

# COTE D'IVOIRE

*Report prepared by the Joint UN Team on AIDS*

## PROGRESS TOWARDS THE FAST-TRACK TARGETS

COUNTRY PRIORITIES/ TARGETS BY END OF 2021	STATUS	RESULTS, END OF 2020
By 2021, Côte d'Ivoire will achieve the 90-90-90 targets for all people living with HIV, including children and adolescents.	<b>ON TRACK</b>	By 2020, about 77% people living with HIV knew their HIV status in Côte d'Ivoire, of whom 97% were enrolled on antiretroviral treatment (ART), and 82% of those on treatment were virally suppressed (GAM, 2021).
By 2021, an estimated 60% of adolescents, young girls and boys aged 10-24 years benefit from HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services; and 80% of people from key populations benefit from the combined prevention service package in line with the national standard.	<b>ON TRACK</b>	In 2020, condom use during sexual debut with non-regular partner among young people aged 15-24 years was 42% among females and 67% among males. 96% of the female sex workers and 36% of men who have sex with men received two HIV prevention services in the past three months (Côte d'Ivoire HIV Prevention Scorecard, 2020).
By 2021, an estimated 100% of pregnant women in antenatal consultations will take an HIV test and receive their results. By 2021, around 95% of pregnant and breastfeeding women living with have received treatment for prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT).	<b>ON TRACK</b>	In 2020, the HIV testing acceptance rate among pregnant women in antenatal care was at 84%); and 89% of the pregnant women living with HIV accessed PMTCT services to eliminate vertical transmission (GAM, 2021).

### JOINT TEAM

UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN WOMEN, ILO, UNESCO, WHO, WORLD BANK, UNAIDS SECRETARIAT

## JOINT PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTIONS AND RESULTS IN 2020

*In 2020, implementation of differentiated service delivery models, including facility- and community-based 3-6 multi-month dispensary of ART and Facility Adherence Club models increased ART coverage and treatment adherence among people living with HIV in Côte d'Ivoire. The Joint Team supported the Government to develop a Dolutegravir transition plan, treatment protocols and guidelines for adults to further improve treatment services and health outcome of people living with HIV. Support was also provided to scale up sexual and reproductive health, family planning, HIV prevention, testing, and treatment linkage services for workers in targeted industries, adolescents and young people, young motorbike taxi drivers, and young women. Community sensitization and life skill building has also been another area of focus for the Joint Team. Over 700 public and private health facilities across the country received training and supervision on integrated management of PMTCT and paediatric care services to improve their services. Results and recommendations from a situational analysis conducted in 18 districts to identify reasons behind low PMTCT coverage among pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV will help bridge gaps and improve future programme implementation.*

### TESTING AND TREATMENT

#### ADVOCACY; TECHNICAL SUPPORT; FOSTERING PARTNERSHIPS

Knowledge of HIV status among men aged 15 years and over remains low in Côte d'Ivoire. In 2020, 68% of men over 15 years old living with HIV knew their HIV status, compared to 84% of women in the same age group (Spectrum 2021). Although the country implemented new HIV counselling and testing strategies in 2019, such as self-testing, index, and family testing, the combined yield from all the strategies remained below 3% in 2020. In this view the Joint Team conducted a rapid assessment of HIV testing programmes across the country which underscored an urgent need for a) a shift to a three-test algorithm to achieve a positive predictive value of at least 95%; b) provision of HIV and syphilis dual test during antenatal care to allow more pregnant and lactating mothers living with HIV know their status and access treatment; c) strengthening index testing; and (d) accelerated scale up of self-testing to improve performance of HIV testing programmes.

1558 workers (93.3% of men) in targeted industries, including banks, insurance companies, telecommunication and small information technology enterprises received HIV counselling and testing during workplace HIV awareness and testing campaigns organized with partnership between the Joint Team and the Côte d'Ivoire Business Coalition (CECI). The campaign was also used to collect data on HIV in workplaces in the country and the final report is due to be published in 2021.

As a result of technical support provided by the Joint Team, Côte d'Ivoire completed the Dolutegravir (DTG) transition plan, including treatment protocols and guidelines for adults and the development of an implementation plan for new paediatric treatment regimens is underway.

### HIV PREVENTION AMONG ADOLESCENT AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### POLICY ADVICE; TECHNICAL SUPPORT; COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Health for the development of an operational plan and implementation of the HIV Prevention 2020 Roadmap to ensure continuity of prevention services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Support was also provided for an analysis of condom and lubricant supply and distribution as part of the total market approach to improve access, uptake, and consistent use to these prevention commodities.

The Joint Team technically and financially supported combined sensitization initiatives and HIV, sexual reproductive health (SRH) and family planning services targeting adolescent and young people in Côte d'Ivoire. This included HIV prevention project focused on young motorbike taxi drivers and vulnerable young girls in Bouaké and Korhogo cities; HIV awareness campaigns;

provision of HIV, SRH, and family planning services; virtual youth camps; health consultations and weekly talks in universities and schools; and provision of SRH and life-skill courses which reached 54% of primary and 50% of secondary school students across the country. A total of 102 000 adolescents and young people accessed SRH services, and 75 safe spaces were created ensuring continuity of peer support and coaching of 1424 girls on HIV, SRH and family planning services.

Additionally, 360 teachers, parents, and students in Dabou, Aboisso and Grand Bassam towns improved their knowledge through comprehensive sexuality education. Around 865 service structures were identified in Bouaké, Korhogo, Abengourou, Yamoussoukro and in the Greater Abidjan and have been geolocated in the "Hello Ado" smartphone application, which connects adolescents and young people to reproductive health, social, legal, and judicial protection services.

In 2020, as a result of support from the Joint Team, 475 197 most vulnerable young people aged 15-24 years, including key populations, children in conflict with the law, and young people living with HIV in nine health districts improved their knowledge on HIV prevention through the U-Report platform, thanks to the support from the Joint Team. Another 23 844 adolescents and young people accessed HIV combination prevention services, referrals to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and HIV-related commodities, including HIV self-testing kits. More than 6229 HIV and STIs self-testing kits were distributed to young people, and 101 most-at-risk adolescents and young people were successfully enrolled in PrEP programme.

### **PMTCT COVERAGE**

#### **POLICY DIALOGUE; TECHNICAL SUPPORT; PARTNERSHIPS**

The Joint Team supported a situational analysis in 18 districts to identify reasons behind low PMTCT coverage among pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV. This analysis revealed poor quality of programme data due to data inconsistencies in DHIS2, site reports, and primary tools due to insufficient understanding of PMTCT indicators by service providers and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers, and over- or under-reporting of some data. The study also made key recommendations, including improving uptake and delivery of PMTCT services; holding monthly meetings to validate data before it is sent to the district and region; involving M&E officers and data managers from implementing partner organizations in central-level supervision missions.

Technical support to the Government resulted in 755 public and private health facilities across the country strengthening their service delivery capacity through supervision and training on integrated management of PMTCT and paediatric care services.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO THE COVID-19 RESPONSE**

The Joint Team coordinated its efforts and reprogrammed resources to support the Government of Côte d'Ivoire through a multisectoral response plan. A national COVID-19 contingency plan, which integrated HIV services was developed and implemented accelerating a 3-6 multi-month dispensing (MMD) of ART. In 2020, an estimated 48% of the people living with HIV enrolled on antiretroviral treatment (ART) received their treatment under differentiated service delivery models—23% in the 6MMD and 25% in 3MMD schemes, community-led services, and Facility Adherence Club models. These efforts increased ARV coverage for adults and adolescents to 71% in 2020, a 4% increase from 2019. Retention on ARV also improved in 2020 with 96% for people living with HIV serviced under differentiated care model adhering to their treatment compared to 52% enrolled on the standard care model.

Rapid assessment conducted by the Joint Team to identify impacts of COVID-19 and the needs of people living with HIV showed a need to maintain ART, care, and nutrition services and ensure the safety of this group from COVID-19 infections. As a result, 1000 vulnerable households received cash transfer and food assistance, including 100 households of people living with HIV. 1328 households of people living with HIV and key populations (a total of 13 968 people), who became vulnerable due to the pandemic, also accessed monetary and nutrition support.

Personal protective equipment and hygiene kits were donated to 103 health, social and community support facilities, and socio-education centres in Abidjan. Additional 666 pregnant women living with HIV received community ART delivery services and 4050 pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers living with HIV improved their understanding of HIV, treatment and care adherence and COVID-19 infection prevention through community sensitization initiatives. Around 4000 posters and leaflets, and audio-visual public service announcements on COVID-19 prevention and care were also produced and disseminated via various mass communication outlets increasing awareness among the wider communities.

### **CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTEGRATED SDG AGENDA**

In 2020, the Joint Team made significant contribution in the development of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) ensuring that people living with HIV are included in the eight groups of people left behind or at risk of being left behind in the new Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2021-2025) signed between the United Nations and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

To further improve inclusion and protection of people living with HIV, a pool of 20 trainers on human rights, health and HIV was established, and 25 officers from the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights—magistrates, prison staff and judicial protection educators—strengthened their capacities around human rights for HIV and other health services to improve the health outcome of their populations.

PERSISTING AND EMERGING CHALLENGES AND BOTTLENECKS	KEY FUTURE ACTIONS TO RESPOND TO CHALLENGES AND UNBLOCK BOTTLENECKS
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic-related lockdown, quarantine, curfew, and other public health restrictive measures had a significant impact on the continuity of HIV services. The pandemic also had a negative socio-economic impact on the most vulnerable groups, including people living with HIV and key populations.</p>	<p>Continue advocacy and technical support to ensure HIV services remain integral part of the COVID-19 response.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance to strengthen advocacy for accelerated social protection scheme for all, including people living with HIV.</p>
<p>Poor implementation of HIV counselling and testing strategies resulted in low HIV testing yield and progress around expansion of community-led testing, self-testing, index testing programmes remains low.</p> <p>There is a need to scale-up the ‘test and treat’ and differentiated care strategy to achieve the 90-90-90 targets. Development of task-shifting and expansion of community-led monitoring are lagging due to the lack of resources, hindering the retention of adults and children living with HIV in treatment and care services.</p> <p>Access to paediatric treatment services to ensure better viral load suppression among children remains low—an estimated 32% of all children living with HIV achieved suppression compared to 62% adults in 2020 (Spectrum 2021).</p>	<p>Provide technical support for implementation and accelerated expansion of community-led monitoring and differentiated testing and treatment services targeting men, people from key populations and children.</p>
<p>There is a need to strengthen and increase coverage of combination HIV programmes and behavioural change communication initiatives targeting key populations.</p>	<p>Provide technical support for the i) implementation of the HIV Prevention 2020 Roadmap aimed at accelerating HIV prevention programmes with focus on adolescent and young people, and key populations, ii) integration of HIV and SRH services for adolescent and young people in school and university health facilities, and iii) scale up of HIV combination prevention services coverage and behaviour change communication initiatives targeting key populations, including young people and illegal immigrants.</p>
<p>Stigma, discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, punitive laws and policies, and criminalization of behaviours/practices remain predicaments in accessing HIV services, especially among young women and key populations.</p>	<p>Intensify advocacy to accelerate implementation of the human rights and the 2030 SDG Agenda, and creation of an enabling environment for a rights-based, equitable, and gender sensitive HIV response.</p>

<p>HIV counselling and testing among pregnant women during the first trimester of pregnancy remains inadequate and delivery of integrated HIV, SRH and family planning services is weak.</p> <p>Early infant diagnosis (EID) at two months of life among HIV-exposed infants remains low and there is poor retention of mother-child pairs in care until the final HIV status is determined.</p>	<p>Provide technical support to strengthen the capacities of 755 public and private health institutions through supervision and training in the areas of integrated management of PMTCT services and paediatric care.</p> <p>Support conduction of a situation analysis in 18 districts with low ART coverage among pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV to identify determinants of low coverage.</p> <p>Build capacity of community health workers to follow-up and remind pregnant women and mothers of their appointments via telephone and cover their transport cost for community-based distribution.</p>
<p>The HIV response in Côte d'Ivoire is highly dependent on external funding resources. There is a need to increase or to the minimum maintain the current Government budget expenditure to ensure sustainability of the response. Substantial private sector contribution is also required to increase domestic resources.</p>	<p>Continue advocacy and technical support to strengthen the coordination, national ownership, and national leadership to ensure increased domestic resources HIV programmes and the sustainability of the response.</p> <p>Continue to provide technical support to ensure efficient and synergistic implementation of the National Strategic Plan 2021-2025, and the Global Fund and PEPFAR (COP21) funded programmes.</p>
<p>Poor quality of HIV data, including data produced at the community level and weak use of strategic information must be addressed to advance the national HIV response.</p>	<p>Continue to provide technical support to improve the quality, availability and use of strategic information in HIV programme planning, implementation, advocacy and decision-making.</p>

---

Report available on the  
**UNAIDS Results and Transparency Portal**

[open.unaids.org](http://open.unaids.org)