The Rwandan government has officially approved an agreement to host the Africa headquarters of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI).

This milestone was announced in Presidential Decree No. 091/01 on December 26, 2024, and published in the Official Gazette on December 27, 2024.

In June 2024, Rwanda's Minister of Health, Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, and Dr. Jerome H. Kim, Director General of IVI and an international expert on the development and evaluation of vaccines, signed an agreement to establish the institute's Africa branch in Rwanda.

The agreement aims to strengthen Africa's vaccine production and distribution capacity, improving public health across the continent.

On November 25, 2024, the government and IVI leaders signed another agreement confirming the headquarters location. The agreement includes 21 key provisions, such as tax exemptions for the institute's equipment, vehicles, and machinery, though items sold to individuals or businesses will still be taxed.

A significant focus of the agreement is the development of local pharmaceutical manufacturing. By building domestic capacity, the initiative aims to support Africa's health independence and the well-being of its people. The IVI Africa Regional Office will also play a vital role in advancing vaccine research, technology, and education in Rwanda and other African nations.

This announcement comes as Rwanda is building a BioNTech factory, which will produce various vaccines locally.

Founded in 1998 and headquartered in Seoul, South Korea, IVI is a non-profit organization dedicated to making vaccines accessible to all. It works with governments, research institutions, and the pharmaceutical industry to ensure vaccines reach communities in need worldwide.

With this new headquarters, Rwanda is set to become a key player in advancing vaccine development and distribution across Africa.