Introduction

Laboratories produce test results that are widely used in clinical and public health settings. It is thus incumbent on laboratories to produce results that are accurate, using robust and reliable operations and reporting must be timely in order to make them useful for clinical decision making. Achievement of this is through proper implementation of the 12 Quality System Essentials (QSEs) of the laboratory quality management system.

Road to Accreditation

- Friday 26th July, 2013: Global Health Systems Solutions (GHSS) carried out Baseline audit with a rating of 1 star.
- 6th to 7th of August 2014: GHSS carried out an Exit audit.
- 5th to 6th November 2014: African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) carried out an audit using the WHO-AFRO Stepwise Laboratory (Quality) Improvement Process Towards Accreditation (SLIPTA) Checklist. The laboratory was awarded a 3-star grading.
- Recommendation was made to register for accreditation for enough grounds were covered already.
- This motivated the staff and management to work hard to improve and close up gaps identified in the 12 QSEs.

Baseline, exit and audit scores in all the 12 QSEs for NEIDRL

- 4th to 5th March 2016: South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) carried out an initial assessment and found the Lab to have a good working management system in place and granted it accreditation to ISO15189 on July 18, 2016.
- ISO15189 standard is considered the gold standard for quality and competence for medical laboratories

- Progress was made from 1 star to 3 stars within 17 months and only 18 months to move from the 3 stars to accreditation.
- This is the first laboratory to be accredited not only in the country but the entire Central African region.

Testing platform was upgraded from manual Roche Amplicor vs 1.5 to semi-automated Abbott m2000sp/rt installed in 2014.

Modern workbench with lockers gave a professional touch to the laboratory.

Testing room extended to accommodate an eyewash station and emergency shower.

The exterior of the building housing the laboratory was refurbished.