



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

On 7 December 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan. The National Assembly was inaugurated on 19 December 2005. Despite gains toward building a stable central government, a resurgent Taliban and continuing provincial instability - particularly in the south and the east - remain serious challenges for the Afghan government. 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 \$57 billion at three donors' conferences since 2002, Kabul will need to overcome a number of challenges. Expanding poppy cultivation and a growing opium trade generate roughly \$3 billion in illicit economic activity and loom as one of Kabul's most serious policy concerns. Other long-term challenges include budget sustainability, job creation, corruption, government capacity, and rebuilding war-torn infrastructure. The GDP per capita is \$800, with an unemployment rate of 40%.

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 staff collaborated with military officials and US Embassy staff in Afghanistan to provide technical assistance in the establishment of a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy for the ANA. In 2008, the ANA successfully completed the *Policy for the Prevention of Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome in the Afghan National Army*.

