



*A global approach in tackling health security in Africa*

## **LABPLUS AFRICA: A MOBILE LAB FLEET TO STRENGTHEN LABORATORY CAPACITIES FOR PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND ROUTINE DIAGNOSTICS**

Brussels, Belgium - February 17, 2022 - **On the occasion of the European Union/African Union summit, Praesens Care announces the launch of a Mobile Lab fleet funded by the European Union, as part of the LABPLUS AFRICA project. This initiative implements an innovative approach to address unmet needs of diagnostics and health services through mobile laboratory platforms to detect, respond, control and prevent epidemics, in particular in remote and hard-to-reach areas.**

### **LABPLUS AFRICA**

Almost half world's population has little to no access, even to most basic diagnostics. Deficiencies in infrastructure, workforce, and quality assurance pose barriers to diagnostic quality and safety. They hinder the existence of sustainable and resilient health systems. Securing diagnostic infrastructure and quality services close to the patient will reduce the diagnostic gap and improve health outcomes, as a fundamental step to accelerate change.

Within this framework, the EU Coronavirus Global Response and the Security and Development Policy of the European Commission's Directorate General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) launched LABPLUS AFRICA. The initiative presents a series of scientific activities, preparedness and training measures aiming at strengthening and empowering the African preparedness and response to COVID-19 and future outbreaks in the continent.

The unprecedented COVID-19 crisis reveals the need to reinforce the capacities in terms of diagnostic testing, outbreak surveillance, containment, and surge capacity. The EU is showing its global solidarity with partner countries under the leadership of the EU Centres of Excellence for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk mitigation.

### **BIONEAR®**

A fleet of five Mobile Labs, so-called BIONEARs®, is ready to be deployed in a regional hub approach to countries willing to reinforce their healthcare delivery model. This includes routine diagnostics, genomic surveillance activities, vaccine delivery services at the peripheral level of the health system. These state-of-the-art vehicles essentially bring together the best in class in terms of European technologies and partners with >90% of BIONEARs® components coming from Europe. BIONEARs® are all-terrain truck-based, autonomous, and connected biosafety laboratories that are fully equipped for wide-spectrum detection. Unique on-board genomics capacities also allow on-the-spot diseases characterization.



The BIONEARS® can be operated in regional hubs for personnel shifts, resupply and maintenance purposes. Patients are screened on-site, samples of suspected cases collected, tested, and confirmed in the BIONEARS®. Beyond addressing the infrastructure and hardware needs, it will include a complete package of training, maintenance, and as such will contribute to real capacity building efforts in-country that will last beyond the Covid-19 crisis while also addressing other highly needed health programs like HIV, TB and Malaria.

*On 17-18 February, one BIONEAR® will be showcased at the Justus Lipsius building of the European Council in Brussels and presented to official State delegations, during the European Union/African Union summit, under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.*

The project aims to increase mobile laboratory capacities run by trained African teams integrated into the local health systems. This initiative will reach a large number of African Public Health and Research institutes with the potential to be scaled globally, bringing field-proof solutions to patients that are traditionally underserved. This fleet will be embedded within the current healthcare system and will be complementing the already existing capacities.

**Dr. Rudi Pauwels, co-founder Praesens Care** *"We are delivering platforms and services that aim to improve access to quality healthcare for patients, irrespective of where they live. Global health issues call for global integrated solutions, that can be customized and operated locally. Praesens Care is honoured it can count on Europe's support to scale up its activities solution and accelerate preparedness and resilient response to COVID-19 and emerging pathogens in Africa".*

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## ABOUT

*Praesens Care designs, builds, and scales a healthcare service delivery platform that integrates fit-for-purpose vehicles and broad service offerings. We believe that innovative technologies and a preparedness ecosystem play an important role to build healthcare systems capacity in-country. Praesens Care embraces decentralization as a vehicle for change towards a world where health systems are resilient, better prepared, and more equitable.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Link press kit:

<https://praesens.care/press-release-labplusafrica-eu-ausummit2022/>