



Increasing Access to Save Lives: Private HIV Network in Côte d'Ivoire

Video Transcript

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Dr. Ahui Anwanzi, General Director, Polyclinique Centrale, Abobo [Speaking in French, English translation]: My name is Doctor Ahui Anwanzi. Before, I did not offer medical care to people living with HIV and AIDS. Sometimes, I had to let my patients go. I dreamed of a day when I could offer a complete range of services.

Caroline Quijada, Deputy Director, Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Project: In Côte d'Ivoire, over half a million individuals are HIV positive, many of them without knowledge of their HIV status. The government of Côte d'Ivoire has a free treatment policy: anyone who needs HIV services can access them for free with no charge. This includes HIV testing and counseling, as well as access to ARVs. In Côte d'Ivoire, no private commercial facilities were actually licensed or approved to provide HIV treatment services.

Professor Félix Yapo Boa, General Director, Ministry of Health and the Fight against AIDS [Speaking in French, English translation]: Overall, the private sector represents 40% of the demand for medical and pharmaceutical services in Côte d'Ivoire.

Caroline Quijada: USAID asked the SHOPS project to come to Côte d'Ivoire to do a private health sector assessment.

Dr. Alphonse Kouakou, Program Manager, SHOPS Project: One of the recommendations was to create a pilot [project] for HIV services.

Dr. Kouamé Abo, Coordinating Director, National Program of Persons Living with HIV [Speaking in French, English translation]: The pilot project actually involves 15 clinics.

Caroline Quijada: In Côte d'Ivoire, this is the first time that the government has actually partnered with the private health sector to deliver HIV counseling, testing, and treatment services. The Ministry of Health provides access to commodities for free, access to diagnostic machines. One of the things that this pilot allows us to do is really build confidence and trust in these providers.

Dr. Kouamé Abo [Speaking in French, English translation]: Today we can report that there are encouraging results.

Caroline Quijada: While our pilot is still new, we started in September 2014, we are starting to see results. Through our private provider network, we tested just short of 2,000 individuals. 131 of them were found to be HIV positive. In addition, through the private provider network, we enrolled 67 individuals in ARV treatment. These results show that there is in fact a lot of demand for accessing services and that these private health facilities are in fact meeting that demand.

Dr. Ahui Anwanzi [Speaking in French, English translation]: My staff and I are very happy about this initiative. We are very thankful for this, because it has allowed us to be truly complete in our work.