



TIMOR-LESTE

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 Timor-Leste is 1.2 million people, with an average life expectancy of 67 years. Tetum and Portuguese are the official languages of Timor-Leste, which has an estimated literacy rate of 59%. In late 1999, about 70% of the economic infrastructure of Timor-Leste was laid waste by Indonesian troops and anti-independence militias, and 300,000 people fled westward. Over the next 3 years, however, a massive international program, manned by 5,000 peacekeepers (8,000 at peak) and 1,300 police officers, led to substantial reconstruction in both urban and rural areas. The gross domestic product per capita is \$2,000, with 42% of Timorese living below the poverty level.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Timor-Leste's general population is not known. A 2003 study found HIV prevalence rates of 3% for female commercial sex workers and 1% for men who have sex with men.

Military Statistics

The Timor-Leste Defense Force (Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste, FDTL) is estimated at approximately 600 members. Forcewide testing is not in place; therefore, HIV prevalence is unknown.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

The US Pacific Command (USPACOM) and its implementing agent, the Center of

Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (COE), engaged with the FDTL during 2007.



OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

Prevention and Care

Activities for fiscal year 2007 included 2 of the 5 planned peer education trainings. The others were halted because of the continuing political instability. Educational material has been developed and are currently being translated. Trainings have been rescheduled for 2008.

Delegates attended the *Asia Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Counseling and Education Workshop for Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants*. The 4-day workshop was held at the Phramongkutklo Military Medical Center in Bangkok, Thailand. The workshop was intended to raise awareness of the importance of counseling by encouraging participants to consider psychosocial issues as well as technical and accommodative skills, which may influence approaches and increase effectiveness of HIV/AIDS instruction, communication, counseling, and education.

During this fiscal year, the actual number of individuals who were counseled and tested was not available, but 3,382 rapid test kits were procured and delivered in September 2007.

Proposed Future Activities

A portfolio review is planned for summer 2008, and will determine future activities with the FDTL.

