



Update on the BD/PEPFAR Lab Strengthening Partnership

BD collaborates with the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) program on Laboratory Strengthening Programs in sub-Saharan Africa. This ongoing initiative applies BD's knowledge, expertise and resources to expand and improve healthcare systems, build local capacity and improve patient care. Co-developed with the lab strengthening arm of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local on-the-ground partners, BD associate volunteers have conducted lab strengthening activities in sub-Saharan Africa since 2008.

These BD volunteers have conducted detailed assessments of on-site diagnostics and lab equipment. Information from these assessments helped them develop and implement tailored training programs for lab workers in several fields of study including:

- Proper use of new equipment
- Proper laboratory management practices and quality control systems
- Training in specific testing procedures for diagnosing and monitoring HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis
- Teaching lab technicians to train other lab workers

Uganda Quality Management Program

The most extensive training has occurred in Uganda under the Uganda Quality Management Program. In 2009, BD conducted three volunteer trips to Uganda under the auspices of the BD-PEPFAR collaboration. To date, nearly 100 Ugandan lab workers have been trained through this program. As a direct result of the training, test scores for standard laboratory practices improved from an average of 35 percent to 88 percent. This level of improvement represents an overall increase of 144 percent in test scores.

In July 2009, BD began the second phase of the training program, called "Training the Trainers." BD trains selected, on-site lab personnel to serve as trainers themselves. This approach helps to ensure the long-term sustainability of laboratory improvements.

Tuberculosis-related Training for Microbiologists in Sub-Saharan Africa

The BD-PEPFAR collaboration is working with numerous partners to train microbiologists throughout sub-Saharan Africa in the detection and identification of tuberculosis. Training is provided through a 10-day course conducted at the African Centre for Integrated Lab Training (ACILT) in Johannesburg, South Africa. As part of the curriculum, the microbiologists were introduced to liquid culture testing systems that identify drug-resistant forms of tuberculosis faster and more accurately than traditional methods. At the end of 2009, 34 microbiologists from eight countries had participated.

Lab Capacity Planning in Mozambique

In December 2009, BD associate volunteers traveled to Mozambique to advance the country's strategic planning process for laboratory strengthening. BD associates worked closely with the Mozambique Ministry of Health and CDC-Mozambique to deliver training in quality management and in the assessment of laboratory capabilities. They provided strategic planning to improve laboratory quality at the provincial as well as national level.



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