



Establishment of a HIV Vaccine Cohort among Clandestine Female Sex Workers in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso: Situation Analysis of Sexual and Reproductive Health and HIV Needs



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EDCTP (The European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership)

ANRS (French National Agency for Research on AIDS and Viral Hepatitis)

Study Participants (potentiel cohort participants, stakeholders)



Objectives



- To perform a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of past/current interventions for high-risk women's access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services and HIV prevention and care in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.
- To assess the SRH and HIV needs of the future EDCTP Cohort participants (part-time Female Sex Workers [FSW] and bar waitresses aged 18-25 years).



Methods (1)



- **Geomapping of sex work venues** was done throughout the city using Geographic Information System (GIS) and participant observation.
- **Qualitative methods** to recruit Key Informants and elicit information on sex work experience and on past/current access to SRH services, HIV prevention and care among FSWs.





Methods (2)



- Enumeration of 5 target populations (seaters, roamers, bar waitresses, women making and selling local beer).
- **4** focus groups discussions with FSWs.
- 37 in-depth interviews were conducted with Key Informants:
 - **17** FSWs
 - **20** other KIs: researchers and leaders of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and national institutions working in the field of HIV/AIDS, hygiene and security.

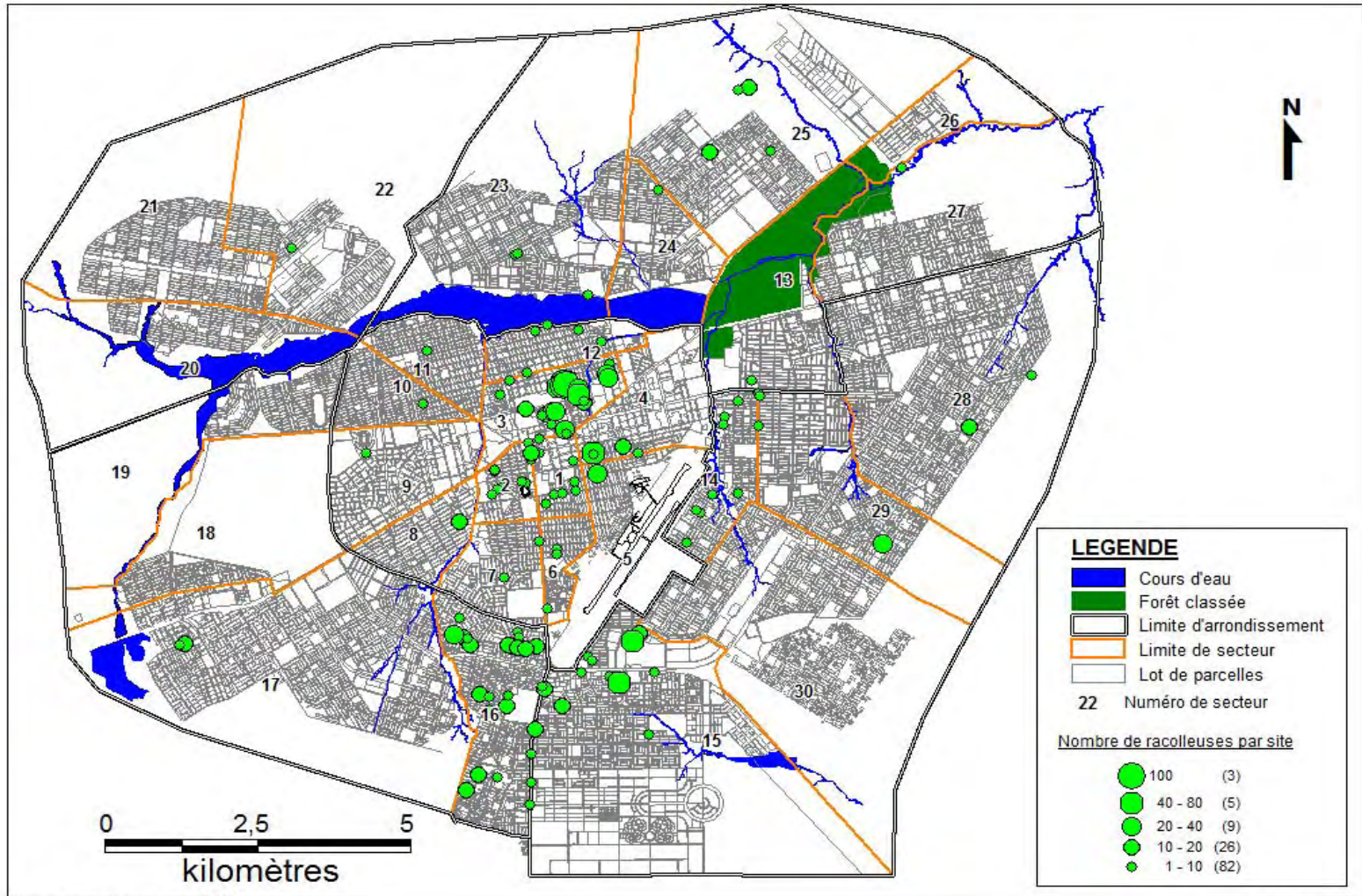




Results (1)

- Since 1990, more than **17** HIV/AIDS interventions have targeted FSWs in Ouagadougou:
 - Generally focused on **HIV prevention activities**, including education on safer sex, provision of condoms, and access to sexually transmitted infections (STI) services.
 - **Little emphasis has been placed on HIV care** and access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) or on **other SRH issues**.
- In 2009, over **65%** of these interventions were **discontinued** when funding ceased or NGO left.
- **Police and legal repression** of prostitution significantly **limits the coverage and impact** of the remaining interventions.





Source: projet vaccin VIH / 2009

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“Hotspots” for sex work in Ouagadougou



Results (2)



- Enumeration of :
 - **1,088** part-time FSWs <25 yo in **125** SW locations (median 10 women/site)
 - **2,487** bar waitresses <25 yo in **699** bars (median 3 women/site)
- Health problems reported by sex workers were mainly STI, malaria, respiratory disease, and HIV infection.



Results (3)



- **Cost** and **stigmatization** limited sex workers' access to public health services.
- The target population interested to have dedicated, accessible, **integrated SRH and HIV/AIDS prevention and care** services offered in a confidential and non-stigmatising way, particularly for the clandestine FSWs.
- Such services would greatly contribute to **build trust** with researchers and enhance willingness to participate in long-term research projects.
- Identified **stakeholders committed** to support the study.





Discussion & Conclusions



- The EDCTP project, by providing **integrated SRH and HIV/AIDS services** in a discreet/accessible location, will address the SRH and HIV care needs of this highly vulnerable and stigmatized population.
- This will enhance potential participants' willingness to be recruited in **future HIV vaccine trials**.
- A new **Community Advisory Board (CAB)** composed of **local AIDS NGOs** and **FSWs** has been now established:
 - Community leaders have suggested this CAB to become the main organism and clearing house for research projects managed the ANRS site in Burkina Faso.



Future perspectives



- **Enrollment into the Ouagadougou EDCTP Cohort** started in Sept 2009 aiming to be completed by Jan 2010 (N=300 HIV-negative women <25 yo) with an 18-months follow-up.
- **Study outcomes:**
 - prevalence and incidence of HIV, STI (incl. HPV), cervical dysplasia and pregnancy
 - local molecular epidemiology of HIV
 - mucosal immunological sub-studies
- **Other benefits:**
 - Transfer of technology of the enzyme-linked immunospot (ELISPOT) technique to study HIV mucosal immunity



