The first early diagnosis of an atrioventricular canal made at the NT scan in Equatorial Guinea

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Objective
To evaluate the nuchal translucency (NT) examination in a developing country like Equatorial Guinea, for early diagnosis of cardiac anomalies.

Methods
This was a retrospective study carried out in the only one fetal unit in Equatorial Guinea, during the first four operational months at our unit from December 2013 to March 2014. The study population included every woman who had a routine NT examination (11-13+6 weeks) in our center. This was the only screening option available in the first trimester in the country. When an increased NT was found, a fetal cardiac ultrasound was performed at 15 weeks. When a cardiac anomaly was found, parents were informed about the prognosis and non-availability of fetal karyotype analysis in the country. Furthermore, they were informed about the possibilities of pregnancy termination only in cases with a poor prognosis.

Results
During the study period, we performed 42 NT examinations. We found only one case with an NT increase and we carried out one fetal cardiac ultrasound at 15 weeks finding a complete atrioventricular canal. This was the only patient who chose a termination of pregnancy after the diagnosis.

Conclusion
Evaluation of NT has been proven to be of value in screening for cardiac defects and this is the only instrument that we could use for early diagnosis in developing countries like Equatorial Guinea.