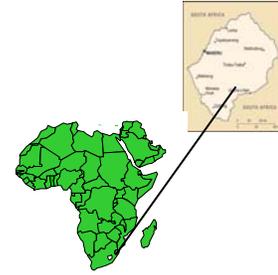




*DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program  
Status Report  
May 2003 to September 2004*

**Lesotho**



## **BACKGROUND**

### **Introduction/General Information**

The population of Lesotho is estimated to be 1.86 million, with a life expectancy of 36.8 years, shortened due to the AIDS epidemic. English is the official language, with a literacy rate of 84.8%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Lesotho is a developing country with an economy based primarily in subsistence agriculture. More than one third of the country's male wage earners work in South Africa. The estimated annual per capita income is \$3,000.

### **Country HIV/AIDS Statistics and Risk Factors**

HIV/AIDS prevalence in Lesotho is estimated to be 29%; 320,000 people are believed to be living with AIDS. Risk factors include high incidence of sexually transmitted infections, mother-to-child transmission, and unprotected heterosexual contact with multiple partners and commercial sex workers.

### **Military HIV/AIDS Information**

The Lesotho Defense Force (LDF) is estimated at 2000 troops. HIV prevalence rates in the LDF are unavailable; however, rates are believed to parallel the civilian population.

## **PROPOSED PROGRAM**

The LDF submitted a proposal to train peer educators to educate troops on HIV risk factors and visit bases for continued HIV prevention, mass awareness campaigns, and surveillance efforts.

In September 2003 at the *All-Africa HIV/AIDS Prevention Workshop*, Lesotho requested DHAPP resource support for its HIV/AIDS peer education program and funds to pay for HIV test kits and home-based care.

## **PROGRAM RESPONSE**

### **Military-to-Military**

The LDF established the following priorities, requesting DHAPP to provide: (1) technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and Military in HIV prevention; (2) support for tuberculosis prevention, control, and management; (3) training of nurses and physicians counseling, HIV screening, management, prevention of opportunistic infections, and use of antiretroviral therapy; and (4) training in infection control.

DHAPP funds purchased a computer, laboratory equipment and supplies including microscopes, HIV test kits, nutritional supplements for home-based care, and a Coulter Counter. DHAPP funded 3

representatives from the LDF to attend the *All-Africa Military HIV/AIDS Prevention Workshop* in Gaborone, Botswana.



Senior LDF officers and medical staff conduct ceremony to accept DHAPP support and launch their HIV/AIDS prevention program.

In 2004, DHAPP provided support for the peer education program, purchased a computer and software for the pharmacy, paid for training in pharmacy software, and purchased laboratory equipment. In July 2004, a DHAPP logistician procured computer, audiovisual, laboratory equipment, and nutritional supplements for troops with AIDS or diagnosed with HIV.

#### **Contractor-Based Assistance**

None during this reporting period.

#### **Clinical Provider Training**

In 2003 an infectious disease physician and laboratory technician from University of California San Diego (UCSD) School of Medicine provided 2-weeks' training on-site to the LDF in managing opportunistic infections and tuberculosis, infection control, and use of antiretroviral therapy. They also trained laboratory technicians in slide microscopy for bacteriology and mycobacterium. In summer 2003, 2 laboratory technicians and 2 nurses received 2 weeks of training in microbiology, clinical management, and infection control at the UCSD Medical Center.

#### **Interoperability**

None during this reporting period.

#### **PROGRAM IMPACT**

DHAPP supported the HIV prevention pillars of peer education and laboratory capability/infrastructure in Lesotho.

#### **Master Trainers and Peer Educators**

None during this reporting period.

#### **Number of Troops Trained**

None during this reporting period.

#### **Potential Number of Troops Affected**

DHAPP-sponsored HIV prevention efforts have the potential to impact 2000 troops.

#### **Counseling and Testing (CT)**

None during this reporting period.

#### **Laboratory Capability/Infrastructure**

DHAPP provided training for laboratory technicians as well as laboratory equipment and supplies.

#### **Mass Awareness**

The military has not officially begun mass awareness campaigns yet, but they are used throughout the country with success.



Billboards are widely used for mass awareness.