

NEPAL

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 Nepal is 29.5 million people, with an average life expectancy of 61 years. Nepali is the official language of Nepal, which has an estimated literacy rate of 49%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, providing a livelihood for three-fourths of the population and accounting for 38% of the gross domestic product (GDP). Industrial activity mainly involves the processing of agricultural produce including jute, sugarcane, tobacco, and grain. Security concerns relating to the Maoist conflict have led to a decrease in tourism, a key source of foreign exchange. The GDP per capita is \$1,100, with 31% of the population living below the poverty level.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in the general population of Nepal is estimated at 0.5%, with approximately 75,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Estimates in most at-risk populations consistently exceed 5% in one or more high-risk groups, which include female sex workers, intravenous drug users, men who have sex with men, mobile populations, and young people.

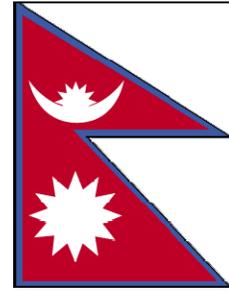
Military Statistics

The Nepalese Army (NA) is estimated at 100,000 members. Nepal expends 1.6% of the GDP on military expenditures. While no prevalence data are available for the NA, pre- and post-tests among NA personnel on UN peacekeeping missions indicated a rate of 0.11%.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The US Pacific Command and its implementing agent, the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, have continued to collaborate with the NA on program activities.



OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

During FY07, four (4) peer education training workshops were conducted for 75 NA personnel. Three (3) of the 4 workshops were refresher courses. Three hundred and fifty (350) peer education handbooks were printed and distributed. By September 2007, the HIV/AIDS policy book for the NA was produced with planned distribution to 350 units in the coming fiscal year.

Care and Treatment

Six (6) NA members attended 3 workshops in 2007 at the Regional Training Center in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshops covered Counseling and Testing, Treatment & Care, and Laboratory & Diagnostics for HIV/AIDS. Two (2) NA members attended each of the workshops.

Renovations for additional Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) Centers are currently in the planning stages for bases located in Western Nepal. Currently, 1 service outlet in Kathmandu provides VCT services to the NA.

Other

The NA hosted an *HIV Advocacy Workshop for Senior Leaders and Line Commanders* in November 2006. The objective of the workshop was to create awareness and understanding of HIV/AIDS in the military, and share lessons learned and best practices. The workshop delved into key issues and related policy concerns of HIV/AIDS in the military context and brought together Army

personnel in a highly visible forum to discuss the importance of an HIV/AIDS program. The workshop led to the draft of an HIV/AIDS policy for the Nepalese Army. One (1) NA member attended the *7th Annual Defense Institute for Medical Operations (DIMO) HIV/AIDS Conference* in San Antonio, Texas, in December 2007.

Proposed Future Activities

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

