

ETHIOPIA

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 Ethiopia is 82.5 million people, with an average life expectancy of 55 years. Amharic is the official language of Ethiopia, which has an estimated literacy rate of 43%, unevenly distributed between men and women. The GDP per capita is \$700. Ethiopia's economy is based on agriculture, accounting for half of the GDP, 60% of exports, and 80% of total employment. The agricultural sector suffers from frequent drought and poor cultivation practices. Coffee is critical to the Ethiopian economy, with exports of some \$350 million in 2006. Normal weather patterns helped agricultural and GDP growth recover in 2003–2008.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Ethiopia's general population is estimated at approximately 2.1%, with 890,000 living with HIV/AIDS. Identified risk factors include unprotected sexual contact, blood transfusions, unsafe injections, and vertical transmission. Rates are higher in urban areas and along transport corridors.

Military Statistics

The Ethiopian National Defense Forces (ENDF) has approximately 200,000 active-duty members. Ethiopia expends 3% of the GDP on the military. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown, but a seroprevalence and behavioral risk study of the ENDF is in the planning stages.



PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

DHAPP staff participate in the PEPFAR Ethiopia Country Support Team, and provided technical assistance in preparing the FY09 COP. DHAPP hired an in-country program manager who works for the Security Assistance Office at the US Embassy in Addis Ababa. The University of Connecticut's Center for Health, Intervention, and Prevention is an implementing partner in Ethiopia for the ENDF and DHAPP. US DoD Blood Personnel provide ongoing support to the ENDF Bella Blood Center facility funded through PEPFAR.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Ethiopia 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 and released for expenditure in FY05. Funding for the 2003 appropriation has been used to procure ENDF Bella Blood Center facility equipment and a serology analyzer.



OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

Through the collaborative efforts of DHAPP, US Navy Blood Program personnel, the ENDF, Ethiopian Red Cross, CDC, and WHO, the ENDF Bella Blood Center facility in Addis Ababa began operations in fall 2007. Throughout FY08, blood banking technical assistance was provided by US Navy Blood Program personnel to assist the ENDF as it stood up operations in its new facility. The Blood Program will expand to include mobile collection services and field support for provision of blood to fully implement the ENDF's vision of a clean blood supply for its military, regardless of location of donors or recipients.

Care

In the ENDF, a *Prevention with Positives* and ART adherence program will be launched in FY09. The methods and evaluation plans were developed, and the rollout of the program will begin in FY09. The University of Connecticut's Center for Health, Intervention, and Prevention worked collaboratively with ENDF representatives to create a program that is acceptable to staff and patients.



Other

HIV prevalence in the ENDF is unknown. Since prevalence and risk-factor data are critical to programming, planning, and tracking of HIV rates, the ENDF is undertaking an HIV prevalence survey linked with a behavioral survey. DHAPP is providing technical assistance to the ENDF, and the planning for this survey is currently under way.

Proposed Future Activities

Some of the proposed activities for the ENDF in FY09 include continuing the seroprevalence study among ENDF personnel, the continued development of a *Prevention with Positives* and antiretroviral therapy adherence program for people living with HIV/AIDS, continued capacity development for the Bella Blood Bank Center, and a continued injection-safety program for the ENDF. Data from the behavioral risk survey will be used to inform HIV prevention activities and plan clinical care.

