

UGANDA

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 Uganda is 31.4 million people, with an average life expectancy of 52 years. English is the official language of Uganda, which has an estimated literacy rate of 67%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Uganda has substantial natural resources, including fertile soils, regular rainfall, and sizable mineral deposits of copper and cobalt. Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy, employing over 80% of the work force. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$900, with 35% of Ugandan people living below the poverty level.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Uganda's general population is estimated at 6.7%, with approximately 1 million individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Identified significant risk factors include high-risk heterosexual contact with multiple partners and sexually transmitted infections. Prevalence is higher in urban areas (10.7%) than in rural areas (6.4%). Prevalence is higher among women than men.

Military Statistics

The Ugandan Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) consists of approximately 50,000 active-duty members with an estimated 200,000 dependents. Uganda expends 2.2% of the GDP on the military. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown, but a seroprevalence survey is under way.



PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The UPDF HIV/AIDS Control Program is a collaborative effort between the UPDF, the Office of Defense Attaché at the US Embassy in Kampala, DHAPP, the University of Connecticut Center for Health, Intervention, and Prevention (CHIP) and the National Medical Research Unit (NAMERU). An in-country program manager who works out of the Office of the Defense Attaché oversees the day-to-day operations of the program, including oversight of the implementing partners.

DHAPP staff members provided technical assistance to the UPDF during in-country visits throughout FY07. The purpose of the trips included review, assistance, and preparation of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Country Operational Plan (COP) for FY08, as well as military-specific planning and technical assistance to the UPDF and US Embassy personnel. DHAPP staff members represent the UPDF as members of the PEPFAR Core Team, and have been involved in every level of country planning, ensuring that UPDF programs are adequately addressed.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Uganda 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 FY03-04 and FY06. Funding for the 2003 and 2004 appropriation was released for expenditure during FY05 and FY07, respectively. To date, the 2003-04 funding appropriation has been used to procure hematology and chemistry analyzers, in addition to supporting diagnostic supplies and reagents.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

Support to run comprehensive prevention programs for the UPDF and their families came from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defense, US Agency for

International Development, and funded nongovernmental organizations in various regions of Uganda. Condom distribution occurs across the UPDF through 12 condom distribution centers. There are 12 service outlets that carry out blood-safety activities for the UPDF and 240 personnel were trained in the provision of these services.



Eight (8) service outlets provide prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services for the UPDF. There were 1,345 women that were provided with these services including counseling and receiving their testing results. Of those women, 165 were given a complete course of antiretroviral prophylaxis. Thirty-eight (38) health care workers were trained in the provision of PMTCT services.

Care

Eight (8) service outlets provide palliative care services for the UPDF, their families, and civilians in the surrounding communities. During FY07, 20,995 individuals were provided with palliative care services and 76 health workers were trained in the provision of these services. The UPDF provided services to 1,789 orphans and vulnerable children in FY07.

Fourteen (14) Counseling and Testing (CT) Centers have been established, covering all of the major military bases, with 34,906 persons tested in FY07. Training for CT services was provided to 150 individuals. The CT program is directly linked to palliative care, including drugs for opportunistic infections, provided for HIV-infected military personnel and family members.

Treatment

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) is now provided through PEPFAR and Global Fund support at 8 UPDF sites, serving 3,051 military personnel, spouses, and children. During FY07, 1,461 individuals were newly initiated on ART. Through the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) in Kampala, 13 UPDF medical personnel were trained in HIV/AIDS–ART dispensing. In addition, 20 UPDF health workers were trained in palliative care, adherence counseling, and quality data assessment by a team of researchers from the University of Connecticut.

Other

Ninety-six (96) individuals were trained in strategic information. Of those trained, a core group was formed to implement a new monitoring and evaluation program for the UPDF, which was developed in collaboration with Makerere University in Uganda.

A seroprevalence study for the UPDF is ongoing. NAMERU is the implementing partner for this study. The study will continue into the next fiscal year.

Proposed Future Activities

Ongoing successful UPDF and partner programming was expanded to include additional aspects of comprehensive prevention, care, and treatment for military members and their families. All proposed activities were submitted to the Uganda Country Team and were included in the FY08 COP.

