

Major growth potential for laboratories in the SADC region

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Medlab Africa 
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Africa Health 
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Africa – one of the world’s fastest-growing economic regions – has an expanding laboratory medicine and in vitro diagnostics (IVD) market that is expected to be worth 1.78 billion USD by the year 2029.

The clinical laboratory industry in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region is estimated to be the fastest growing in the area, presenting numerous opportunities for development and market expansion.

The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed significant change and investment in Africa’s laboratory medicine sector. The urgent needs for diagnostic testing and monitoring during the pandemic has led to a greater appreciation for laboratory medicine, casting a spotlight on this crucial aspect of Africa’s healthcare system.

Clinical laboratory professionals across the continent were the pandemic year’s unsung heroes, working tirelessly to track and test for the virus, indirectly saving countless lives. Throughout the pandemic, African nations

invested steadily in medical laboratory infrastructure, increasing testing capacity at crucial stages.

With advancements in technology and the surge of innovation driven by the pandemic, Africa’s laboratory medicine sector is contributing to improved healthcare quality standards, as well as collective efforts towards global pandemic preparedness.



This success of African health systems in combatting COVID-19 and other pandemics is attributed to the combined efforts of clinicians, pathologists, lab workers, as well as proactive state healthcare departments.

Point-of-care (POC) testing presents a significant advantage for disease diagnosis, monitoring, and management for patients in Africa. In areas where access to diagnostics is limited, particularly at the community level, POC testing is proving a viable solution.

POC testing has enabled significant strides in diagnosing and managing the disease burden in Africa, as it provides timely and appropriate treatment and helps control the rapid spread of infectious diseases.

Connectivity and digitisation advances have made it possible to monitor the quality of POC testing in real time. Well-established POC testing programs have already changed the health landscape in Africa. However, education, training, data governance, and quality management remain essential for ensuring the reliability and accuracy of test results.

Providing diagnostic tools, as well as methods for testing vaccine efficacy and safety, laboratory medicine plays a crucial role in supporting vaccine research and development. Local progress in pharmaceutical production - including the establishment of COVID-19 vaccine-producing facilities in SA - has had

significant implications for laboratory medicine on the continent.

As Africa continues to focus on immunisation efforts, laboratory medicine will remain essential for managing the challenges associated with vaccine production and administration.

Like the previous years, Africa Health 2023 - as well as the co-located Medlab Africa conference - will highlight the importance of laboratory medicine; foster innovation and collaboration; and showcase cutting-edge methodologies and technologies.

Progress and innovations in the laboratory medicine space are paving the way for improved quality standards, enhanced patient care, and stronger global pandemic preparedness, positioning the continent's healthcare system for a brighter future.

More information at africahealthexhibition.com/medlabafrika



To learn more about the African medical laboratory industry, join us live, in-person in **Johannesburg, South Africa** from **17-19 October 2023**.

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