



## MAURITANIA

# 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 Mauritania is estimated to be 3.1 million, with an average life expectancy of 52.7 years. Arabic is the official language; the estimated literacy rate is 41.7%, distributed disproportionately between men and women. Half of the country's population depends on agriculture and livestock for a livelihood. Mauritania is expected to benefit from the exploitation of its offshore reserves of oil and natural gas. The annual per capita income is estimated at \$1,800.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is estimated at 0.6% with approximately 9500 people living with HIV/AIDS. Little is known about the factors that influence the spread of HIV/AIDS in Mauritania. Infection rates are believed to be higher in border towns than in other areas.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 16,000. 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 and maintained collaborative contact with US Embassy representatives in Mauritania. DHAPP staff members provided technical assistance regarding the logistic challenges faced by the US Embassy staff in the procurement of the military's needed laboratory and counseling and testing (CT) equipment and facilities. Despite instability in the country, the combined the Department of Defense collaboration allowed basic purchases to be made for the setup of a laboratory and CT center in Mauritania.

## **OUTCOMES & IMPACT**

### **Prevention/Care/Treatment**

According to the US Embassy in Mauritania, many bilateral efforts for HIV prevention are currently suspended due to instability and widespread famine in the area. DHAPP funding was sent to Mauritania late in the fiscal year, and despite the ongoing difficulties in the country, these funds have been expended. Basic equipment was procured for the setup of a CT Center at Nouakchott, as well as for its related laboratory. Specific equipment purchased includes a microplaque reader, an automatic microplaque washer, 2 incubators, reagents, quick test kits, ELISA tests, and micropipettes, tubes, disinfectants, needles, and Vacutainers.

DHAPP looks forward to anticipated results from the newly equipped laboratory and CT Center, as well as to continued collaboration with Mauritania in fiscal year 2006.

