Improving quality of HIV diagnosis: do you know how to update your HIV national testing algorithms?
ASLM2021 Satellite Session

Sponsor
World Health Organization

Date and Time
18 November 2021, 8AM-9AM GMT

Summary
WHO revised its guidance on HIV testing services in 2019 and released updated recommendations including:
- Moving toward using a prevalence-independent HIV testing strategy consisting of three consecutive reactive serology test results to provide an HIV-positive diagnosis;
- Use of dual HIV/syphilis rapid diagnostic tests as assay one in antenatal care settings;
- Move away from western blot and line immunoassays in HIV testing algorithms; and
- Reinforcing retesting prior to ART initiation.

As countries revise their national guidelines for HIV testing services and align to the standard HIV testing strategy, WHO encourages conducting a study to verify the national testing algorithms to ensure that the HIV products selected will not share false HIV-reactive test results for the same individual, minimizing in this way the risk of misdiagnosis. If a product is WHO prequalified, clinical evidence has already been submitted and assessed by WHO; therefore, there is little additional benefit in repeating clinical performance studies to reconfirm sensitivity and specificity.

To assist countries on how to conduct a testing algorithm verification study, WHO has developed a toolkit with resources and materials including a generic study protocol, a product selection tool and templates for ordering, budgeting, human resource planning and data analysis. A number of countries have undertaken such verification studies and sharing their practical experience will be beneficial for other countries intending to do the same.

Learning Objectives
1. Enhanced understanding of the latest WHO recommendations on HIV testing services and the number of countries in the African region adopting WHO guidance and main issues.
2. Increased awareness about the importance of the appropriate selection of HIV assays in HIV testing algorithms to reduce the risk of misdiagnosis.
3. Better insights on the feasibility and process of conducting such a verification study

Target Audience

Policy makers, donors, clinicians, programme managers, national reference laboratory staff and other laboratory scientists.

Session Programme

Presenter & Affiliation	Title
Miss Anita Sands Regulation and Prequalification Department, World Health Organization, Switzerland	Opening remarks
Mr. Emmanuel Fajardo Global HIV, Hepatitis and STI Programmes, World Health Organization, Switzerland	WHO 2019 recommendations on HIV testing services and policy uptake in the African region
Mrs. Céline Lastrucci Global HIV, Hepatitis and STI Programmes, World Health Organization, Switzerland	Launch of WHO HIV testing algorithm verification toolkit
Dr Adoum Abderrazzack Fouda Sectoral Programme HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (PSLS/IST), Ministry of Health, Chad	Optimizing the national HIV testing algorithm through the verification study in Chad
Mr Jean de Dieu Anoubissi National AIDS Control Committee, Ministry of Health, Cameroon	Optimizing the national HIV testing algorithm through the verification study in Cameroon
Dr Stephen Ayisi Addo National AIDS Control Program, Ministry of Health, Ghana	Experience from Ghana in transitioning to a 3-assay HIV testing strategy
Dr. Linda Nabikata AIDS Control Program, Ministry of Health, Uganda	Experience from Uganda in increasing syphilis testing coverage through the introduction of dual HIV/syphilis RDTs