HIV response in the context of the Covid-19 Epidemic in the City of Yaounde, Cameroon

Albert Frank ZEH MEKA, MD, Msc
Coordinator, Regional Technical Group for AIDS Control, Centre Region
Plan

• Background
• Covid-19 trend data in Cameroon and City of Yaounde
• HIV and TB trend data in the Covid-19 context and strategies to mitigate impact on HIV services
• Impact and challenges on organization of HIV service provision
• Lessons learned
Background

- 26 153 961 inhabitants
  - 4 846 002 centre Region
  - 3 255 651 City of Yaounde

- Drop in country HIV prevalence 15-49 years: 5.5% (2004); 4.3% (2011); 2.7%(2018)

- Prevalence Yaounde: 6.3%(2011), 2.4% (2018)

- June 30, 2020: 328 264 on ART/ 504 258 PLHIV (65%)

- 40 000 new infections yearly (6 out of 10 in the 15-24 years)

- 2014: 90-90-90 targets

- 2016: Test and treat strategy
Background

- Assessment of risk of importation of the Corona virus/response plan
- EOC alert mode
- Reinforcement of surveillance (borders+++)
- Treatment center put in place

- First 2 cases of Covid-19 (Yaounde)
- Activation of Incident Management System

- April 2, 2020: Activation of Regional Incident Management system
- Progressive decentralization of Covid-19 response: district, involvement of local councils and communities
Background

- 4 main axes of the country response plan
- Track-test-treat strategy

Active case finding: (1) Testing; (2) Contact tracing

Management of confirmed cases

Social regulation

Governance and accountability
Covid-19 trend data in Cameroon and City of Yaounde
Widespread Covid-19 epidemic in Cameroon

Distribution of covid-19 cases across health districts in Cameroon (02/09/2020)

**City of Yaounde**
- 30% Covid-19+ cases

*Source: situation report, Centre Cameroon, 02/09/2020*
Decline in the number of new Covid-19+ cases in Cameroon

New and cumulative number of Covid-19 cases, 27/08/2020-02/09/2020

Confirmed cases: 19,604
Total deaths: 414
Recovered cases: 18,448
Fatality rate: 2.1%

Source: situation report, Centre Cameroon, 02/09/2020
Decline in the number of new Covid-19+ cases in Cameroon

New and cumulative number of cases in the city of Yaounde

Confirmed cases
5 678

Total deaths
89

Recovered cases
1 771

Fatality rate
1.6%

City of Yaounde accounts 22% of death cases

Source: situation report, Centre Cameroon, 02/09/2020
Health personnel highly affected by the Covid-19 epidemic

Yaounde
- 55 Covid-19+
- 7 cases of death

Source: situation report, Cameroon, 02/09/2020
High morbidity in the 20-49 years age group

Gender and age Distribution of covid-19 Cases in Cameroon

Gender and age Distribution of covid-19 Cases in the city of Yaounde

Sources: situation reports, Centre Cameroon, 02/09/2020; Centre Region 04/09/2020
High number of deaths in the 40-79 years age group

Gender and age Distribution of covid-19 deaths in Cameroon

Source: situation report, Cameroon, 02/09/2020
HIV and TB trend data in the Covid-19 context in the City of Yaounde
Operational contingency plan for service provision

Objectives
1. Service continuity
2. Staff protection

1. Maintain coordination of activities at site level and above site
2. Infection prevention and control - Staff ++ - clients
3. Reorganization of testing and linkage strategies
4. Reorganization of patient follow-up/retention activities to reduce waiting time

Catch-up activities as soon as positive change observed
Declining trends in testing and linkage to ART

- Acceleration of ICT
- Community testing
- Self testing

Source: DHIS2 data base, Sept 2020
Increase in overall number of regular ART users

**Source:** DHIS2 data base, Sept 2020

- -32% (2019-2020)

Patient attrition avoided
- Home delivery of antiretrovirals
- Patient flow revised
- Reminder calls
- Scheduling of appointments
Decline in the notification of TB cases

Source: 2019 and S1 2020 TB regional program report
Strategies to maintain HIV and TB services continuity and mitigate impact of Covid-19 epidemic

1. Maintain coordination of activities at site level and above site
   • Meetings online
   • Maintain data reporting

2. Infection prevention and control
   • Staff
     o Rotations
     o community activities avoided
     o Protection measures
   • Clients
     o Patient flow revised
     o Scheduled appointments per cohorts
Strategies to maintain HIV and TB services continuity and mitigate impact of Covid-19 epidemic

3. Reorganization of testing and linkage strategies
   - Intensification of testing at entry points with high yield
   - Starter ARV packs for doctors
   - Follow-up calls for newly initiated clients

4. Reorganization of patient follow-up/retention activities to reduce waiting time
   - Pre packing of ARVs
   - Homeng time
   - Deliveries of ARVs in homes, offices other locations as per agreement between provider and client
Strategies to maintain HIV and TB services continuity and mitigate impact of Covid-19 epidemic

5. Catch-up activities
   • Self-testing
   • Mobile units to support facilities in testing and linkage
   • Community testing
   • Viral load campaign
   • Return to care campaign
Impact and Challenges of Covid-19 pandemic in organization of service delivery

**Challenges**
- Stock-outs of ARV (challenge in providing MMD until June 2020)
- Staff rotations in health facilities
- Infected staff
- Fear to use services

**Impact**
- Relocation of services in some facilities
- Discontinuation of activities at the community level
- Discontinuation of ANC/PMTCT services in one high volume site
Lessons learned

• Sustainability of service delivery requires innovative approaches
• Planning to anticipate helps mitigate impact
• DSD was a core component of the continuity in service provision
Acknowledgement

• Mrs Yemban Anastasia, RDPH, CE-CMR
• HIV RTG team
• IAPAC team