Metabiota and African Risk Capacity (ARC) Help African Nations Better Plan for and Mitigate Risk of Infectious Disease Outbreaks

Pilot Program Delivers Innovative Modeling and Insurance Triggers that Empower African Nations with Advanced Insight into Epidemic Risk

SAN FRANCISCO (PRWEB) March 06, 2018 -- Today, Metabiota, the pioneer in epidemic risk modeling, with over 12 years building disease surveillance, lab diagnostics and response capacity across the African continent, announced it has commenced the modeling work for a trailblazing initiative with the African Risk Capacity (ARC), a Specialized Agency of the African Union (AU), to help Africa’s sovereign nations evaluate their epidemic risk, engage coordinated contingency planning with pilot country ministries, and equip governments with the financial resources to respond to the first signs of a national epidemic.

The World Bank estimates the cost of managing the Ebola crisis could have topped $32 billion, with an estimated $2.2 billion lost in the gross domestic product (GDP) in the three hardest hit African countries in 2015 alone. Metabiota’s research shows that outbreaks illustrate distinct patterns and therefore can be insured so that resources, financing, and other risk profiling and contingency planning support can be set up in advance to offset the impact.

The ARC Outbreak & Epidemic program builds on ARC’s successes with climate risk financing on the continent, which include over $34 million paid out to African governments to assist over 2.1 million people against drought impacts. The ARC Outbreak & Epidemic program further advances African Union sovereign nations’ ability to respond faster and more sustainably to public health disasters. The ARC Outbreak & Epidemic program will evaluate certain public health risks through a multidimensional self-assessment of the country’s ability to respond to an epidemic event, as well as putting in motion contingency plans for such an eventuality. Leveraging Metabiota’s risk modeling capabilities and ARC’s successes in building national capacity for disaster risk financing in Africa, ARC’s Outbreak and Epidemic program will be able to analyze pathogen-specific outbreak scenarios and deliver advanced risk profiles of pilot countries to provide insight into the cost associated with the loss and response of epidemiological events.

“This ARC pilot empowers African nations to develop a novel, proactive approach that will change the way outbreaks are managed, and that is one of the many reasons we are excited about this program,” said Dr. Karen Saylors, vice president of Field Research for Metabiota. “Because of our deep field surveillance expertise and our relationships on-the-ground in West and East Africa, Metabiota has an intimate understanding of the challenges and opportunities to help African nations better prepare themselves for a health crisis. We fully align with ARC’s vision to empower sovereign nations and this innovative effort supports that vision.”

Metabiota’s platform estimates epidemic preparedness and risk, including the frequency, severity, duration and cost of outbreaks with a powerful combination of risk analytics, historical data, disease scenarios and insights from public health analysts and global epidemiologists. Metabiota’s capabilities enable the insurance industry to develop epidemic insurance solutions by helping insurers better understand and underwrite risk. Through this program, Metabiota and ARC are creating an insurance trigger mechanism with participating countries and is actively developing these tools with top insurance companies.

“Like everything ARC does, this collaboration is aimed at increasing the resilience of African states by giving them the capacity and tools to plan, prepare, and finance an early response to public health outbreaks before
vulnerable lives are lost and livelihoods are ruined,” said Mr. Mohamed Beavogui, ARC Director General. “Metabiota understands risk and how it can be measured, so we believe this program marks the next frontier for how Africa, and the world, can better manage outbreaks.”

ARC is led by 33-member states, eight of which have joined ARC’s risk pools by purchasing insurance coverage for drought response costs. In addition to the outbreak and epidemic risk insurance, ARC is developing early warning tools and insurance instruments to address additional climate perils that increasingly impact African populations and budgets, such as river floods and tropical cyclones.

About Metabiota
Metabiota is the pioneer in comprehensive risk analytics that help organizations and countries build resilience to epidemics and protect global public health. Built on a strong foundation of scientific expertise, including a worldwide network of on-the-ground experts, Metabiota delivers actionable, data-driven analytics to help countries and corporations mitigate complex health issues. With a strategic global presence and sustained partnerships, Metabiota’s agile approach helps identify, analyze and transfer the risk associated with biological threats. The company’s international footprint includes operations in nearly 20 countries and offices in San Francisco, Canada, Sierra Leone, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. For more information, visit http://www.metabiota.com.

About African Risk Capacity (ARC)
The African Risk Capacity Agency (ARC Agency) was established as a Specialised Agency of the African Union (AU) to help African Union Member States improve their capacities to better plan, prepare and respond to weather-related disasters. With the support of the United Kingdom, KfW Development Bank, Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, France, and the US, ARC Agency assists AU Member States to reduce the risk of loss and damage caused by extreme weather events affecting Africa’s populations by providing, through sovereign disaster risk insurance, targeted responses to natural disasters in a more timely, cost-effective, objective and transparent manner. For more information, please visit: www.africanriskcapacity.org.
Contact Information
Aimee Eichelberger
+1 3129521528

Barbara Fang
3129521528

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.