

KAVI-ICR and India's NCBS to enhance vaccine development

The University of Nairobi's KAVI-Institute of Clinical Research (KAVI-ICR) and the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), India, have established and initiated a collaboration to spear head vaccine development through enhanced technology.

According to the Director, KAVI-ICR, Prof. Omu Anzala, the partnership will see the team expand metagenomics sequencing from selected target groups in India and Africa and inform the newly emerging pathogens such as Chikungunya and Dengue in their virology, pathology, point of care diagnostics and vaccine designs.

"In collaboration with NCBS, we will facilitate the manufacture of existing vaccines in Africa," he explained. "In addition, we will support the Dengue programmes using some of the existing facilities such as the animal house, screening program, imaging, flow units and genomics."

KAVI-ICR and NCBS will carry out off campus and hospital and community engagements with an evolving data science perspective.

"As KAVI-ICR, we will explore the additional use of novel cutting edge technologies that NCBS is currently using such as next generation sequencing technologies to evolve therapeutic vaccines," added Prof. Anzala. "We will also have joint ventures such as development of infrastructure and research, teaching arrangements and supervision of postgraduate students, Joint application for funding including donor funds, research grants, and contributions subscriptions, among others."

The team from NCBS led by Lt. General Velu Nair, met the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Mbithi when they paid a courtesy call on him.

"Over the years, the University of Nairobi has had good relations with India and this collaboration is just one of them," said Prof. Mbithi. "I wish you well as you embark on this project and we look forward to impressive results."