In 2014 UNAIDS set forth three ‘90-90-90’ targets. The first of these is that 90% of people living with HIV will know their status by 2020.

To achieve this, access to HIV diagnosis will need to be scaled up. There are an estimated 18 million people living with HIV who are still unaware of their status.

As testing services become more widespread, ensuring the quality of those services becomes essential. An estimated 150 million HIV rapid tests are performed annually by lay workers in low- and middle-income countries. Not all of these tests are translated into accurate diagnoses, largely because of human error. This has serious consequences for patient care, and for disease control.

FIND supports 90-90-90 targets

• By 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status.
• By 2020, 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy.
• By 2020, 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

Access to HIV rapid testing & high-quality results

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HIV Rapid Test Quality Improvement Initiative (RQTII)

Since October 2014 FIND has been working on a pilot, led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to ensure HIV rapid testing delivers reliable results.

The project, Rapid Test Quality Improvement Initiative (RQTII), was implemented with local partners: Ethiopia Public Health Institute in Ethiopia; National Public Health Laboratory Service in Kenya; Uganda Virus Research Institute; and University Teaching Hospital in Zambia. In each country, approximately 200 testing sites were enrolled in the project.


Project activities

Policy engagement – engaging policy makers to advocate for resources for quality assurance and development of HIV quality assurance policies

Human resources development and certification – building capacity and certifying HIV rapid test service providers through onsite training.

FIND is currently working with partners in Uganda to implement virtual training through video conferencing using the Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) model.

Proficiency testing using dried tube specimens – increasing uptake of proficiency testing for service providers as well as testing sites, paired with implementation of corrective action for sites and testers with unsatisfactory results.

Standardized HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) registers – increasing uptake and utilization of standardized registers as a quality assurance monitoring tool and ensuring data analysis and implementation of corrective action.

Post-market surveillance – strengthening capacity of national HIV reference laboratories to continuously monitor the quality of HIV rapid test kits.

Site certification – development of guidance documents for the certification of sites, assessing sites using a standardized WHO-approved checklist and certifying sites for the provision of HIV testing services.