



## The SLMTA Symposium: Lasting legacy, pandemic pivots, and the reimagined future

ASLM2021 Satellite Session

### Sponsors

United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
African Field Epidemiology Network

### Registration

Participants must [register via the SLMTA website](#) to obtain access to the Symposium. (This satellite session will not be hosted on the ASLM2021 conference platform.)

### Summary

Strengthening Laboratory Management Toward Accreditation (SLMTA) is a structured quality improvement program that helps laboratories in resource-limited settings implement quality management systems and attain accreditation. To date, it has been implemented in 1300+ laboratories in 56 countries and has helped 230+ laboratories get accredited. SLMTA, complemented by its sister program SLIPTA, is PEPFAR's flagship program to strengthen laboratory systems.

Over the past decade, SLMTA has laid a strong foundation for the laboratory systems in LMIC to be able to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this session, we will describe how SLMTA has contributed to the response. We will also provide case studies of how we adapted existing programs in response to the pandemic in order to continue program implementation. Finally, we will explore implications of our responses for the post-pandemic era, inspiring hope for the future.

The goals of this session are as follows:

- Showcase examples from countries of how SLMTA has prepared them for the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic
- Describe our adaptations and accomplishments during the pandemic for laboratory and lab-clinic interface programs
- Explore implications of lessons learned to inform future program implementation
- Unveil new SLMTA songs

### Learning Objectives

Participants will learn:

1. Challenges, innovative design solutions, and facilitation tips when converting a traditional classroom-based curriculum to on-line learning that is as effective as the face-to-face training

2. Strategies to sustain and expand program implementation post COVID

**Target Audience**

- MOH Leadership
- Program Managers
- Laboratory Managers
- Lab mentors and trainers
- Implementing Partners
- Physicians and Nurses

**Session Programme**

Presenter & Affiliation	Title
<p><b>Ashaba Davis</b> Senior Laboratory Scientist, African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), Uganda</p>	<p>Ashaba Davis is a Laboratory and Public Health Specialist with a Master’s of Science in Public Health and over 11 years implementing different laboratory capacity strengthening initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean Region and Dominican Republic. He has also supported implementation of SLMTA in selected PEPFAR supported countries. His areas of expertise include HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Microbiology laboratory techniques; development of laboratory policies/ guidelines including National Laboratory Strategic plans development; Laboratory Quality Management Systems manuals. Other areas include development and implementation of sample transport systems, Laboratory information Management systems, Acute Febrile Illness studies, HIV Drug Resistance Studies, External Quality Assurance schemes and HRH capacity building to ensure quality and efficient diagnostic services. Davis currently serves as a Senior Laboratory Scientist/ Laboratory Projects Manager at AFENET and oversees implementation of Acute Febrile Illness project in Liberia and supporting HIV-related laboratory networks and partnerships to facilitate laboratory strengthening and management activities for countries supported under PEPFAR.</p>
<p><b>Dr Katy Yao</b> Public Health Educator, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US</p>	<p>Dr. Yao led the creation of the SLMTA program, which is funded by The President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), a US governmental initiative to address the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. She has been the director of the program since it was launched in 2009. The SLMTA program has been implemented in 1300+ laboratories in 56 LMIC countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the</p>

	<p>Caribbean, and Oceania. She also co-founded The Laboratory African Regional Collaborative (LARC) program - a learning collaborative initiative designed to improve the HIV viral load cascade by optimizing laboratory-clinic interface using the continuous quality improvement approach in PEPFAR-supported countries. Dr. Yao is a Public Health Educator at US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She has a PhD in education with a focus on instructional design and adult learning.</p>
<p><b>Dr Talkmore Maruta</b> Senior Biosafety and Biosecurity Officer, Africa CDC, Zambia</p>	<p>Dr Maruta is a Public Health Medical Laboratory Scientist with a BSc (Hons) Degree in Medical Laboratory Sciences, Master’s in Public Health, Master’s in Business Administration, and PhD in Public Health, and currently studying for a Master’s in International Affairs and Diplomacy. He has regional and international experience in laboratory system strengthening, disease surveillance, epidemic preparedness and response and biosafety and biosecurity. He contributed significantly to the development and implementation of two sister programs – SLMTA and WHO/AFRO SLIPTA – for improving the quality of public health laboratories in developing countries to achieve ISO 15189 standards. He received a “Distinguished Leadership” award at the ASLM 2012 and “Best Employee” award in the World Bank supported Southern Africa TB Health Systems Strengthening project in 2019. At Africa CDC, he leads implementation of the Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity Initiative, whose goal is to strengthen the biosecurity and biosafety systems of African Union Member States.</p>
<p><b>Dr Barbara McKinney</b> Physician Consultant, Global Health Consulting BCM, US</p>	<p>Dr. Barbara McKinney is one of the three “Mothers of SLMTA.” She also co-founded The Laboratory African Regional Collaborative (LARC) program - a learning collaborative initiative designed to improve the HIV viral load cascade by optimizing laboratory-clinic interface using the continuous quality improvement (CQI) approach in PEPFAR-supported countries. Dr. McKinney is a physician surveyor for The Joint Commission. Prior to TJC, she was an assistant professor of healthcare systems engineering in the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. She is a “Black Belt” in the Mayo Quality Academy. Barbara received a Medical Doctor degree from Loma Linda University (LLU) School of Medicine, completed an Internal Medicine internship and a Laboratory Medicine/Pathology residency at LLU Medical Center,</p>

	<p>followed by a surgical pathology fellowship at The Mayo Clinic (MC), Rochester, MN. She also has a Master of Public Health in Health Policy and Management from Johns Hopkins University.</p>
<p><b>Dr Luciana Kohatsu</b> Biologist, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US</p>	<p>Dr. Kohatsu is a senior Health System Strengthening Advisor and Scientific Advisor for innovative proficiency testing technology. She joined the U.S. CDC International Laboratory (ILB) Branch in 2008, and has served in several roles, including liaison for ten PEPFAR-supported countries, advisor for laboratory accreditation in both international and ILB laboratories, and CD4 lab unit lead. She was the Laboratory Branch chief for CDC-Mozambique (2015-2018). She has a Ph.D. in Cellular and Molecular Pathology from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA). She completed a CPEP Fellowship in Infectious Diseases and Clinical and Public Health Microbiology Laboratory Directorship at the UCLA Medical Center, the West Los Angeles Veterans Hospital, the Los Angeles County Public Health Laboratories, and the State of California Public Health Tuberculosis Laboratory. As a SLMTA Master Trainer, she trained the first cohort of Master Trainers in Latin America, and has been recognized as Latin America’s Mother of SLMTA.</p>
<p><b>Ms Beatrice van der Puije</b> Public Health Program Manager, African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM), Ghana</p>	<p>Ms. van der Puije helped redesign the classroom-based SLMTA 3 curriculum for on-line delivery and serves as a facilitator of the e-learning course. Based in Ghana, Ms. van der Puije is a Public Health Program Manager at African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM), a pan-African organisation strengthening medical laboratory networks and systems in Africa. Ms. van der Puije is a certified QMS Trainer, with a Master of Science Degree in Medical Immunology and Microbiology. She is a SLMTA master trainer and has trained numerous laboratorians in the past decade.</p>
<p><b>Elde Paladar</b> Adventist Health International &amp; Loma Linda University, Malawi</p>	<p>Mr. Paladar led the redesign of the classroom-based SLMTA 3 curriculum for on-line delivery and serves as a and facilitator of the e-learning course. Based in Malawi, he is a Project Manager at Adventist Health International, as well as Assistant Professor at the Department of Clinical Laboratory Science, Loma Linda University. Mr. Paladar has a Master of Science in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He is a SLMTA master trainer and has trained numerous laboratorians in the past decade.</p>

<p><b>Janet Scholtz</b> National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS), South Africa</p>	<p>Ms. Scholtz helped redesign the classroom-based SLMTA 3 curriculum for on-line delivery and serves as a facilitator of the e-learning course. Ms. Scholtz is a Quality Manager, Regional Western and Northern Cape, at National Health Laboratory Services (NHLS), South Africa. She is a certified auditor for The South African National Accreditation System (SANAS). Ms. Scholtz has a Medical diploma in Biomedical Technology. She is a SLMTA master trainer and has trained numerous laboratorians in the past decade.</p>
<p><b>Kennedy Matovu</b> African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), Uganda</p>	<p>Mr. Matovu is the course coordinator for the SLMTA 3 e-learning course. Based in Uganda, Mr. Matovu is an ECHO coordinator at African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), He has a Master of Science Degree in Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics with a background in Medical Laboratory Sciences. He has experience in supporting laboratory systems strengthening activities through technical support and mentorship. Mr. Matovu has previously mentored numerous laboratories towards accreditation.</p>
<p><b>Norah Vere</b> National HIV Program Laboratory Coordinator, Ministry of Health and Child Care, Zimbabwe</p>	<p>Norah Vere is a biomedical scientist with a Master’s degree in Clinical Epidemiology. She has over 20 years’ experience in diagnostic, research and public health laboratories with extensive experience in medical laboratory sciences, laboratory management and coordination of laboratory programs, especially HIV. She has experience in ISO 15189 Laboratory Quality management systems development implementation and auditing as well as in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). She has served in several positions as a scientist and in management positions. Currently she is the National HIV Program Laboratory coordinator at the Ministry of Health and Childcare, Zimbabwe.</p>
<p><b>Japhet Mabuku</b> Ministry of Health and Child Care, Zimbabwe</p>	<p>Japhet Mabuku is the National Quality Improvement (QI) Officer with the MoHCC in Zimbabwe. He has more than 10 years of experience in data management and implementation of QI projects in public health. He is responsible for training, coaching and mentoring of QI coaches and management of QI performance measurement data. He successfully coordinated the implementation of 2 QI collaboratives in Zimbabwe (ART4ALL &amp; LARC CLI). Japhet holds a master’s degree in strategic management, PMI-PMP and PMI-ACP certifications among other qualifications. He is a team</p>

	<p>player and project manager who strongly believes in QI to improve health services.</p>
<p><b>Fortunate Maketo</b> Biomedical Research &amp; Training Institute (BRTI), Zimbabwe</p>	<p>Fortunate Maketo is a Midwife, Nurse Administrator and Quality professional with over 20 years of experience working in a healthcare environment. She is passionate about quality and has been instrumental in the implementation and rollout of the LARC Clinic Laboratory Interface Quality Improvement program in Zimbabwe. She enjoys working with people and improving the health service delivery in Zimbabwe. She is currently working at Biomedical Research &amp; Training Institute as a Clinic Lab Interface Officer responsible for Quality Improvement in the Viral Load program and is recognised as one of the most prominent voices in this program.</p>
<p><b>Patience Musasa</b> Biomedical Research &amp; Training Institute (BRTI), Zimbabwe</p>	<p>Patience Musasa is a laboratory quality professional with over 10 years of progressive experience and proven record of significant, successful contribution in quality management, quality assurance and, process improvement in the health care sector. She has worked with laboratories in establishing quality management systems and ISO 15189 accreditation process. She is passionate about ensuring quality in patient care services and her latest role is with the Biomedical Research and Training Institute as the Clinic Laboratory Interface - Laboratory Specialist, contributing to closing the chasm between lab and clinic to ensure an improved healthcare service.</p>