Technical Assistance to Improve HIV National Information System in Niger

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GOAL:
To ensure access to high-quality care to people living with HIV/AIDS

STRATEGY:
1. Supporting national coordination bodies for HIV/AIDS care strategies
2. Capacity strengthening of local healthcare workers
3. Technical improvement of laboratories
4. Enhancing drugs procurement and supply chain management
5. Developing a data collection and analysis system for all patients monitored
Access to Antiretroviral Therapy in Niger: 2004

HIV prevalence: 0.7% (DHS 2006)

CISLS
National Intersectoral HIV/AIDS Programme

ULSS
Ministry of Health
HIV/AIDS Unit

INAARV
Nigerien Initiative for Access to Antiretroviral Therapy

SOLTHIS team based in the field

HIV/AIDS patients care and management in public, associative and confessionnal hospitals
Electronic medical record system

WHAT?
- Gathering together data
- Complex system design
- Technical challenge

WHY?
- To improve population health
- To strengthen health system

Essential role in the scale-up of HIV/AIDS management, care and treatment in lower-income countries

Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programme</th>
<th>Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logistic and epidemiologic follow-up</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual patient follow-up</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Solthis strategy on EMR system

- EMR system must frame and support the scale-up of the HIV/AIDS care system

- Key elements:
  - System must be part of initial requirements for an efficient HIV/AIDS national programme
  - National outreach
  - Bottom-up approach
  - Practice-driven
  - Patient based

- Aim: HIV/AIDS EMR system is integrated in the National Health Information System with only limited resources
Role of Solthis in designing initial system

- Advocacy at national level for early integration of M&E competencies into INAARV institutions
- Setting up a vertical centralised information system based on reliable data
- Specific interventions at each level of the system
Solthis’ support to this decentralization process:
- Additional staff
- Decentralized office in Zinder
- Lobbying and support for the decentralization of EMR system
2008 – 2009: Scaling-up of EMR system (1)

- **Solthis intervention:** organisation of a multidisciplinary workshop
- **Objective:** to identify the barriers and induce operational improvements to scale up the system

- **Outcome 1: Improvement of data collection**
  - Patient file revision
  - Stronger involvement of health workers
  - Identification of a more efficient data collection process

  ✓ **Result:** Improvement of data quality
  ✓ **Challenge:** Insufficient investment from national counterpart in data collection
Outcome 2: Standardization of data encoding
- Adaptation of Fuchia data entry system
- Training sessions for 15 data encoders
- Elaboration of set of technical support tools

Result: Improvement of data entry

Challenges: - High turn over of data encoders
- Fuchia software: stand-alone system
2008 – 2009: Scaling-up of EMR system (3)

- **Outcome 3: Formal organisation of system architecture**
  - Creation of a network of 10 decentralized databases
  - Assignment of responsibilities

  ✓ **Result**: Improvement of national outreach

  ✓ **Challenge**: Problems with data collection/circulation/entry on certain point of care

- **Outcome 4: Definition of a national quality framework for statistics**
  - Schedule of national report, supervision and feedback
  - Design of data storing and management

  ✓ **Result**: National reports on HIV/AIDS follow-up data produced by Nigerien institutions from November 2008

  ✓ **Challenges**: - Low capacity of complex analysis
                          - Irregular data reliability
Solthis approach

Strengths

- Long-term development approach based on principle of non substitution
- National outreach: design of a single EMR system that fits all environments
- Systemic design: a given data set can be used for multi-purpose information needs
- Bottom-up approach: point-of-care data are used to generate more complete and accurate aggregate reports
- Adaptability to an increasingly complex system

Challenges

- The role of Solthis is seen more as technical support for data management than as a monitoring and evaluation technical referent
- Limit pressure from government and funding agencies to alter data system in order to produce specific statistics
Conclusion

Evolution of EMR system in Niger is promising

• Unified and practice-driven source of information for its national HIV/AIDS programme, containing information for more than 5,000 patients
• Can be used from individual follow-up to international standard indicators production

But Niger still faces numerous challenges

Perspective

Perspective to exploit EMR system

• Level 1: To reduce medical errors and to improve patient monitoring
• Level 2: To improve drug supply management
• Level 3: To produce regular national and feedback reports

Perspective to improve EMR system

• Being reactive to the decentralization issues
• Stronger ownership of the stakeholders
• Reducing the data entry lead time
• Regular upgrading of system
• Integration in the National Health Information System

Perspective to evaluate EMR system

• Specific outcomes will be measured
Aknowledgements

• CISLS Coordinator, Dr Moussa Idé, & team

• ULSS Director, Dr Fati Maïga and team

• Nigerien Ministry of Health

• Y. Madec, Institut Pasteur

• Solthis team in Niger & France

• Solthis scientific working group

• Fondation Bettencourt Schueller