

Press Release

EMPIRICAL Project's 5th Annual Meeting Highlights Major Milestones and Future Plans



The 5th Annual Meeting of the EMPIRICAL Project was held on April 9-10, 2024, at the Novotel Hotel in Madrid. This significant event followed the DSMB (Data Safety Monitoring Board) meeting that took place a day earlier, where the safety team presented the latest data from the ongoing study. The DSMB members concluded that there are no safety concerns, allowing the trial to continue as planned.

The Annual Meeting was a joint event with the 4th TSC (Trial Steering Committee) meeting, featuring presentations and discussions over the course of two days. The TSC members provided updates on the trial's achievements, challenges, and future plans, highlighting the critical importance of early diagnosis and treatment of pneumonia in infants living with HIV.

Key milestones discussed at the meeting included:

- **Recruitment Completion:** As of January 31st, 2024, the recruitment phase of the study has been successfully completed with a total of **552** patients enrolled.
- **One-Year Follow-Up:** The project is now entering a one-year follow-up period, after which comprehensive data on the clinical trial's outcomes will be available.

The members of the EMPIRICAL Project, emphasized the group's achievements in capacity building and scientific collaboration. This includes training young researchers and their participating in international conferences. The meeting underscored the significance of collaboration between African researchers and international partners, as well as the crucial role of community engagement in research.

During the meeting, participants discussed strategies to effectively translate and implement research findings in low-resource settings. The Principal Investigators from recruitment sites from **Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe** presented their data on recruited patients and shared their plans for future data analysis and local dissemination.

About the EMPIRICAL Project

The EMPIRICAL Project is funded by the European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) and coordinated by SERMAS. This randomized controlled clinical trial aims to evaluate whether empirical treatment against cytomegalovirus and tuberculosis can improve the survival of infants living with HIV admitted with severe pneumonia. The project focuses on building research capacity and fostering scientific collaboration to enhance health outcomes in low-resource settings.