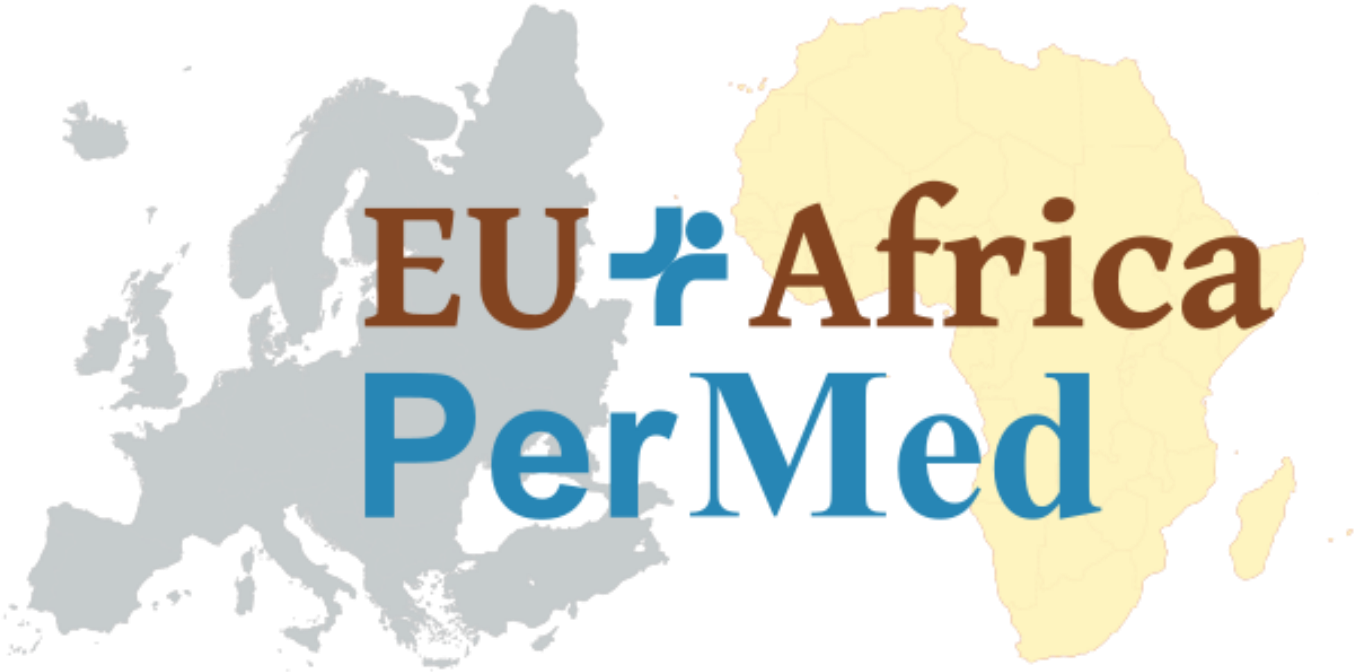
“International cooperation is not an option but a fundamental and inherent component of health research and innovation.”

ICPerMed
INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM



ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP, 10-11 June - Nairobi, Kenya

Erika Sela, project coordinator

BUILDING LINKS BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA IN PERSONALISED MEDICINE

EU-Africa PerMed has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme under grant agreement No 964333

EU-Africa PerMed: Building links between Africa and Europe in Personalised Medicine

- ✓ The **EU-Africa PerMed** project seeks to facilitate and strengthen research and innovation collaboration between Europe and Africa in Personalised Medicine (PM), fostering joint projects and programmes as well as facilitating the participation of African organisations in the **International Consortium for Personalised Medicine (ICPerMed).**
- ✓ Coordination and Support Action funded by the **European Commission - Horizon2020** Research and Innovation Programme, as one of the Actions supporting **ICPerMed.**

The project started in February 2021 and will finish in July 2025 (6-month extension granted).

EU Africa PerMed

EU-Africa PerMed Objectives

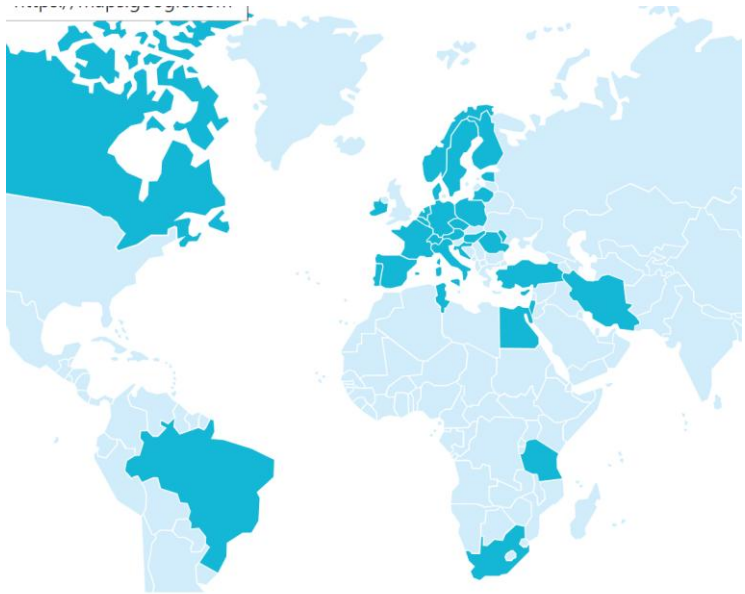
OBJECTIVE 1	*To map and better understand the scientific and policy PM landscape in Africa* *To identify, contact and engage with relevant organisations and stakeholders in Africa*
OBJECTIVE 2	*To explore and analyse with relevant stakeholder, the potential for and advantages of research collaboration in PM between Africa and Europe*
OBJECTIVE 3 and 4	***To foster and facilitate the integration of health research funding and policy organisations from African Union (AU) countries in the ICPerMed consortium*** *and ERA PerMed calls.* *To seek synergies and align with activities of ongoing EU-Africa research programmes and other by-regional policy actions*
OBJECTIVE 5	*To carry out capacity building and training activities addressing relevant PM issues for Africa*
OBJECTIVE 6	*To contribute to raising awareness of PM and the benefits of a closer inter and intra-regional collaboration, in order to advance in the implementation of PM approaches in Africa.*

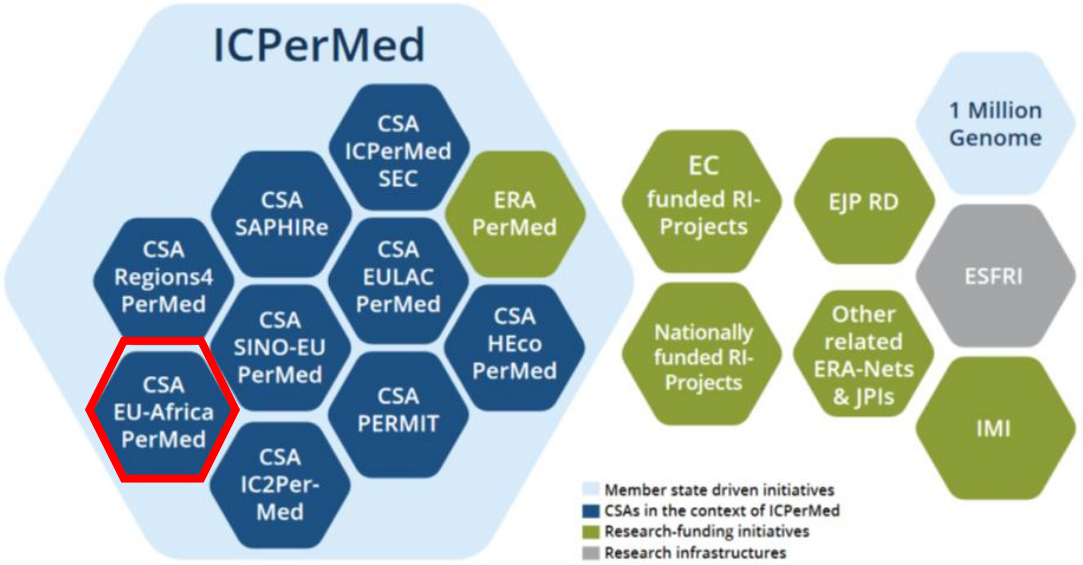
EU-AFRICA PERMED CONSORTIUM

EU Africa PerMed

ICPerMed – An International Consortium

- Almost 50 European and international partners
- Members include public and private `not-for-profit` health research funding and policy organisations and the European Commission





Overall aim: To coordinate and promote **research** along the full value chain to develop and evaluate personalised medicine approaches

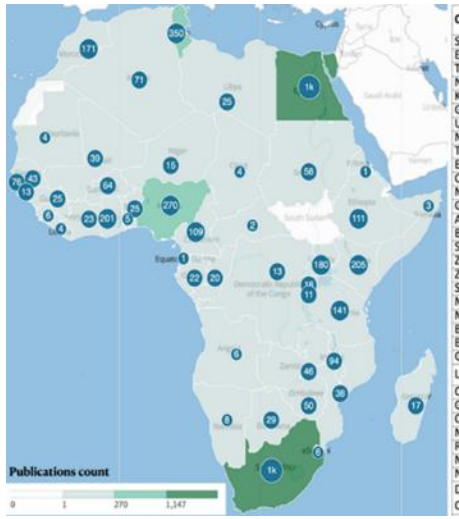
EU+Africa PerMed

EU-Africa PerMed Activities 2021-2025

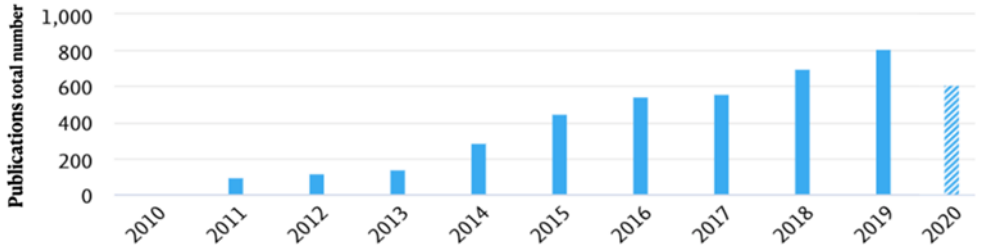
EU+Africa PerMed

OBJ 1: UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENTIFIC AND POLICY LANDSCAPE OF PERSONALISED MEDICINE IN AFRICA AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Graphical representation of the level of PM/genomic research capacities in African countries, following the mapping framework of EU-Africa PerMed (Ref: Sela E. et al 2021)



Country	Publications count	Country	Publications count
South Africa	1346	Guinea-Bissau	13
Egypt	1147	Burundi	11
Tunisia	350	Namibia	8
Nigeria	270	Seychelles	7
Kenya	205	Angola	6
Ghana	201	Sierra Leone	6
Uganda	180	Swaziland	6
Morocco	171	Togo	5
Tanzania	141	Chad	4
Ethiopia	111	Liberia	4
Cameroon	109	Mauritania	4
Malawi	94	Somalia	3
Gambia	76	Central African Republic	2
Algeria	71	Cape Verde	1
Burkina Faso	64	Equatorial Guinea	1
Sudan	58	Eritrea	1
Zimbabwe	50		
Zambia	46		
Senegal	43		
Mali	39		
Mozambique	38		
Botswana	29		
Benin	25		
Guinea	25		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	25		
Côte d'Ivoire	23		
Gabon	22		
Congo	20		
Mauritius	18		
Rwanda	18		
Madagascar	17		
Niger	15		
Democratic Republic Congo	13		



Ref: Deliverable 2.1-Report: Mapping the scientific and policy landscape of PM in Africa. Link to the document

EU Africa PerMed

OBJ 2: EXPLORING AND ANALYSING WITH RELEVANT STAKEHOLDES THE POTENTIAL AND ADVANTAGES OF EUROPE-AFRICA COLLABORATION IN PM

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

1st Stakeholder Workshop
Feb. 2022 online
Presentation of Mapping results and collection of perception, challenges and opportunities of PM in Africa

2nd Stakeholder Workshop Feb. 2023
Cape Town (S. Africa)
Presentation of the gaps and needs identified and discussion on areas of mutual interest and collaboration models

3rd Stakeholder Workshop
June 2024
Present the EU-Africa PerMed Action Plan, discuss and validate with relevant stakeholders the Actions proposed and next steps to be taken, support African regional consortia.

Project results:

- D3.1 "List of African PM needs"
- D3.2 "List of areas of mutual interest between Europe and Africa"
- D3.3 "Report on gaps-and-needs assessment"
- **D3.4 "The EU-Africa PerMed Action Plan"**

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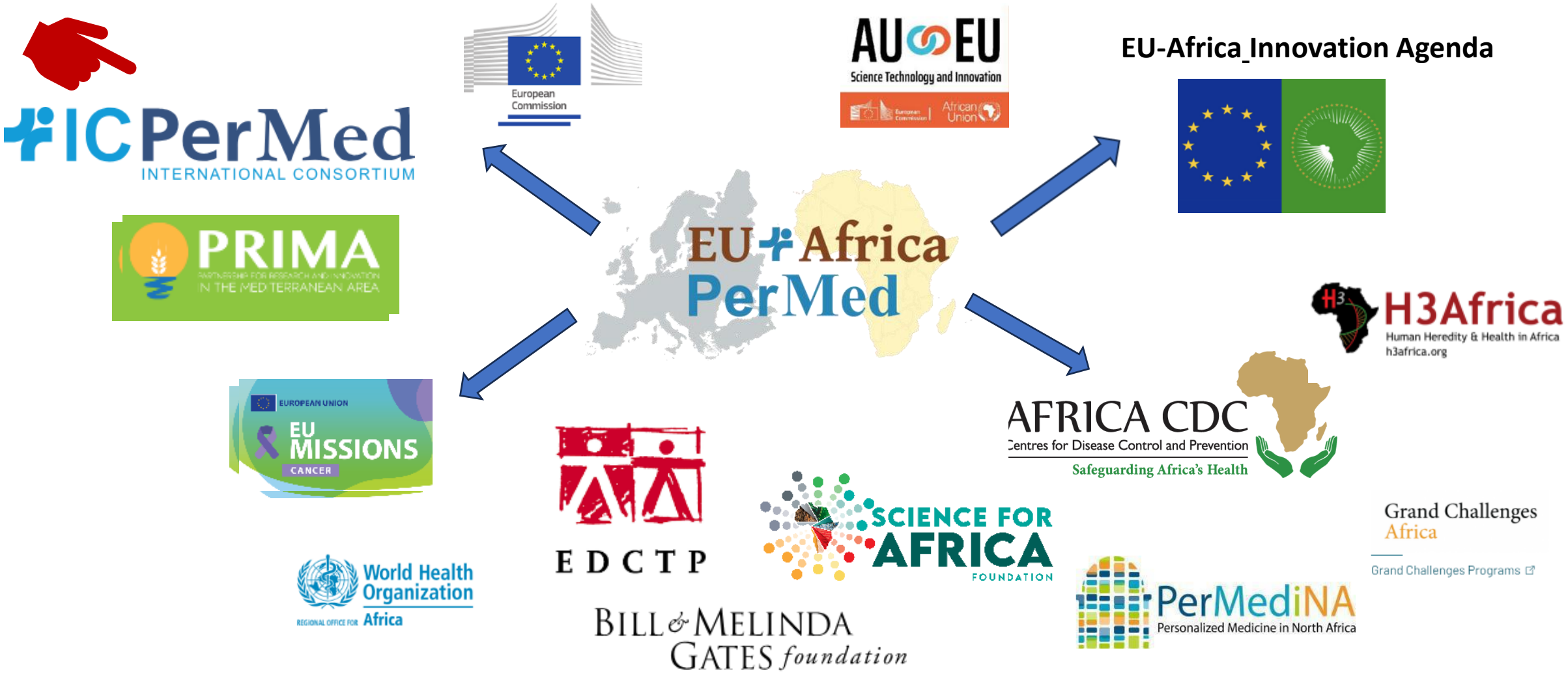
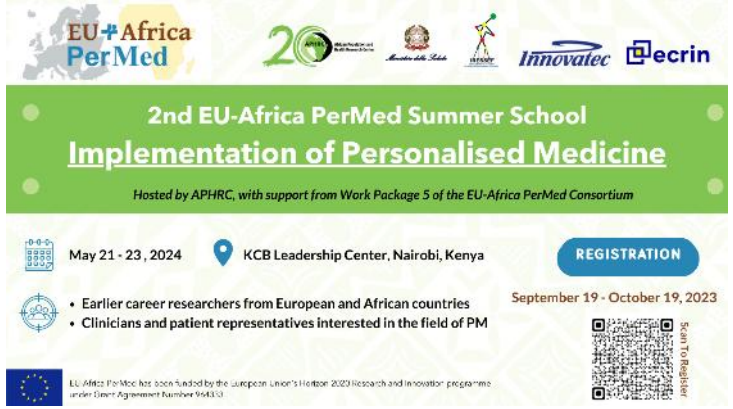
OBJ 3 AND 4 : INTEGRATION OF AFRICA ORGANIZATIONS IN ICPerMed AND ALIGMENT WITH ONGOING AU-EU RESEARCH PROJECTS, PROGRAMMES AND POLICY ACTIONS



OBJ 5: CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

2 SUMMER SCHOOLS



11 WEBINARS

7th Webinar "Empowering Patients as Partners in Clinical Research"

All webinars recording are available on the project website
https://www.euafrica-permed.eu/project-information/

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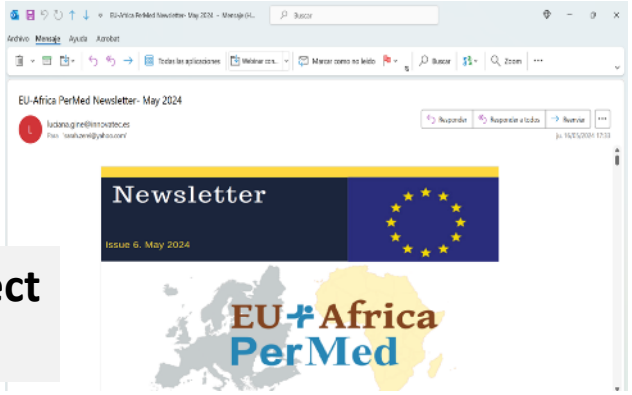
COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

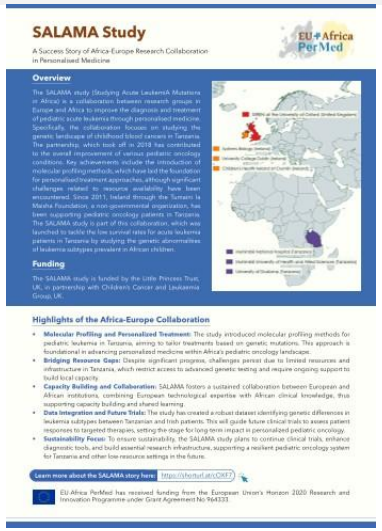
Social Networks (1384 followers in LinkedIn

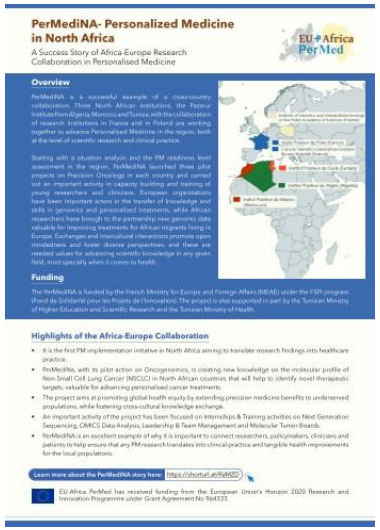
Twitter 270 Following/406 Followers



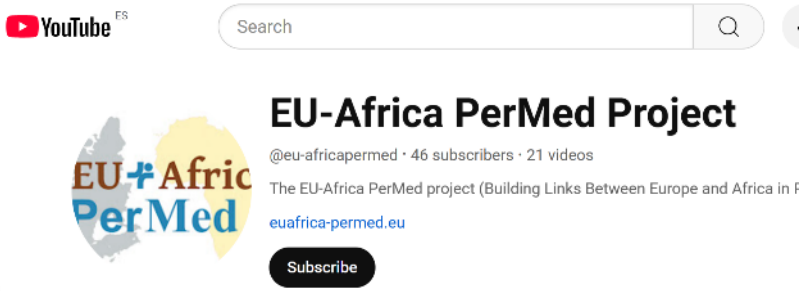
2 Annual Project newsletters

6 Success stories of Africa-Europe Research Collaboration In Personalised Medicine





2nd Summer School videos: 1 long video and 6 short interviews



4 project videos

EU+Africa PerMed

EU-Africa PerMed
Main results

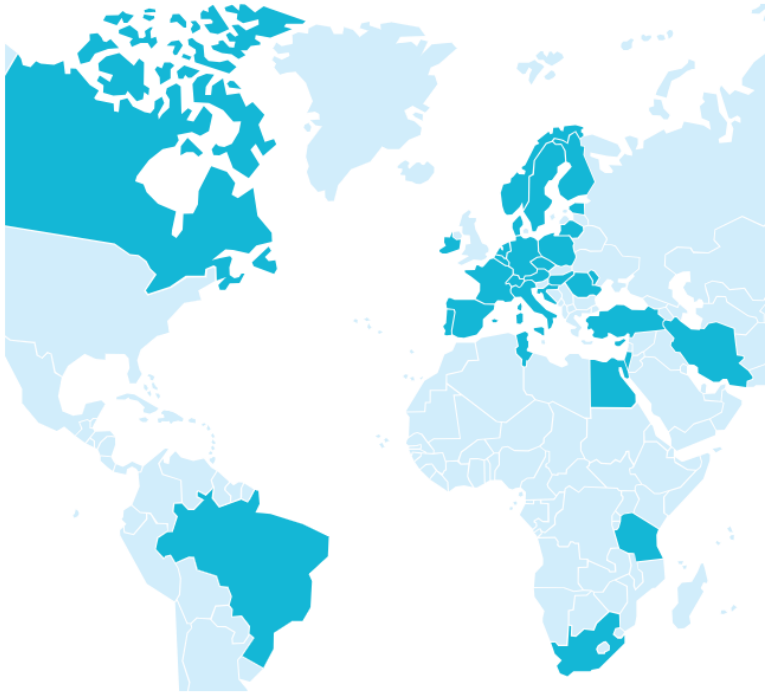
AFRICA JOINS ICPERMED

ICPerMed
INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM

ICP

Members of ICPerMed

ICPerMed brings together more than 40 funding bodies from EU member states and beyond. M
for-profit' health research funding and policy organisations. Other organisations or initiatives



4 AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOW FULL MEMBERS IN ICPerMed.

- South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC)
- Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT)
- Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR) of Tunisia
- The Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH)

Rizwana Mia (SAMRC) is vice-chair of ICPerMed.

- **The SAMRC joined the ERA PerMed Joint Transnational Call (JTC)2022.**
- **Experts from Africa were successfully integrated as reviewers in the JTC2021.**
- **One project, coordinated by a South African research group received funding in the JTC2022.**
- **The SAMRC joined the EP PerMed Joint Transnational Call (JTC)2025 and starts first steps to become a partner**

EU Africa PerMed

All documents are available in the project website https://www.euafrica-permed.eu

THE EU-AFRICA PERMED ACTION PLAN

A roadmap for facilitating, fostering and promoting the collaboration of Africa and Europe in Personalised Medicine. It includes:

- **26 Concrete recommendations** for actions at research and policy level.
- Activities that are of mutual interest for Africa and Europe and responding to common health challenges and needs.

All documents are available in the project website https://www.euafrica-permed.eu

ACTION PLAN PART I: PERSONALISED MEDICINE ADOPTING ENVIRONMENT

I.1) Infrastructure: Resources, education and technology awareness	I.1.1) Infrastructure – collection and sharing	A1, A2
	I.1.2) Healthcare infrastructure and capacity building	A3
	I.1.3) Healthcare professionals and patients – training, education, and technology awareness	A4, A5, A6, A7
	I.1.4) Research support and network organisation	A8, A9, A10, A11, A12
I.2) Ethical and legal considerations		A13
I.3) Policy actions: Access to Technology and Expertise	I.2.1) Advocacy and awareness-raising activities	A14, A15
	I.2.2) Regional consortia	A16
	I.2.3) PM Meta-Cluster	A17
	I.2.4) African-European collaboration	A18, A19

ACTION PLAN PART II: GENETICS AND GENOMICS IN PERSONALISED MEDICINE, AN EXAMPLE STUDY

1) Human Genomic Networks	
Research supporting actions	
A20	National Genome Archive
A21	Establish regional genomic hubs
A22	Genomic data network
A23	Genomics for global health – African contribution
2) Genomic Research Networks, Hubs and Projects	
Research actions	
A24	Characterisation of regional genetic populations' architecture
A25	Africa-Europe network for human genomic research
A26	Genome-wide association (GWAS) study

EU+Africa PerMed

Top 5 research and research-support priorities:

TOP 5 Research-Supporting Priorities:

1. Strengthening bioinformatics in research infrastructure (A2)
2. Support for a second edition of the EU-Africa PerMed project (A18)
3. Biobank infrastructure/cohort network (A1)
4. Capacity building of PM data generators and users (A3)
5. Education and training programme for public healthcare forces (A5)

TOP 5 Research Priorities:

1. Africa-Europe network for human genomic research (A25)
2. International multidisciplinary research programme addressing PM (A9)
3. Characterisation of regional genetic populations' architecture (A24)
4. Research collaboration revealing cancer diversity (A10)
5. Research projects on companion diagnostic (A11) and on the "Big Three Infectious Diseases" and molecular based tests (A12)

PART 1: PERSONALISED MEDICINE ADOPTING ENVIRONMENT

EXAMPLE ON A RESEARCH SUPPORTING ACTION PROPOSED

I.3) Policy actions: Access to Technology and Expertise	I.2.1) Advocacy and awareness-raising activities	A14, A15
	I.2.2) Regional consortia	A16
	I.2.3) PM Meta-Cluster	A17
	I.2.4) African-European collaboration	A18, A19

Advocacy and awareness-raising activities

To enhance awareness around PM, and therefore create opportunities to leverage funding and accelerate the access of PM implementation, advocacy programmes are needed.

A14	A Personalised Medicine Advocacy Programme or Initiative
Description	Launching of an African-European PM project or initiative engaging governments and their science granting councils, particularly in the African context, to develop common strategies for the support of PM.
Mutual African-European interest	Engaging organisations responsible for implementing science in Africa: • enhances the capacity of countries to fund and regulate PM means, particularly if the respective governments are engaged • drives translation into practice, i.e. healthcare, particularly if ministries of health are engaged. The development of capacity of African countries and organisations to lead and fund PM will provide the potential to: • initiate further collaboration with external players on more level ground • achieve less dependence, and increase capacity to contribute to the common goal of improved global health • allow more effective evidence production and translation into practice and policy.

Mode of collaboration	The project or initiative brings together actors such as research councils, ministries of health, science and education, and funders from different countries to develop and align strategies as well as investments (research funding) in the field, e.g. by jointly managing research grants, designing and monitoring research programmes, supporting knowledge exchanges between the public and private sectors and strengthening partnerships between funders and ministries. The initiative facilitates the connection of policy makers with researchers and clinicians (actors from the field) but also healthcare professionals and the public/patients from the end-user perspective to advocate for the development and implementation of PM. Examples of existing (not PM-related) advocacy initiatives are GloPID-R (Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness, https://www.glopid-r.org/) or SGCI (Science Granting Councils Initiative, https://sgciafrica.org/), but also the ICPerMed (International Consortium for Personalised Medicine, https://www.icpermed.eu/). Participation in the initiative could be in kind (no budgetary commitment needed), but members joining agree to work towards the same objectives. At the launch of the initiative, it would be a support if funding were provided to allow the organisation of meetings or activities such as events, communication and dissemination.
Timing and objectives	Short-term objective: a first meeting takes place where organisations of different countries come together to agree on a modus operandi for a PM advocacy group Medium-term objective: an initiative is launched, and a roadmap (common strategy) is developed Long-term objective: PM is incorporated into national strategies.

Supporting the setting up of regional PM stakeholder groups in Africa

Regional PM stakeholder groups in Southern, East, North and West-Central Africa, working towards advancing the PM agenda in the regions/countries, raising awareness and facilitating the collaboration within countries/regions and internationally.

CREATING INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC NETWORKS

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES FACILITATE THE CREATION OF NETWORKS BETWEEN RESEARCHERS IN ACROSS COUNTRIES AND CONTINENTS

1540 participants in EU-Africa PerMed training activities.

LESSONS LEARNT OF THE EU-AFRICA PERMED PROJECT

- **Collaboration does not start from scratch**; it needs time for all parts to arrive to common understandings and shared objectives.
- **The context must be understood**; Collaborating with Africa is collaborating with 54 countries.
- **Africa is ready** for research collaboration with Europe in PM.
- **Different timings and levels for collaboration are needed**; long-term perspective and the co-creation of funding calls and topics of shared interest, top and bottom-up approaches are needed, and a shared vision of the value and benefits of the collaboration needs to be agreed upon.
- **International collaboration is important and valued to advance PM implementation into healthcare**. The integration of African organisations in ICPerMed will bring the African perspective to an initially European driven initiative, thus contributing to making it acting globally.
- **Keep the momentum going.**

EU+Africa PerMed

Thank you!

@EU_AfricaPerMed

eu-africa-permed-project

www.euafrica-permed.eu