

KENTO MWANA

Project for the prevention of the transmission of HIV from mother to child in Congo

The project aims at reducing the mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission rate to 2-3% in the Kouilou, Niari and Cuvette regions by using the logistics and the network of healthcare facilities set up by Eni Foundation for the *Salissa Mwana* project.

Area of intervention

The project will be expanded to the entire Kouilou region and extended to Niari and Cuvette. The Centers involved in the initiative will be selected in coordination with the National Council for the Fight against AIDS (CNLS) of the Republic of Congo.

Beneficiary population

Based on the results of the pilot program and the epidemiological data provided by the local healthcare authorities, an estimated 1,025 mother-child pairs will be treated (January 2009-June 2011).

Objectives

- Develop coverage of the activities of the pilot program.
- Improve the capabilities of the laboratory for the advanced diagnosis of HIV.
- Strengthen the capacities of the staff of local healthcare facilities.
- Gradual transfer of skills on prevention of mother-to-child transmission to Congolese healthcare personnel.

Activities

In addition to the activities conducted in the pilot phase, the project plan includes:

- Integrating the new healthcare facilities to conduct HIV screening and radiological and instrumental tests.
- Providing new instrumentation for the Pointe Noire laboratory.
- Extending prevention to other mother-to-fetus transmitted diseases, in particular infection by HBV (Hepatitis B virus) and early vaccine protocols for newborns when mothers test positive.
- Training local personnel (on-site training sessions, internships in Pointe Noire for the staff from other departments and internships in Italy). On-site training is planned for about 320 people, including doctors, Center managers, counseling staff, obstetricians, nurses and delivery room attendants and laboratory technicians.
- Assessing Congolese healthcare personnel acquired skills with respect to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Partners and roles

- Eni Foundation finances the project and is responsible for its management.
- The Ministry of Health provides healthcare facilities, medical staff, antiretroviral drugs and other necessary support.
- The National Council for the Fight against AIDS (CNLS) guarantees the coordination with the other activities aimed at fighting the infection.
- The Clinic for Infectious Diseases of the University of Genoa is the project's clinical and scientific manager.

Duration and cost

The project last 4 years (2009-2012) and has an estimated cost of 1.8 million euro.