**BACKGROUND**

In order to support efforts to achieve the first 95 of the UNAIDS targets, there is a need to ensure every individual seeking HIV testing receives an accurate result. However, the current set of quality measures in place and funding commitments may not be sufficient to adequately ensure the accuracy of testing. With global efforts, focusing on sustainable control of the epidemic, innovative based data driven strategies and approaches are critical to addressing the quality assurance implementation gaps.

To assist national programs and promote consistency in the application of quality management systems, a a standard tool, the Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid and Recency Testing (SPI-RRT) checklist has been developed for testing site audits. The checklist provides guidance on quality assurance (QA) practices for sites using HIV rapid tests to diagnose HIV infection and for sites using the rapid test for recent infection (RTRI) to determine whether a newly HIV diagnosed person has been infected within the past 12 months. The SPI-RRT checklist sets minimum standards for all HIV RT/RTRI testing points and provides is a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process which enables heads of testing sites and facilities to recognize quality gaps and shortcomings, identify areas for improvement and where additional resources may be needed to achieve national site certification.

**PURPOSE**

This training program aims to support continuous quality improvement at HIV rapid and recency testing sites toward certification using the Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid and Recency Testing (SPI-RRT) checklist for audit testing site.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To train local staffs on HIV rapid and recency testing site audits using the SPI-RRT checklist.
2. To conduct baseline site audits using the SPI-RRT checklist
3. To review and analyze baseline audit data to generate audit reports

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

1. Pool of testing sites auditors identified and certified for national certification program
2. Baseline audits conducted for HIV rapid and recency testing sites
3. Audits data reviewed and analyzed to develop improvement plan

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

This training program is designed to target primarily mid to high level professionals providing oversight to the HIV program and HIV-1 recent infection surveillance in region, district and sites using the SPI-RRT checklist.

The following professionals may be selected for the training:

* National laboratory personnel and/or quality assurance officers
* National HIV/AIDS program representative with prior RTCQI training
* Regional or District HTS Coordinators with prior RTCQI training
* Regional or district laboratory technician and/or quality assurance Officers
* Trained Q-Corps volunteers (Level II)
* Recency implementing partners
* Recency lab coordinator

The number of participants required for this training is 20 - 30 mid-high-level professionals.

**PROGRAM LENGTH**

This training program is interactive and composed of classroom presentations, 12 hands-on activities, site audits and computer based-data management and analysis.

The length of the training program is six (6) days:

1. Three days of didactic sessions on the following:
   1. Key components on comprehensive quality assurance program
   2. Review of SPI-RT checklist version 3.0
   3. Review of the site audit tool using android tablet (ODK application)
   4. Conducting a site audit using the SPI-RT checklist
   5. Review and analysis of audit data
2. Two days to conduct the site audits and compile data for analysis and prepare summation reports (depending on location of sites and required travel)
3. One day to report on audit findings and the facilitators to provide feedback on the performance of the participants

**METHODOLOGY**

1. TOT Options
2. Pre-Training of Trainers (Participants from the National Reference Lab Level and Implementing Partner)

* In order to reduce class size and minimize social contact, ILB can conduct pre-TOT virtual sessions with a small number of key high-level professionals from the National Reference Laboratory and implementing partners.
* The purpose of this pre-TOT is to build capacity for future master trainers and lead auditors at the national reference lab and program level as well as the primary implementing partner overseeing the SPI-RRT activities.
* Suggested number of trainees would be up to eight participants.
* The SPI-RRT curriculum would be the similar to the TOT but will be in a discussion format and include tools to facilitate the practical sessions for the TOT.
* The virtual sessions would be four days, 4 hours each day and conducted through a Zoom or Microsoft Teams platform
* Those that pass the written and mock site audit practical and meet the criteria for master trainer and lead auditor will support the district level TOT

1. Training of Trainers with no Pre-TOT (Participants from the National + District Levels)

* ILB can conduct TOT virtual sessions with key high-level professionals from the National Reference Laboratory and program level, implementing partners and national pool of trainers from the district level.
* Suggested number of trainees would be no more than twenty participants.
* In order to minimize social contact please refer to key mitigation strategies listed below.
* The SPI-RRT curriculum includes activities and home-work assignments that will be distributed through Google classroom
* The virtual sessions would be five days, 4-5 hours each day and conducted through a Zoom platform.
* There will be one mock site audit practical which will be conducted as part of morning sessions and exercises in small groups of 5 trainees to one facilitator starting on Day 2. This hands-on practical will be conducted under direct observation by the facilitator using the direct observation checklist.
* Mock site audits will be conducted after the five-day training at sites within the participant’s districts to avoid travel and large groups. performed using virtual tools such as phone interviews with key site personnel, sharing documents through Google drive and video calls.
* A one-day virtual session will be held whereby the participants will present their findings and discuss lessons learned.

1. Virtual Didactic format

* The training program is based on a participative methodology, with interactive exercises and includes both virtual classroom and hands-on practical sessions.
* Virtual sessions will be conducted through Zoom or Microsoft Team platforms.
* Instructor led demonstrations will be in the form of short webinars.
* Work group sessions, assignments and/or case studies will be provided to the participants through Google classroom. This gives the participants a better understanding of the new quality assurance tools and foster discussion with the instructors and other participants.
* Activity-based curriculum: The training activities are designed to enable mid- to high level laboratory professionals to accomplish those tasks, using tools and job aides to adequately address quality related issues as they arise. It empowers mid- to high level professionals to implement corrective actions and monitor progress.

1. Didactic materials

The training package include modules on key components of quality assurance and HIV testing procedures, forms, handouts, worksheet, audit SPI-RRT Checklist and relevant supporting documents.

1. Training language

The training will be conducted in English. However, in non-English countries, the training materials will be translated, and the training will be conducted in the official language,

1. Profile and Number of facilitators required

The proposed ratio is one facilitator for up to four participants.

Pre-requisite: Laboratory professionals trained and certified in quality management systems or RTQII master trainers.

* The recommended facilitator/participants ratio is **1 facilitator for 3-4 participants.** Up to 10 local lead trainers will be selected from trained and certified SPI-RRT master trainers or auditors RTQII master trainers, SLMTA mentors, and SLIPTA auditors.
* For initial training, up to two master trainers will be selected from the CDC Headquarters team. Whenever possible, HQ team will be involved in subsequent in-country training.

**CONSIDERATIONS FOR SITE AUDITS**

1. Requirements for Site Selection
   1. Health facilities with multiple testing points
   2. Health facilities located in the vicinity of the training venue and facilities located in regions or districts that require limited travel
   3. Health facilities that have the capacity to submit documents and relevant site pictures through Google drive and conduct video interviews
2. Logistics
   1. Training venue
      * For didactic sessions, discussions on audit finding and work-plan development
      * Teams that are traveling a further distance from the training venue will require a conference room or classroom at one of the facilities or nearby university to work with the facilitators to compile and analyze site audit data and complete summation reports
   2. Notification of sites- selected the sites should occur immediately after they have been identified and reminders communicated to the sites prior to the audit.
   3. Method of Audits
      * Participants can work in groups of two (if they are from the same district) to conduct the virtual audits
      * A facilitator from the National level or implementing partner will provide mentorship and guidance during the virtual audit through Zoom or Microsoft Teams platform.
      * A checklist of required documents to review should be sent to the sites prior to the virtual audit. Those documents can be submitted through Google drive.
      * Interview with site personnel can be conducted by phone or video call. If direct observation of testing if feasible then the testing staff can demonstrate the testing procedures through a video call.
      * Participant will work with the facilitators to compile and analyze site audit data and complete summation reports
   4. The participants will audit up to two testing points using the virtual method. If working in groups of two, then each participant will take turns being the lead auditor during phone interviews and video calls.
   5. It will be important to have a partner at the sites being audited in order to facilitate communication and document sharing.

*Note: There will be a need to audit up to 4 testing points in a single facility per day or 2 facilities with less than 3 testing points per day for each group composed of three participants and one facilitator.*

1. Equipment Required
   1. Computer and projector
   2. Flip Chart
   3. Speakers
   4. Laptop for participants
   5. Android Tablets (Proposed Specifications provided below)
      * Samsung Galaxy Tab S, storage- 8GB, screen -8”inch with at least OS 1.6 or higher
      * Bluetooth keyboard with tablet cover (make sure the tablet cover has a hole in the back to enable the use of the camera)
      * Rain protector cover/carry case
      * Same tablet and configuration for all tablets and accessories
      * If you need to use a local 3G network, ensure you purchase unlocked tablets.
   6. Participants will need to be able to access Zoom, Google drive and Google classroom

**KEY MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR SAFETY CONSIDERATION**

1. Virtual or mixed virtual–presential training to minimize social contact.
2. [Social distancing](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html) of at least 2 meters (or local definition) throughout all pre-, during, and post-training activities, including lunch and coffee breaks. This may include reducing the number of participants per training (e.g., 5 people per 10 m2 or 100 feet2 people maximum considering trainees, facilitators, and support staff) and avoiding physical greetings (e.g., customary greetings);
3. Hosting trainings outdoors or in well-ventilated areas, keeping windows and doors open if possible.
4. Breaking out participants in small groups for practical sessions and avoiding movement of facilitators and support staff from one group to another.
5. Providing prepacked food for lunches and tea breaks rather than buffet style meals, staggering breaks (including lunch and coffee breaks).
6. [Cleaning and disinfecting](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html) according to country recommendations for school settings, if available, at minimum frequently touched surfaces should be disinfected at the beginning and end of the day and at regular intervals throughout the day.
7. Consistent and correct use of [masks](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/cloth-face-cover.html) by all participants and facilitators at all times, in- and outdoors, except when drinking or eating;
8. [Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html), with provision of hand sanitizers and washing stations;
9. At the start of each training day, screening participants and trainers using a COVID-19 symptom and exposure screening checklist to identify participants who should not join the training until further evaluation.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITOR CERTIFICATION**

The minimum acceptable scores as outlined below will be required to be considered as a certified SPI-RRT auditor.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Total Points** | **Minimum Acceptable Score** | **Comments** |
| Attendance | 10 | 100% | Mandatory attendance to all sessions |
| Pre training assessment | 10 | 80% | Expected to be familiar with HTS, Recency and national QA programs |
| Understanding of training content | 10 | 100% | Demonstrates knowledge of training content through group activities |
| Site audit skills | 50 | 80% | Uses audit techniques effectively and prepare a summation report that outlines key deficiencies, recommendations for improvement and timelines |
| Computer skills /data management understanding | 10 | 80% | Ability to compile and analyze site audit data |
| Post training assessment | 10 | 90% | Expected to have improved knowledge on HTS, Recency and national QA programs |
| **Total** | **100** |  |  |