



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## ***News Release***

Issued: Tuesday 24 October 2017

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### **Africa-led research to tackle the challenge of infectious diseases**

Millions of people could benefit from a new study that is seeking novel solutions to the problems of infectious diseases and emerging epidemics in Africa.

Teams of scientists from Africa and the UK are to pool their expertise in dozens of research projects across the continent.

They will seek to develop better treatments for conditions such as malaria and sleeping sickness, and to be better prepared for epidemics such as Ebola.

The £7 million initiative – named Tackling Infections to Benefit Africa, or Tiba, after the Swahili word to cure infection – aims to harness and develop expertise in partner countries.

Tiba's programme of research will be set by its partners in Africa, who will apply their own perspective to address the continent's infectious disease problems.

Researchers aims to improve the health of affected populations by strengthening every part of the health system – from lab research to clinical treatments – on a continental scale.

The initiative will involve teams from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe, supported by experts in infectious disease and global health at the University of Edinburgh.

Tiba is funded by the National Institute for Health Research through the Global Challenges Research Fund.

Professor Francisca Mutapi, Tiba Deputy Director at the University of Edinburgh, said: “The key to this initiative is that Africa will be setting its own research agenda. We are working closely with governments and drivers of health policy, to ensure recommendations from research are taken up and the people of Africa can benefit from our collective findings.”

Professor Mark Woolhouse, Tiba Director at the University of Edinburgh said: “This project is a unique opportunity to improve the ways that African health systems tackle infectious diseases. By harnessing our collective expertise to gain a better understanding of what works best, we hope to reduce the burden of infectious disease for millions of Africans.”

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