



ETHIOPIA

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 estimated population of Ethiopia is 78.3 million people, with an average life expectancy of 49 years. Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia, which has an estimated literacy rate of 43%, unevenly distributed between men and women. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$700, with 39% of Ethiopian people living below the poverty level. Ethiopia's economy is based on agriculture, accounting for half of the GDP, 60% of exports, and 80% of total employment. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent drought and poor cultivation practices. Coffee is critical to the Ethiopian economy, with exports of some \$156 million in 2002.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Ethiopia's general population is not known with certainty, but it is estimated between 0.9% and 3.5%, with between 420,000 and 1.3 million individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Identified risk factors include unprotected sexual contact, blood transfusions, unsafe injections, and vertical transmission. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of all transmissions are acquired through heterosexual contact.

Military Statistics

The Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) has approximately 200,000 active-duty members. Ethiopia expends 3% of the GDP on the military. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown, but a seroprevalence study of the ENDF is planned using FY08 funds.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

Through the collaborative efforts of DHAPP, US Navy Blood Program personnel, ENDF, Ethiopian Red Cross, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization, the ENDF Bella Blood Center facility in Addis Ababa began operations in Fall 2007. Throughout the year, blood banking technical assistance was provided by US Navy Blood Program personnel to assist the ENDF as it stood up operations in its new facility. DHAPP personnel participated in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Ethiopia Country Team and provided technical assistance for Country Operational Planning for FY08.



Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Ethiopia was awarded Foreign Military Financing funding for the acquisition of laboratory equipment, and supporting reagents and supplies related to the diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS. This award was appropriated for FY03 and released for expenditure in FY05. Funding for the 2003 appropriation has been used to procure ENDF Bella Blood Center facility equipment and a serology analyzer.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

Since the opening of the ENDF Bella Blood Center facility in Addis Ababa in fall 2007, significant staff training has occurred. Three (3) ENDF staff members attended a 3-week training in blood safety donation and processing at the US Naval Medical Center San Diego. Approximately 150 students and health professionals participated in lectures in Ethiopia. The lectures on blood safety and proper blood transfusion practices were provided by the US Navy Blood Banking Team.



Approximately 12 technicians and managers were trained in blood collection, processing, and center management. Training is ongoing.



All health professionals and support staff have been trained on injection safety. The trainings have occurred with a phased approach, with the provision of universal precautionary equipment and policies.

Proposed Future Activities

Some of the proposed activities for the ENDF in FY08 include a seroprevalence study among ENDF personnel, development of a *Prevention with Positives* program for people living with HIV/AIDS, an antiretroviral therapy adherence program, continued capacity development for the Bella Blood Bank Center, and a continued injection safety program for the ENDF.

