



DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program Status Report:

Ghana



BACKGROUND

Introduction/General Information

The population of Ghana is estimated between 19.8 and 20.3 million people, with life expectancy from 56 to 60 years. English is the official language in Ghana; literacy is about 65%, disproportionately distributed between males and females. Ghana has a developing economy with relatively well-developed export markets; however, 60% of the population relies on subsistence agriculture. Annual per capita income estimates range from \$400 to \$1,980.

Country HIV/AIDS Statistics and Risk Factors

HIV/AIDS prevalence estimates in Ghana range from 3% to 3.6% of the population with either HIV infection or AIDS; the number of people estimated to be living with HIV ranges from 340,000 to 360,000. Identified significant risk factors include heterosexual contact with multiple partners and commercial sex workers, and a high incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Select groups of commercial sex workers tested had prevalence rates as high as 76%.

Military HIV/AIDS Information

The Ghanaian military numbers about 18,000 troops. HIV prevalence statistics are unavailable since systematic screening has not been done.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

Ghana requested funding and logistical assistance with a plan called *Prevention of HIV/AIDS in African Services* with the following objectives:

- Establishing VCT centers in military garrisons and the central military hospital,
- Providing staffing for the Ghana Armed Forces AIDS committee, and
- Acquiring a vehicle.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Military-to-Military

DHAPP staff participated in a working group to develop an HIV prevention plan for the uniformed services of Ghana. Following this contact, the Ghana Police Service produced an HIV/AIDS prevention plan that received DHAPP support.



Flip chart developed by Ghana Police Service to facilitate discussions and impart the STI/HIV/AIDS prevention message. The flip chart was used extensively in peer education programs throughout sub-Saharan Africa and has been translated into French, Portuguese, and Amharic.

DHAPP staff met several times with the Ghana Chief of Military Medicine to discuss the DoD program and encourage the Ghana military to participate. Subsequently, the Ghana military submitted a proposal to the defense attaché in Accra for review and approval. In May 2003, DHAPP forwarded funds to the American Embassy in Accra to provide assistance to the Ghana Armed Forces HIV/AIDS Program. Authorized charges against these funds include regional travel, purchase of computer and audiovisual equipment, training, and general office support on behalf of the Program.

Contractor-Based Assistance

The Ghana Police Service AIDS Control Program was awarded a DHAPP contract to develop and implement a prevention campaign that included the following components:

- Reducing the incidence of STIs/HIV,
- Improving treatment-seeking for STIs,
- Encouraging monogamy,
- Increasing the use of condoms,
- Increasing HIV risk knowledge and perception through a peer-based HIV/AIDS education program, and
- Establishing voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) for police officers.

GHANA POLICE SERVICE
STI/HIV/AIDS PEER EDUCATION EVALUATION
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE: IMPACT OF STI/HIV/AIDS PEER EDUCATION ON JUNIOR POLICE OFFICERS

SECTION B:

POLICE STI/HIV/AIDS PEER EDUCATION

1. Have you ever had any interaction with a Police STI/HIV/AIDS Peer Educator?
YES **NO**

2. If YES, what did you discuss with the Peer Educator?
VCT **Condoms** **Information on STI/HIV/AIDS**

3. Have you seen, used or read any of the Communication Materials developed by the Police AIDS Program?
YES **NO**

4. If YES, which of them have you seen, used or read?
Stickers/Posters **Key Chains/Badges** **T-shirt**
Bill-board **Condom Wallet** **Booklets**

Excerpt from a questionnaire to evaluate the STI/HIV/AIDS peer education program by Ghana Police Service personnel.

PROGRAM IMPACT

To develop the Ghana Police program, candidates for peer education training were selected from all police administrative regions. Those selected were provided training in health education, VCT promotion, promotion of condom use, and prevention media distribution. Following training, the new peer educators provided training sessions throughout the police force. In conjunction with the peer education program, Ghana Police produced and disseminated materials developed for a comprehensive social marketing media campaign, including flipcharts, posters, stickers, brochures, key rings, and condom wallets for all uniforms.

The Ghana Police experience has had a wide-spread effect on HIV/AIDS prevention efforts among several countries. In particular, the requirement for leather condom pouches as part of the uniform has been widely repeated as a social marketing tool.

Mass Awareness

The Ghana Police created 6,000 condom wallets that are worn as a distinguishing feature on the uniform belts. HIV/AIDS peer educators are also equipped with clearly marked and easily recognizable tote bags. Attractive stickers, brochures, and public billboards with messages on HIV and condoms augment these marketing efforts.



Tote bag used by Ghana Police Service HIV/AIDS prevention master trainers and peer educators.