



EU RESPONSE TO MPOX OUTBREAK

OCTOBER 2024

In August 2024, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared a global health emergency, due to the mpox outbreaks in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and other African countries. This situation highlighted the urgent need for a coordinated global response to contain the virus and protect public health.

The EU and its Member States (“Team Europe”) provided immediate and comprehensive action to help partners control and respond to the mpox outbreak, covering the many relevant areas necessary for an effective response. These efforts use all available channels to ensure the most effective support to the affected countries, including through international organisations, regional bodies, public authorities and global health actors such as the Pandemic Fund.

Team Europe has already helped to mobilise more than one million vaccines. The EU and its Member States have donated more than half a million vaccines to date—more than two hundred thousand of which have already been delivered to the DRC in early September, being the first

vaccines to arrive in the country, followed by the delivery of more than five thousand vaccines to Rwanda in early October. A further half a million vaccines to be delivered in 2024 are purchased through Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance whose core partners include the EU and its Member States. Gavi also supports mpox immunisation campaigns.

Team Europe has provided support across all the different pillars necessary for response, contributing specifically to the implementation of the WHO global mpox plan and the African continental mpox plan. Vaccines are important for stopping the acute phase of the outbreak in the affected countries, but they require regulatory approvals and health infrastructure to reach the people on the ground. Crucially, an effective response relies on comprehensive long-term actions across many different areas, from surveillance to diagnostics/treatments, from workforce training to risk communication and community engagement, from clinical care to water and sanitation actions.

Some examples are as follows:



Through the Pandemic Fund, up to USD 241 million are mobilised with Team Europe support. The Pandemic Fund, to which Team Europe is the largest contributor, has allocated USD 129 million to the ten of the most affected countries to projects that improve surveillance and detection of the virus; enhance laboratory capacity; and train the emergency workforce. This direct allocation mobilises additional contributions from countries and global health actors of up to USD 112 million.



Through the **Global Fund**, where again Team Europe is a main contributor, USD 9.5 million have been given to support better **risk communication and community engagement**, amongst other things. This is needed to help communities adapt their behaviour with the support of infection prevention, water and sanitation actions. This limits the spread of the disease and is crucial to contain and beat mpox.



Through an **EUR 10 million project**, the **EU Health Taskforce** has deployed **epidemiologists on the ground** from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), to help understand the disease and its transmission. This is essential to define the best strategies to beat the virus and save lives.



The **European Medicines Agency** works intensively with **WHO and African partners** to support **regulatory approvals** in affected countries. Without these approvals, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics cannot be deployed on the ground. This is a key bottleneck that must be eliminated.



The EU-funded research partnership bringing together 15 European and 29 African countries (the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership) has provided **emergency funding of EUR 12 million to fast-track the research** that will advance the knowledge on the epidemiology and transmission of the virus, and the safety and effectiveness of mpox vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics, particularly for infants and pregnant women. Moreover, as a response to the 2022 outbreak, **EUR 17 million of emergency funding** were mobilised by the EU under Horizon Europe to **support projects which include mpox clinical research initiatives** and address research gaps.

The **European Commission** has released **more than EUR 1.5 million in humanitarian aid** to support care, prevention, epidemiological surveillance, risk communication and distribution of kits in the eastern DRC; to strengthen coordination, laboratory capacity, case management and community engagement in Uganda; to assist the response of the Burundian Red Cross; and to strengthen surveillance in Kenya's camps for internally displaced people.

The European Commission is also mobilising a **new package of EUR 20 million for supporting health system strengthening to respond to mpox in the DRC**, working with local partners as well as the WHO and UNICEF on the ground.

These are only some of the actions that complement the direct support the EU and its

Member States provide to the WHO, Africa CDC and affected countries. To date, Team Europe support to the WHO for this outbreak includes EUR 4.3 million for the special WHO mpox appeal in addition to over 80% of the unearmarked financing of the WHO's Contingency Fund for emergencies in 2024, which has allocated EUR 3.5 million to the global mpox response.