



**REPORT ON HIV SELF-TESTING TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR  
GHANET NGOs HELD FROM 4TH TO 6TH APRIL, 2023  
@ SPLENDOR HOTEL, KUMASI, ASHANTI REGION**



**GHANA HIV AND AIDS NETWORK (GHANET)**



# INTRODUCTION- DAY 1

Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), in partnership with National AIDS/STIs Control Program (NACP), held a three-day in-person Training Workshop on HIVST from 4th to 6th April, 2023, at Splendor Hotel, Kumasi.

## ATTENDANCE

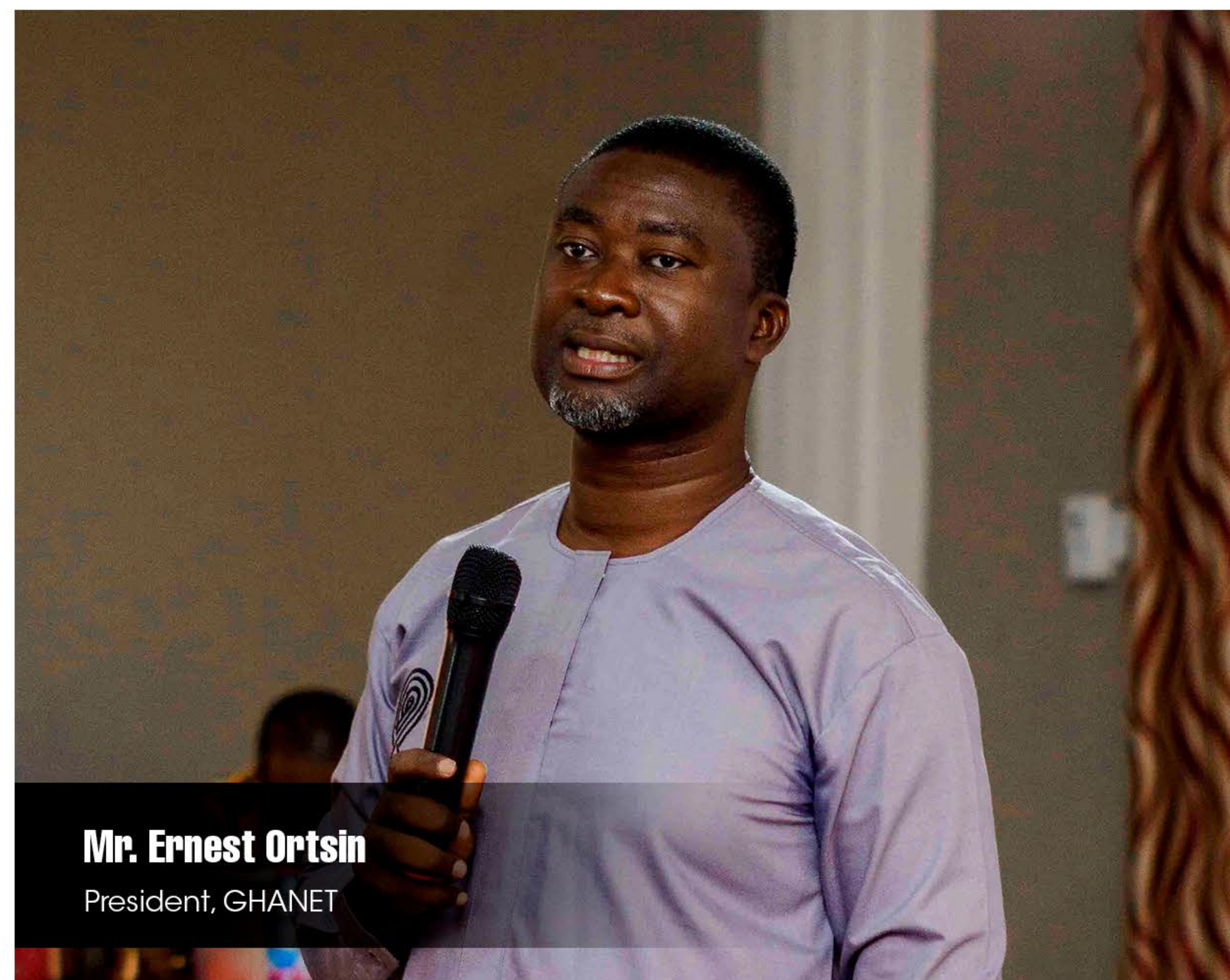
The meeting was attended by a total of 160 participants, comprising GHANET Secretariat, Directors from across the country, representing the various Implementing Partners on the HIVST Project, as well as their Volunteers Also, Officials from NACP, Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), and Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) were present.

## OPENING REMARKS

The National President of GHANET, Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin, in his opening remark, congratulated the entire membership of GHANET, especially directors of the various Implementing Partners (IPs) on the HIVST Project for their dedication towards the project. He commended the Volunteers from the various organizations for the hard work and perseverance to achieve the goals of the 1st quarter even though funds for activities delayed. He urged every individual to continue to work hard and build strong evidence for every work done in order to sustain the HIVST Project and also make the dream of 'repositioning GHANET' a reality. Mr. Ortsin advised leaders of the various IPs to 'clean their houses', to avoid being taken off the project, as there are plans being put in place towards a Monitoring and Evaluation exercise. Also, he mentioned that more than half of the total number of IPs have been able to link confirmed cases to care, and it is worth commending.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

On behalf of the Director General of GAC, Madam Olivia Graham, TSU, GAC, welcomed all participants to the Ashanti Region. She furnished participants with a brief overview of the current state of HIV in the region. "When it comes to HIV in Ghana, Ashanti Region is one of the prioritized regions because it is centrally located and highly populated", she stated. She said that mining activities in the region also contribute highly to the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region. She was optimistic and hoped that the Training Workshop would bring positive results to help accelerate the implementation process of activities GHANET undertakes



**Mr. Ernest Ortsin**  
President, GHANET

## PRESENTATIONS

### Financial Reporting

The National Treasurer of GHANET, Mr. Louis Acheampong, took participants through the financial reporting template designed for the project. He urged them to pay attention to the various steps in order not to make mistakes in their financial reports. This session was very interactive, as participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications.

### Basic Facts About HIV and AIDS

The keynote speaker, Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Program Manager, NACP, congratulated participants on a good work done, and the leadership of GHANET for their hard work and dedication. He encouraged participants to voice out all issues bothering them regarding implementation of the project at the end of his presentation. Dr. Ayisi Addo took participants



through the basic facts about HIV and AIDS. He elaborated on the four (4) modes of HIV transmission:

- Unprotected sex (peno-vaginal, peno-anal, oral)
- Mother-to-Child Transmission
- Blood and blood products
- Sharp instruments

He avers that women are more vulnerable and at risk to contract the virus than men due to the fact the female organ is more delicate and accommodating. Also, men are more likely to buy sex than women and culturally date, marry or have sexual affairs with multiple women, which also put women at higher risk.

At the end of the presentation, Dr. Ayisi Addo gave the opportunity to participants to ask questions and make inputs, especially from the experience on the field.

## Technical Reporting

The President of GHANET took participants through a Software Application developed for technical reporting, known as GHANET Information Management System (GIMS). Participants who did not have the Application were helped to install and those who could not navigate through the system were assisted. Step by step, Mr. Ortsin tested the Application and demonstrated how it works to help participants get familiarized with the system.

## DAY 2

### Recap of the Previous Day

After an opening prayer, Madam Victoria Araba Dadzie-Dennis, Vice President of GHANET, led participants through a recap of the previous day's activities. She asked participants to give a summary of the previous day's presentations and what lessons they took from them.

### Treatment and Care of People Living with HIV (PLHIV)

The Deputy Program Manager, NACP, narrated the history of HIV and its discovery. He stated that before the year 1980, HIV/AIDS was not in existence. He indicated that there have been several unfruitful attempts by scientists and other individuals to get a cure for HIV and AIDS. Dr. Ashinyo encouraged participants that even though HIV cannot be cured, it can be treated. He advised that HIV/AIDS is no longer a death sentence like it was in the past because there are efficient drugs

known as Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) which help people living with HIV (PLHIV) to live longer and stronger. These drugs are free and easy to access at ART centers of health facilities.

Dr. Ashinyo further informed participants that after a client gets enrolled on ART, he or she needs the support of the society to remain strong emotionally. He said that living or relating with an HIV positive person in the society like we do with any 'normal person' does not get one infected with HIV. He told participants that for them to be able to care for people living with HIV without discrimination and stigmatization, they need to educate themselves on what HIV is, how it is transmitted and how it is treated.

To end the presentation, Dr. Ashinyo mentioned that when an HIV positive person starts treatment and is consistent with the medications, he or she gets to a stage where the viral load gets suppressed. At this point, the client is undetected and cannot transfer the virus unto another person.



**Dr. Anthony Ashinyo**

Deputy Program Manager, NACP



Global Fund Grant Cycle 7 (GC7) Constituency Engagement/ Dialogue

Mr. Samuel Hackman, Executive Secretary of Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), made a presentation about the membership composition of the CCM. He indicated that it is made up of fifty (50) people; twenty-five (25) substantive members, each assisted by their alternate. He explained that CCM is a committee whose mandate is to develop grant proposals for the Global Fund (GF) and oversee implementation investment in Ghana. According to him, another opportunity is here for Ghana to apply to the GF for funding. The current funding ends this year, 2023. He explained that funds from GF is not for CCM but rather for every Ghanaian.

Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH)

Educating participants on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) and their preventive measures, Mr. Ernest Ortsin expounded the individual topics under the concept. He touched on some misconceptions associated with SEAH such as; victims being the cause and are to blame, women enjoying being pressured, only men being guilty of SEAH, women meaning 'yes' when they say 'no'.

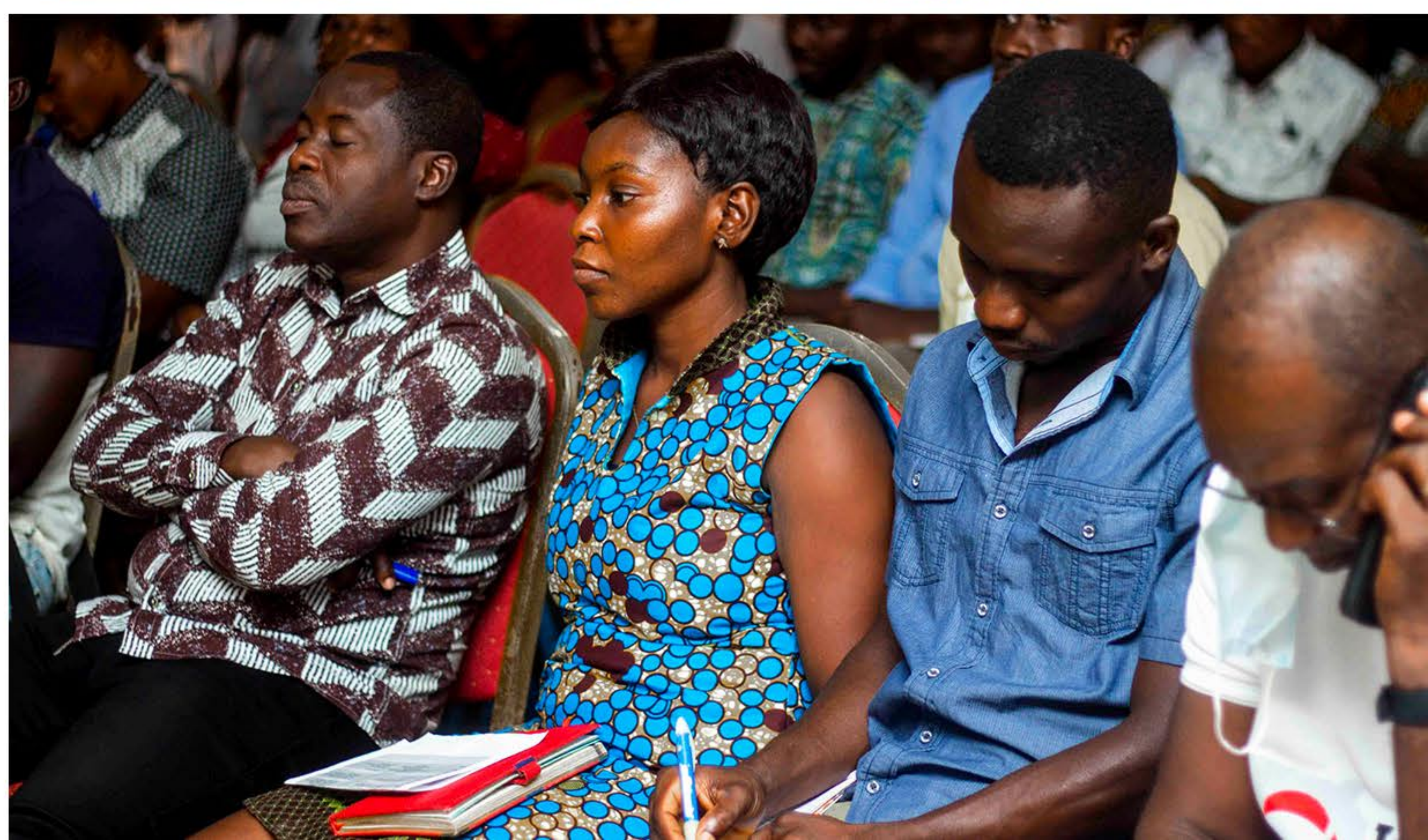
He further discussed how to report incidents of SEAH, support victims, legal implications, and how to prevent SEAH. Participants were allowed enough time for questions and contributions.



Some Critical Questions and Concerns from Participants and their Respective Responses after the Presentations

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
Must one disclose his/her HIV status when asking or offering help? What does the law say about disclosure of HIV status?	No, disclosure is voluntary. There are only 4 circumstances under which one's status can be disclosed without consent; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A court order for the HIV status of a rapist</li><li>• If a Health Worker is convinced that a person living with the virus is deliberately spreading it to people</li><li>• If a Health Worker believes that you can harm yourself due to your HIV status</li><li>• Your status can be disclosed to your employer to help take better decisions like reduction of work load but not to sack you or stigmatize</li></ul>
Does the HIVST kit have grace period after expiry?	No, do not use the kit after expiry
What is the appropriate time to use the kit?	There are clear instructions on the leaflet attached to the kit and must be followed. You may not get an accurate result if you do not wait for the stated time after eating or brushing your teeth before taking the test
Some persons with the virus deliberately default and spread the virus	Deliberately spreading the virus is a crime and punishable by law
Difficulty in retrieving used test kits from clients	It is not necessary to retrieve the used kits, rather teach them how to dispose them off properly
How do I explain to clients that HIV is not transmitted through saliva but saliva can be used for the ORAQUICK test?	It can be explained that the test kit does not look for the virus. Rather, it picks out antibodies produced when HIV infection takes place

















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