



**DNDi**

Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative*

## COVID-19: Advancing Towards an Equitable and Healthy World

Dr Bernard Pécoul  
Executive Director, DNDi  
28 January 2021  
Prince Mahidol Award Conference 2021

# A year of tremendous mobilization of public and private sectors towards addressing R&D needs

IN THAT ONE YEAR

**4,400**

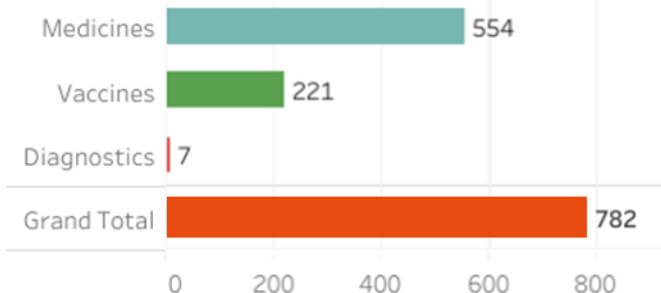
Clinical trials\*

**782**

Products in development\*



A. No. of products by type



\*Clinicaltrials.gov

\*WHO Global Observatory



URGENT R&D NEEDS REMAIN UNADDRESSED

# A fatal imbalance



**1975- 1999**

**1.1% of the 1,393** new drugs  
for neglected diseases

**12%** of the global disease  
burden



## DNDi ORIGINS

# Born on the frontlines of medical action



Médecins Sans Frontières did not have the medicines we needed to carry out our life-saving work.

So, when we received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999, we decided to dedicate a portion of the funds received to launch a brand-new model of R&D.



**Four years later, DNDi was born.**

# DNDi was created by public & private health & research institutions and WHO

- Kenya Medical Research Institute
- Indian Council of Medical Research
- Malaysian Ministry of Health
- Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, Brazil
- Institut Pasteur
- Médecins Sans Frontières
- World Health Organization's Special Program for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

## We develop life-saving medicines for neglected patients around the world



Sleeping sickness



Leishmaniasis



Chagas disease



Filaria



Mycetoma



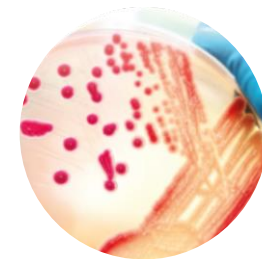
HIV



Hepatitis C



Malaria (Until 2015)



Antibiotic resistance



COVID-19

# Our aim: to develop 25 new treatments in our first 25 years



## **We innovate to save lives**

We develop urgently needed treatments for neglected patients and work to ensure they're affordable, available, and adapted to the communities who need them.



## **We partner for impact**

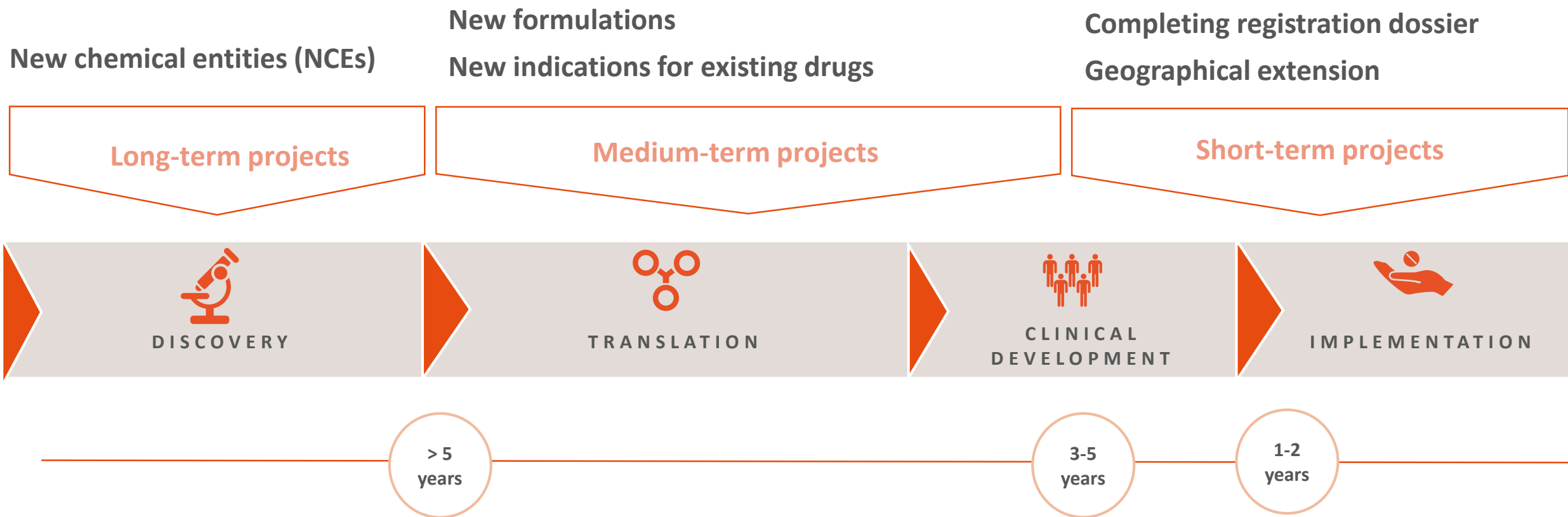
We conduct research where it's needed most, utilizing and strengthening R&D capacity in countries affected by neglected diseases.



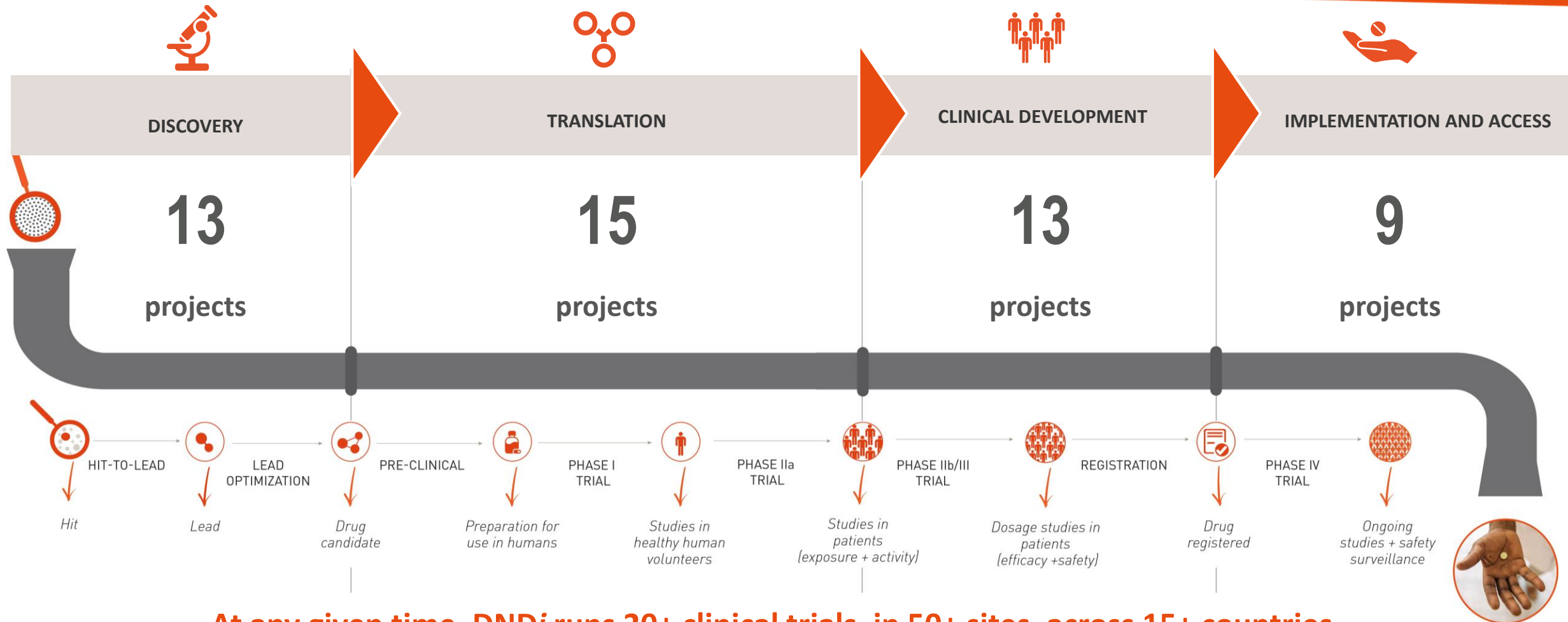
## **We advocate for change**

We speak out for policy change to enable more effective and equitable R&D and access to the fruits of science for all people in need, no matter their income or where they live.

# Driving innovation from the lab bench, to the patient bedside



# 40+ projects and 20+ new chemical entities at all stages of R&D





# 8 new treatments developed for 5 deadly diseases, saving millions of lives



**2007**

**ASAQ**  
A new combination to  
simplify malaria  
treatment  
>500 million  
treatments distributed



**2009**

**NECT** for  
sleeping sickness  
100% of stage-2  
patients



**2011**

**Paediatric  
benznidazole**  
Easier and safer  
treatment for children  
with Chagas disease



**2016**

**Superbooster therapy**  
More effective  
treatment for children  
with HIV who also have  
tuberculosis.



**2008**

**ASMQ** for malaria  
Used in Africa and Asia



**2010**

**SSG+PM**  
Visceral leishmaniasis  
in East Africa  
Now 1st line in all  
countries



**2011**

**New Visceral  
leishmaniasis  
treatment  
in Asia**  
Support to disease  
elimination



**2018**

**Fexinidazole:**  
a paradigm shift for  
sleeping sickness



**Easy to use**



**Affordable**



**Field-adapted**



**Non-patented**

WHAT WE DO

# We partner for impact

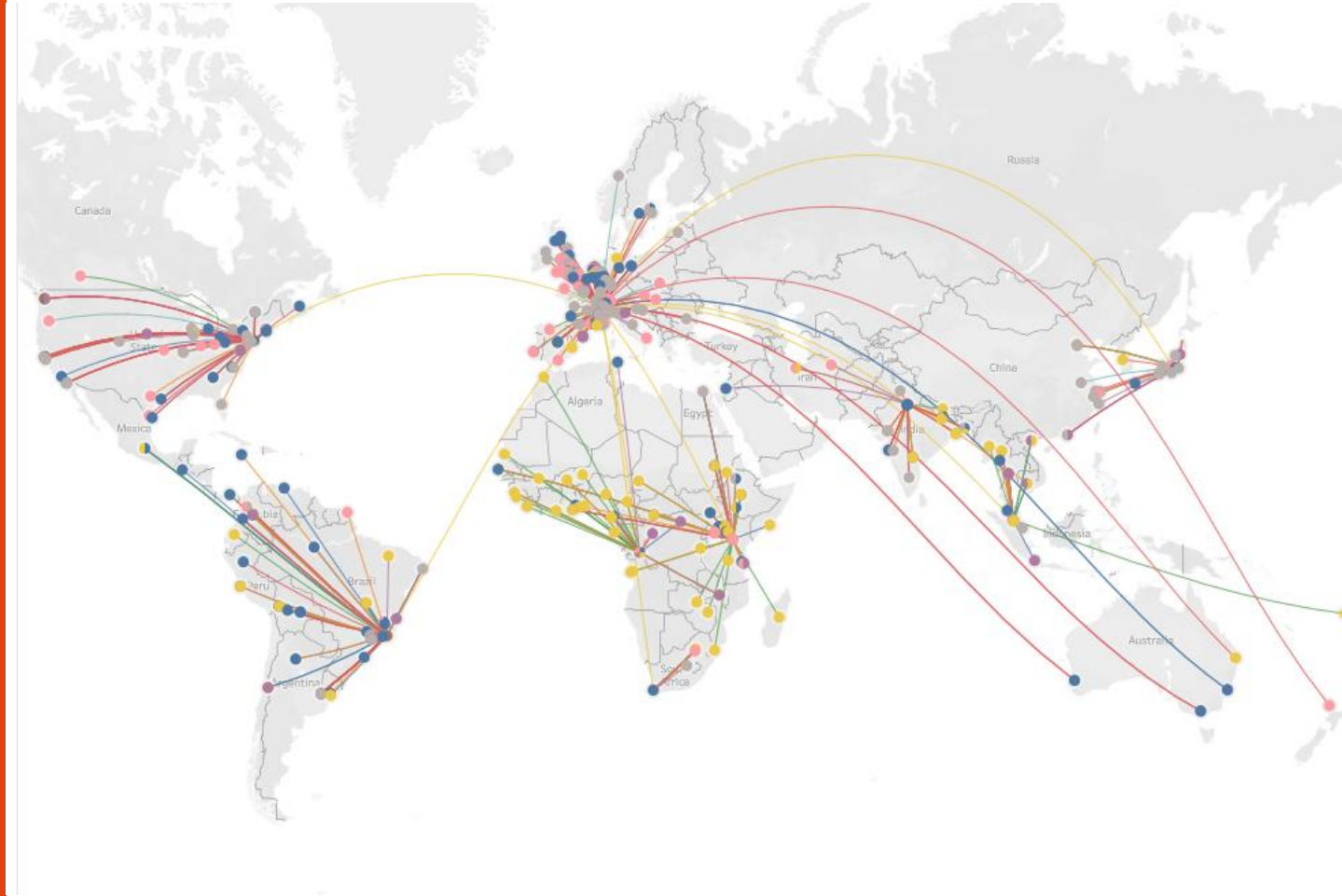


A global network of  
200+ partners

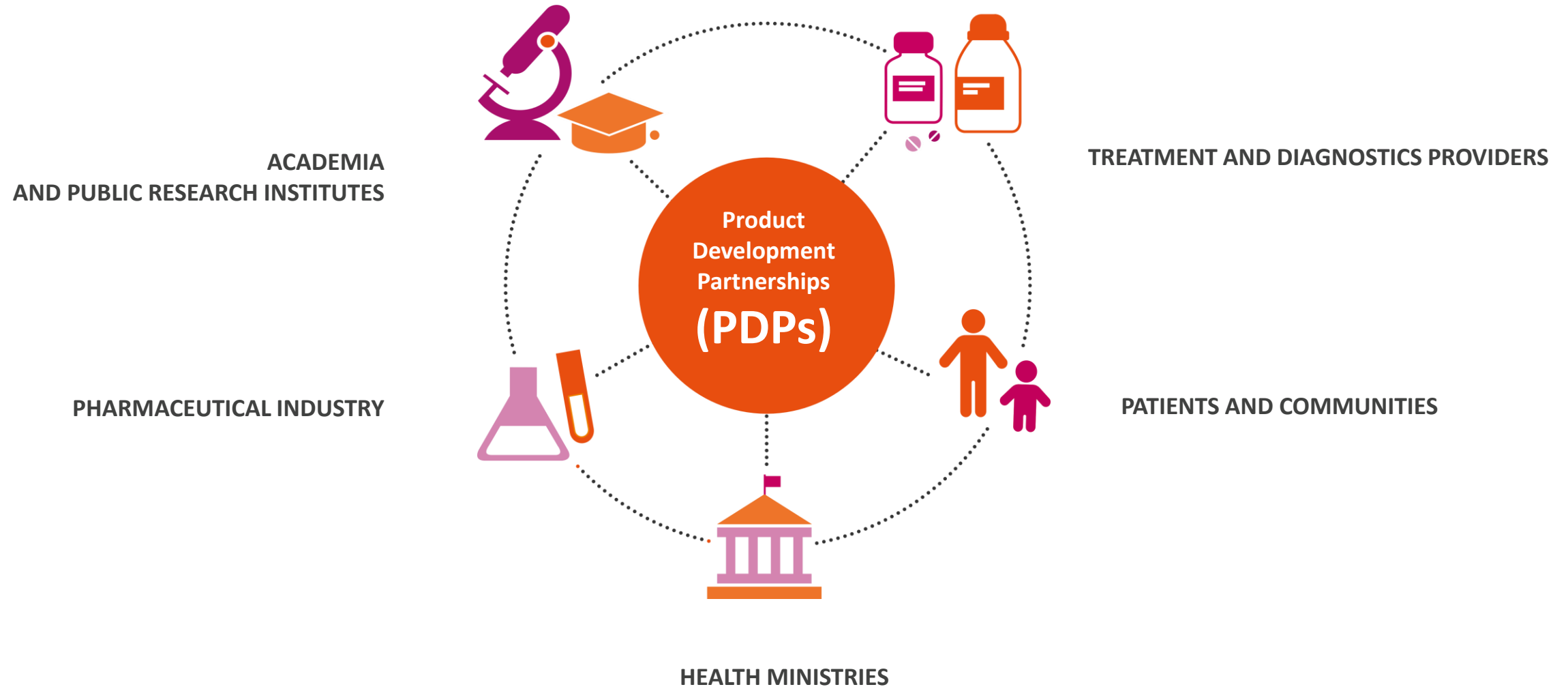
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Offices worldwide that  
allow proximity to  
patients and LMIC needs

Brazil, DRC, Kenya, India,  
Japan, Malaysia, South Africa,  
US + Switzerland



# The “virtual orchestra”: a collaborative partnership model of R&D





## SLEEPING SICKNESS

# Towards a one-dose cure to sustain elimination



**8.5 MILLION**  
people live in areas of  
moderate to very high risk



**90%**  
reduction in reported cases  
from 1998 to 2018



**2/3**  
of reported cases in 2018  
were in the DRC

### 15 years ago MELARSOPROL

Toxic  
treatment,  
'fire in the  
veins', killed 1  
in 20 patients



### 2009

#### NECT

Effective & improved therapy

...but hospital-based and bulky.



Swiss TPH



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY  
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH



### 2018

#### FEXINIDAZOLE

The first all-oral treatment  
for sleeping sickness: once a  
day over 10 days.



### By 2022

#### ACOZIBOROLE – ONE DOSE FOR A CURE?

A DNDi new chemical entity to  
facilitate sustainable  
elimination of sleeping sickness







## HEPATITIS C: SOUTH-SOUTH COLLABORATION TO DEVELOP A NEW CHEMICAL ENTITY

# Ravidasvir + sofosbuvir: a new, affordable cure



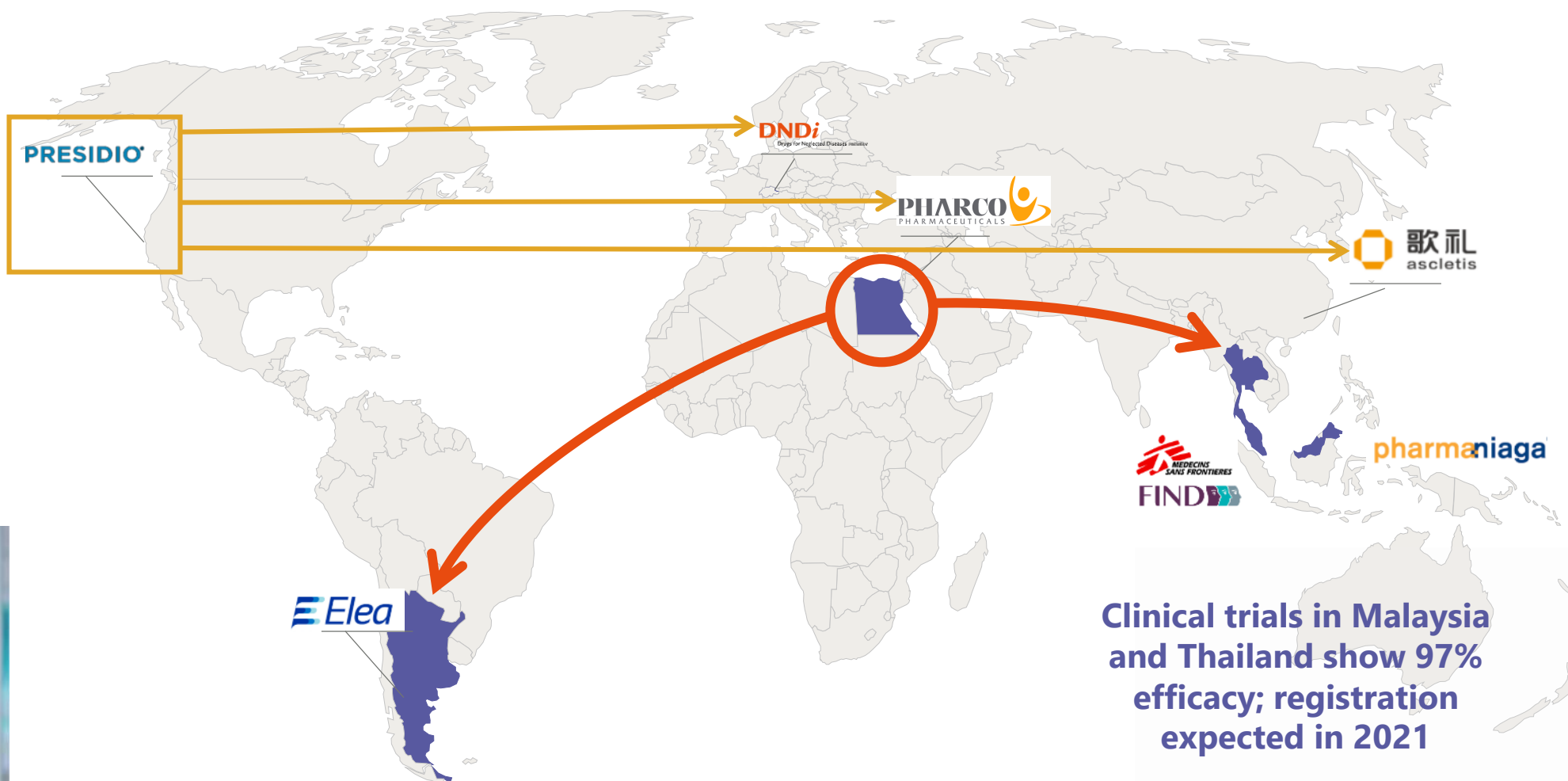
**71** MILLION  
people are living  
with HCV globally



ONLY **7%**  
have had access  
to treatment



**>1,000**  
people die from  
HCV every day



# A new R&D initiative: The Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership (GARDP)



## PROGRAMMES:

- Serious bacterial infections
- Children's antibiotics:
  - Neonatal sepsis
  - Paediatric
- Sexually-transmitted infections
- Discovery & exploratory

Jointly created by DNDi and WHO in 2016

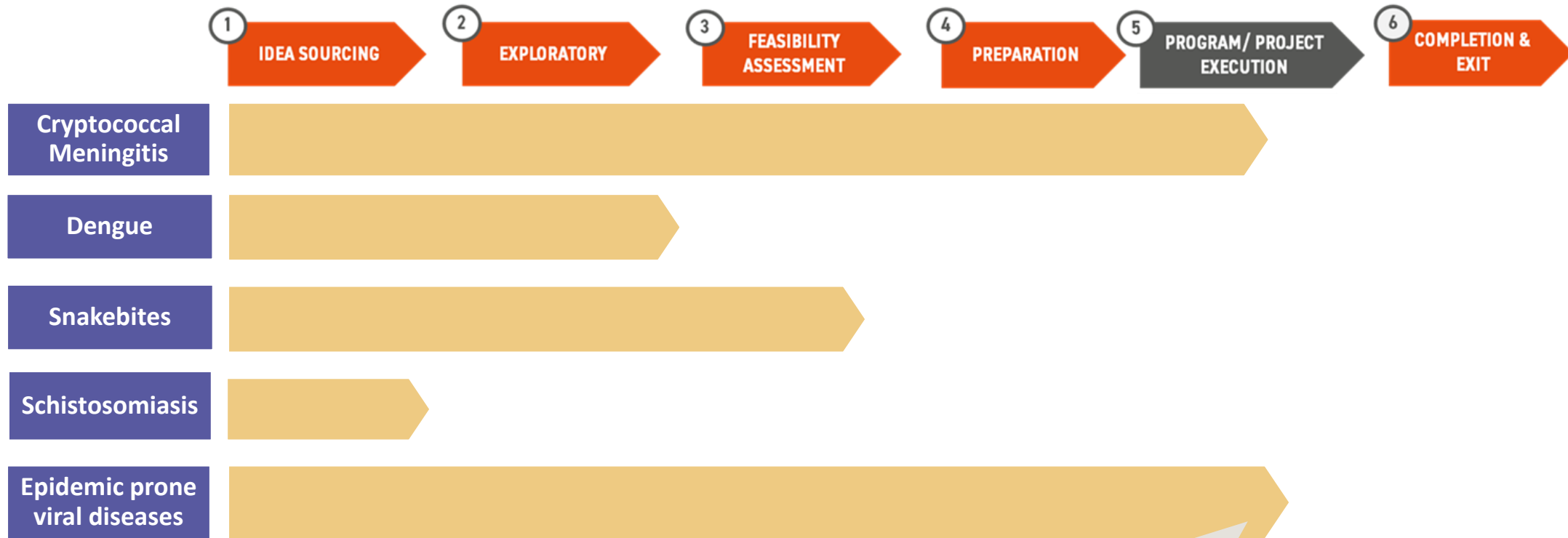
Incubated by DNDi and launched as a separate organization in 2018

## DNDi and GARDP close collaboration:

- Shared commitment to public health-driven R&D & access
- Sharing specialized R&D, and policy advocacy expertise
- GARDP's programmes supported by DNDi's regional network
- Sharing some infrastructure and support services

OUR DYNAMIC PORTFOLIO APPROACH ALLOWS DNDI TO EXPLORE DIFFERENT MODELS

## As needs evolve, so does DNDi

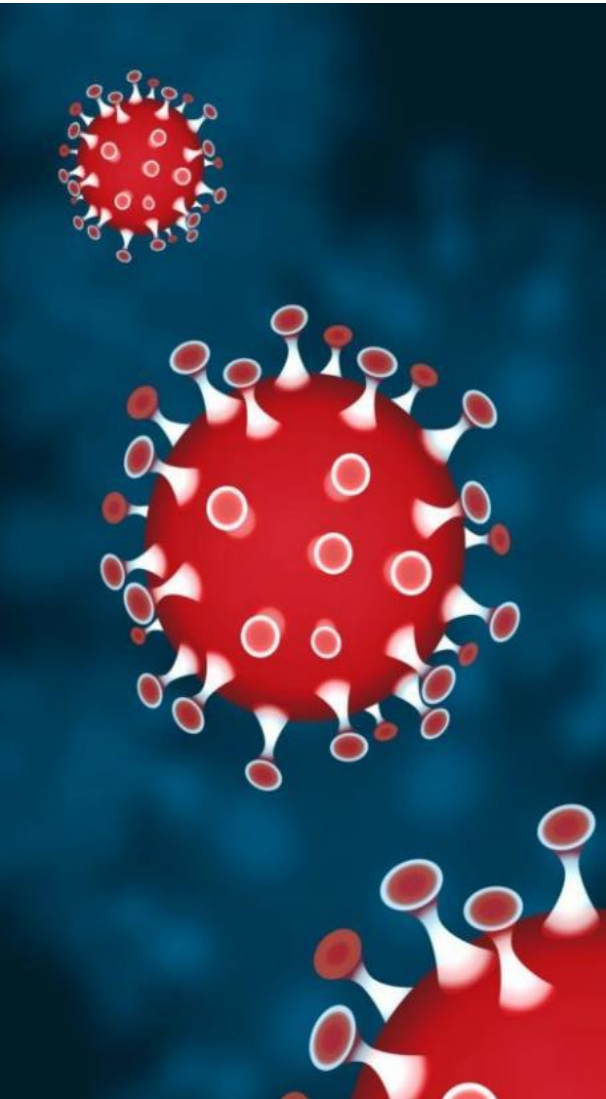


Responding to  
the COVID-19 crisis



COVID-19

# Accelerating Covid-19 research in resource-limited settings



11 March 2020

WHO declares  
**COVID-19 outbreak a  
Global Pandemic**



2 April 2020



Coalition to accelerate  
research in resource-limited  
settings. 195 institutional  
members from 60 countries

**Launched and hosted by  
DNDi**



21 September 2020

ANTICOV

First participant recruited in  
largest trial in Africa for mild  
and moderate COVID-19  
outpatients

**Coordinated by DNDi**





# The largest COVID-19 study in Africa testing multiple early treatment options

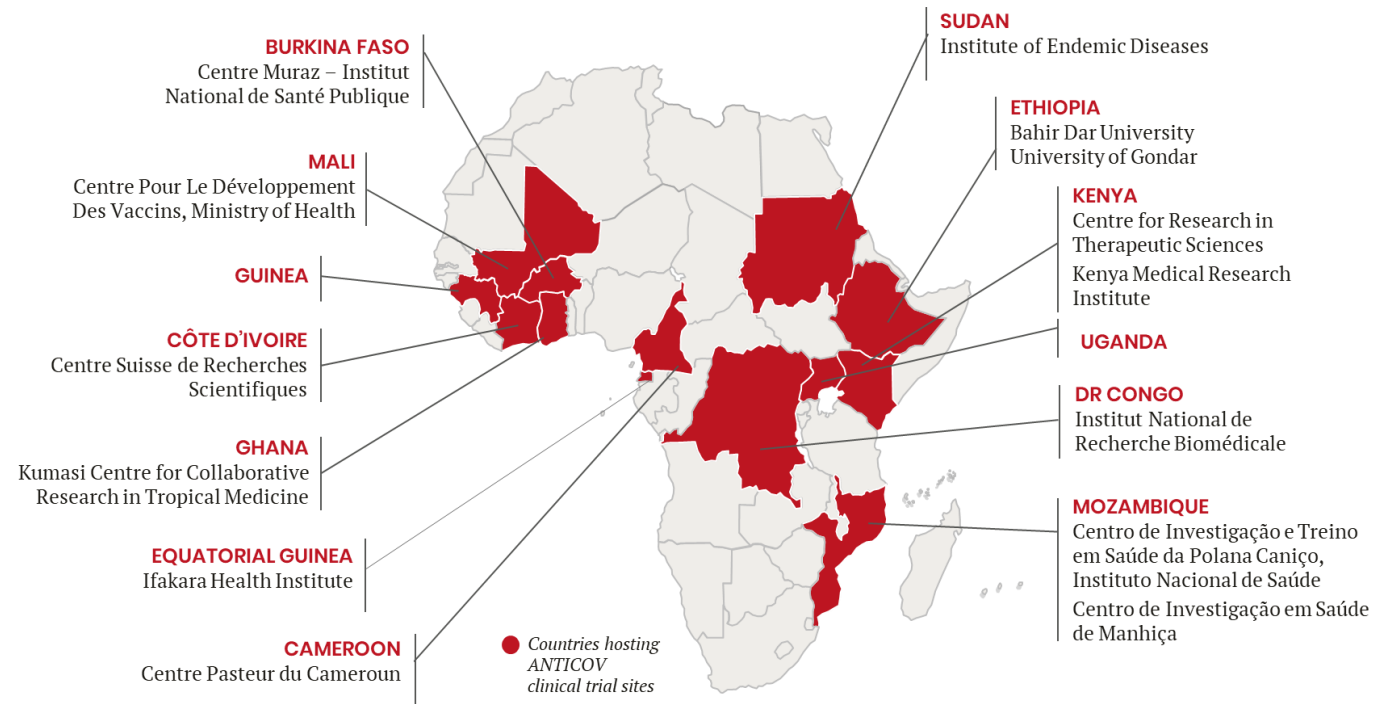
**26 member institutions** with recognized experience in clinical research

**Up to 3,000 patients** in 13 countries

**Adaptive platform trial with 4-5 treatment arms**



**Selecting pre-clinical candidates** with partners including Wellcome and the ACT-A Therapeutics Partnership



## Along with:

- Agence Nationale de Recherche sur le Sida et les Hépatites Virales (ANRS)
- Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA)
- Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal)
- Bernhard-Nocht-Institut für Tropenmedizin (BNITM)
- Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi), **coordinating partner**
- Epicentre
- Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND)
- Infectious Diseases Data Observatory (IDDO)
- Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp (ITM)
- Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)
- Université de Bordeaux- INSERM
- Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH)



WHAT WE DO

# We advocate for change

## Policy lessons for the COVID-19 response:

- Participation by low- and middle-income countries in setting the research agenda
- Open sharing of research knowledge and data
- Health tools free of intellectual property restrictions
- Ensure sufficient production, equitable allocation, and affordable pricing
- Full transparency on R&D funding







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**Thank you for your attention**