

The Global Laboratory Initiative

Terms of Reference for the GLI TB Supranational TB Reference Laboratory Network

Programmatic

1. Liaise with Global Laboratory Initiative (GLI) technical partners, National TB Reference Laboratories (NRLs) and National TB Programmes (NTPs) to facilitate implementation of WHO policy guidance on TB diagnostics and laboratory norms and standards.
2. Support the integration of quality TB diagnostic services within national laboratory policies and strategic plans incorporating cross cutting laboratory issues including quality management systems, supply management, specimen transport and referral and human resource development.
3. Advocate for TB laboratory worker protection with use of current WHO TB bio-safety recommendations.
4. Support the implementation of an appropriate data management system.
5. Provide guidance on quality management systems for a process towards achieving laboratory accreditation to international standards.

Technical

Serve as the focal point for coordination of technical assistance to NRLs (or equivalent) to enable:

1. Monitoring of the proficiency of drug susceptibility testing of *M.tuberculosis*
2. Implementation of quality assured AFB microscopy (including external quality assessment) in laboratory networks
3. Development of capacity and proficiency in performing conventional and new WHO endorsed technologies including:
 - a. Microscopy methods
 - b. Culture and identification methods
 - c. Drug susceptibility testing (phenotypic and molecular methods)
4. Development of laboratory components of drug resistance survey (DRS) protocols, data validation, and quality assurance as required
5. Susceptibility testing against first and/or second-line drugs (for both patient management and surveillance) until NRLs establish capacity
6. On-site technical training or in-house training of laboratory staff as needed
7. Review of laboratory proposals in Global Fund applications
8. Operational research, as relevant, including the introduction of new laboratory tools