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Indian Biopharmaceutical company Biological E (BioE) and European biotech company Valneva SE (Valneva) announced that the World Health Organization (WHO) has awarded prequalification for global use in adults of BioE's Japanese Encephalitis vaccine. BioE also expects the pediatric indication to be prequalified by the end of the year.

This is the first prequalification of a Japanese Encephalitis vaccine, and is a key step in assuring the vaccine can be distributed to developing countries. Ms Mahima Datla, Managing Director, Biological E Limited said, "We are happy that our JE vaccine is the first ever WHO prequalified JE vaccine. It is an extremely important achievement for the vaccines community as our vaccine's prequalification is well in time to support GAVI's plans of introducing the JE vaccine in several developing countries."

Biological E and Valneva (ex Intercell) constituted a relationship in 2005 for the development and commercialization of a Japanese encephalitis vaccine for endemic regions, based on Valneva's JEV technology. The vaccine, which was successfully formed under this partnership, is being marketed in India under the trade-name JEEV® and commercialization in other JE-endemic countries is planned.

Thomas Lingelbach, Valneva's President and Chief Executive Officer and Franck Grimaud, Valneva's President and Chief Business Officer, said, "We share the excitement for this great achievement and are pleased that our technology used for IXIARO® will now help introducing an excellent vaccine in countries of substantial needs." (IXIARO® is an FDA and EMA approved vaccine).

Biological E is in the news recently for venturing into a five year Pentavalent supply arrangement with GAVI, for forming a Joint Venture with GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) to create a six-in-one paediatric vaccine combining GSK's IPV and BioE's pentavalent vaccine, and for licensing Novartis's Phase II Typhoid Conjugate vaccine.