**HIV Serology EQAS**

In India, under the National AIDS Control Programme, National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) has established more than 5000 laboratories to carry out diagnosis of HIV infection. HIV infection is routinely diagnosed by detecting HIV antibodies using tests like ELISAs and Rapid tests based on various principles. To monitor the performance of these laboratories, a three tier system has been established where all the testing centers (ICTCs) have been grouped under different State Reference Laboratories (SRLs). The SRLs are grouped under different National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) and NRLs come under an Apex Laboratory (ICMR-NITVAR)

HIV Serology EQAS is conducted twice a financial year wherein Apex laboratory (ICMR-NITVAR) sends proficiency panels to 13NRLs (12 under NACO network and to National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis) and 18 SRLs from the states of Goa, Gujarat and Maharashtra. In addition to NRLs & SRLs, the PT Unit is also open to private laboratories involved in HIV testing. The private laboratories have to register in the EQAS programme on payment basis.