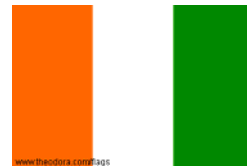


Côte d'Ivoire



Epidemiological Situation

Côte d'Ivoire is the most heavily infected country in West Africa and among the 15 worst in the world affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Current estimates put the national HIV seroprevalence rate at over 10% in adults aged 15 to 49. This figure translates into approximately 570,000 people infected with HIV/AIDS and a rapidly growing number of people requiring care and support.

Three years ago, Côte d'Ivoire experienced a civil instability situation. Consequently, a high HIV transmission rate led the epidemic to progress more rapidly than expected.

Both HIV-1 and HIV-2 infections are found in Côte d'Ivoire where the HIV-1 epidemic is driven predominantly by the CRF02_AG subtype.

Overall HIV/AIDS Policy

The existing health infrastructures, already overburdened and under-resourced, are ill-equipped to cope with the increased demand of care. Because of the severity of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the government created the Ministry of AIDS in January 2001 to deal with the epidemic.

The major aims of the Ministry of AIDS are to strengthen care, prevention and community response to HIV/AIDS in Côte d'Ivoire and at term the decentralization of HIV/AIDS activities. Coordination committees have been established to provide supervision from the national to the peripheral village level including a national central committee (CNLS), led by the President of the State, the Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM), headed by the Prime Ministry, and finally a team of UN mission coordination in collaboration with the national authorities.

The five year National strategic plan highlights priorities including reducing the HIV/AIDS and STI incidence among youth, childbearing women, sex workers, migrants and truck drivers, new orphans and vulnerable children. This plan emphasizes strategies for condom promotion, management of psychosocial and medical care for persons living with HIV/AIDS, improvement of the socio-economic empowerment of persons living with HIV/AIDS through the community mobilization and the income generating micro-projects promotion.

HIV Vaccine Preparedness

National AIDS vaccine plan: Several HIV vaccine workshops, designed to raise awareness of HIV vaccine issues, mobilize the political will for the HIV vaccine research and to discuss the progress of the vaccine development and evaluation, have been held since autumn 2000. The political crisis in the country, however, has caused the development of the HIV Vaccine Trials National Plan to be postponed indefinitely since September 2002.

Vaccine policies developed by: A National Research Board has already drafted the policy that has to be approved by the national and international key people of interest, and works closely with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of AIDS on HIV Vaccines, and the existing Scientific Committee and ethical board.

Scientific review by: The Scientific Committee from the National Research Board on HIV Vaccines.

Protocol approval: By the National Ethical and Research Committee.

Ethical Framework

Cote d'Ivoire adheres to the international guidelines that will be updated during the establishment of National Research Board on HIV Vaccine.

HIV Capacity and Infrastructure to Conduct HIV Vaccine Research

Laboratory Facilities: In each health management region of Côte d'Ivoire, there is a laboratory with the capabilities to support on-site investigation. The following laboratories have the infrastructure capable to support vaccine trials: Projet RETRO-CI (Retrovirus- Côte d'Ivoire), Centre de Diagnostic et de Recherche sur le SIDA et les Maladies Opportunistes (CeDRS), Centre Intégré de Recherches Biocliniques d'Abidjan (CIRBA) and Pasteur Institute.

Study Populations (Cohort Studies): Military/army troops or forces cohort, started in 1999, and sponsored by the French Agence National de Recherche sur le SIDA, (ANRS). The political crisis prevented other cohort studies from being carried out.

Potential trial sites: none

Clinical Trials

Several clinical studies of vaccines have been carried out in Côte d'Ivoire, such as the TRIVACAN clinical trial carried out by researchers from Service des Maladies Infectieuses (SMIT) CHU Treichville, Centre de Diagnostic et de Recherche sur le SIDA et les Maladies Opportunistes (CeDReS), Projet RETRO-CI (Retrovirus- Côte d'Ivoire), and from Agence Nationale de Recherche sur le SIDA, France (ANRS). This trial started in 2004 continues today.

Other vaccine related activities: None

Other trials: 1998-2000 (completed): Phase III trial of a microbicide COL 1492 manufactured by Columbia Laboratories France. Sponsored by UNAIDS and Columbia Laboratories France, Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), Antwerp. The trial was conducted in several sites in Côte d'Ivoire among female sex workers.

International Collaborators

U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), Emory University, Agence National de Recherche sur le SIDA (ANRS), UNAIDS, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, EU, USAID, Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), Projet RETRO-CI, PAC-CI, Centre Intégré de Recherches Biocliniques d'Abidjan (CIRBA), Center for AIDS and Emerging & Re-emerging Infections (ICAERI), Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), Antwerp and London Hygiene School of Public Health, Case Western Reserve University and Aventis-Pasteur.