

FINAL EVALUATION

**ACCESS TO PREP FOR WOMEN:
DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING
A MODELLABLE COMMUNITY-BASED
INTERVENTION TAILORED TO WOMEN
MOST AT RISK OF HIV**

EVALUATOR: JULIETTE PAPY - HMST
EVALUATION DATES: OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023



COUNTRY:
MALI, MOROCCO,
MAURITIUS



BUDGET :
€1,077,622



**LEAD
ORGANIZATIONS:**
Association de Lutte
Contre le Sida (ALCS)

PARTNERS:
ARCAD SANTÉ PLUS,
Prevention Information
Lutte contre le Sida
(PILS)



START DATE:
01/05/2020

END DATE:
30/03/2024

THE PROJECT**Background**

PrEP is recommended by the WHO as a proven highly effective method of reducing HIV infection risk and protecting against HIV infection. It is one of various approaches taken to achieve the UNAIDS roadmap that aims to reduce the number of new HIV infections from more than 1.8 million in 2016 to less than 370,000 by 2025. However, in most Southern countries, as is the case in the three countries where this project works, PrEP implementation is often at a low or non-existent level. In the project countries, PrEP was integrated into national strategic plans, however availability for women remains low or is inaccessible. Of the partner organizations, ALCS already had implementation experience with SWs, ARCAD Sante Plus with MSM, and PILS had not delivered PrEP outside of collaborating between care providers.

Project operating model

ALCS had responsibility for the overall technical and financial coordination and monitoring of the project, ensuring monitoring and consolidation of data provided by partners, by means of monitoring tools developed. Collegial coordination (including 2-3 people from ALCS) and thematic collaboration (with advocacy, capacity strengthening and research committees including experts from the three organizations) were set up to enable meaningful exchange and «South-South» collaboration between partners.

OBJECTIVES**Overall objective**

Promoting PrEP roll out in Mali, Morocco and Mauritius with and for female SWs, trans women and sexual partners of people who inject drugs, based on an innovative, adapted and modellable community strategy.

Specific objectives

- Develop PrEP roll out strategies in year 1 based on scientific data.
- Improve the political and health environment to roll out and/or strengthen PrEP through an advocacy strategy.
- Improve access to PrEP for women targeted by the project.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Relevance

The project is relevant in the context of Morocco, Mali and Mauritius, and addresses the specific needs and barriers for female SWs, transgender women and sexual partners of people who inject drugs around HIV prevention and sexual health. These women face stigma and discrimination, have difficulty accessing public health services, and are particularly vulnerable to HIV and STIs. Despite international recommendations for PrEP, services are generally not accessible to them, despite the clear need. The project takes a participatory approach and integrates PrEP into respectful and practical community services to address these challenges.

Effectiveness

Despite challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and delays in procurement in Mali, project effectiveness has been positive overall. Community-based research has created good visibility and PrEP roll-out strategies have been developed on this basis. PrEP has been integrated into national strategic plans or protocols, and GC7 Global Fund funding requests, with the exception of target partners of people who inject drugs. Mauritius. Training of teams on PrEP and the launch/expansion of PrEP was successfully conducted in Mali and Morocco, but with lower level results in Mauritius. Integrating PrEP into sexual health services has significantly improved the quality of PrEP care for women.

Efficiency

The project is generally considered to be cost effective, despite the late start of PrEP interventions in Mali and Mauritius, and the relatively high cost of PrEP services. Although recruitment figures in Mauritius are relatively low and there is a significant number of loss to follow up in all three countries, it is important to note that some outcomes, such as strengthening collaboration between PILS and the Ministry of Health in Mauritius, simply cannot be quantified in monetary terms. The project also experienced high turnover of administrative staff and community workers, but this did not lead to major problems in implementation.

Impact

The project has significantly improved prevention and sexual health of target women, although the impact varies from country to country, due to the limited number of beneficiaries. Beneficiaries are better equipped to make informed choices about HIV and STI prevention, and have better access to quality services. The project also established PrEP as a combination prevention approach for this population group, and generated support for it to be integrated into national policies and Global Fund funding. Finally, the project strengthened the strategic position of partners as community experts on PrEP.

Sustainability

Project sustainability is considered relatively good in Morocco and Mali, and average in Mauritius despite certain strong areas. These strengths include creating demand for PrEP among target populations, integration into national policies, Global Fund funding, state funding prospects, and community expertise developed in the three organizations. However, barriers such as community outreach workers having volunteer status, high turnover, financial and geographical accessibility challenges for target women, as well as difficulties obtaining future funding for certain components of the project, pose threats to sustainability.



Conclusions and recommendations

The «Access to PrEP for women» project has made it possible to establish (Mauritius, Mali) and improve (Morocco) access to PrEP services for female SWs, transgender women and partners of people who inject drugs.

Project achievements include getting 469 women in the three countries onto PrEP, creating in-country visibility on PrEP for women targeted by the project and beyond, developing community PrEP knowledge and expertise, modeling a PrEP service for these populations, gaining a political foothold and accessing GF funding.

Some of the successes include: very strong collaboration and complementarity between partners who were able to share their expertise and support each other in the event of difficulties and great flexibility in terms of project implementation; the three-pronged «research- advocacy-intervention» approach made it possible to create visibility and gain a foothold for the project at national level; the integrated services approach through a community «one-stop shop» and regular medical monitoring to meet the specific and holistic needs of women.

However, there were still significant challenges in terms of:

1. Improving the quality, coverage and effectiveness of PrEP services, in particular recruitment and community mobilization - including strategies to recruit and mobilize women (in Morocco and Mauritius in particular), the structuring of services and referrals (and counter-referrals) and advocacy (in Mauritius) for community services. In Mauritius, it is necessary to strengthen advocacy with the Ministry of Health to enable PrEP service provision several days a week and at times more suitable for women.
2. Improving the participation and empowerment of communities, as well as the involvement of national authorities in the project in order to promote national and community ownership and oversight of the project.
3. Strengthening the project's monitoring and evaluation system, including results-oriented indicators, to better monitor/evaluate the PrEP cascade.

AUGUST 2025