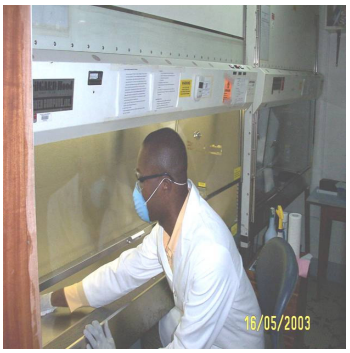
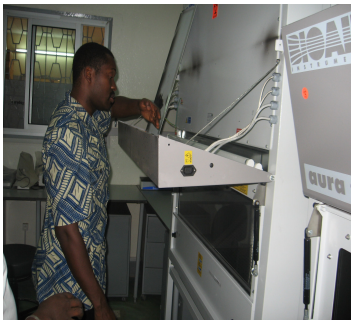
From Processing to Full Capacity Field Laboratories

Cyrille Djoko thought he wanted a career in human medicine (surgery) but failed to get into the medical school. Unlike most young and ambitious students of his age he considered registering at the University of Yaounde rather than trying to get his dreams through expatriation. Embarrassed with the choice of a faculty due to his ability to do well in all subjects, he decided to get into what he considered could link with human medicine, Biochemistry.
Following his BSc in 1998, he meets with Dr. Wilfred Mbacham who just returned from the ScD training at the Harvard School for Public Health. That was the beginning of Cyrille's research career as he got his Masters Degree (2001) studying drug resistance and disease expression markers in malaria.



His patience, commitment and hardworking qualities prompted his supervisor to recommend him for a job position, following a request from h school mate from Harvard, Dr Nathan Wolfe. He spent three years working as a laboratory technologist on the genetic diversity of HIV and related viruses in the rural human populations in Cameroon. During that time, he decided to suspend his PhD program.
His leadership spirit let him to the laboratory supervisor position in 2003 with the role of coordinating field laboratory activities in the Central African Militaries and activities involved with the *in vitro* responses to HIV-1 vaccine candidate study in collaboration with the Merck Research Laboratories.



In 2004, he decided to resume with the PhD program with sponsorship through Dr Wolfe from the Johns Hopkins University/Fogarty Aids International Training and Research Program in collaboration with Dr Martine Peeters at the "*Institut de Recherche pour le Dévelopement*" in Montpellier, France and Dr. Wilfred Mbacham at the Biotechnology Centre, University of Yaounde I. The almost completed PhD program looks at the transmission of SIV at the hunter - NHP interface as a driving factor in the high levels of HIV genetic diversity in Central Africa.

As the laboratory Coordinator, Cyrille has developed and supervised laboratory activities in multiple central African countries focused on understanding the distribution and diversity of a range of infectious agents (e.g. malaria, retroviruses and influenza viruses).. He has always considered setting up the technology closer to the genetic resources as the top capacity building priority and the current opportunity for using both his laboratory development as well as his molecular biology skills in developing an influenza and viral discovery molecular laboratory in Cameroon is a dream come through.