

**COVACOM PROJECT**

« Evaluation of a rapid screening strategy for Covid-19 by antigenic tests at community level »

Optimising the fight against Covid-19 in Mali by introducing antigenic tests at community level

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, screening was based on PCR tests, which were only available in 4 laboratories, all located in Bamako. As the majority of PCRs were performed for travel purposes, a minority of people suspected of having Covid-19 were identified.

To address this issue, the ECoVAM project initially implemented a new screening strategy in health centres, based on a medical triage consultation and the use of rapid tests. This strategy has led to a sharp increase in Covid-19 screening, thus demonstrating a rapid, effective and more suitable screening solution than PCR at all levels of the health pyramid.

Thus, to improve the national response plan against Covid-19, the COVACOM project is taking over from the ECoVAM project to introduce this strategy at community level. The project will be carried out in 4 health zones in the Fana district, comprising a total of 35 community health workers.

INFORMATIONS CLÉS

 **Duration of the project:** 9 months (March 2022 – November 2022)

 **Beneficiaries:** 25 community health workers, 38 community relays, 10 CSCOM health workers, 26433 inhabitants, Malian Ministry of Health

 **Source of financing :** FIND

 **Partners:** Ministry of Health and Social Development - UMRSS, National Institute of Public Health Research (INSP), IRD (Institut de Recherche et Développement)

 **Country of intervention:** Mali

GOALS

The project aims to evaluate, in comparison with the national reference strategy in Mali, the impact of a community-based screening strategy for SARS-CoV2 by antigenic tests in people with a clinical suspicion of Covid-19 and in contact cases in four health zones of the Fana district in Mali.

Different studies will be conducted in this perspective to:

- Evaluate the feasibility of this community-based screening strategy for symptomatic patients and contact cases.
- To assess the acceptability of this strategy by patients, community health workers, community leaders and national officials through a qualitative socio-anthropological study.
- To model the cost-effectiveness of implementing this strategy in the Malian health system.

« With the antigen test, we get the result within 15 minutes. If the test is positive, the patient is taken care of early, which reduces the waiting time and therefore the circulation of the virus in the community and in the health centers. »

Dr Issouf MAIGA, manager of the ECoVAM project and then of the COVACOM project

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Provide concrete results of the implementation of this strategy to guide the Malian authorities in their strategic choices for the response plan against Covid-19.
- To establish whether the use of antigenic tests at community level and by community health workers is an appropriate strategy in this context.
- Assess the requirements and costs of deploying this strategy.



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