



# AFGHANISTAN

# 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**

In December 2004, the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan took office. The National Assembly was inaugurated on 19 December 2005. The estimated Afghan population is 32 million people, with an average life expectancy of 44 years. Pashto and Persian (Dari) are the official languages of Afghanistan, which has an estimated literacy rate of 28%, with uneven distribution between men and women. While the international community remains committed to Afghanistan's development, pledging over \$24 billion at three funding conferences since 2002, Kabul will need to overcome a number of challenges. Long-term challenges include budget sustainability, job creation, corruption, government capacity, and rebuilding war-torn infrastructure. Gross domestic product per capita is \$1,000, with 53% of people living below the poverty level.

#### **HIV/AIDS Statistics**

The HIV prevalence rate in Afghanistan's general population is estimated to be less than 0.1%. Sexual transmission, blood transfusions, and intravenous drug use have been identified as possible risk factors for HIV transmission, but none are well-documented.

#### **Military Statistics**

The Afghan National Army (ANA) has an estimated 70,000 members, with an air force of 8,000 members. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.

## PROGRAM RESPONSE

### **In-Country Ongoing Assistance**

DHAPP has continued its collaboration with military officials and US Embassy staff in Afghanistan to provide technical assistance in the establishment of a HIV/AIDS prevention program for their country. This collaboration is currently assisting the DHAPP program working with the ANA to develop an HIV/AIDS policy in addition to providing prevention and awareness information. The ANA has been very open to US military assistance. Officials from DHAPP, the US military, and the US Embassy are working closely with the ANA to develop further plans for HIV/AIDS education and training.

