



GUATEMALA



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 estimated population of Guatemala is 13 million people, with an average life expectancy of 70 years. Spanish is the official language of Guatemala, which has an estimated literacy rate of 69%, unevenly distributed between men and women. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is \$4,700, with 56% of the population living below the poverty level. Guatemala is the most populous of the Central American countries with a GDP per capita roughly one half that of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in the general population of Guatemala is estimated at 0.9%, with approximately 61,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Seventy percent of reported cases are men. Under reporting could be as high as 50%, due to Guatemala's inadequate surveillance system, social stigma and discrimination, and insufficient medical access. The Guatemalan epidemic is spread primarily through sexual activity, and is growing rapidly among men who have sex with men (MSM), and commercial sex workers.

Military Statistics

The Guatemalan Armed Forces (GAF) consists of approximately 15,500 members, stationed in 44 military bases across the country. Guatemala has a draft system and requires 18 months of military service. Guatemala expends 0.4% of the GDP on the military. In a 2003 study, 3,000 military personnel were tested for HIV, 0.7% of these members were found to be HIV positive.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The GAF, in collaboration with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and the Ministry of Health in Guatemala, began HIV prevention and HIV counseling for military personnel in 2003. In the past, DHAPP and US DoD Southern Command had engaged the GAF. No subsequent engagement occurred in FY07 for HIV/AIDS prevention programming.

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

No programmatic activities took place with GAF military personnel during the current reporting period.

