Success in Togo in the Transition to New High Quality Antiretroviral Therapy (TLD)

Haguiratou Daou Ouedraogo, Conseillère Technique Senior/ Chef d’équipe, GHSC-TA Francophone TO, Togo; Charlemagne Gnouna, Conseiller Regional Technique Senior/ Chef d’équipe, GHSC-TA Francophone TO, Burkina Faso ; Francois Lamegou, Analyste des données de la chaîne d’approvisionnement, GHSC-TA Francophone TO, Togo; Bleza Tchao, Spécialiste en gestion des stocks, GHSC-TA Francophone TO, Togo.

The Projet USAID Global Health Supply Chain Technical Assistance Francophone Task Order (GHSC-TA Francophone TO)

Impact of the activity

The transition enabled the strengthening of the medication management system at the sites and this led to having zero ruptures at the national level. The transition enabled the strengthening of the medication management system at the sites and led to zero ruptures of the products. At the national level, the transition made it possible to manage the availability of stocks at the central and the sites. The factors that have contributed to this strengthening are: the harmonization of management tools, the development, validation and scaling up of new practices. This made it possible to improve the purchase, storage, and management of the sites with drugs, taking into account the options expressed by the sites.

Evidence: Since the Department of Health launched the TLD Transition Program in January 2020, the initiative has seen significant progress. In July 2021, after only 18 months, the transition from TLE to TLD in 24 PEPFAR health sites in Togo is complete for 97.41% of eligible patients. These PEPFAR sites benefit from a direct partnership with the GHSC-TA Francophone TO for technical assistance, which includes in-depth stock management training and workshops for HIV drug stock managers.

Barriers

A first hurdle was the pandemic, COVID-19, which led to delays in drug delivery dates. A second obstacle to encounter is that of patient resistance to changing treatment.

Lessons learned

The methodology for developing a transition plan defining the steps are known and for the next transitions these steps can be used. The one box is equivalent to a 3-month treatment, which has considerably reduced lost sight, improved compliance, which also contributes to the reduction of opportunistic infections.

Facilities

The purchasing and inventory monitoring group meets every month under the leadership of the PNLS with the participation of all the stakeholders in order to ensure the availability of drugs through the monitoring of supply plans and take decisions as needed. The group is in place to ensure that there is a supply plan that could lead to a national shortage of drugs and stop the transition.

The strategy to ensure continuous communication is to create a WhatsApp group to share important information for stakeholders. This includes meeting minutes, presentations on the methodologies adopted by the PNLS, information to be shared between the different sites, stock management reports, etc. This information sharing allows:

- to have constant availability of TLDs at the national level and at the last mile with a rapid resupply system through the private sector.
- Good collaboration between the project and the PNLS has prevented better monitoring of the transition and scaling up to achieve 97% transition at the national level.

Description of the activity

Togo’s policy has determined that 95% of adult patients will switch to use of TLD, a generic combination pill of tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, lamivudine and emtricitabine (TDF), which is taken at a fixed dose once a day. This new therapy was unknown to the providers before, and it was the first time it was used in Togo. Implementing the transition required strong collaboration between the country’s stakeholders: the National AIDS Control Program (PNLS), the World Fund and the technical group for monitoring purchases and stocks.

The PNLS and the technical group meet every month with the participation of all the stakeholders in order to ensure the availability of drugs through the monitoring of supply plans and to take decisions as needed. The group is in place to ensure that there is a supply plan that could lead to a national shortage of drugs and stop the transition.

One strategy to ensure continuous communication is to create a WhatsApp group to share important information for stakeholders. This includes meeting minutes, presentations on the methodologies adopted by the PNLS, information to be shared between the different sites, stock management reports, etc. This information sharing allows:

- to have constant availability of TLDs at the national level and at the last mile with a rapid resupply system through the private sector.
- Good collaboration between the project and the PNLS has prevented better monitoring of the transition and scaling up to achieve 97% transition at the national level.

Impact of the activity

The transition enabled the strengthening of the medication management system at the sites and the new therapy was unknown to providers before, and it was the first time it was used in Togo. Implementing the transition required strong collaboration between the country’s stakeholders: the National AIDS Control Program (PNLS), the World Fund and the technical group for monitoring purchases and stocks.

One strategy to ensure continuous communication is to create a WhatsApp group to share important information for stakeholders. This includes meeting minutes, presentations on the methodologies adopted by the PNLS, information to be shared between the different sites, stock management reports, etc. This information sharing allows:

- to have constant availability of TLDs at the national level and at the last mile with a rapid resupply system through the private sector.
- Good collaboration between the project and the PNLS has prevented better monitoring of the transition and scaling up to achieve 97% transition at the national level.

Evidence: Since the Department of Health launched the TLD Transition Program in January 2020, the initiative has seen significant progress. In July 2021, after only 18 months, the transition from TLE to TLD in 24 PEPFAR health sites is complete for 97.41% of eligible patients. These PEPFAR sites benefit from a direct partnership with the GHSC-TA Francophone TO for technical assistance, which includes in-depth stock management training and workshops for HIV drug stock managers.