

BURUNDI

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 Burundi is 8.7 million people, with an average life expectancy of 52 years. Kirundi and French are the official languages of Burundi. There is an estimated literacy rate of 59%, with uneven distribution between men and women. Burundi is a landlocked, resource-poor country with an underdeveloped manufacturing sector. The economy is predominantly agricultural, with more than 90% of the population dependent on subsistence agriculture. Economic growth depends on coffee and tea exports, which account for 90% of foreign exchange earnings. The GDP per capita is \$400.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Burundi's general population is estimated at 2.0%. Burundi has approximately 90,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The primary identified risk factor in the population is unprotected heterosexual contact.



Military Statistics

The Burundi National Defense Force (BNDF) has approximately 30,000 personnel. Burundi allocates 5.9% of the GDP for military expenditures. No current HIV/AIDS prevalence data are available for the BNDF.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

DHAPP is working with the BNDF, US DAO in Bujumbura and PSI on a prevention program for the troops. Development and implementation of the program began in FY06, and continues with the current goals of providing prevention efforts as well as CT services.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Burundi 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 2006 and 2008, with 2006 funds released for expenditure during FY09. Although still in negotiation, the current proposal for these funds includes procuring HIV diagnostic equipment, and supplies and reagents to be used in the CT center under development in Bujumbura.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention and Care

The program seeks to reduce HIV sexual transmission among the BNDF through CT, with a focus on behavior change. Using mobile video units, 4,972 troops and their families were reached with comprehensive prevention messages. Behavior change communication materials including leaflets, posters, and T-shirts were distributed during the mobile video events. A short film and radio spot on prevention and CT promotion were targeted at troops and their families. In a national media campaign, one radio spot promoting the Akabanga CT center was broadcasted 342 times on 2 local radio stations. A TRaC survey was conducted to evaluate key indicators of the CT program. It appeared that most troops (95%) are well informed about prevention, but only few of them used condoms during their last sexual intercourse (55%). Therefore, PSI will focus its activities on condom distribution through awareness campaigns, and accessibility to condoms at military camps.

During the reporting period, 1,500 troops and family members visited the Akabanga CT center and received their results. PSI will be introducing a mobile CT program to reach military troops living away from the Akabanga CT center. PSI provided the Akabanga CT center with laboratory supplies as well as HIV testing services in response to a temporary stock-out in the government supplying system. The CT team at Akabanga CT center, including 7 counselors and 3 laboratory technicians, received refresher training in June 2008.



Proposed Future Activities

DHAPP received a proposal from PSI on behalf of the BNDF. The primary objectives of the proposal include continuing to encourage behavior change through prevention efforts and providing CT for troops and their families at 2 CT centers as well as CT mobile units.

