

## KYRGYZSTAN

# 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

A Central Asian country and a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Kyrgyzstan was formerly part of the Soviet Union; independence was achieved in 1991. The population is estimated at 5.1 million, with an average life expectancy of 68.2 years. Kyrgyz and Russian are the official languages of Kyrgyzstan, which has a literacy rate of 99%. Kyrgyzstan's economy depends largely on agriculture and livestock; the main agricultural products are cotton, tobacco, wool, and meat. The annual per capita income is estimated at \$1,600.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is estimated to be less than .01%, with an estimated 3900 people living with HIV/AIDS. As of 2004, only 543 cases of HIV infection had been officially reported in Kyrgyzstan. However, independent estimates put the overall number of cases at up to many times the official number. The country is facing a rapidly expanding HIV epidemic. The main vulnerable groups include injecting drug users, commercial sex workers and their clients, prisoners, and young people. The main mode of transmission is intravenous drug use. Most people living with HIV/AIDS are 20–39 years old. Men are much more severely affected than women.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 9000. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available.

### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### Military-to-Military Technical Assistance

DHAPP staff members have established contact with the US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan and has assisted them, along with their military colleagues there, in the early development of a proposal for future activities. Through this collaboration, members of the Kyrgyzstan military were able to work with the US Embassy to ensure 2 military physicians were able to attend vital training in HIV prevention, care, and treatment methods at the San Diego-based *Military International HIV/AIDS Training Program* (MIHTP).

### Proposed Future Activities

A proposal was received on behalf of the military of Kyrgyzstan for the 2006 fiscal year. The specific objectives of the proposed project include developing a peer education training program, establishing an HIV/AIDS prevention information center, conducting a survey to determine HIV awareness, and strengthening and expanding laboratory infrastructure.

## OUTCOMES & IMPACT

### Prevention/Care/Treatment

DHAPP has commenced early collaborative interaction with military officials and US Embassy staff in Kyrgyzstan to establish a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention/education program for their country. DHAPP provided support for 2 Kyrgyzstan military physicians to attend the MIHTP in April–May 2005. Participants relayed positive feedback from the course and stated that they felt it would enhance their ability to establish prevention, care, and treatment programs for HIV in their country. In addition, DHAPP funds sent to date have been used to purchase software for 9 computers in an effort to establish infrastructure for the program.

