



SWAZILAND

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 Swaziland is 1.1 million people, with an average life expectancy of 32 years. English and siSwati are the official languages of Swaziland, which has an estimated literacy rate of 82%, evenly distributed between men and women. In this small, landlocked economy, subsistence agriculture occupies more than 80% of the population. Sugar and wood pulp remain important foreign exchange earners. In 2007, the sugar industry increased efficiency and diversification efforts. The GDP per capita is \$5,100.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

Swaziland has the world's highest known rates of HIV/AIDS. The estimated HIV prevalence rate in the Swaziland general population is 26.1%, resulting in approximately 170,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The primary identified risk factors in the population are high mobility, high-risk heterosexual contact with multiple partners and commercial sex workers, gender inequity, and high incidence of STIs.

Military Statistics

The Umbutfo Swaziland Defense Force (USDF) is estimated at 3,500 members. Swaziland expends 4.7% of the GDP on military expenditures. No HIV prevalence data are currently available for USDF members, but a seroprevalence study will be conducted in FY09.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The USDF has developed an ongoing prevention and care program for its military members and their families in collaboration with DHAPP and other partners. DHAPP staff are active members of the PEPFAR Swaziland Country Support Team and have provided technical assistance in creating the FY09 COP. In early FY09, an in-country program manager was hired to manage all programmatic activities.



Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Swaziland was awarded Foreign Military Financing (FMF) 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 fiscal years 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. Funding for 2003 and 2005 was released for expenditure in FY07. To date, the funds have been used to train laboratory technicians and assess the laboratory capabilities to assist in appropriate procurement, in addition to purchasing biosafety cabinets and laboratory consumables in support of the diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

During FY08, 3,570 soldiers and their families were reached with comprehensive prevention messages. One method of delivering these messages was through Information, Education, and Communication materials adapted to the military. Forty-three (43) peer educators were trained in the provision of

these messages. The USDF supported 96 condom service outlets and distributed 127,962 condoms.



An increasing number of USDF people living with HIV/AIDS have been reaching out to the USDF active-duty personnel and their families to support disclosure of HIV status and provide home-based care for them.

Care and Treatment

One (1) service outlet provided HIV-related palliative care services to USDF personnel and their families. Phocweni Clinic provides clinical prophylaxis for OIs and provides treatment for TB once the client has been diagnosed at the government hospital. With the upgrading of the Phocweni laboratory and x-ray departments, clients are diagnosed by USDF medical personnel, which reduce delays in treatment. During FY08, 116 military personnel were provided with HIV-related palliative care (105 men, 11 women). Forty-nine (49) nurses were trained to provide HIV-related palliative care by the National Tuberculosis Control Program in Swaziland. DHAPP staff continued to provide technical assistance to the USDF for the establishment of palliative care at St. George's Barracks. This will increase palliative care services to the USDF and their families. In addition, USDF chaplains were trained on palliative care services, specifically emotional and spiritual support, by the South African National Defense Force Chaplains.

Two (2) outlets provided CT services for military personnel. During the year, 748 military members and their families were tested for HIV and received their

results. The USDF has 1 service outlet that provides ART to the troops and their families. At the end the reporting period, 65 individuals were on ART. Four (4) USDF clinicians were trained in provision of ART services. Five (5) lab technicians were trained in the provision of lab-related activities for the USDF. Additional lab equipment was procured for the Phocweni Clinic with FMF funding.

Other

During FY08, 17 individuals were trained in strategic information. Ten (10) individuals from 2 different local organizations (including the USDF) were provided with technical assistance in HIV-related institutional capacity building and were trained in HIV-related policy. The upcoming prevalence and behavioral survey for the USDF will have an imminent roll-out in 2009. The USDF and DHAPP have been working on the HIV/AIDS policy and will continue to do so in FY09.



Proposed Future Activities

Continued comprehensive HIV programming for USDF members and their families was proposed to the PEPFAR Swaziland Country Support Team. All proposed activities were included in the FY09 COP. Some of these activities include continued prevention efforts, increased CT services, rollout of a prevalence study among USDF, and completion of an HIV/AIDS policy.