ROLE OF LABORATORIES IN OUTBREAK ALERT AND DETECTION

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Director, National Public Health Laboratories The Gambia Consultant – Fondation Mérieux (REDISSE Project) Laboratory diagnosis is an essential element of communicable disease surveillance, both for routine confirmation of infections and for the rapid identification of the cause of outbreaks and epidemics.

Some Basic Underlining Concepts - 1

<u>Surveillance</u> is the <u>ongoing</u>, <u>systematic</u> collection, analysis, and interpretation of health data.

It includes:

- ✓ the timely dissemination of the resulting information to those who need it for action.
- ✓ is the primary strategy for tracking emerging drug resistance in the population, allowing for early and appropriate action.

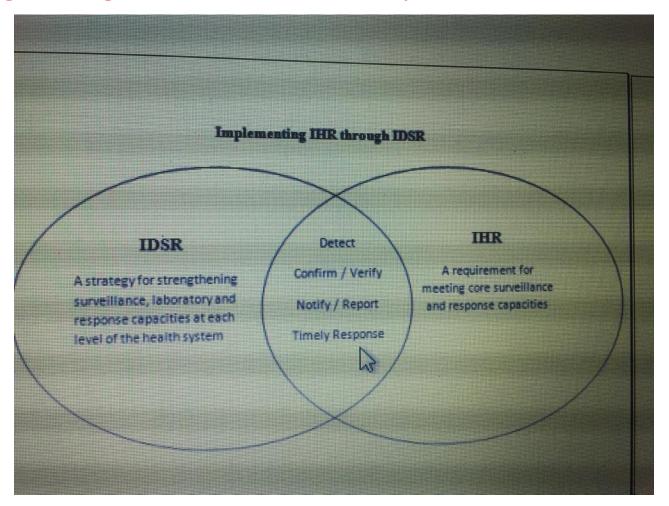
Countries should therefore strengthen their capacity for early detection and identification of organisms that cause diseases of public health importance.

International Health Regulations (2005) - 2

- The IHR (2005) is not a separate surveillance system.
- Among the several requirements in the IHR (2005) is a call for strengthening of national capacity for surveillance and control of public health events of national and international concern.
- Member States in the African Region recommended that IHR
 (2005) be implemented within the IDSR framework.

Role of the Laboratory in IDSR

The Regional Committee suggested that member countries take into account the development of laboratory services while strengthening disease surveillance systems.



THE ROLE OF THE LABORATORY (PUBLIC HEALTH)

The role of the laboratory is to:

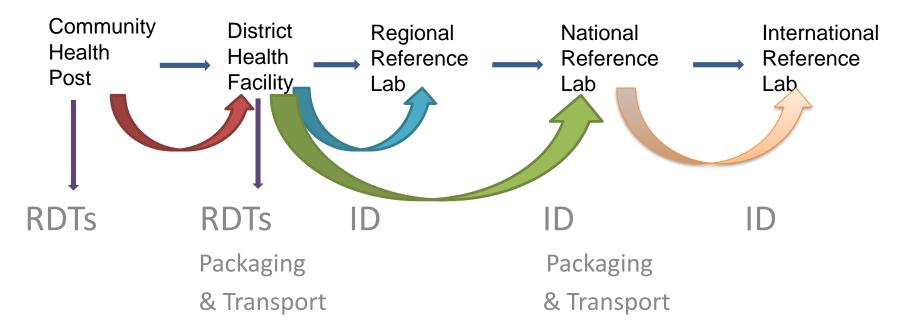
- Monitor causal bacteria
- Identify trends of causative disease pathogens
- Ensure effective monitoring of programmes (elimination/eradication programmes)
- Detect new or re-emerging pathogens
- Monitor bacterial resistance to antimicrobials

Laboratory requirements

- Laboratory facility with adequate utilities
- Equipment, media & supplies
- Human resource (trained)
- Quality of service (IQC/EQA)
- Supervision

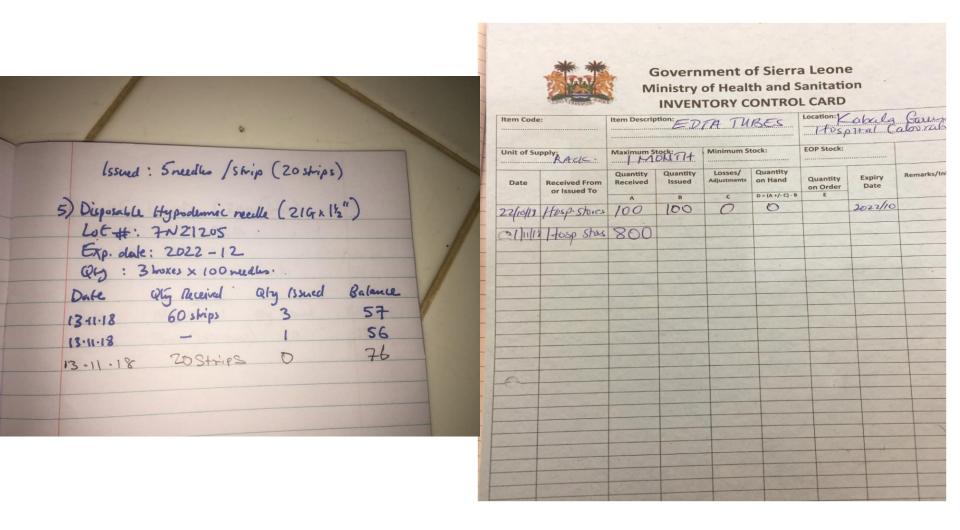
Minimum requirements in the laboratory

There should be at least one laboratory in each country with capacity to identify the most common causes of outbreaks in that country (e.g. cholera, meningitis, VHFs).



Must have:

• An adequate supply of appropriate media, equipment and other materials

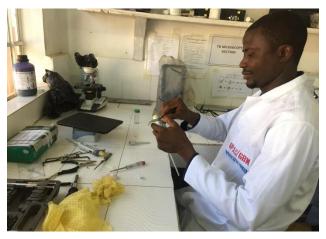
















Must have:

• Staff trained in laboratory investigations of the common causes of outbreaks in the country and able to produce <u>reliable results</u> (negative results; e.g. 'it is not cholera' are as important as positive).





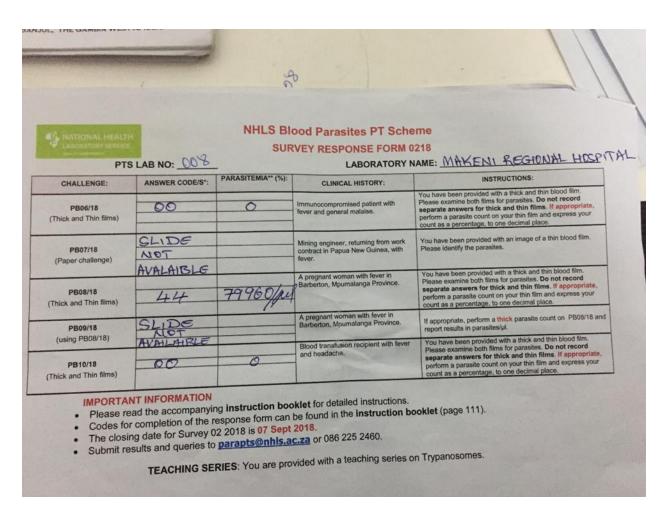
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Must have:

• Regular quality assurance.

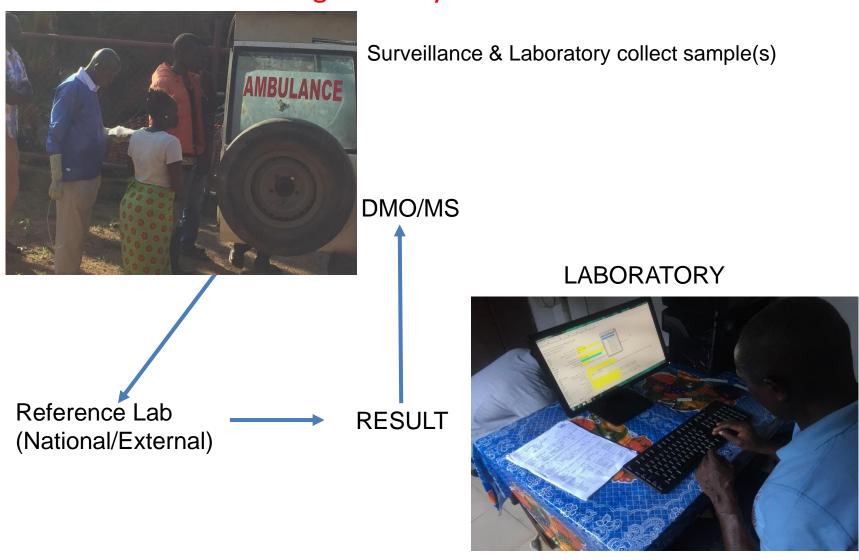


Minimum requirements in the laboratory cont....

• Mechanisms established for sending to specialized international laboratories specimens for investigation and microbial isolates for further characterization.

- ✓ IATA training
- ✓ Airlines
- ***** WAHO

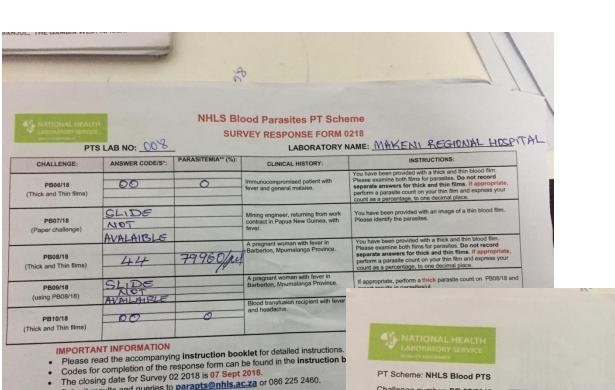
A functional data management system



Supervision (<u>supportive</u>) – weak at all levels

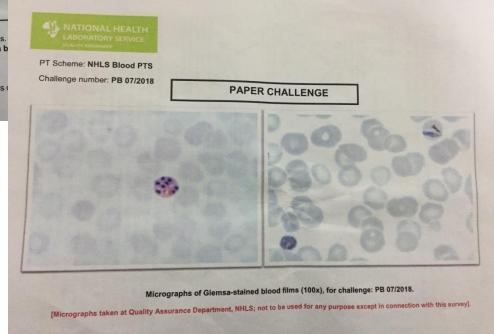


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TEACHING SERIES: You are provided with a teaching series of





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Provide trainings



Role of Players

- Laboratorians
- Clinicians
- Surveillance
- International Partners
- Government

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Fondation Mérieux
The Government and People of Sierra Leone
Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Sierra
Leone

THANK YOU