



ANGOLA

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

Since the end of a 27-year civil war in 2002 and the death of rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, Angola has been making efforts to rebuild the country's infrastructure and move forward as a democratic society. President José Eduardo dos Santos held legislative elections in September 2008, and announced plans to hold presidential elections in 2009.

The estimated Angolan population is 12.5 million people, with a life expectancy of 38 years, one of the lowest in the world. Portuguese is the official language of Angola, which has an estimated literacy rate of 67.4%, with even distribution between men and women. Oil production and its supporting activities account for about 85% of the GDP. Increased oil production supported growth averaging more than 15% per year from 2004 to 2007. Subsistence agriculture provides the main livelihood for most of the population, but half of the country's food must still be imported. The GDP per capita is \$9,100, with extensive unemployment and underemployment affecting more than half the population.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The estimated HIV prevalence rate in Angola's general population is 2.1% among adults 15–49 years of age. The estimated number of people living with HIV/AIDS by the end of 2007 was 180,000. Identified significant risk factors include blood transfusions and unprotected sexual contact. Most cases of HIV in Angola are spread through multi-partner heterosexual sex.

Military Statistics

The Angolan Armed Forces (AAF) comprises an estimated 110,000 personnel in 3 branches: army, navy, and national air force. Angola allocates 5.7% of the GDP for military expenditures. In 2003, the Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science conducted a military prevalence study and estimated rates of seroprevalence at 3% to 11%, depending on location. HIV prevalence rates are highest near the border of Namibia (11%).



PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The AAF has continued its efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS in collaboration with the Drew Center for AIDS Research, Education and Services (Drew CARES). In 2008, a program manager was hired to coordinate the DHAPP program and its partner in Angola. The program manager works for the DAO in Luanda. The program continues to make exceptional progress with the current prevention programs, while breaking ground with new efforts to reach more of the AAF and beginning to provide services for HIV care and treatment.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Angola 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 2003, 2004, and 2008. Funding for the 2003 and 2004 appropriation was released for expenditure during FY05 and FY08, respectively. To date, 2003 funding has been used to procure a CD4 counter, and viral load analyzer, in addition to supporting supplies for the main military hospital. The 2004 funding has been used to procure CD4 machines, and supporting supplies and reagents to be used

in the army, air force, Cabinda, and Huambo clinics. Planning and negotiation for 2008 funding procurements are currently under way.



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention

During the reporting period, 24 AAF members from the divisions of health and patriotic education received training in communication methods for the creation of messages intended to promote behavioral changes that may help reduce the transmission of HIV. Members of the health services and patriotic education divisions of the AAF participated in 2 seminars offered by Drew CARES in the development of radio programs that educate and entertain. Though the focus of the training emphasized HIV prevention and HIV-related messages, the training addressed topics that would be appropriate for a wide set of health-related topics. These trainees have since developed a radio drama that addresses the risks of infidelity, multiple partners, and avoidance of condoms, as well as the PMTCT. In keeping with the AAF's theme for 2008 of "Leadership," these AAF members have also developed 10 additional episodes that focus on leadership, both in its interpersonal or social aspects as well as in its structural form. This radio drama highlights the importance of leadership in the country's efforts to stem the spread of HIV. The AAF also developed a poster campaign promoting fidelity and time-bounded abstinence. These posters were distributed to military units across the country.

The radio drama discussed previously, *O Tropa Lunguka*, has aired on the National Radio Station during the military hour. It is roughly estimated that over a third of active military personnel of the AAF listen to the program, which airs in every military unit on Sundays in the morning and the afternoon. To

complement the messages conveyed via the radio drama, posters that promote fidelity and HIV testing have been distributed to military units across the country. In addition, the program has been highlighted by the highest levels of the military and during HIV campaigns implemented by the AAF. To evaluate these activities, the health services of the AAF have developed, along with Drew CARES, a questionnaire that will be used to assess the effectiveness of the radio program and provide evidence-based information to best guide future efforts.



Care and Treatment

The 3 CT sites for the AAF are in Luanda and Lubango. Actual figures for the number of personnel who have received CT services were unavailable. The AAF has been testing and is trying to improve testing procedures. During the past year, Drew CARES supported the training of medical doctors and counselors in CT services. Under the direction of the National Institute for the Fight Against AIDS, 3 counseling master trainers, 3 lab technicians, and 6 medical doctors received training on the national protocols in Angola in the delivery of CT services. The 3 counseling master trainers, who are military officers working for the division of health and patriotic education, will be responsible for training additional counselors and medical doctors on CT protocols. Trainings are already scheduled for early FY09 for 12 counselors from various military regions. Drew CARES supported the training of 9 military officers in lab-related activities, with assistance from the National Institute for the Fight Against AIDS. As part of the training efforts for care and treatment services, 9 AAF health personnel participated in a 2-week training as part of the program aimed at increasing the access points for CT and ART services in the Angolan military.

Other

Twenty-eight (28) individuals were trained in strategic information. The CDC provided training on Epi Info software. The participants received training in all aspects of data collection, analysis, and evaluation. This training has been used to create databases intended to facilitate access to information for policy decisions.

Proposed Future Activities

DHAPP received a proposal from Drew CARES for FY09. Proposed activities include continuing prevention education, increasing CT capabilities, and training medical staff on treatment services for the AAF.

