



Reaching Impact, Saturation, and Epidemic Control (RISE) HIV Testing Services and Linkage

The Global Challenge

Of the estimated 37.9 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) worldwide, more than 8 million (21%) do not know their HIV status. HIV testing—the only way people can know if they have HIV—is key to epidemic control. Early testing allows PLHIV to get on treatment and to take precautions to avoid transmitting HIV to others. For those who test negative, HIV testing services (HTS) are an important link to prevention services, such as pre-exposure prophylaxis, voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC), condoms, and risk-reduction counseling. RISE offers technical assistance and service delivery support to help countries achieve HTS targets while adhering to quality and safety standards in alignment with guidance from the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

RISE is a 5-year global project (2019–2024) generously funded by PEPFAR and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support countries to achieve and maintain epidemic control by providing strategic technical assistance and direct service delivery to improve HIV prevention, case finding, treatment, and viral load suppression. RISE partners with governments and other stakeholders and implementing partners to establish, expand, and improve the quality of HTS and linkage, with a goal of ensuring implementation of and fidelity to best practices and evidence-informed HTS and linkage interventions; ensuring country-level engagement and ownership; strengthening existing health systems; and supporting continuous quality improvement of HTS programs.

The RISE consortium (Jhpiego, ICAP, Management Sciences for Health, Anova Health Institute, BAO Systems, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Mann Global Health) brings unrivaled expertise in taking evidence-based programming to scale and transitioning to local implementing partners for sustainable, self-reliant, and resilient health systems. We have a history of meeting ambitious targets through provision of high-quality, cost-efficient services matched with innovative and human-centered demand-creation approaches.



How RISE Can Support Optimized HIV Testing Services

With leadership from Jhpiego, the RISE consortium brings extensive experience in helping to introduce, scale up, and optimize multiple HIV testing modalities. RISE can support country efforts to improve performance on PEPFAR's first 95 targets, with interventions ranging from national-level policymaking to community-level implementation, including:

- Assisted partner notification services and index case testing ensure that when an individual tests positive for HIV, all members of that person's household and all sexual partners are offered voluntary HTS. Strategies include family tree tracking, integration of partner notification and self-testing, and couples HIV testing and counseling (HTC). Recognizing that violence and harmful gender norms may prevent individuals from accessing HTS and disclosing their status, RISE addresses gender-based violence (GBV) in the context of HTS by ensuring that survivors identified during self-testing, index testing, and partner notification services, are provided and/or referred to HIV treatment initiation and comprehensive GBV response services.
- Social and sexual network testing provides HTS clients with information about HIV risk reduction and testing services that they can pass on to their social and sexual networks. The approach is particularly valuable among key and priority populations, who are often discouraged from seeking comprehensive HTC services by stigma or unavailability of services at locations and hours that are appropriate for them.
- Provider-initiated testing and counseling supports health care providers to offer voluntary HTC to all clients as part of routine care, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, especially in areas where HIV is prevalent. RISE helps to build the capacity of health care workers to deliver compassionate and comprehensive HTC services and works with governments to develop policies and guidelines to ensure this work continues.
- HIV self-testing expands the reach of HTS programs by providing an option to populations that might otherwise not seek out or receive these services. In addition to advocating with ministries of health (MOHs) for policy and implementation planning, RISE introduces and supports innovations such as couples testing, in which pregnant women receive oral HIV self-test kits for themselves and their partners during antenatal care visits and are encouraged to test together at home.
- Recency testing distinguishes new HIV infections from long-term infection using a test that measures the level of antibodies in an HIV client's blood. RISE uses recency testing to identify hotspots of new HIV infection and target interventions to halt the spread of HIV. Recency testing also supports RISE's efforts to collect, analyze, evaluate, and share data on HIV infection at the population level.

Examples of RISE Consortium Expertise in HIV Testing

Within the RISE consortium, Jhpiego leads HTS technical assistance and service delivery/implementation support efforts. Jhpiego brings extensive experience supporting HTS services from across all levels of the health system—from policy and health systems strengthening support at the national level to community-level testing services. Jhpiego is supporting multiple countries to optimize HTS, including quality improvement and technical assistance to ensure the quality and safety of index testing services, in alignment with PEPFAR guidance. Between 2009 and 2018, more than 15 million individuals in 34 countries received HTS through Jhpiego-led programs:

- Jhpiego's technical assistance has resulted in the development of up-to-date national HTS guidelines to incorporate recency testing and other novel case-finding approaches, including HIV self-testing,

partner notification services, and dual HIV/syphilis rapid diagnostic testing. Our programs incorporate “Undetectable = Untransmittable” messaging on viral suppression to counter stigma and empower providers and clients for improved service uptake, adherence, and retention.

- In Malawi, for example, Jhpiego worked with the MOH to support scale-up of comprehensive HIV testing, treatment, and prevention services for high-risk and hard-to-reach populations in priority districts. Our strategies included:
 - Mobile and outreach HTS in workplaces, markets, and sports events to reach men, who are often the least likely to know their HIV status and be on treatment; in teen clubs to reach adolescents; and in prisons, job sites, and at “open day” events that included music, drama, theater, speeches, and testimonies focused on HIV/TB health education.
 - Index testing using MOH Family Referral Slips—an official invitation for a family member of an HIV client to visit a health facility for HTS. In Thyolo district, for example, of the 5,468 people tested for HIV between April and September 2018, 1,030 people were tested through index testing; of these, 419 tested positive. In Malawi, as in other Jhpiego HTS programming, index testing is a critical strategy for improving yield of HTS services.
 - Integration of HIV testing with VMMC initiatives, which has resulted in more than 130,000 VMMC clients tested through Jhpiego-supported projects. A referral tracking form supports follow-up with HIV-positive clients to ensure linkage to antiretroviral therapy.
 - Health worker capacity-building to improve quality of care and integration of services. The Jhpiego-led Support for Service Delivery Integration-Services project, for example, trained 164 health workers on viral load, 114 on the revised HTS curriculum, and 201 on the revised antiretroviral therapy/prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV guidelines. The project also trained 429 volunteer expert clients, who supported 21,832 clients to receive HTS in their communities.

RISE Project Principles

- Break the cycle of HIV transmission and reach those at highest risk for HIV.
- Scale up proven and innovative approaches, using human-centered design thinking to inform the development and implementation of locally driven, adaptive solutions.
- Implement interventions that address structural drivers.
- Strengthen local partners and build networks for resilient systems.
- Impart a culture of quality, data use, and accountability.
- Rapidly mobilize to respond to immediate country needs and establish strong working platforms to achieve the bold vision of epidemic control by 2020.
- Work with local partners to tailor impactful, innovative, evidence-based services to targeted populations, particularly at-risk adult men and women, including key populations.

Tools & Resources

- Consolidated guidelines on HIV testing services for a changing epidemic (WHO): <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/consolidated-guidelines-on-hiv-testing-services-for-a-changing-epidemic>
- Guidelines on HIV self-testing and partner notification (WHO): <https://www.who.int/hiv/pub/self-testing/hiv-self-testing-guidelines/en/>
- HIV Testing Services Guidance Database (USAID): <https://aidsfree.usaid.gov/resources/guidance-data/hts>
- HIV Testing Strategies to Reach People Living with HIV Who Are Unaware of Their Status (ICAP): https://icap.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/HIV-Testing_Technical_Brief_2019_WEB-1.pdf
- USAID List of Approved HIV Rapid Test Kits (February 1, 2017): https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/Rapid-Test-Kit-List-February-1-2017-508_0.pdf
- WHO HTS Info app (available through the Apple Store for iPhone and iPad): <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/who-hts-info/id1359010276>

RISE Technical Areas

To learn more about our work, visit our website at <https://www.jhpiego.org/riase>, and see our briefs on:

- [RISE Introductory Brief & Project Overview](#)
- Health Systems Strengthening
- HIV Prevention: Oral Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
- HIV Prevention: Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision
- Engaging Men in HIV Testing, Linkage, and Retention in Care
- Antiretroviral Therapy Optimization
- Strategic Information
- Key Populations
- TB/HIV Integration
- Laboratory Services

For more information about RISE, contact:

At the RISE Consortium: Kelly Curran, Project Director (Kelly.Curran@Jhpiego.org)

At USAID: Jacqueline Firth, USAID AOR (Jfirth@usaid.gov)