



COUNTRY PROFILE



USAID works with the Government of Rwanda to improve the health and livelihoods of Rwandans and increase economic and political development.

OVERVIEW

Much has changed in Rwanda since the 1994 genocide that left more than 800,000 people dead. Today, the Government of Rwanda is committed to development, recovery, and reconciliation, and major milestones have already occurred, notably in security and health. Internal and external security must, however, always be weighed against the gradual democratization and decentralization that the country requires for development. To achieve these goals, USAID focuses on health, education, economic growth, and democracy and governance.



PROGRAMS

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID supports Rwanda's decentralization process through building the capacity of 12 district governments to deliver services to their citizens. USAID also supports the establishment of legal aid centers for the poor, helps Rwanda's government improve the quality of legislation through a stronger legislative drafting process, and assists the General Prosecutor's Office to reduce the backlog of cases accumulated in the national courts. By supporting reconciliation through a program that promotes increased dialogue and debate on important and sensitive national topics, USAID is reducing the potential for conflict. Moreover, to help build a political system that offers meaningful political choices to its citizens while maintaining a spirit of national unity, USAID supports a political party strengthening project. The project supports and reinforces mechanisms to boost interparty dialogue and builds political parties' capacity to organize, communicate, and reach out to grassroots constituents.

In July 2008, Rwanda was approved for the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation threshold assistance program, which will strengthen the capacity and independence of the judiciary, expand opportunities for civic participation, and promote civil rights and liberties.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

USAID programs work to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality, ensure access to health care, improve family planning, and reduce child malnutrition. USAID also supports community-managed pre-paid health insurance schemes—"mutuelles"—in part because a mutuelle member is five times more likely to seek modern health care than a non-member.

RWANDA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1962
Population: 10.2 million (2008)
Per Capita Income: \$370 (2008)

Source: U.S. State Department

USAID IN RWANDA

<http://usaid.gov/missions/rw>



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

In addition, under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID supports prevention of mother-to-child transmission, voluntary counseling and testing, care and treatment, and psycho-social services to people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, and other vulnerable people. The United States is Rwanda's largest donor of HIV/AIDS programming. Under the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), USAID focuses on preventing and treating malaria in pregnant women, spraying homes, distributing bed nets, providing life-saving drug therapy, and managing malaria cases in health facilities and households.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

Building civil society and reducing gender disparities requires an educated population. USAID provides scholarships to disadvantaged, but academically talented, girls and boys. Scholarship recipients are often orphans of war or HIV/AIDS and have limited financial means. In addition, USAID has recently launched a project to assist young people in developing the skills and attitudes necessary to find jobs or create their own employment, as well as maintaining healthy lifestyles and participating constructively in their communities. The project will also build the capacity of local youth workforce organizations and contribute to the government's emerging policy implementation in this area.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Because four out of five Rwandans rely on subsistence agriculture, USAID's economic growth program is expanding agri-business opportunities, especially in the specialty coffee and the dairy sectors. In 2000, no specialty coffee was exported from Rwanda; in 2009, Rwanda exported 3,045 metric tons. Annual export revenue from coffee has grown from zero to \$11.6 million, and Rwandan specialty coffee has been featured by Starbucks and Green Mountain Coffee as the "best of the best." USAID support for the Rwandan dairy industry enhances its competitiveness through the use of a more efficient and profitable value chain for milk, dairy products, and related inputs and services. The program also seeks to expand access to economic opportunities for vulnerable people by involving people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, and other vulnerable children into dairy-related income-generating activities.

USAID provides food assistance to vulnerable households, which contribute to employment, improved agricultural technologies, agri-business development, incomes, and food security. In 2009, over 700,000 Rwandans benefited from the U.S. food assistance.

To promote eco-tourism, USAID works in Nyungwe National Park to increase the number of visitors to the park, conserve the biodiversity, and improve the livelihoods of Rwandans surrounding the park.

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