

BELIZE

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 Belize is 300,000 people, with an average life expectancy of 68 years. English is the official language of Belize, which has an estimated literacy rate of 77%, evenly distributed between men and women. The GDP per capita is \$8,500, with an unemployment rate of 8.5%. In this small, essentially private-enterprise economy, tourism is the number one foreign exchange earner, followed by exports of marine products, citrus, cane sugar, bananas, and garments. Current concerns include an unsustainable foreign debt, high unemployment, growing involvement in the South American drug trade, growing urban crime, and increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in the Belize general population is estimated at 2.1%, the highest per capita HIV prevalence rate in Central America.

Military Statistics

The Belize Defense Force (BDF) is composed of approximately 800 personnel, with a primary task of defending the nation's borders and providing support to civil authorities. Belize allocates 1.4% of the GDP for military expenditures. The BDF estimates military HIV prevalence rates at 0.07%.



PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

DHAPP staff have been working in conjunction with the US MLO in Belmopan and the BDF to create a comprehensive HIV/AIDS program.

Proposed Future Activities

In FY08, the BDF submitted a proposal to DHAPP for prevention, stigma and discrimination reduction, and CT services. Activities are expected to begin in FY09.

