

ERITREA

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 Eritrea is 4.9 million people, with an average life expectancy of 60 years. Several languages are spoken in Eritrea, including Afar and Arabic, with an estimated literacy rate of 59%, unevenly distributed between men and women. The GDP per capita is \$700. A two-and-a-half-year border war with Ethiopia that erupted in 1998 ended under UN auspices in December 2000. Eritrea currently hosts a UN peacekeeping operations that is monitoring a 25 km-wide Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) on the border with Ethiopia. An international commission, organized to resolve the border dispute, posted its findings in 2002. However, both parties have been unable to reach agreement on implementing the decision. On 30 November 2007, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) remotely demarcated the border by coordinates and dissolved itself, leaving Ethiopia still occupying several tracts of disputed territory, including the town of Badme. Eritrea accepted the EEBC's "virtual demarcation" decision and called on Ethiopia to remove its troops from the TSZ which it states is Eritrean territory. Ethiopia has not accepted the virtual demarcation decision.

HIV/AIDS Statistics

The HIV prevalence rate in Eritrea's general population is estimated at 1.3%. Eritrea has approximately 35,000 individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Identified significant risk factors include blood transfusions and unprotected sexual contact. Most cases of HIV in Eritrea are spread though heterosexual sex.



Military Statistics

The Eritrean Armed Forces (EAF) is estimated at approximately 200,000. Eritrea allocates 6.3% of the GDP for military purposes.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

In-Country Ongoing Assistance

Bilateral military programs for HIV prevention in the EAF were suspended during FY07 and remain suspended.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

No activities occurred in FY08 because the bilateral military programs have been suspended indefinitely by the US Embassy in Asmara.

