

Highlights of 2023

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP

Co-funded by
the European Union



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1 Foreword

“ Our investments reflect our ambition to become the leading research partnership on infectious diseases. ”

Dr Michael Makanga
Global Health EDCTP3
Executive Director

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Dear Reader,

It is with pleasure that I present to you the Consolidated Annual Activity Report of the **Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking** (Global Health EDCTP3).

Building on the previous investments of over EUR1 billion in the first and second EDCTP programmes, the new **EUR 1.6 billion** Global Health EDCTP3 has reignited the momentum in the fight against infectious diseases. With a fresh investment of over EUR 103 million in its first year of implementation in 2022, 28 new projects are already underway.

In 2023, we continued to support key research in infectious diseases and expanded our activities to ensure a stronger, longer-lasting impact. We launched additional funding opportunities to expand our portfolio of investments. **With a total budget of over EUR 130 million, seven new calls for proposals were launched in 2023** to support activities aiming at tackling the Ebola outbreaks in sub-Saharan Africa, improving the health of women and children, and improving the delivery and uptake of vaccines, among others.

On 16 November, I started my tenure as the new Executive Director and, following my appointment, on 23 November, Global Health EDCTP3 became **financially autonomous from the European Commission**, which had supported the establishment and initial operation of the programme until it reached the operational capacity to implement its own budget. Moreover, we finalised the institutional framework by establishing the **Stakeholders Group**, a new body working to provide input on the scientific, strategic and technological priorities to be addressed by the Global Health EDCTP3, as well as to ensure synergies between the partnership and adjacent sectors. These events marked significant milestones and kick-started the new implementation phase of the Global Health EDCTP3 programme.

Dr Michael Makanga
Global Health EDCTP3
Executive Director



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In December 2023, the **Work Programme 2024** was published with **over EUR 140 million in funding opportunities**, the highest annual budget since Global Health EDCTP3 was established. This annual programme supports a range of activities aimed at tackling diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS or Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), as well as building research capacity in Africa through academic-industry fellowships for researchers.

Our investments reflect our ambition to become the **leading research partnership on infectious diseases** and we expect the new projects supported through these calls for proposals to directly contribute to our objectives.

This ambition was demonstrated during the **Eleventh EDCTP Forum** held in Paris. With almost 1,000 participants, this special event allowed us to celebrate the **EDCTP's 20th anniversary**, highlight the excellent work being carried out by researchers, policy makers and health research stakeholders in the fight against infectious diseases, and look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

In addition, the **Programme Office** has continued to grow and deliver on its core functions of launching and evaluating calls for proposals, supporting beneficiaries to achieve impressive results, and ensuring synergies with like-minded partners, with the overall aim of strengthening the research ecosystems in Africa and Europe and contributing to the global fight against infectious diseases.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in Global Health EDCTP3, colleagues, beneficiaries, partners and many more, for their efforts and contributions to our common goals.

I look forward to continuing working with you to provide solutions to those who need them most.

Eleventh EDCTP Forum
Paris



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2 Executive summary

“ A successful initiative which has developed sustainable capacities and supported local leadership in many African countries.”

World Health Organization (WHO)



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Introduction

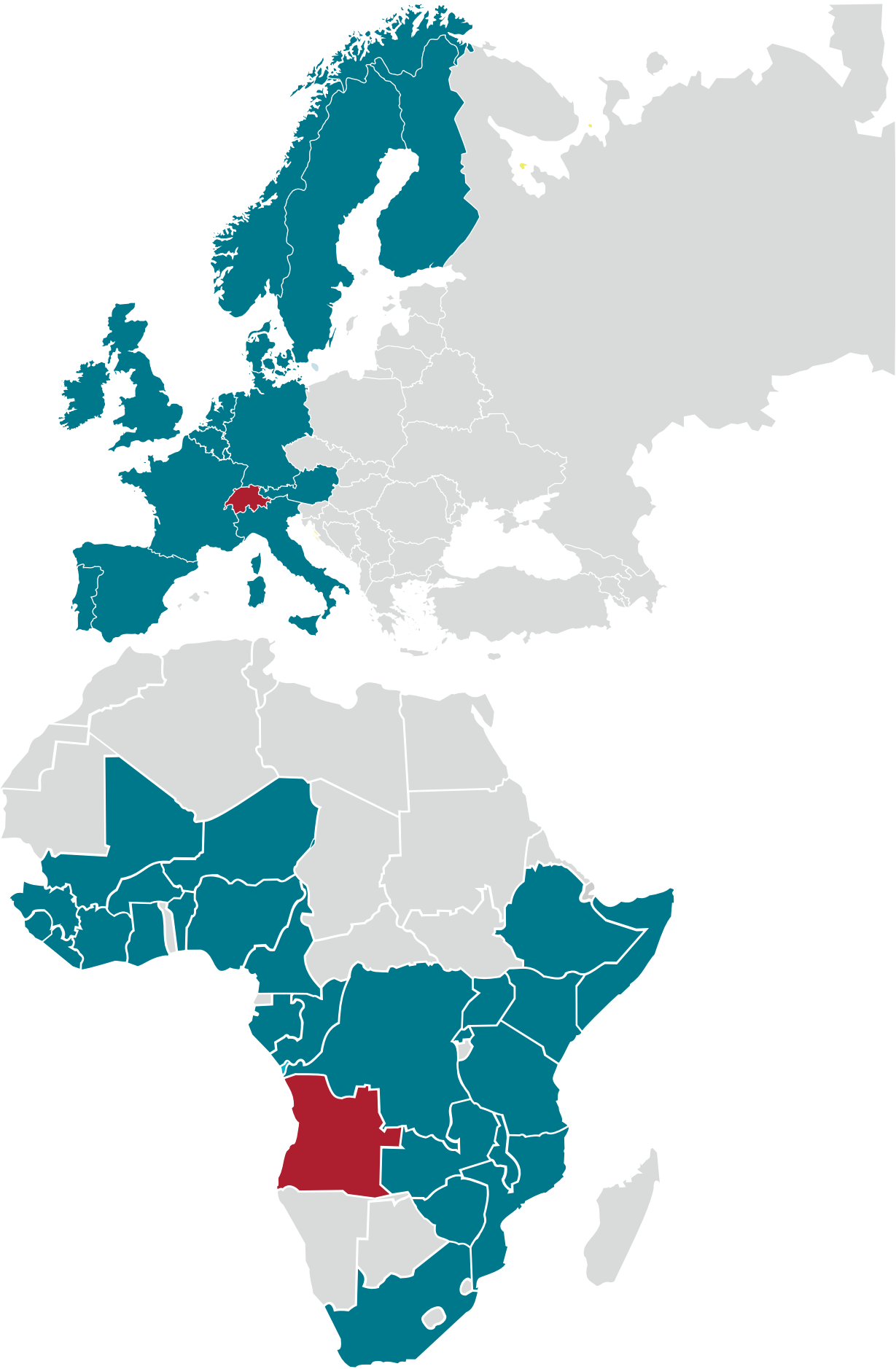
Looking back over the year, 2023 marked the full establishment of Global Health EDCTP3. During the year, core processes and governing bodies were established and activated; two Work Programmes for 2023 and 2024 respectively were adopted, their funding opportunities launched; and the first grants were signed, leading to the start of exciting new projects.

Moreover, several initiatives were taken to raise awareness and promote the partnership between research, innovation and global health stakeholders. This year, which also marked the 20th anniversary of the EDCTP since its initial launch in 2003, was concluded on a very positive note with several success stories from the In-Kind Additional Activities (IKAA) of the programme, which are also featured in this report.

Laying the foundations: Autonomy and governance

In 2023, Global Health EDCTP3 finalised the establishment of its governance structures and bodies, as well as implemented its financial and administrative frameworks, following the financial autonomy from the European Commission in November 2023.

During this year, the Global Health EDCTP3's private co-founder, the **EDCTP Association**, has grown its sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) members pool from 21 to 28 countries, welcoming Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Zimbabwe, highlighting the value that these countries place on international collaboration with the 15 European countries that are part of the EDCTP Association.



EDCTP Association Members and Aspirant Members

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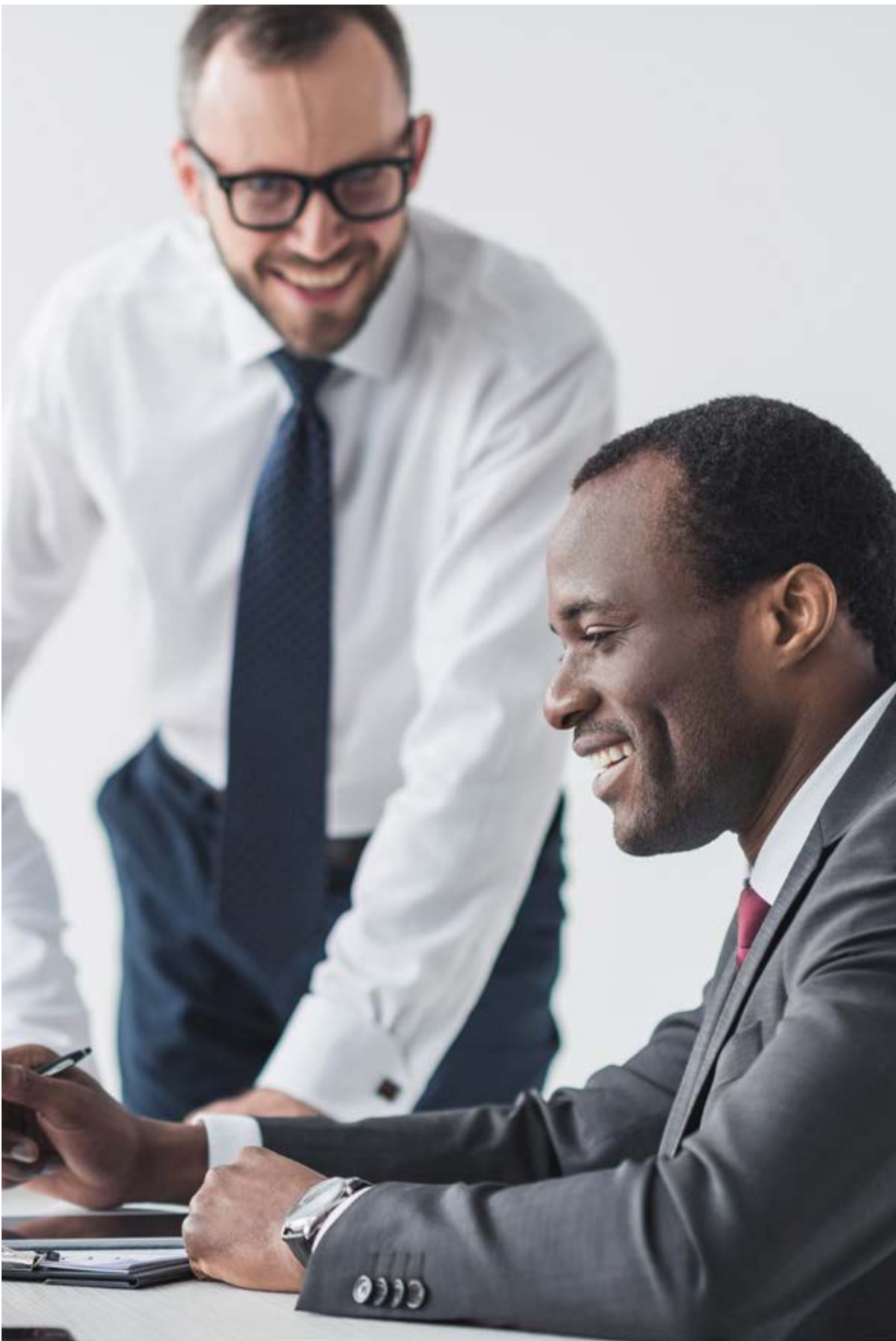
This expansion has allowed the Joint Undertaking to further establish itself as the reference funding agency for clinical trial-related research in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and as the main opportunity for SSA countries to become global health research and innovation leaders. Moreover, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recognised the exemplary role of this partnership in the ongoing global discussion on clinical research capacity. In addition, the Global Health EDCTP3 established its **Stakeholders Group** (SG) to provide input on its scientific, strategic and technological priorities. This group currently has 33 members from key sectors in global health, such as academia, industry, civil society organisations and patient representatives. Coordination and collaboration between the SG and the Global Health EDCTP3’s other key advisory body, the **Scientific Committee** (SC), has been established to ensure complementarities and pooling of knowledge. On 7 November 2023, the two groups met for the first time at the EDCTP Forum to lay the foundations of their collaborative work and to identify synergies.

Core business: R&I projects and calls for proposals

Running projects

In 2022, Global Health EDCTP3 published its first Annual Work Programme and funding opportunities. During 2023, the Programme Office managed to conclude and sign these grant agreements, as well as subsequently launch the prefinancing payments, monitor their implementation and support projects as needed.

With total funding of over EUR 103 million, the first 28 projects funded under Global Health EDCTP3 signed their grant agreements in 2022 and 2023 and commenced their work in 2023.



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19 of these are research and innovation projects implementing clinical trials and other clinical research activities. In particular, the running projects are working on diseases such as malaria, HIV, tuberculosis, as well as Lassa fever, certain Neglected Infectious Diseases (NIDs), alternatively referred to as Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), and antimicrobial resistance (AMR)-related infections.

Nine projects focus on coordinating and strengthening institutional capacity and the enabling environment for conducting clinical research. For example, five of these projects are working to strengthen regulatory capacity to support the conduct of clinical trials in SSA.

Importantly, all projects funded under Global Health EDCTP3 support **South-South and South-North collaboration**. This is a requirement when applying for funding, as all consortia are required to have at least one partner from a European Union Member State or country associated to Horizon Europe, and at least one partner from a sub-Saharan African country that is a member of the EDCTP Association.

Work Programme 2023 publication and evaluation

On 4 April 2023, the Global Health EDCTP3 published its Work Programme 2023 with EUR 131.90 million in funding opportunities to support research on infectious diseases. This annual work programme included different funding opportunities (topics), divided into single-stage and two-stage topics.

Five of these topics closed submission of proposals on 4 July 2023. Ninety-nine proposals were submitted, and 27 were selected for funding with a total budget of EUR 78.2 million. The successful applicants were informed about the evaluation outcome in November 2023 and quickly thereafter started the process of Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP). These projects are expected to start their activities in mid-2024.

Two further topics (total budget of EUR 56 million) were launched under a two-stage procedure. Seventy-nine first-stage proposals were submitted by the first deadline, 28 September 2023. Eligible proposals subsequently underwent expert evaluation that focused on the scientific excellence and expected impact. Thirty-seven proposals were invited to submit their complete research proposal by 3 April 2024, after which the second and final evaluation stage will take place, with the aim to invite proposals for GAP by June 2024.

Communication and dissemination

In 2023, communication activities of Global Health EDCTP3 focused on four main objectives: to establish new communication channels and tools, promote funding opportunities, raise awareness about the partnership, and promote funded projects and their results.

To achieve these objectives, a new web presence and social media accounts were launched, where key information about Global Health EDCTP3 governance, funding opportunities, news, activities and resources is regularly published.

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Moreover, on 23 March and 12 April 2023, specific events were organised to promote funding opportunities and provide potential applicants with information on the calls for proposals, including information on eligibility criteria and other relevant administrative matters.

Importantly, the Eleventh EDCTP Forum , held in Paris from 7 to 10 November 2023, provided an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the work and projects funded under EDCTP1 and EDCTP2 as well as to promote the third iteration of the programme, Global Health EDCTP3.



Dr Laurent Muschel, Acting Director General of the Health Emergency and Response Authority (HERA) at the Opening Ceremony of the Eleventh EDCTP Forum

Collaboration and coordination: Enhancing impact.

Working with the European Commission: Ensuring coordination

Strategic coordination mechanisms have been established with the different Directorate-Generals (DGs) of the **European Commission** that are active in the health sector. Under the leadership of DG Research and Innovation (RTD), a regular Sherpa meeting with the key DGs has been established to promote knowledge sharing and synergies between programmes.



Dr Michael Makanga and Mr Martin Seychell, Deputy Director-General at the European Commission Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA)

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An in-depth cooperation has been established with DG International Partnerships (INTPA), which has invested over EUR 1 billion on health-related fields in Africa. Monthly coordination meetings have been set up to exchange information, consult on call topic texts, discuss the availability of relevant experts and identify potential synergies or joint calls to be taken forward.

Working with the EDCTP Association: In-Kind Contributions to Additional Activities

In addition to the direct funding from Global Health EDCTP3 Programme Office to eligible organisations carrying out clinical research and other activities, the member countries of the EDCTP Association also align and coordinate their activities under the programme.

The contribution from the EDCTP Association is predominately in the form of **In-Kind Contributions to Additional Activities** (IKAA), which are mostly multi-annual. For the year 2023, the EDCTP Association submitted a plan to initiate, through its constituents, additional activities with an estimated value of EUR 86 621 213. This brings the total estimated value of all initiated activities by the end of 2023 to an additional EUR 387 605 543. In addition, in anticipation of the UK joining Horizon Europe, in December 2023 the EDCTP Association committed to increasing its contribution to the Global Health EDCTP3 by at least EUR 110 122 000 to reach a total contribution of at least EUR 550 million.

Among the activities already reported, several are already having a major impact on key diseases such as malaria, HIV, tuberculosis and NIDs, as well as on creating and supporting the necessary capacity building activities and networks to support this research.

For example, the **Multi-Stage Malaria Vaccine Consortium, MMVC** progressed the clinical development of the R21/Matrix-M™, which has culminated in the 2023 WHO recommendation for the use of new malaria vaccine R21/Matrix-M for the prevention of malaria in children. The R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine is an easily deployable vaccine and is expected to result in sufficient vaccine supply to benefit all children living in areas where malaria is a public health risk.



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Moreover, in December 2023, the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP) of the **European Medicines Agency’s** (EMA) adopted a positive scientific opinion of the use of Fexinidazole Winthrop as the first oral treatment for *Trypanosoma brucei rhodesiense* sleeping sickness. The trial for treatment with Fexinidazole Winthrop in Malawi and Uganda was supported by EDCTP through the HAT-r-ACC consortium with co-financing from several countries through the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi) partnership. This CHMP opinion paves the way for the update of WHO guidelines on sleeping sickness, as well as the extended indication and distribution of fexinidazole in African countries where *Trypanosoma brucei rhodesiense* is prevalent.

Furthermore, some of the activities supported by these IKAAs have supported the creation of coordination and collaboration networks. The EDCTP2–funded epidemic preparedness networks – ALERRT and PANDORA-ID-NET – have made coordinated efforts to improve the capacity of countries to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of this, the PANDORA-ID-NET played a critical supportive role in the drafting, consultation and final publishing of the Africa CDC framework for One Health practice in national public health institutions. This is a guidance document supporting the implementation of One Health that the Africa CDC is using to advise and support African Member States.

Working with other partners: Establishing new relationships

In 2023, Global Health EDCTP3 established new conversations with nearly a dozen different partners to identify potential synergies and promote coordinated responses, especially through joint calls for proposals for 2025. Moreover, active participation in different global health fora has been a high priority for the programme to raise the visibility of Global Health EDCTP3 and ensure engagement with stakeholders and potential partners.

In this respect, the Programme Office attended and/or organised sessions at the 3rd Africa Health Research and Innovation Funders Forum (South Africa, August), the Grand Challenges Forum (Senegal, October), the World Health Summit (Germany, October), the WHO Global Clinical Trials Forum (Switzerland, November), and the International Conference on Public Health in Africa (Zambia, November).



Dr Francine Ntoumi and the team of PANDORA-ID-NET

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These events have proven to be key to establishing our status as a **global funder of public health** and initiating discussions with other funders. For example, at the Grand Challenges meeting held in Dakar (Senegal) in October 2023, the five projects that resulted from the Global Health EDCTP3’s first joint call with a contributing partner, the **Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)**, together with the relevant partners, held their first joint meeting and launched their collaboration with the aim to strengthen genomic epidemiology infrastructure in Africa.

Moreover, through the **EDCTP Association’s Africa Office**, we have ensured that Global Health EDCTP3 maintains its regional presence in Africa. The Office and its staff provide an excellent platform and avenue for supporting programme activities best executed from an African location. These include implementing and monitoring capacity developing activities, organising workshops, facilitating dialogue between African and European research entities and other stakeholders, promoting networking activities (South-North and South-South), and overall, increasing the visibility of Global Health EDCTP3.

Conclusion

In 2023, Global Health EDCTP3 has successfully finalised its establishment as a new Joint Undertaking and implemented its annual Work Programme, the only one of its kind to tackle infectious diseases in both Africa and Europe.

This new funding model for EDCTP encourages global co-funding and collaboration and, building on the previous programmes, it carries the legacy of equitable research partnerships.

The work and results of the first projects funded and the activities carried out under the IKAA, showcase the **tangible impact that the partnership**

is having on the ground, improving health research capacities, and improving the wellbeing of affected populations. In addition, the strong response to the calls for proposals launched displays the high level of interest in the partnership and its field of work.

Over the years, EDCTP has succeeded in establishing a true partnership of equals between African and European partners, a key aspect that we have built on during the past year.

By pooling resources of its African and European Participating States, the EU and the private sector, Global Health EDCTP3 has a clear structuring effect, decreasing fragmentation and ensuring efficiency, making a positive contribution to the fight against infectious diseases in SSA and improving health security worldwide.

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3 Fact sheet

Highlights of 2023 in numbers



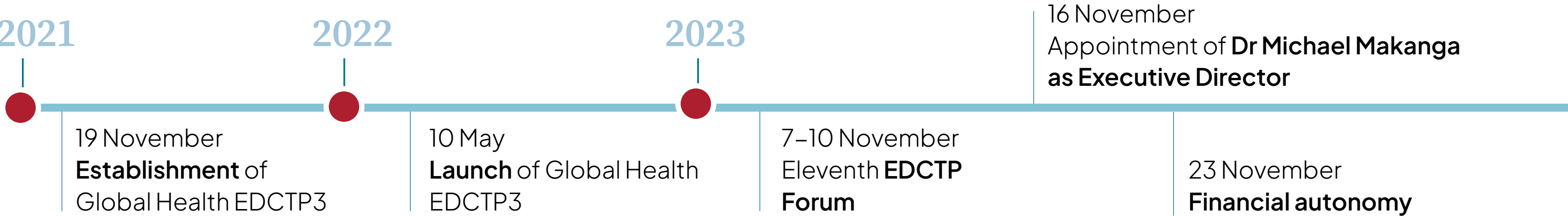
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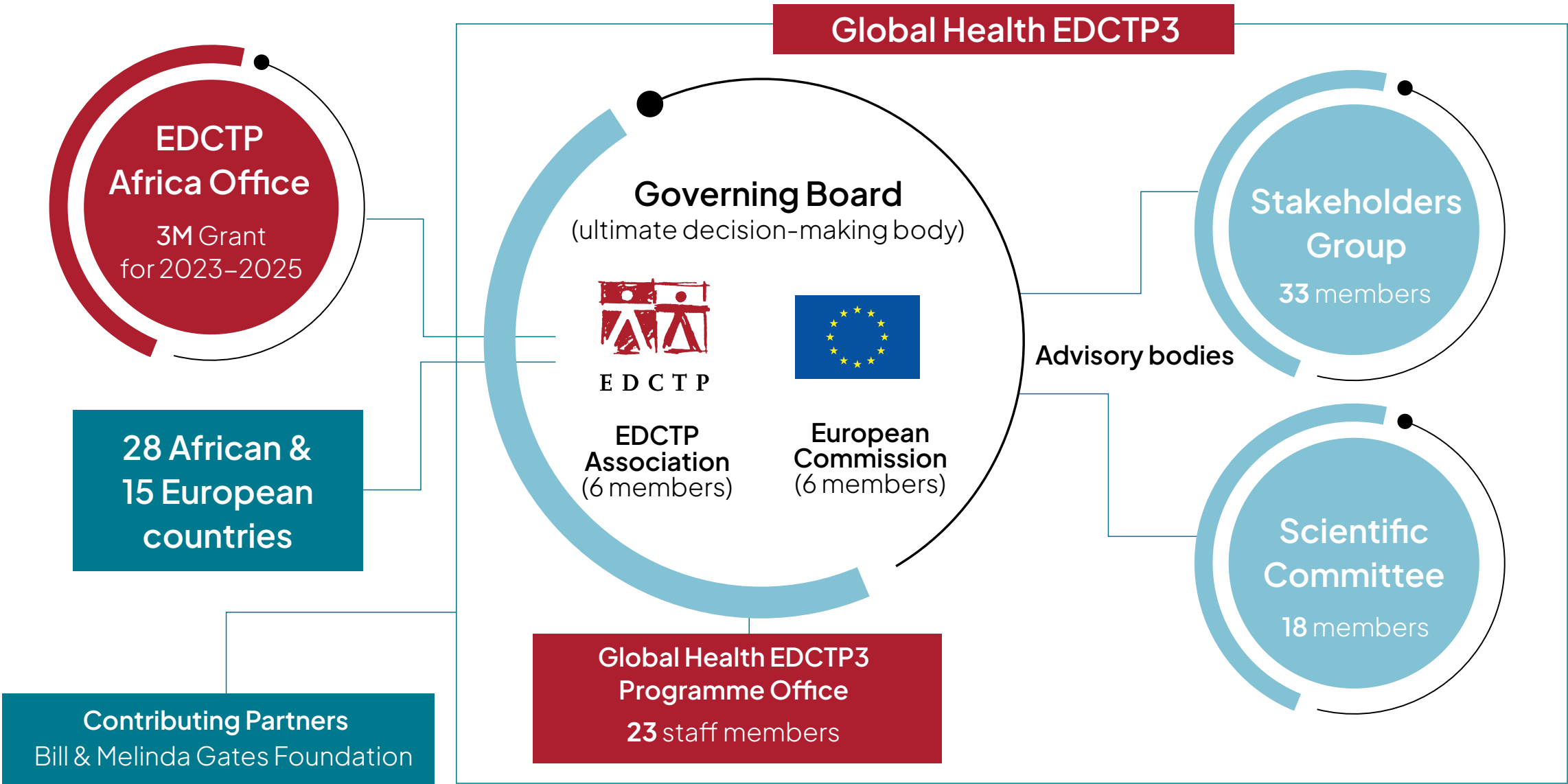
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Key milestones



Governance



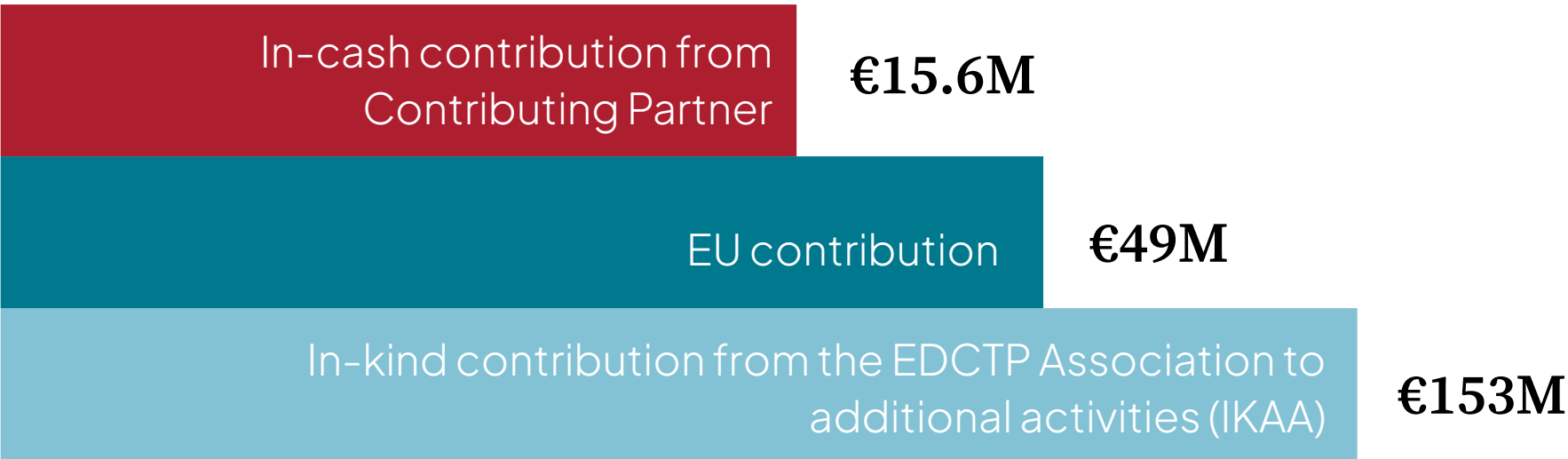
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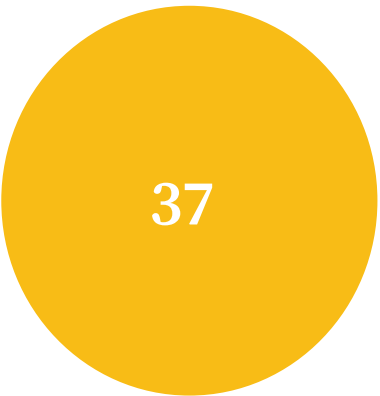
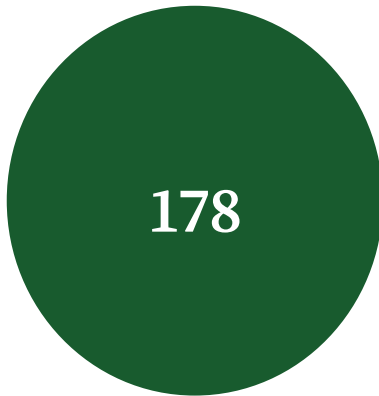
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Programme budget



Calls for proposals



Budget

Calls for proposals

Topics

Proposals submitted

Funded projects*

* Data from 2023 Annual Activity Report updated to include remaining investments from the 2023 Work Programme.

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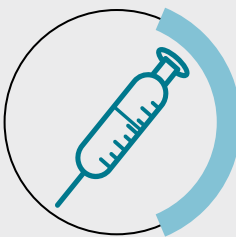
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Call topics

Delivery, deployment, and uptake of vaccines through phase IV/implementation research



Budget **€30M** 5 funded projects

Existing interventions – Women’s and children’s health evaluation



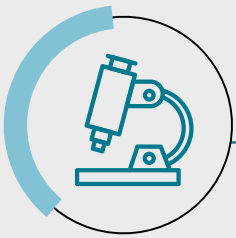
Budget **€26M** 6 funded projects

Point-of-care diagnostics



Budget **€26M** 5 funded projects

Clinical research fellowships



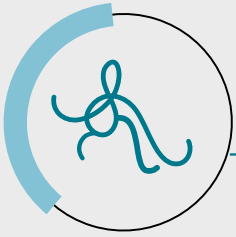
Budget **€15.3M** 4 funded projects

EDCTP2 clinical trials negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic



Budget **€14M** 8 funded projects

Interventions on Ebola outbreaks in Africa



Budget **€11M** 3 funded projects

Ethics & regulatory capacity strengthening



Budget **€8M** 6 funded projects

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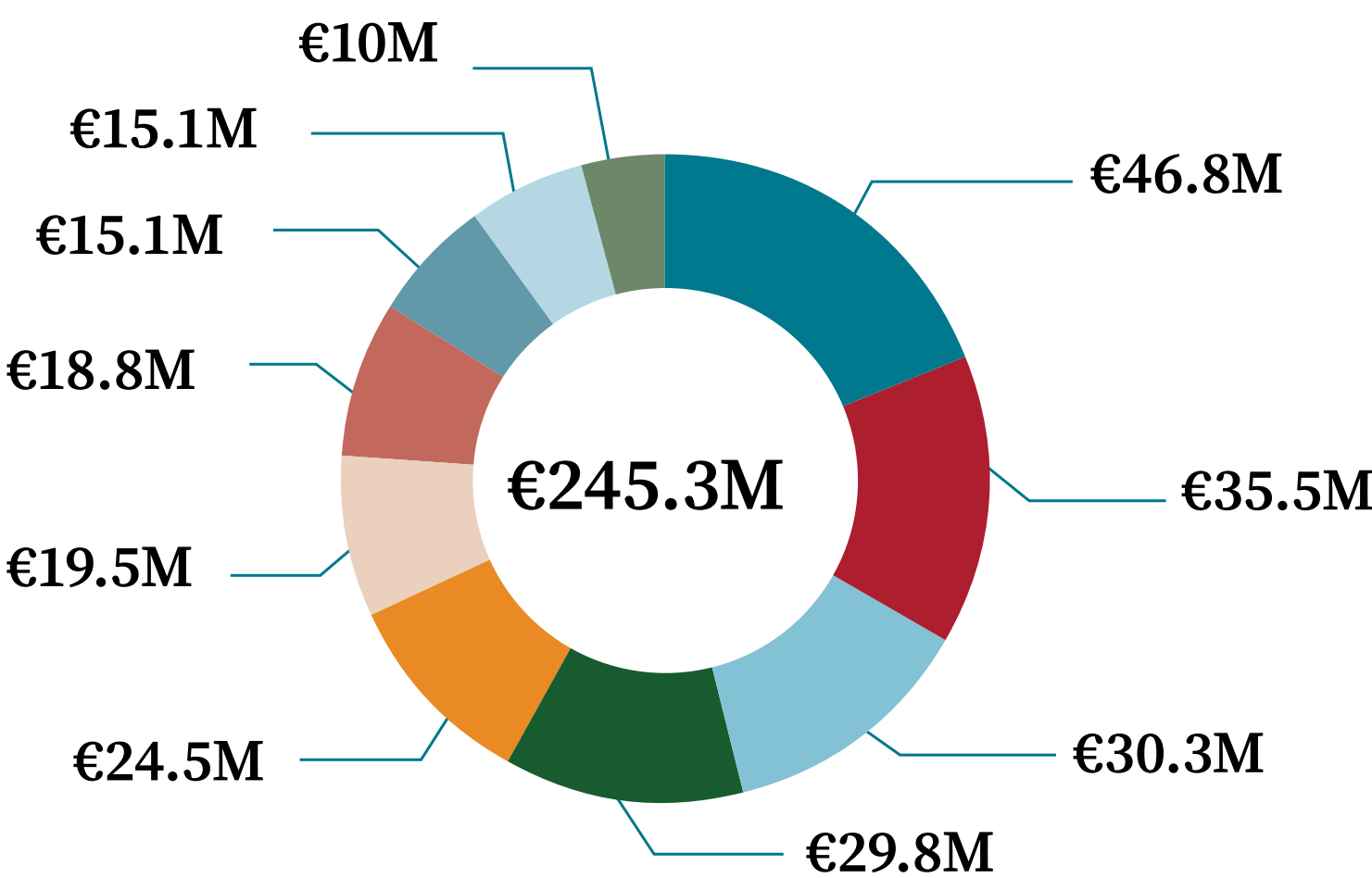
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Investments portfolio 2022-2023

(in million EUR)

Currently, Global Health EDCTP3-funded projects amount to more than **€245M** allocated to among the following areas:



** Other diseases include sexually transmitted infections and urinary tract infections

- Malaria
- Emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases with epidemic potential
- Neglected infectious diseases (NIDs)
- Capacity building, ethics, regulatory and training
- Tuberculosis
- Lower respiratory tract infections
- HIV
- Diarrhoeal diseases
- Childhood cross infections
- Other**

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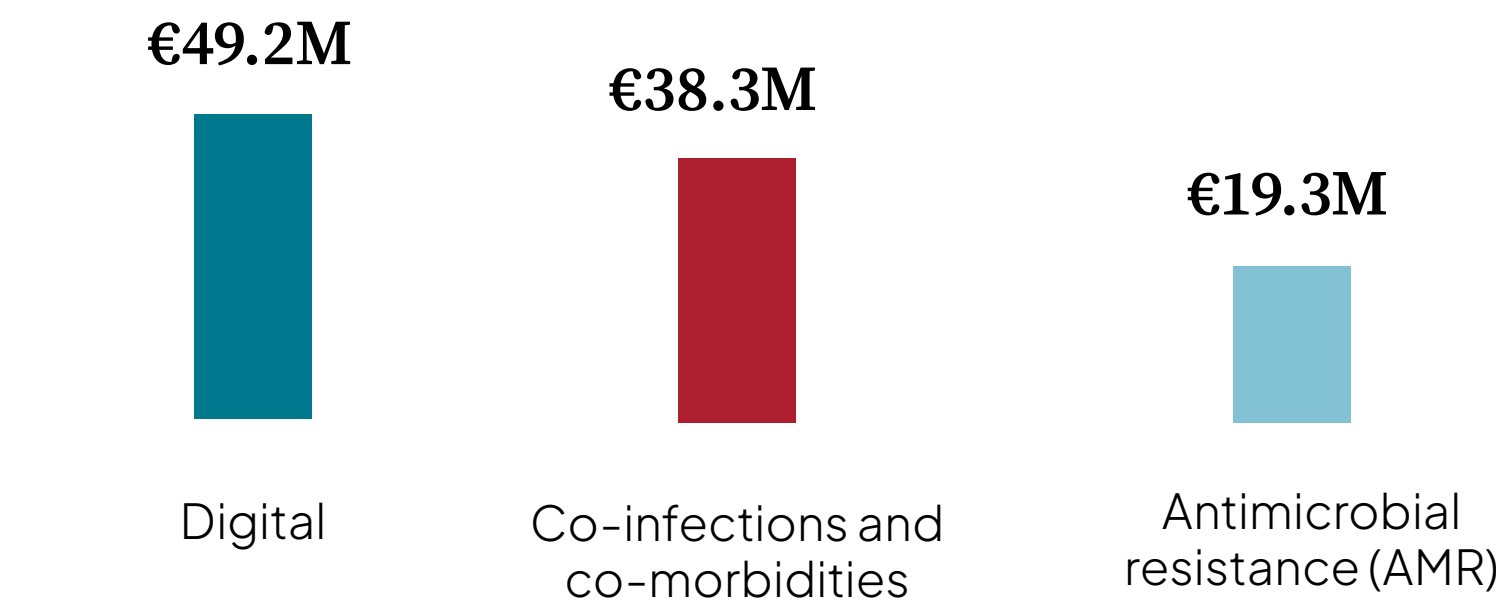
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Investments portfolio 2022-2023

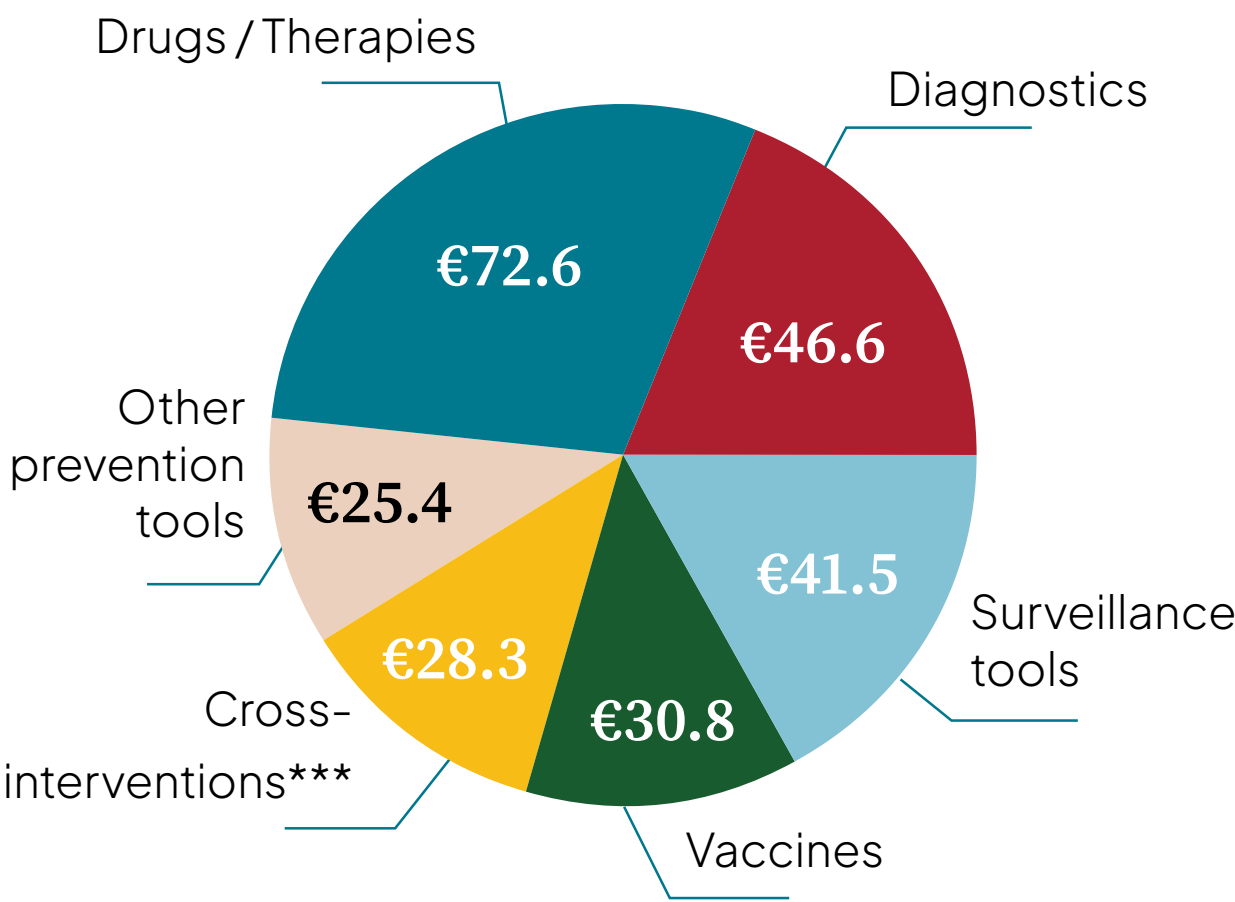
(in million EUR)

They also contribute to the following overarching areas:



Global Health EDCTP3-funded projects feature activities that contribute to the development of different types of medical countermeasures.

Investments per type of intervention (in million EUR):



*** Cross-cutting activities which do not relate to a particular intervention or generally cover supporting activities related to several interventions.

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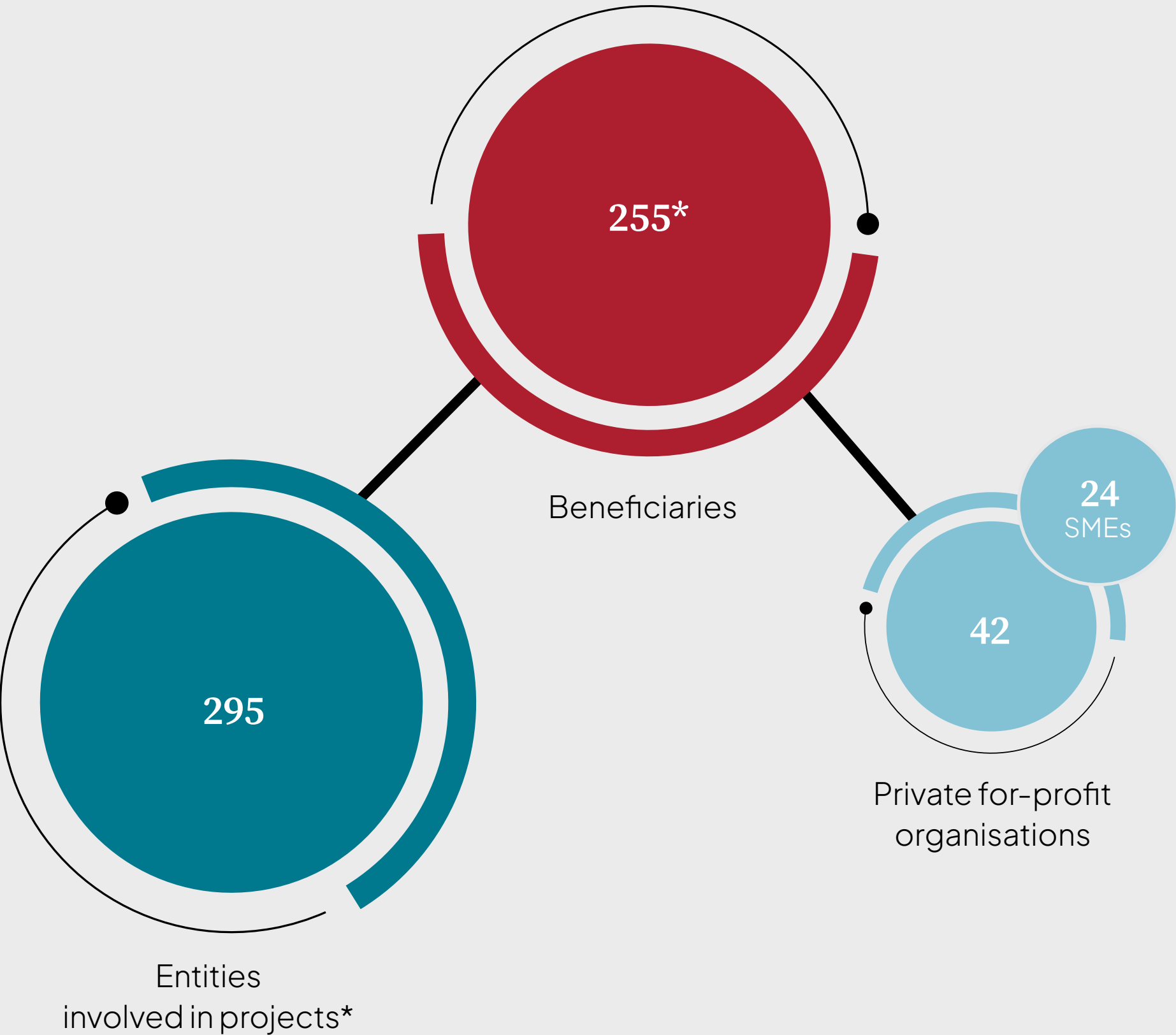
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Participation

in grants

Global Health EDCTP3 has gathered a rich network of stakeholders actively participating in its projects.



* Data from 2023 Annual Activity Report updated to include remaining investments from the 2023 Work Programme.



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