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SOLTHIS: sharing medical expertise to promote national skills

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1: Solthis Paris, 2: Solthis Mali, 3: Solthis Niger, 4: Solthis Madagascar.



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Issue: How to help local stakeholders organize sustainable care to people infected by HIV/AIDS: **medical support to national access to ARV programs in Africa.**

Description: Founded in July 2003 by Pr Christine Katlama and Pr Gilles Brucker *Solidarité Thérapeutique et Initiatives contre le Sida* (SOLTHIS) is an independent NGO committed to enabling access to antiretroviral drugs for people suffering from HIV/AIDS.

SOLTHIS provides daily technical support to local care structures, by bringing them:

- medical training in hospital and community care centers,
- technical support in HIV-related medicine and science
- assistance and counseling in:
 - care and laboratory (virology, immunology, bacteriology);
 - PMTCT prevention and organisation;
 - data collection and epidemiological evaluation;
 - pharmacy management;
 - AIDS policies.

A scientific committee meets every month to analyse data from the field and issue technical recommendations.

Mali

- Launched in: Dec. 2003
- Location: Ségou region
- 6 prescribing clinics in the Ségou district and 3 district referral health centres currently being activated.
- 8 mother-and-child treatment centres in the Ségou district, 6 centres in the Bla and Niono district since January 2006 and 4 centres planned for the San district.
- 12 prescribing physicians
- 804 ARV treatments begun in April 2006
- 32 children monitored under ARV

Niger

- Launched in: October 2004
- Locations: Niamey, Zinder
- 12 prescribing sites
- 23 prescribing doctors
- More than 1200 ARV treatments initiated at this time

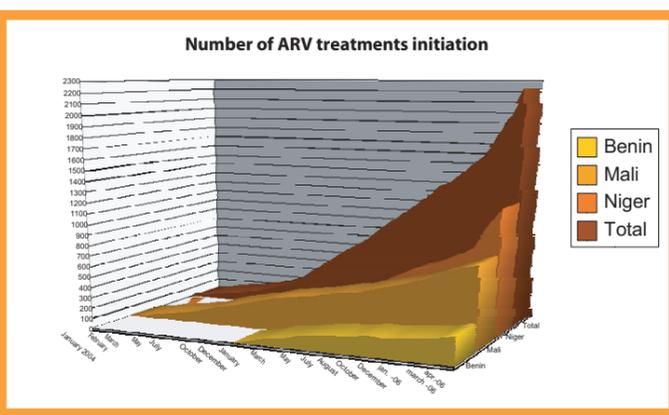
Benin

- Launched in: Dec. 2004
- Location: Atacora-Donga region [northwest part of the country], sites in Natitingou and Tangueta
- 3 drug dispensaries
- 9 prescribing physicians
- 308 ARV treatments begun in March 2006

Since its creation, SOLTHIS has launched 4 programs in:

- **Mali** (Segou), December 2003,
- **Niger** (Niamey), October 2004,
- **Benin** (Atacora-Donga), January 2005,
- **Madagascar** (Antananarivo – Diego Suarez), May 2006,
- **Chad**: PMTCT program planned for T4 2006.

⇒ More than 2200 patients benefited from ARV treatment (within the framework of national initiatives).



Training

More than 800 health workers have received training

Grassroot training

HAART Prescription
Pharmacy
Opportunistic infections and Tuberculosis
Dermatology and HIV
Drugs management and stocking
Biology: immunology, virology, parasitological, bacteriology...
Adherence

Guest health workers in French hospitals
10 since 2005

University courses:

DU de Ouagadougou
IMEA: Cours Fournier
EACS

Participation in international conferences
Bruxelles, Abuja, Paris

Participation in national conferences
"Journées VIH": Niamey and Bamako

Lessons learned: SOLTHIS' approach has set up the conditions for a better care to HIV/AIDS patients and has enhanced **capacity building**:

- **Application of WHO recommendations and use of simplified ARV treatment regimens (FCD).**
- **80%** of all patients are receiving a first-line treatment.
- More than **800 medical workers were trained** to ARV prescription and adherence.
- Assessment and follow-up tools will be implemented for evaluation purposes.

Recommendations: Cause it's time to deliver,

⇒ **Being on the field** close to those who need assistance enables to **bridge the gap between funders and local stakeholders.**