



## 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 Albanian population is estimated to be 3.6 million people, with an average life expectancy of 77.4 years. Albanian is the official language, and the literacy rate is estimated at 98.7%, evenly distributed between men and women. In the 2005 general elections, the Democratic Party and its allies won a decisive victory by pledging to reduce crime and corruption and promote economic growth. The election was considered an important step forward. The gross domestic product per capita is \$4,900, with 25% of Albanian people living below the poverty line. Albania, with troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, has been a strong supporter of the global war on terrorism.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Albania's general population is unknown. Identified significant risk factors include intravenous drug users, migrant populations, and sex workers and their clients.

#### Military Statistics

The military in Albania is estimated at approximately 54,000 members. Albania allocates 1.4% of the gross domestic product for military expenditures. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.

### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### In-Country Ongoing Assistance

Implementation of proposed activities for the current fiscal year faced significant challenges due to contracting issues. The goals were to increase the level of HIV/AIDS knowledge and safer behaviors of the soldiers, officers, and medical staff, including identifying and training peer educators; distributing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to 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 distributing IEC materials for soldiers participating in missions abroad.

### Proposed Future Activities

Because of the challenges faced this year in the commencement of the program in Albania, FY06 funding will be used to meet the objectives of the Albanian military's HIV prevention program during FY07.

### OUTCOMES & IMPACT

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. The Albanian HIV prevention program for military members has only recently commenced. DHAPP looks forward to successful program implementation in Albania.

