

RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT AT RTI INTERNATIONAL

# HIV Care and Treatment



Government and private-sector clients around the world rely on RTI for independent, objective, and scientifically rigorous research in support of the care and treatment of people living with HIV. We recognize the importance of an integrated model of care and treatment, and we have the expertise to help clients develop and implement broad-based, multi-sectoral approaches to caring for HIV-infected adults and children.

RTI International has pioneered efforts to broaden the range and quality of HIV prevention, care, and treatment programs. We draw on our expertise in HIV prevention methodologies, as well as care and treatment interventions, to help government agencies and NGOs plan and execute programs to optimize quality of life for HIV-infected persons and their families. RTI experts assist with efforts to provide

- HIV counseling and testing (HCT)
- Health service delivery including palliative care and antiretroviral treatment
- Patient education to prevent transmission of HIV and acquisition of other sexually transmitted infections (STI)
- Psychological support
- Economic opportunities.

We also understand the needs of those who care for persons living with HIV/AIDS—health facility and community-based caregivers, family members, and others who provide home-based care.

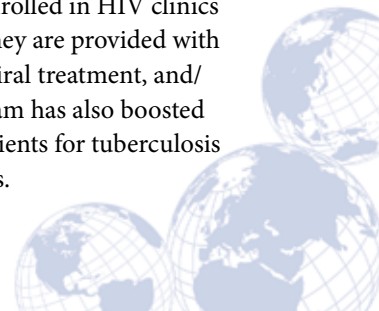
## Key Project Highlights

RTI researchers and technical experts support the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs to improve the care and treatment of people living with HIV. With decades of experience in the field, we understand how to launch, scale up, and sustain successful programs.

## Expanding Routine Counseling and Testing and Basic Care in Uganda

In partnership with the Uganda Ministry of Health and local stakeholders, RTI successfully implemented, and is currently scaling up, a model provider-initiated HCT program in rural health facilities. With support from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, we have trained 3,000 healthcare workers in 41 facilities in 12 districts to provide quality HCT and basic HIV care on a routine and sustainable basis. The training focuses on crisis counseling, infant and child counseling, protocols and algorithms for rapid HIV testing, and methods for generating and recording accurate data. The program also supports CD4 testing and radiological diagnosis of TB infection for HIV+ individuals.

Since March 2005 more than 534,000 individuals have received confidential HIV counseling and testing services through this program. All patients found to be HIV+ are initiated on Septrin prophylaxis and referred to chronic care clinics for additional basic and specialized care. A total of 45,000 HIV+ patients are enrolled in HIV clinics supported by the program, where they are provided with prophylactic medication, antiretroviral treatment, and/or quality palliative care. The program has also boosted clinicians' capacity to test HIV+ patients for tuberculosis and to treat those with co-infections.



### **Risk Reduction for Pregnant African-American Women in Drug Treatment**

RTI conducted a woman-focused intervention to help at-risk pregnant African-American women in North Carolina reduce their chances of contracting HIV, decrease drug abuse, and increase healthy births. Under this project, funded by the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse was conducted in collaboration with North Carolina substance abuse treatment providers, 100 women participated in a 90-minute computer interview, and approximately half participated in four intervention sessions about substance use, sexual risk, and violence during a 1-month period, with follow-up sessions 3 and 6 months later. This intervention included video clips of women sharing their experiences with substance use, sexual risk, and violence. At the end of each session, participants received a personalized review of their risk for HIV infection and developed an action plan to help them stay in drug treatment and make positive behavior changes.

Participants were also tested for HIV, and those who tested positive received an additional targeted intervention session that addressed issues such as the importance of ARVs to prevent mother-to-child transmission, how to avoid drug resistance, and the risk of tuberculosis. HIV+ participants were also referred to a community organization for HIV care.

### **Providing Comprehensive HIV/AIDS-related Services to Uganda Military and their Families**

In partnership with the Uganda People's defense Force HIV/AIDS Control Program, RTI supports HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment activities for military personnel and their families at six military facilities and several outposts across the country. Through this program, RTI provides clinical mentorship on patient monitoring, CD4-testing, diagnosis and treatment of adult and pediatric patients, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and provision of HCT for military personnel and their dependents.

A total of 433 health workers have been trained in various areas of HIV-related service provision and clinics have been remodeled to improve patient flow and infection control.

More than 11,000 persons have been tested for HIV, and 4,600 HIV patients have enrolled in the supported chronic care clinics. About 37% of these patients receive antiretroviral treatment.

The program also supports networks within the military for persons living with HIV to mitigate the impact of the disease. Working with the various military departments, we have developed guidelines and a package of services for orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) that is being rolled out to select beneficiaries.

### **Supporting Civil Society's Response for HIV Prevention for Most-at-Risk Populations in Botswana**

This RTI-led program supports the HIV response in Botswana targeting female sex workers and their clients, girls in transactional or cross-generational sex, and mobile male populations. It operates in five sites and focuses on building the technical and organizational capacity of civil society organizations to deliver HIV prevention interventions and to strengthen their referral linkages to care, support, and treatment services for these most at-risk populations (MARPs).

RTI applies its experience in evidence-based research and community mobilization to mentor and build the capacity of civil society organizations to design and implement locally relevant and sustainable solutions. RTI has leveraged support from the district Ministry of Health, the national and district AIDS Committees, and the various national networks of AIDS organizations in Botswana to assess, strengthen, and develop the referral services for HIV-positive and -negative MARPs, reaching an estimated 4,000 persons with various services in the first 2 years of program implementation.

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#### **More Information**

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