



COUNTRY PROFILE



Manocheh Deghati

USAID helps Kenya's small farmers get loans to attain better farm inputs, and helps them connect to customers.

OVERVIEW

Kenya boasts the largest, most diversified economy in the East African region, and its location as a transport hub amplifies its importance for much of the continent. But decades of inequitable and often corrupt governance have dampened economic progress and exacerbated ethnic divisions. Apart from the political elite and a small middle class, most citizens remain subsistence farmers. The majority of urbanites work in the "informal" sector, and more than half of Kenyans are poor.



Following the violence after the 2007 elections, a new democratic transition including a new constitution has made improved governance a top priority for USAID, since future peace and stability depend on it. USAID assistance to Kenya supports governmental reform at all levels, promotes peace and conflict resolution and stimulates economic growth, and supports improvements already underway in health, education, and environmental management.

PROGRAMS

PEACE AND SECURITY

Violence following the contested presidential election of December 2007 continues to cast a shadow on relations between ethnic groups and political factions. USAID is supporting district-level "peace committees" and other programs for reconciliation and conflict resolution in areas that suffered severe post-election violence and where conflicts over land resources are chronic. USAID also supports grassroots peace building through programs that build ethnic tolerance and local capacity.

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

As part of the agreement ending the post-election violence, the coalition government endorsed an ambitious program of governmental reform. USAID focuses directly on promoting this reform agenda. Programs are helping Parliament increase its oversight of the executive branch, as well as its own transparency. USAID is supporting constitutional and electoral reform, civic education, and working with Kenya's political parties for free, fair, and peaceful elections in 2012.

For greater citizen engagement, USAID works with civil society groups on leadership, advocacy, and organizational development. Last year, 133 public sessions encouraged widespread discussion on Kenya's legal system, contributing to the November launch of a new draft constitution.

KENYA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1963

Population: 39 million (2009)

GDP per person: \$1,600/yr

Source: U.S. State Department



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

Due largely to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Kenya health program is one of USAID's largest in the world. To reduce the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS nationwide, it integrates prevention and treatment of other diseases, especially malaria and tuberculosis, and improvements in maternal and child health, family planning, and reproductive health. In addition, USAID is working to strengthen Kenya's health system overall by improving policy, logistics, health-worker effectiveness, and monitoring and evaluation. The Global Health Initiative focuses on leadership, governance, and capacity building of the Kenyan health system for greater sustainability.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

Education programs focus on improving quality and access to education. Programs target teacher training, orphans and vulnerable children, and marginalized groups in urban slums and along the coast. Through the *Yes Youth Can!* program, Kenyan out-of-school youth are empowered to develop livelihood opportunities and improve their capacity for a greater voice in national and local affairs.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Kenya's economy relies heavily on agriculture and tourism, which in turn is dependent on natural resources. Agriculture programs target small horticulture, grain, and dairy farmers, helping them increase productivity, get credit, farm sustainably, and sell their produce. USAID also supports microenterprises through Development Credit Authority loan guarantees to microfinance institutions. To promote conservation as well as livelihoods in wildlife-rich areas, USAID helps rural communities improve biodiversity management through nature conservancies, eco-tourism and other environmental-friendly enterprises.

Equitable land and natural-resources policy is key to good stewardship. USAID has supported Kenya's new wildlife policy and land policy, which recognizes ownership rights of women and traditional communities. Other policy support focuses on an enabling environment to further smallholder agriculture, trade, and a vibrant private sector.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Kenya has chronic shortages of food that affect 2-3 million people each year. In FY 2009 USAID emergency relief sustained nearly 3 million Kenyans and refugees during the worst drought in 25 years. USAID provided food valued at \$133.7 million and an additional \$21 million to help communities rebound from emergencies.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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