

MALAWI

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 Malawi is 13.9 million people, with an average life expectancy of 43 years. Chichewa is the official language of Malawi, which has an estimated literacy rate of 63%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Landlocked Malawi ranks among the world's most densely populated and least developed countries. The economy is predominately agricultural, with about 85% of the population living in rural areas. Agriculture accounts for more than one third of the GDP and 90% of export revenues. The GDP per capita is \$800.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The estimated HIV prevalence rate in general population of Malawi is 11.9%, with approximately 840,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Most cases of HIV in Malawi are spread through multi-partner heterosexual sex and mother-to-child transmission. HIV prevalence is almost twice as high in urban areas as in rural areas. More than half of new HIV infections occur in young people aged 15–24 years.



Military Statistics

The Malawi Armed Forces (MAF) is estimated at approximately 7,000 members. Malawi expends 1.3% of the GDP on the military. A seroprevalence study in the MAF was conducted, but results have not yet been released.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The MAF established an HIV/AIDS coordinating team made up of MAF personnel. They work directly with PSI, which provides prevention education and CT services, as well as technical assistance to the MAF. Personnel from the US Embassy, particularly the Political Officer and the Military Program Assistant, along with DHAPP staff, coordinate with the MAF and PSI on the program. The Malawi College of Health Sciences, an MAF partner, provides training for health professionals such as nurses and clinicians.

Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Malawi was awarded Foreign Military Financing funding for the acquisition of laboratory equipment, and supplies related to the diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS. This award was appropriated for fiscal years 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. The 2005 funding was released for expenditure during FY07, and the 2006 funding was released in FY09. Funding for the FY05 appropriation has been used to procure a CD4 machine, a microscope, and other supporting diagnostic supplies and reagents. Although still in negotiation, the current proposal for 2006 funds includes procuring chemistry and hematology analyzing machines, in addition to other supporting diagnostic supplies.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

The MAF reported continued success in its prevention, care, and treatment programs during FY08. During the year, 7,132 military personnel and civilians from the surrounding area were reached with comprehensive prevention

messages, and 65 peer educators were trained. The MAF supported 35 condom service outlets. Seven (7) service outlets carried out blood-safety activities for the MAF. There were 42 military medical personnel trained in medical transmission/blood safety and 88 trained in injection safety. There is a need to improve the infrastructure and equipment at the service outlets that support blood safety.

PMTCT is a priority for the MAF, so it has continued to strengthen these services. Increasing its service outlets from 2 to 4 this year, the MAF provided 619 pregnant women with PMTCT services at the outlets, and 11 women received a complete course of ARV prophylaxis. Three (3) health care workers were provided training in the provision of these services.

Care

Eleven (11) MAF outlets provided HIV-related palliative care. During the year, 97 military members or spouses were provided with HIV-related palliative care, with 77 of those treated for TB. Since nonmilitary individuals can receive care from MAF outlets, 700 individuals were provided with palliative care. Sixty-five (65) individuals were provided with palliative care training over several weeks that covered topics such as preventive care and management, as well as OI reduction. The MAF outlets provided services to orphans and vulnerable children, and 39 caregivers were trained in caring for them.

At the end of FY08, 8 CT centers were operational for MAF personnel and families. During the year, 1,075 troops were tested for HIV and received their results. Forty-two (42) individuals were trained in the provision of CT services.



Treatment

During the fiscal year, 6 outlets provided ART for MAF members, families, and civilians. By the end of FY08, 2,236 MAF personnel and family members were currently on ART. Forty (40) MAF medical personnel were trained in the provision of ART services.

Proposed Future Activities

Continued HIV programming for MAF members was proposed to the PEPFAR Malawi Country Support Team. All proposed activities were included in the FY09 COP. Some of these activities include continued prevention efforts and increased palliative care and CT services.

