

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA

# 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 Papua New Guinea is 5.9 million people, with an average life expectancy of 66 years. Melanesian Pidgin, English, and Motu are spoken in Papua New Guinea, which has an estimated literacy rate of 57%, unevenly distributed between men and women. Papua New Guinea is richly endowed with natural resources, but exploitation has been hampered by rugged terrain and the high cost of developing infrastructure. Agriculture provides a subsistence livelihood for 85% of the population. The GDP per capita is \$2,300. Of note, Australia supplied more than \$300 million in aid in FY07/08, which accounts for nearly 20% of the national budget.

### HIV/AIDS Statistics

The estimated HIV prevalence rate in Papua New Guinea's general population is less than 1.5%. Roughly 53,000 people were living with HIV in FY08. The main mode of transmission is heterosexual contact.

### Military Statistics

The Papua New Guinea Defense Force (PNGDF) is estimated at approximately 2,000 members. Military HIV prevalence rates are unknown.



## PROGRAM RESPONSE

### **In-Country Ongoing Assistance**

The USPACOM and its implementing agent, COE, have continued to collaborate with the PNGDF.

## OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

### **Care and Treatment**

One (1) clinician from the PNGDF attended the *MIHTP* course in San Diego in FY08. The clinician experienced in-depth lectures, toured US medical facilities, and took part in rounds and counseling sessions with HIV/AIDS patients. The clinician was exposed to the most up-to-date advances in HIV/AIDS prevention and care, specifically ART, OI treatment, and epidemiology.



USPACOM/COE, together with the US Armed Forces Research Institute of Medical Sciences and the Royal Thai Armed Forces, and with funding from DHAPP, stood up a military Regional Training Center (RTC) in Bangkok, Thailand. The RTC is responsible for the education of a core group of military medical officers. In FY08, 1 member of the PNGDF attended the *Asia-Pacific Regional HIV/AIDS Lab Infrastructure and Capacity Building (Train the Trainer in Lab and Diagnostics)* Course in August 2008. Also in FY08, 2 PNGDF members attended the *Asia-Pacific Regional Support and Training Capacity for Treatment and Care Initiatives (Train the Trainer in HIV/AIDS*

*Care and Treatment) Course in July 2008.*

### Other

In July 2008, DHAPP, COE, and AFRIMS staff traveled to Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, to conduct a needs assessment of the HIV/AIDS program in the PNGDF. They met with various members of the PNGDF, US Embassy and Papua New Guinea Department of Health staff, and several NGOs in the country.

