

Site Identification and Development Initiative (SIDI) Mozambique HIV Incidence Studies

The objective of FHI's Site Identification and Development Initiative (SIDI) has been to develop new research sites for HIV prevention research. This program has been funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through its microbicide development program. Through clinical, laboratory and data management infrastructure development and rehabilitation, training of local staff, community engagement, and hands-on learning during the conduct of an HIV incidence study, sites will emerge as well-prepared, sustainable research groups ready to implement future HIV research, as well as research in other infectious disease areas and public health issues. FHI investigated sites in Mozambique because of the high HIV seroprevalence in several provinces, coupled with limited clinical research capacity outside of the capital city, Maputo. With the approval of the national Ministry of Health (MISAU), and the full support of Provincial Departments of Health (DPS) and district authorities, two research sites were established in Beira, Sofala Province, and Chókwè, Gaza Province.

Center for Infectious Disease Research, Beira, Sofala Province

Beira houses the Catholic University of Mozambique (UCM) Faculty of Health Sciences, which features the nation's second medical school founded in 2000. The study is being conducted by the UCM Center for Infectious Disease Research/Centro de Investigação de Doenças Infecciosas (CIDI). The study is co-funded by USAID and by the European and Developing Country Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP). Technical support is provided by FHI and by the Academic Medical Center, University of Amsterdam, Center for Poverty-related Communicable Diseases (AMC-PCD). At the Beira site, the HIV incidence study commenced on World AIDS Day 2009. A tuberculosis research study funded by EDCTP will be also conducted in Beira in collaboration with the CIDI research group and the Central Beira Hospital starting in 2011.

Chókwè Health Research and Training Center, Chókwè, Gaza Province

The Chókwè study is being implemented by the Chókwè Health Research and Training Center/Centro de Investigação e Treino em Saúde de Chókwè (CITSC), a research unit of the National Institute of Health/Instituto Nacional de Saúde (INS). The INS is the research arm of the Ministry of Health. The Chókwè study is funded by USAID, with technical support from FHI. At the Chókwè site, the HIV incidence study was initiated in June 2010. FHI has been in discussions with the U.S. Military HIV Research Program (MHRP) to expand the planned size of the incidence study. In addition, a Health Demographic Surveillance Survey (HDSS) is being implemented in Chókwè district with funding from CDC Mozambique, and will be housed at the CITSC research site, presenting further cost-sharing and leveraging opportunities.



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HIV Incidence Studies

In both HIV incidence studies, a cross-sectional phase serves as the screening step for a prospective cohort, measures HIV seroprevalence and evaluates the BED-CEIA assay for estimating HIV incidence. Women 18-35 years are tested for HIV and pregnancy in this phase. Those who are HIV-negative are invited to join the prospective follow-up phase. Currently, women are scheduled to be followed monthly for 12 months, but we intend to extend the follow-up duration with additional funding. HIV seroconversions are detected by rapid HIV testing; the timing of infection is confirmed by HIV RNA PCR testing at the INS immunology laboratory in Maputo.

Research Capacity Building

The two research sites in Beira and Chókwè are making meaningful contributions to national clinical research capacity in Mozambique. The research sites are models of collaboration and leveraging of support across multiple donors. Efforts funded by USAID not only led to two potential new health research sites in Mozambique, but also to multiple collaborations among other U.S. government and non-U.S. government entities and local partners.

