



PLAN D'URGENCE AMERICAIN
IVOIRIENS ET AMERICAINS ENSEMBLE CONTRE LE SIDA

PEPtalk

News you can use
from PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire

No. 8, October 2009

Ambassador's Corner

PEPFAR is, above all, a catalyst for change, applying its human and financial resources to redefine what is possible in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Now PEPFAR is changing, too, top to bottom.

A new U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, Ambassador Eric Goosby, is shaping a new five-year global vision for PEPFAR 2. Similarly, PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire has a new leadership team – you'll meet Jennifer Walsh (country coordinator designee), Dr. Anna Likos (CDC chief of party), and Felix Awantang (USAID representative) on this page. Ms. Julia Stanley has joined the PEPFAR team as the Embassy's new Deputy Chief of Mission.



In line with PEPFAR's new paradigm of a partnership based on country ownership and responsibility, the PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire team is working with implementing partners, Ivorian ministries, and other stakeholders to plan programs that rely on national leadership, build local capacity, and ultimately can be sustained without external assistance. These principles should inform our PEPFAR Côte d'Ivoire planning within a new National Strategic Plan 2010-2013 and a Partnership Framework agreement outlining objectives and commitments by the U.S. and Ivorian governments.

Amidst this swirl of change, Ivorian organizations and programs continue their steady climb toward excellence. I was reminded of this during a recent trip to San Pedro to visit with the National OVC Program (PNOEV), ANADER, and APROSAM (see News in Brief on Page 2), which has been at work here twice as long as PEPFAR and no doubt will continue caring for needy women and children long after PEPFAR has left.

If PEPFAR is serving as a catalyst for change, the PNOEV, ANADER, and APROSAM represent the hope for sustainability.

Managing change and planning for sustainability are challenges. Together, we welcome the opportunities.

Wanda L. Nesbitt
U.S. Ambassador

Introducing... the new PEPFAR CI team



Chief of Party Dr. Anna Likos

Previous position: Director, CDC Haiti

Other interesting jobs: Influenza epidemiologist, epidemic intelligence officer – poxvirus, internal medicine hospitalist, college professor and division chair, medical technologist, waitress

What I've heard about PEPFAR

CI: In spite of a difficult working environment in Côte d'Ivoire, the team has accomplished great things.

A major goal in CI: To build bridges: between partners, between agencies, between headquarters and the country team, between Retro-CI and the Embassy... wherever bridges are needed.

First official action: To listen

All-time favorite best practice: Shutting off cell phones during meetings

Favorite pastime: Learning new stuff, be it cooking, gardening, sports, travel... whatever.

Favorite dessert: Anything chocolate



Country Coordinator Jennifer Christine Walsh

Previous position: Assistant Country Director for Programs, Care International in Côte d'Ivoire

Other interesting jobs: International Rescue Committee and World Food Program, Tabou, 2003-04. Christian Children's Fund, Chad, 2005. Waitress during university.

What I've heard about PEPFAR CI: They're workaholics.

A major goal in CI: Ensure a common vision of what we are trying to achieve in the short and long term. Foster a supportive work environment that encourages creative ideas and rewards the pursuit of excellence. Encourage work/life balance. Ensure that we coordinate with the EU, World Bank, Global Fund, and others, under the leadership of the Ivorian government

First official action: Interviews with staff, partners, and government to better understand their views

All-time favorite best practice: Typing notes during meetings

Favorite pastime: Beach volleyball

Favorite dessert: Crème brûlée.

But I'll order a fruit bowl instead.



Country Program Manager Felix N. Awantang

Previous position: Deputy Mission Director, USAID West African Mission, Accra, Ghana

Other interesting jobs: USAID West Africa Regional Health Officer, Health Officer for Senegal, USAID Representative for Nigeria

What I've heard about PEPFAR CI: I have heard and seen some of the significant accomplishments of the program and heard about the challenging operational environment as well as great program possibilities.

A major goal in CI: Improve program sustainability and efficiency, contribute to the realization of greater possibilities

First official action: Listen to those who have been implementing the program and what they think the challenges and obstacles are

All-time favorite best practice: Tenacious engagement with the issues and trust in the team

Favorite pastime: Fishing and scuba diving

Favorite dessert: Fruit salad

TB technology: better diagnosis, care

Cutting-edge diagnostic tools and laboratory upgrades are strengthening Côte d'Ivoire's tuberculosis program, allowing faster and more reliable identification and treatment of TB patients and better testing for drug resistance.

Three laboratories in Abidjan will benefit this year, with decentralization planned for two more TB centers in 2011, under a partnership by the National TB Program (PNLT), the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), CDC/Retro-CI, and PEPFAR partners EGPAF and the American Society for Microbiology. TB is the leading killer of people living with HIV.

The latest in diagnostic equipment – automatic BACTEC MGIT 960 machines for TB liquid culture and drug-susceptibility testing, lateral-flow devices for rapid identification of TB species, and tools for PCR-based genotyping for drug resistance – will be introduced at the national TB reference laboratory (Institut Pasteur) and CeDRes. Decentralization of new liquid-culture services will be piloted at the TB Center (CAT) Adjamé.

The new equipment will vastly improve TB identification in terms of accuracy – from as low as 20%-60% compared with widely used smear-microscopy

techniques to near 100% with liquid culture – as well as speed, reducing liquid-culture times from 28-70 days to 8-14 days. It will also allow rapid differentiation of TB species (within 15 minutes) and molecular genetic detection of resistance to specific drugs.

"This technology represents a significant step forward," said Institut Pasteur Director Dosso Mireille. "More rapid and accurate diagnosis of TB means more timely and effective treatment, reduced morbidity and mortality, and reduced transmission."

To perform the new diagnostic techniques, Institut Pasteur is receiving a new Level 3 lab, and CeDRes and CAT Adjamé are being upgraded to an improved Level 2 with Level 3 practices. All three labs are being equipped with new biological safety cabinets and negative pressure rooms.

The labs will be operational by late November, and training of a national pool of trainers will begin in December. In the first year, the PNLT is expected to provide free liquid culture services for 2,200 patients, species-identification tests for 1,000 positive cases, first-line drug-susceptibility testing for 200 cases, and genotyping tests for 400 patients at high risk for multi-drug-resistant TB.

CONSEIL NATIONAL DE LUTTE CONTRE LE SIDA
SECRETARIAT TECHNIQUE

Ministère de la Lutte contre le SIDA
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Le SIDA, l'affaire de tous !

Discours du ministre à l'occasion de la JNCD

Madame la 1ère Dame de Côte d'Ivoire,
Monsieur le Ministre de la Santé et de l'Hygiène Publique,
Monsieur le Préfet de la Région des Lagunes,
Madame l'Ambassadeur des Etats-Unis d'Amérique,
Messieurs et Mesdemoiselles les Représentants des Agences du Système des Nations Unies,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Directeurs Centraux et Chefs de service,
Messieurs et Mesdemoiselles les représentants des réseaux et OND de lutte contre le sida,
Distingués Chefs coutumiers et religieux,
Honorables Invités,
Messieurs les Membres,

Identifiant
Mot de passe
Se souvenir de moi
CONNEXION

Mot de passe oublié ?
Créer un compte

www.mlsida.gouv.ci

The Ministry of AIDS offers two new national resources: Story on Page 2.

Ministry offers 2 new tools in fight against HIV/AIDS

The fight against HIV/AIDS in Côte d'Ivoire has two important new tools at its disposal – a national Web site and a national information center.

The Ministry for the Fight Against HIV/AIDS (MLS) recently launched its national Web site, www.mlsida.gouv.ci. Offering epidemiological data, news, events, job openings, national documents, and other information about the national response, the site can serve as an invaluable exchange and coordination tool. It also allows visitors to upload their submissions directly to the site.

"We want the site to be used widely, by partners, researchers, the general public, anyone interested in the well-being of Côte d'Ivoire," said Dr. Evelyn Ehuia, head of the ministry's information and communication division. "We are actively looking for contributions and ideas for making it as rich and useful as possible."

A second resource is the ministry's renovated National HIV/AIDS Documentation and Information Center, which will open in October at the Houphouët-Boigny Bridge dispensary in Treichville. An information center created there in 1998 was moved to Plateau in 2006, but a scarcity of materials and difficult access led the ministry to decide to overhaul and relocate the center to its original site.

New both in form and in the extent of its offerings, the center will offer access to national policy, guideline, procedure, and training documents as well as studies, theses, and other scientific documents in an environment conducive to reading and research. It will be open Mondays-Fridays to all interested parties.

The Web site and the center, both supported by PEPFAR, are services of the ministry's information and communication division.



Dr. Ehuia



Ambassador Wanda Nesbitt at the opening of APROSAM's pediatric center

A decade of maternal and child health services, a new pediatric clinic, and a national campaign for children's rights headlined a two-day whirlwind of activities Oct. 16-17 in the port city of San Pedro.

U.S. Ambassador Wanda Nesbitt joined the prefect and the general inspector of the Ministry for Women, Families, and Social Affairs (MFFAS) for ceremonies marking:

- PEPFAR subpartner APROSAM's 10 years of service improving the health of women, children, and families in the region of Basassandra, under the leadership of Odette Koffi Brou.
- The opening of APROSAM's PEPFAR-funded pediatric health center supported by EGPAF
- The donation of lab equipment to APROSAM's clinic for highly vulnerable populations
- The launch, with Minister Jeanne Peuhmond (MFFAS), of an awareness-raising caravan to promote the protection and human rights of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The caravan will use TV and radio ads, posters, and other materials designed by JHU/CCP.
- A tour of the restructured government social center, hub of the local OVC coordination platform.

Eighteen high-performing village HIV/AIDS action committees were honored and rewarded with work resources (including motorbikes for 12) during a ceremony by the PEPFAR-ANADER Program in August.

The winning village committees won out over 128 other villages in five regions of Côte d'Ivoire where ANADER (National Agency for Rural Development) supports HIV prevention, testing, and care activities. Volunteer village committees comprising chiefs, nurses, teachers, trained

News in Brief

HIV community counselors, and other activists are the backbone of ANADER's program, which from October 2008 through June 2009 reached more than 200,000 people with prevention outreach, counseled and tested more than 23,000 people, and provided care and support for 2,700 people living with HIV and more than 9,700 OVC.

Watch the roadsides – and clinic walls – for a nationwide campaign publicizing pediatric HIV diagnosis and care, coming in October from EGPAF and the MTN Côte d'Ivoire Foundation.

The campaign is conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with technical assistance from PEPFAR partner JHU/CCP. In 2008, the EGPAF-MTN partnership supported renovation of a pediatric emergency center, donations of office equipment and school kits, and an HIV testing campaign aimed at children.



Most participants in National HIV Testing Day were first-time testers who were drawn by a promotional campaign and left as satisfied customers determined to protect their health, a survey shows.

JHU/CCP surveyed 711 clients (49% women) during Côte d'Ivoire's first National HIV Counseling and Testing Day on June 20, a pilot that tested 12,583 people (3.7% HIV-positive) at 83 sites in Abidjan. The effort was led by the ministries of AIDS and Health and supported with mass media promotion by JHU/CCP, technical oversight by the CDC/Retro-CI lab, and community mobilization and follow-up counseling and support by RIP+ (the national network of PLWHA organizations) and its members.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of those surveyed said they were getting their first HIV test.

A variety of promotional strategies helped mobilize participation: 34% said they learned of National Testing Day from TV, radio, billboards, or posters; 28% from mobilization by community agents and caravans; and 26% from relatives and friends.

After being tested, 84% said they intended to preserve their health through safer behavior (abstinence, discipline/prudence, use of condoms, following advice offered during counseling, etc.).

Despite long waits at many sites, 91% said they were satisfied with the services they received. By contrast, only 34% of site counselors and 40% of community counselors pronounced themselves satisfied; many complained about inadequate organization, late site openings, etc.

Recommendations will inform a national roll-out of Testing Day next year. The full report is available on the MLS Web site, www.mlsida.gouv.ci.

The HIV risks and health needs of men who have sex with men (MSM) are the focus of a PEPFAR-supported study by the National Institute for Statistics and Applied Economics (ENSEA), the NGO Arc en Ciel, CDC, and the Ministry of AIDS. A formative phase of interviews and focus groups involving 32 MSM and 11 health service providers was completed in September. The full study, to be finished in early 2010, will inform programming aimed at this underserved population.

The Global Fund's Inspector General has a new 24-hour toll-free hotline and Web-based service for people to report concerns about potential fraud or misuse of Global Fund funding. People may report anonymously in any of six languages on the hotline (+1 704-541-6918) and 21 languages on the Web (<http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/oig/contact/> or <https://www.integrity-helpline.com/theglobalfund.jsp>) or by e-mail (inspector.general@the-global-fund.org).

New Partner



Who: Health Alliance International (HAI)

Country Director: Dr. Albert Bakor
HQ Chief of Operations: Dr. Ahoua Koné

What: Under a cooperative agreement with CDC/PEPFAR, HAI will support expansion of HIV prevention, care, and treatment services in Central, North and Northeast Côte d'Ivoire. Services will include HIV testing and counseling, PMTCT, care and support (including for OVC), and ART. The HAI service-delivery model is based on the district approach. The project team will be embedded within the Ministry of Health district team to strengthen integration and capacity building at all levels.

When: Started in September 2009

Where: Region of the Vallée du Bandaman, Savanes, and Zanzan

What Else: HAI staff have been active in Côte d'Ivoire periodically since 1991, working on assessment and research projects in partnership with university hospitals and the National Institute of Public Health. As part of the effort to rebuild the conflict-damaged health-care infrastructure, HAI implemented a UNICEF-funded project in 2007-2008 to scale up PMTCT services in the three districts of Bouaké. When the agreement with UNICEF ended in December 2008, HAI received PEPFAR subpartner funding to continue and expand those services.

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Dr. Bakor

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www.mlsida.gouv.ci
<http://abidjan.usembassy.gov/PEPFAR.html>

Comings & Goings



Julia Stanley,
new Deputy
Chief of Mission



Laura Ramseur,
new PEPFAR
Admin. Assistant



Koko Simone,
research tech,
leaving Retro-CI



The late Blingui
Lucien, chauffeur