Reflections on HPV vaccination during COVID-19 adaptations in Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia

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Routinized introductions with Gavi supported

- November 2019 in both Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia
- Nine year old cohort with second dose after six months
- Routinized (due to perceived cost) with schools anchored to health facilities, supplemented by community outreach
- Supported by Gavi, WHO and a variety of partners (incl Girl Effect)
COVID-19 impacts were severe, and complicated by other outbreaks - Côte d’Ivoire

• Program completed first dose coverage and supervision in January/February, then first COVID-19 case in March 2020

• School closures and other travel restrictions

• Loss of confidence in facilities

• Rumors and misinformation
  › that targeted HPV, including sterility misinformation
  › sometimes conflated HPV vaccine with COVID-19 vaccines

• Vaccine-derived polio-virus outbreaks
  › Deployment of novel monovalent OPV2
Cote d’Ivoire cumulative vaccination to December 2020

Coverage of 1st dose, Jan-Dec 2020
- Target: 518917
- Achievement: 229706

Coverage of 2nd dose, May-Dec 2020
- Target: 345944
- Achievement: 44185

Internal analyses, not official coverage reports. DO NOT CIRCULATE.
HPV vaccination was affected more than infant vaccines in CDI

Comparison of monthly vaccination performance in 2020, HPV1 and DTP3, Côte d'Ivoire (% of doses given / target)

District mapping of coverage for Pentavalent 3 and HPV 1
Note: does not include HPV vaccine intensification in December 2020

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Responses to the pandemic in Côte d’Ivoire

- Communication from the EPI Director to continue with all routine immunization
- Periodic intensification of vaccination against HPV
  - in 15 health districts with high populations, and which had suffered restrictions on movement
  - Organization of sensitization meetings:
    - vaccinators, community and religious leaders, teaching staff
  - Coordination of activities with teaching staff
    - planning, vaccination, response to hesitancy
  - Community-based catch-up for girls not in school
    - Community (15%) and schools (40%)
Responses to the pandemic in Côte d’Ivoire, continued

• Many girls missed vaccination in 2020 and are needing catch-up in 2021

• Good planning needed to follow-up those newly eligible and to systematically provide catch-up for unvaccinated girls in 2021

• Continue periodic intensification of immunization activities to complement the continuing routine services
Vaccine service records in Liberia show some apparent recovery with an integrated PIRI

Figure 2: Monthly progress in vaccinations given

Internal analyses, not official coverage reports. DO NOT CIRCULATE.
Overall lessons: introducing HPV during COVID-19

• Planning and coordination
  › Video conferencing, chat groups etc are difficult stop-gaps
  › Emergency intensification can throw up new partners
  › New tracking needed to catch-up those missed in 2020

• Implementation
  › School-based periodic intensification can work,
  › PIRI, either school or integrated, may prove a longer-term complement to routine HPV

• Communications
  › Specific adaptations needed in both countries to encourage attendance at facilities
  › Adaptations also needed to respond to specific misinformation
INFORMATIONS SUR LE HPV

Thank you! christopher.morgan@jhpiego.org