



ZAMBIA

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

Zambia's estimated population is 11.7 million people, with an average life expectancy of 39 years. English is the official language of Zambia, which has an estimated literacy rate of 81%, somewhat unevenly distributed between men and women. Zambia's economy has experienced modest growth in recent years, with significant GDP growth in 2005–07 between 5% and 6% per year. Copper output has increased steadily since 2004, due to higher copper prices and the opening of new mines. The GDP per capita is \$1,500. Although poverty continues to be a significant problem in Zambia, its economy has strengthened, featuring single-digit inflation, a relatively stable currency, decreasing interest rates, and increasing levels of trade. Unfortunately, in looking forward, the decline in world commodity prices and demand will likely hurt GDP growth in 2009, and elections and campaign promises are likely to weaken Zambia's improved fiscal stance.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Zambia is one of the highest in the world. The estimated prevalence rate in the general population is 15%, with approximately 980,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. Heterosexual contact is the principal mode of transmission.

Military Statistics

The Zambian National Defense Force (ZDF) is estimated at approximately 22,000 members. Zambia expends 1.8% of the GDP on the military. In 2004, a seroprevalence study was done within the ZDF and the rate found was 28.9%.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The HIV/AIDS program in the ZDF is a collaborative effort between the ZDF, the DAO at the US Embassy, Project Concern International (PCI), Jhpiego (a Johns Hopkins University affiliate), and DHAPP. In-country program team members who work out of the DAO coordinate and manage the various program partners and activities.

Throughout FY08, 4 bilateral exchange visits to Zambia by US military clinicians occurred, with technical assistance provided to the ZDF. In addition, DHAPP staff members provided technical assistance to the ZDF during in-country Country Support Team visits. The purpose of each visit included review and preparation of the PEPFAR COP for FY09, monitoring and evaluation of existing programs and implementation. Visits also addressed military-specific planning and technical assistance to the ZDF in the areas of palliative care, care and treatment of HIV-infected patients, pediatrics, and *Prevention with Positives*. A DHAPP staff member represents the ZDF as a member of the PEPFAR Country Support Team, and has been involved in every level of country planning, ensuring the success of the ZDF HIV program.



Foreign Military Financing Assistance

Zambia 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 FY05. Funding for 2003 was released for expenditure during FY05. FY03 funds were used to procure an incubator, refrigerator, and HIV test kits, in addition to other

supporting diagnostic supplies and reagents. FY05 funds were released in FY08 and plans are under way to provide laboratory training at IDI in addition to equipping several regional laboratories.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention

During FY08, the ZDF, in coordination with PCI and Jhpiego, continued to report successful results across all areas in HIV prevention, care, and treatment. The total number of individuals reached with community HIV/AIDS outreach programs was 51,519; of this total, 26,401 were abstinence and/or being faithful messages. Nearly one third of the individuals reached were children from the ZDF schools where PCI is supporting HIV prevention activities through the anti-AIDS youth clubs. Two hundred (200) individuals were trained to communicate Abstinence and Be Faithful messages; these include 50 anti-AIDS youth clubs drawn from 16 ZDF schools and military chaplains and their spouses. The anti-AIDS youth clubs were equipped with skills to communicate age-specific messages that encourage young people to avoid contracting HIV by abstaining from sex until marriage. Stationery and HIV/AIDS education materials which promote abstinence until marriage for youths were distributed in 32 ZDF schools. Military chaplains and their spouses were also trained to communicate AB messages through a subgrant to the Baptist Fellowship of Zambia (BFZ). A resource center for military chaplains has been established by BFZ in Lusaka, with education materials including books, videos, and DVDs focusing on HIV/AIDS, spiritual counseling, marriage guidance, and sexuality.

A total of 25,118 individuals were reached with comprehensive prevention messages that go beyond AB messages. Out of the total number reached, 13,276 were reached through drama performances while 11,842 were reached through peer education activities. The 25-member ZDF drama group performed in 52 military camps in 8 of the 9 Zambian provinces. The theme of the play was promoting CT for couples, and ART. A video titled *Never Say Die* was produced by the drama group in collaboration with Loyola Studios. The video will be used by peer educators to sensitize their colleagues on the benefits of knowing one's HIV status. PCI supported an HIV sensitization tour of ZDF camps by a team of HIV-positive ZDF

personnel. The team was also involved in an HIV-related stigma reduction campaign and formation of support groups for people living with HIV and AIDS in the military camps. This was undertaken as a follow-up activity to the mobile CT tour of the camps. Defense Force Medical Services (DFMS) were supported to conduct pre-deployment HIV/AIDS sensitization sessions at a military camp. A 14-day development workshop for 25 drama group members was held, during which time new plays were developed to be performed in FY09. Information, Education, and Communication materials, which include posters and pamphlets, were reprinted and distributed during the tour of ZDF camps by the drama group and the mobile CT team. Fifty-five (55) targeted condom service outlets were supported for the ZDF.

Working with DFMS, Jhpiego continued to expand its support for infection prevention and injection safety (IP/IS) programs to more DFMS sites.

Follow-up visits to 14 sites showed improvements in IP practices, with all sites achieving a greater number of standards. Assessments of IP practices were undertaken in 10 new sites, and 97 managers and supervisors were oriented. IP/IS commodities (waste receptacles, personal protective equipment, disinfectants, and antiseptics) were provided to 6 sites to couple the commodities needed with training received by service providers. A total of 172 service providers received training in cross-cutting IP/IS practices.

During FY08, 1,026 women were provided with PMTCT services at 22 PMTCT sites. These services included CT, and linkages to care and treatment. Of the women tested at the PMTCT sites, 93 were provided with a complete course of ARV prophylaxis. Forty-four (44) military health care workers were trained in the provision of PMTCT services.

Care

Sixty-three (63) service outlets provided HIV-related palliative care to military members, their families, and civilians living in the surrounding areas. During FY08,

3,349 clients were provided with HIV-related palliative care, and another 186 individuals were trained in the provision of that care. Support was provided to a 3-member team of ZDF personnel living with HIV/AIDS to tour 19 ZDF units throughout the country and assist with the formation of support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS. Jhpiego trained 67 service providers in diagnostic CT focused on TB/HIV and other OIs.

Home-based care (HBC) was provided to 3,106 clients in palliative care services during the reporting period. The number of HBC clients has been steadily declining largely because of the increase in the number of people accessing ART. Many HBC clients have dropped from the program because their health has improved. Equally, there are few new clients being enrolled in HBC. One hundred two (102) individuals were trained in palliative care for HBC. The figure includes 60 HBC volunteers and 42 military chaplains and their spouses. The training was conducted by ZDF master trainers who attended a palliative train-the-trainer course facilitated by the Palliative Care Association of Zambia. Caregivers were provided with equipment and other logistical supplies, such as bicycles, shoes, umbrellas, aprons, bags, and palliative care kits. Food supplements (high energy protein supplements and enriched nutritious sandwich biscuits) were procured and supplied to clinically malnourished clients with a body mass index of less than 18.5. Palliative care kits were also procured for HBC clients.

PCI has continued to participate in the palliative care forum for USG partners. At one of the forums, ZDF personnel gave a presentation on palliative care initiatives being undertaken at Maina Soko Military Hospital in collaboration with the Naval Medical Center in San Diego under a twinning program. A 5-day “Stay Healthy” train-the-trainer workshop was conducted for 19 HIV-positive individuals drawn from 10 ZDF support groups. The trainees were provided with logistics to train a minimum of 200 support group members. Six (6) support groups were provided with grants to start income-generating activities. Income raised from these ventures will be used to support group members and other activities of the support groups.

The ZDF supports services for orphans and vulnerable children in 10 surrounding communities throughout Zambia. In FY08, 22,391 OVC benefited from the program. The services provided include commodity grants to schools, procurement of learning and recreational materials for schools, support of play and recreational kids' clubs, children's exercise books, and school bursaries. OVC guardians were sensitized by trained caregivers about the importance of psychosocial support. Trained caregivers reached out to 1,097 children with psychosocial support. The caregivers visited children in their households and offered emotional support through one-on-one communication and group counseling for the entire household. Four (4) caregiver support groups were formed. This has resulted in improved quality of education for 3,726 children. Caregivers visited 120 households, and as result of these visits, 123 children who had dropped out of school for various reasons were re-enrolled. In one community, caregivers organized CT activities, in conjunction with the District Health Management Team. Over 600 people were tested and 3,525 children were sensitized on HIV/AIDS, child rights, child abuse, and early marriages. Trained caregivers continued to work with OVC in the kids' clubs.

Play equipment was installed at 4 basic schools, which benefits over 4,000 children. Twenty (20) schools received grants for recreation materials. The project continued to collaborate with nearby health centers to provide CT services as well as ART for HIV-affected households. Also, 492 children (224 girls and 268 boys) were offered school bursaries for school fees and other expenses for exams, uniforms, and shoes. Eight (8) schools that had received building materials have since completed renovations of classrooms.

Fifty-five (55) CT centers provided services for the ZDF. During FY08, a total of 10,728 troops and family members were tested for HIV and received their results. Forty-five (45) military members were trained in the provision of CT services. The mobile CT team provided services to 7,221 clients at 35 ZDF units throughout the country. The remaining clients were counseled and tested at the 55 permanent CT centers.

Treatment

The ZDF has 8 service outlets that provide ART for its personnel, family members, and civilians living in the surrounding areas. In FY08, 335 patients were newly initiated on ART, and at the end of the reporting period, there were 2,379 patients currently receiving ART. Fifty-four (54) health workers were trained in the delivery of ART services, in accordance with national standards. In addition, PCI procured 3 CD4 FACSCount machines, 3 chemistry analyzers, 3 hematology analyzers, and related laboratory supplies. The DAO at the US Embassy in Lusaka officially handed over the equipment to DFMS at a ceremony held at Maina Soko Military Hospital. The equipment will help to improve access to ART services by individuals who test HIV positive. This equipment will be placed at 3 strategic ZDF health facilities. Currently only Maina Soko Military Hospital in Lusaka has this kind of equipment. Five (5) laboratory personnel were trained in the use of the equipment at Maina Soko Military Hospital Virology Laboratory. Arrangements have been made to procure all reagents from Zambian Government Medical Stores.



Few children have had access to ART since few providers are confident in dealing with children and pediatric formulations. Forty-two (42) providers received training in pediatric ART during the period under review. Jhpiego also conducted a *Clinical Training Skills Course* for 11 ZDF trainers. Clinical equipment and medical furniture were procured and distributed to 8 sites. These included examination couches, diagnostic instruments, and personal protective equipment and clothing.

Other

Eighty (80) individuals attended the annual monitoring and evaluation workshop, which reviewed data collection tools, collecting data, and reporting. During FY08, HIV activity reports were received from 54 out of the 55 service delivery sites. This was a

major improvement from the previous reporting period. The involvement of ward masters in data collection and reporting has greatly contributed to this success.

PCI participated in the formulation of the Zambian Defense Force HIV/AIDS Policy, which has since been officially launched. Following the official launch of the policy, PCI in collaboration with the DoD office at the US Embassy and Jhpiego is supporting the development of the ZDF's HIV/AIDS strategic plan. PCI has hired a consultant from the University of Zambia to work with the ZDF in developing the strategic plan. Sixty (60) ZDF senior officers were trained as peer educators. This will help reduce the shortage of peer educators within the senior ZDF ranks. A uniformed services program officer was hired to spearhead HIV/AIDS activities for peacekeeping personnel. The officer sits at UNAIDS, which is the implementer of this activity. A detailed work plan has been developed by PCI, UNAIDS, and DFMS.

With assistance from Jhpiego, the Defense School of Health Studies, which has been in development for quite some time, started training medical assistants. This is the only course offered by the institution at the moment. During FY08, 114 medical assistants were trained in IP/IS, HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment, and other related topics, for a total number of 138 trained personnel.

Proposed Future Activities

All proposed activities from PCI and Jhpiego on behalf of the ZDF were submitted to the Zambia Country Support Team and included in the FY09 COP.

