

India, Netherlands to partner for innovative vaccine solutions

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Life Science and health is priority sector for strategic investment in both the Netherlands and India. Growing market opportunities in India, combined with the Netherlands' strengths in areas such as Therapeutics & Vaccines, Diagnostics, Medtech and E-health create excellent opportunities for partnerships that address *shared societal challenges with smart solutions*. Making India, a valuable partner for the Dutch Life Sciences and Health (LSH) Sector.

Dutch Lifesciences majors Philips, DSM are important players in the Indian healthcare industry. Key Indian pharma players have active and growing investment in the Netherlands; companies including Serum Institute of India, Dr. Reddys, Lupin, and Sun Pharma are leveraging the Dutch life sciences ecosystem for their global strategy. The recent decision to relocate the European Medicine Agency (EMA) will further enhance the existing position of the Netherlands as a hub for Indian pharmaceutical companies.

The Affordability and accessibility of healthcare is a theme where our countries have excellent opportunities for Innovation partnerships. This theme is central to our bilateral partnership for affordable medical devices and the Indo-Dutch living lab for e-health which is currently under development in Bangalore. *Vaccine development is another priority area for new partnerships.*

Vaccine Development

India and the Netherlands have strong historic ties in the area of vaccines. Technology transfer through the Netherlands Vaccine Institute has made an important contribution to the sector's development in India. The emergence of India as a global manufacturing hub and its growing strength in vaccine innovation creates opportunities for partnership where vaccine players from both countries work together and leverage each other's strengths for new product development.

A Dutch-Belgian Vaccine Delegation was in India from 21st to 25th February, 2018 to further intensify cooperation in the Life Sciences and Health Sector. The Delegation consisted of Dutch LSH entities like Intravacc, Amsterdam Institute for Global Health and Development (AIGHD), Janssen Vaccines & Prevention, LiteVax, Viroclinics, and the Netherlands Enterprise Agency. Belgian vaccine entities, Flanders Bio and Flanders Vaccine, Univercells and Q-Biologicals are also participating in the mission.

During their visit the delegation interacted with Government, Indian vaccine experts and Academia to explore and identify new partnerships in vaccine development under the freshly launched 'Innovate in India' initiative. In addition to affordable vaccine development interactions in Delhi, the annual [Vaccine World Summit](#) in Pune and the [Bio Asia](#) 2018 in Hyderabad also involved the delegation's participation.

"India is an important partner for the Netherlands--specifically in terms of cost-effective vaccine development. We firmly believe, the existence of affordable, innovative vaccine technology is synonymous to an improvement in global health," said Mr. Niels van Leeuwen, Senior Advisor International R&D cooperation, Life Sciences & Health, Netherlands Enterprise Agency.

Leading Dutch vaccine development player, Intravacc, was also part of the vaccine delegation. *"Vaccines play a critical role in public health globally- and for Intravacc, India is a vital market for partnerships in vaccine development. Through research, knowledge sharing and constantly innovating with Indian academia, public health organizations, biotech and pharmaceutical companies we contribute to providing access to affordable healthcare for all,"* Thijs Veerman, CEO, Intravacc said.

The New Delhi leg of the Vaccine Mission also included a discussion on possible vaccine collaborations between Davinder Gill, CEO, Hilleman Labs, India and the delegates. New Delhi-based Hilleman Labs focuses on high-impact, affordable vaccine solutions aimed towards effective immunization.

"Affordability is at the core of our adjuvant design. We look forward to partner, collaborate and serve Indian vaccine R&D organisations," said Lukk Hilgers of Litevax BV, after discussing the scope of innovative Indo-Dutch vaccine solutions at the Hilleman Labs.

Apart from forging new partnerships, the mission also involved substantiating existing Indo-Dutch vaccine R&D partnerships even further. A name synonymous to Vaccine R&D in India, the Serum Institute, Pune and Intravacc, the Netherlands engaged into exploring new joint vaccine solutions and strengthened the 40-year-long Indo-Dutch vaccine collaboration.

Affordable Medical Devices

In 2016, The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) / the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw) opened a joint-call for project proposals. The topic for the call was, 'Technology for a Sustainable Healthcare: Minimally invasive techniques.' The joint call has resulted in funding for three Indo-Dutch projects that are dedicated to developing sustainable healthcare systems.

Other notable joint projects under the bilateral cooperation include, the AIIMS –Erasmus MC cohort study on cognitive decline and the Imaging partnership between Maastricht University Medical Center and the NCCS in Pune which will consist of a series of joint projects and a joint master's program.

Living Lab on E-Health:

To further develop strong ties between the two countries in Life Sciences & Healthcare, a 15-20 member delegation from academia and industry will visit the Netherlands from 19th to 21st March. Some of the participants include Philips, TCS, Bosch, HealthMap Diagnostics, Forus Healthcare, Apollo Hospitals, Manipal Hospitals, Narayana Nethralaya, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Manipal University and Christ University among others. The purpose of this visit is to take the Living Lab initiative forward where a total of 15 joint projects have been proposed in areas such as Elderly Care, Diabetes & Hypertension and Mental Health.

European Medicine Agency (EMA)

Furthering its reputation as a world leader in the Life Sciences and Health Sector, the Netherlands is also gearing up for the relocation of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) from London to Amsterdam in 2019. EMA is the body that assesses the efficacy, quality, and safety of new medicines, for human and animal health, before they are approved for the European

market. A direct consequence of the Brexit, Amsterdam was chosen to house the new EMA headquarters among nineteen EU cities that tabled their bids for the position.