



## **Systems Approach and Coordination in Outbreak Response: Can We Do Better?**

### **ASLM2021 Roundtable 2**

#### **Co-chairs**

- **Dr Marguerite Massinga Loembé**, Africa CDC/ASLM
- **Christina Mwanzi**, CDC Uganda

#### **Panelists**

- **Chris Lee**, Director of Global Preparedness and Response Team, Resolve to Save Lives
- **Dr Ludovic Fiomona Tamadea**, Coordinator ECCAS REDISSE IV Project Coordinator
- **Dr Etoundi Mballa**, MoH Director of Disease, Epidemics and Pandemic Control & National EOC Coordinator, Cameroon MoH
- **Elsie Ilori**, Head of Surveillance and Epidemiology, Nigeria CDC
- **Colonel Elvire Mbongo Kama**, Director, Pr Gahouma High Capacity Laboratory, Gabon
- **Emmanuel Omony**, Mildmay Uganda
- **Prossy Mbabazi**, Central Public Health Laboratory, Uganda

#### **Summary**

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront the key role of the laboratory as the cornerstone of the global “detect/isolate and trace/treat” outbreak response strategy. Unprecedented mobilization has accordingly led to the prompt set up of diagnostic capacity at the country level and scale up of tests on the continent. Collaboration across sectors and among stakeholders has been critical to that effort.

Inherent weaknesses in healthcare systems have however proven to be bottlenecks for optimal outbreak response even when significant financial support has been provided for testing scale-up. Inadequate capacity for specimen collection, transportation, testing, and result transmission led to sub-optimal linkages between the detection, reporting, and response pillars and has often limited countries’ capacity to timely and effectively control the transmission of the virus.

#### **Objectives**

This round table aims to present best practices and explore innovative strategies for an inclusive and coordinated approach during outbreak response both nationally and regionally. Each panel member will briefly present their experiences and lessons learnt in this thematic area. The panel and audience will then discuss the best practices needed for improvement.

In this session, we will address:

- The role of regional agencies in strengthening (pre-existing) national networks and systems to promote collaboration during outbreak response
- Mechanisms for fruitful collaboration between the public sector, CoE and researchers to ensure quick adoption and roll-out of innovations during outbreak response
- The advantages of building strong NPHIs that host laboratory and surveillance governance under one roof
- Collaboration and coordination with the private and military health sector, including how to regulate disease reporting and tap into the capacity for outbreak response
- Laboratory information systems for an integrated flow of information, including across countries, during outbreak response.

**Session Programme**

- Welcome, introduction and opening remarks
- Moderated question and answer panel discussion
- Summary and closing remarks