

# Improving HIV case finding through differentiated HIV testing using HTS Mentors in Uganda.

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## BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

- In 2020 Uganda faced a challenge of only 80.9% of individuals living with HIV being aware of their status, falling short of the first 95 UNAIDS target.
- Addressing this gap required tailored and targeted differentiated testing strategies, particularly in regions like North-Eastern Uganda characterized by a relatively low HIV prevalence of 4.2%.
- This analysis explores the impact of leveraging HIV Testing Services (HTS) mentors to improve HIV case finding through index testing and Social network testing (SNS) in Northeastern Uganda.

## METHODS

- In **January 2021**, TASO with the support from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through PEPFAR recruited **50 HTS mentors**.
- These mentors were trained and supported to implement index testing and SNS across 107 public facilities in North-Eastern Uganda.
- Their role encompassed mentorship of health workers, screening and recruiting peers for SNS, counseling eligible index clients to elicit their partners or refer their peers, and delivering counselling and HIV testing at both community and facility levels

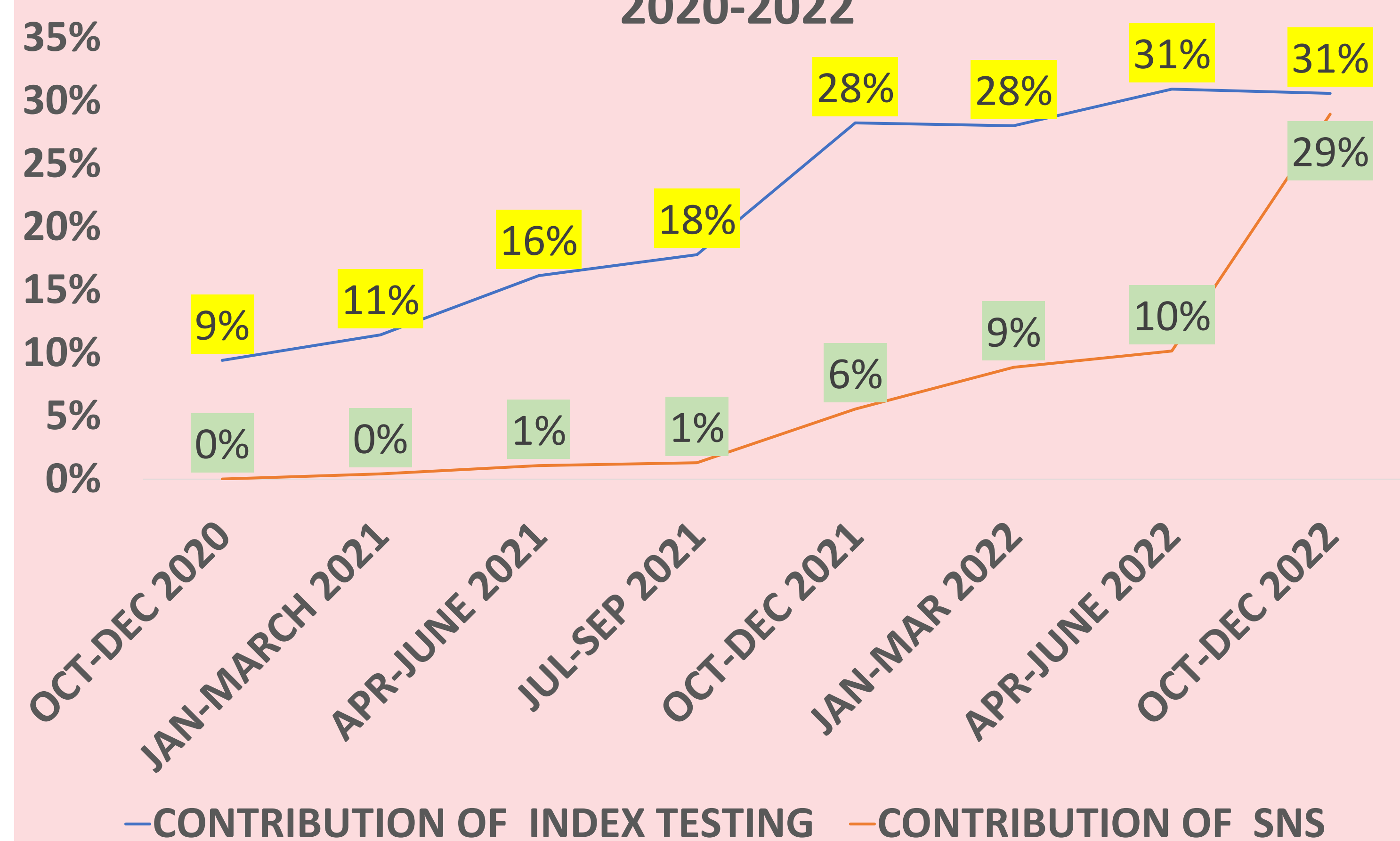


A TASO supported HTS mentor with health workers during a mentorship session

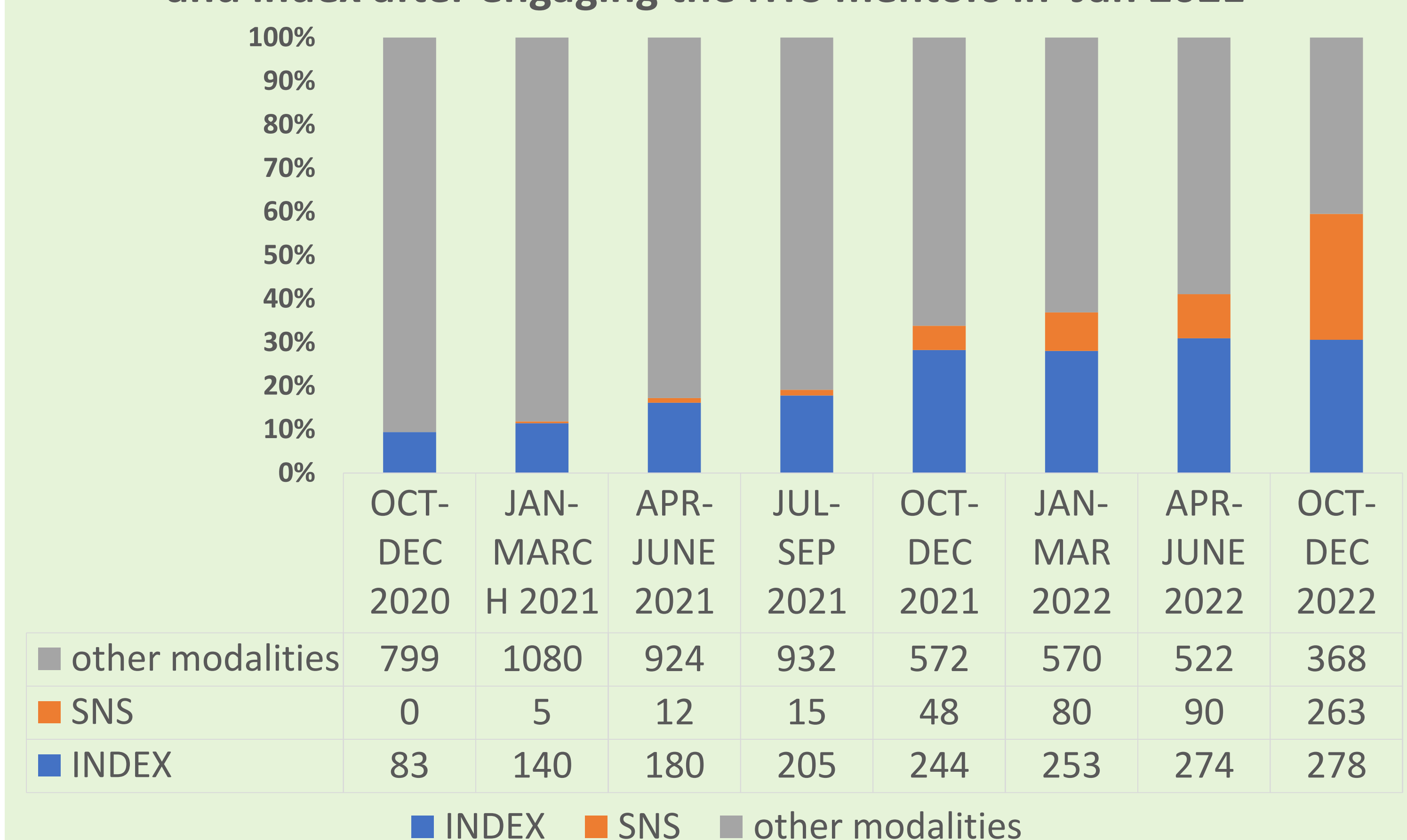
## RESULTS

- Between January 2021 and December 2022, a total of 56,293 individuals received HTS services, with 7,055 individuals testing positive.
- Notably 22% (1574/7055) individuals were identified through index testing and 7% (513/7055) through SNS.
- With the engagement of HTS mentors, the contribution of index testing to identifying positive clients increased from 9% (83/882) to 31% (278/909) while for SNS increased it increased from 0%(0/882) to 29% (263/909), respectively.

A graph showing the contribution of index testing and SNS on HIV case identification in Uganda 2020-2022



A graph showing the increase HIV case finding by SNS and index after engaging the HTS mentors in Jan 2021



## DISCUSSION

- Utilizing trained HTS mentors improved the yield from both SNS and index testing.
- The adoption of differentiated testing services played a pivotal role in identifying individuals living with HIV in North-Eastern Uganda

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