

## MOROCCO

# 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 Morocco is estimated to be 32.7 million people, with an average life expectancy of 70.7 years. Arabic is the official language; the estimated literacy rate is 51.7%, distributed disproportionately between men and women. The economy of Morocco is concentrated primarily in agriculture (40%) and services (45%). Tourism is an important sector of the economy, as are cash remittances from the large number of Moroccans working in France. The annual per capita income is estimated at \$4,200.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population is estimated at 0.1%, with approximately 15,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. Individuals 30–39 years old and those living in the regions of Marrakech and Agadir are the most severely affected. HIV in Morocco is mainly transmitted through heterosexual intercourse. Less frequent modes of transmission include sexual contact with men who have sex with men, intravenous drug use, and blood or blood products. Mother-to-child transmission accounts for about 5% of cases.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the armed forces is approximately 100,000. The Moroccan military is currently involved in 6 peacekeeping operations (Haiti, Ethiopia, Western Sahara, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone). As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available.

### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### Military-to-Military Technical Assistance

DHAPP staff conducted an initial site assessment and discussed potential DHAPP prevention efforts with the Moroccan Ministry of Defense during an in-country technical assist visit, 6–10 June 2005. This trip also included a site visit to the Rabat Military Hospital, which is the largest military hospital in Morocco and North Africa.

An overview of the DHAPP program was provided and the Ministry of Defense identified areas in need of support. AIDS patients are currently being provided with antiretroviral therapy at a cost of approximately \$100 per patient per month.

There is interest in conducting an HIV/AIDS prevalence survey, and Moroccan physicians

would like the opportunity to visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and be included in *Military International HIV Training Program*.

## **OUTCOMES & IMPACT**

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

DHAPP has continued to engage Moroccan military officials and US Embassy staff to establish a new HIV/AIDS prevention/education program for their military members, with focus on activities that will increase their capacity in strategic information methods, specifically disease surveillance systems. Morocco was slated to receive additional funding in fiscal year 2006, and DHAPP will work with the US Embassy representatives and with the Moroccan military to establish the implementation of those funds.

