

SOUTH AFRICA

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 South Africa is estimated to be 44.3 million people, with an average life expectancy of 43.3 years, down significantly from a high of 61 prior to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Although English predominates, South Africa also has 10 other official languages and a literacy rate of approximately 86.4%. South Africa is described as a middle-income, developing country with significant resources, a well-developed infrastructure, and a substantial stock exchange. However, the South African economy is highly stratified, with 13% of the population living in first-world conditions and 53% in third-world conditions. The annual per capita income is approximately \$11,100.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is estimated to be 21.5%, one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world. The number of people living with HIV/AIDS is approximately 5.3 million. South Africa now has more people living with HIV than any other country in the world. HIV/AIDS is now the number one cause of death in South Africa. Prevalence rates are still increasing. Identified risk factors include high-risk heterosexual contact with multiple partners, sexually transmitted infections, and perinatal transmission. Heterosexual contact is the principal mode of transmission, accounting for 79% of all HIV cases. Vulnerable groups include commercial sex workers, miners, truck drivers, and men who have sex with men.



Military Statistics

The South African National Defense Force (SANDF) is estimated at 63,000 active-duty personnel. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available. However, HIV prevalence is estimated to be between 17 and 23%, about the same as the HIV rate in the general population.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Military-to-Military Technical Assistance

DHAPP staff members conducted a technical assistance visit to South Africa 24 July to 6 August, 2005. The primary objective of this trip was to provide continuing technical assistance to the SANDF to meet the 2005 Country Operational Plan (COP) objective for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC).

Accomplishments included:

- OVC technical assistance was provided to 4 bases (and their surrounding community partners) located in 4 provinces. Priority problems were identified and workable plans were initiated to be included in the fiscal year 2006 COP.
- Plans addressed the care and prevention of HIV/AIDS transmission to OVC with the following emphasis areas: (1) Ladysmith, Kwa Zulu Natal: Sexual activity in teens; (2) Phalaborwa, Limpopo: Parenting skills; (3) Mefikeng, North-West: Myths and belief systems; (4) Umtata, Eastern Cape: Package of care for OVC to address coordination between organizations, life-skills training, and basic needs.

In addition, DHAPP staff conducted site visits in: Ladysmith, Kwa Zulu Natal, Phalaborwa, Limpopo, Mefikeng, North-West, Umtata, Eastern Cape, and Cape Town, South Africa.

A second technical assistance visit was conducted by DHAPP staff at the *Phidisa* Conference held in Cape Town, South Africa, 2-7 August 2005. The purpose of this trip was for DHAPP staff to facilitate the *Phidisa* Conference workshop on HIV surveillance and provide support for all workshops and military presentations. Additionally, staff members met with delegates from DHAPP-supported countries attending the meeting to discuss prevention program status and to address country needs.

Accomplishments included the following:

- DHAPP staff facilitated opening the workshop for all military attendees.
- DHAPP staff facilitated the workshop session on HIV surveillance in military settings.
- DHAPP staff met with representatives from Angola, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, Benin, Botswana, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Lesotho to discuss implementation of the FY05 HIV/AIDS prevention program and planning for FY06.
- DHAPP staff held in-depth meetings with Mozambican representatives regarding development of programs addressing programs for prevention for HIV-positive persons.
- DHAPP staff developed follow-up plans with all Foreign Military Financing funded countries on the purchasing and assessment of all laboratory equipment.

Proposed Future Activities

As a President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) focus country, the SANDF submitted a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment proposal to the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) via its PEPFAR country team's overall COP. Military activities for FY06 were approved by technical and program review committees at OGAC, as well as by agency principals, and these will commence in the new fiscal year.



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention

The SANDF has continued to meet its targets in HIV prevention, considered by many to lead the way in innovative thinking about military programs. During FY05, 2165 troops were reached by community outreach programs focusing on abstinence and/or being faithful. Sixteen individuals were trained in the provision of these services. This entails almost entirely the prevention pro-

gram called “Combatting HIV and AIDS Through Spiritual and Ethical Conduct” (CHATSEC), which is run by the military chaplains. Good coverage was obtained in 8 of the 9 provinces of South Africa, most notably the Western Cape where 8% of the SANDF community was reached during the past 12 months. The CHATSEC course is available in 2 versions: a 3-day and a 5-day version. The 5-day version focuses on a set of core spiritual values that are common across major religions in South Africa. The 3-day course focuses on spirituality and value clarification, and links this to ethical decision making. Both courses are strongly focused on abstinence and faithfulness, with little or no emphasis on condom use.

In addition, another 1884 troops were reached with community outreach programs with a comprehensive prevention message, and 1164 were trained as master trainers to deliver this message. The SANDF supported 405 targeted condom outlets. Five individuals were trained in blood safety and 4 were trained in injection safety.

The SANDF supported 104 outlets providing prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services. During FY05, 3849 pregnant women were provided with PMTCT services at these locations. Forty-eight military health workers were trained in the provision of PMTCT.

Care

The SANDF supports 130 outlets that provide HIV-related palliative care. The number of troops receiving palliative care services has been restricted for security reasons. However, 330 individuals were trained in the provision of HIV-related care, including tuberculosis care.

Counseling and Testing

During FY05, the SANDF supported 105 Counseling and Testing (CT) Centers. One thousand five hundred and seventeen troops or family members (968 men, 549 women) were tested for HIV and received their results during the year. Two hundred and thirty-one troops were trained in the provision of CT.

Treatment

During FY05, 94 health workers were trained in the provision of antiretroviral therapy (ART) in accordance with national or international standards. One laboratory had the capability to perform HIV or CD4 testing.



Other Activities

A 5-day strategic information work session was facilitated by the SANDF Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Manager, during which all regional and national HIV managers underwent training in M&E theory, M&E strategy and plan, the results of some M&E activities, and the utilization of M&E results in program planning. In total, 29 individuals were trained in M&E.