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Shantha Biotechnics receives WHO approval for cholera vaccine

26 February 2018 | News

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Shantha Biotechnics, a wholly-owned subsidiary of one of the world's largest pharma company Sanofi group, has received approval from the World Health Organisation (WHO) for its oral cholera vaccine Shanchol which eliminates the challenges of maintaining the vaccine cold chain between 2 and 8 degrees to maintain vaccine potency during transport.

Shanchol cholera vaccine is the second mass campaign vaccine and first cholera vaccine worldwide to receive such a stamp of approval for storage and distribution outside the traditional cold chain. It is majorly used for prevention and control of cholera in outbreak, endemic settings during humanitarian crises.

According to the company, WHO's approval will help to make Shanchol available to populations living in remote, hard-to-reach areas of India and other parts of the world, especially ones with erratic electricity supply.

Since WHO pre-qualification in 2011, 12 million doses of Shanchol vaccine have been shipped to 25 countries across the world, including Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Mozambique and South Sudan.