



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

# ANNUAL **REPORT**

---

2023





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1. Luo et al. Comparison of HIV oral fluid and plasma antibody results during early infection in a longitudinal Nigerian cohort. *Journal of Clinical Virology*, December 2013;58(Suppl 1):e113-8.

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## WELCOME MESSAGE

# TEST YOURSELF...KNOW YOUR STATUS

Dear Partners,

On behalf of the Executive Committee (EXECO), National Executive Council (NEC), and entire Membership of Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), it is my singular honour and privilege to present to you our 2023 Annual Report.



The year 2023 was particularly exhilarating for GHANET. It started on a rather propitious note when I got elected as Vice Chair of the Ghana Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund on 11<sup>th</sup> January. Then, by end of the same January, the National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), under the aegis of the Ghana Health Service (GHS) and Ministry of Health (MoH), concluded arrangements with GHANET to undertake pilot implementation of HIV-Self Testing (HIVST) at the community level across the country.

By 19<sup>th</sup> July, GHANET made news headlines, both nationally and internationally, following the successful launch of the HIVST project. It was launched by the Minister of Health, Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu. The day, more or less, marked a rebirth for GHANET as the Network experienced unprecedented media publicity. Social media coverage of the launch which was dubbed **"Test Yourself...Know Your Status"** was massive and it received mentions on the social media handles of both UNAIDS and World Health Organization (WHO), as well as coverage by BBC, among others.

Beyond our expectation, the HIVST pilot implementation was widely embraced by Ghanaians from all walks of life. In the course of the year, we distributed about 140,000 HIVST kits and we were able to put 202 persons on Antiretroviral treatment (ART). These are persons who tested reactive, underwent confirmatory tests in health facilities (based on the prescribed three-test algorithm) and self-reported their positive status. Notably, majority of these Persons Living with HIV (PLHIV) were first time testers who took advantage of the convenience of the HIVST kits to know their status.

In this Report, we have some exciting activity reports, as well as colourful photos from some of our events. The most thrilling ones for me are the photos from the health walk that took place in November (from Ayi Mensah to Peduase). Indeed, the vibe and energy of that event was electric. For a long time to come, I will relish the memory.

There are several other super-exciting activity reports ranging from stakeholder engagements we held with Traditional Leaders (Chiefs and Queen Mothers), Journalists, Assembly Members, GHS Regional HIV Focal Persons, Ghana AIDS Commission – Technical Support Unit (GAC-TSU) Coordinators and selected private sector health professionals (including Community Practice Pharmacists).

We are very grateful to all our partners for their continued support. It is my fervent hope and prayer that 2024 will take GHANET to the next level, even as we expand our portfolio of partnerships and programmes.

Thank You! and Happy Reading!!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin'.

Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin  
(President)



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## ABOUT GHANET

**G**hana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET) is the leading Civil Society Organization (CSO) in the fight against HIV and AIDS in Ghana. With a membership of over 250 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), GHANET has presence in every nook and cranny across the 16 regions of Ghana.

The President of GHANET serves on the Governing Board of the Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) which is under the Office of the President of the Republic of Ghana. GHANET is also represented on the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

At the national level, GHANET leads in advocacy campaigns and analysis of public policies on HIV and AIDS. Through its collaboration with GAC, the Network has contributed towards the preparation of several National Strate-

By way of implementation strategy, projects under GHANET are carried out by the constituent member organisations (at the community level). This way, the Network is able to rapidly deploy its members to implement projects timeously and efficiently. Transparency and accountability are core values of the Network.

The Network traces its beginnings to May 1996 when it was established to rally together NGOs, Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) that had started public campaigns on HIV and AIDS, as part of the national response.

It is duly registered under the Companies Code, 1963 (Act 179) and also with other relevant state regulatory agencies.

GHANET is highly committed to working in partnership with other CSO networks and development partners.



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



# OUR FOCUS



## Community Mobilization

We are a grassroots organization and we have a specialty in mobilizing local communities for concerted action. We work hand-in-hand with chiefs, queen mothers, opinion leaders, religious leaders, assembly members, women groups, youth groups etc.



## Advocacy

We are always at the forefront of advocacy issues relating to HIV and AIDS policy, funding, prevention, treatment, care and support, stigma and discrimination, and human rights.



## Resource Mobilization

We are constantly engaging donors, development partners and government to mobilize funds for HIV and AIDS interventions across the country.



## Capacity Building

On regular basis we organize capacity-building workshops for our member NGOs, especially in the areas of evidence-based technical and financial reporting, as well as effective communication and fundraising.



## Research

Our members are always collecting data on the field through implementation of their various projects and we collaborate with research institutions and professionals to churn out relevant information on HIV and AIDS.



## Monitoring and Evaluation

Through a knowledge management information system, we monitor and evaluate the work of our Member NGOs to document best practices, success stories, and lessons learnt.



## Networking

We work closely with fellow CSO Networks represented at the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund, particularly Network of People living with HIV (NAP+), Stop TB Partnership Ghana (STBPG), Ghana TB Voice Network (GTBVN) and Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health (GCNH). We also maintain healthy working relationships with other CSOs with whom we share common goals and aspirations.

## Vision

Towards an HIV & AIDS-free society

### Mission

To be the lead CSO, working in partnership with international and local collaborators, to end HIV & AIDS and other emerging viral pandemics in Ghana.

### Objectives

- To provide a platform for rapid deployment of HIV & AIDS services at the community level by involving all stakeholders in support of the national response.
- To monitor and evaluate activities of CSOs at the community level to ensure effective implementation of the national HIV & AIDS response.
- To build the capacity of member and non-member NGOs, CBOs, and stakeholders to increase their competence in the implementation of the National HIV & AIDS Response.
- To engage donors, government, and stakeholders in the mobilization of resources toward the national response.
- To create and maintain linkages and partnerships with Regional, National, and International Networks in support of the national response.



# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



**Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis**  
Vice President



**Mr. Andrew Yilob Embireh**  
Secretary



**Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin**  
President

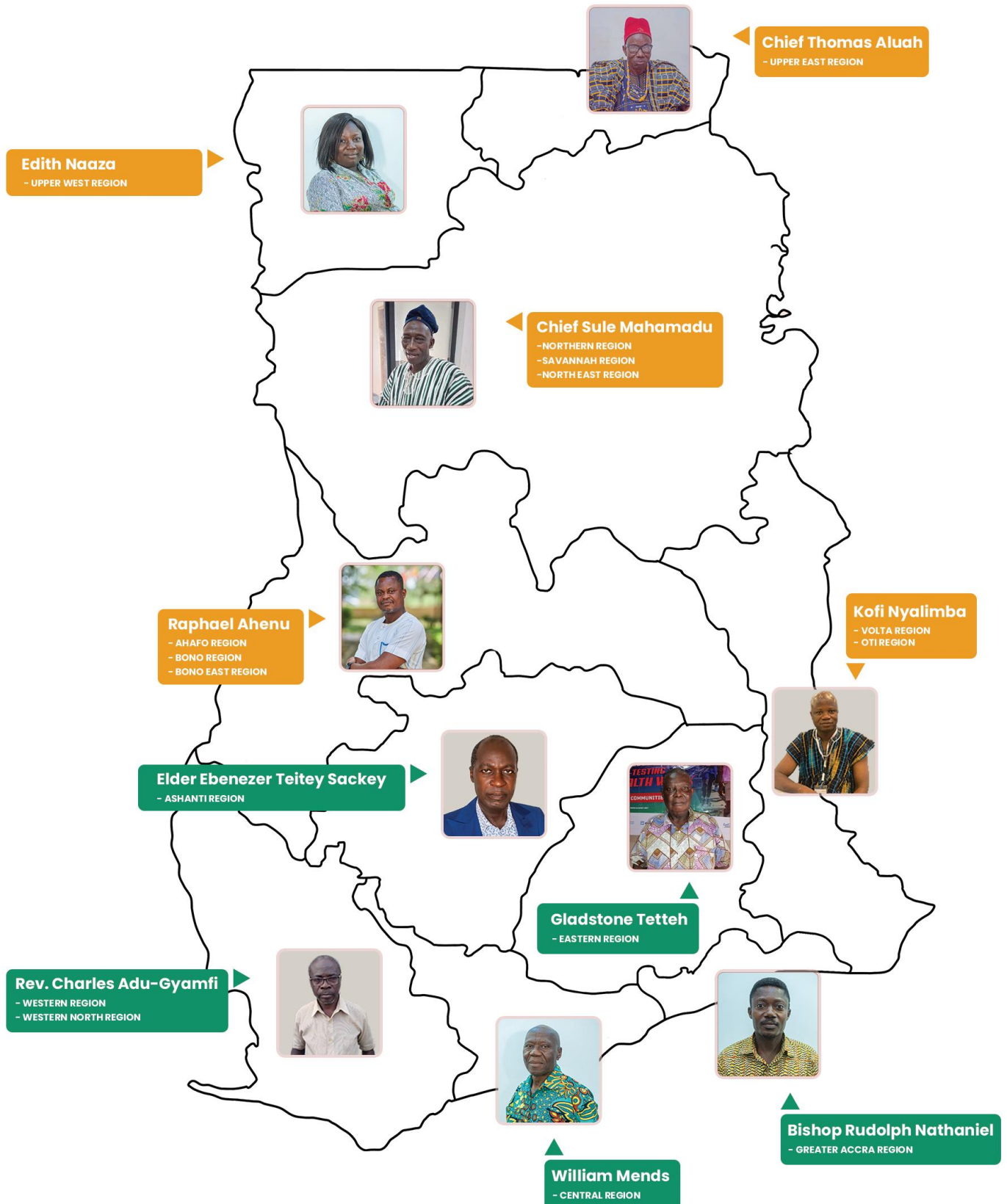


**Mr. Louis Acheampong**  
Treasurer



**Mr. Patrick Anamoo**  
Public Relations Officer

# REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS





# REGIONAL EXECUTIVES

## UPPER WEST



**Edith Naaza**  
CHAIRPERSON



**David Balooro**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**David Gaanye**  
SECRETARY



**Wowo Anbakpire Simon**  
TREASURER



**Matthew Vaari**  
PRO

## UPPER EAST



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CHAIRPERSON



**Alagskomah Noble**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Thomas Abagmbire**  
SECRETARY



**Kanluke Patricia**  
TREASURER



**Ebenezer Awine Amongba**  
PRO

## NORTHERN, SAVANNAH & NORTH EAST



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CHAIRPERSON



**Azara Mahamadu**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Sa-ad Ali**  
SECRETARY



**Fuseini Shayawu**  
TREASURER



**Ibrahim Abdallah**  
PRO

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CHAIRPERSON



**Mustapha Yeboah**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Simon Azumah Asore**  
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**Angela Essel**  
TREASURER



**Baffour Mensah Amos**  
PRO

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CHAIRPERSON



**Martha Jonah**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Selina Ekuban**  
SECRETARY



**Rev Samuel Ekow Panford**  
TREASURER



**Robert Cobbina Jonah**  
PRO

# REGIONAL EXECUTIVES

## ASHANTI



**Elder Ebenezer Teitey Sackey**  
CHAIRPERSON



**Justice Owuraku Bofo**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Haruna Yoda**  
SECRETARY



**Ninsau Helen**  
TREASURER



**Siaka Stevens**  
PRO

## EASTERN



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CHAIRPERSON



**Isaac Acheampong Fianko**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Bright Owusu**  
SECRETARY



**Abdul Muhaimin Yakub**  
TREASURER



**Nana Akuamoah Yaw**  
PRO

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CHAIRPERSON



**Deborah Dzifa Gavi**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**David Alormene**  
SECRETARY



**Gershon Kugbeadzor**  
TREASURER



**Gustav Boni**  
PRO

## WESTERN & WESTERN NORTH



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CHAIRPERSON



**Alberta Kwofie**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Eva Ankrach**  
SECRETARY



**Agbanyanklu Richmond**  
TREASURER



**Desire Agor**  
PRO

## GREATER ACCRA



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CHAIRPERSON



**Comfort Quarshie**  
VICE CHAIRPERSON



**Jack Dawson**  
SECRETARY



**Bishop Abraham Annoh**  
TREASURER



**Nicholas Duho**  
PRO



# NATIONAL SECRETARIAT



**Bernice Ababio**  
Administrative Manager



**Joana Armoo Polley**  
Lead Counsellor



**Prince Amugi Nmai**  
Assistant Counsellor



**Cynthia Adolowine**  
Office Assistant



**Kwamina M. Dawson Amoah**  
Multimedia Specialist





## NATIONAL LAUNCH OF HIV SELF-TESTING (HIVST) INITIATIVE



### Special Guest of Honour

Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu  
(Minister for Health)



### Chairman

Nii Ahele Nunoo III  
(Mantse, Abola Traditional Area)



### Host

Hon. Elizabeth Naa Kwatsoe Tawiah Sackey  
(Mayor of Accra)



### Venue

Omanye Aba Hall of the Accra Metropolitan  
Assembly



### Date

July 19, 2023



### No. of Participants

341





The National Launch of HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) in Ghana was held at the Omanyee Abo Hall of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly on July 19, 2023. The event which was held under the theme, **"Test Yourself: Know Your Status"** attracted 341 participants. Some of the participants included the following dignitaries:

- Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu – Minister for Health
- Nii Ahele Nunoo III – Mantse, Abola Traditional Area
- Hon. Elizabeth Naa Kwatsoe Tawiah Sackey – Mayor of Accra
- Dr. Mokowa Blay Adu-Gyamfi – Presidential Advisor on HIV/AIDS at the Office of the President
- Hon. Sebastian Sandaare – Member of Parliament for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency
- Mr. Hector Sucilla Perez – UNAIDS, Country Director
- Dr. Kyeremeh Atuahene – Director-General, Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC)
- Dr. Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe – Director of Public Health, Ghana Health Service, representing the Director General (Dr. Patrick Kuma-Aboagye)
- Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo – Programme Manager, National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP)
- Mrs. Elsie Ayeh – President, Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS.





## OPENING REMARKS

The event was chaired by Nii Ahele Nunoo III (Mantse, Abola Traditional Area) who, in his opening remarks, thanked all the participants for being present and indicated that he was well pleased to be in the midst of all the dignitaries present.

According to Nii Nunoo III, it was a rare honour and privilege for him to be selected to chair an event as prestigious as the National Launch of HIVST initiative. He informed the participants that they were gathered to be enlightened on how to know their HIV status by themselves and at their own convenience.

Nii Nunoo III explained that, it is very necessary for individuals to know their HIV status so that they can be guided to choose less risky lifestyles. He expressed the hope that the program would serve as a catalyst to improve participants' knowledge about HIV and consequently embrace HIVST.



**Nii Ahele Nunoo III**

Mantse, Abola Traditional Area



**Hon. Elizabeth Naa Kwatsoe Tawiah Sackey**

Mayor of Accra

Mr. Jacob Acquah Andoh (Public Relations Officer, GHS) was the master of ceremony (MC) of the program which was streamed live on virtual platforms including Facebook and Zoom.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

Hon. Elizabeth Naa Kwatsoe Tawiah Sackey, Mayor of Accra, welcomed participants with a warm smile and entreated them to "feel at home." She expressed her elation at the choice of Omanyeba Hall as the venue for the National Launch and commended the Minister for Health for his visionary leadership and commitment to the health and wellbeing of the nation. She stated that, from her experience, an event such as a National Launch required great deal of effort and planning. She, therefore, commended the Planning Committee for successfully putting together the event.

Hon. Sackey mentioned that the presence of high-profile stakeholders was an indication of the overall importance of the program. She pledged the support of her office towards the HIVST initiative and committed to making sure that HIV and AIDS campaigns would be revived in the Accra Metropolitan area.

The Mayor urged the participants to keep in mind that knowledge and awareness of issues relating to HIV and AIDS are critical in the fight against the disease. She indicated that testing one's self empowers the individual to know their status, seek necessary care and support, and make informed decisions that can impact their lives positively. She further reminded the participants not to underestimate the potential threat of HIV and AIDS on the society and encouraged everyone to support the vision of making Ghana an HIV-free nation.

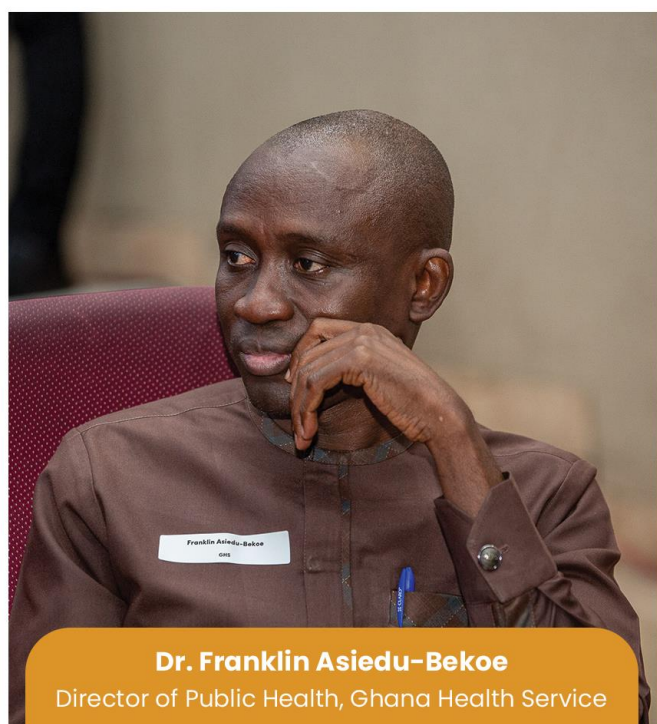


## PURPOSE OF GATHERING

Dr. Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe, Director of Public Health, Ghana Health Service (GHS), representing the Director-General of the Service (Dr. Patrick Kuma-Aboagye), welcomed participants to the launch. He announced that the Ministry of Health (MoH), through GHS, has been implementing several interventions towards achieving the UNAIDS' 95-95-95 targets. He identified HIVST as one of these interventions under the Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) module. He intimated that HIVST has been proven globally as being effective for the discovery of hidden HIV cases and facilitating linkage to care of Persons Living with HIV (PLHIV).

Dr. Bekoe stated that the GHS, through the NACP, in collaboration with GAC and partners, developed the relevant policy and guidelines for this initiative and the guidelines include community sensitization, online and in-person capacity building, training for stakeholders, technical evaluation of selected HIVST kits, and procurement and testing of kits. He further indicated that the purpose of the launch was to climax all the previous efforts towards introducing HIVST in Ghana. He added that this would pave way for a national scale-up and enable Ghana to improve on her first 95 from the current 72% to 95% by 2025.

Dr. Bekoe thanked all Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations for the support given to GHS to come thus far. He further urged participants to contribute towards a successful implementation of the HIVST pilot, as well as the plans to scale up the intervention. He expressed optimism that the remaining 28% of PLHIV would be found sooner than later and be linked to care. He entreated every Ghanaian to embrace the HIVST initiative as part of efforts to bring healthcare to the doorsteps of all and sundry, stressing the motto of GHS: **"Your health is our concern"**.



**Dr. Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe**

Director of Public Health, Ghana Health Service

## RELEVANCE OF HIV SELF-TESTING IN GHANA

Addressing participants, Dr. Kyeremeh Atuahene, Director General, Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) noted that it was a great honor to be present at the occasion of the launch of HIVST. Originally billed to give an overview of the HIV and AIDS situation in the country, Dr. Kyeremeh indicated that, due to the importance he attached to the launch, he would not want any other HIV data to compete with the subject matter of "HIVST" in the media space for the next one to two weeks. He therefore focused his presentation on the processes that led to the formulation of the HIVST policy guidelines. He thanked the GHS, NACP, GHANET, Development Partners and all stakeholders for working assiduously towards the launch of HIVST in Ghana after the policy on self-testing was adopted.

Dr. Atuahene informed the participants that they were gathered in order to be introduced to an important innovation to help address a critical gap that continues to challenge the national progress towards the elimination of HIV and AIDS: case detection. He explained that, the ability of a country to diagnose its HIV population is the key determinant of success towards achieving the 95-95-95 goals. This is because HIV testing is the entry route to the treatment cascade; therefore, the achievement of the second and third 95s hinge on the first 95.



**Dr. Kyeremeh Atuahene**

Director-General, Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC)

Dr. Atuahene declared that, at the current rate of progress, Ghana is unlikely to achieve the 95-95-95 targets by the end of 2025. According to him, as at December 2022, Ghana had only achieved 72%, compared to 82% in West and Central Africa. He, however, expressed confidence that from the progress made by GHANET, so far, he sees HIVST as a gamechanger that would enable the country achieve the targets. He noted that from what he has read about some countries concerning the initiative of self-testing, it appears Ghana has done very well in the first year of HIVST Program. GHANET has been able to distribute about 70,000 self-test kits in the last 6 months, as against 28,000 in the UK in the first 8



months. He emphasized that without knowing one's HIV status, individuals cannot access appropriate prevention services, initiate treatment if positive, or contribute effectively towards breaking the chain of HIV transmission. He said that testing is the foundation upon which effective HIV prevention and care programs are anchored, hence, the need to scale up HIV testing.

Dr. Atuahene added that HIVST is an additional innovative solution to address the gaps in HIV testing and encourage more people to know their HIV status. He pointed out that HIVST gives individuals the empowerment to discretely and conveniently test themselves, adding that by expanding access to self-testing, Ghana can overcome concerns about privacy and confidentiality issues that usually deter individuals from seeking traditional testing services. He stressed that, in the national pursuit to end the HIV epidemic, priority must be given to key, hard-to-reach, and underserved populations.

Ending his presentation, Dr. Atuahene outlined some critical measures that would ensure increased uptake of HIVST services: procedure for testing, linkage of testers to health facilities for further diagnoses, counselling and treatment or prevention services.

Dr. Atuahene admonished the participants that HIV is still a public health threat in Ghana as the number of new infections average about 16,400, annually. He added that the situation calls for urgent actions to prevent further transmission by providing treatment for those living with HIV, and ensuring equitable access to health care services for all. He encouraged People Living with HIV (PLHIV) who are on anti-retroviral therapy (ART) to adhere to treatment in order to achieve and maintain a virally suppressed status to enjoy good health and productive life.



## ROLLOUT OF HIV SELF-TESTING IN GHANA

Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager of NACP, expressed delight to see July 19, 2023, because to him, the day symbolized triumph over all the obstacles that delayed the National Launch. He revealed that earlier plans to launch the HIVST in the first and second quarters of the year were unsuccessful due to a barrage of challenges. Therefore, the day marked a major milestone. He explained that HIVST is an evolution from provider-initiated testing and counselling with a 7 to 14 day results turnaround time, through couple counselling and testing, through family-based index testing and counselling to HIV testing and linkage to treatment, care and support.

Dr. Addo indicated that, today, a 'lay person' can receive and test himself or herself without the presence and direct supervision of any health care worker, in the comfort of their confidential space and get results within 20 minutes using HIVST kits. He informed the participants that HIVST is intended to complement the routine tests conducted by trained service providers. Hence, a reactive HIVST result must be confirmed by the routine algorithm using the three different tests in series before a person is declared to be HIV positive. He further explained that, unlike malaria, one cannot be declared positive for HIV without confirmatory tests. This is especially due to the high incidence of stigma related to the disease.

Dr. Ayisi Addo announced that in 2016, Ghana adopted the "Treat All" policy and developed a manual for HIV Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) module of care in 2018. He said since HIV testing is the entry point to treatment and viral



load monitoring, differentiated HIV testing is an important intervention, expected to improve access to HIV screening services. He further indicated that the HIV and AIDS National Strategic Plans (2016 – 2020, and 2021 – 2025) provide the strategic direction for the roll-out of HIVST. He stated that, in March 2020, the GHS, through NACP constituted a technical working group to come out with the requisite technical guidelines and necessary protocols for the rollout of this intervention.

He noted that Ghana begun implementation this year to support key population-led approach and accelerate progress towards the 95-95-95 goals. He noted that EpiC, with strong support from USAID, GAC, UN Partners and other stakeholders (particularly the NACP-led committee) accelerated key components of the implementation plan that led to the jumpstart of HIVST implementation in two regions among key populations in March 2021.

He said that the key components of the implementation plan included technical evaluation, quantification and forecasting, procurement of HIVST kits, selection of two regions (Ashanti and Greater Accra), and health facilities for the HIVST delivery. He further indicated that there was an adaptation of self-test monitoring tools and training of 25 national HIVST master trainers, selected from local NGOs and CSOs, and clinicians who cascaded to 189 community volunteer staff of local partners and healthcare workers in the two regions. He added that there was a human-centered virtual intervention established for local HIVST delivery that is being led SH:24, a UK-based online sexual reproductive health service provider, through the Global Fund DSD Strategic Initiatives (DSD-SI). He further that this is expected to contribute to increasing the uptake by key populations.

Dr. Ayisi Addo mentioned that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with GHANET in the first quarter of 2023 to undertake implementation of HIVST in 50 districts across the country. He said as he spoke, GHANET had distributed about 70,000 self-test kits in the 50 districts. He further mentioned that a supportive tele-counselling centre has been established at the



**Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo**

Programme Manager, NACP

GHANET secretariat where counselling is given to both negative and positive clients.

Dr. Ayisi Addo further revealed that there were some challenges which included delayed technical assistance, stock out of routine tests for confirmation, limited funds, and high community and self-stigma. He explained that one of the feedbacks he received from the pilot of the HIVST is that, some tested reactive but were negative on confirmation and that this is not unusual at all. He said the HIVST is a trial test and always needs confirmatory test. He added that there will be procurement of more kits for the HIVST intervention.

Concluding his presentation, he extended appreciation to the Global Fund, UNAIDS, USAID, GAC, CSOs, leadership of GHS, and MoH for the encouragement and support. He expressed his excitement about the prospects of the HIVST initiative and urged everyone to keep supporting its implementation in order for the country to achieve the 95-95-95 goals.





## DOCUMENTARY



A documentary on the HIVST implementation by GHANET was aired to the participants. Featured in the documentary were Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Mr. Ernest Ortsin, Ms Gertrude Nunoo (EpiC Project Manager), Enoch Assan Ninson (Project Manager, SH:24), Mr. Kofi Yalley (K. Yalley Co. Ltd.), Dr. Henry Nagai (Chief of Party, JSI).

The documentary highlighted the history and current situation of HIV/AIDS in Ghana and the past and present interventions put in place to curb the menace. The individuals who represented the various Implementing Partners and organizations narrated the roles they play to make the HIVST project tick.

Dr. Ayisi Addo reiterated that, in order to end HIV, focus must be on the first 95. He reported that, at the end of 2022, Ghana was at 72% against the first 95% target. Mr. Ernest Ortsin explained that GHANET was implementing the HIVST project with 50 member NGOs in 50 districts across the country.

The documentary illustrated how volunteers of the implementing NGOs go about the distribution of the self-testing kits in the communities. Some of the volunteers narrated that while some members of the community were impressed with the HIVST initiative because of the convenience and confidentiality it provides, others did not want to entertain any discussions on HIV testing.

Dr. Henry Nagai stated that there are several interventions that the country has been able to provide for citizens and one of them is HIVST kits. He said that, HIVST is a way to empower individuals to know their HIV status in the comfort of their homes. He expressed joy that Ghana is finally implementing HIVST on a large scale. The documentary also highlighted some advantages of the HIVST, including the fact that it provides privacy, gives quick results, is convenient and confidential.

## DEMONSTRATION OF HIVST KITS

A team of volunteers on the HIVST project, led by Mr. Nicholas Duho, demonstrated to participants how to use the Oraquick HIVST kit. Mr. Duho informed participants that before the procedure begins, the hands must be clean. After that, the tester should check the expiry date on the pack and also ensure that it is well sealed. He mentioned that when you open the pack, there is a manual that gives directives on how to test. Also, there is a stand, a liquid known as chase buffer, and the test kit. He told participants to fix the tube of chase buffer on the stand and put it on a flat surface. After that, the tester must proceed to swab the test kit on the upper and lower gum (only once) and put it in the tube. He said after this, testers should time themselves 20 minutes after which they can check the results.

Mr. Duho proceeded to explain to participants how results on the HIVST kits are read. He explained that the test kit has a control (C) and test (T) columns and if there are two lines, that is on both C and T, it means the result is reactive and the individual has to go for a confirmatory test at the nearest health facility.

However, if there is only one line and it is on C, it means non-reactive. He added further that in cases where there are no lines at all or there is only one line and it is on T, it means that the result is invalid. He advised that testers must wait for at least 30 minutes after eating or 15 minutes after brushing their teeth. Otherwise, chemical reactions from the food and toothpaste could interfere with the result (i.e. a false reactive or false negative).



## SOLIDARITY MESSAGES

### OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Amb. Mokowa Blay Adu-Gyamfi, Presidential Advisor on HIV and AIDS, represented the Office of the President. She conveyed a message of warm felicitations on behalf of H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, who incidentally, is the Chairperson of the Ghana AIDS Commission Governing Board. She used the occasion to accentuate the commitment of the president towards attaining the 95-95-95 UNAIDS targets and also towards ending HIV and AIDS as a public health threat in the country by the year 2030.



**Dr. Amb. Mokowa Blay Adu-Gyamfi**  
Presidential Advisor on HIV and AIDS

### DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez, UNAIDS Country Director, highlighted the significant roles of the various development partners towards the materialization of the HIVST project in Ghana. He encouraged everyone to get tested and convince other people to do so. He affirmed the commitment of Development Partners towards ending HIV and AIDS in Ghana, and the world at large, by 2030.



**Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez**  
UNAIDS Country Director

### PARLIAMENT OF GHANA

Hon. Sebastian Sandaare, Member of Parliament for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency, praised the organizers of the launch for the invitation extended to Members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Health. He assured participants of the support of Parliament in the deployment of HIVST and, ultimately, the fight to end HIV and AIDS by 2030.



**Hon. Sebastian Sandaare**  
Member of Parliament for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa  
Constituency



## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

On behalf of Civil Society Organizations, Mrs. Elsie Ayeh, President of Network of Persons Living with HIV (NAP+), acknowledged the importance of HIVST. She testified to participants that, there is life after testing positive for HIV and that it is not the end of the world as some people believe. She encouraged every individual to take charge of their lives and get tested in order to know their HIV status. She pledged the support of all CSO networks towards the implementation of the HIVST project.



**Mrs. Elsie Ayeh**

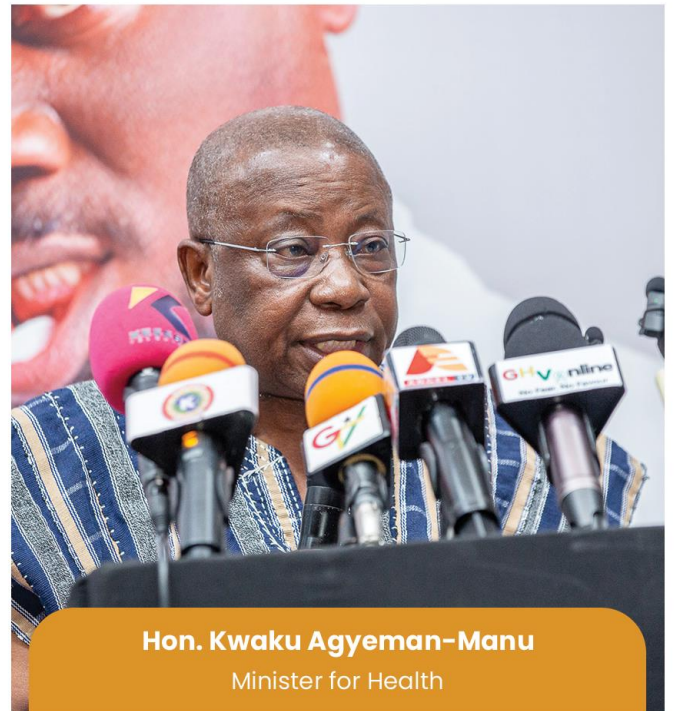
President of Network of Persons Living with HIV (NAP+)

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS AND OFFICIAL LAUNCH

Upon taking the podium, as the keynote speaker for the occasion, the Honorable Minister for Health, Kwaku Agyeman-Manu, informed the participants that he was indisposed but due to the importance he attached to HIV and AIDS, he had to defy his doctor's advice to be present. He declared that the purpose of the launch was not only to outdoor the HIVST kits but particularly to advocate for people to boldly test. He expressed immense pride as he performed the launching ceremony. He noted that the theme, **"Test Yourself, Know Your Status"**, was appropriate considering recent increase in new HIV infections in the country. According to him, it was a rare privilege for the Minister for Health to participate in such a momentous milestone in the effort to combat HIV. He proclaimed that the availability of the HIVST kits is a significant step forward in the quest to relegate HIV and AIDS to the doldrums.

After briefing participants on the current situation of HIV in the country, and the world at large, Hon. Agyeman-Manu emphasized that testing is the foundation upon which the entire national response to HIV is built. He stressed that, testing is the gateway to prevention, treatment, care and support services.

The Honourable Minister announced that the country



**Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu**

Minister for Health

was embarking on a new chapter in the fight against the HIV epidemic. The launching of the HIVST initiative, according to the Minister, was aimed at expanding access to HIV testing services by increasing early detection, reducing stigma and ensuring timely intervention and treatment for all who need it.

Hon. Agyeman-Manu commended the National Planning Committee, partners and all individuals who worked tirelessly to make the National Launch a success. In his final words, Hon. Agyeman-Manu declared the HIVST program officially launched.

## CLOSING REMARKS

In his closing remarks, the chairman exhorted participants to help spread the **"gospel of HIVST"** to every household and also participate in self-testing. He thanked participants for coming for the National Launch of the HIVST and wished them well.



**Bishop Dr. John Kwaku Asante**

Rep. of Christian Council of Ghana



## CONCLUSION

Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis, Vice President of GHANET, rendered the vote of thanks in which she expressed appreciation to all present. She noted that, the proceedings of the launch indicated the willingness of all partners and individuals to fight and eradicate the HIV epidemic. After a closing prayer was said, participants took group photos and also visited exhibition booths mounted by HIVST suppliers.

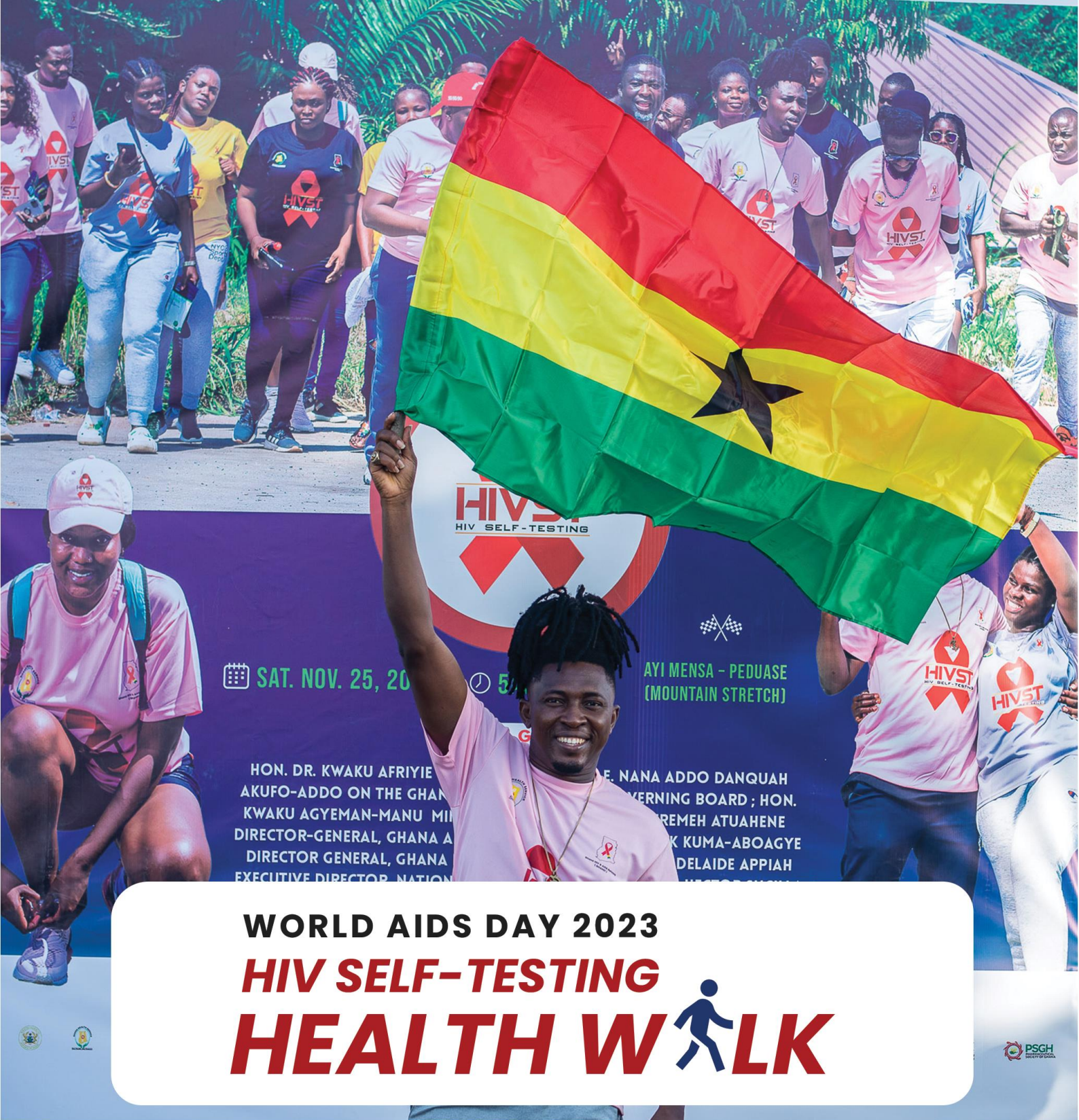


**Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis**

Vice President, GHANET







#### SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOUR

Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez  
(Country Director, UNAIDS)



#### HOST

Hon. Jennifer Dede Adjabeng  
(Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) for  
La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality)



#### DATE

November 25, 2023



#### STARTING - FINISHING POINT

Ayi Mensa (La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality)  
to Peduase (Eastern Region)



#### SIDE ATTRACTIONS

Colour Splashing, Aerobiccs, 360 Camera  
Video & Kenkey Party



#### NO. OF PARTICIPANTS

800 (est.)





On Saturday, November 25, 2023, GHANET organized a health walk that was aimed at raising awareness about HIV self-testing. The event was also part of the activities to celebrate the 2023 World AIDS Day under the theme **"LET COMMUNITIES LEAD."** The walk commenced at 6am from Ayi Mensa in the La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality and ended at Peduase in the Eastern Region.

The walk attracted approximately 800 people, including dignitaries such as Hon. Jennifer Dede Adjabeng (Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) for La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality), Hon. Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare (MP for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency, Upper West Region), Mr Héctor Sucilla Pérez (UNAIDS Country Director), Dr. Rita Owusu-Amankwah (represented the Director General, Ghana AIDS Commission), Dr. Elizabeth Agyare (WHO Representative), Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo (Programme Manager, National AIDS/STI Control Programme), Ms. Refilwe M. Kotane, Product Manager - Public Health, MEA, Abbott, Ernest Amoabeng Orsin (President of GHANET), Mrs Victoria Araba Dadzie-Dennis (Vice President of GHANET) and Louis Acheampong (Treasurer of GHANET).

Speaking at a brief ceremony, before the procession, the MCE for La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality thanked the organizers for choosing her municipality

as the starting point of the walk. She noted that, HIV cases have been increasing in recent times, across the country. Hence, the need for more awareness to be created. She declared that her office was ready to collaborate with all stakeholders committed to the fight against HIV. She prayed for a successful event.



**Hon. Jennifer Dede Adjabeng**

MCE for La Nkwantanang-Madina Municipality



Other speakers at the end of the walk included Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez, who applauded GHANET for the initiative. He indicated that walks, as a form of exercise, are good for the body and mind. He expressed hope that all participants would make it a habit to exercise regularly. He pledged UNAIDS' support to all activities that seek to give prominence for communities, in line with the global theme calling on communities to lead.

Ms. Refilwe M. Kotane, Abbott, flew in from South Africa to join the walk. She expressed her company's elation to be part of the event and congratulated GHANET for exhibiting exceptional organizational skills. "I wasn't expecting this kind of crowd. I thought it was going to be a small group of people walking; but seeing this number of participants, I am overwhelmed."

Hon. Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare, who is a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Health, used the occasion to call for more government support for HIV and AIDS programming. He lamented that HIV and AIDS awareness campaigns had decreased, which may be contributing to the rising figures.

Also speaking during the walk, Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo called on the general public to test and know their status because Ghana is committed to attaining the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets. "Unless people test and know their status, we cannot identify those who need to be put on treatment".

Dr. Ayisi Addo revealed that, at present, about 100,000 people are HIV positive in Ghana but are unaware. "That is why we need to take HIV testing very seriously. Self-testing is an innovation which supports our efforts to encourage more people to test. I therefore urge everyone to test and know their status. HIV is no longer a death sentence. We have Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) available."



**Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez**

Country Director, UNAIDS



**Ms. Refilwe M. Kotane**

Product Manager - Public Health, MEA, Abbott



**Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo**

Programme Manager, NACP



**Hon. Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare**

MP for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency, Upper West Region



On behalf of Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC), Dr. Rita Owusu-Amankwah, Director of Policy and Planning, acknowledged the zeal of the participants to get to the end point of the walk. She said that their presence spoke volumes about their commitment to their health.

She stressed on the need on the importance of knowing ones' status. "HIV self-testing empowers us with the knowledge we need to protect ourselves and our loved ones," she stated.

Dr. Elizabeth Agyare, representing the WHO, called for unity and determination in the fight against the virus. She highlighted the progress and challenges in the ongoing fight against HIV, urging national focus on addressing vulnerabilities and disparities.

She also called for a renewed commitment to evidence-based strategies, scientific innovation, and social justice principles, with emphasis on the importance of amplifying the voices of those affected. She expressed gratitude to all participants for their dedication, inspiring hope for a future free from the scourge of HIV and AIDS.

Speaking to the media at the end of the event, Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis, Vice President of GHANET, thanked the media for the massive interest they had shown in the event. She implored them to continue propagating the message of HIV and AIDS and to always collaborate with GHANET.



**Dr. Rita Owusu-Amankwah**

Director of Policy and Planning, GAC



**Dr. Elizabeth Agyare**

World Health Organisation (WHO)











## HIV SELF-TESTING TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR GHANET NGOs



### KEY SPEAKERS

Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager, NACP  
Dr. Anthony Ashinyo, Deputy Programme Manager, NACP  
Mr. Samuel Hackman, Executive Secretary of the  
Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM)



### KEY TOPICS

- Training and Information on HIVST
- Global Fund Grant Cycle 7 (GC7) Constituency Engagement
- Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH)



### PARTICIPANTS

160



### VENUE

Splendor Hotel,  
Kumasi, Ashanti Region



### DATE

April 4 to 6, 2023





A three-day in-person training workshop on HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) was organized by GHANET under the auspices of National AIDS/STIs Control Program (NACP).

Key speakers and participants included: Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin, President of GHANET, Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis, Vice President of GHANET, Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager, NACP, Ghana Health Service, Ministry of Health, Dr. Anthony Ashinyo, Deputy Programme Manager, NACP, Mr. Samuel Hackman, Executive Secretary, Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), Mr. Louis Acheampong, Treasurer, GHANET, and Madam Olivia Graham, Coordinator of Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC) – Technical Support Unit (GAC-TSU).

The Workshop took place from April 4 to 6, 2023 at Splendor Hotel in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. It brought together all the implementing NGOs and their volunteers from the 50 implementation districts across the country.

The workshop sought to provide training and information on HIVST, including financial reporting, basic facts about HIV and AIDS, technical reporting, treatment and care of Global Fund Grant Cycle 7 (GC7) Constituency Engagement, and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH).

The speakers took turns to make their various presentations and created the opportunity for interactive Q&A sessions. Participants were provided with information, guidance, and resources to enhance their understanding of HIV and AIDS, financial reporting, technical reporting, and prevention measures related to HIVST. The workshop emphasized the importance of collaboration, education, and adherence to guidelines and protocols in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

Additionally, critical questions and concerns from participants were addressed with detailed responses to ensure clarity and understanding.
















## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENTS

 COMMUNITY / OPINION LEADERS	 DATE	 Venue
Traditional Leaders Assembly Members Media Practitioners	May - June, 2023	Splendor Hotel, Kumasi
 PRIVATE SECTOR HEALTH WORKERS		
Community Practice Pharmacists Association Private Health Facilities Association of Ghana	August - September, 2023	Bedtime Hotel, Koforidua
 PUBLIC SECTOR HEALTH WORKERS		
Regional HIV Focal Persons District Health Management Teams ART Clinic In-Charges Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies GAC-TSU Coordinators	August - September, 2023	Bedtime Hotel, Koforidua





## COMMUNITY / OPINION LEADERS

The Stakeholders Engagement Meetings, organized by GHANET, was held at Splendor Hotel in Kumasi between May and June, 2023. The meetings brought together a wide array of participants, including traditional leaders (chiefs and queen mothers), assembly members, and media practitioners.

The primary objective of the meetings was to provide comprehensive insight into the prevailing HIV situation in Ghana and also to introduce community-level HIV self-testing.

Mr. Ernest Ortsin, President of GHANET, underscored the significance of the engagements in view of the pivotal role the selected stakeholders play at the community level.

Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager of the National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), during the review meetings, made presentations on the overview of HIV and AIDS situation in Ghana, covering essential topics such as the nature of HIV, transmission modes, key populations, and misconceptions surrounding HIV and AIDS.

He stressed on the power of knowledge and emphasized the imperative of taking tangible actions to combat the spread of the virus, urging participants to translate awareness into proactive measures.



**Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo**

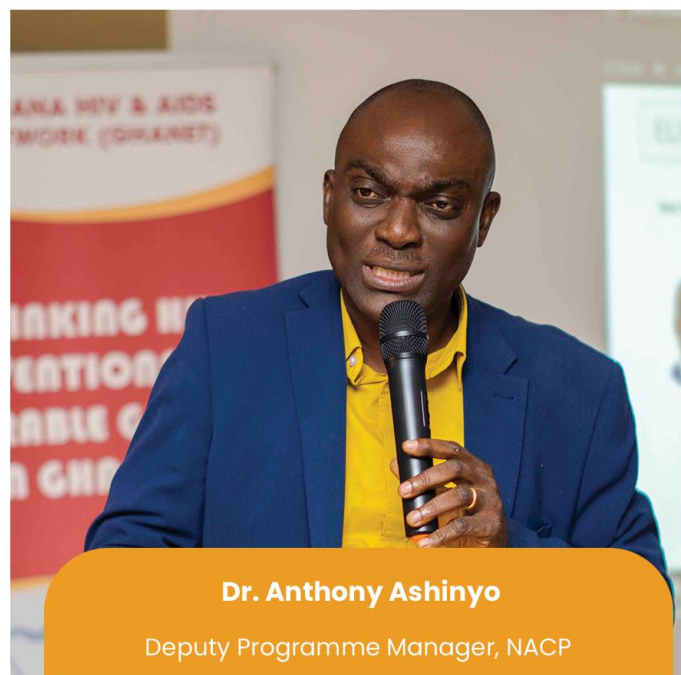
Programme Manager, NACP



Dr. Anthony Ashinyo, Deputy Programme Manager of NACP, also gave presentations during the review meetings. He discussed the different roles that stakeholders such as traditional leaders, assembly members, and media practitioners could play in the implementation of the HIVST project. He urged the stakeholders to leverage their platforms to promote the HIVST project and encourage testing. Additionally, he emphasized the significance of collective effort, stressing the need for solidarity in breaking down barriers of stigma and misinformation surrounding HIV and AIDS.

Interactive sessions during the open forums elicited discussions on various topics, including condom distribution, mother-to-child transmission, and technological support for volunteers. These discussions reflected a unified commitment to effective HIV prevention efforts in Ghana.

The assembly members and media practitioners stakeholder meetings were held from May 22 – 24, 2023. The traditional leaders stakeholder meeting was held between June 1 – 3, 2023.

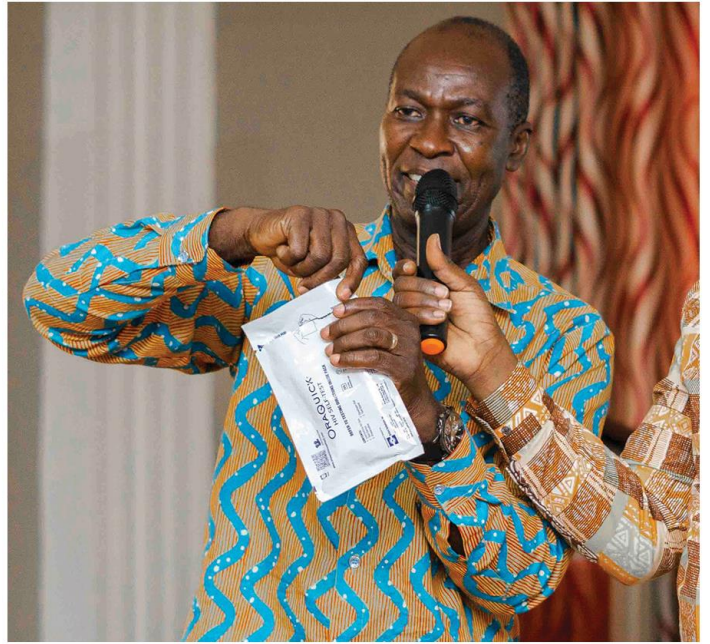


**Dr. Anthony Ashinyo**

Deputy Programme Manager, NACP











## TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTOR HEALTH WORKERS

A series of in-person training workshops were conducted by GHANET, under the auspices of National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), on HIV self-testing.

The workshops targeted two main groups: private and public sector health workers. They were held at Bedtime Hotel, Koforidua, from August 27 to September 9, 2023. Participants included representatives from various organizations such as the Private Health Facilities Association of Ghana (PHFAG), Community Practice Pharmacists Association (CPPA), and Association of Medical Counter Assistants, Ghana (AMCAG), as well as staff from Regional Health Directorates, District Health Management Teams (DHMT), Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), and Ghana AIDS Commission Technical Support Units (GAC-TSU).

The workshops focused on providing training on HIV self-testing and awareness, with participants from both northern and southern zones, covering different regions of Ghana.

Facilitators from NACP led the sessions, treating topics such as global HIV and AIDS situation, HIV testing strategies, importance of self-testing, and differentiated service delivery models.

Participants engaged in pre and post-test exercises to assess their knowledge on the subject of HIV. Additionally, practical demonstrations of the OraQuick self-test and blood-based HIVST kits were conducted. Key takeaways included an understanding of the HIV and AIDS situation in Ghana, importance of confidentiality and regular testing, and potential of self-testing to improve testing coverage.

Participants were encouraged to disseminate knowledge gained from the workshops in their communities and districts and to promote HIV self-testing as an important tool in the fight against the epidemic. The workshops concluded with participants expressing gratitude for the opportunity and committing to sharing their new knowledge with others.

*Full report on training workshops for private and public sector health workers available on [www.ghanet.net](http://www.ghanet.net)*









## QUARTERLY REVIEW MEETINGS



QUARTER 1 REVIEW MEETING



DATE  
May 22 to 24, 2023



Venue  
Splendor Hotel, Kumasi



QUARTER 2 REVIEW MEETING



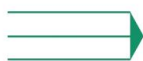
DATE  
August 22 to 26, 2023



Venue  
Bedtime Hotel, Koforidua



QUARTER 3 REVIEW MEETING



DATE  
November 27, 2023



Venue  
Bedtime Hotel, Koforidua





**Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis**

Vice President , GHANET

As part of the HIV Self-testing (HIVST) project implementation, GHANET organized quarterly review meetings for quarters 1, 2, and 3 for all implementing organizations on the HIVST project. Participants in the review meetings included officers from the National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), the Executive Committee and National Secretariat of GHANET, Executive Directors of implementing organizations, and their volunteers. The meetings provided participants with the opportunity to share experiences from the field, analyze data from the previous quarter, and plan for the next quarter.

The quarter 1 review meeting took place from May 22 to 24, 2023, at Splendor Hotel, Kumasi, and there were 62 participants. Mr. Ernest Ortsin, President of GHANET, noted that the first-quarter data shows that some volunteers did well by following up on clients to whom they distributed the test kits. Also, some reactive cases have been confirmed and linked to care. According to Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager for NACP, data is relevant in HIV/AIDS programming, and he said he was pleased with the idea of GHANET developing a software application specifically for the HIVST project.

He stressed that "data helps to identify patterns in the spread of infections, which in turn helps in decision-making." At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that, in the next quarter, condoms would be added to the test kits for distribution.

The second quarter review meeting was held in Koforidua, Bedtime Hotel, from August 22 to 26, 2023. Participants numbered about 155. Mr. Ortsin led participants through the activities of the just-ended quarter. Participants raised some challenges faced in the field during distribution. They indicated that some clients did not willingly grant them audience on the field. Participants requested to be given some form of identification to help remove doubts from the minds of the community residents.

On November 27, 2023, the quarter 3 review meeting was held for 159 participants at Bedtime Hotel in Koforidua, where participants identified challenges, successes, and opportunities for program enhancement. Strategies were formulated to overcome challenges and improve program effectiveness. An action plan was developed for the next quarter to further advance the self-testing initiative.



## QUARTER 1 REVIEW MEETING



## QUARTER 2 REVIEW MEETING







## QUARTER 3 REVIEW MEETING







## HIV SELF-TESTING OUTREACHES BY NATIONAL SECRETARIAT



### OUTREACH LOCATIONS

Kasoa Market  
Kaneshie Market  
Tema Station  
Mallam Market  
Agbogbloshie Market  
Dome Market  
Madina Market  
Avenor Community  
Mantse Agbona Community



### DATE

December 8, 2023  
to  
December 19, 2023



### TOTAL NO. OF PEOPLE TESTED

1,489



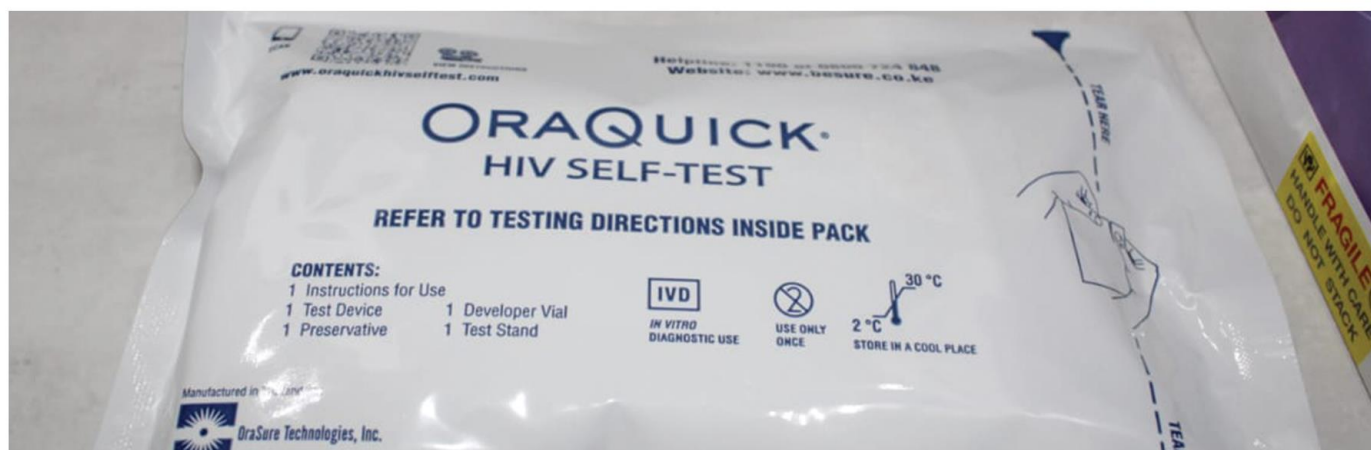


As part of GHANET's HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) demand creation, a series of market and community activations were organized in Accra. They were spearheaded by Mrs. Joana Polley, GHANET's Lead Counselor, and Mr. Prince Amugi Nmai, the Assistant Counselor. The outreaches started on December 8, 2023, and ran until December 19, 2023, in the Greater Accra region.

Some of the marketplaces and communities visited included Kasoa Market, Kaneshie Market, Tema Station, Mallam Market, Dome Market, Agbogloboshie Market, Madina Market, Mantse Agbona community, and Avenor community. The initiative aimed to provide accessible HIV testing and awareness in diverse community settings.

In total, 1,489 individuals were tested, with males comprising 347 and females 1,142. The campaign featured welcome addresses emphasizing the significance of community testing, keynote speeches stressing empowerment through knowledge, live demonstrations of HIV self-testing kits and condom usage, as well as testing of individuals in confidential settings.

The interactions were intended to break down barriers to testing, promote health awareness, and empower individuals to make informed choices about their well-being. The successful campaign reinforced the importance of community engagement in HIV prevention efforts, fostering a healthier and more supportive community.





## KASOA MARKET (DECEMBER 8, 2023)



## KANESHI MARKET (DECEMBER 9, 2023)



## TEMA STATION (DECEMBER 11, 2023)





## MALLAM MARKET (DECEMBER 12, 2023)



## AGBOGBLOSHI MARKET (DECEMBER 14, 2023)



## AVENOR COMMUNITY (DECEMBER 16, 2023)





## MANTSE AGBONA COMMUNITY (DECEMBER 16, 2023)



## DOME MARKET (DECEMBER 18, 2023)



## MADINA MARKET (DECEMBER 19, 2023)







## WORLD AIDS DAY 2023

The 2023 World AIDS Day ceremony was held on Thursday, November 30 rather than the usual December 1. This was because it coincided with National Farmers Day which is a public holiday. The event was held at the forecourt of State House under the theme **“Let Communities Lead”**.

Some of the dignitaries included, Mrs. Frema Opare, Chief of Staff, who represented H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Ado. Other guests included, Mr. Rolf Olson, U.S. Deputy Ambassador to Ghana, Dr. Kyeremeh Atuahene, Director-General, Ghana AIDS Commission (GAC), Mr. Héctor Sucilla Pérez, Country Director, UNAIDS, Dr. Amb. Mokowa Blay Adu-Gyamfi, Presidential Advisor on HIV and AIDS, Dr. Kwaku Afriyie, Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation.

Others included Hon. Samuel James Nii Adjei Tawiah, MCE of Korle Klottey Municipal Assembly, Ms. Rhoda Coffie, National Secretary, Network of Persons Living with HIV (NAP+), Hon. Sebastian Ngmenenso Sandaare, MP for Daffiama/Bussie/Issa Constituency, Upper West Region, Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager, National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), Dr. Leticia Adelaide Appiah, Executive Director, National Population Council and Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin, President, Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET).







## ANNUAL CSO FORUM



### SPONSOR

West Africa Programme to Combat AIDS and STI (WAPCAS)



### DATE

December 20, 2023



### VENUE

Crystal Palm Hotels, Accra



### CSO NETWORKS

- Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET)
- Network of Persons Living with HIV (NAP+)
- Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health (GCNH)
- Stop TB Partnership Ghana (STBPG)
- Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Malaria (GCNM)
- Ghana TB Voice Network (GTBVN)





On December 20, 2023, the West Africa Programme to Combat AIDS and STIs (WAPCAS) supported the organization of a CSO forum that brought together all CSO networks working in the areas of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria. The program took place in Accra at Crystal Palm Hotels. The Networks included the Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), represented by Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin (President); Network of Persons Living with HIV (NAP+), represented by Mrs. Elsie Ayeh (President); Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health, represented by Mr. Bright Amissah Nyarko (Chairman); Stop TB Partnership Ghana, represented by Mr. David Afreh (Chairman); Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Malaria, represented by Mr. Vincent Ninsau (Executive Secretary); and Ghana TB Voice Network, represented by Ms. Charity Femeyibor, Administrator. Also present was the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), represented by Ms. Catherine Bentum-Williams, Ethics and PSEAH Officer.



**Mrs. Comfort Asamoah-Adu**

Executive Director, WAPCAS













# INTEGRATED BIOLOGICAL BEHAVIORAL SURVEILLANCE SURVEY (IBBSS) WORKSHOP



## Sponsor

ENDA Santé / Civil Society Institute for Health for West and Central Africa



## Key Takeaways

- The Importance of Collaboration
- Data-driven decision-making
- Inclusivity and Community Involvement
- Addressing Stigma and Discrimination



## Workshop Facilitator

Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager,  
National AIDS/STI Control Programme



## Venue

Mensvic Grand Hotels - Accra



## Date

September 27-29, 2023





The IBBSS (Integrated Biological Behavioral Surveillance Survey) Workshop was hosted by GHANET in collaboration with various stakeholders, including healthcare professionals, community representatives, NGO employees, researchers, and policymakers. The workshop took place from September 27–29, 2023, at the Mensvic Grand Hotels in Accra, Ghana.

The workshop discussed research findings and effective practices related to IBBSS, as well as current state of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in Ghana.

It also fostered collaboration among stakeholders to enhance intervention strategies, and identify key challenges and opportunities in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment.

The workshop featured interactive presentations and discussions by key speakers such as Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo and ACP Jones Blantari. This was followed by active engagement from attendees, discussing topics such as identifying gaps and opportunities in HIV prevention and treatment, the role of data research, and promoting inclusivity and community participation.

### Key Takeaways from the Workshop

- ▶ **Importance of collaboration:** Participants emphasized the necessity of cross-sectoral collaboration to address HIV/AIDS effectively.
- ▶ **Data-driven decision-making:** The importance of reliable data and research in shaping evidence-based strategies was underscored.
- ▶ **Inclusivity and community involvement:** Involving people living with HIV/AIDS in decision-making processes is vital for successful interventions.
- ▶ **Addressing stigma and discrimination:** The urgent need to combat stigma (especially self-stigmatization) and discrimination against those affected by or living with HIV/AIDS was highlighted.









# CCM Ghana

Country Coordinating Mechanism  
of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria



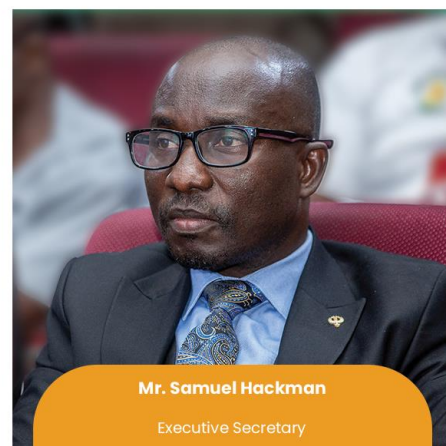
**Hon. Kwaku Agyeman-Manu**

Chairman



**Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin**

Vice Chairman

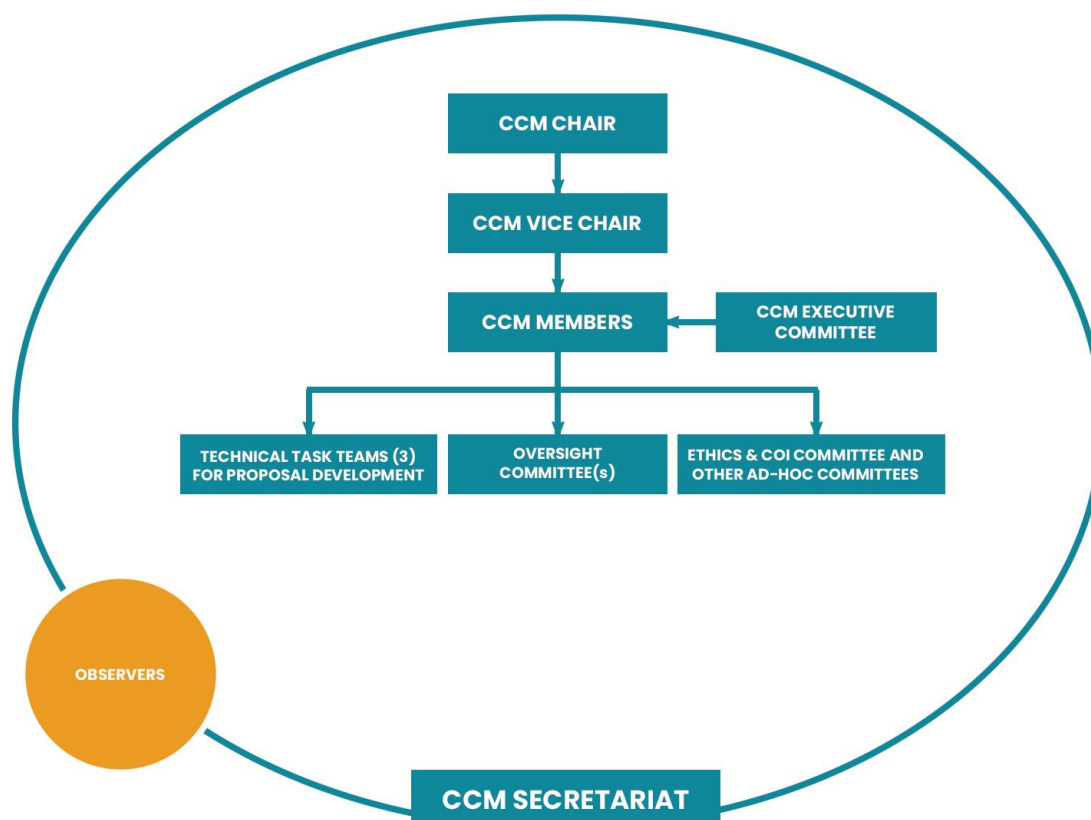


**Mr. Samuel Hackman**

Executive Secretary

The Ghana Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria was established in 2002 with the overall responsibility of managing Global Fund grants in the country. It is responsible for developing grant proposals, setting the policy framework for effective implementation of approved grants, exercising oversight of grants, monitoring progress towards meeting set targets, and reviewing program performance. The CCM also selects Principal Recipients as the lead implementers of approved grants.

## STRUCTURE OF GHANA CCM





## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF GHANA CCM

- To create a forum where civil society, the private sector, and development partners in health can interact more equitably with the Government through public-private partnerships.
- To create opportunities for harmonization and alignment of health funds for aid effectiveness.
- To maximize efficiencies through the collective efforts of national stakeholders in the submission of Global Fund proposals.
- To increase transparency and accountability through multi-stakeholder participation in the Global Fund grant implementation.
- To continuously build the capacity of the CCM and its constituencies.

- To establish effective oversight systems and tools for Global Fund grant implementation.

The Ghana CCM comprises representatives from the public and private sectors, including government, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, private businesses, people living with diseases, and multi-lateral or bilateral agencies.

CCM members are elected or nominated depending on the sector they are representing. Additionally, the Ghana CCM has a Secretariat that handles day-to-day operations for CCM members and coordinates their activities, communication and documentation.

### Public Sector (8 members)

- 2 – Health Sector (MoH/GHS)
- 1 – Education Sector
- 1 – Ghana AIDS Commission
- 1 – Local Government
- 1 – Gender, Children & Social Protection
- 1 – Finance and Economic Planning
- 1 – CHRAJ

### Civil Society (13 members)

- 1 – Private Sector
- 4 – NGOs / Community Based Organizations
- 1 – Professional Associations
- 1 – Faith Based Organizations
- 3 – Persons living with or affected by the disease
- 1 – Key Populations
- 1 – Women and Children Interest Groups
- 1 – Academic and Research Institutions

### Multilateral & Bilateral Agencies (4 members)

- 2 – Multilateral Organizations
- 2 – Bilateral Organizations

### POSTAL ADDRESS

PMB CT 380  
Cantonments / Accra  
Ghana

### PHYSICAL ADDRESS

53 Asafoanye O. Broni Cres.  
Osu Residential / Accra  
Ghana

### TELEPHONE

+233-302-260032

### DIGITAL ADDRESS

GA-054-8648





## ENDING PEDIATRIC HIV: AFRICA NEEDS STRONG POLITICAL COMMITMENT

**T**he Programme Manager of the National AIDS/STI Control Programme, Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, has called for strong political commitment to end Pediatric HIV in West and Central Africa.

Mr. Ayisi said that in ending HIV among children, there is a need to pay attention to the data, have continuous dialogue, provide funding, and build capacity not only in the health system but also among state actors.

This, he said, would ensure multisectoral responses in the fight against Pediatric HIV in West and Central Africa, including Ghana.

Dr. Ayisi made the call at the opening of a three-day regional summit on ending AIDS in children in West and Central Africa. The meeting, organized by the Civil Society Institute for Health in West and Central Africa in collaboration with the Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), with support from USAID, seeks to join efforts between civil society organizations to end AIDS in the region.

It also seeks to empower communities and CSOs with the means to conduct testing, outreach, and contribute in terms of care and support.

According to Dr. Ayisi, Ghana's total HIV population is 354,927, out of which 7% are children. He emphasized that while fighting to end pediatric HIV is important, there is also a need to focus on the role of caregivers and the family around the child to build their capacities psychosocially to provide the needed care.

The Executive Director of Health West and Central Africa, Nguissali Turpin, said the meeting is important as data indicates that 60 percent of children living with HIV know their status, adding that half of this figure is on Anti-Retroviral Therapy.

She noted that 65 percent of new HIV infections are transmitted to children because their mothers did not receive adequate Anti-Retroviral Therapy treatment.





## 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)



### Venue

Crystal Palm Hotels, Accra



### Date

December 20, 2023



### Special Guest

Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo, Programme Manager,  
(National AIDS/STI Control Programme)



### Major Outcome

Formation of Constitutional Review Committee





## INTRODUCTION

On Wednesday, December 20, 2023, GHANET held an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Accra at Crystal Palm Hotels, Tesano. The meeting was attended by the Programme Manager of National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), leaders and representatives from CSO Networks, representatives from Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), Executives Committee of GHANET,

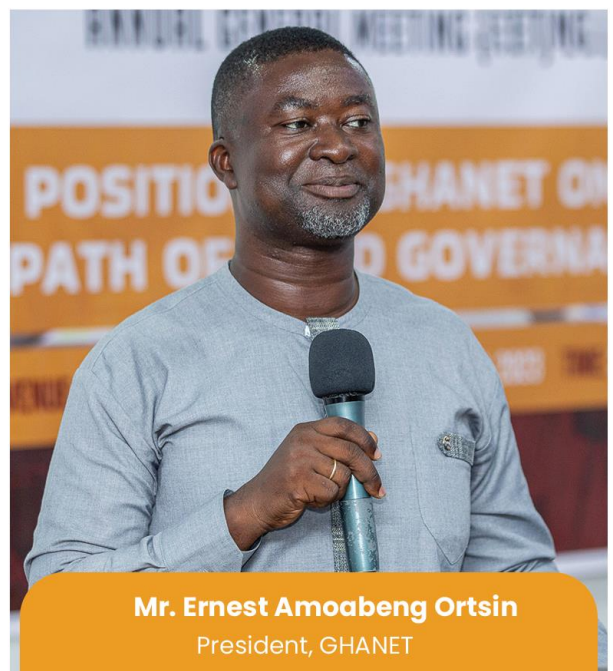
He entreated every participant to bring ideas on board to help the leadership of GHANET make the right decisions so as to achieve good governance.

GHANET Regional Executives, some members of GHANET, as well as GHANET National secretariat. The theme for the AGM was **"Positioning GHANET on A Path of Good Governance"**.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin, President of GHANET, welcomed participants to the meeting. He indicated that the year 2023 had been a good one for GHANET and extended kudos to the various organizations who keep working tirelessly to bring the network to the forefront in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Mr. Ortsin stated that one important factor that helps organizations to prosper is good governance and it is for this reason that the meeting focused on setting up a committee to review the constitution.

AGM



**Mr. Ernest Amoabeng Ortsin**  
President, GHANET



## SOLIDARITY MESSAGES

### COUNTRY COORDINATING MECHANISM (CCM)

The representative from CCM, Kenneth Yeboah congratulated the membership of GHANET for a successful year, filled with activities. He indicated that the effort of the network is being recognized by everyone, and it is worth commending. He told participants that the rise and fall of a network depends on good governance and that members should abide by the constitution to make the work of the leadership of the network easier. He stated that good governance is not only the role of the leadership; if leaders do their best but members do not abide by rules and regulations governing the organization, good governance would be almost impossible. He therefore implored everyone to put in their best for the success of GHANET.

### GHANA COALITION OF NGOS IN HEALTH

Mr. Ninsau K. D. Alazar, Vice Chairman of Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Health, announced that partnerships and collaborations are very important for a successful and lasting relationship. He mentioned that going forward, he would like the networks to work together to achieve a common objective. He also told leaders of the CSO networks to always ask themselves, "how can GHANET count on me?"

### STOP TB PARTNERSHIP GHANA

The Chairman for Stop TB Partnership Ghana, Mr. David Kwasi Afreh, thanked all participants for being present. He spoke to participants about some issues on governance. These included the role of good governance in securing resources. He told members of GHANET who were present at the meeting to be sure to follow the constitution, pay dues and also perform duties expected of them. He said that by doing so, GHANET would have a strong government and a strong network as well. He ended by wishing GHANET and its members the best.

### NETWORK OF PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV (NAP+)

Mrs. Elsie Ayeh said she was happy that during the introduction of participants, various regions were mentioned. This shows how GHANET is represented in every corner across the country. She believes that with such a structure, problems would be easily solved and community implementation of projects would be effective. She thanked GHANET for working hard to make the lives of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) worthwhile.



**Mr. Kenneth Yeboah**  
Oversight Officer, CCM



**Mr. Ninsau K. D. Alazar**  
Vice Chairman, Coalition of NGOs in Health



**Mr. David Kwasi Afreh**  
Chairman, Stop TB Partnership Ghana



**Mrs. Elsie Ayeh**  
President, Network of Persons Living with HIV



## GHANA TB VOICE NETWORK

Ms. Charity Femeyibor, Administrator of Ghana TB Voice Network, addressed and thanked GHANET for inviting them to such an important gathering. She mentioned that if GHANET continues to work harder than they did in 2023, the years ahead will be very successful. She appreciated the relationship that exists between networks that are into HIV and those into TB. She wished participants a successful engagement, even as they try to position GHANET on a path of good governance.

## GHANA COALITION OF NGOS IN MALARIA

Mr. Vincent Ninsau, Executive Secretary of Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Malaria stated that good governance simply means working together. He said that it is important for members to agree and work together with the leadership of the organization for good governance, but if one side is putting in effort while the other side is rebellious, good governance would just be a concept in their minds.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Programme Manager for National AIDS/STI Control Programme (NACP), Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo extended warm greetings from Ghana Health Service (GHS) and NACP. He congratulated GHANET for the good work done with the HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) pilot implementation. He stated that there has been high demand of the HIVST kits since the MoU was signed with GHANET and the National Launch of the implementation.

Dr. Ayisi Addo mentioned that if the NACP and GHS would continue project implementation with GHANET, it would be determined by their governance system. He said that since GHANET is an umbrella network, good governance must start from the individual organizations that make up GHANET. He entreated every organization to get their necessary documents in place.

He advised all Implementing Partners to see themselves as health workers; which means that people's lives are in their hands. He promised participants that going forward, certificates would be given at training workshops.

Dr. Ayisi Addo concluded by urging participants to strengthen the community system of implementation in order to end HIV and Tuberculosis.

## PRESENTATION OF REGIONAL UPDATES

Regional Chairpersons and their representatives took participants through events that took place in the various regions. They excitedly recounted the HIVST Health Walk which took place concurrently across the country. The Regional Chairs indicated that the health walk organized by GHANET was a huge success and they were privileged to have some important personalities who are in the fight against HIV/AIDS on board. Aside from the health walk towards the 2023 World AIDS Day Celebration, Regional Chairpersons also gave an account of some project implementations that took place in 2023. According to them, 2023 has been a very busy year for GHANET. They expressed hope in the coming year to bring better tidings.



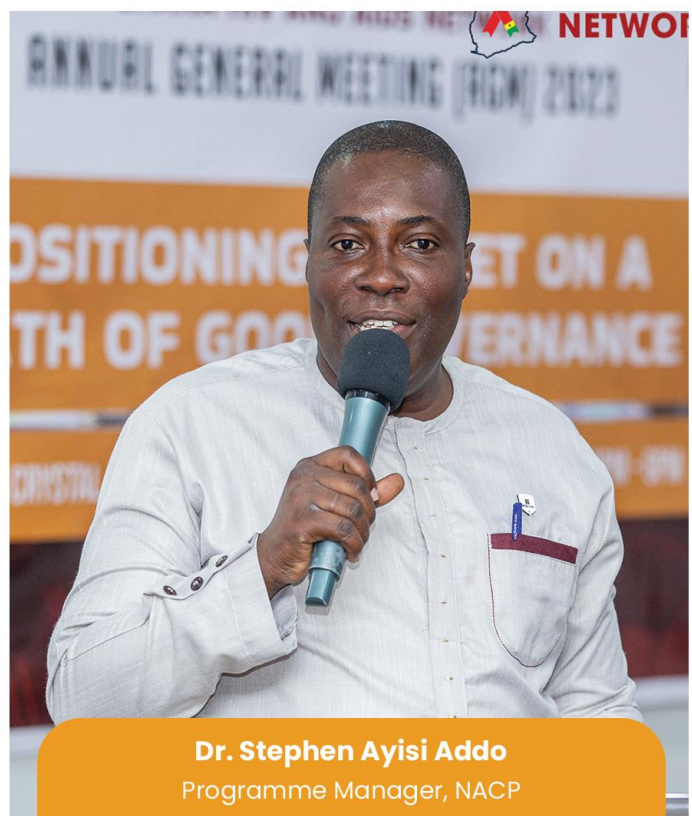
**Ms. Charity Femeyibor**

Administrator, Ghana TB Voice Network



**Mr. Vincent Ninsau**

Executive Secretary, Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Malaria



**Dr. Stephen Ayisi Addo**

Programme Manager, NACP



## PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS/OPEN FORUM

After the Account Officer made a presentation on the technical and financial reports of GHANET, there was an open forum where participants asked questions about and made contributions to the presentation made. A participant suggested that there should be a dollar equivalent of the figures in the report since the report will go international. Another participant questioned why the report was not submitted to members to study before the AGM even though it is stated in the constitution. To some participants, the allowances given to Implementing Partners for project are usually small. They made an appeal for these allowances to be reviewed.

## FORMATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr. Ortsin informed participants that the GHANET Constitution needs to be reviewed and amended. He said that this has become necessary because the Network needs positioning on a path of good governance. He further mentioned that a committee needs to be set to review the constitution. He suggested a 7-member Committee and a 5-member Committee and asked participants to vote. Finally, participants agreed on a 5-member Committee.

Participants were made to nominate people for the Committee and they came out with 5 people, including the Vice President of GHANET, representing the Executive Committee. The Review Committee was given 3 months to review the Constitution, taking into consideration the submissions and views of Implementing Partners and the entire GHANET membership.

## NEXT STEPS

Bringing the meeting to a close, Mr. Ortsin informed participants that the GHANET 2023 Annual Report was being worked on and would be shared among members during a Result –Sharing Meeting which was being organized. He encouraged members to remain hopeful as the project is likely to continue. He announced that going forward, a lot of information would be on the GHANET website ([www.ghanet.net](http://www.ghanet.net)) and so members should endeavor to visit the site regularly. He asked Regional Chairpersons to submit a report on the just ended HIVST Health Walk. Also, he urged all Implementing Partners to submit any report outstanding, both financial and narrative.

## CONCLUSION

In her vote of thanks, Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis thanked all participants for being part of the 2023 Annual General Meeting. She encouraged the individuals to continue the hard work and dedication, bearing in mind that their efforts will not go unrewarded. She wished everyone the best in their endeavors.



**Mrs. Victoria Araba Dennis**  
Vice President, GHANET

AGM















## World AIDS Day 2023 health walk to create awareness about HIV self-testing

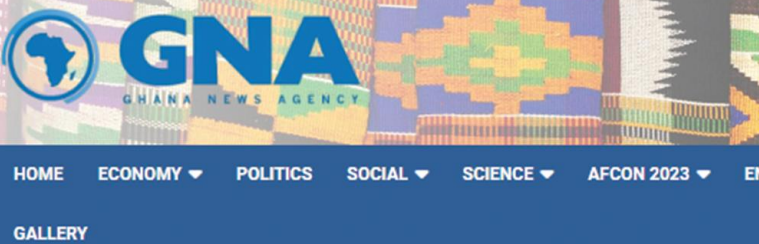
Dadok Kwame Gyasi / Nov - 20 - 2023, 09:19



Some of the organizers of the health walk

Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET) in collaboration with the Network of Persons living with HIV (NAP+), and other stakeholders are organising a health walk to create more awareness on HIV Self-Testing (HIVST).

The health walk will be held on November 25, 2023, ahead of this year's World AIDS Day, which is on December 1.



GHANET in the Media 62

FAQtoids

News

## 'Embrace HIV self-test kits to promote early detection'



December 14, 2023

2 minutes read



Prices starting from \$89,000

Learn more

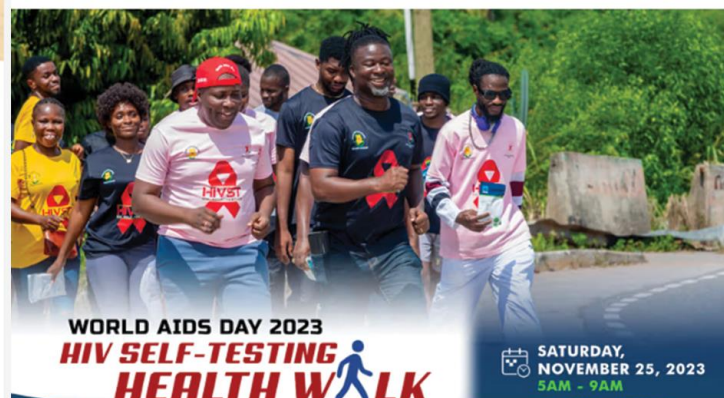
Lifestyle Events

## World AIDS Day 2023 health walk to create awareness about HIV Self-Testing

EVANS EFFAH | November 22, 2023 6:35 PM



Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), in collaboration with the Network of Persons living with HIV (NAP+), and other stakeholders, are organizing a health walk to among others, create more awareness HIV Self-Testing (HIVST) tool kit that was launched recently and also mark World AIDS Day (WAD) which falls on December 1.



**WORLD AIDS DAY 2023**  
**HIV SELF-TESTING**  
**HEALTH WALK**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2023**  
5AM - 9AM

World AIDS Day 2023

This year, the theme for the WAD celebration is 'Let Communities Lead' and it is intended to ginger up persons from infected and affected communities, HIV and AIDS stakeholders and the general public to lead the

HEALTH

## GHANET engages youth, men to increase HIV self-testing in Bongo

January 2, 2024 / GNA

By Gilbert Azeem Tiroog

Bongo (U/E), Jan. 2, GNA – The Ghana HIV and AIDS Network (GHANET), has engaged youth and men in Bongo District of the Upper East region on HIV self-testing to scale up awareness of their status and help prevent the spread.

Mr Patrick Anamoo, the National Publicity Officer for GHANET, said health was a priceless asset that enabled individuals to appreciate the world to the fullest and meet life's problems with ease and comfort, and it was important that the youth developed the habit of frequent self-testing to



HIV SELF-TEST

**ACCRA: HIV SELF-TESTING****GHANET begins community sensitisation****NEWS HOUR**

FROM GBC - CLOTHING

17. DR. EDEN DZREGAH FROM OYIBI - CLOT

f gbcghana

ITV KASEE

**ACCRA: COMBATING HIV IN CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA**

40% OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS DO NOT KNOW THEIR STATUS - NGUISSALI TURPIN

**HEADLINES**

WORRY OVER MISFIRING GREAT OLYMPICS STRIKERS. ||| ENTERTAINMENT: OKYEAME KWAA

LOCAL NEWS

**ACCRA**

IBBS HOLDS THREE DAYS WORKSHOP FOR CSOs

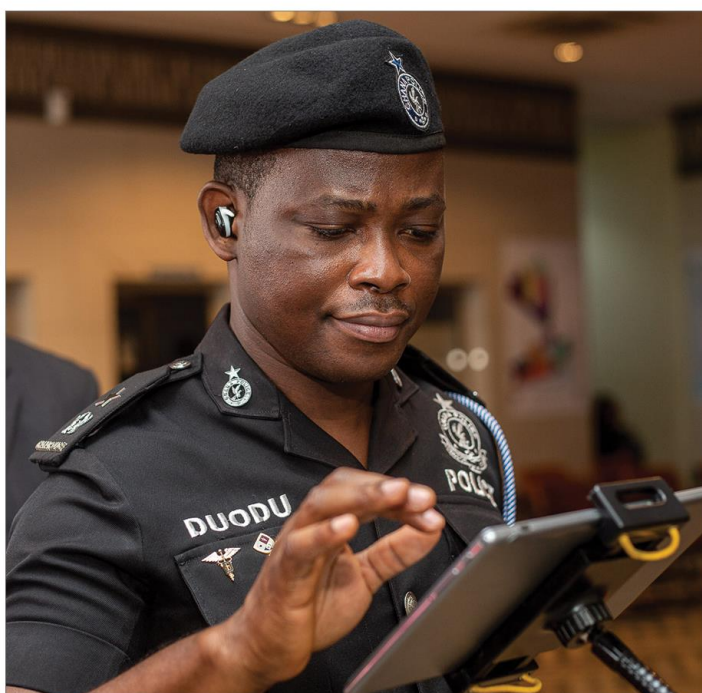
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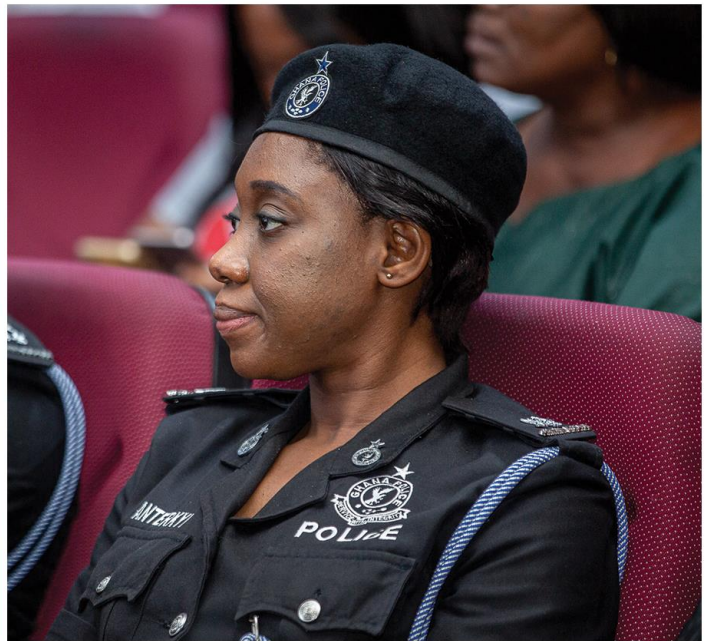
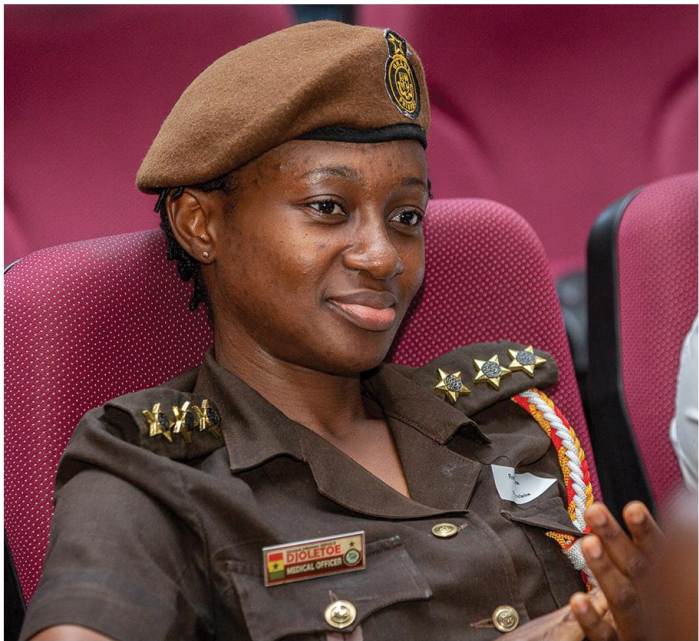




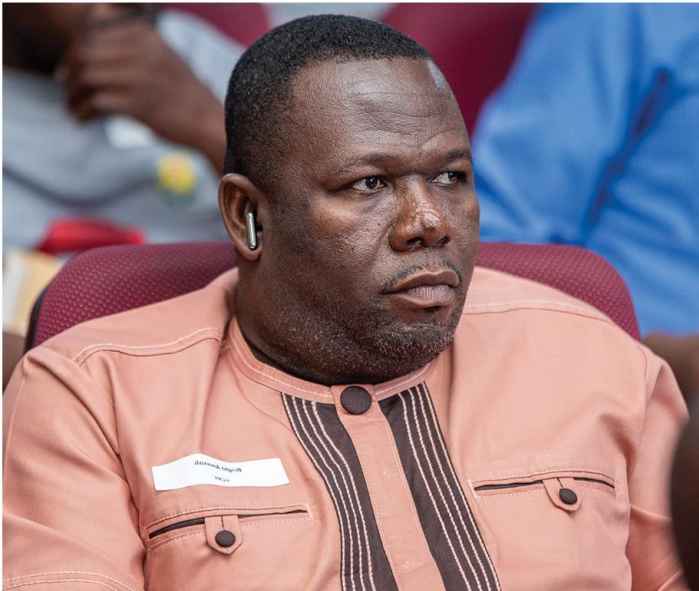
































**GHANA HIV & AIDS  
NETWORK (GHANET)**

## OUR CSO COLLABORATORS



**GHANA COALITION OF NGOs  
IN HEALTH**

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GHANA-WEST AFRICA PROGRAM  
TO COMBAT AIDS AND STI



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ANOGOLOD ASHANTI (GHANA)  
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MALARIA CONTROL



HFFG



# KNOW NOW

Take the HIV Self-Test. Know your status.



#### Reference:

1. WHO PQ Public Report, October 2019, version 2.0; Available at : [https://extranet.who.int/pqweb/sites/default/files/191003\\_amen ded\\_pqpr\\_0320\\_090\\_00\\_mylan\\_hiv\\_self\\_test\\_v2.pdf](https://extranet.who.int/pqweb/sites/default/files/191003_amen ded_pqpr_0320_090_00_mylan_hiv_self_test_v2.pdf); Accessed on : 9 February 2023.

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WHO - World Health Organization  
\*Cape Town, South Africa

  
VIATRIS





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

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