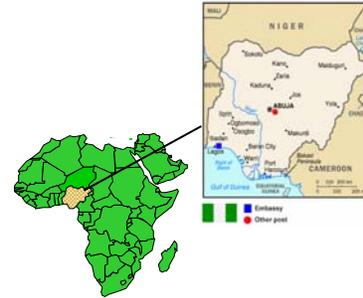




*DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program  
Status Report  
May 2003 to September 2004*

**Nigeria**



## **BACKGROUND**

### **Introduction/General Information**

The population of Nigeria is 137.25 million people. The life expectancy is 50.5 years, which is declining due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. English is the official language in Nigeria, with a literacy rate of 68%, disproportionately distributed between males and females. While Nigeria is described as a resource-rich country, political circumstances have resulted in a population that relies primarily on subsistence agriculture. Annual per capita income in Nigeria is estimated to be \$900.

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

HIV/AIDS prevalence in Nigeria is estimated at 6% of the adult population with either HIV infection or AIDS. The number of people living with AIDS varies widely but is thought to approximate 3.6 million. Identified significant risk factors include a high prevalence of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), heterosexual contact with multiple partners, and powerful stigmatization of people with HIV/AIDS.

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

Nigerian military size is estimated at 150,000. Nigeria has not performed forcewide testing of personnel; however the rate of HIV prevalence is believed to be 8%,

which is slightly higher than the rest of the population.

## **PROPOSED PROGRAM**

The Nigerian Armed Forces (NAF) submitted a prevention proposal titled *Nigerian Armed Forces Program on AIDS Control (AFPAC)*. Objectives outlined included:

- An education program to develop greater HIV/AIDS awareness,
- Training for healthcare workers,
- Sponsorship of an annual HIV/AIDS Week,
- Implementation of HIV/AIDS education and training for trainers and military personnel,
- Enhanced nutritional support of people with AIDS in medical facilities, and
- Training of healthcare workers in HIV management

## **PROGRAM RESPONSE**

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

DHAPP funded 2 representatives from the NAF to attend the *All-Africa Military HIV/AIDS Prevention Workshop* in Gaborone, Botswana and supported the training of 2 NAF physicians in the DHAPP-sponsored *Military International HIV Training Program* in San Diego, California. DHAPP also purchased

laboratory equipment, supported HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, prevention education, disease surveillance, laboratory capacity, counseling and testing, clinical skills training, and the development of HIV/AIDS policy for the NAF.

### **Contractor-Based Assistance**

The University of Maryland, Institute of Human Virology, Baltimore, Maryland, was awarded a contract by DHAPP to establish baseline data on HIV seroprevalence and incidence rates in the Nigerian Navy and to identify high-risk behaviors associated with the spread of HIV, as well as to develop a training program covering HIV ethics and confidentiality issues, HIV counseling, and improved diagnostic accuracy. In addition, HIV testing and counseling training was provided for Nigerian Navy personnel.

Beginning in May 2003, the University of Maryland capitalized on its previous work by building laboratory capacity for the Nigerian military designed to augment accurate HIV diagnosis at the military hospitals and health centers and by developing a prototype HIV surveillance system for the Nigerian military. The University augmented the first objective by developing counseling and testing centers and theory-based HIV risk reduction curriculum for army personnel and their families.

Lincoln University of Pennsylvania was also awarded a contract by DHAPP to develop and implement an HIV/AIDS prevention program in cooperation with the NAF. The Lincoln program provided HIV/AIDS prevention education and counseling to Nigerian military personnel.

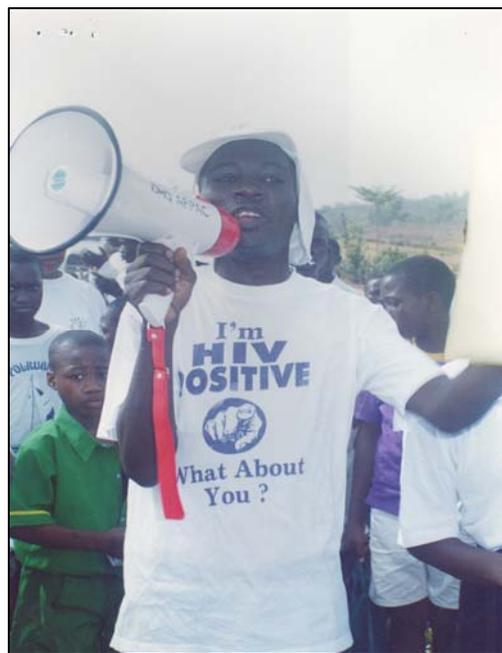
Lincoln University increased HIV/AIDS awareness and provided prevention education throughout the Nigerian military through efforts which included conducting a knowledge, attitudes, and practices and behavior (KAPB) survey, training peer

military educators, and providing prevention education workshops in 36 military units.

Lincoln recently increased the cadre of educators by training an additional 248 military personnel as peer health educators. Following training, Lincoln expanded HIV/AIDS/STI prevention activities to all military locations throughout Nigeria. The training material developed in phase one of Lincoln's project was updated and distributed throughout the program.



Nigerian soldiers attend DHAPP-sponsored HIV/AIDS prevention training.



An HIV-positive soldier delivers a powerful message encouraging peers to get tested for HIV as part of the prevention program.

### **Clinical Provider Training**

DHAPP supported the training of 2 NAF physicians in the DHAPP-sponsored *Military International HIV Training Program* in San Diego, California.

### **Interoperability**

In addition to DHAPP efforts, the US Agency for International Development and Family Health International are supporting HIV prevention efforts in the Nigerian military, particularly in the area of peer education.

### **PEPFAR**

Nigeria has been identified as a focus country in the *President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief* (PEPFAR), which was announced during the 2003 State of the Union Address to Congress. Future US Department of Defense support for the NAF HIV/AIDS programs will be coordinated through PEPFAR.

### **PROGRAM IMPACT**

Lincoln University conducted posttest evaluations among NAF members that showed very significant progress in learning HIV/AIDS/STI information. Lincoln also achieved excellent results with Web-based training materials that will assist ongoing training for the NAF and support other groups working on HIV/AIDS prevention.

The University of Maryland program achieved vastly improved support and networking between the armed forces and the civilian sector and laid the foundation for integrated national programs. The Army counseling unit developed a simplified information booklet on facts about HIV/AIDS for soldiers and families, titled, "*MY HEALTH IN MY HANDS (MHMH)*." Initiative shown by the Nigerian Army to incorporate HIV counseling and MHMH into the daily routine of HIV testing demonstrated how it has taken ownership of

the program. The general population of the city of Jos benefits from sharing program materials developed for the NAF.

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

Lincoln University added 248 peer educators, bringing the total trained by its programs to 433. The University of Maryland has trained a total 8 master trainers and 356 peer educators to date.



A peer health educator presenting HIV/AIDS prevention information to Nigerian troops.

### **Number of Troops Trained**

Training by peer educators is currently in process and it is estimated that approximately 2600 troops have been trained by Lincoln University. Over 4000 troops received HIV/AIDS prevention information during CT visits.



Peer health educators take advantage of break time to discuss HIV prevention with fellow troops.

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

DHAPP funds have sponsored HIV prevention efforts that can reach 150,000 troops.

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

Another CT center was opened at the 330 NAF, Jos, which now complements the one at the 3rd Armored Division, Jos. The 330 NAF site has now collected and tested 2100 specimens, bringing the total specimens screened by the University of Maryland surveillance program to over 4000. In addition, 30 counselors have been trained to assist with this program at the 330 NAF.

### **Laboratory Capability/Infrastructure**

The University of Maryland has improved laboratory capabilities in HIV diagnostics, quality assurance, and data entry. Twelve laboratory personnel have received advanced technical training, and 28 lab technicians have been trained.

### **Mass Awareness**

HIV/AIDS prevention materials have been widely distributed among the Nigerian Army and Navy units. Additionally, HIV/AIDS prevention materials are shared among the local civilian communities.