



East, Central and Southern Africa—
Health Community (ECSA-HC)

The Global Fund Regional TB Lab Strengthening Project



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PROJECT GOALS

1. Build a regional network of National TB reference Laboratories (NRLs) for inter-state laboratory quality assurance and management in ECSA Region.
2. Improved Laboratory service provision for quality assured 1st and 2nd line Drug susceptibility testing (DST) accessible to all people in the ECSA region
3. Build capacity of NRLs to undertake epidemiological/monitoring surveys such as DRS and TB disease prevalence

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ECSA-HC and Uganda SRL Host the 3rd TB Regional Laboratory Strengthening Steering Committee Meeting

With support from the Global Fund, the East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) in partnership with Uganda SRL hosted the 3rd Regional steering committee meeting in Kampala, between the 27th November and 1st December.

The meeting was attended by representatives from 17 of the 18 project countries, SRL Benin, development and implementing partners and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) including: The Global Fund, WHO, the East African Community (EAC), AMREF Health Africa, Swaziland Migrant Mine Workers Association and the TB Advocacy Consortium.

The meeting was officially opened by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health Uganda, **Dr. Daina Atwine Kanzira**, who held the project in high regard for supporting the area of TB diagnostics which is greatly underfunded within the ECSA region and applauded the efforts made by ECSA and SRL Uganda in ensuring the regional project was moving toward achieving its intended goals.

Representing WHO was Mr. Jean de Dieu Iragena, who appreciated the project's efforts towards strengthening laboratory services in the Region.

Also present at the meeting was Dr. Tefferi from the Global Fund, who shed light on Global Fund's new funding model. Dr. Tefferi also called for alignment of country plans with regional grants to ensure complementarity with country program grants to avoid the possibility of a service void.

As part of strengthening TB diagnosis in the region, the project supports accreditation of laboratories.

During the meeting five countries. (Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania) were identified and earmarked for mentorship towards attainment of candidate SRL status by the end of the project. In July this year, ECSA-HC as the Principal recipient to the Global Fund project commissioned a Mid-Term Review to evaluate the project's progress. During this meeting the committee members also had an opportunity to validate findings and make recommendations as way forward in implementation of project activities.



PS MOH Uganda poses for a group photo with members of the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) after officially opening the 3rd RSC meeting in Kampala, Uganda

Uganda SRL Supports the South Sudan NTRL on LIMS

Through Global Fund support, a needs assessment was conducted in all project countries. During this assessment, it was found that a majority of the NTRLs in the region lacked a robust Laboratory Information System (LIMS).

In view of this challenge, the Uganda SRL has developed a system which can capture data, analyze, store and create reports. The system has been installed in several countries including Tanzania and Somalia-Hargeisa.

This quarter, the Uganda SRL team set out to provide Technical support to the South Sudan NTRL. The support included installation of the system, system customization to country needs, configuration of wireless LAN for networking and training of users.

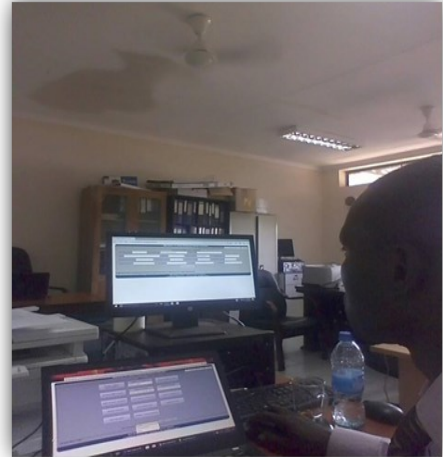
Uganda SRL also supported the Laboratory Data Manager in performing verification of the installed LIMS and the development of information man-

agement related SOPs to guide secondary users.

The South Sudan team is expected to operationalize and continue to utilize the electronic LIMS.

Countries using this all-in-one system are happy with the user friendliness, and the fact that it is able to support laboratory data needs within the reference lab as well as peripherals.

The Uganda SRL has opened doors to those who may need more information about this all rounder LMIS. Contact details are found at the end of this brochure.



SRL – Uganda Staff trains NTRL South Sudan Team to navigate the LIMS entry screen, during the two week Technical assistance visit.

SRL Uganda Develops a Staff Training Curriculum

In a bid to become a globally recognized center of excellence in TB laboratory diagnostics within Africa, Uganda SRL with support from KNCV set out to conduct a curriculum development workshop for its staff.

The key objective of the workshop was to build the SRL staff capacity in regard to organizing and conducting training courses at the SRL offices. Specifically to; strengthen participants' competencies in development of standardized training materials, delivery of capacity development activities related to laboratory strengthening and new diagnostics, designing of standardized curriculum materials from already existent content and selection of appropriate adult training methodologies for each of the content topics.

The curriculum development workshop was attended by a team of 12 SRL staff (4 females and 8 males) who are currently involved in the development and implementation of various training courses.



SRL Uganda team with KNCV consultants following the curriculum development workshop

ECSA-HC and Uganda SRL Host the Regional Basic Laboratory Quality Management System Training Workshop

With support from the ECSA-HC regional Global Fund project, the SRL organized a basic QMS training workshop in October 2017. The workshop was collaboratively facilitated by the African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) and the Uganda SRL. The workshop was aimed at equipping participants with knowledge and skills required for implementing an effective and efficient QMS in TB laboratories.

Twenty-two (22) participants from 18 countries (Burundi, Rwanda, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, Botswana and Uganda) attended the course and displayed immense enthusiasm and keen interest during each session of the 5-day training workshop.



Country Representatives pose for a group photo during the QSM training workshop, Entebbe Uganda

Uganda SRL Mentors receive Basic Laboratory Quality Management Systems and Internal Audit Training

As part of strengthening the capacity of its mentors the SRL Uganda organized a 5-day training in basic laboratory Quality Management Systems and internal audit based on ISO 15189 at SRL Uganda between the 2nd and 7th of October 2017.



Group Photo of SRL staff taken during the Laboratory Quality Management Systems and Internal Audit course

The training was facilitated by the South African National Accreditation System (SANAS), and aimed at equipping SRL mentors with the requisite skills to mentor the staff in the beneficiary NTRLs in the implementation of the

Quality Management System with a special focus on the use of internal auditing methods and techniques, understanding of the internal audit plan, report, root cause analysis, and monitoring trends and to skill SRL mentors on how to communicate non conformities identified during internal audits.

The 24 mentors trained are expected to mentor beneficiary NTRL staff from the 17 project countries on skills acquired during the training which include; getting acquainted with the ISO 15189:2012 SANAS checklist so as to perfect identification non-conformities, instituting corrective and preventive actions and conducting internal audits.

Uganda SRL Hosts the Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity training

The Uganda Supranational Reference Laboratory (SRL) through the ECSA-HC global fund TB grant for strengthening laboratory TB diagnostic capacity conducted a Biosafety and Biosecurity management training in October 2017, in Entebbe Uganda.

The training aimed at equipping selected laboratory personnel from each of the 18 project countries with key practical knowledge and competence in applied bio risk management, laboratory bio safety and bio security practices, understand the concept of Assessment, Mitigation and Performance (AMP Model), and instigating a change in attitude towards bio risk management practices with regards to environment protection.

The training was facilitated by regional experts and national bio risk trainers drawn from different institutions within Uganda including the TB Supra Reference Laboratory, Uganda Virus Research Institute and University Research Co. LLC, and was delivered through didactic sessions, demonstrations, exercises, interactive discussions, and practical, Case Scenarios, Assignments, Role Play and Video Presentations. A total of 29 participants from the 17 project coun-



Participants group photo during the Regional Biosafety and Biosecurity training in Entebbe, Uganda

Upcoming Events (January —March 2018)

1. *Joint supervisory visits to Kenya, Malawi and Zambia*
2. *ECSA-HC Monitoring Visits to Uganda, Somalia and Eritrea*
3. *Short term TA in New Diagnostics and TB C&DST Mozambique*
4. *Annual Meeting of 18 NTP/NTRL managers on sharing best practices*
5. *Long and Short Term TAs to Project Countries*

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