



# HEALTH



USAID's health programs improve access to high quality health services in facilities and communities and strengthen the overall healthcare system in Rwanda.



## HEALTH IN RWANDA AT A GLANCE

- Population: 10.2 million (2008 est.)
- Population growth: 2.8 percent
- Fertility rate: 5.5 births per woman
- Life expectancy at birth: 47 years
- Maternal mortality ratio: 750 out of 100,000 live births
- Under-five childhood mortality rate (ages 0-5): 103 per 1,000 live births
- Malnutrition prevalence (ages 0-5): 45 percent stunted; 23 percent underweight; 4 percent severely underweight
- Births attended by skilled health personnel: 52 percent
- HIV prevalence (ages 15-49): 3.0 percent

*Sources: U.S. State Department; World Bank Development Indicators 2007; United Nations Development Report 2007; Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2005, Interim DHS 2007*

### HEALTH IN RWANDA

The health and livelihoods of Rwandans have greatly improved since the genocide in 1994. Men, women and children enjoy better access to lifesaving health services. Despite these improvements, problems persist. In Rwanda, one child in ten does not live to the age of five. Rwandan children frequently suffer from malnutrition. According to the 2005 Demographic and Health Survey (2005 DHS), 23 percent of children under the age of five are underweight and 4 percent are severely underweight. Women in Rwanda give birth to an average of six children and the use of modern methods of family planning remains low (Rwanda is already one of the most densely populated countries in the world). Fifty five percent of women deliver their babies at home, outside of a health facility. The entire population is at risk for malaria. Rwanda also faces a generalized AIDS epidemic, with an HIV prevalence of 3 percent among adults.

### RESPONSE AND RESULTS

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is dedicating over \$112 million in fiscal year (FY) 2009 to increase the quantity and improve the quality of health services available to Rwandans. USAID supports the Government of Rwanda's initiatives to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, increase the quality and use of family planning and reproductive health services, improve maternal and child health and develop the overall health sector. Health programs create hope and save lives.

**HIV/AIDS:** Rwanda is one of 15 focus countries for the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Launched in Rwanda in 2004, PEPFAR supports the Government of Rwanda's HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment programs. PEPFAR prevents new HIV infections, provides care and treatment for those living with and affected by the disease and strengthens the overall health care system. PEPFAR/Rwanda is a collaborative U.S. Government effort implemented by USAID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Department of Defense, the Peace Corps, and the U.S. Embassy in Kigali. With nearly \$123 million in PEPFAR funding in FY 2009, the United States is Rwanda's largest partner on its fight against HIV/AIDS.

PEPFAR supports voluntary counseling and testing activities, youth intervention programs, provides antiretroviral drugs and treatment for opportunistic infections and supports education and life skills training for orphans and vulnerable children. As of September 2009, with PEPFAR support, the Government of Rwanda has distributed antiretroviral (ARV) treatment to nearly 73,700 HIV-positive people (nearly two-thirds of these people receive ARVs in PEPFAR-supported facilities); has provided nearly 26,500 HIV-positive women with ARV prophylaxis for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission (60 percent of the women have been directly supported by PEPFAR); and has provided voluntary counseling and testing services to 2.7 million Rwandans (over 1.5 million have been directly supported by PEPFAR). Moreover, as of March 2009, PEPFAR provided school fees and materials, food, vocational training, psychosocial support and links to clinical services to 68,000 orphans and vulnerable children.

In Rwanda, PEPFAR funds approximately 40 international nongovernmental, private voluntary and faith-based organizations that implement activities in cooperation with the Government of Rwanda and local Rwandan organizations in 22 of the country's 30 districts.

**MALARIA:** Rwanda is one of four second-round focus countries for the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). PMI/Rwanda is led by USAID in collaboration with CDC. In FY 2009, the U.S. Government provided \$16.3 million to support the Government of Rwanda's malaria prevention and treatment objectives.

# HEALTH FACT SHEET CONTINUED



Source: Still Life Projects



Source: PSI

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## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

[www.usaid.gov/missions/rw](http://www.usaid.gov/missions/rw)  
[www.pepfar.gov](http://www.pepfar.gov)  
[www.fightingmalaria.gov](http://www.fightingmalaria.gov)

PMI's goal is to reduce deaths due to malaria by half by reaching 85 percent of the most vulnerable groups – principally pregnant women, children under five years of age, and people living with HIV/AIDS – with lifesaving services, supplies and medicines. PMI uses a comprehensive approach to prevent and treat malaria, supporting four key areas: indoor spraying of homes with insecticides, insecticide-treated mosquito nets, essential antimalarial drugs and treatment to prevent malaria in pregnant women.

In 2009, nearly 500,000 houses were sprayed, protecting over 2 million people from malaria, and 550,000 insecticide-treated nets were distributed (over 500,000 others were procured for an early 2010 bed net campaign). In addition, PMI supported effective case management of fevers in children under five by distributing 439,000 doses of artemisinin-based combination therapies through community health workers and the private sector.

**FAMILY PLANNING AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH:** In 2007, the Government of Rwanda made family planning a national priority recognizing its relation to economic growth. USAID supports the Government of Rwanda's national family planning program which seeks to increase the demand, access, availability, quality and use of contraception. As the Government of Rwanda's emphasis on family planning increased, USAID's support grew from \$2.7 million in fiscal year 2004 to over \$9 million in 2009.

USAID works to increase the availability of family planning and reproductive health services. USAID buys the majority of the contraceptives used in the national family planning program and increasing male involvement and meeting unmet demand are integral aspects of the program. USAID's local partners train and supervise health providers, sensitize Rwandans to the importance of family planning and purchase family planning commodities to ensure that health facilities can adequately meet their clients' needs. In 2008, USAID trained more than 7,900 providers of family planning services in 23 of Rwanda's 30 districts and provided family planning services to thousands of Rwandans.

**MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH:** USAID committed \$6.5 million in support of maternal and child health issues in Rwanda in FY09. Rwanda participates in the Safe Birth Africa Initiative, which aims to reduce maternal and neonatal deaths in three to five years through proven lifesaving interventions such as skilled birth attendance, active management of third stage of labor and essential newborn care. USAID also trains health providers in the emergency care for pregnant women in order to improve maternal health in Rwanda.

Child health is being addressed through technical assistance for immunization, a roll out of facility and community-based integrated management of childhood illnesses in 10 districts across Rwanda, essential nutrition activities, water treatment and disinfection and improved hygiene and sanitation. Child health programs work to reduce the childhood illnesses and deaths due to malaria (this includes the distribution of long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets).

In 2009, as a result of USAID support over 270,000 antenatal care visits were conducted, over 121,000 deliveries took place with a skilled birth attendant, nearly 163,000 children received Diphtheria-Pertussis-Tetanus vaccine (3<sup>rd</sup> dose), over 3,800 people were trained in child health and nutrition, and nearly 1,000 people were trained in maternal and newborn health.

**HEALTH SECTOR DEVELOPMENT:** In addition to supporting the immediate goal of improving Rwandans' health and saving lives, USAID health activities contribute to long-term capacity building and system strengthening. Significant support is provided through technical assistance to the Government of Rwanda for decentralization in the health sector, health policy development, pre-service training and competency-based nursing curricula design, support for masters and doctoral programs in public health, strengthening post-graduate medical training and health care financing.