



Orientation Workshop to introduce updated National Consolidated Guideline on HIV Testing Services in Cambodia
30th November to 01st December 2023, Sokhalay Angkor Hotel, Siem Reap Province

With the permission of the Ministry of Health, and funding from the Global Fund (GFATM), the National Center for HIV/AIDS Dermatology and STD (NCHADS), in collaboration with health development partners and HIV-TWG, conducted the two-day orientation workshop. The event is aimed to introduce the updated National Consolidated Guidelines on HIV Testing Services in Cambodia and to discuss and identify common challenges and practical solutions to strengthen delivery of HIV testing services by health providers at health facilities and community-based organizations to increased uptake of HIV testing to unknow HIV status among key populations and targeted general populations in Cambodia. Dr. Moug Narin, Deputy Director of Siem Reap Provincial Health Department (PHD), and Dr. Lim Yi, NCHADS Deputy Director, gave opening remarks for the workshop on behalf of Assist. Prof. OUK Vichea, Director of NCHADS. He expressed that the consolidated HTS SoP and orientation workshop will equip us to act professionally on HIV testing services, refer linkages, and contribute to achieve 95.95.95 targets in 2025.



The workshop benefited a total of 84 participants from 25 provinces across Cambodia, who are PHD directors, provincial AIDS and STI program managers, and representatives from community-based organizations (Men Health's Cambodia (MHC), KHANA, AHF) and partners (US-CDC, FHI360, CHAI) and NCHADS officers.

The consolidated guidelines are composed of eight chapters. Chapter 1: Introduction or rationale: HTS guidelines in line with WHO HTS guidelines requires that all HIV testing services be provided, following WHO's essential 5 Cs: consent, confidentiality, counseling, Correct test results, and connection or linkage to prevention, care and treatment. Chapter 2: Ethical and legal considerations: HTC services should be provided in an environment where human rights are protected and respected to avoid or minimize vulnerability for both people living with HIV and people who are affected. Chapter 3: HIV testing service: To maximize the impact of HTS and to maintain HIV epidemic control, Cambodia has applied a strategic mix of differentiated HIV testing approaches, which include facility-based HTS, community-based HTS, network-based testing (NBT), and HIV self-testing which includes brief pre-test information and post-test counseling; linkage to appropriate HIV prevention, care, and treatment services; and PrEP/PEP services. Chapter 4: Priority populations: A comprehensive HIV response must include key populations: couples and partners of PLHIV, adolescents and young women, people in prison and close settings, men, pregnant women (PW), infants and children. Also, workers in certain industries, such as fishermen and long-distance drivers, may face increased vulnerability to HIV. These vulnerable groups are often hard to reach and, typically, seldom use conventional HIV services. Chapter 5: Testing service: as part of the strategy to reach people with HIV who do not know their status and who have high HIV-related risk, demand creation approaches may need to be tailored based on settings, targetted population, and available resources. The chapter also talks about pre-test and post-test information, counseling for HIV testing, updated testing strategy for HIV diagnosis (National HIV Testing Algorithm) and STI, Viral Hepatitis, and diabetes linkage. Chapter 6: Quality assurance of HIV testing: follow the previous HTS-SoP. The quality management system (QMS) can be implemented in varying degrees for any HTS that provides HIV diagnosis. QMS implemented in any HTS should incorporate the 12 elements: QA/QC procedures, and external quality assessment scheme (EQAS). Chapter 7: Logistic supply management: Logistics and supply management involves multiple parties, ranging from the Central Management System of the Ministry of Healty (CMS), NCHADS, municipal/provincial health departments, national hospitals, provincial hospitals, operational districts, referral hospitals, health centers, VCCT clinics , NGOs, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) to the Cambodian Ministry of Finance in quantification, procurement and distribution processes. Chapter 8: Monitoring and evaluation: It is important to note that NCHADS works closely with the Department of Planning and Health Information of the Health Minstry (MOH/DPHI) to integrate the HTS information system at all levels into the health information system (HIS) of the MOH. The NGO partner reports should be incorporated into the OD report on a monthly basis.

The workshop provided opportunities not only to share updates about HIV testing procedures, algorithm, and referral linkages but also to discuss and identify common barriers to and practical solutions for effective service delivery/guideline implementation. The facilitators and participants shared their experience in effective delivery of testing services at facilities and in community settings. In addition to the workshop, the participants will continue to share what they learned through team meetings, trainings, and on-site coaching.

