

ANGOLA

DHAPP

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HIV/AIDS
PREVENTION PROGRAM

REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF HIV/AIDS
AMONG UNIFORMED PERSONNEL IN
SELECTED AFRICAN NATIONS AND BEYOND

WINNING BATTLES IN THE WAR AGAINST HIV/AIDS

BACKGROUND

Country Statistics

The Angolan population is estimated to be 11 million people, with an average life expectancy of 38.4 years. Portuguese is the official language of Angola, which has an estimated literacy rate of 67%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Since the end of a 27-year civil war in 2002, Angola has begun to enjoy the fruits of peace. Subsistence agriculture provides the main livelihood for 85% of the population. Oil production and the supporting activities are vital to Angola's economy, contributing about 45% to the gross domestic product and more than half of exports. The annual per capita income is \$2,100.



HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Angola's general population is estimated at 3.9%. Angola has approximately 240,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. It is believed that Angola's civil war may have deterred the spread of HIV. Now that the war is over, and transportation routes are reopening, there is concern that HIV will spread more rapidly. Identified significant risk factors include blood transfusions and unprotected sexual contact. Most cases of HIV in Angola are spread through multi-partner heterosexual sex. Mother-to-child transmission accounts for approximately 15% of HIV cases.

Military Statistics

The Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) is estimated at approximately 110,000. According to a 2003 study by Charles R. Drew University, HIV prevalence in the military ranges from 3-11% depending upon the location. HIV prevalence rates were highest near the border of Namibia (11%).

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

Angola's proposed project, under the direction of the Drew Center for AIDS Research, Education and Services (Drew CARES), builds upon their current DHAPP work, and is designed

to expand access to counseling and testing (CT). In Angola, efforts were made to increase knowledge of HIV, improve demand for HIV testing, and improve the physical, laboratory, and human resources infrastructure to conduct CT. Regions of Angola known to have high cross-border traffic with the Democratic Republic of Congo were targeted. These large populations of military personnel and commercial sex workers, compounded by few HIV prevention services, are presumed to have high rates of HIV infection. Development of these sites will provide the necessary infrastructure and expertise to create an operational and sustainable CT clinic that can serve this high-risk region.



In addition, success of Drew CARES partnership model used with the Angolan military suggested that it could be used in other African militaries with limited resources and recovering from civil war. As part of Drew CARES work, they also consulted with the US Department of Defense in Rwanda and the Rwandan military to develop a strategic plan for HIV prevention, surveillance, care, and treatment in the Rwandan military.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Angola was awarded Foreign Military Financing funding for the acquisition of laboratory and medical equipment. This award was bestowed/granted during fiscal year 2003, and was released for expenditure during this fiscal year. These funds are intended for the purchase of a chemistry and hematology analyzer, CD4 count technology, and ELISA machine for HIV testing and viral load analysis.

Proposed Future Activities

In January 2005 DHAPP received and reviewed a follow-on proposal from the FAA to continue and expand HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in FY06. Key elements of the proposal included developing a new HIV prevention curriculum, training military personnel as master trainers and peer health educators, and conducting a comprehensive HIV mass awareness campaign.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention

During FY05, the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science has continued to provide exceptional results in its work with the FAA, specifically in the areas of prevention. The FAA military HIV/AIDS prevention program has exceeded all goals in prevention and peer education during FY05. During the year, 570 peer advocates were trained to provide a comprehensive prevention message. These advocates have now trained 7592 military personnel in HIV/AIDS prevention topics. In addition, 20,000 brochures



describing condom use and using clean razors to prevent HIV/AIDS have been provided to the FAA for distribution to soldiers. Finally, the FAA has supported 6 targeted condom service outlets during the fiscal year.

One thousand four hundred and seventy military personnel were interviewed about their knowledge, practices, and planned behavior with regard to condom use to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. These baseline interviews took place between March and July 2005. Six-month follow-up interviews to detect any changes effected by the peer advocate training began in September 2005, and 200 additional military personnel have already been interviewed.

Care

The FAA worked to resolve confidentiality and quality control issues as they pertain to CT centers. They decided that these will be best maintained if CT teams trained and set up to deliver CT services in fixed predefined sites. Planning meetings also resulted in an implementation strategy/schedule/program that will train personnel for CT sites at 2 military units in Luanda. One of these sites will be at the main army base and the other at the main FAA Air Force base. The FAA Army and Air Force bases in Luanda have set up facilities where CT services will be provided. The CT teams will receive their training in Luanda and will be provided with intensive and extensive practical training at the main military hospital in Luanda. The training will be implemented by Drew University, and protocols created for these purposes will serve as the standard to be used by the FAA in the future. Training began at the end of July 2005. The FAA will be implementing such services as soon as all relevant personnel are trained.

