



In Search of Better Health

Press Statement

To: News Editors

Event: Health CS to launch DNA Facilities & First-ever regional Medical Culture Media Production Line at KEMRI.

Date: Tuesday, 24th, February, 2015 at 10.30 a.m.

Venue: KEMRI Headquarters, Mbagathi Road.

Cabinet Secretary for Health **Mr. James Macharia** is expected to launch the Human Identification DNA laboratory and the first-ever regional Medical Culture Media Production Line at KEMRI Headquarters this **Tuesday, 24th, February, 2015 from 9.00 am.**

Both facilities are housed at the KEMRI Production Department (KPD) which will also be celebrating the attainment of a double Quality Management Systems: ISO 13485:2003 certification and ISO 17043:1010 Accreditation that now allows it to offer world class service and products globally including supplying to World Health Organizations (WHO) upon prequalification.

The Human Identification DNA laboratory, popularly known as DNA, is a service that comes at the right time to strengthen the existing national capacity to conduct the Human DNA Identification tests that are normally necessary in forensic analysis and paternity/ maternity testing.

Nationally, this is very important as the country has in the recent past been forced to send such DNA samples to foreign country laboratories, especially during major disasters. This is not only expensive, but time wasting and affects country's reputation in development of science and technology.

This facility is also expected to collaborate with other existing facilities in enhancing quality control of these services in the country and the region as well as serving for confirmation of tests that are carried out in other laboratories.

This facility is also expected to provide researchers in KEMRI and other parts of the country with a platform to carry out research in Human DNA Identification and related science.

On its part, the establishment of the culture media manufacturing facility at KEMRI is driven by the fact that a number of medical laboratories in Kenya and the entire region lack adequate equipment and quality systems to prepare the much needed Ready-to-use culture media for diagnosis of infectious diseases and as well as testing for microbial drug resistance.

The need for manufacturing these media is further enhanced by the short shelf-lives nature of the Ready-to-Use culture media that are usually important from developed countries as they often tends to expire shortly after being received by laboratories. This among other factors makes them very expensive and inaccessible to most laboratories, leading to under-diagnosis/mis-diagnosis of infectious diseases that could result in loss of lives or poor health.

The Institute's Ready-to-Use Culture Media products include a wide range of both plated and tubed media for bacterial isolation and identification. They include: Chocolate Blood Agar, blood agar, Mac Conkey Agar, Sabaround Dextrose Agar among others.

Experts in KEMRI outline the advantages of using KEMRI's Ready-to-Use culture media laboratory for Kenya and the region to be:

- Assurance of Internationally accepted Quality media
- Reduction of wastage of prepared media
- Saving on costs of running laboratory, equipment calibration and maintenance, procurement of raw materials, space, Quality Control and Human Resource
- Guarantee ready supply of a wide variety of Ready-to-Use Culture media, thus enhancing Good Laboratory Practices.
- Reduced turn-around time for getting the results and improving service delivery.

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