

## THAILAND

# 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 Thailand is estimated at 65.4 million people, with an average life expectancy of 71.6 years. Thai is the official language, and the in-country literacy rate is estimated at 92.6%. Thailand has a well-developed infrastructure, a free-enterprise economy, and is open to foreign investment. Agriculture employs about 50% of the workforce, but the industrial and service sectors are expanding rapidly. In December 2004, a major tsunami took 8500 lives in Thailand and caused massive destruction of property. Annual per capita income is estimated at \$8,100.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the general population has been reported to be 1.5%, with 570,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. The number of new infections in Thailand has fallen every year since 1991 due to a very comprehensive national HIV/AIDS response. There is evidence that the HIV epidemic in Thailand is now spreading largely among the spouses and clients of commercial sex workers and among certain marginalized sections of the populations, such as intravenous drug users and migrants. The HIV prevalence among female sex workers was just over 10% in 2003; the HIV rate among intravenous drug users attending treatment clinics was 45%. It is believed that heterosexual intercourse still accounts for the majority of new infections.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the Royal Thai Armed Forces is estimated at approximately 300,000 active-duty personnel. As of this annual report, no information regarding HIV prevalence in the military was available.

### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### Proposed Future Activities

A proposal was submitted by the US Pacific Command (USPACOM) for fiscal year 2006. The goal of the proposed project is to renovate and expand the operations of its existing regional training center in Thailand for the USPACOM area of operations. Other objectives of the proposed project include infrastructure development (physical expansion of square footage of training facilities), training of trainers from 20 different countries, and in-country administrative support for coordination, curriculum development, and execution.

## OUTCOMES & IMPACT

### Prevention/ Care/Treatment

DHAPP has continued to work with the Thai military in support of its comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention/education program. The bilateral program with the Thai military is relatively new. Funding is slated to be sent early next fiscal year, in support of the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through capacity and partnership building, technical training, and training of master trainers.

In addition to bilateral efforts in Thailand, DHAPP provided funding early in the fiscal year to support 36 delegates from 18 Asia Pacific nations (Bangladesh, Philippines, Tonga, Fiji, India, Vietnam, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Nepal) to attend the *Asia Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Treatment and Care Workshop* in Bangkok, Thailand. The 4-day workshop was held at Phramongkutklao Military Medical Center (PMMC), US Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences (AFRIMS).

The workshop was organized by the Center of Excellence, the Royal Thai Army, PMMC, and AFRIMS. The objectives of this workshop were: (1) to give an overview of HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment technologies; (2) to enhance military medical capacity to provide effective HIV/AIDS counseling and education across a continuum of care; (3) to provide accommodative learning through hands-on counseling sessions and role-playing; (4) to encourage community and capacity building to create an effective environment for the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS; (5) to facilitate partnership building among the represented countries, with an emphasis on sustainable networks and sharing best practices and lessons learned to better combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic; (6) to continue to expand the regional hub of military medical professionals with expertise; and (7) to develop master trainers via a train-the-trainers format and provide materials, resources, and partnerships for subsequent in-country training.

Later in FY05, again in conjunction with the University of Hawaii and AFRIMS/Thailand partners, DHAPP provided funding for a second workshop, which invited 24 military medical officers from 14 countries of the region. Both workshops were considered successful by all participants.

