

GEORGIA

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 Georgia is estimated to be 4.66 million people, with an average life expectancy of 76 years. Georgian is the official language of Georgia, which has an estimated literacy rate of 100%, evenly distributed between men and women. Georgia's main economic activities include the cultivation of agricultural products such as grapes, citrus fruits, and hazelnuts; mining of manganese and copper; and output of a small industrial sector producing alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages, metals, machinery, and chemicals. Despite the severe damage the economy has suffered due to civil strife, Georgia, with the help of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, has made substantial economic gains since 2000, achieving positive gross domestic product (GDP) growth and curtailing inflation. The GDP per capita is \$3,400, with 54% of Georgian people living below the poverty level. A partner in the war on terror, Georgia has sent troops to Iraq.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Georgia's general population is estimated at 0.2%, with approximately 5600 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The main route of HIV transmission is thought to be intravenous drug use. Men are more severely affected than women. Vulnerable groups include intravenous drug users, migrant populations, and commercial sex workers and their clients.



Military Statistics

The Georgian Armed Forces (GAF) consists of approximately 27,000 active-duty members. Georgia expends 0.54% of its GDP for military purposes. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The new GAF HIV prevention program included the following objectives: improve the understanding of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among military personnel; provide information on HIV/AIDS and STI transmission and prevention through slides, lectures, and booklets; foster open dialogue about healthy living, HIV/AIDS and STIs; and increase knowledge acquisition, attitude modification, and behavior change in military members.



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

Prevention

One thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven (1997) troops were reached with comprehensive prevention messages during the fiscal year. To date, 43 training sessions on HIV/AIDS and STI prevention have been held for troop-level education. In addition, 6 medical providers were trained in HIV prevention, care and treatment before deploying to Iraq. Finally, 19,000 booklets on HIV/AIDS and another 19,000 on STI have been prepared for publication, as well as 2000 mini-books on HIV/AIDS and 2000 on STIs specifically for troops deployed in Iraq. After publication, these materials will be distributed among the troops.

