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In an article published online on February 9, 2022, the British Medical Journal claims that “WHO efforts to bring vaccine manufacturing to Africa are undermined by the drug industry”, notably by the kENUP Foundation and BioNTech.

The opposite is true. kENUP promotes private sector efforts to establish vaccine manufacturing in Africa. These include BioNTech’s initiative to deploy end-to-end mRNA vaccine production in Africa in alignment with the African Union’s Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM) strategy.

This commitment was announced on August 27, 2021 on the sidelines of the G20 Compact with Africa Summit in Berlin with the Presidents of Rwanda, Senegal, and the European Commission, among other dignitaries. The chosen approach is complementary to other efforts, such as the WHO tech transfer hub, also aiming at the expansion of local capabilities and capacities. Moreover, it provides rapid hands-on transfer of technology, skills and regulatory know-how. Strengthening African regulatory bodies is essential to these efforts.

A consultative process undertaken by kENUP with Africa CDC, WHO, African regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders aims to contribute to regulatory readiness for advanced biopharmaceutical production. kENUP has also furthered BioNTech’s support for the Republic of Rwanda’s application to host a Biomanufacturing Workforce Training Hub.

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