



FOOD AID

FOOD SECURITY IN RWANDA

Erratic rainfall, frequent droughts, low soil fertility, poor farming inputs and techniques, high population density, poverty and HIV/AIDS all contribute to Rwanda's food insecurity. Nearly 80 percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture and farmers are dependent on rain for good harvests.

The World Food Program estimated that in 2006, 78 percent of the rural population suffered from limited or no access to food. A 2009 Government of Rwanda assessment of child malnutrition found that 60% of children under the age of five experience moderate acute malnutrition.

FOOD SECURITY AT A GLANCE

- Population: 10.2 million^[1]
- Population below poverty line: 57 percent^[2]
- Population dependent on subsistence agriculture: nearly 80 percent^[3]

^[1] U.S. State Department

^[2] UNDP

^[3] World Bank Development Indicators 2008

RESPONSE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides food assistance to Rwanda as part of its Public Law 480 Title II Food Aid Program managed by USAID Office of Food for Peace (FFP). Rwanda received \$12.5 million in Title II development and emergency food assistance in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, \$15.2 million in FY 2008, \$14.4 million in FY 2007, and \$17.9 million FY 2006. In addition, beginning in 2009, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing \$9 million per year for three years to the WFP-implemented school-feeding programs.

USAID's direct food assistance under Title II reached some of the most food-insecure Rwandans through institutional feedings – orphanages, homes for the elderly, homes and schools for disabled and street children, and malnourished people living with HIV/AIDS. Title II development programs included food for work projects that promoted terracing to prevent soil erosion. USAID's emergency assistance under Title II has been the largest contributor to the World Food Program's (WFP) humanitarian food assistance programs in Rwanda.

The Title II Program is set to conclude by the end of 2009. To prepare for this conclusion, USAID promoted the sustainability of benefiting institutions through income generating activities including vocational training, handicrafts, agriculture, and livestock. In addition, USAID's new Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative will build on the Title II program's results in its nutrition activities.

RESULTS

In 2009, U.S. food assistance helped nearly 400,000 people through distribution of food, social assistance and income-generating activities.

Nearly 300,000 students in vulnerable areas benefit through the school feeding program.

In 2009, 86% of food aid recipients were at or above normal body mass index (BMI) within six months of USAID-supported food assistance.

93% of Title II recipients demonstrated improved health, nutrition and hygiene as a result of the program's nutrition and health training in 2009.

Food aid contributes to employment, income, improved agricultural technologies, agribusiness development, and food security. Food aid programs are reinforced by USAID's work to expand agribusiness opportunities.