



IVOIRIANS AND AMERICANS
IN PARTNERSHIP TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS

PEPFAR

PEPtalk

**News you can use
from PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire**

July—September 2019

The Coordinator's Corner

Dear Implementing Partners,

I hope this message finds you in good spirit. First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for your commitment to serving people living with HIV in Cote d'Ivoire. Please know that your contribution is much appreciated.



Given the urgent need for the PEPFAR/Côte d'Ivoire program to roll-out innovative approaches and meet programmatic targets by the end of September, it would be prudent for us to change our way of doing business and institute some drastic measures in the field. As we strive to find efficiency and effectiveness in our work, PEPFAR/USG teams have decided to share the responsibility of accompanying service providers (both clinic and community) to remain accountable for the performance of each site. With the support of the ministry of health and the National AIDS Control Program, we are all committed to work collaboratively toward achieving epidemic control. I know that you're working very hard and your commitment is strong, however, I'm also asking that we push ourselves a little bit harder.

(To be continued on page 3).....

In this issue

The Coordinator's Corner	p.1
CDA Katherine Brucker hosts welcome reception for the new PEPFAR Coordinator	p.1
DAS Harrington visits DREAMS site in Anono	P.2
PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire Q3 results	P.5
PEPFAR stakeholders attend the U.S. Independence Day	p.4
PEPFAR CI welcomes new Country Coordinator	P.5
PEPFAR bids farewell to USAID Health Director Mary Ahmed	P.5
Hospital Director praises stakeholder engagement	P.6
PEPFAR tracks down for lost to follow up patients	P.6
PEPFAR assesses site monitoring during SIMS 4.0 visits	P.6
Community Counselor Gbra performs well at CHR San Pedro	P.6

CDA Katherine Brucker hosts welcome reception for the new PEPFAR Coordinator

The U.S. Chargé d'Affaires (CDA) Katherine Brucker invited some embassy and PEPFAR staff, as well as stakeholder organizations to a welcome reception for the new PEPFAR Coordinator Bibola Ngal-



amulume. The event took place on September 5, 2019 at her residence.

In her introductory remarks, CDA Brucker outlined the efforts of the PEPFAR country team and stakeholders in the continuous fight against AIDS in Côte d'Ivoire. She also emphasized the challenges still to be met in order to help the country achieve more. The results have been going down over the last years and that resulted



into a reduction of the COP budget to \$100 millions for 2020.

The new PEPFAR Coordinator shared her enthusiasm and optimism in the program capacities to perform better and make up for the gaps.

She said everyone should feel involve in making a change to patients' life.

She encouraged the staff to go to the field, meet and talk to patients, and assist implementing partners in providing better and patient focused services at sites.



Bibola Ngalumulume started her Coordinator office in August 2019 for two years.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Harrington visits DREAMS site in Anono

The U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (DAS) for the African Affairs Matthew Harrington and the PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire team visited the social center of Anono village, in Abidjan on August 04,



Matthew Harrington met some activity leaders, mentors and young girls-beneficiaries of the program.

2019. DAS Harrington is in Côte d'Ivoire to participate in the AGOA 2019 Conference, and he was keen to learn about the progress of the PEPFAR DREAMS program.

DREAMS is an ambitious partnership to reduce HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women in 10 sub-Saharan African countries. In Côte d'Ivoire it is implemented in the health districts of Cocody, Abobo, Daloa and Man.

The goal of DREAMS is to help girls develop into Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe women.



He asked relevant questions that allowed the monitoring staff to provide further information on the package of DREAMS services that are delivered at the site. Some adolescent girls, parents and young women testified on the benefits of the program and its positive impact in their daily lives as well as within the community.

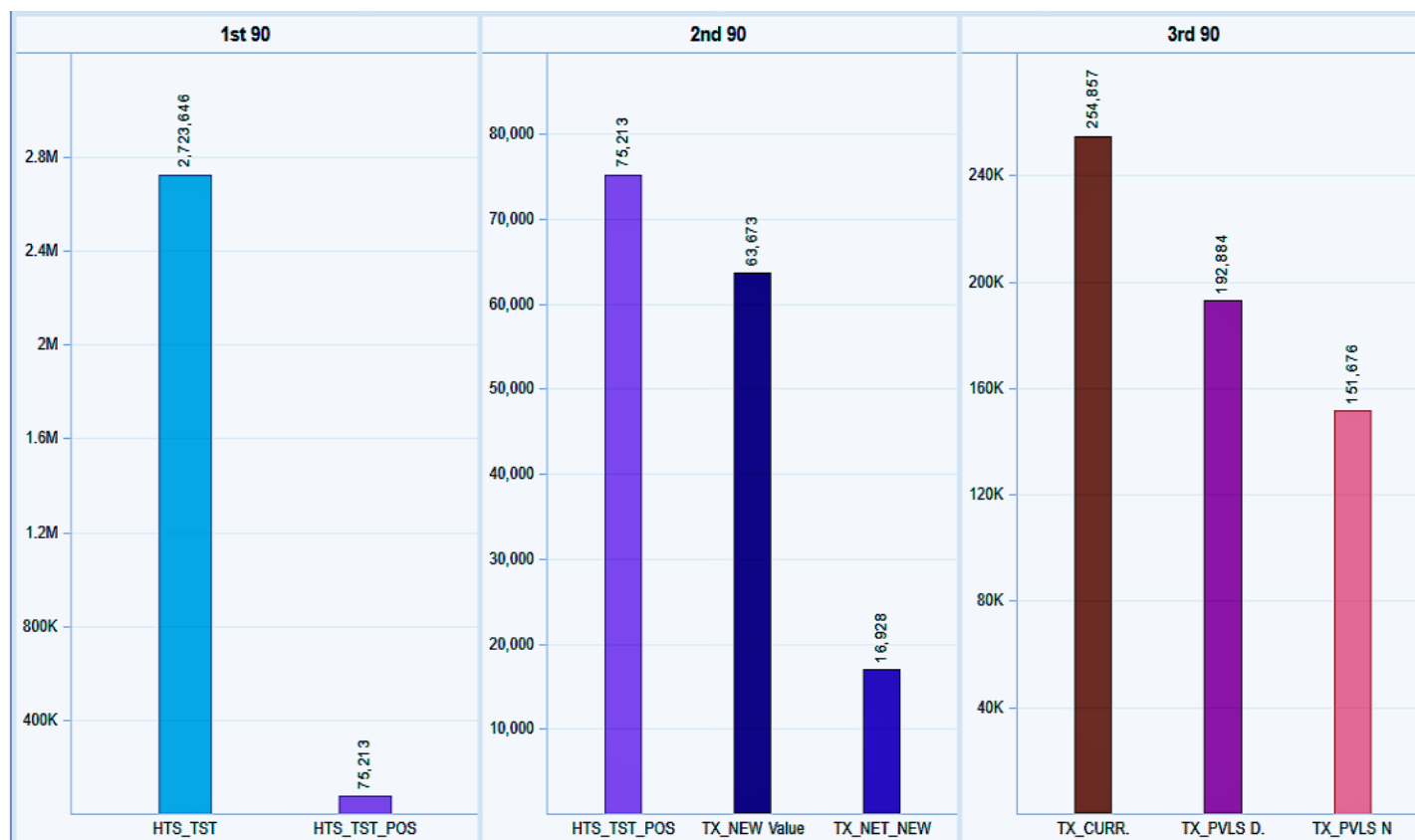
Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Harrington congratulated the PEPFAR country team, EGPAF the program implementing partner, the Director and activity leaders of the Social Center for the good job. He reassured the audience that the US

After the courtesies to the Chief of Anono and his notability, the delegation visited to the Social Center where Deputy Assistant Secretary



government will continue to support Côte d'Ivoire's efforts towards achieving HIV / AIDS control.

PEPFAR COTE D'IVOIRE Q3 RESULTS



This clinical cascade shows the results of the PEPFAR program over the previous 4 quarters (FY18Q4-FY19Q3). Over the FY19Q3 period, the observed yield was 2.0% (12,300/611,512). It is lower than 2.8% observed during the previous period FY19Q2.

These results highlight the slow implementation of the proposed pause in testing and a relaxed approach to targeted index testing in facilities. Consequently, the low case finding result affects the newly on treatment. Achievements in both indicators remain high when comparing to the COPI8 revised targets.

PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire continues to work with implementing partners at site level to bring back to care patients lost to follow up and improve on the retention. I

n regards to the 3rd 90, viral load coverage during Q3 increased to 75% (80%, 57%, 70% in FY18Q4, FY19Q1-Q2 respectively) the suppression remains stable at around 79%.

PEPFAR stakeholders attend the U.S. Independence Day

On July 3, 2019, the PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire interagency team invited some stakeholders to



Military officials with the DHAPP Coordinator Dr Didier Adjoua

participate in the celebration of the US Independence Day at the Chief of Mission Residence in Abidjan.



Dr. Catherine Barouan (WHO) greeting US Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker



Dr. Kiyali Ouattara (JHPIEGO) with Dr. Stephen Dzisi and Dr. Willi Sasha (USAID)

Vice President Daniel Kablan Duncan.

The participation of the PEPFAR stakeholders in the event was an evidence of the continuous involvement and engagement of the

PEPFAR country team to foster



Dr. Alphonse Kouakou (Abt Associates)

The event was chaired by the US Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker and a delegation of high ranking ivoirien officials led by



Dr Virginie Ettienne Traore (FHI) with Dr. Zandra Andre (USAID) and Moïse Tchreme (CDC)

the contribution of all parties in achieving success for the country program.

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Therefore, by this letter, we strongly recommend that the following expectations be implemented immediately:

That as Implementing partners, you spend more time in the field working closely with your sub-partners and site level staff to provide services and eliminate programmatic bottlenecks as they arise. Our PEPFAR-CI/US Government teams will closely monitor your presence and performance at the site level moving forward.

That you welcome any USG employee working on the PEPFAR program (USAID, CDC, DoD, and DoS) to your sites at any time during working hours, and grant them unlimited access to programmatic information and resources, as long as they properly and satisfactorily identify themselves with US Embassy Issued ID cards. However, you must insist on an out-brief with the USG employee before they leave the site, with concrete actionable recommendations on how to improve or maintain performance.

That you collaborate more with clinical partners in your zones and sites as referenced in the signed Clinical/Community MoU and document the outcomes of such collaborative activities in your quarterly reports.

That you regularize your capacity-strengthening activities with your sub-partners and keep accurate records of the outcomes of these. PEPFAR-CI/US Government staff will monitor these records more regularly and determine how they align with your programmatic performance on a quarterly basis.

That you carefully develop remediation plans with actions to directly address specific challenges identified, and assign responsibilities to all relevant parties to ensure shared accountability at all levels (site, IP, district, USG, etc.). This is "living" document and must be updated regularly. See attached remediation plan template.

That you complete the attached LTFU data call (April-July 2019) and return it to the PEPFAR coordination office

During this emergency period to improve performance and achieve programmatic targets, it is imperative that you maintain clear lines of communication between all stakeholders engaged in HIV/AIDS service delivery activities. Careful review of weekly and monthly data for priority indicators must occur routinely as to track effectively the performance of each site. Please continue to address challenges as they emerge and share best practices and lessons learned amongst each other when/where applicable. Please know that we remain committed to supporting you and working closely with you, our beloved and trusted partners, to ensure that quality services are provided to all people living with HIV in Cote d'Ivoire. Remember that even one recipient of care is too many to be ignored or lost to HIV.

PEPFAR CI welcomes new Country Coordinator



Bibola Ngalamulume is the new PEPFAR Country Coordinator for Côte d'Ivoire. She entered duty on July 29, 2019.

Prior to her current role, she served as Senior Project Officer (SPO) at ICAP at Columbia University in New York, NY. As SPO, she specialized in program management and served as the primary project interface between ICAP's field operations and the organization's technical, grants management and administrative support platform in New York.

She provided high-level, broad managerial (technical and operational) support to the development, implementation, and evaluation of prevention, care and treatment activities of HIV, TB and other related conditions of multiple PEPFAR-funded projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ms. Ngalamulume also spent two years as Program Quality Manager at the Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

During this time, she provided programmatic, technical and operational oversight of the CRS Health Program portfolio in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

She has a Master's degree in public health and over 15 years of experience in public health disease intervention program development, implementation, monitoring and reporting, and documenting best practices in developing countries.

PEPFAR bids farewell to USAID/Health Director Marie Ahmed

Ms. Marie Ahmed left post on June 14, 2019 after serving for three years as Director of USAID/Health Office in Côte d'Ivoire.

The US Chargé d'Affaires, Katherine Brucker, PEPFAR colleagues, and implementing partners attended a farewell party on her honor. During her tenure Marie highly contributed to the results of the interagency



PEPFAR country team.



Marie received symbolic gifts from the team and shared a farewell meal with her guests. The staff testified on what experience they gained working with Marie, how her managerial skills empowered them to better perform their tasks and work towards achieving the program objectives. Everyone wished Marie the best on her next appointment.

Hospital Director praises stakeholder engagement

PEPFAR and MOH staff visited the General Hospital of Ferkéssédougou (HG Ferké) for the Site Improvement Monitoring System (SIMS) 4.0 site visit on August 26, 2019. They met Dr Kouamé Nda who is the Director of HG Ferké. Dr Kouamé emphasized the importance of Stakeholders engagement for successful site activities and management. He said: "Stakeholders are at the heart



of our action. We involved community and religious leaders, civil society, youth and women organizations, as well as the implementing Partners to help us find solutions. We involved them for the development of the action plan and we also invite them for the periodic reviews. In so doing we ensure those stakeholders transmitted the necessary information within their communities making it easier to capture the needs and concerns of the patients and their parents and address them as appropriate. Stakeholders are key partners to help us reach our targets and objectives"



PEPFAR tracks down for lost to follow up patients

Starting April through June 2019, PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire and their Ivoirian Ministry of Health counterparts sent teams on the field countrywide to investigate large numbers of for patients who are lost to follow up at site level.

The purpose was to understand why patients who drop treatment and ask them to get back to their ARV. The teams visited 135 sites to track down about 22,000 patients lost to follow up.

The process consisted in having community counselors call the patients and inquired the reasons why they haven't come back to the health facility for their drugs.

It came out from the interviews with the patients reached, that the lack of financial resources prevented them from coming from remote rural places every month to get the ARV drugs. A patient is considered lost to follow up when doesn't come back to the health facilities to collect his ARV drugs within 3 months after his last scheduled appointment.



PEPFAR assesses site monitoring during SIMS 4.0



SIMS 4.0 visit at APROSAM—PMI Bardot—San Pedro

From March 26 through September 30, 2019, joint MOH / PEPFAR teams have been conducting assessment visits to PEPFAR support-sites.

These visits aim to ensure that no HIV service fees are charged to the clients, and sites comply

with the national counseling and testing, care and treatment guidelines when providing services to the People Living with HIV (PLHIV).

During the visits there will be discussions with site staff in order to identify the factors that contribute to the low rate of PLHIV referral to ARV treatment services and their retention at site level. Ultimately, the visits will contribute to improve the quality of HIV prevention, care and treatment services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Community Counselor Gbra performs well at CHR San Pedro

"Provide her with the a patient's identifier and she will give you the most recent updates about that patient. She is the living memory of the site. The way she organises her work makes it easy for us to maintain patients on treatment"

Dr. Aka Abadjinan, the Dermatologist at CHR San Pedro said about Ms. Gbra Zoukou Inès.

Since 2009 Inès has been working as a



Community Counselor with Elan d'Amour, a NGO supported by PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire through the Ariel Glaser Foundation.

Like Inès, there are hundreds of community counselors at care and treatment sites and within the community who, with love, dedication and self-sacrifice, contribute to the achievement of the PEPFAR goals in Ivory Coast. They all deserve support and respect.