

Project Overview

For the first three phases of the São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) DHAPP project, Medical Care Development Inc. (MCDI) has coordinated with the DHAPP Gabon Program Manager and the STP military health contact about programming priorities and procurement needs. As a result, MCDI developed programming priorities and a procurement list during each phase within the existing budget for laboratory supplies that is validated by the Program Manager.

PROCUREMENTS

Due to the pandemic's impact on project activities for the last two years, MCDI's support for STP has been mainly focused on procurement of laboratory supplies such as HIV rapid diagnostics tests, male condoms, viral load tests, other infectious disease tests and COVID-19 supplies.

HIV Counseling & Testing Service (HVCT)

To date, MCDI has procured the following items in order to support testing services in São Tomé:

- **19,700** HIV Rapid Diagnostic Tests Alere Combo
- **5,000** Alere Determine Chase Buffer
- **6,000** Lancets
- **900** HIV Rapid Diagnostic Tests SD Bioline
- **190** HIV viral load testing cartridges

The viral load testing cartridges will help monitor the viral suppression status of two military members enrolled in ART and additional HIV positive military members currently enrolled in treatment through the civilian health system who are expected to be transferred to the care of the military HIV/AIDS program.

Other Sexual Prevention in São Tomé

The availability of test cartridges for the aforementioned sexually transmitted infections will allow the country to enhance its provision of provider-initiated testing and counseling (PITC).

MCDI has procured the following items in order to support prevention of sexually transmitted diseases:

- **290,000** lubricated latex condoms were procured during Phase I and II.
- **750** chlamydia and gonorrhea test cartridges were procured by MCDI for use with the GeneXpert machine at the central laboratory.
- **180** rapid tests for the detection of syphilis and hepatitis B and C (2 boxes of 30 for each type of sexually transmitted infection, for the purpose of promoting provider-initiated testing and counseling, PITC).



Sao Tomean military health representative stands beside delivery of 145,000 male condoms carried out by MCDI on behalf of DHAPP.

Procurement of Laboratory Supplies (HLAB) MCDI delivered the following lab and COVID-19 supplies to São Tomé and Príncipe:

- **50L** of alcohol
- **7Kg** of hydrophilic cotton
- **1,000** latex gloves

In addition to the HIV testing supplies, the following COVID-19 supplies were purchased and delivered to São Tomé and Príncipe:

- **4,000** surgical caps
- **1,500** surgical masks
- **4,000** latex gloves
- **900** protective gowns
- **3,000** shoe covers
- **3** thermometers (Thermo-flash)
- **10Kg** of hydrophilic cotton
- **70L** of alcohol
- **50** bottles of 300 milliliters (ml) of hand sanitizer

In addition to the laboratory supplies, MCDI has procured two black and white and two-colored ink cartridges as well as three wall thermometers that the São Tomé and Príncipe military health contact requested in order to better monitor laboratory conditions and provide required reporting.



Box of supplies delivered to São Tomé and Príncipe.
Source: São Tomean Military Health Program

Improvement of Client Health Outcomes (OI) MCDI and the São Tomean focal point identified the following anti-infectives (anti-viral, anti-parasitic, and antibiotic) medicines for use in the medical treatment of existing clients who are People Living with HIV (PLHIV), from a longer list of medicines.

The following medicines were procured through the MCDI Gabon office and delivered to STP during Q2 of FY22.

- Augmentin / Clavamox
- Flagyl
- Bactrim
- Fluconazole / Triflucan
- Zentel

TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



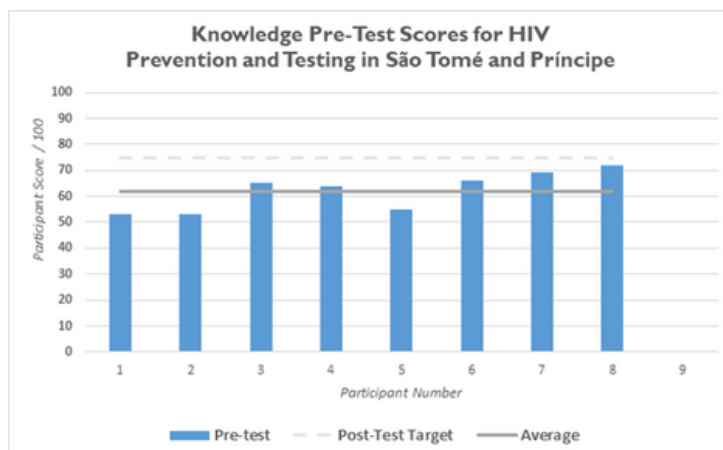
Still frame of a Portuguese-language animation on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) as part of the virtual training on safe and ethical index testing for the São Tomean military health program.

During Q4 of FY2021, MCDI developed and led a multi-day virtual training with São Tomean military health personnel that covered subjects including: maintaining client confidentiality, reducing stigma and discrimination, management of gender-based violence (GBV) cases, pre- and post-test counseling, and how to better incorporate the use of high-yield approaches such as provider-initiated testing and counseling (PITC) and index testing into clinical practice.

MCDI trained nine frontline military health providers virtually. The Portuguese language training was carried out in four

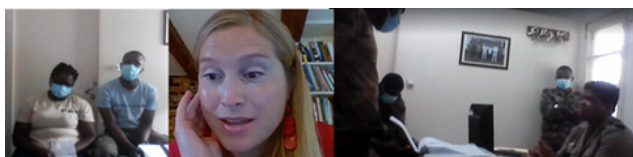
TARGETED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE *continued...*

modules spread out over eight hours and three days (on September 21, 22 and October 1). Module I covered pre- and post-test counseling as well as client confidentiality, Module II covered PITC and S&D reduction, Module III covered safe and ethical index testing and gender-based violence, and Module IV covered strategic information with an emphasis on the DHAPP monitoring, evaluation and reporting indicators. The training modules included a combination of live lecturing, customized animated videos on selected topics, and role playing.



Sao Tomean Virtual Training Participants' Pre-Test Scores

Post-test results were not available at the time of reporting, however, the average score for the eight training participants who completed the pre-test was 62%. The expected result was that participants should reach a score of at least 75% by the post-test in order to be considered proficient in all topics covered. Pending the results of the knowledge post-test, MCDI preliminarily recommends reinforcing the voluntary nature of testing, principles of client confidentiality, and the LIVES method for treating survivors of gender-based violence.



(L) Two of the nine training participants with the MCDI trainer on the second day of training with Sao Tomean military HIV/AIDS program. (R) Lead military HIV/AIDS physician role playing counseling with other training participants.



Frontline military health workers carry out a role playing exercise during the virtual training led by MCDI.

STRATEGIC INFORMATION (HVSII)

Development of Indicator Reporting System & Tools With the goal of incorporating the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) indicator definitions into the virtual training sessions with the São Tomean military, MCDI translated the performance indicator reference sheets for selected indicators into Portuguese:

The indicator definition translations will enable São Tomean military focal points to understand DHAPP's treatment of strategic information and improve data collection tools in order to meet donor reporting requirements.

- PP_PREV
- TX_NEW
- TX_CURR
- TX_TB
- HTS_TST including HTS_TST_POS
- HTS_INDEX
- TB_STAT

CLINICAL AND DIAGNOSTIC TESTING SERVICES (HVCT)

HIV Screening of New Military Recruits

In October 2021, the military HIV/AIDS program tested new recruits for HIV using rapid tests provided by DHAPP, for total screening of 410/600 total new recruits (68.3%). One positive case was identified and communicated to the MOH's National HIV/AIDS Program (a yield of 0.24% positives when testing among new recruits).

Following advocacy by the military HIV/AIDS program director on the human rights of PLHIV, the HIV+ individual was accepted into the armed forces by the military hierarchy, with special accommodations. The military health program recommended that the HIV+ individual be assigned to a unit closer to the centers of medical care in the country to ensure proper care and treatment, and provided guidance to the unit head on how to avoid occupational hazards (use of sharp objects, conducting sensitization activities during recruitment, etc.) to reduce the risk of accidental exposures to blood. The new client's viral load was tested and the individual was enrolled in treatment.

World AIDS Day Activities

On December 1, 2021 the São Tomean military HIV/AIDS program joined the National HIV/AIDS Program at a shopping center to perform free screenings for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and other conditions. The same entities also distributed condoms, provided COVID-19 vaccination, and gave health talks to participants. Five thousand six hundred (5600) condoms that had been supplied by DHAPP were distributed to participants at the public awareness event.

Public participation exceeded expectations; 700 individuals were tested, from which one positive case of HIV was detected in a 60-year-old female (a yield of 0.14% positives when testing in the general population). This individual was referred for treatment and psychosocial support the following day.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY4

- Continue targeted technical assistance and trainings
- Assist in improving data collection for the project's MER indicators

