

HIV self-testing at the workplace

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VCT@WORK

What is HIV self-testing?

HIV self-testing is a process in which a person

collects his or her own specimen, blood or saliva, using a simple rapid test;
performs the test as per given instructions; and
interprets the result.

A reactive (positive) self-test result is not an HIV-positive diagnosis. It needs to be confirmed by further testing at a facility.

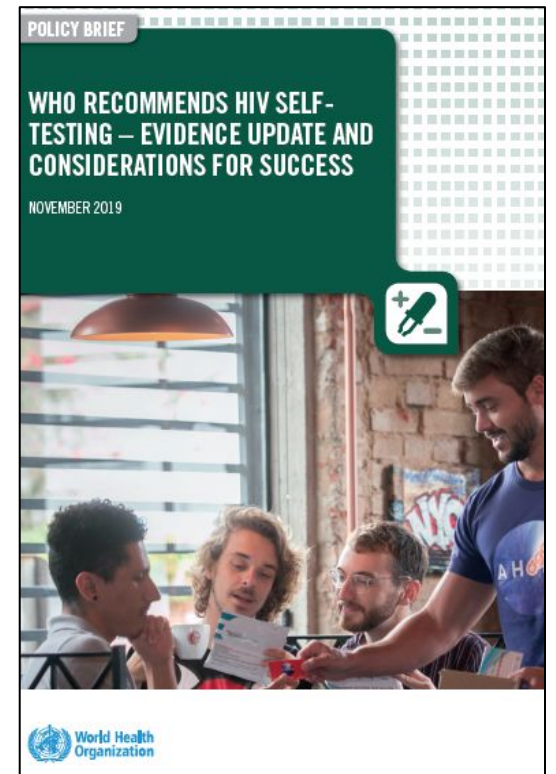
WHO recommends offering HIV self-testing as an additional approach to testing that complements and creates demand for existing HIV testing services.

<https://youtu.be/BA5E9wsEbPw>



What are the advantages of HIV self-testing?

- HIV self-testing increases the uptake of HIV testing.
- Proportions of people diagnosed and linked to care with HIV self-testing are comparable to those with facility-based testing.
- Misuse of HIV self-testing and social harms associated with HIV self-testing are rare. No suicides were reported.
- A range of HIV self-testing service delivery models and support tools are found to be effective.
- Many people are willing and able to perform HIV self-testing with minimal support.
- HIV self-testing is acceptable and feasible in a range of populations and settings.



HIV self-testing at the workplace



Reaching people with undiagnosed HIV

ILO-WHO Policy Brief

Piloted HIV ST in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Zambia in 2019.

ILO is part of the Unitaids' STAR Project in seven countries to **develop sustainable workplace models of HIVST.**

New Publication launched on 1 Dec. 2020



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Health and Wellness at Work:

Guidelines for an integrated health testing approach under

VCT@WORK

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_762676.pdf

Advantages of HIV self-testing at the workplace

- It offers an additional choice to workers.
- It can be offered by trained peer educators.
- It offers workers greater confidentiality and convenience.
- It reduces opportunity costs for workers.
- It enhances uptake of testing.
- It is cost-effective and sustainable.
- It avoids overcrowding of health facilities.
- It allows workers who work in remote locations/ work in shifts to access HIV testing.

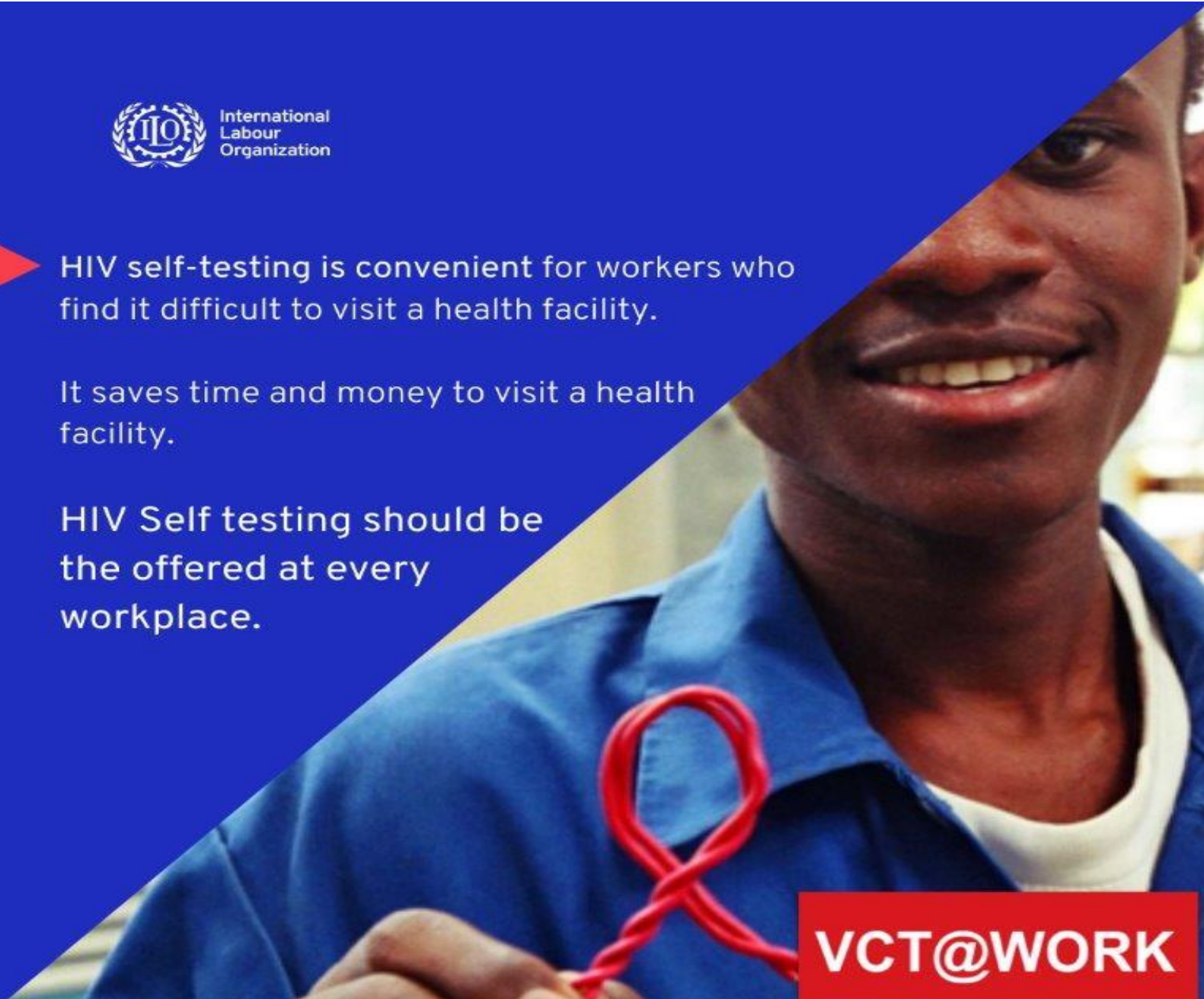


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▶ HIV self-testing is convenient for workers who find it difficult to visit a health facility.

It saves time and money to visit a health facility.

HIV Self testing should be the offered at every workplace.

A close-up photograph of a smiling man with dark skin, wearing a blue button-down shirt over a white t-shirt. He is holding a red HIV awareness ribbon, which is tied in a loop. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a workplace or office setting.

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“Getting information on how to use HIV self-test kits and getting the kits at truck stops is great. I don't need to get parking for my truck for an HIV test. I can test at my convenience.”

Harun Mwangi,
Truck Driver, Kenya



Self Testing integrated into VCT@WORK

**Rights-based
approach**

**Strategic
partnerships**

**Multi-disease
testing**

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**Advocacy and
Communication**

**Monitoring and
Evaluation**

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/hiv-aids/vct/lang-en/index.htm>



Advancing social justice, promoting decent work

The potential impact of HIV self testing at workplaces

- Reduces the HIV testing gaps amongst men at risk
- Tests those who had never tested or those who do not test too often
- Reduces the opportunity cost of testing for workers. Gives workers a choice.
- Cost-effective: potential of companies to pay for test kits and coverage in public and private health insurance
- Sustainable, if integrated within existing policy and programmes

Approaches

- Adopt a sectoral approach (mines/transport/ construction...) and select workplaces in consultation with stakeholders
- Key considerations: presence of a workplace policy and an ongoing HIV programme to ensure non-discrimination and linkages to services.
- leverage existing systems for implementation (workplace clinics, VCT@WORK, wellness programmes, occupational Safety and health etc.)
- Product (Test Kit selection) and regulatory considerations
- Human resource and sustainable financing options (staffing and training needs; reimbursement, incentives, insurance)

Support package

- Advocacy and demand creation
- Tools to perform HIVST correctly (videos, demonstrations, training, virtual support, hotlines)
- Post self-test support (linkage and counselling services during and after hours)
- Linkage to onsite healthcare facilities or referral/link to other service providers
- Supportive and enabling environment
- Linkage with facility-based HIV counselling and testing services.

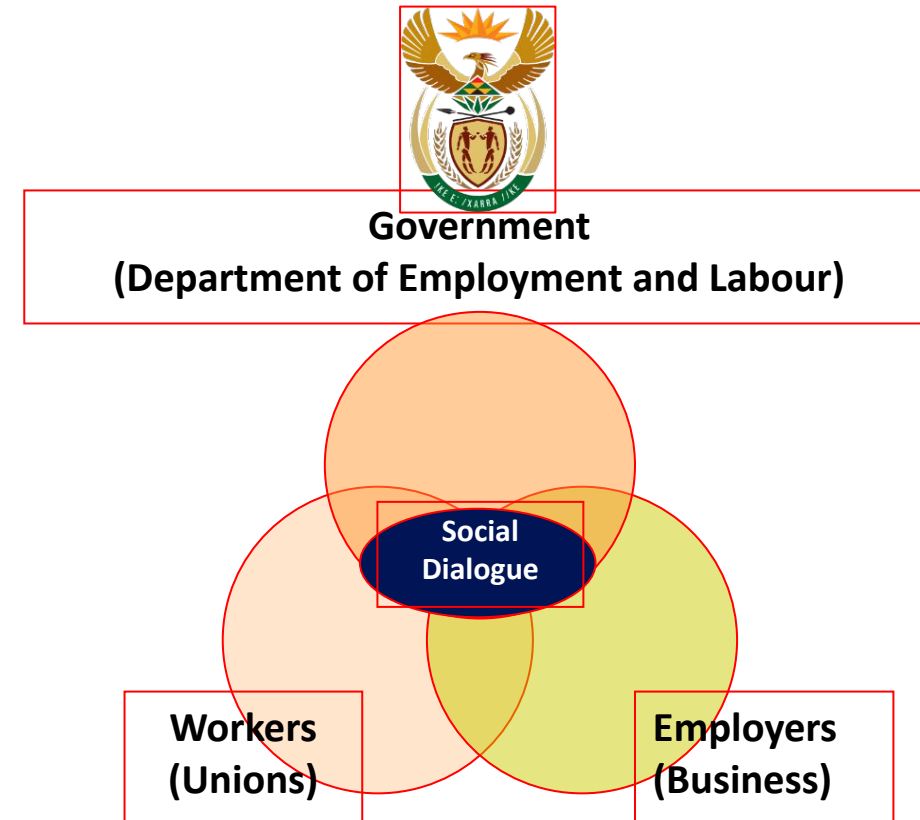
Monitoring and Evaluation

Key Indicators:

- No of kits procured/ obtained from a partner
- No of workers (male, female, others) who attended the VCT@WORK awareness sessions and were informed about how to use the HIV self test kits.
- No of kits distributed (workers who took the test kit after the sessions, and workers who took the kit from the peer educators/ identified places at the workplace.
- No of workers who showed up at the health facility for a confirmatory test.
- No of workers who provided feedback to counsellors/peer educators about their experience (convenience of using the kit, did they share with their partner, any other feedback about the product etc.

Example 1: HIV ST in the workplace in South Africa

- ILO is part of the Technical Working Group on HIV Self-Screening
- Focus on selected sectors
- Engaging a service provider working on HIV ST
 - Partnership with [Re-Action](#).
- Facilitate partnerships between government departments, employers', workers' and their organizations

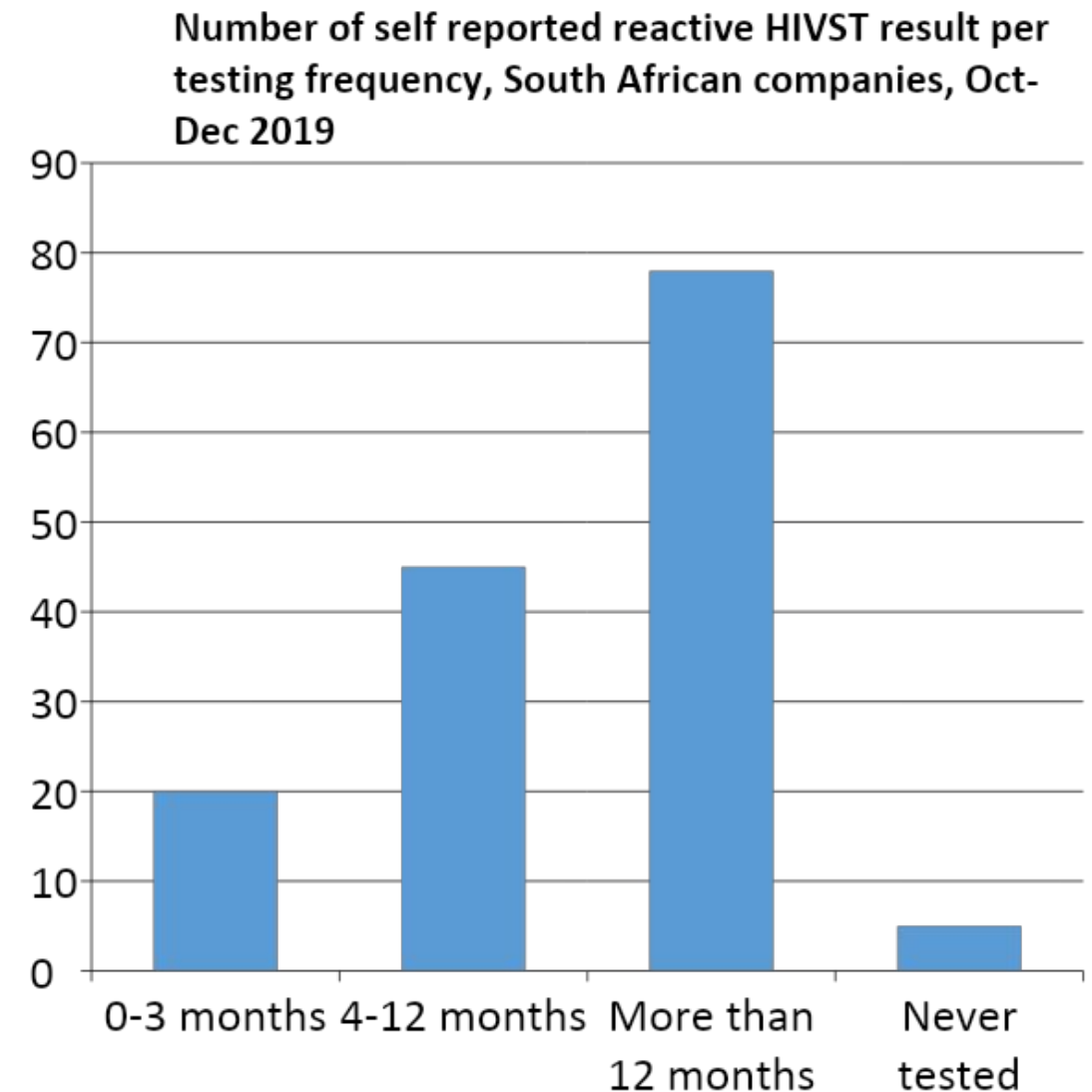


Critical Enablers

- Getting commitment of the management
- **Innovation:** HIV-Selfie as a point of engagement and the ability to take HIVST kits for partners
- Collaboration with the networks of PLHIV and Trade Unions
- Facilitate **linkage to care** through communication with peer educators and reference cards for medical services .



- Over 50,000 HIV ST kits distributed.
- Nine out of 11 sectors had more males receiving HIV Self-Test kits: **62% recipients were males.**
- The majority of those tested were people who were tested more than 12 months ago.
- 4,617 were randomly selected for follow up.
- 99% of these employees agreed to share their test results. 148 had a reactive HIVST result (3,3%)



Example 2: HIV ST at workplace in Zimbabwe

- Implemented in a public private partnership mode.
- Ministry of Health & Child Care, PSI, WHO, ILO, NAC
- Started with a training of 10 companies in May 2019. Now, 20 companies on board.



“If we all work together, if we all are accountable and if we leave no one behind, we will end AIDS. **Workplaces will help us close the HIV testing gaps, particularly amongst men. I welcome collaboration with the ILO in initiating HIV self-testing in ten companies in Zimbabwe.**”



Dr Owen Mugurungi
Director, AIDS & TB Unit,
Ministry of Health and
Child Care
Zimbabwe



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Post training support



Sensitization and testing of senior executives



Training of 230 peer educators



Training of medical management – doctors, nurses and general staff



Training of workers committee



Joint visits of MOH, PSI and ILO

Lessons learned

- HIV self-testing very well received by workers
- More men were reached than women in all the three indicators: in usage, in showing reactive results and in taking the confirmatory tests
- Peer educators played a key role
- MOH need to create space for reports from workplaces in their national systems
- Technical support and regular follow up are important factors

Lessons learned

- Advocacy with management is key
 - Develop management- specific messages
 - Trade unions play an effective role
- Management a bit sceptical, though staff welcomed the self test kits.
 - A company's focal point, Zimbabwe

Workplace model of HIV ST is Sustainable and Scalable



Creation of an enabling environment is key

Thank you very much

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ILO HIV AIDS web page

<https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/hiv-aids/lang--en/index.htm>