

## LIBERIA

# 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 Liberia is estimated to be 3.04 million people, with an average life expectancy of 39.6 years. Liberian is the official language, and the literacy rate is estimated at 57.5%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Civil war and government mismanagement have destroyed much of Liberia's economy, especially the infrastructure in and around Monrovia, while continued international sanctions on diamonds and timber exports will limit growth prospects for the foreseeable future. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$900, with 80% of Liberian people living below the poverty line. Liberia, with troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, has been a strong supporter of the global war on terrorism.

#### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The current HIV prevalence rate in Liberia's general population is unknown, but 2003 estimates ranged from 8.2% to 12% among adults. In 2003, it was estimated that 100,000 Liberians were living with HIV/AIDS, and over 7000 deaths were attributed to the disease.

#### Military Statistics

The size of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) is unknown. Liberia allocates 7.5% of the GDP for military expenditures. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.



### PROGRAM RESPONSE

#### In-Country Ongoing Assistance

In September 2006, DHAPP staff conducted a HIV/AIDS site assessment in Monrovia, Liberia, to explore potential HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in collaboration with the AFL. While in Monrovia, DHAPP staff met with Liberian personnel responsible for training and providing HIV/AIDS prevention training to military recruits, toured recruit facilities, discussed current HIV testing practices, and began HIV/AIDS prevention program planning.

### OUTCOMES & IMPACT

DHAPP staff members have just begun collaborative efforts with Liberian military officials and US Embassy staff to establish a comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention/education program for AFL members. DHAPP looks forward to successful program implementation in Liberia.