MOROCCO

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 Morocco is estimated to be 33.2 million people, with an average life expectancy of 70.9 years. Arabic is the official language of Morocco, which has an estimated literacy rate of 51.7%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Moroccan economic policies brought economic stability to the country in the early 1990s but have not spurred growth sufficient to reduce unemployment that nears 20% in urban areas. Poverty has actually increased. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is $4,100, with 19% of Moroccan people living below the poverty line.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Morocco's general population is estimated at less than 1.0%, with approximately 1500 people living with HIV in 2004. HIV in Morocco is mainly transmitted through heterosexual intercourse. Less-frequent modes of transmission include sexual contact with men who have sex with men, intravenous drug use, and blood or blood products. Mother-to-child transmission accounts for about 5% of cases.

Military Statistics

The Moroccan Royal Armed Forces (MRAF) has recently been involved in six peacekeeping operations (Haiti, Ethiopia, Western Sahara, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone). The size of the military is not documented. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available, although the MRAF reports 102 documented cases of HIV in its personnel.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The MRAF implemented a prevention program for its forces beginning in 1996. By 2001, peer advocacy programs reached more than 60,000 military personnel through prevention efforts and focus groups. Prevalence data and risk behavior information were collected, allowing for improved prevention efforts; however, due to lack of funding, the programming efforts were halted in 2001. DHAPP staff members have conducted bilateral planning meetings with MRAF officials and have agreed to proceed as partners in HIV prevention efforts in the future.

Proposed Future Activities

DHAPP received a proposal from the MRAF for activities in fiscal year 2007. Goals for restarting their prevention efforts include conduct train-the-trainer and peer education sessions and implement a peer education program for troops, improve HIV epidemiology skills of military health personnel through training in the United States, increase statistical skills through US-based training so MRAF personnel can analyze data from the program, provide necessary materials so existing efforts may be expanded, provide postexposure prophylaxis kits, and purchase and distribute condoms.

The proposal was reviewed by a scientific panel and will be presented to the DHAPP Board of Directors.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention, Care and Treatment

During FY06, no reporting data were received from the MRAF or its partners, as the program remains in the planning stages at the moment. DHAPP looks forward to future collaborative efforts with the MRAF.