



USAID | **HAITI**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

NUTRITION FACT SHEET

March 2017



ELLIE VAN HOUTTE / USAID

BACKGROUND

Nutritional deficiency is a long-standing challenge in Haiti, which suffers from one of the heaviest burdens of hunger and malnutrition in the Western Hemisphere. In recent years Haiti has made some progress in the area of nutrition. For example, the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey showed that, between 2005-2006 and 2012, stunted children under five years of age decreased from 23.8 to 21.9 percent; wasting decreased from 9.1 to 5.1 percent; and underweight children decreased from 22.2 to 11.4 percent. Nonetheless, Haiti still ranks “alarming” in the 2016 Global Hunger Index and according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) roughly 50 percent of Haiti’s population is undernourished. The chronic problems are exacerbated by shocks, such as three years of severe drought 2013-2016 and a devastating hurricane in 2016 that severely affected 2 million people.

KEY CHALLENGES

Access to food: Much of Haiti’s food is imported, and food is normally available in Haiti’s markets, but many people cannot afford to purchase sufficient food. Nationally, about six out of ten people live on less than \$2 per day, and more than 24 percent live on less than \$1 per day. This poverty, compounded by the recent sharp depreciation of the Haitian gourde, means approximately 4.5 million Haitians struggle to get enough food to eat every day.

Infant and early childhood nutrition: Fewer than half of children younger than six months of age are breastfed exclusively and less than 20 percent of children between 6 and 23 months of age receive appropriate complementary nutrition. Therefore, many children do not receive the nutrients necessary for healthy growth and development. According to the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey, 65 percent of children under five years and 49 percent of women of reproductive age are anemic.

USAID STRATEGY & ACTIVITIES

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) works to ensure that more Haitians have access to nutritious, affordable food by promoting efforts to increase locally sourced food through agricultural production while also addressing the immediate needs of food-insecure households.

Improving access to food and nutrition for vulnerable households: USAID collaborates with the Government of Haiti to implement a voucher-based social safety net program called *Kore Lavi*, which increases access to locally-produced, nutritious foods among vulnerable households. The program also improves the nutritional status of children and pregnant and lactating women by providing specialized foods and by training

community health workers to promote behavioral change and adoption of good nutritional practices. USAID also promotes exclusive breastfeeding through a network of 164 health facilities across the country supported through the Services de Santé de Qualité pour Haiti project, and through community health workers who promote breastfeeding and screen for malnutrition at the community level.

Ensuring access to school lunch: To ensure that low-income students have the energy and focus needed to be successful in school and to encourage attendance, USAID supports a school feeding program. These activities provide nutritious snacks and hot lunches in several communes across the Central Plateau and Grand'Anse. The project also empowers local female food vendors to expand their activities while promoting non-charcoal, non-health damaging energy sources for cooking and food preparation.

Leveraging Local Networks to Address Malnutrition: USAID partners with Fonkoze, a national microfinance institution, leveraging its existing infrastructure, network, and health program, to address malnutrition. The five-year project, Aksyon Kominote nan Sante pou Ogmante Nitrisyon, provides capacity building for community health workers, who with support from registered nurses, conduct community screening campaigns to identify cases of severe and moderate acute malnutrition. These activities are reinforced through knowledge and skill building around nutrition, hygiene, sanitation and food security strategies.

Enhancing availability of Micronutrients: In 2017, USAID launched a \$4 million project, Ranfose Abitid Nitrisyon pou Fè Ogmante Sante, to address micronutrient deficiencies by fortifying food in Haiti. This project will increase the availability of high-quality, staple foods by expanding the local production and importation of fortified foods and providing clear and consistent messaging for consumers on the value and safety of these foods.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Improved access to local and nutritious foods: Since 2013, the social safety net program, *Kore Lavi*, has provided access to local and nutritious foods for over 18,000 households, enabling nearly 64,000 children to escape the long-term ramifications of malnutrition. In addition, *Kore Lavi* has also provided over 54,000 pregnant or lactating women with supplementary rations aimed at preventing malnutrition.

Contributing to improved health of children: In the four years since 2013, *Kore Lavi* has reached over 83,000 children under five with malnutrition treatment and prevention programs.

Providing emergency food assistance: In response to Hurricane Matthew (October 2016), USAID's Food for Peace program contributed over \$42.6 million to meet the urgent needs of hurricane-affected families, including \$19.2 million to the United Nations World Food Program, \$15.4 million to a CARE-led NGO consortium, and \$8 million to Catholic Relief Services. These programs have reached over 900,000 people in Grand'Anse, Sud, and Nippes with urgently needed food assistance, specialized nutritional foods for children under five and pregnant and lactating women, cash-based assistance, and support for agriculture inputs.