

Rollout of DTG in South Africa and Uganda

A Community Perspective

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Historical Facts:

- ▶ The use of a three-in-one combination of the ARV TLD for treatment of HIV was first recommended by WHO in 2018.
- ▶ In 2019 it was recommended by the SA, as a preferred 1st line HIV Treatment Regimen, though Uganda introduced TLD in 2018
- ▶ Since then, Dolutegravir has largely replaced another drug called Efavirenz.
- ▶ The objective is to provide clinical benefits to patients and to promote rapid viral suppression and reduction of new HIV infections.



Methodology

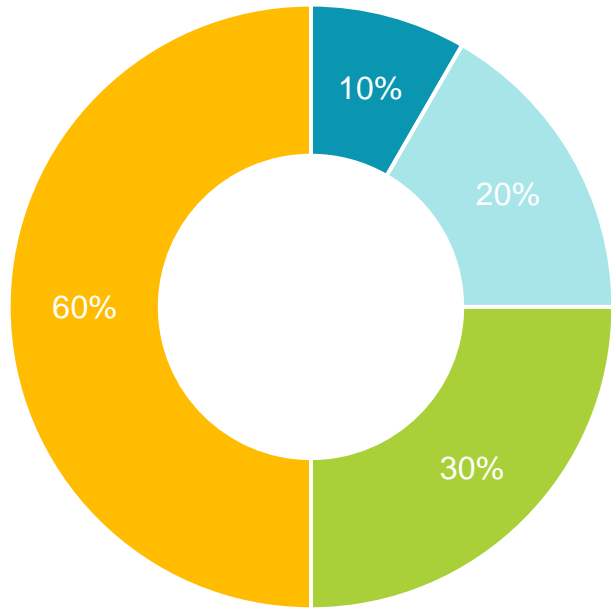
Data and feedback was obtained through community surveys done in local clinics adherence and CCMDD clubs for PLHIVs in South Africa and Uganda.

- ▶ Target Population: (PLHIVs)Men and Women the ages 18- 32 and HCPs and CHW's managing PLHIVs Adherence Clubs
- ▶ Focus Groups were broken down in age categories 18- 20; 21- 25; 26- 28 and 29- 32.

Key Questions: 1) Experience since switch to TLD; 2) Patient's response to TLD and noticeable changes in TLD Patients



Findings



■ 18 -20 ■ 20-25 ■ 25 -28 ■ 28-32

- ▶ 10% of patient respondents didn't understand why they were switched to DTG
- ▶ 20% patients on DTG can't tell whether DTG is better than the previous first line HIV Regimen
- ▶ 30% couldn't at first understand the need to switch them to DTG but can elaborately explain the advantages it has brought in their lives
- ▶ 40% of the patients understand the reasons for the switch to DTG



2023 ART Clinical Guidelines

Switching All ART Clients to TLD/ALD

- ▶ TLD will be used as first-line and second line ART regimen and as part of certain third-line regimens with other medicines
- ▶ Safety of DTG in women of childbearing potential has been firmly established

Drug Inter- action Considerations

- ▶ Can cause elevated HIV viral load
- ▶ Drug resistance due to replicating virus in the presence of subtherapeutic concentrations



Patients' Experiences

- ▶ Patients switched to TLD reported weight gain in the early stages after being switched
- ▶ They experienced some after effects but nothing much to worry about nor severe
- ▶ They seemed more accepting of the new regimen and show positive adherence attitude, especially those that had missed treatment mostly due to after effects from the previous regimens
- ▶ They wanted more information about the new regimen and to allay their fears that they were switched to a better and more efficient safer regimen, with lesser side effects.



Patients' Experiences

- ▶ Clients have a positive expectation of the new regimens
- ▶ Newly ART- Initiated clients were skeptical of the regimen based on information received about the previous ART regimens and the associated side effects
- ▶ This affected adherence in ART- Naïve clients and Enhanced Adherence Counselling is needed.



Health Care Professionals' Experiences

- ▶ HCPs were adequately trained on switching patients to TLD and are generally happy with the positive outcome of the DTG Rollout process
- ▶ There are nurses who have developed social pages where they educate clients on DTG and have regular page updates and videos.
- ▶ Decanting mentors for adherence clubs in clinics have reported lower VL in clients previously having challenges with their VL



9 Positive DATA Facts

**#1 Over 9
Million ART
Patients
switched to
DTG**

**#2 Adherence
improved by at
least 80% since
switch to DTG**

**#3 Increased
weight gain in
bout 65% of
clients since
switched to
DTG**

**#4 Adults, adolescents
and children over 20 kgs
have been transitioned to
a fixed dose combination
of Tenofovir/
Lamivudine/Dolutegravir
and Dolutegravir.
Transition to dispersible
paediatric DTG for young
children in South Africa
has started in 2023**



Community Health Clinics Reviews

- ▶ HCPs reports a steady decline in the number of patients with ART side effects
- ▶ They are happy with improved adherence to treatment at both adult adherence clubs and youth and children adherence clubs since the switching of clients to TLD



General Community Perceptions and Recommendations

South Africa

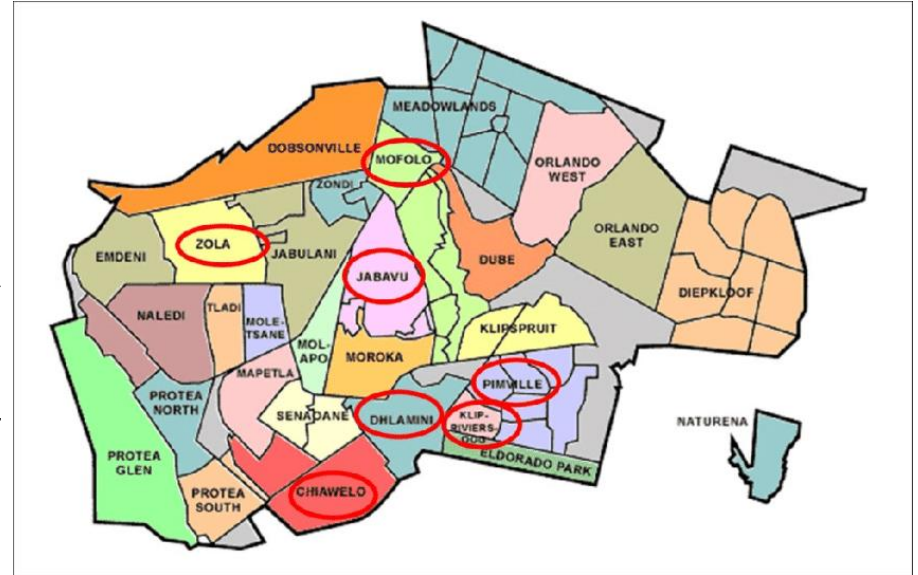
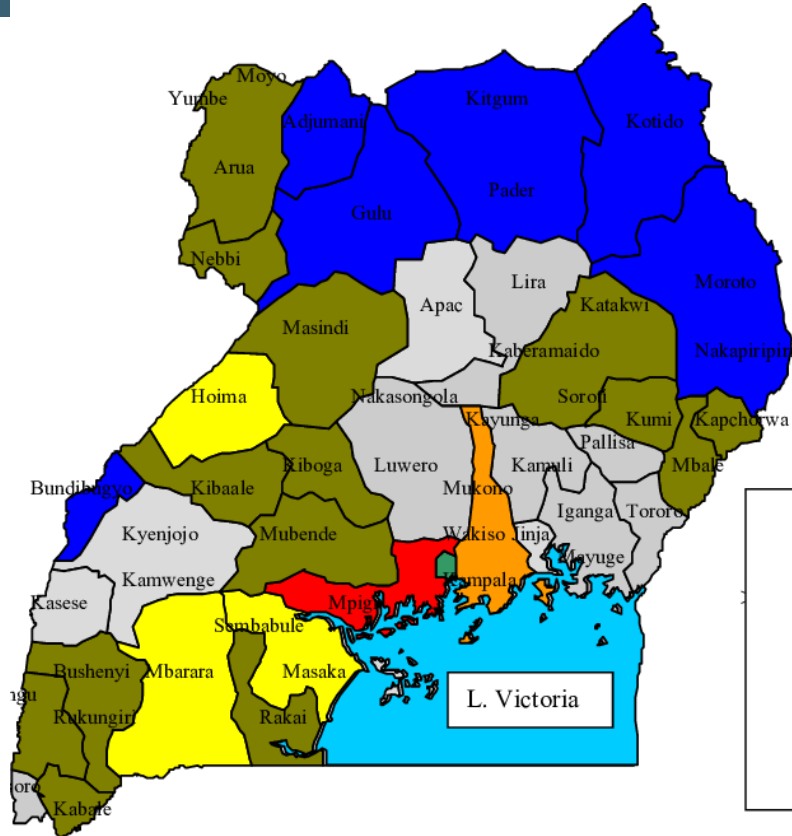
- ▶ TLD as a new First-line, Second-Line and Third-Line HIV Treatment Regimen has been positively accepted by both ART Clients and HCP
- ▶ The DoH has introduced the National-ART-Clinical Guidelines_24_4_2023 as simplified ART provision methods of management of children, adolescents and adults, as well as pregnant women living with HIV/Aids, TB and other common opportunistic infections.

Uganda

- Whereas DTG is making tremendous results in terms of HIV viral load suppression, increase in appetite, less side effects and so many others.
- More effort is needed in creating awareness among the people to understand the reason as to why some people are being switched from a particular first line regimen to DTG OR the reasons as to why they are being introduced to DTG.



Survey Coverage Areas



Conclusion



- ❑ Based on the survey most people clearly stated that Dolutegravir was doing really well for them and they experienced fewer side effects compared to the previous first line regimens.
- ❑ However more effort is needed in creating awareness on the advantages of dolutegravir especially at the time of the switch to the patients.



THANKS!

Any questions?

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- ▶ WRHI Treatment CAB

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