

# SENEGAL

# 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 Senegal is estimated to be 11.1 million people, with an average life expectancy of 58.9 years. French is the official language; the estimated literacy rate is 40.2%, distributed disproportionately between men and women. Senegal is a developing nation with a strong democratic government. Predominantly rural and with limited natural resources, the country earns foreign exchange from fish, phosphates, peanuts, tourism, and services. The majority of its population are employed in agriculture. The annual per capita income is estimated at \$1,700.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

Senegal has one of the lowest HIV/AIDS rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, with an estimated 0.8% of the population living with HIV/AIDS. The number of people living with HIV/AIDS is estimated at 44,000. While other Sub-Saharan Africa countries are experiencing the worst HIV epidemics in the world, Senegal's HIV rate has consistently remained below 2% since 1997. Senegal is considered to have a concentrated epidemic. Although the HIV rate in the general public has been consistently low, specific vulnerable populations have much higher prevalence, such as a prevalence rate of 17% among commercial sex workers. Identified risk factors include heterosexual contact with multiple partners and contact with commercial sex workers.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 9000. Although the military has not performed forcewide testing, screening of a sample of 4105 Senegalese Armed Forces (SAF) personnel revealed an HIV infection rate of 1.24%.



### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### Military-to-Military Technical Assistance

DHAPP staff provided technical assistance to the SAF during an in-country assist visit, 24 August – 3 September 2005. DHAPP staff members observed that civilian and military ministries in Senegal efficiently combine efforts to implement plans that benefit both programs. The SAF has utilized DHAPP funds efficiently, which is demonstrated by its capacity to increase acceptance of HIV testing among military recruits from 25% to 90%.

During the visit, DHAPP staff toured Ziguinchor, the location of one of the laboratory rehabilitation sites. Developing a military training center in Dakar is under consideration. Additionally, a member of the Office of Defense Cooperation at the US Embassy will be participating in the interagency working group in November 2005, between the US Agency for International Development and Family Health International.

### Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Senegal was awarded Foreign Military Financing funding for the acquisition of laboratory and medical equipment. Equipment specifications are being negotiated; however, there are current plans to purchase CD4 counters to outfit 4r laboratory facilities.



### Proposed Future Activities

A proposal was received on behalf of the SAF for the 2006 fiscal year. The specific objectives of the proposed project include conducting an Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) program, conducting mass awareness and HIV education activities and workshops, training medical staff and social workers, expanding the counseling and testing (CT) program, conducting evaluation of HIV prevention activities, training staff in the care of people living with HIV/AIDS, and participating in international and national seminars and conferences.

## OUTCOMES & IMPACT

### Prevention

During FY05, the SAF continued its commitment to prevention messages with a comprehensive overview. Efforts focusing primarily on abstinence and/or being faithful reached 2614 soldiers (2610 men and 4 women). In addition, another 5561 troops were reached through these community outreach efforts at comprehensive prevention (5559 men, 2 women), and 25 condom service outlets were supported. Forty-nine military members were trained to provide a comprehensive prevention message to peers. One event targeted young recruits new to HIV prevention messages during a 1-day awareness building event. The other event was a cross-country race that concluded with discussions on HIV prevention methods. All participants were given T-shirts featuring the SAF HIV prevention logo. In addition to the 2 mass awareness events, a variety of IEC materials have been purchased and distributed among the military camps. DHAPP provided the funds to purchase 300 posters with military-specific HIV prevention messages, 350 guides detailing methods of transmission, treatment options, prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), military people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), and 2000 leaflets concerning condom use, as well as 50 videos addressing various aspects of HIV, including transmission, counseling, and true stories from PLWHA.

Five clinics were capable of providing the full range of PMTCT services. At the 5 clinics during FY05, 791 women were provided counseling concerning HIV testing and 681 actually were tested. Of these, 8 were seropositive and were provided with HIV prophylaxis. Fifteen military health workers were trained in the provision of PMTCT services.

SAF has 8 service outlets participating in medical transmission safety programs, and has trained 40 health care providers in the provision of blood and injection safety for

the prevention of HIV. DHAPP provided funds to purchase over 800 Sharpsafe containers that are being used at testing sites and throughout the military hospitals.

### Care

During FY05, 18 outlets provided generalized palliative care for military patients with HIV/AIDS. During the year, 180 troops received care at these outlets. Of these, 1 was provided with tuberculosis (TB) treatment and another 5 provided with TB prophylaxis. Fifteen health care workers were trained in the provision of HIV/AIDS (including TB-HIV) palliative care.

### Counseling and Testing

Nine service outlets provided CT for military members. During FY05, 4745 soldiers were tested and received their results (4740 men, 5 women).



### Treatment

Two SAF adult male patients have initiated antiretroviral therapy (ART) during FY05. Sixteen health workers were trained in the provision of ART services. Of the 1,343 troops tested during the fourth quarter, only 8 were found to be seropositive. These 8 soldiers are not currently on ARV but they are being followed to determine the proper course of treatment. One military laboratory has been provided with the necessary equipment for carrying out HIV tests and CD4 tests with DHAPP funding. The World Bank has provided funding for the training of military personnel to use the equipment. The laboratory is still being set up and will be fully operational during the first quarter of the next fiscal year. Seventeen technicians were trained in laboratory services during FY05.

### Other Activities

Four organizations were provided with technical assistance, and 4 people were officially trained in the provision of capacity building and stigma reduction, although all sensitization efforts include a component related to the reduction of stigma and discrimination. The head of the SAF has been very active in discussing the HIV issue with other military officials, both nationally and internationally. He has been instrumental in spearheading the effort to open dialogue about HIV. The coordinator for the SAF HIV/AIDS prevention program attended a 3-week training course in Burkina Faso at the Centre International de Formation en Recherche to learn better surveillance and information management techniques that will be applied to the SAF HIV/AIDS prevention program. He is currently carrying out research that will be presented at the follow-up course in May 2006.

