



In Search of Better Health

PRESS RELEASE

To: News Editors & Reporters

Subject: KEMRI to Partner with English Premier League Anti-Doping Testing Laboratory

Date: Friday, 13th October, 2023

NAIROBI, KENYA, The Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) has signed a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with **Kings University College London** to partner in the establishment of the antidoping lab at KEMRI Centre in Eldoret. This is one among other steps, the Institute is taking to realize fully the recently launched, Sports Sciences Research Centre in Eldoret.

Kings University College is the only accredited antidoping laboratory in the United Kingdom and among others is the testing centre for all Premier League footballers. According to KEMRI's Acting Director General & CEO Prof. Elijah Songok, the partnership with the London-based College will bring on board the required expertise for the Institute to carry out effective Sports Research.

"We are really excited to partner with King's College- a university that has vast experience, expertise and reputation in anti-doping testing and research. We believe this is the right step in ensuring KEMRI serves as a hub for athlete sample testing but also as a homegrown platform for other research and aim to eliminate the need to send samples out of Kenya," Prof. Songok said as he appended his signature on the MOU on behalf of KEMRI.

"We are happy to partner with KEMRI and we shall work together in consultation with WADA for Kenya to acquire the first accredited anti-doping laboratory for the East Africa region," said Prof Kim Wolff, Head of Kings Forensics Centre.

Among the activities to be done by KEMRI and Kings College include partnership in the equipment of the laboratory with approved instrumentations, design of WADA approved protocols, training of KEMRI staff at Kings Forensics, and partnership in research and testing activities on anti-doping,

forensics and drugs of abuse.

KEMRI is also in the processing of signing another MoU with the University of Stirling from the United Kingdom, one of the top five global sports science and research institution. The Scottish-based University of Stirling university is ranked first in the UK and top five globally in sports facilities and excellence in sports research facilities, a fate that the institute is eager to replicate at the Eldoret Centre. Some of areas of collaboration will range from healthy ageing to athlete performance, including physiology, nutrition, genetics, coaching, gender, and anti-doping.

Among those who witnessed the signing ceremony at Kings University were Dr. Fredrick Kirui, Chair of the KEMRI Sports Science Committee, Ms. Mary Kairu, Head of Testing at Antidoping Agency of Kenya (ADAK), Mr. Edwin Bett, Chair of KEMRI's Capital Projects Committee, Ms. Lucy Kanyara, Head of KEMRI Laboratories and a member of the Kenya Medical Laboratory and Technicians Board (KMLTTB), Dr. Lucia Keter, Pharmacist and KEMRI researcher on drugs of abuse, and Eva Aluvaala, Head of KEMRI Forensics Laboratory, while King's University College London delegation, Prof. Kim was accompanied by Prof. Christer Hogstrand, Dr. Shoba Ali, Dr. Rodrigo Aguilera, Dr. Erika Castrighano, Prof. Denis Syndercombe-Court and Prof. Gilhan Tully.

KEMRI Eldoret Centre which was launched in August 2023 by Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Health, Nakhumicha S. Wafula is designed to prioritize sports health research including comprehensive analysis of biological passports, factors associated with anti-doping testing, nutrition and sports injuries and will also serve as the Rift Valley regional station for research activities for the Institute.

KEMRI Eldoret is poised to evolve into a fully-fledged facility dedicated to comprehensively addressing the well-being of our athletes through a spectrum of holistic research studies including sports medicine and medical research components specifically targeting Nutrition Research, Social and Mental Health Research, Clinical Health aspects, provision of laboratory services as well as anti-doping.

The Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) is a State Corporation established in Kenya in 1979 through the Science and Technology (Repealed) Act, Cap 250 of the Laws of Kenya operated under the Science Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 as the national body responsible for carrying out research in human health in Kenya. Currently, KEMRI operates under Legal Notice No. 35 of March 2021 KEMRI has grown from its humble beginning over 40 years ago to become a regional leader in human health research. The Institute currently ranks as one of the leading Centres of excellence in health research both in Africa as well as globally.

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