



ALBANIA

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

The population of Albania is estimated at 3.6 million people, with an average life expectancy of 77.2 years. Albanian is the official language, with an estimated literacy rate of 87%. In the early 1990s, Albania ended 46 years of Communist rule and established a multiparty democracy. The transition has proved difficult, since successive governments have dealt with challenges of high unemployment, poor infrastructure, and disruptive political opponents. Although Albania's economy continues to grow, the country is still one of the poorest in Europe. The annual per capita income is \$4,900.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is unknown, and the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Albania is also unknown. The first 2 HIV/AIDS cases were diagnosed and reported in Albania in 1993. The primary mode of HIV transmission is thought to be heterosexual contact. Vulnerable groups include intravenous drug users, migrant populations, and sex workers and their clients.

Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 54,000. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Proposed Future Activities

A proposal was received on behalf of the military of Albania for the 2006 fiscal year. The overall goal of the proposed project is to increase the level of HIV/AIDS knowledge and safer behaviors of the soldiers, officers, and medical staff. Specific objectives of the proposed project include identifying and training peer educators; distributing information, education, and communication (IEC) materials to the recruits; training medical staff on diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections; conducting a knowledge, attitudes, practices, and behavior survey; refurbishing and enhancing a counseling and testing (CT) center, promoting CT, and creating and distributing training packs and IEC materials for soldiers participating in missions abroad.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention/Care/Treatment

DHAPP staff members have continued collaborative efforts with Albanian military officials and US Embassy staff to establish a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention/education program for military members in Albania. DHAPP funding for these efforts has been approved and was sent at the end of FY05 for the commencement of their program.

