

Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus (RPM Plus) Program – Closing of Activities and Transfer of Responsibilities To The Supply Chain Management System Project (SCMS), Côte D'Ivoire Trip Report – August 20 – 24, 2006

Michael Derosena

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Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus
Center for Pharmaceutical Management
Management Sciences for Health
4301 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22203 USA
Phone: 703-524-6575
Fax: 703-524-7898
E-mail: rpmpplus@msh.org

Strategic Objective WARP Cote D'Ivoire

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About RPM Plus

The Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus (RPM Plus) Program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (cooperative agreement HRN-A-00-00-00016-00), works in more than 20 developing countries to provide technical assistance to strengthen drug and health commodity management systems. The program offers technical guidance and assists in strategy development and program implementation both in improving the availability of health commodities—pharmaceuticals, vaccines, supplies, and basic medical equipment—of assured quality for maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, infectious diseases, and family planning and in promoting the appropriate use of health commodities in the public and private sectors.

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Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus
Center for Pharmaceutical Management
Management Sciences for Health
4301 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22203 USA
Telephone: 703-524-6575
Fax: 703-524-7898
E-mail: rpmpplus@msh.org
Web: www.msh.org/rpmpplus

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Acronyms

ART	Anti-Retroviral Treatment
ARV	Anti-Retroviral
CDC	U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CI	Côte d'Ivoire
COP	Country Operating Plan
DIPE	Information, Planning and Research Unit of the Ministry of Health
EGPAF	Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
GF	Global Fund
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LTRA	Long term Resident Advisor
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
PNPEC	National Program of HIV/AIDS
PSCM	Partnership for Supply Chain Management
PSP-CI	Public Health Pharmacy - Central Medical Store
RETROCI	Retrovirus project-Côte d'Ivoire
RPM Plus	Rational Pharmaceutical Management Plus Program
SCMS	Supply Chain Management System
SIMPLE	Information System for Managing Drugs Used in Epidemics
SOW	Scope of work
STG	Standard Treatment Guidelines
STRA	Short Term Resident Advisor
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
TA	Technical Assistance
USG	U.S. Government
WARP	West Africa Regional Program

Background

At the Center for Disease Control (CDC) request in Côte d'Ivoire, the RPM Plus program conducted an assessment of the Public Health Pharmacy (PSP-CI) in 2003 in preparation for the Prevention Mother To Child Transmission (PMTCT) program expansion and the implementation of the President Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Following the presentation of the findings to the national health authorities, the RPM Plus program received funds from the US Government to develop activities aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of PSP-CI and selected health facilities delivering HIV/AIDS services, with the aim to ensure availability of ARVs and other related commodities at the service delivery points. RPM Plus technical assistance focused mainly on human capacity development and reinforcement of the ARV management information system at central, district and institutional levels. RPM Plus assisted PSP-CI in building a national core of 15 trainers in drug management, the preparation of a drug management curriculum and provision of training in drug management to more than 75 pharmacists, midwives and nurses from accredited ART centers. RPM Plus ensured the roll out of the ARV dispensing tool SIMPLE-1 in 25 ART centers, and in coordination with the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) trained 40 ARV managers in the use of the tool. Following different meetings and discussions with the Information, Planning and Research Unit of the Ministry of Health, a monthly reporting form and two drug management indicators were included in the national health management information system. Collection of information on ARV management and ART patients are conducted jointly by RPM Plus and staff from the ARV management unit created by/at PSP-CI. A manual tool was also introduced and disseminated to track the expiration dates of ARVs in use at ART service delivery points. RPM Plus also tested and disseminated an automated tool for assisting pharmacists from ART facilities in quantification of ARV needed for HIV/AIDS case management. To ensure coordination of HIV/AIDS commodity management for the PEPFAR expansion, RPM Plus also developed a collaborative relationship with key partners from the Ministry of Health (MOH) and other stakeholders like the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric Foundation which is a key player in HIV/AIDS activity expansion.

Following the award by the US Government of the "Supply Chain Management System" (SCMS) project to the Partnership for Supply Chain Management (PSCM), the USAID mission and CDC/Côte d'Ivoire shifted technical assistance (TA) responsibilities to the SCMS project. RPM Plus assisted the PSCM team and USAID/Washington in February 2006 in a reconnaissance visit to Côte d'Ivoire listed among the SCMS priority countries of implementation. RPM Plus facilitated the introduction in Côte d'Ivoire of a short-term technical advisor for SCMS and provided support in the identification of a long-term Resident advisor (LTRA) for the development of SCMS activities.

Purpose of Trip

Michael Derosena traveled to Côte d'Ivoire from August 20 to August 24, 2006 to review with PSP-CI staff RPM Plus ongoing and completed activities, conduct an inventory of tools transferred or to be transferred to the SCMS project, and assist SCMS staff in the transition process and initiation of activities in CI.

Scope of Work

- Review drug management interventions and RPM Plus activities conducted with PSP-CI and national health authorities in response to the PEPFAR development.
- Discuss with PSP-CI, SCMS local staff and EGPAF, the transition process and short-term plan for consolidation of RPM Plus achievement and development of specific SCMS activities.
- Prepare with the local RPM Plus staff the proceedings for ending RPM Plus activities in Côte d'Ivoire.
- Brief upon arrival and/or debrief prior departure the US team, as requested.

Activities

- **Review drug management interventions and RPM Plus activities conducted with PSP-CI and national health authorities in response to the PEPFAR development.**

Different meetings were conducted at PSP-CI with the Director Dr. Souaré Doussou, the ARV Monitoring and Evaluation staff Moise Touhon, Mohamed Sidibe, Fofana Abdul Kader, Ayemon Florent, and Dr. ATTIA Régine, responsible for drug management training activities at PSP-CI. RPM Plus also met with Dr. Virginie Traoré, newly appointed as Director of the National HIV/AIDS Program (PNPEC).

- Meeting with Dr. Souaré: the meeting with the PSP-CI Director was an opportunity to review the key interventions of RPM Plus for the past two years, achievements, ongoing and pending activities. Dr. Souaré was extremely preoccupied by the development of the SCMS project and potential support PSP-CI can expect from SCMS. Dr Souaré's main concern was about the role of the SCMS regional depot to be located in Accra and how this depot would support PSP-CI in procurement and distribution activities locally without developing a parallel system. This meeting offered another opportunity to clarify for Dr. Souaré the SCMS mandate and technical assistance areas to be covered by the SCMS project to improve HIV/AIDS commodity management in Côte d'Ivoire. RPM Plus reassured Dr. Souaré that the SCMS project is not a challenger or a competitor to PSP-CI, but all HIV/AIDS product management interventions will be discussed and planned with input from PSP-CI and the Global Fund in order to reinforce PSP-CI capabilities to make ARVs available in CI and improve the management aspects of HIV/AIDS products in general. RPM Plus stressed the need for Seydou Doumbia selected as Lead Resident Advisor for SCMS, to meet with Dr. Souaré as soon as he joins the team in Côte d'Ivoire. Seydou was expected to be in post on September 4.

In reference to RPM Plus ongoing activities, Dr. Souaré focused on the three main areas that brought significant changes in HIV/AIDS commodity management at PSP-CI and peripheral depots: the implementation of the ARV Dispensing Tool SIMPLE-1, the dissemination of the Tool for tracking expiration dates of ARVs, and the training in drug management. She stressed on the need to maintain and reinforce these activities in conformity to the objectives of the PSP-CI three-year plan developed with RPM Plus technical assistance. Another point of discussion was the lack of progress in the signature of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) needed to move forward with the implementation of the drug management software ORION@MSH at PSP-CI. The signature of the MOU was still pending, and Dr. Souaré promised to meet as often as necessary with the Cabinet of the Minister to have this document approved by the MOH.

SIMPLE-1: PSP-CI has conducted different meetings with the Global Fund (GF) and the USG team in order to discuss the possibility for the GF and PEPFAR to provide ART facilities with computers for the extension of SIMPLE-1. The most recent discussion with donors took place the second week of August involving PSP-CI, SCMS, and the USG team including Chris Barratt from the West Africa Regional Program (WARP). Significant changes were noted in the availability of information on ARV patients and regimen since the implementation of SIMPLE-1 in ART facilities. This program currently provides information on approximately

11,000 patients from 19 ART centers. This number does not include patients from health facilities managed by the local NGO Aconda receiving TA and financial support from EGPAF. Dr. Souaré is eager to see SIMPLE-1 extended to all ART centers. The USG team is considering how to assist PSP-CI in this activity in coordination with the GF.

Implementation of the Tracking sheet: information collected from the field by the RPM Plus consultant shows a continuing progress in the use of the tool for tracking the expiration dates of ARVs. The tracking sheet was disseminated in 34 ART facilities. Through monitoring visits, the PSP-CI M&E team discussed the use of the tool with pharmacists and managers of ARVs and other HIV/AIDS commodities, techniques used to forecast needs, stock inventory, and the accuracy of data in files in comparison to the physical stock in the warehouses. The missing component in the use of the Tracking sheet is the PSP-CI document of procedures for managing products close to expiration or expired. Some facilities do exchanges before expiration with nearby ART centers, while others contact PSP-CI while placing the products in quarantine if expired. However, there is no standard and this gap needs to be addressed since PSP-CI plans to extend the dissemination of the Tracking tool to all ART centers. This issue will be discussed with the SCMS Resident advisor.

Training in drug management: As a result of the assessment conducted at PSP-CI in November 2004, training activities in drug management were conducted for pharmacists, assistant-pharmacists (PGP), and other categories of personnel dealing with pharmaceuticals at different levels of the health system. Preliminary to the training of dispensing personnel, RPM Plus conducted a training of trainers who in turn had to ensure training activities in different regions/districts. Personnel from VCT/PMTCT/ART centers were targeted in priority since the immediate objective was to improve knowledge and promote best practices in drug management in order to support the PEPFAR expansion. From the group of 15 trainers, 8 so far were able to practice and conduct training activities on their own. Dr. Souaré expressed the need to see during the implementation of SCMS, the training in drug management extended to the other trainers as well as personnel other than those from VCT/PMTCT/ART centers. In fact, RPM Plus coordinated with SCMS the preparation of the workplan for COP06 to make sure that there is no gap in the current training activities, and priority given accordingly to other areas identified by RPM Plus but not addressed yet.

ORION@MSH: The installation process of the drug management software ORION was also among the key points discussed with Dr. Souaré. This activity initiated since February 2005 confronted numerous constraints and could not be completed as planned. PSP-CI has been going back and forth for the signature of the MOU that is a key step before starting the installation operations. The last request from Dr. Souaré was about an updated version of the MOU that was in fact prepared and sent to PSP-CI in July 2006. The MOU needs to be approved by the Cabinet of the Ministry of Health, but no real progress has been made. During our visit, another meeting was on schedule with the Cabinet for a final decision.

Another point of discussion with Dr. Souaré was the shift of the local RPM Plus consultant Moise Touhon to SCMS. Under the agreement between PSP-CI and RPM Plus, Moise was hired as Pharmacist consultant with the specific mandate to support in priority the warehouses in the accredited ART centers and district pharmacies. Since his inception, he was integrated

into the ARV management unit created at PSP-CI. With the shift to SCMS, PSP-CI would like to consolidate the work being done in pharmaceutical management in general, and reinforce the HIV/AIDS information system. An initial step was the dissemination of manual tools to ART centers that do not have computer capability in order to collect basic information on ARV patients and regimen, and obtain consolidated data in the quarterly report being produced with SIMPLE-1. Dr. Souaré insisted on this activity as a key step to consolidate efforts being conducted for collecting ARV management data. This priority was shared with the SCMS LTRA Seydou Doumbia.

- Meeting with the ARV M&E staff: the ARV unit was created by Dr. Souaré with support from the GF. The main purpose of this unit is to improve the management of HIV/AIDS commodities, forecast needs, and assist pharmacists at accredited centers delivering ART services. Among other staff, the ARV unit operates with a monitoring and evaluation section composed of four technicians including two computer specialists, one statistician, and the RPM Plus consultant. This trip offered an excellent opportunity to review progress in the development of the ARV information system, the utilization and expansion of SIMPLE-1 to all ART centers, constraints or bottlenecks that hamper the smooth operation of the ARV information system. The key points of discussion center mainly on follow up training activities – either for SIMPLE-1 or drug management in general, data collection at ART centers and district pharmacies, standardization of the quarterly reports to include data collected from ART centers using the manual tools. A review of the last quarterly report produced with data from SIMPLE-1, and discussions with the team on how to integrate data from the manual tools received from 4 ART centers in order to have a consolidated report and more accurate information on patients and regimen also took place. Another point of discussion was to identify an easy way to use information collected to respond to the indicators from the national HIV/AIDS list and the PEPFAR list. The M&E team showed a lot of enthusiasm for their work, but kept requesting continuing support from MSH as the number of ART centers using the RPM Plus tools are increasing. A recommendation was made to Dr. Souaré and the SCMS LTRA to continue to support this team and find additional resources to reinforce the M&E section of the ARV unit at PSP-CI.
- Meeting with Dr. Régine ATTIA: important changes occurred at in the internal organization of PSP-CI at the time of the visit. While some chiefs of services were removed, others shifted to different positions. Dr. ATTIA, responsible for the essential drug's distribution service at PSP-CI and coordination of training on drug management was removed from the distribution service. From communication with Dr. Souaré, RPM Plus learned that she has proposed to fully coordinate PSP-CI training activities. Our meeting with Dr. ATTIA was an occasion to conduct an inventory of the training materials transmitted to PSP-CI that include a Training of Trainers curriculum, a generic curriculum in drug management that can be adjusted for training of mid-level pharmacists, assistant-pharmacists (PGP), nurses and midwives working at VCT/PMTCT/ART centers, as well as other categories of managers in district depots and institutional pharmacies managing and dispensing essential medicines. In addition, RPM Plus also provided PSP-CI with a copy of the “Managing Drug Supply” manual and the updated edition of the “Medical Management of HIV Infection” manual. The detailed list of materials inventoried is shown in Annex 1.

- Meeting with Dr. Virginie Traoré: the meeting with the newly appointed PNPEC Director opened doors to an extensive collaboration with the SCMS project. The visit took place at the PNPEC office with participation from the RPM Plus consultant, Dr. Moïse Touhon. It was the first technical meeting with RPM Plus since the appointment of Dr. Traoré as the new PNPEC Director. The national program has moved temporarily to a new building that seemed unfortunately inappropriate to accommodate the program. However, RPM Plus was told that the move was temporary while PNPEC is waiting for a new location under construction. Dr. Traoré was briefed about RPM Plus activities, preliminary contacts with the former Director, tentative areas of collaboration, and the need to coordinate with SCMS for moving on priorities identified. Among key activities were the updating of the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STG) in conformity to the conclusions of the Bassam Conference, support for editing and disseminating the STG in ART centers, the involvement of PNPEC in PSP-CI M&E activities.
- **Discuss with PSP-CI, SCMS local staff and EGPAF, the transition process and short term plan for consolidation of RPM Plus achievement and development of specific SCMS activities.**
- Meeting with EGPAF: Dr. Yapi Faustin, EGPAF pharmacist, and Lee Yerkes, Senior Officer Drug Procurement and Logistics in the absence of the EGPAF Representative. The key point of discussion was about the use of SIMPLE-1 and the manual tools, and the need to have all ARV management information consolidated within the report produced by the M&E team at PSP-CI. Another important issue raised was the need for updating the quantification data for ARV and HIV/AIDS commodity procurement. The EGPAF team was informed that SCMS has planned to send the quantification expert for assisting CI in forecasting ARV needs as the accredited centers are being expanded. During the transition process, the EGPAF pharmacist will continue to coordinate with the RPM Plus consultant the need assessment for training on SIMPLE-1 as well as ARV management and other essential drugs. These activities will shift under the SCMS project.
- **Prepare with the local RPM Plus staff the proceedings for ending RPM Plus activities in Côte d'Ivoire.**
- Before this trip to CI, Moïse Touhon was instructed to make the inventory of all tools, drug management instruments developed, introduced and disseminated by RPM Plus in CI. The training materials and accessories were officially transferred to Dr. ATTIA. The IT specialist Mohamed Sidibe is in charge of coordinating the management of SIMPLE-1 where the program was already operational as well as preparing the plan of expansion to be submitted to Dr. Souaré and the GF. An inventory of documentation produced was also conducted and the last report from Moïse is expected at the end of September.
- **Brief upon arrival and/or debrief prior departure the US team, as requested.**
- A brief meeting was held with Jyoti Schlesinger upon arrival and the main issue raised was the implementation of ORION. Jyoti who became the new PEPFAR coordinator for CI was informed about the delay for having the MOU signed and expectations that this activity will

be achieved under the SCMS project. During the visit, Chris Barrat accompanied the SCMS LRA to CI for his introduction. A meeting was conducted at the PEPFAR office at the Embassy with RPM Plus and the SCMS staff, Seydou Doumbia and Ian Sliney. The USG team suggested that RPM Plus uses the remaining fund to leverage the SCMS budget available for the development of ORION. The quantification and procurement process was briefly discussed at the end of this meeting.

Next Steps

- Prepare the RPM Plus audit.
- Assist in the shift of Moise from RPM Plus to SCMS.

Conclusion

As immediate priority, there is a need to initiate steps for addressing drug management issues in general at district and institutional levels in a more coordinated way. PSP-CI has taken actions to reinforce the monitoring and evaluation team and extend the field of activities to more frequent visits for supportive supervision to the health facilities with the involvement of district pharmacists. In fact, the district pharmacists themselves are in need of technical assistance, and immediate interventions are required at the district warehouses for improving the storage conditions of all commodities. This in turn will reinforce the capability of the districts to play their role of decentralized warehouses supplying and supervising ART centers of their catchment area. While transitioning to SCMS, technical assistance to PSP-CI and PEPFAR will continue. RPM Plus will coordinate with SCMS in Washington and on the ground to ensure a smooth transition of drug management activities.

Annex 1: Inventory of materials transferred to PSP-CI and SCMS

Date	Article	Quantity	Purpose	Inventory 8/06
06/01/2005	Pack of Perforated Pad 8 1/2 x 11	3	Training July & Oct 2005	
06/01/2005	RSVP Pens black medium	36	Training July & Oct 2005	
06/01/2005	Calculator	10	Training July & Oct 2005	
06/01/2005	Set of Expo Scents Lightly Scented, Dry Erase Markers - Chisel	5	Training July & Oct 2005	
06/01/2005	pack of 9 Economy masking tape	1	Training July & Oct 2005	
06/01/2005	Stapler	1	Training July & Oct 2005	
01/05/2006	Economy Reference Binder	25	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of 48 index dividers	5	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of 100 Economy Paper clips	10	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	USB pins	5	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of 10 floppy disks	2	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	pack of CD for storage of doc's	1	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Desktop X-RACK	6	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	packs of 12 pads	3	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of 12 pencils # 2	3	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Multi-Hole pencil sharpener	1	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of black pens	3	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	boxes of markers (6 colors)	3	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	punch	1	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Yellow stickers - roll of 450	2	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Red stickers - roll of 450	2	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Laminated Drug Tracking sheet	50	Training January 2006	
01/05/2006	Laminated Drug Tracking sheet instructions	50	Training January 2006	
04/05/2006	Laminated Drug Tracking sheet	200	Post training support	
04/05/2006	Laminated Drug Tracking sheet instructions	200	Post training support	
04/05/2006	Yellow stickers - roll of 450	12	Post training support	
04/05/2006	Red stickers - roll of 450	12	Post training support	
04/05/2006	Dry Erase Markers - black	48	Post training support	
04/05/2006	RPM Plus canvas bags	26	Post training support	

Annex 2: Inventory of tools transferred to SCMS

Tool Inventory Transfer from RPM Plus to SCMS August 23, 2006

	Name	User	Contact
1	SIMPLE-1 (ARV Dispensing Tool) – CD and user's guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists and data entry operators at accredited ART centers • Statisticians at district and central levels • Computer specialists at district and central levels (Administrators) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon • Mohamed Sidibe • Fofana Abdul Kader • EGPAF (Dr. Yapi)
2	SIMPLE-2 (ARV Inventory Tracking Tool) – CD and user's guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statisticians at district and central levels • Computer specialist at district and central levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon • Mohamed Sidibe • Fofana Abdul Kader • EGPAF (Dr. Yapi)
3	QUANTIMED (Quantification tool) – CD and user's guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIV/AIDS program Directors • HIV/AIDS program managers • HIV/AIDS commodity procurement officers at national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Patrice Kacou • Dr. Eric Coulibaly
4	ARV Quantification tool for facility level – Excel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists and Assistant Pharmacists at accredited ART centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
5	ARV Quantification tool for facility level – manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists and Assistant Pharmacists at accredited ART centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
6	IMAT (Inventory Management Assessment Tool)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse Pharmacists and managers at central, district and facility levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
7	Laminated Tracking sheet – expiration date of ARVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse Pharmacists and managers at central, district and facility levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
8	Laminated Tracking sheet instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse Pharmacists and managers at central, district and facility levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
9	Monthly report form ARV management – PSP-CI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse Pharmacists at central level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
10	Monthly report form ARV management – facility level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse pharmacists at accredited ART centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
11	Monthly report form (manual) dispensing and inventory – facility level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehouse pharmacists at accredited ART centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
12	Aggregate patient & ARV regimen table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists and managers at central level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon
13	Managing Drug Supply (Textbook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacists and managers at central, district and facility levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Moise Touhon

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14	Medical Management of HIV Infection (Textbook)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIV/AIDS program managers, service providers and pharmacists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Moise Touhon
15	TOT Drug Management Curriculum (Training materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug management Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. ATTIA Régine
16	Drug management Curriculum (Training materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pharmacists, Assistant Pharmacists, service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. ATTIA Régine
17	HIV/AIDS Drug Management Curriculum (Training materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ART center Pharmacists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Moise Touhon