



USAID Food Security Programs in Haiti

Food security is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, with three distinct variables central to the attainment of food security: availability, access and utilization. Promoting Haitian food security requires attention on all three variables. Haiti's constraints related to *food availability* include: weak agricultural technologies and practices; largely subsistence production that is especially vulnerable to natural disasters; land tenure insecurity impeding expansion of underutilized acreage; as well as abysmal processing, marketing, transportation and infrastructural support that cripples cost-effective movement of food throughout the country. Haitians' particular problems related to *food access* are weak economic growth, widespread lack of job opportunities, credit constraints, and citizens' weak purchasing power (an estimated 75% of Haitians make barely \$2/day). Finally, *food utilization* is associated with poor nutritional practices, lack of child care, and inferior sanitation that all undermine Haitians' ability to ensure a nutritionally adequate diet.

USAID engages the food security issue in Haiti through multi-year PL480 Title II food security programs, stabilization programs that generate much-needed disposable income, watershed restoration programs with direct technical assistance for improved agricultural production, financing programs that target rural farmers and cooperatives, health programs, and disaster mitigation programs.

PL480 Title II Food Security Programs: Multi-Year Agreements

In FY08, over \$34.2 million of PL 480 Title II Food for Peace commodity and monetization resources support maternal and child health (MCH), school feeding, social assistance, agriculture production and disaster readiness programs that enhance food security. Nearly 127,635 persons will benefit from direct distribution of food commodities. MCH programs will help ensure availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, provide micro-nutrients targeting 13,350 pregnant/lactating women, 36,500 children under 5, 2000 TB patients and 6,000 people living with HIV/AIDS. The school feeding program will ensure the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods through the distribution of hot meals to 45,000 students. Social assistance programs distribute food rations to the most vulnerable populations - orphans, the institutionalized elderly/disabled and people affected by HIV/AIDS and TB reaching over 22,000 persons. The agriculture program supports livelihoods improvement in both urban and rural target areas. Activities support 1) improved productivity through improved agricultural and natural resources management practices, including improved techniques, inputs, and anti-erosive structures; 2) increased revenue through business development services, including credit and market linkages; and 3) improved productive and market infrastructure. Disaster readiness programs strengthen GOH capacity in early warning, preparedness, mitigation and response activities specifically to protect life and assets in the event of natural disasters, which are frequent in Haiti, and which directly impact food availability and agricultural productivity.

Stabilization (Income Generation) Program

With the increases in food prices, USAID is reprogramming or speeding-up funding for its stabilization programs, which supports small-scale, labor-intensive, income-generating activities. Increased disposable income allows beneficiaries to purchase additional food and enhance household nutrition status. The programs will generate a total of 75,000 jobs in FY 08, of which 73 are 945 short-term and 1,055 long-term.

Under the **Jobs, Opportunities, and re-Building Structures (JOBS)** program, implemented by CHF International, USAID is immediately accelerating job creation in rural areas with the infusion of \$8.0 million for increased agricultural production and improved household nutritional status. Another \$1.9 million will be provided for short-term labor intensive infrastructure programs that increase the purchasing power of vulnerable populations in urban hot-spots.

Under the **PREPEP (“Programme de Revitalisation et de Promotion de l’Entente et de la Paix”)** program, implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), USAID has reprogrammed \$5.562 million to accelerate short-term job creation programs to increase purchasing power of Haiti’s most vulnerable populations. The results target is to create more than 45,000 additional new jobs through 450 new small grants. Another \$10.2 million will support this program in FY08.

Watershed Restoration Programs and Direct Technical Assistance for Agriculture:

USAID also has underway an \$18 million watershed activity, DEED, which is designed to demonstrate visible reversal of environmental degradation in two targeted watersheds (Limbe and Montrouis) over the course of three - five years. The approach relies on economic stimuli to preserve natural resources and allocates funds to support public-private alliances designed to put alluvial plains and river valleys to more productive agricultural use and relieve pressure from the denuded hillsides. Feasibly, one or two more watersheds could be tackled or the work expanded to the fertile Plaine de Cul de Sac.

USAID recently awarded a \$15 million contract for the Market Chain Enhancement (Marche) project, to provide technical assistance and grants – including investment monies to agricultural productive alliances – to producers and others along the “market chain” of key agricultural exports, such as mangoes, coffee, and essential oils, and local food crops, such as rice, plantain, and yams. Under this program, income derived from increased sales of these products will increase by a minimum of 20% annually.

Agricultural Finance

Under its Rural and Agricultural Finance Program, USAID has encouraged financial institutions to expand their outreach to rural and agricultural sectors in a number of ways, and is in the course of negotiating more loan guarantees with local banks to expand access to credit for the rural sector. The estimated amount of new loans covered by these guarantees will be \$8 million, increasing the total financing available under this program to \$15.5.

Through a Product Innovation Fund (PIF), USAID provides incentives to Microfinance Institutions to develop and expand services to rural and agricultural areas. This support includes:

Expanded Rural Operations and Networks.

Rural Credit Cooperatives and Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) nationwide are being provided with technical assistance to improve their management and operational capacities. A number have also received equipment such as motorcycles, generators, and internet connectivity. As a result, existing branches have been strengthened and new branches have been opened in Fonds de Negre, Cabaret, Limbe, Hinche, and Aquin.

Product Development.

USAID has been at the forefront of the development of specific credit products designed to finance small and medium-sized farmers. This is an extremely challenging proposition as even MFI are reluctant to lend to the agricultural sector. However, with USAID support the mindset is changing and agricultural lending is now on the agenda of Haiti's banking sector - albeit in different stages.

USAID also provides **loan guarantees** to two local banks (Capital Bank and Sogebank/Sogesol) to encourage lending to micro, small, and medium enterprises (SME) involved in the agricultural sector. The micro loan portion of the guarantee covers \$2.5 million of loans while the SME portion covers \$5 million. The guarantee provides for reimbursement of 50% of any claim on an unpaid loan subscribed to the program.

On the **policy** side, USAID provides annual assessments on the state of the microfinance industry in order for policy makers and donors to have an accurate professional "snapshot" on which to base their own evaluations and decisions.

Health Programs

Community-based nutritional programs target 1,500,000 vulnerable woman and children annually. Activities include monitoring for mild to severe malnourished women and children, breastfeeding promotion and appropriate weaning, educating families on low-cost but high-nutrition food choices available within local markets, vitamin A supplementation, and simple approaches to ensuring a safe supply of potable water. Child health programs improve immunization coverage, and treat diarrheal diseases and upper respiratory infections. Additional nutrition services are provided to people living with HIV/AIDS. This includes:

- Provision of locally produced peanut butter-based ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) for severely malnourished HIV positive persons and OVC: Target beneficiaries: 2900 persons in 2008, 3500 persons in 2009.
- Provision of locally produced fortified flour product to all HIV positive pregnant and lactating women, as well as their children 6 to 24 months, as prevention against malnourishment. Target beneficiaries: 2000 women and their babies in 2008 and 4000 women and their babies in 2009.