

MALI

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

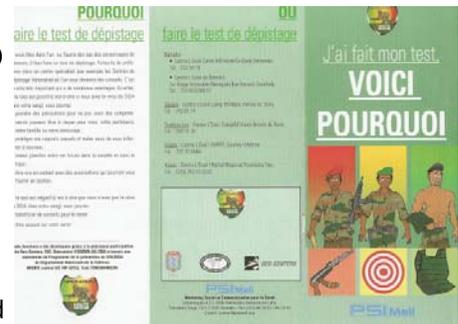
BACKGROUND

Country Statistics

The population of Mali is estimated to be 12.3 million, with an average life expectancy of 48.6 years, shortened due to the AIDS epidemic. French is the official language; the estimated literacy rate is 46.4%, distributed disproportionately between males and females. Mali is a developing country with a stable and democratic government. The economy of Mali is described as underdeveloped, with 80% of the population engaging in subsistence agriculture. The annual per capita income is estimated at \$900.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is estimated at 1.9%, with approximately 140,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. Recorded cases are higher in Malian women than in men. Identified risk factors include high-risk heterosexual contact with multiple partners, sexual contact with commercial sex workers, and a high rate of sexually transmitted infections. Migration is thought to be a significant factor in Mali's HIV epidemic, as HIV rates are substantially higher in bordering countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso.



Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 7000. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available, but is thought to be higher than the national average of 1.9%.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Military-to-Military Technical Assistance

DHAPP staff members provided technical assistance to US Embassy representatives in Mali during an in-country assist visit 19–March 2005.

DHAPP staff members toured the main laboratory, the primary Counseling and Testing (CT) center, and regional center that had been developed with previous year's funding. The military

and civilians share the main hospitals, with the military functioning primarily out of health clinics. There are 34 military clinics in the 6 military regions, and 3 CT centers are available. Two labs currently support the military. Approximately 20 military physicians have received training in antiretroviral therapy.

Program development, implementation, and logistics of providing personnel support for the Malian Defense Force (MDF) were discussed and action items identified. In addition, DHAPP staff members provided technical assistance in the development of the MDF fiscal year 2006 proposal for funding.



In-Country Ongoing Assistance

In order to effectively use the funding sent directly to the US Embassy in Mali, the MDF began actively looking for a nongovernmental organization (NGO) to assist them with their HIV/AIDS prevention and education efforts. At this time, no group has been selected; however, the objective for such an organization should be to provide administrative supervision of the MDF effort. The NGO will utilize the personnel resources that the MDF has available and will identify and set up the program plan and budget indicators. The NGO will also be responsible for fulfilling the DHAPP administrative/financial reporting requirements and submitting them through the office of the US Defense Attaché for the duration of the contract. Specifically, the MDF and the selected NGO will also work together to design educational pamphlets with behavior changing information for distribution.

Proposed Future Activities

A proposal was received on behalf of the MDF for FY06. The specific objectives of the proposed project include expanding a peer education training program, constructing and equipping 2 new CT centers in the Gao and Kayes regions, enhancing laboratory capabilities, training Malian military health service personnel, and conducting CT monitoring and evaluations.



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention/Care/Treatment

DHAPP staff members have begun collaborative efforts with MDF officials and US Embassy staff to establish a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention/education program for military members in Mali. DHAPP staff members traveled to Mali in March 2005 to conduct a needs assessment and assist with proposal preparation. Objectives included the increase of technical capacity of military health centers by training selected personnel to collect data and analyze information. The MDF requested assistance with renovating and equipping 3 laboratories, and constructing 1 CT Center. Refresher training for peer educators and personnel working at the existing CT Centers was requested as an additional priority. DHAPP staff members look forward to the commencement of this program and continued collaboration with the MDF.