Africa

MHRP is accelerating HIV research and is committed to HIV prevention, care and treatment efforts in Africa

A Worldwide Threat

MHRP, centered at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, conducts research to develop an effective HIV vaccine to protect U.S. and Allied troops and reduce the impact of HIV infection worldwide. With 36 million infections, HIV continues to pose a significant threat in terms of force protection and readiness, and may affect the stability and security of many nation-states. The pandemic requires long-term solutions to screen, prevent infection and ensure leading-edge care and treatment.

Since its inception in 1986, MHRP has emerged as a world leader in HIV vaccine research, threat assessment and epidemiology, HIV diagnostics and cure research. The program’s growth and success has been achieved through a combination of strong science, careful development of research sites and partnerships with key research institutions in the U.S. and host countries.

Recently, MHRP’s expertise and research infrastructure have been leveraged to combat emerging disease threats including Ebola, MERS and Zika. It leads five Ebola vaccine clinical trials, initiated the first-in-man MERS vaccine study and helped develop a leading Zika vaccine candidate called ZPIV. It is also leading a collaborative program called the Joint West Africa Research Group (JWARG).

PEPFAR

While MHRP’s primary focus is on developing a safe, globally effective HIV vaccine, the program provides prevention, care and treatment services in each of the communities in Africa where research is conducted. These services, funded through the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), provide an ethical, non-coercive environment to conduct clinical research. The integration with research sites has created vibrant synergy that enhances clinical research and improves public health infrastructure in Africa. As a result, MHRP has built strong and trusting relationships within the communities and developed sustainable local healthcare capacity for HIV and other medical programs.

Our PEPFAR programs engage both civilian and military populations in sub-Saharan Africa. MHRP PEPFAR programs have developed robust in-country relationships with CDC, USAID, Peace Corps and other stakeholders, and have built powerful partnerships with host country civil society, government, academia, and Non-Government Organizations.

Kenya

Walter Reed Project–Kenya (WRP)

Research activities in Kenya are centered at the U.S. Army Medical Research Directorate–Kenya (USAMRD-K) on the campus of the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) in Nairobi. HIV field site activities have been based in Kericho, in the Southern Rift Valley, since 1999. WRP-K has demonstrated excellence in its vaccine and therapeutics research efforts, and was selected by the NIH AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) to participate as a Clinical Research Site.

The HIV research and care programs are mutually synergistic with long-term capacity building and sustainability. WRP conducted the first HIV vaccine study in Kenya to be held outside of Nairobi, and the largest to date in Kenya. It also established Kenya’s first College of American Pathologist (CAP)-accredited laboratory. Its PEPFAR programs encompass both military and civilian populations, and MHRP has developed strong links to the Kenyan Ministry of Defence through PEPFAR.

Uganda

Makerere University Walter Reed Project (MUWRP)

Scientists and partners are part of a robust research program focused on cohort development, HIV surveillance and vaccine studies. MUWRP is currently conducting a phase II study of an Ad26/MVA HIV candidate vaccine. In 2015, MUWRP researchers began a clinical trial of an Ebola vaccine in Kampala. MUWRP conducted the first Ebola vaccine trial in Africa (2009), and will begin another Ebola study in 2016. MUWRP also collaborates with DoD Global Emerging Infection and Surveillance System (GEIS) to study pandemic influenza.

MUWRP launched a first-of-its-kind mobile circumcision clinic in Uganda. This innovative program helps prevent HIV by bringing safe male circumcision services to hard-to-reach, high-risk populations. The program has also successfully expanded PEPFAR services to people on the Koombe islands.

MHRP Supports African Communities:

- Establish HIV clinical sites
- Improve lab services and infrastructure
- Inform PEPFAR service delivery
- Develop human capacity
- Create programs and services for orphans and vulnerable children
Tanzania

**Walter Reed Program-Tanzania (WRP-T)**

WRP-T works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to advance HIV research, prevention, and care in Tanzania. Research is conducted in partnership with the Mbeya Medical Research Center (MMRC), a National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) collaborating center. MMRC has conducted several HIV vaccine studies, and in 2013 it was selected to be an NIH Clinical Research Site as part of the HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN).

MHRP has supported both military (Tanzania Peoples Defense Forces, TPDF) and civilian counterpart organizations in Tanzania to fight HIV/AIDS through PEPFAR programs since 2004. Through these programs, MHRP has enhanced local capacity to support care and treatment efforts and conducts research to determine the impact program interventions and services have in combatting HIV/AIDS in the region. Other WRP-T activities are aimed at malaria control with the TPDF supported by U.S. Africa Command and the President’s Malaria Initiative.

Nigeria

**Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (WRP-N)**

The U.S. Embassy-based team in Nigeria has been working closely with the Nigerian Ministries of Defense and Health to enhance HIV prevention, care and treatment through PEPFAR since 2005. MHRP has established Centers of Excellence for laboratory services in Abuja and Lagos, supporting military health efforts at more than 45 sites. PEPFAR supported services are available to members of the Armed Forces, their dependents and civilians in nearby communities. WRP-N focuses on developing leadership, clinical, laboratory and logistical capabilities within the community to build a sustainable health capacity and infrastructure.

WRP-N’s strong partnership with the Nigerian military and its large network of medical facilities and well-trained personnel developed through PEPFAR provides a platform to conduct surveillance and clinical research on infectious disease threats. WRP-T began its first Ebola vaccine study in 2015 and will open a second study in 2016.

Mozambique

In Mozambique, MHRP works with local researchers to gain a better understanding of the country’s HIV epidemic and expand the country’s capacity to perform future HIV vaccine trials. Our research is a part of a collaborative effort to create a sustainable HIV vaccine research infrastructure in Mozambique in partnership with the National Ministry of Health/National Institute of Health/Polana Canico Health Research and Training Center in Maputo. Collaborations in Mozambique allow MHRP scientists the opportunity to test future vaccine candidates against the predominant HIV subtype (C) circulating in this part of the world. The site was also selected to be an NIH Clinical Research Site as part of the HVTN.

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**Kenya**

- HIV Vaccine Phase I/II trials (Army, NIH)
- AIDS Clinical Trials Group (ACTG) studies
- IRIS Study (immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome; IDCRP)
- Pandemic influenza (GEIS)
- The African Cohort Study (PEPFAR) and PEPFAR implementation research
- Health economic cohort studies (BU)
- High risk and acute HIV infection cohort study (Army, NIH)

**Uganda**

- HIV Vaccine Phase I/II trials (Army, NIH)
- Sepsis research (Navy)
- Ebola-Marburg vaccine development (NIH, Army)
- Avian influenza/Pandemic influenza (GEIS)
- The African Cohort Study (PEPFAR) and PEPFAR implementation research
- High risk and acute HIV infection cohort study (Army, NIH)

**Tanzania**

- HIV Vaccine Phase I/II trials; AMP Study (Army, NIH, EU, HVTN)
- Avian influenza/Pandemic influenza (GEIS-TPDF)
- HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN) studies
- Malaria studies (AFRICOM; PMI)
- The African Cohort Study (PEPFAR) and PEPFAR implementation research
- TB diagnostics and treatment research
- High risk and acute HIV infection cohort study (Army, NIH)

**Nigeria**

- HIV vaccine cohort
- Ebola vaccine development (Army, GSK)
- TRUST study (UMD, IHV)
- Avian influenza/Pandemic influenza (GEIS)
- The African Cohort Study (PEPFAR) and PEPFAR implementation research

**Mozambique**

- Vaccine Phase I/II trials; AMP Study (NIH, EU, HVTN)
- HIV cohort studies

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**U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**

*MHRP-supported Programs*

**Kenya PEPFAR (military and civilian)**

- 43,754 current on ART

**Uganda PEPFAR (civilian)**

- 19,203 current on ART

**Tanzania PEPFAR (military and civilian)**

- 161,618 current on ART

**Nigeria PEPFAR (military)**

- 26,792 current on ART