



INDIA

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 India is 1.1 billion people, with an average life expectancy of 69 years. Hindi is the official language of India, which has an estimated literacy rate of 61%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Despite impressive gains in economic investment and output, India faces pressing problems, such as the ongoing dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir, massive overpopulation, environmental degradation, extensive poverty, and ethnic and religious strife. The gross domestic product per capita is \$2,700, with 25% of the Indian population living below the poverty level.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

According to the UNAIDS *2007 AIDS Epidemic Update*, the HIV prevalence rate in India's adult population is estimated to be 0.36%. The newly revised estimates may be lower than previous estimates, but HIV still greatly affects large numbers of people. The predominant mode of HIV transmission is through heterosexual contact, followed by intravenous drug use. Identified risk factors include high-risk heterosexual contact, intravenous drug use, and contact with commercial sex workers.

Military Statistics

The Indian Armed Forces (IAF) is estimated at approximately 1.3 million active-duty troops and more than 500,000 reservists. Although military HIV prevalence rates are unknown, AIDS is documented as the fifth most common cause of death in the IAF.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The US Pacific Command (USPACOM) and its implementing agent, the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (COE), have continued to collaborate with the Indian Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS).



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention

AFMS organized and implemented 4 peer education workshops, which included 1 for military spouses, and trained 340 peer educators. Comprehensive prevention messages reached 4,480 troops and family members during the reporting period. One million condoms were procured and distributed to all the commands for the troops. Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials were developed, produced, and distributed in Hindi and English as handbills, handbooks, and posters. At the request of the paramilitary forces, the AFMS shared its peer education training manuals and IEC materials with them for distribution to their forces.

Care and Treatment

HIV test kits were procured for counseling and testing services for the IAF. The number of troops tested was not available, but 9,000 test kits were procured during the fiscal year.

In addition to the 2 military laboratories that can perform HIV tests and CD4 tests, the capacity of 10 military laboratories has improved with receipt of new medical equipment and supplies. The military laboratories provide support to HIV/AIDS treatment and care services. Opportunistic infection test kits were procured and sent to 8 HIV/AIDS military laboratories. During the year, 108 health care workers were trained in the delivery of antiretroviral therapy

services, and 8 laboratory technicians received training on lab-related activities including use of their new lab equipment. Also, 1 lab technician attended the Regional Training Center in Bangkok, Thailand, for HIV diagnostic laboratory training.

Proposed Future Activities

A portfolio review is planned for summer 2008, and will determine future activities with the AFMS.

