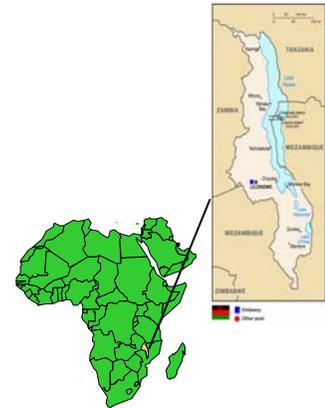




*DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program
Status Report
May 2003 to September 2004*

Malawi



BACKGROUND

Introduction/General Information

The population of Malawi is estimated to be 11.91 million, with a life expectancy of 37.48 years. English and Chichewa are the official languages in Malawi, with an estimated literacy rate of 62.7%, disproportionately distributed between males and females. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, relying on agriculture and generating a per capita income of \$600, which is less than half the sub-Saharan average.

Country HIV/AIDS Statistics and Risk Factors

The HIV infection rate is believed to be 14% of the adult population, with the number living with AIDS estimated at 900,000. Identified risk factors include heterosexual contact with multiple partners, a high incidence of sexually transmitted infections, and perinatal transmission.

Military HIV/AIDS Information

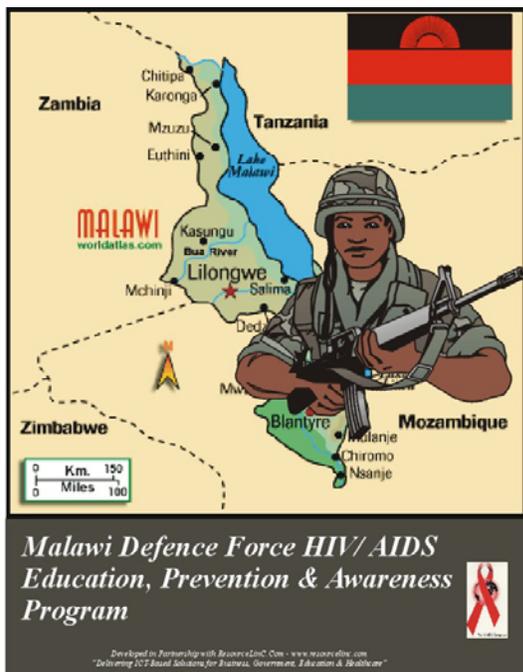
Malawian military size is estimated at 50,000. For the past 2-3 years, potential recruits have been tested for HIV and those who test positive are not permitted to join the military. The Malawian military has not performed systematic screening of its active-

duty personnel; therefore, HIV prevalence statistics are unavailable. Current force wide HIV rates are believed to be approximately 15%, slightly higher than in the civilian population. The average lifespan for enlisted members and officers is 33 years, reflecting the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Malawi.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

The Malawi Defense Forces (MDF) continued efforts in the implementation of their HIV/AIDS prevention plan, which included establishing counseling and testing (CT) centers, developing HIV/AIDS prevention material, improving home-based care for people living with AIDS, establishing a program for prevention of mother-to-child transmission, and conducting mass awareness campaigns through radio, newspapers, and television.

The MDF submitted a request in September 2004 to continue to strengthen and further expand its highly successful HIV/AIDS prevention efforts. The request included additional computers and equipment needed to broaden efforts to every unit in the MDF and ensure accurate data collection to monitor progress.



Malawi launched its HIV prevention program with a powerful poster campaign.



Malawian officer explains the whole blood donor program during DHAPP needs assessment.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Military-to-Military

DHAPP staff met with MDF representatives in-country in December 2001 to conduct a preliminary assessment of the HIV/AIDS situation. This meeting was followed by a needs assessment conducted in March 2003 by a Navy infectious disease physician and a DHAPP logistician. Action items listed below were identified through the needs assessment:

- Acquire a CT/lab structure and generator for Kamuzu Barracks,
- Conduct HIV testing of active-duty members to obtain the first accurate HIV prevalence data in Malawi,
- Develop an HIV education movie,
- Supply 10,000 condom pouches that will become part of the MDF military uniform,
- Print HIV prevention posters and materials, and
- Obtain office equipment and supplies.

Contractor-Based Assistance

ResourceLinC, Inc., was awarded a DHAPP contract to implement an HIV/AIDS prevention program for the MDF. The program included infrastructure development and adaptation of HIV intervention tools. ResourceLinC presented a curriculum to 25 military personnel. Each of the trainers was able to provide the same information to other personnel. ResourceLinC provided culturally relevant videotapes, slides, models, posters, pamphlets, and condoms for distribution.



A DHAPP contractor meets with Malawian leadership to discuss the HIV/AIDS prevention curriculum.

Clinical Provider Training

One physician from Malawi attended the 4-week *Military International HIV Training Program* in San Diego, California, during the summer of 2003. DHAPP sponsored 18 MDF personnel to attend the Malawi Armed Forces College to obtain training as medical assistants, nurse technicians, laboratory technicians, and environmental health specialists.

Interoperability

The National AIDS Commission and Family Health International conducted interviews and briefings for DHAPP and other US representatives. DHAPP established a liaison with the MDF together to include site visits to nongovernmental organizations and academic centers.

PROGRAM IMPACT

The DHAPP-sponsored ResourceLinC program in Malawi has had a significant impact since its inception, including the following:

- Established monitoring and evaluation tools to monitor training progress,
- Improved HIV/AIDS knowledge,
- Increased requests for condom, demonstrations and distribution
- Increased numbers of trainers and senior officers participating in demonstrations,
- Increased numbers of MDF personnel seeking CT,
- Established HIV/AIDS prevention training for MDF recruits, and
- Implemented HIV/AIDS training for dependents and the greater community.

Master Trainers and Peer Educators

To date, 25 master trainers and 270 peer educators have been trained.

Number of Troops Trained

Thirty thousand MDF troops were trained during 460 new recruit sessions. Over 3500 condom demonstrations have been conducted, reaching more than 35,555 MDF personnel.

Potential Number of Troops Affected

DHAPP-sponsored HIV/AIDS efforts can affect 50,000 Malawian troops.

Counseling and Testing (CT)

Three CT centers were established for the MDF.



One of three counseling and testing centers established with DHAPP funds.

Laboratory Capability/Infrastructure

DHAPP-sponsored training in HIV diagnostics, provided rapid test kits, and procured laboratory equipment for 3 CTs.

Mass Awareness

Posters and brochures are popular method of implementing mass awareness campaigns in military settings.



The MDF widely employs culturally relevant posters as part of its mass awareness efforts.