



MALI



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 Mali is 12.3 million people, with an average life expectancy of 50 years. French is the official language of Mali, which has an estimated literacy rate of 46%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Mali is among the poorest countries in the world, with 65% of its land area desert, and with a highly unequal distribution of income. Economic activity is largely confined to the river area irrigated by the Niger. About 10% of the population is nomadic, and some 80% of the labor force is engaged in farming and fishing. Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid and vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices for cotton, its main export, along with gold. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$1,200, with 36% of Malian people living below the poverty level.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Mali's general population is estimated at 1.7%, with approximately 130,000 people living with HIV. The primary modes of HIV transmission are heterosexual contact, sexual contact with commercial sex workers, and a high rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Migration is considered a significant factor in Mali's HIV epidemic.

Military Statistics

The Malian Armed Forces (MAF) are estimated at approximately 12,000 members. Mali expends 1.9% of its GDP on the military. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

In-country partner Family Health International (FHI) has established a collaborative relationship with the MAF and US Embassy officials in country. In Mali, as in many African countries, military and civilian populations share the main hospitals, with the military primarily using the health clinics. There are 34 military clinics in the 6 military regions. The health care system in the military is severely limited in its capacity to care for people living with HIV/AIDS due to inadequate staff skills, supplies, and infrastructure, including erratic availability of reagents in Counseling and Testing (CT) Centers, drugs for STI treatment, and interrupted supplies of antiretroviral drugs in clinics.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

During FY07, 14,356 troops and their family members were reached with comprehensive prevention messages. The prevention activities occurred in the targeted barracks of Kati, Bamako, Segou, Sevare, and Tombouctou. These activities involved all the aspects of the prevention including abstinence, being faithful, and correct and consistent use of condoms. Fifty-two (52) medical health care providers were trained in injection safety.



Care

Five (5) service outlets provide palliative care and CT services for the MAF and the surrounding civilian population. One hundred sixteen (116) individuals received palliative care services and 20 individuals were trained in providing those services. CT services were provided to 1,156 individuals. Thirty-two (32) individuals were trained in CT services.



Proposed Future Activities

DHAPP received two proposals for FY08 activities on behalf of the MAF. The first one is from the US Embassy in Mali. Objectives include (1) provide training for 2 physicians through DHAPP's Military International HIV Training Program, (2) provide training for 2 health care workers through the Infectious Diseases Institute in Uganda, and (3) allow the Naval Medical Research Unit 3 to provide a laboratory assessment. The second proposal came from FHI, and objectives include (1) continue prevention education, (2) continue training for peer educators, (3) establish 3 new CT Centers for the MAF, and (4) provide training for health care workers.