THE IANPHI/CDC SUPPORTED LABORATORY PROJECT IN NIGERIA

PRESENTED BY

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Effective and Reliable Laboratory services are critical for efficient and well functioning health systems.

Laboratories are pivotal to:
- Accurate diagnosis of disease conditions
- Effective disease prevention and control
- Reliable disease surveillance
- Effective response to disease outbreaks

However, for results of laboratories to be credible and contribute positively to improving health care, they need to implement quality management systems that meet international standards.
To achieve this, health laboratories need to strive and achieve International accreditation – the ISO 15189 accreditation.

Accreditation enhances the quality of performance of Laboratories to ensure they meet International Standards and produce credible results.

In the developed countries, the culture of accreditation of medical laboratories has been well established and had been in practice for several decades.

On the other hand, the culture and level of laboratory accreditation in the developing countries is abysmally very low.

This Situation needs to be urgently addressed and improved.
Laboratory Accreditation in Africa

- Until 2-3 years ago, only International Accreditation processes (ISO, CAP etc) were available to most African countries.

- The requirements for these International accreditation processes are quite stringent and the costs are enormous, thus unaffordable by laboratories in Africa.

- As a result, in 2010 only 340 of the several thousands of laboratories in Africa were accredited.
Laboratory Accreditation in Africa cont.

- Out of these 340 accredited laboratories, 312 were in South Africa.

- This situation was unacceptable and stimulated the urgent need to increase the number of accredited laboratories in the African Region.
The WHO/AFRO Stepwise Accreditation Approach

- Recognizing the gaps between the state of laboratories in the sub-region and the requirements of ISO 15189 accreditation scheme, the WHO/AFRO, established a **Stepwise** and affordable Accreditation scheme.

- The WHO/AFRO in partnership with CDC, ASCP, CLSI, APHL and the Clinton Health Foundation developed the SLMTA programme – a tool for strengthening laboratory management towards accreditation.
This WHO/AFRO approach was not intended to replace the ISO 15189 accreditation scheme.

The scheme is meant to provide an alternative pathway towards the realization of International Laboratory Standards required for the ISO 15189 accreditation.

The checklist of the WHO/AFRO accreditation scheme is based on the 12 quality essentials which are consistent with the ISO requirements for accreditation.
The WHO/AFRO Stepwise Accreditation Approach Cont.

- The SLMTA scheme is an 18 month cycle with the following essential components
  - Baseline Assessment of laboratories
  - 3 SLMTA Stepdown Workshops
  - 3 Supervisory/assessment visits.

- SLMTA provides every laboratory the opportunity to know the level of their quality management systems at any given time and make room for improvement.
The WHO/AFRO Stepwise Accreditation Approach Cont.

- At each assessment visit, laboratories are scored using the checklist and ranked on a graded scheme from zero to 5 Star.
- 0 Star (<55%), 1 Star(55-64%), 2 Star(65-74%), 3 Star(75-84%), 4 Star(85-94%), 5 Star(>95%)
- On attainment of the 5-star ranking, laboratories would have achieved QMS that meet international standards and are advised to apply for ISO accreditation.
- In 2010, the WHO/AFRO advocated that Laboratories in the sub-region should embrace the SLMTA Programme.
- Since then several laboratories in various countries of the sub-region have embraced this WHO/AFRO stepwise accreditation scheme
Laboratory Accreditation in Nigeria

- The Level of laboratory accreditation in Nigeria is extremely very low and appalling.

- There are currently over 6000 medical diagnostic laboratories operating in Nigeria.

- Disappointingly, only 2 of these 6000 (0.03%) laboratories have either ISO certification or accreditation (The NIMR HIV Laboratory and the Pathcare Ltd Laboratories)

- The stringent requirement and unaffordable costs of International accreditation schemes, is significantly responsible for this poor level of accreditation in the country.
Laboratory Accreditation in Nigeria Cont.

- The other identified factor is low level of awareness and culture for laboratory accreditation
- Nigeria embraced the SLMTA programme in 2010 and 23 laboratories under the PEPFAR programme were supported for the programme.
- However, successful implementation of the SLMTA programme requires a critical mass of trained personnel to roll out the laboratory workshops and assessments
- As at July 2012, there were only 7 trained personnel in the entire country with adequate expertise to conduct SLMTA workshops and assessments
Also there were no SLMTA Master Trainers in the country

This level of available human capacity in the country was grossly inadequate

To improve this situation IANPHI in partnership with CDC approved a grant for NIMR to develop in-country human capacity to support the roll out of SLMTA programmes
The IANPHI Support in Nigeria

Goal
To contribute to a culture of quality services for laboratories in Nigeria with an aim of eventually making accreditation the norm.

This will be achieved through advocacy and by developing a cadre of SLMTANs and Master Trainers through a TOT programme

Subsequently support some laboratories in the country for the SLMTA programme.

Project Deliverables

- Enhance awareness and culture for accreditation
- Training three New Master Trainers
- Train additional 24 SLMTANs
- Support 6 Laboratories for the WHO/AFRO accreditation scheme
Achievements so far

- Developed and broadly distributed flyers on SLMTA,
- Conducted 1st SLMTA TOT in Nigeria (July 30-August 11, 2012) and trained:
  - 3 Master Trainers
  - 24 SLMTANs
- Commenced SLMTA programmes for 6 selected laboratories
Recommendation

Urgent need for IANPHI member Institutions in Africa to embrace SLMTA and ensure that the quality of their laboratory services are improved to meet International Standards.