

Leaders in their respective fields

An update from three **Publishing Partners** on their activities in Africa.

This is the page for our **Publishing Partners** to have their say. Their support throughout the year is crucial as an enabling factor in our provision of the journal, so this page is made available to them to communicate with our readership. In this issue the spotlight falls on **Standard Diagnostics** from Korea, **sanofi-aventis** (its Africa operation is hubbed out of Lagos, Nairobi, and Johannesburg); and **Partec** of Germany

Standard Diagnostics Inc. (SD), has in only a little over 10 years become a global leader in the development of in vitro diagnostics, with a special focus on point of care tests for the early detection of infectious diseases. ICA rapid test kits, are now available through 160 distributors in 100 countries for point-of-care testing (POCT) of infectious diseases, blood borne disease, tumours, and cardiac markers and hormones. They are all manufactured in-house under strict quality control to meet the international standards (ISO 13485:2003, etc.). The company is proud to have continuously provided top quality products to their customers worldwide under the contract with WHO, Unicef, and other agencies.

Recently **Standard Diagnostics** concluded a long-term supply contract with MSF for malaria rapid diagnostic test procurement. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an international humanitarian aid organisation that provides emergency medical assistance to populations in danger in more than 70 countries. In countries where health structures are insufficient or even non-existent, MSF collaborates with authorities such as the Ministry of Health to provide assistance. This contract was only achieved after rigorous examination of the company's output including assessments of WHO/TDR-FIND Malaria RDT Product Testing, mass production capacity and SD's strict QA/QC system which had to be proven by onsite inspection. Proof if proof were needed, of quality output.

Sanofi-aventis is one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies. Backed by a world-class R&D organisation, the company is developing leading positions in seven major therapeutic areas: cardiovascular, thrombosis, oncology, metabolic diseases, central nervous system, internal medicine, and vaccines.

The **sanofi-aventis** Group has a prominent presence in Africa and has long been dedicated to working toward erasing many of the diseases endemic to Africa, such as malaria, leishmaniasis, epilepsy, sleeping sickness, and tuberculosis, and to improving access to medicines. To this end a specific division, Access to Medicines, was formed in 2006. Through this division **sanofi-aventis** is committed to ensuring access to vaccines and medicines for the most underprivileged populations. The division

has also worked with NGOs and government bodies in order to ensure the greatest impact of this social initiative. **sanofi-aventis** is proud that regionally and globally: through its research and development strategy it is able to provide patients with effective and well-tolerated medicines and vaccines as rapidly as possible, in therapeutic areas where there are major healthcare needs; it follows the principle 'no small countries and no small products'; a strategy that ensures a worldwide presence with an extensive product portfolio adapted to the individual markets; and it is a global, socially responsible healthcare player partnering with national health authorities and professionals to ensure better service and access to the patient community.

Since 1967 **Partec** has provided complete solutions in flow cytometry, cell analysis, and diagnostics, including instrumentation, software, reagents, protocols, accessories, application support, training, and after-sales service. The **Partec** network of subsidiaries and distributors covers more than 100 countries and the company's Essential Healthcare division focuses on dedicated diagnostic solutions in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, TB, and Malaria. It introduced the first mobile CD4 counter 'CyFlow®' as well as a uniquely new class of mobile and battery-operated fluorescence microscopes, the 'CyScope®' in order to serve the rapidly growing demand of developing and emerging countries for robust, almost maintenance-free, easy-to-operate, accurate, and affordable high-performance diagnostics. The impact of this development is considerable, e.g. in HIV/AIDS immune status monitoring, 2.5 million patient tests from **Partec** are used every year for supporting health programmes at governmental level, from international organisations and from NGOs. **Partec** is offering CD4 testing with the CyFlow® – the internationally most widely validated CD4 technique – at cost of less than EUR2,00 per patient test.

The CyFlow® Autopreparation and Autoloading Station, a complement to the CyFlow® Counter, has been designed for fully automated precise sample processing and sample loading. The automatised change of pipette tips and intelligent cleaning cycles after every sample run eliminates the risk of cross-contamination. The dedicated solution enables acquisition of up to 400 patient samples per day.

The company has introduced 'dry' CD4 and CD4% reagent kits as well as lyophilised/dry control blood samples. This innovative and unique solution in CD4 and CD4% counting has created a significant breakthrough for patient support programmes, as for the first time, cold chain and cold storage are no longer required.

