MATRIX-007 Study-Specific Procedures (SSP) Manual Section 2 – Study Structure and Oversight

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2 Introduction

This section describes the operational structure of the MATRIX-007 study including study member team, management, and oversight.

2.1 MATRIX

The organization of the MATRIX-007 study builds off the consortium-style model of MATRIX by engaging many of the MATRIX collaborative members as part of the protocol team. MATRIX partner institutions will implement MATRIX-007 through sub-awards from MATRIX Prime (Magee Womens Research Institute [MWRI]), which coordinates submission of MATRIX budgets, associated sub-awards and other procurements to USAID for approval. MATRIX Prime also reviews all publications and research disseminations.

2.1.1 Study Leadership

MATRIX is the study sponsor and has ultimate responsibility for study conduct. The study is led by the Co-Chairs (MRWI and FHI 360). Each country in the study has a designated Principal Investigator (PI), who oversees study conduct within country.

2.1.2 Leadership and Operations Group

The study is centrally coordinated by the **Leadership and Operations Group (LOG),** which consists of the Protocol Co-Chairs (MWRI and FHI 360) and FHI 360 Operations and Data Management Team [Clinical Research Manager (CRM) and Research Associate]. The LOG coordinates study operations across management teams and country teams, monitors for and ensures proficient study progress and manages communications with MATRIX leadership. The LOG alias email is matrix007log@lists.matrix4prevention.org. LOG responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Coordinate and advise on implementation of study operations
- Coordinate, facilitate, and document Management Team and Protocol Team calls
- Review protocol deviations

2.1.3 MATRIX Clinical Trials Hub

This study is housed within and managed by the MATRIX Clinical Trials Hub (CTH). The CTH will:

- Obtain Mission Concurrence with the study countries and update as needed
- Organize a pre-implementation operational walkthrough meeting with key protocol team members and country/site teams
- Monitor study progress and activities and provide study oversight in collaboration with FHI 360
- Document key study milestones in the Clinical Trial Status Update Table
- Liaise with other MATRIX implementing partners and with management team at USAID regarding MATRIX-007 as needed
- Ensure activities are implemented according to MATRIX and USAID policies and procedures

2.1.4 Research / Technical Areas

Conduct of MATRIX-007 is guided by research and technical (R/T) experts in the following areas. The MATRIX partner organization denoted in parentheses leads the area but works across other partner organizations and with each country team to coordinate area-specific study implementation. Primary responsibilities are indicated below:

- MATRIX CTH Regulatory and Protocol Development (MWRI)
    - Coordinates development of the study protocol, amendments, clarification memos, and sample informed consent documents with the protocol team, including coordination and documentation of Protocol Development Team calls and communications
    - Coordinate submission of protocol documents listed above for review by USAID and/or MATRIX leadership
    - Maintain current financial disclosure and investigator qualification documentation for all applicable protocol team members and country/site teams
    - Provide regulatory input and assistance to protocol team members
    - Manage scheduling of team conference calls
- Operational Coordination (FHI 360)

    - Collaborate with protocol team members and CTH to develop operational and informational study materials and tools, data collection forms, and the Study-Specific Procedures (SSP) Manual
    - Manage overall timelines for study implementation
    - Support communications within R/T area teams and between them and sites as needed
    - Coordinate/document Management Team, Protocol Team and Safety Sub-committee communication and conference calls
    - Support country teams to facilitate initial protocol, amendments, and study materials submission to local Institutional Review Boards (IRB)/Independent Ethics Committees (IEC)
    - Facilitate FHI 360 Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC) review of protocol, amendments, and study materials for country teams under its jurisdiction
    - Coordinate and conduct study-specific training with study staff, in collaboration with staff from other R/T areas, and conduct refresher and follow-up training as needed throughout study implementation
    - Coordinate the site-specific study activation process
    - Respond to inquiries and provide operational and technical assistance to study teams during study implementation
    - Provide study progress reporting to MATRIX leadership as requested
    - Assess the performance of country teams (through site assessment visits and regular communication with and reporting from country teams)
- Data Management (FHI 360)
    - Develops data management and sharing plans
    - Creates and maintains study data collection systems (e.g., REDCap database) to securely capture accurate data
    - Manages data collection forms, including programming and version control as well as coordinated translation of forms to local languages with country teams
    - Provides guidance and oversight of data security and confidentiality measures
    - Produces clean analytic datasets
    - Produces systematic and ad hoc data reports on study progress
- Quantitative Data Analysis (FHI 360)
    - Develops statistical analysis plan
    - Develops results verification procedures
    - Plans and conducts quantitative analyses and produces tables and figures for knowledge products
    - Ensures accurate and clear presentation of findings through results verification and document review
- MATRIX CTH Laboratory Center (LC) (MWRI)
    - Provides advice and guidance to country teams for point of care (POC) testing commodities procurement and quality assurance
- Safety Sub-committee (FHI 360, MWRI, Jhpiego)
    - Provides guidance and technical oversight on safety-related procedures
    - Assists with development of provider training materials and facilitation of any clinical-based training
    - Routinely reviews pregnancy data for quality assurance
    - Reviews all serious adverse event (SAE) and Social Harm (SH) reports, and safety-related queries and provides guidance as needed

2.1.5 Country Teams

Each MATRIX-007 country has a study implementation team responsible for all in-country study operations. The designated country PI is responsible to build and manage the country study implementation team consisting of two tiers comprised of country-level and site-level staff. Country-level team members have responsibilities at the country level and across all study sites in that country. Each study site will have assigned Clinical Research Assistants to conduct study procedures and manage participants. Study sites are associated with CATALYST study sites, ideally located within the CATALYST sites. The MATRIX-007 study site may be set up at an alternative nearby location if sufficient space and access are not possible at the CATALYST site. MATRIX-007 study staff are expected to work closely with CATALYST research staff and the facilities' service delivery staff and implementing partners to achieve efficient and effective management of participants between the two studies and PrEP service delivery points. MATRIX-007 Country teams are also responsible for obtaining advice and/or any required approvals from the Ministry of Health (MOH) and USAID missions for country-specific implementation. The country-level and site-level staff work in close collaboration to ensure cohesive implementation within the country. Following are key roles and responsibilities of the country team:

- Country PI - overall responsibility for study conduct with the country.
- Country Study Coordinator - responsible to coordinate and oversee study site implementation, manage study regulatory requirements, liaise with the Management Team, perform study procedures/data collection as needed.
- Country Co-Investigators, including MOH Co-Investigator – advise and support country-based study implementation in line with country-specific research objectives and regulations
- Clinical Research Assistants – responsible to perform all study procedures and data collection

2.1.6 United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID provides funding for the MATRIX program. Through the MATRIX cooperative agreement, USAID serves as a thought-partner in the technical direction of the study. At a minimum, USAID will be engaged in MATRIX-007 protocol development, data analysis plan review, and representatives will be part of the study management team.

2.2 Study Management and Communication

MATRIX-007 is managed through various mechanisms and tiers of oversight and communications that work in unison to ensure proper study conduct.

2.2.1 Protocol Team

The study Protocol Team is composed of representatives from all entities outlined in the MATRIX-007 structure section 2.1 above. All Protocol Team members are responsible to meet their study-specific roles to ensure optimal study conduct. Communications to the Protocol Team will mostly consist of emails with study milestone updates, protocol modifications, results dissemination, etc. Once study implementation has commenced, Protocol Team calls will take place routinely, facilitated virtually by the LOG. The calls will serve as a forum for cross-country reflections on study implementation, highlighting successes and challenges in relation to recruitment, retention, participant support, etc.; presentation of new, relevant data from the field; and updates on major study milestones. The Protocol Team alias email,

matrix007protocolteam@lists.matrix4prevention.org, can be used to email the Protocol Team. MATRIX maintains this email and can add/remove individuals upon request.

2.2.2 Management Team

Overall management of the study is guided by the Management Team composed of:

- Protocol Co-Chairs
- FHI Operations and Data Management team
- Country PIs and Study Coordinators
- MATRIX Regulatory
- USAID

The Management Team coordinates study implementation across study countries by developing study-specific guidance and tools, providing support and guidance to study country teams to optimize protocol implementation and to monitor overall study progress. The Management Team is coordinated by the CRM through regular virtual meetings and emails/ad hoc calls. R/T area teams may convene additional standing and ad hoc calls and communicate by email as needed. The Management Team alias email, matrix007mgmtteam@lists.matrix4prevention.org, can be used to email the entire team. MATRIX maintains this email and can add/remove individuals upon request.

2.2.3 Country and Site Team

Country teams are responsible for having communication mechanisms and reporting structures established from the country level down through site level, as well as with the MOH and USAID missions, and other in-country stakeholders.

The success of MATRIX-007 depends on centralized (study-level) awareness of country-level implementation that ensures accurate and consistent study conduct per protocol. To enable such oversight, the MATRIX CRM will provide operational guidance and assistance with implementation challenges. The CRM should be in regular contact with country-level team members through emails and implementation calls. The CRM will also coordinate **priority emails** with country teams. Priority emails are standard emails sent to key members of each country team on an as-needed basis to communicate study-related guidance and request actions on behalf of the LOG and R/T area leads. Emails should be responded to by the date denoted in the email (typically within a week).

Country-level team members are responsible for oversight of the site teams. Site teams should be in regular contact with the country team members. Country team members should serve as the liaisons between site teams and the Management Team. In addition to emails, teams may choose to use messaging systems, such as WhatsApp. Country study coordinators should also coordinate regular visits to sites to monitor study implementation quality and accuracy.

2.2.4 Protocol Publication Committee

The MATRIX-007 Protocol Publications Committee (PPC) will oversee the publication and data sharing approval process. The responsibilities and membership of the PPC are detailed in the MATRIX publication policy.

2.2.5 Field Reports

Country study coordinators are also responsible for submitting field reports to the CRM on an established frequency, but at least every two weeks. These reports should summarize progress at the site as well as provide details on any issues related to recruitment or study operations at the site. These issues might be related challenges with research procedures conduct, recruitment and retention, rumors in the community regarding the study, or things that are working well to facilitate study operations. A field report template is available on the MATRIX-007 webpage under Study Documents (https://www.matrix4prevention.org/activity-hubs/clinical-trials/matrix-007-care-prep/matrix-007-care-prep-study-documents). Study reports should be saved on SharePoint in designated folders for each country.

2.2.6 Site Operational Visits

Site operational visits are encouraged to be completed at each site semiannually. The objective of the visit is to assess that study implementation is happening according to protocol, SSP, and country/site-specific plans/SOPs; that onsite study management is adequately supporting such implementation; and to identify any challenges or gaps in study operations. It is recommended these be conducted by the Country PI, Study Coordinator, and/or other country-level R/T area team members as relevant. MATRIX-007 CRMs and any other relevant R/T leads may travel out to support one of these visits annually if feasible. During the visits, the assessment team will:

- Review study documentation on site for accuracy and completeness, such as informed consent forms (ICFs), participant tracking logs, paper-based data collection forms (e.g., cohort visit forms, SAE/SH reporting forms), etc.
- Meet with the Clinical Research Associates to conduct quality assurance measures on research procedures and management
- As appropriate, meet with facility management to discuss any challenges and successes with the site supporting study implementation
- Provide refresher training to any research staff based on outcomes of the assessment or by request

Findings and action items from each site operational visit should be documented by the Country Study Coordinator, in collaboration with the CRMs, if in attendance. A **CARE PrEP Site Operational Visit Guide** is available from the LOG for guidance on visit preparation and completion; the guide can be adapted based on who is conducting the visit and the site/country-specific context. Completion of the guide can serve as documentation of the visit, and should be filed in country-specific folders on the SharePoint site.

2.3 Study Training

All country team staff responsible for conducting MATRIX-007 research procedures and/or engaging with participants are required to complete training prior to conducting any of these activities. Initial study-specific training is a requirement on the MATRIX-007 Activation Checklists. The LOG will work in collaboration with R/T area leads to develop training content and coordinate/facilitate study training.

All country team staff listed on the MATRIX Investigator of Record (IoR) Form are required to have human subject protection (HSP) and Good Clinical Practices (GCP) training through a formal

curriculum recognized by MATRIX Regulatory (for a listing of recognized GCP training resources, see MATRIX Good Documentation Practices [GDP] Policy, available at https://www.matrix4prevention.org/resources/matrix-policies). Country PIs are also required to complete MATRIX IoR training (IoR training slides and training documentation form available at https://www.matrix4prevention.org/resources/regulatory-documents). Key/lead individuals listed on the protocol roster who are not part of the country study teams must complete GCP training through a formal curriculum recognized by MATRIX Regulatory. Training completion certificates for individuals listed in the protocol roster will be maintained by MATRIX CTH Regulatory and should also be maintained in the country team's essential documents. HSP, GCP and IoR training must be current (i.e., completed within 3 years) prior to study start, and individuals are responsible to keep training current for the duration of their involvement in the study by renewing all applicable certifications prior to expiration.

Any individual who becomes study staff after initial study start (e.g., a new hire or someone with new study responsibilities) must complete training relevant to their role prior to engaging in any study activities, especially conduct of study procedures or engagement with study participants. The country PI and Study Coordinator are responsible to facilitate or designate an appropriate facilitator for such training using current training materials. This training may be offered as self-led, one-on-one, or small group sessions as applicable.

Training of all staff must be documented on training logs that indicate the topics trained on, date of completion, facilitator's name, and trainee signature. A training log template is available upon request from the CRM. Logs should be maintained by the country PI or designee on paper or scanned electronically and saved in the country team's essential documents.

2.4 Open Data Management Plan

As a MATRIX activity, the MATRIX-007 study must comply with ADS 579 and USAID's open data policy. De-identified data will be periodically shared on an open data portal, where it can be accessed by the general public. This process will be managed by FHI 360.