



# OPP-ERA

ENDING HIV/AIDS THROUGH  
BETTER PATIENT FOLLOW-UP:  
INCREASE ACCESS TO  
VIRAL LOAD TESTING



## OPP-ERA PROJECT CLOSURE CÔTE D'IVOIRE - JULY 2019

A project implemented by:



A project supported and funded by:

With the support of Côte d'Ivoire from:

The Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene, Diagnosis and Research Centre on AIDS and other opportunistic diseases (CeDReS) and Treatment Research and Training Centre (CePreF)

# THE OPP-ERA PROJECT

## 4 INTERVENTION COUNTRIES



## CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVE THE UNAIDS 3<sup>rd</sup> 90

Performing viral load testing for people living with HIV makes it possible to monitor the effectiveness of their antiretroviral treatment and can warn of treatment failure and the need to improve treatment adherence. An undetectable viral load also helps to avoid the risk of transmission. This exam is recommended for any HIV patient on ARV treatment. However, access to it is still very limited in sub-Saharan African countries.

Since its inception, the OPP-ERA project has been part of the global strategy to respond to HIV/AIDS, including the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets, and particularly the "3<sup>rd</sup> 90": to achieve the target of 90% of patients on antiretroviral treatment who have an undetectable viral load by 2020. The OPP-ERA project has helped improve routine access to and use of this test in four countries in West and Central Africa.

This project was supported and funded by Unitaid and implemented by a consortium, led by Solthis, responsible for operational coordination and implementation in Guinea; ANRS, providing co-financing and scientific leadership; Expertise France, providing project implementation in Côte d'Ivoire and Cameroon; and Sidaction, providing implementation in Burundi.

## CREATING FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS IN THE HEALTH SYSTEM

In addition to addressing the technical challenges of conducting this test in a laboratory, the OPP-ERA project also helped to improve all essential factors that facilitate access to viral load testing in a country.

Available at [webdoc-chargevirale.solthis.org](http://webdoc-chargevirale.solthis.org) or at [chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org](http://chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org)



## 2013-2019: PROJECT SUCCESSES



# THE PROJECT IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

## Bridging the gap in access to viral load testing in Côte d'Ivoire

Improving access to viral load measurements is a major challenge for Côte d'Ivoire, which has not yet achieved UNAIDS' objectives (3<sup>rd</sup> 90).

According to the PNLs, only 14% of people infected with HIV who are on antiretroviral treatment were tested for viral load in 2014.

In 2017, according to UNAIDS data, the HIV prevalence rate in Côte d'Ivoire was estimated at 2.8%, or nearly 500,000 people living with HIV. Less than half of those who knew their HIV status were receiving antiretroviral treatment, or 46% ARV coverage. The percentage of patients on ARVs with an undetectable viral load was estimated at only 35%.

## In Côte d'Ivoire, the OPP-ERA project was implemented by Expertise France through its local coordination office in Abidjan, in close collaboration with various local partners:

- Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene:
  - General Directorate of the Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene
  - National AIDS Control Programme (PNLS)
  - National Program for the Development of Pharmaceutical Activity (PNDAP/CNCAM)
  - Directorate of Pharmacy, Medicine and Laboratories (DPML)
  - CCM Global Fund
  - New Public Health Pharmacy (N-PSP)
- CeDReS: Diagnosis and Research Centre on AIDS and other opportunistic diseases
- CePReF: Treatment Research and Training Centre
- Daloa Regional Hospital Centre

- Scientific partners:
  - National Public Health Laboratory (LNSP) RIIP+, ICHANGE, PAC-CI, IPCI, CIRBA, DIEM
- PEPFAR Partners:
  - RETROCI, ICAP, EGPAF, ACONDA, Ariel Glaser

## OPP-ERA project successes in Côte d'Ivoire

The OPP-ERA project has equipped three laboratories—CeDReS and CePReF in Abidjan and the Daloa Regional Hospital Centre—with multi-purpose platforms. From 2014 to the end of 2018, the OPP-ERA project conducted more than 71,000 viral load tests.

In 2018, 85% of the viral load tests performed by CePReF and 73% performed by CeDReS were undetectable.

The OPP-ERA project trained 16 staff members from the 3 project laboratories: 14 from the CeDReS and CePReF and 2 from the Daloa Regional Hospital Centre. Five technicians from the two laboratories in Abidjan have been authorized to perform viral load measurements on OPPs, and a laboratory accreditation process is underway in 2019.

The project also enabled the project's intervention countries to share experiences: 3 Burundian and 6 Guinean laboratory staff members were trained in Côte d'Ivoire.



**71,000 viral load tests performed**  
from 2014 to the end of 2018



**16 laboratory staff trained**

## What transition to ensure the project sustainability?

Implementation of the OPP-ERA project activities will continue in Côte d'Ivoire under the leadership of the National AIDS Control Programme (PNLS), supported by various units of Ministry of Health and Public Hygiene. In addition to the staff capacity building (i.e., laboratory, clinical, community) that took place throughout Phase 2 of the project (2016–2019), the products needed to operate the OPP platforms are already integrated into the national supply chain process. The NACP will handle procurement of this OPP laboratory products needed through the Global Fund.

Open polyvalent platforms (OPPs) are an opportunity for greater access to molecular biology exams in the case management of PLWH. An undetectable viral load that can be sustained over time provides an individual benefit for the patient's well-being and a benefit to society by reducing the risk of transmission to new people.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the OPP-ERA project revolutionized access to viral load testing through OPPs.

CePreF Laboratory Technician




## Practical resources on HIV viral load at your disposal

A **handy toolkit** with downloadable documents.

Register today to be informed of the launch in October:

 [toolkit-chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org](https://toolkit-chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org)

An **up-and-running site** that will be supplemented with resources and a lessons learned document (in October):

 [chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org](https://chargevirale-oppera.solthis.org)

A **web documentary** to explain the project's practical implementation:

 [webdoc-chargevirale.solthis.org](https://webdoc-chargevirale.solthis.org)

For more information about OPP-ERA, please contact:

SOLTHIS: [rachel.domenach@solthis.org](mailto:rachel.domenach@solthis.org)

EXPERTISE France:  
[laurent.malato@expertisefrance.fr](mailto:laurent.malato@expertisefrance.fr)

Unitaid: [mascheronisa@unitaid.who.int](mailto:mascheronisa@unitaid.who.int)

In Côte d'Ivoire:

PNLS (National HIV Programme): [pnlsci@pnlsci.ci](mailto:pnlsci@pnlsci.ci)  
or [infos@pnlsci.ci](mailto:infos@pnlsci.ci)

Dr Gale Fleure, Head of Medicines and  
Laboratory Department: +225 54399819

Dr Kouadjale Mathurin, Head of Care and  
Treatment Department: +225 08976550