

Two Postdoctoral Research Positions at Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) under the EDCTP3-funded ACT-PREP Project

Advancing Clinical Trials and Epidemic Preparedness Research in Africa

Project Background

The WHO African Region carries one of the heaviest and most volatile burdens of infectious disease emergencies in the world. Between 2001 and 2022, the region recorded 2,234 acute public health events, 92% of which were infectious in origin, and zoonotic outbreaks rose by 87% over the period. The recent disease outbreaks repeatedly exposed the same structural weaknesses: fragmented surveillance, weak One Health integration, delayed diagnostic confirmation, and slow research deployment. The project aims include strengthening the surveillance, diagnostic and policy foundations of Africa's Emergency, Preparedness and Response (EPR) ecosystem. The proposed research activities reinforce cross-sectoral (One Health) surveillance and institutionalisation of policies and financing mechanisms required to trigger and sustain outbreak-driven research across the region. The two postdoctoral fellows will each lead one of these foundational evidence streams.

Host institution

Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) invites applications for **two postdoctoral fellowship positions** under the ACT-PREP project (Advancing Clinical Trials and Epidemic Preparedness Research in Africa). ACT-PREP is a five-year, Africa-led initiative funded under the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking. Building on EDCTP1 and EDCTP2 investments, the project aims to institutionalise sustainable, context-responsive EPR research capacity across sub-Saharan Africa.

The successful candidates will be based at MakSPH and will collaborate closely with researchers across the project consortium partners, including the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE, Rwanda), Kinshasa School of Public Health (KSPH, DRC), the National Health Laboratory and Diagnostic Services (NHLDS, Uganda), Infectious Diseases Research Collaboration (IDRC, Uganda), Makerere Lung Institute (MLI, Uganda), Karolinska Institute (Sweden), Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS, Tanzania), Cheikh Anta Diop University (UCAD, Senegal), Somali National University (SNU, Somalia), Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine (BNITM, Germany), and Africa CDC.

The Postdoctoral fellowships

We are recruiting two postdoctoral fellows. Each fellowship is a full-time appointment of 18 months (1.5 years). Applicants should apply for one position only and clearly indicate their chosen track.

Research project 1. Strengthening One Health surveillance systems for zoonotic diseases

Zoonotic diseases account for a large share of epidemic-prone diseases in Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa sits at the heart of high-risk zones where people live in close proximity to wildlife and domestic animals, yet surveillance at the human–animal–environment interface remains fragmented, with limited data sharing between the public health, veterinary and environmental sectors. This fellowship will contribute to strengthening integrated disease surveillance.

We are seeking a postdoctoral fellow with experience or strong interest in One Health approaches to zoonotic disease surveillance in low-resource settings. The ideal candidate has a research background in veterinary medicine, veterinary public health, or surveillance of zoonotic or emerging infectious diseases, and is familiar with health policy analysis and cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms. The role requires the ability to engage national and international stakeholders across government, academic, and non-governmental sectors. Candidates should have excellent analytical, writing, and communication skills, a proven record of reports or peer-reviewed publications, and enthusiasm for collaborative, multi-country research that strengthens One Health.

Position 2. Strengthening research financing mechanisms

The speed at which evidence is generated during an outbreak depends on pre-approved protocols, pre-positioned platforms and trial networks that are ready to activate, all of which require dedicated, rapidly disburseable financing. Yet emergency research funding in Africa remains largely reactive, fragmented and donor dependent. This fellowship will contribute towards advancing fit-for-purpose financing mechanisms for outbreak-triggered research.

We seek a postdoctoral fellow with experience or strong interest in research financing, health systems, or emergency preparedness in low-resource settings. Candidates should have a background in health economics, health policy, or health financing. Strong analytical, writing, and communication skills, a record of reports or peer-reviewed publications, and the ability to engage government, academic, and funder stakeholders are essential. Applicants should be enthusiastic about collaborative, policy-relevant research that strengthens outbreak-triggered research financing mechanisms.

Eligibility and candidate profiles

We welcome applications from early-career researchers who are nationals of, or based in, sub-Saharan Africa. The following are required:

- A PhD in a relevant discipline or a post-Masters Field Epidemiology Training Programme. For Position 1: veterinary medicine, veterinary public health, One Health,

emerging infectious diseases epidemiology, or a related field. For Position 2: health policy and systems, health economics/financing, global health governance or a related field.

- A track record of peer-reviewed publication and research dissemination.
- Experience with policy review, qualitative or mixed-methods research, and stakeholder engagement (an advantage).

What we offer

- A full-time, 18-month postdoctoral fellowship based at MakSPH, Kampala.
- Mentorship from senior researchers and the opportunity to collaborate across an international consortium including institutions from across Africa and Europe.
- A platform to shape continental policy on One Health surveillance and emergency research financing, with clear, publishable deliverables.
- A stipend commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Application process

Interested candidates should submit the following:

- A motivation letter (maximum two pages) outlining research interests, relevant experience, and suitability for the chosen position.
- A two-page research concept aligned with the selected track.
- A detailed curriculum vitae, including a publication list and contact details for at least two academic or professional referees.
- At least one letter of recommendation from a referee.

Applications must be for one position only – please state clearly whether you are applying for Position 1 (One Health surveillance) or Position 2 (Strengthening research financing mechanisms).

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide:

- Copies of academic transcripts and degree certificates.

A first round of interviews is expected to take place in Kampala on or around **14th August 2026**. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Submission

Submit your application to the Office of the Dean, Makerere University School of Public Health, via email: recruitment@musph.ac.ug, not later than **7th August 2026**. Please quote “ACT-PREP Postdoc – Position 1 or 2” in the subject line.

***Note:** ACT-PREP and Makerere University School of Public Health are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. Qualified women and candidates from under-represented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.*