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Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Results Report

ACDI/VOCA / Rwanda Development Assistance Program

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List of Acronyms

BMI	Body Mass Index
BRD	Rwanda Development Bank
CCC	Construction Consulting Company
CHDI	Clinton Hunter Development Initiative
COOPAC	Coopérative pour la Promotion des Activités
COMIXBU	Coopérative Mixte de Buyoga
COIMU	Coopérative Ibukwa Muhinzi
CODEPRAG	Coopérative de Développement et de la Promotion de Récolte Agricole
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CS	Cooperating Sponsor
CSB	Corn Soy Blend
DAP	Development Assistance Program
DMS	Development and Management Solutions
EAC	East African Community
FARN	Positive Deviance Approach
FSC	Food Security (Grants) Committee
FFP	Office of Food for Peace
FY	Fiscal Year
GOR	Government of Rwanda
GFSI	Gikongoro Food Security Initiative
Ha	Hectares
HBC	Home Based Care
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
IERF	Initial Environment Review Form
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IR	Intermediate Result
ISAR	Rwanda Agricultural Research Institute
ITSH	Internal Transport, Storage, and Handling
KDMR	Koperative Dufatanyirize Mu Rukundo
Kcal	Kilocalory
Kg	Kilogram
Km	Kilometer
LOP	Life of Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Ton
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCIR	Office Des Cultures Industrielles du Rwanda
OFSP	Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato
PLWHA	People Living With HIV/AIDS
PREP	Program and Resource Estimate Pipeline

RAA	Recipient Agency Agreements
RCA	Rwandan Cooperative Agency
Rwf	Rwandan Franc
SO	Strategic Objective
TA	Transfer Authorization
TOT	Training of Trainers
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCT	Voluntary Counseling and Testing
Wakala	Wakala East Africa Services
WFP	World Food Program
WV	World Vision

1.0 Annual Results

1.1 Background

In June 2004, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace (FFP) approved the proposal from cooperating sponsor (CS) ACDI/VOCA for the implementation of a follow-up five-year development assistance program (DAP), awarding transfer authorization (TA) FFP-A-00-04-00073-00. On February 1, 2005, ACDI/VOCA began formal implementation of its five-year funded Title II program to improve agricultural productivity in Rwanda. The overall goal of the DAP is to reduce chronic food insecurity and vulnerability of individuals, households and communities to food security shocks.

Program activities in fiscal year (FY) 2009 continued to support the goal of the DAP by: (1) strengthening cooperatives; (2) improving the productivity and quality of target food crops such as rice, wheat, maize, pulses (soybeans), tomato and root crops (potato and cassava); (3) awarding grants to rural cooperatives to promote post-harvest processing and commercialization of agricultural production; (4) rehabilitating tertiary farm-to-market roads and bridges; and, (5) undertaking activities to conserve and improve soil use. As sub-recipient to ACDI/VOCA under the DAP, Africare also implements a program in Gikongoro to integrate supplementary feeding for people living with the human immunodeficiency virus and /or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) (PLWHA) with food security, natural resource management, and HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention activities.

Results under specific Strategic Objectives (SOs) and Intermediate Results (IRs) are described in the following sections.

1.2 SO 1: Increase Incomes and Reduce Vulnerability to Food Insecurity

1.2.1 IRI.1: Increase Adoption of Improved Agricultural Production and Processing Practices

A. Food Security Grants

In 2009, ACDI/VOCA continued using its grants approach to build sustainable outcomes. Grants resources were channeled to rural cooperatives, associations, and farmers in food insecure areas in collaboration with district authorities and USAID. The grants were used to pilot activities and demonstrate the economic viability of improved agricultural productivity and processing, improved knowledge of farming practices, expanded use of agricultural inputs and advisory services, improved technologies, increased linkages to agricultural agencies and strengthened cooperatives in order to increase incomes and reduce food insecurity. The grants further supported efforts to improve the quality and marketability of commodities, as well as increase household food supply, improve farm-to-market access, facilitate start-ups of food security initiatives, support agroforestry, assist PLWHA associations and promote cooperative development. ACDI/VOCA food security grants also partnered with a variety of local service organizations, suppliers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and governmental bodies to provide training, inputs and equipment services, and follow-up support. This approach helped achieve the food aid objectives and strengthen the private sector's capacity to deliver advisory or technical services and inputs.

While cooperatives and associations were not without limitations and financial difficulty, they demonstrated that they can feasibly overcome food insecurity and vulnerability through grants provided under the DAP. The grant process and program oversight instilled operational discipline,

improved their operational management and business capacity, and increased access to financial loans and services, raising their value of production.

A total of 10 grants were reviewed by the Food Security Committee (FSC) in 2009, of which four were later canceled due to timeline or inability of the cooperative to meet requirements. The FSC consists of the USAID cognizant technical officer, a representative from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) and ACDI/VOCA. The grants are considered based on how they can further the goals and objectives of the ACDI/VOCA-managed DAP. A total of 15 farmer cooperatives received training organized as part of their approved FSC grants or under a separate task order provided through an Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) signed with two separate service providers, Development and Management Solutions (DMS) and Wakala East Africa Services (Wakala), to strengthen their agricultural or cooperative capacity. A list of cooperatives approved for grants is provided in Appendix A.

B. Grain/Cereals Subsector Activities

1. Wheat Cooperative

ACDI/VOCA supported three wheat producer cooperatives in two districts of the Northern Province through grants, namely the Impuyaki and Twitezimbere cooperatives in Gicumbi, and a wheat producer cooperative named Cooperative Mixte de Buyoga (COMIXBU) in Rulindo. This support included agricultural inputs (seeds and fertilizers), post-harvest equipment (winnowers, threshers, sewing machines, and scales), support for the hiring of technical staff, and training and technical follow-up in agricultural techniques and cooperative development. DMS provided training on cooperative leadership, governance, and cooperative management and agricultural training was provided by Wakala. The outcome of this support resulted in Impuyaki and COMIXBU meeting or exceeding expected targets, whereby both cooperatives increased their total area of cultivation and production. They also strengthened their capacity as cooperative enterprises to coordinate and manage resources to produce wheat.

Table 1 – Impuyaki Cooperative, Wheat Production, 2008-2009

Impuyaki cooperative	2008	2009
Land size (Ha)	13	120
Productivity (Mt/ha)	0.8	1.16
Total Production (Mt)	10.4	139
Total value of the production (Rwf)	2,600,000	31,680,000

Approximate value of production in 2009 was \$56,572.

Table 2 – COMIXBU Cooperative, Wheat Production, 2008 - 2009

COMIXBU Cooperative	2008	2009
Land size (Ha)	3.5	24.7
Productivity (Mt/ha)	0.8	0.9
Total Production (Mt)	3	21.4
Total value of the production (Rwf)	875,000	5,350,000

Approximate value of production in 2009 was \$9,554.

The improved production is credited to the expanded access to inputs and advisory support extended to cooperative members and the hiring of management staff. In total, 80 members of COMIXBU and 486 members of Impuyaki benefited both directly and indirectly from training and technical follow-up, which has led to improved rural livelihoods, food security and income opportunity within their communities.

Given the importance of wheat to the local district's crop strategy, the Honorary Governor of the Northern Province, Aime Bosenibamwe, acknowledged that the achievements of COMIXBU will set a good example to other upcoming cooperatives especially when it comes to cooperative leadership and management, which are still a big challenge for most cooperatives in Rwanda.

The Twitezimbere cooperative in the Cyamutara sector of Gicumbi fell short of its expected targets. The cooperative leadership did not use the provided agricultural inputs properly and did not fully implement its activities in accordance with the signed Recipient Agency Agreement (RAA). ACIDI/VOCA informed the district authorities in Gicumbi and sought their support to investigate the issue of mismanagement, which ultimately led to the termination of the grant agreement. Remaining urea fertilizer inputs (173 bags, each containing 50 kilograms (kgs) of urea) were recovered from the Twitezimbere cooperative and transferred from the Cyamutara sector to the Rutare sector. ACIDI/VOCA worked with the Gicumbi district mayor's office to identify a new cooperative to receive the fertilizer. Cooperative Amakiro was ultimately selected and a cultivation plan approved by the district. By partnering with the district mayor's office and making the authorities a responsible stakeholder in the process, more accountability and transparent behavior of grant resources by the cooperative was thus assured. Consequently, Twitezimbere has initiated internal changes by electing a new president and board and is in the process of reforming itself. However, the circumstances surrounding the grant and factors of poor leadership resulted in the food security grant falling short of meeting production targets.

2. Wheat value chain study

The wheat value chain study planned in FY 2009 was not carried out due to USAID's request to reduce activities and funding in order to avoid the monetization of 450 metric tons (MT) of vegetable oil and to reallocate resources in support of the rehabilitation of a 10 kilometer (km) road segment.

3. Rice Cooperative

Cocurirwa, a rice grower's union in the Rwamagana district, received a grant worth \$60,000 (Rwandan Franc (Rwf) 33,390,451) to repair 50 winnowers and 30 threshers collected from five of its cooperatives and to supply post-harvest equipment and training support. These include Cocuribu in Bugugu (38 hectares (ha)) with 226 members; Coricya in Cyaruhogo (90 ha) with 492 members; Copuricyi in Cyimpima (70 ha) with 336 members; Cocuriga in Gashara (43 ha) with 256 members and Cocurimu in Muhazi (36 ha) with 246 members. The cooperative members constituted the beneficiaries expected of the equipment in the 2010 rice harvest. Additionally, each of the five Cocurirwa cooperatives received training on cooperative leadership, management and business planning (a total of 55 members, 39 men and 16 women, attended) and agricultural methodologies (refer to section G. for more details).

The grant also supported the construction of four rice drying areas (8 x 40 meters each) for Cocurimu. The repairs and drying areas were completed in September 2009 and are expected to improve the quality of rice and reduce losses as well as reduce labor needs. The cooperative's

earnings are anticipated to increase by 25% for 246 of its members in the 2010 rice harvest season (December 2009 – May 2010).

In terms of sustaining crop cultivation, Cocurirwa, Comixbu, and Impuyaki were able to leverage their grants with local financial institutions and to obtain loans to purchase commodity inputs and equipment¹. The cereal cooperatives, with improved operating capacity, experience and crop management performance are therefore in a stronger position to qualify for additional loans, which can help sustain future cultivation, invest in new technologies and equipment and cover working capital needs to fully maximize cereal production.

C. Legume Subsector Activities

1. Tomato Cooperatives

In FY 2009, ACDI/VOCA's DAP supported a tomato-producing cooperative in the district of Rwamagana. Kopimu received agricultural inputs (fertilizers) and materials (including 80 watering cans), post-harvest equipment (wooden tomato boxes and weighing scales), as well as training support in agricultural techniques, environmental awareness, and post-harvest handling and storage worth \$23,121 (Rwf 13,179,248), benefiting 80 members.

Using the agricultural inputs provided, a total of 80 cooperative members from Kopimu planted "Roma" variety tomatoes on 18 ha during the FY 2009 agricultural season (February - May). The harvest was expected to take place in mid-May 2009. Unfortunately, 89% of the tomato plants were attacked by a viral disease² that affected tomato plants throughout the Rwamagana and Bugesera districts (see table 3). Due to the negative impact of the tomato disease, Kopimu sought help from the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) on how to combat the disease, and was advised to conduct varietal trials on new tomato varieties to see which varieties are resistant to the disease in the area. Kopimu, with ACDI/VOCA support, began testing two new varieties, "Nouvelle F1" and "Anna," on a small scale. If either variety is found to be resistant to the disease, Kopimu's harvest is likely to improve in 2010. Meanwhile, Kopimu has started cultivating maize with the remaining inputs while it awaits the test results from the varietal trials. One of Kopimu's leaders is also considering planting tomatoes in greenhouses. He has written a proposal for green house production and is seeking a bank loan through a Rwanda Development Bank (BRD) credit program. The district of Rwamagana is also willing to provide land to pilot the greenhouse production if the loan is approved.

ACDI/VOCA further supported Kopimu's leadership and management with training and technical follow-up. In-kind support was provided through DMS in building the leadership capacity, management and business planning of 26 lead members, including five women. Twenty Kopimu members also received training on agricultural production, environmental awareness and post-harvest handling and storage through Wakala.

¹ Cocurirwa received a loan of \$17,857 (Rwf 10,000,000) from Banque Populaire, Comixbu received a loan of \$8,929 (Rwf 5,000,000) from Banque Populaire, and Impuyaki received a loan of \$17,857 (Rwf 10,000,000) from a private financial intermediary.

² The cause and specific virus for the disease are unknown to this date.

Table 3 – Kopimu Cooperative, Tomato Production, 2008-2009

Kopimu Cooperative	2008	2009
Land size (Ha)	20	18
Productivity (Mt/ha)	25	0.77
Total Production (Mt)	500	14
Total value of the production (Rwf)	45,000,000	1,400,000

The Coopérative de Développement et de la Promotion de Récolte Agricole (CODEPRAG) grant ended in November 2009. CODEPRAG had received agriculture inputs as well as agricultural equipment and tools such as irrigation pumps, spray pumps, watering cans and protective gear in 2008. Although CODEPRAG carried out the grant and achieved its targets, the cooperative still failed to comply with the terms of the grant agreement. ACIDI/VOCA had asked CODEPRAG to take actions to remedy findings of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of its agreement. However, the cooperative failed to comply and ACIDI/VOCA decided to terminate its grant with CODEPRAG on account of deficient accounting and records, inconsistent information, and poor handling of inputs. Despite problems encountered during the implementation of the project, CODEPRAG's tomato production is still ongoing, and the number of tomato producers has increased from 277 to 327. Cooperative members can count on a rotation credit system whose value is around \$12,500 (Rwf 7,000,000).

Table 4 – CODEPRAG Cooperative, Tomato Production, FY 2008-2009

CODEPRAG Cooperative	FY 2008	FY 2009
Land size (Ha)	36	30
Productivity (Mt/ha)	4.2	5.26
Total Production (Mt)	151.2	158
Total value of the production (Rwf)	12,096,000	12,640,000

The mixed experiences of CODEPRAG and Twitezimbere (discussed in Section B) influenced how grant funding must be leveraged with local government responsibility and action to achieve sustainable food security objectives. ACIDI/VOCA has therefore purposely worked in partnership with the Rwandan Cooperative Agency (RCA), a watchdog agency for cooperatives, and districts to ensure greater answerability in implementation and to build local government ownership in the outcome in order to support government efforts to improve cooperative performance and accountability.

D. Root Crop Subsector Activities

1. Orange-Fleshed Sweet Potato Multiplication

Since 2007, ACIDI/VOCA has supported 13 associations and/or cooperatives of PLWHA by funding the “multiplication and distribution of Orange Flesh Sweet Potato (OFSP) activities” in the

Rwamagana District. In FY 2008, ACDI/VOCA completed phases I and II³ for 13 micro-grants. In FY 2009, it was able to extend four follow-on micro-grants worth \$21,029 (Rwf 11,776,400) to four of the PLWHA associations/cooperatives (Umwihariko, Abisunganye, Kwizera and Avcao) for a follow-on phase III. Phase III aims at benefiting all the members of the associations (instead of just 20% of members as in phase I and phase II) by providing additional OFSP cuttings and inputs to improve the beneficiaries' food consumption and possibly generate income. The micro-grants ended in August 2009 and exceeded the original OFSP production targets set. The number of members cultivating OFSP among the four associations/cooperatives increased from 52 (38 females and 14 males) to 214 members (146 females and 68 males) and yields increased from 6 ha to 24 ha. Three out of the four associations/cooperatives experienced increases in average production (see figure 1) and productivity, which ranged from 23.5 MT/ha to 46.8 MT/ha (see figure 2). The PLWHA will therefore be able to sell the OFSP, which averages at 18 cents/kg (Rwf 100/kg) and earn approximately \$4,273 to \$8,509 (Rwf 2,350,000 to Rwf 4,680,000) per ha.

Figure 1 – OFSP Average Production against Target Production (%) for the four PLWHA associations/cooperatives, Season 2009 B

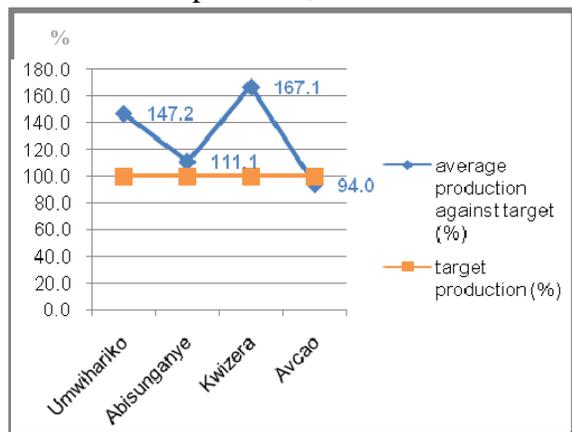
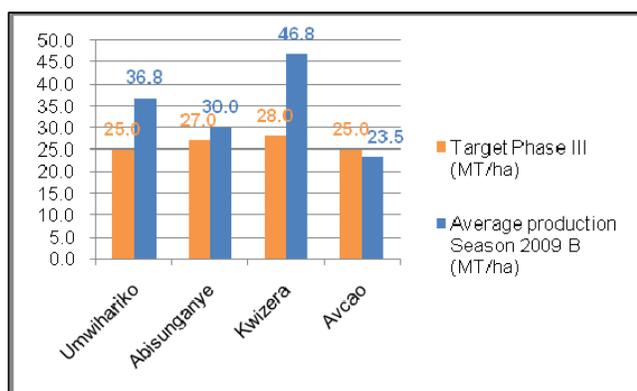


Figure 2 – Average Production in season 2009 B (MT/ha) against Target Production for Phase III (MT/ha) for the four PLWHA associations/cooperatives



³ Phase 1 distributed OFSP cuttings to 13 PLWHA cooperatives for their multiplication and distribution to 20% of the cooperatives' members (mostly women). Phase II distributed fertilizer (NPK 17-17-17), deltamethrin synthetics and funds to purchase organic manure to the members who had received the cuttings. Beneficiaries were also trained on how to apply the inputs to increase productivity so as to increase the number of cuttings for the cooperatives and increase the quantity of food available for its members' consumption.

The availability and use of fertilizers, as well as the application of best practices learned via training contributed to the positive production results. However, the targeted associations/cooperatives are aware that they continue to lack proper record-keeping and production data.

In addition to increasing their earnings, OFSP is also expected to raise the nutritional well-being of PLWHA as it can be used in conjunction with other foods to absorb anti-retroviral medications and strengthen immune systems. Supplemental nutritional training was therefore provided to promote the importance of vitamin-rich foods, which was complemented with cooking demonstrations on the preparation of balanced meals for PLWHA and the use of local foods (such as sweet potatoes) rich in nutrients and carbohydrates.

ACDI/VOCA also continued to support the transformation of the associations to cooperatives. Two of the four associations, the Umwihariko Cooperative, formerly the Rwanyasida Mutegarugori Association, and Kwizera were officially registered as cooperatives by the RCA at the national level. The remaining two associations, Avcao and Abisungane, were also assisted by ACDI/VOCA in becoming cooperatives. This effort supports the Government of Rwanda (GOR) strategy on promoting cooperatives and transforming PLWHA associations into formalized cooperatives so that they can eventually achieve greater economies of scale and become more self-sufficient in meeting their food needs.

2. Potato Cooperatives

ACDI/VOCA issued a grant to Cooperative Ibukwa Muhinzi (COIMU) on April 30, 2009 for a total estimated price of \$23,402 (Rwf 13,339,150). COIMU is a registered cooperative with 376 members (315 men and 61 women) engaged largely in potato production. The grant aims at increasing the quality of potato produced by its members through expanded access to post-harvest equipment, training support in improved agricultural practices, and cooperative leadership and management. COIMU also received five days of training of trainers (TOT) and technical follow-up on potato production techniques, environmental awareness and post-harvest handling and storage, benefiting 20 participants (16 men and 4 women). Training and technical follow-up by DMS in cooperative leadership, management and business planning also targeted 26 cooperative leaders and members.

3. Africare's Income-Generating Activities (IGA)

In FY 2009, Africare issued three income-generating grants to the Abisunzimana, Koronawe and Koperative Dufatanyirize Mu Rukundo (KDMR) cooperatives in Nyamagabe, whose members are primarily PLWHA that Africare is already assisting in other aspects as part of its exit strategy. The micro-grants will help sustain the current Africare activities with these groups and help them generate income through agricultural production and improved marketing opportunities. The income generated from the crop production will help the cooperative members produce or purchase food and cover health care needs at the household level, therefore contributing to both I.R.1.1 and 2.2. In addition to the funding, Koronawe, Abisunzimana and KDMR have also benefited from cooperative development guidance, along with training in soil conservation and plant agronomy and farming practices from Africare and the Rwanda Agricultural Research Institute (ISAR). Members have further been trained through culinary demonstrations by Africare's nutrition specialist on how to mix locally produced food using potato or cassava as one of the food ingredients to help improve their nutritional understanding and general health. Additionally, Koronawe, Abisunzimana and KDMR plan to sell most of their harvests in the open market in order to generate income that will be used to purchase food to diversify their diets, afford adequate health care, and improve their homes.

a. Potato Cooperatives

Two grants were given to the Abisunzimana cooperative and Koronawe cooperative by Africare for potato production, in collaboration with ACDI/VOCA and ISAR. The grants were used to purchase seeds, equipment and supplies for cultivation. Based on an estimated yield of 20 tons/ha, the total yield is expected to reach 260 tons per season for Abisunzimana, benefiting a total of 58 members (12 men and 46 women), and 360 tons per season for Koronawe, benefiting a total of 59 members (12 men and 47 women). Africare is currently providing training to the cooperatives to strengthen their members' knowledge of recommended potato cultivation techniques and practices. Africare has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with ISAR which is working closely with the cooperatives on extending recommended techniques of potato cultivation. An estimated 10% of the harvest will be consumed at the household level, thus contributing to the members' food intake, nutritional needs and reduced food insecurity.

b. Cassava Cooperative

The third cooperative that received grant support from Africare is the KDMR farmer's cooperative society with a total of 133 members (46 men and 87 women). Through this income-generating grant, KDMR will cultivate cassava on 40 ha using improved agricultural practices to improve the welfare of its members. The total yield is expected to reach 320 MT per season, based on an estimated yield of 8 tons/ha. Approximately 30% (96 tons) will be consumed at the household level, thus contributing to nutrition and dietary needs. Training is also underway to strengthen the members' knowledge of recommended cassava cultivation techniques and practices. As with Abisunzimana and Koronawe, ISAR is also working with the cooperative on cassava cultivation. The Gasaka sector authority also donated 80 ha of land⁴ to the society for cassava production.

E. Soybean Subsector Activities

ACDI/VOCA worked with the Ngwinurebe and Duhuzamaboko cooperatives in the Kayonza district in partnership with the Clinton Hunter Development Initiative (CHDI) to promote soybean production in the region. ACDI/VOCA provided agricultural training and technical follow-up, grant funding for agricultural inputs, post-harvest equipment (drying sheets, scales and storage sacks) and salaries for an agronomist and an accountant. A soil test was also carried out at each cooperative cultivation site by a soil scientist, which helped confirm the proper dosage of fertilizer required. CHDI delivered seeds (Num4, PK6) in April 2009 and collaborated with ACDI/VOCA staff and the cooperative agronomists supported under the two grants on extending production knowledge, extension support, and production management. The production results for the season 2009 B for the Ngwinurebe's 88 farmers (59 men and 29 women) and Duhuzamaboko's 319 members (187 men and 132 women) are provided in tables 5 and 6, respectively.

Table 5 – Ngwinurebe Cooperative, Soybean Production, 2008-2009

Ngwinurebe cooperative	2008	2009
Land size (Ha)	5.7	20.36
Productivity (Mt/ha)	0.5	1.10
Total Production (Mt)	3	17.6
Total value of the production (Rwf)	1,200,000	6,162,275

⁴ Only half of the land donated will be cultivated under the Africare grant.
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Table 6 –Duhuzamaboko Cooperative, Soybean Production, 2008-2009

Duhuzamaboko Cooperative	2008	2009
Land size (Ha)	17	22
Productivity (Mt/ha)	0.4	1.4
Total Production (Mt)	7	24.7
Total value of the production (Rwf)	164,706	8,645,000

In addition to inputs, a TOT training was carried out on production, post-harvest equipment, and advisory support for 20 cooperative members from each cooperative. The TOT training focused on agricultural techniques, environmental awareness and post-harvest handling. Both Ngwinurebe and Duhuzamboko also received cooperative leadership training by ACIDI/VOCA’s cooperative development coordinator and cooperative development specialist. The training targeted cooperative leaders and members, and reinforced cooperative principles, good governance, member roles and responsibilities, and cooperative laws.

These interventions helped members from both cooperatives increase their productivity and incomes while managing and improving the fertility of their soil. This increase in income and additional food source (since soybean is rich in protein) is important to many of the cooperatives’ members. The activity also demonstrated the potential of agricultural development through soya development and soybean production on a large scale through the expanded access and use of agricultural inputs, including fertilizer and soybeans. A processing plant is currently being constructed by CHDI and local investors (including the local government) and it is expected that soybean oil due to be produced by the plant in 2010 will help fill the potential gap that may occur by the termination of high quality vegetable oil monetization under the USAID Title II DAPs in 2009.

F. Honey Production Subsector Activities

ACIDI/VOCA worked with Seruka, a local NGO involved in organizing and assisting farmers in beekeeping, to provide beekeeping and honey production assistance to three primary cooperatives (Coapiu, Caepa-Abingenzi and Umutsana) and three secondary honey production associations (Coopas, Coaibu, and Coepu) located in the districts of Rulindo, Gicumbi, Gasabo, Nyarugenge and Kicukiro. A total of 100 beekeepers (32 women and 68 men) received beekeeping equipment and other production accessories, along with training and technical support in beekeeping techniques (harvest, treatment and conditioning of the hives, construction and maintenance of apiaries, and handling of the apiaries’ equipment) and honey production. Also, a honey processing center located in the Jali sector was rehabilitated in the Gasabo district. The center provides a focal point for the collection and processing of honey, and marketing and training. Seruka informed ACIDI/VOCA that the production was expected to reach 8,585 Kgs in 2009, which is 66 % of the targeted 13,000 kilograms (kgs). The production is below target due to start of the project during the rainy season that slowed the colonization of bees in hives.

ACIDI/VOCA’s Cooperative Development Unit conducted training on cooperative leadership while Seruka carried out a business planning training for the three primary associations Coapiu, Caepa-Abingenzi and Umutsana. Seruka and ACIDI/VOCA also assisted the three targeted honey producer associations in registering as cooperatives at the sector, district and national levels. Organizational,

leadership and managerial capacities among the assisted cooperatives are still weak, however, and they will require more training, technical assistance and follow-up to help them sustain their beekeeping activities. The creation of marketing strategies, including the collection, processing and packaging of honey at the honey production centers, is also needed. Seruka and the sector officials will continue following up with the associations/cooperatives to ensure that the practices and equipment can further achieve the objective of income-generation and honey production.

G. Cooperative Development Activities

Many of Rwanda's cooperatives are institutionally weak, unorganized, lack accountability and transparency, have limited cooperative business experience, and are in need of improved management capacity. They need to build their potential and sustainability by increasing their overall management and business skills, while also building good governance and accountable leadership, following cooperative principles and developing as democratic enterprises. They need to evolve and engage in higher value agricultural production and crop management to make their operations more profitable, increase income and reduce overall food insecurity.

In FY 2009, ACIDI/VOCA was asked by USAID/Kigali to focus greater attention on cooperative development and not scale-up more new grants. ACIDI/VOCA therefore designed a series of trainings to complement its food security grants and also extend capacity-building training support to non-grant funded food insecure cooperatives in the Nyabihu, Rubavu, Musanze, Rulindo, Gicumbi, Nyamagabe, Bugesera, Gatsibo, Rwamagana, and Kicukiro districts. ACIDI/VOCA worked in partnership with DMS, a local, private sector training service provider, to provide cooperative development training on cooperative leadership, management and business practices to 12 cooperatives and 325 board leaders and members to improve the cooperatives' capacity to grow as agricultural enterprises (see table 7). This activity was also linked to the GOR's strategy aimed at promoting cooperatives and increasing cooperative development.

Table 7 – Cooperatives trained by DMS in cooperative leadership, management and business planning

DMS Task Order #	Cooperative Name	District	No. of Training participants	Crop
1	Impuyaki	Gicumbi	25	Wheat
	COMIXBU	Rulindo	25	Wheat
	Kopimu	Rwamagana	25	Tomato
2	Indakuki	Bugesera	25	Wheat
	Igicaniro	Bugesera	25	Maize
	Cocurirwa	Rwamagana	50	Rice
3	COIMU	Nyabihu	25	Potato
	Cooptepe	Rubavu	25	Tea
	Coprovab	Musanze	25	Wheat
4	Coderbc	Gatsibo	25	Maize
	Copar	Kicukiro	25	Tomato
	KDMR	Nyamagabe	25	Cassava
TOTAL			325	

1. Cooperative Leadership and Good Governance

The cooperative leadership and good governance training focused on the accountability of elected leaders and governance by the board of directors, president and committee members. It also provided a review of cooperative principles, member relationships, rights and responsibilities of members as shareholders of the cooperatives, and proper procedures. Additionally, the roles and responsibilities of the board of directors and members were clarified, and the importance of accountability and adherence to Rwanda's national standards and rules governing cooperatives was reinforced. The training also spelled out how to set up better administrative and operating procedures. The training results met and in some cases exceeded expectations. Cooperatives demonstrated their willingness to improve leadership accountability and decision-making transparency confirmed through technical follow-up, closing workshops and training reports.

2. Cooperative Management

The cooperative management training emphasized the need for qualified managers and staff, along with proper supervision to improve record-keeping, legal compliance and services to members. It highlighted the importance of establishing and adopting administrative policies and systems that lead to efficient and effective internal operations and controls. The training also pointed out the importance of communication between leaders and members. The training additionally showed ways in which the cooperative can leverage its resources to facilitate income-generating activities such as the collective purchase of inputs, collective marketing, loans, and crop management.

The results from the training met, and even exceeded expectations in some cases, whereby cooperative managers and members attained a greater understanding of cooperative management requirements, practices and systems and of the management of staff, finances and assets, which was evidenced by DMS during technical assistance follow-up. The cooperatives have also been working toward improving their financial management and operations and controls.

3. Business Practices and Business Oriented Cooperatives

The business practices cooperative training focused on improved cooperative business management, including market planning. Cooperative members were trained in assessing their cooperatives' market position as well as existing supply sources, costs, and market access. Business skill development training provided cooperative leaders and management a better understanding of business planning, accounting, and financial planning.

The training met and in some cases exceeded expectations. Some cooperative leaders, managers, and members prepared a simple business plan listing their cooperatives' strategies, performance objectives, operations, resources, key management decisions, and steps the cooperative will follow to realize its business goals. The training also stressed that cooperatives can improve their business operations and supply management (production and processing) by preparing cultivation plans, and a strategy related to market opportunities, risks, capital requirements, and cash flow.

While each of the targeted cooperatives and their participants are involved in different agricultural activities, all three trainings described above reinforced the vital and practical information that cooperatives need. The trainings also emphasized critical issues for cooperative management success. All cooperative development trainings were carried out with the collaboration and participation of the district authorities and were accompanied by technical follow-up to reinforce the

trainings' teachings, mentor the trainees, and facilitate the adoption and tangible application of the training information.

4. Cooperative Law and Posters

ACDI/VOCA purchased 2,222 copies of the new cooperative law number 50/2007 and distributed these to 25 cooperatives representing 13,261 members. The law booklets will be shared internally among the members and are further expected to help cooperatives and their members to understand the legal framework that governs them.

As part of its ongoing efforts to continue assisting cooperative development in Rwanda, ACDI/VOCA has also developed five different posters focusing on promoting cooperative ideals which leaders and members should understand. The posters relay messages such as: what is a cooperative; cooperative leadership; cooperative benefits; obligations of cooperative members; and cooperatives are systems for development. The posters have been distributed to 30 cooperatives, seven sectors and four district offices and were developed in collaboration with the RCA.

5. Agricultural Practices Training by Wakala

In FY 2009, ACDI/VOCA also expanded agricultural training and advisory services to both grant recipients and non-grant recipients in order to improve the knowledge of commercial farming practices. ACDI/VOCA selected Wakala, a local training service provider, to perform the training for selected food insecure cooperatives in Nyabihu, Gatsibo, Kicukiro, Bugesera, Kayonza, Rwamagana, Gicumbi and Rulindo districts (see table 8 for more details). The training focused on agricultural techniques, environmental awareness and post-harvest handling and storage for potato, maize, soybean, rice, wheat and tomato. This training sought to improve crop productivity and the use of good agricultural practices, including awareness on the hazards of chemical use (fertilizers and pesticides) and the environment, improving soil conservation, soil fertility and use, integrated use of green and cow manure with chemical fertilizer, and minimizing post-harvest losses to pests, fungus through improved handling and storage.

Table 8 - Cooperatives trained by Wakala on agricultural techniques

NO	Name of Cooperative	No. of Training Participants	Sector	District	Crop
1	Impuyaki	20	Kaniga	Gicumbi	Wheat
2	Twitezimbere	20	Rutare	Gicumbi	Wheat
3	Comixbu	20	Kisaro	Rulindo	Wheat
4	Cocurirwa	20	Kigabiro	Rwamagana	Rice
5	Kopimu	20	Muhazi	Rwamagana	Tomato
6	Ngwinurebe	20	Rukara	Kayonza	Soybean
7	Duhuzamaboko	20	Mwili	Kayonza	Soybean
8	Indakuki	20	Gashora	Bugesera	Maize
9	COIMU	20	Jenda	Nyabihu	Irish potato
10	Copar Imena	20	Masaka	Kicukiro	Tomato
11	Caepa-Abizeranye	20	Kabarore	Gatsibo	Maize
	TOTAL	220			

H. Collaboration with World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)

ACDI/VOCA continued to work with ICRAF on the shade tree agroforestry project in the Lake Kivu region of the Rutsiro and Rubavu districts. The work supported the development of a sustainable tree seed supply and distribution system whereby ICRAF increased the number of nurseries from four to 80 with the aim of producing one million tree seedlings by December 2009. Seven species (*Grevilea Robusta*, *Polyscias Fulva*, *Cedrela Serrata*, *Maesopsis Eminii*, *Inga Oerstiargana* (Paipai), *Calliandra c.* and *Leuceana d*) have been selected and seeds have been provided to the farmers for their multiplication. In November 2009, cuttings from an eighth variety, *Ficus Thonningi*, will also be obtained for multiplication.

The core nurseries managed by the cooperatives under the Coopérative de Promotion de l'Activité Café (COOPAC) umbrella are now operational in the Rubavu and Rutsiro districts. Approximately one million seedlings have been germinated and will be transplanted into polyethylene bags for distribution to farmers by ICRAF during the rainy season, which is due to start during the fall of 2009. ICRAF presented the project to the governor of the Western Province of Rwanda who gave his support to the project. Local authorities are now expected to assist with the distribution of seedlings, including the coordination and the implementation of activities. To date, approximately 180,096 seedlings have already been distributed to farmers and ICRAF plans to distribute an additional one million.

ICRAF also disseminated agroforestry practices to coffee cooperatives and farmers. An evaluation of tree seedlings and tree planting in coffee gardens was conducted by ICRAF on 143 farmers who had received trees, in order to assess the number of trees that had been planted and their usage. Results of the survey indicate that farmers have certain preferred species for their coffee plots, which include *Alnus*, *Cedrella*, *Leuceana* and *Polyscias*. Additionally, a set of seven factsheets has been produced to inform farmers and stakeholders about the main characteristics of the disseminated tree species. The factsheets are expected to be released in October 2009. Similarly, a short technical note on tree planting in French and Kinyarwanda will be disseminated together with the trees in December 2009.

ICRAF also strengthened the capacity of extension workers in agroforestry and shade tree promotion. Coffee quality training was carried out to help farmers evaluate the current quality of the coffee produced. ICRAF also organized training sessions on coffee quality dedicated to farmers, cooperative and washing station staff and local government personnel. It further set up a database for coffee, in order to maintain data and records on coffee quality, location and agroforestry practices for future production of a coffee quality map of the region.

In FY 2009, ICRAF also carried out on-farm applied research as part of the shade tree development program. The research demonstrated and affirmed that tree shade improves coffee yield and quality in low-input smallholder coffee systems in the hills bordering Lake Kivu in Rwanda. It also demonstrated that intensified management of trees in coffee systems can increase and diversify smallholder farmer incomes. The applied on-farm research specifically quantified the impact of shade on coffee production in terms of coffee tree vigor, yields, and cup quality. It also assessed socio-economic costs and benefits, and farmer perceptions of integrating trees in coffee systems. The ICRAF trial will be ongoing by ICRAF for an additional year (beyond the DAP closing) to understand factors that influence it, including elevation, soils, tree species, temperature, rainfall, light intensity, tree crown characteristics as well as agronomic practices (pruning, mulching, etc.).

The use of shade trees as anti-erosive barriers is expected to improve soil fertility, reduce erosion by protecting steep slopes and increase biodiversity. The added tree cover will also provide fodder and wood as an additional benefit. The use of shade trees and its benefits are still under research and results remain preliminary. However, the program is beginning to change the GOR's assumptions about mono-cropping coffee versus the use of shade cover⁵. Results have been shared with the Office Des Cultures Industrielles du Rwanda (OCIR) to garner their support and encourage appropriate changes in recommended coffee and farming practices.

1.2.2 IRI.2: Improved Access to Markets

1. Muhere-Nzige-Rubona tertiary road

ACDI/VOCA concluded the rehabilitation work on the 8 km Nzige-Rubona and 7 km Muhere-Nzige farm-to-market road sections in the Rwamagana district. The cost of the road rehabilitation totaled approximately \$360,000(Rwf 198,000,000).

An economic impact assessment of the Muhere-Nzige and Nzige-Rubona road rehabilitation segments (totaling 15.7 km) was conducted in May 2009, along with an environmental review of the planned Ntunga-Rubona road rehabilitation segment (10 km). Since October 2008, general spot surveys on the economic impact of the Muhere-Nzige-Rubona tertiary road and field visits by USAID indicate that the rehabilitation of the road has amplified benefits to the community members. These changes include reduced transportation costs, access to the Nzige and Rubona trading centers, and an increased number of traders (or buyers) from Kigali and Rwamagana who participate in the twice-weekly markets. This has started to have a positive impact on prices for staple commodities such as bananas, sweet potatoes, cassava, and other vegetables as buyers from Rwamagana town and Kigali city are now able to reach the farmers. The traders purchase and transport these commodities back to the surrounding main markets and larger towns. They are also able to transport and sell inputs to farmers with greater ease. In terms of social benefits, the new road has improved access to health and government services. Officials expect that the rehabilitated road segment will provide significantly more commercial and marketing opportunities for the Muhere, Nzige, and Rubona sectors' rural population.

2. Ntunga- Rubona tertiary road

USAID/Kigali and ACDI/VOCA met with the local mayor in Rwamagana to review the feasibility for an additional road project proposed by the district. An Initial Environment Review Form (IERF) was presented and later an environmental review carried out, along with a screening report submitted to USAID/Kigali's environmental officer and food aid manager for approval. The road project and environmental review were approved as a category 2 activity per the Africa Bureau standards for Environmental screening of road construction activities. The USAID Mission environmental officer and food aid manager signed off on the environmental screening, authorizing ACDI/VOCA to proceed with the implementation of the proposed \$1 million farm-to-market road rehabilitation work.

ACDI/VOCA awarded Construction Consultancy Company (CCC) a contract to carry out a road study and design the planned 10 km road. Along with the study, tender documents for the actual

⁵ The GOR and OCIR recommend the practice of mono-cropping (only coffee), while ICRAF's agroforestry project and research results recommend shade tree as a more sustainable approach than mono-cropping. The preliminary results of the project are beginning to change the GOR's mindset regarding mono-cropping.

rehabilitation work were developed. Work began in September 2009. In order to be able to complete the road, FFP further extended the Title II program's end date to March 2010. As part of its best practices to build a local framework of stakeholder roles and responsibilities for funded activities, ACDI/VOCA extended its MOU with the district of Rwamagana and formally incorporated the specific road location. Overall, however, the road activity will fall short of the estimated kilometers of road activity planned over the Life of Project (LOP) due to factors tied to the reduced project resource allocation.

1.3 SO 2: Improved Household Health and Nutrition and Reduced Vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

1.3.1 IR 2.1: Improved access and use of health and HIV/AIDS services.

Africare is implementing the Gikongoro Food Security and HIV/AIDS Initiative (GFSI) in Nyamagabe under SO2. In FY 2009, the results achieved for improving access to and use of health and HIV/AIDS services exceeded most of the activity targets.

Africare's Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) facility counseled and tested 1,807 clients (955 men and 852 women). A total of 90 clients (40 men and 50 women) tested positive, indicating 4.98% in HIV/AIDS sero-prevalence. The other 10 VCT facilities counseled and tested 25,257 people (10,525 men and 14,732 women). Among them, 660 (282 men and 378 women) tested positive, indicating 2.61% in HIV/AIDS sero-prevalence. In total, the VCT facilities counseled and tested 27,064, out of which 750 (428 women, 322 men) tested positive showing on average a 2.77% in HIV/AIDS sero-prevalence. The Africare VCT had sero-prevalence of 4.98% in 2009 compared to 12% sero-prevalence in 2006.⁶

The program supported 35 PLWHA associations with a total membership of 2,567 (920 men and 1,647 women). All members of the associations were counseled and tested at the Africare and the other 10 VCT facilities located in the intervention area.

In FY 2009, 2,567 PLWHA within cooperatives received support from Africare, which exceeded Africare's original target of 900 PLWHA. Non-food support was provided through home-based care (HBC) volunteers and consisted of counseling on HIV/AIDS prevention, general palliative care, basic medical care, psychosocial support, nutritional education, and other interventions such as gardening activities. The original target was exceeded due to better organization and greater emphasis on HBC activities. The program also provided health insurance (Mutuelles de Santé) for 997 PLWHA households totaling 3,950 direct beneficiaries.

Peer-education sessions and HIV/AIDS awareness training were also conducted at the Gikongoro youth center through games such as ping pong and billiards.

Africare continued to emphasize the abstinence, being faithful, and correct and consistent use of condom (ABC) approach as a means of mitigating HIV/AIDS infection through training. The ABC behavior change approach was conducted through individual peer-education sessions, as well as through community theater, mobile cinema, sensitization workshops, and seminars and trainings. During FY 2009, HBC volunteers provided psychosocial support, counseling to PLWHA and household members, referral of PLWHA to health services, food aid, and promotion of income-generating activities for PLWHA and their caregivers. In total, 1,903 PLWHA households were

⁶ The steady increase of people visiting the VCTs over the period of DAP is skewing the 2006 and 2009 percentage numbers.
FFP-A-00-04-00073-00
November 2, 2009

monitored by 110 HBC volunteers through 1,507 home visits. A total of 2,567 PLWHA (920 men and 1,647 women) benefited from different types of palliative care (primary medical care and counseling).

Peer-education sessions and HIV/AIDS awareness training were also conducted at the Gikongoro youth center through games, video games, computer literacy courses, and animations using the peer-educator manual. Computer literacy courses have proved popular with the youth. In total, 22,956 youth, including 3,683 girls, attended peer-education sessions at the youth center in FY 2009. In addition to the activities achieved at the youth center, there were also 67 mobile cinema sessions attended by 18,830 individuals, including 4,433 girls, 5,554 boys, 4,488 men and 4,355 women. As a consequence, the total number of individuals who visited the VCTs also increased.

1.3.2 IR 2.2.2: Mitigated impact of HIV/AIDS on the nutritional status of PLWHA

The reduction of underweight children (0-36 months) within program-assisted cooperatives and associations reached a percentage of 16.7%⁷ in 2009, thereby exceeding the targeted reduction percentage of 12.7%. The 2005 baseline for the impact indicator was 27.6%, so a total reduction of 10.9% from the baseline to the final survey. The registration and weighing of children 0-5 years of age in order to identify their nutritional status also contributed to the reduction of underweight children.

The total decrease of malnourished children that had families participate in the Positive Deviance Approach (FARN) activities⁸ also exceeded planned targets. The data was compiled by comparing the children before their participation in FARN activities and afterwards⁹. At the beginning of FY 2009, a total of 1,534 malnourished children with their mothers participated in four cycles of FARN implementation. The nutritional status of the children showed that 87.4% of the children (1,341) were moderately malnourished and 12.6% of the children (193) were severely malnourished. After 18 months of FARN activities, the nutritional status of most children had improved significantly as 89.7% (1,376) out of the 1,534 children were now well-nourished. A total of 9.3% (143) were moderately malnourished and only 1% (15) was severely malnourished.

In collaboration with ISAR, the project also promoted the harvest of yellow sweet potatoes grown in 18 FARN sites by 1,185 direct beneficiaries (515 men and 670 women). The yellow sweet potato is rich in nutrients and contains vitamin A, necessary for body growth, the prevention of eye infections, and the fight against dermatitis and blood infections. Soya farming activities at the community level were also undertaken with ISAR's support by 261 beneficiaries (105 men and 156 women) from 13 associations to help the fight against child malnutrition.

For FY 2009, a total of 999.7 MT of food commodities, including 338.6 MT of CSB, 601.1 MT of bulgur and 60 MT of vegetable oil were delivered to Africare during the months of April and June, 2009. Food balances remaining from FY 2009 totaled 401.71 MT, including 164.46 MT of CSB, 210.91 of bulgur and 26.34 MT of vegetable oil, which will be distributed in FY 2010.

⁷ The data is from the final evaluation survey, which sampled 360 household in the project intervention area. In total 552 children under 5 year of age including 418 children aged 0-36 months participated in the anthropometric measurement.

⁸ FARN activities teach parents good nutrition practices.

⁹ This approach is based on the hearth model approach whereby the nutritional status of children is measured by the analysis of children who were weighed before participating in the 12 day session, after 6 months of participation, after 12 months and finally after 18 month of participation.

The number of HIV/AIDS service providers receiving food rations surpassed the program's original target of 3,901 beneficiaries. A total of 4,952 service providers benefited from food rations. This number is composed of 110 HBC-volunteers, 122 nutrition community volunteers, 120 peer educators and 4,600 peer counselors. The monthly ration for HBC volunteers, peer educators and nutrition community volunteers was composed of 6.25 kg of CSB, 6.25 kg of bulgur, and 1.85 kg of vegetable oil. Peer counselors received about half of the peer educators' rations.

Africare also distributed food rations to 1,903 PLWHA households, who are members of 35 associations, 19 of which have now been consolidated into seven cooperatives, exceeding its original target of 900 affected households. The monthly ration provided by the program to PLWHA households (assuming a household size of five) is composed of 25 kg of CSB, 25 kg of bulgur, and 3.7 kg of vegetable oil. In total, 1,051.4 MT of food commodities composed of 380.9 MT of CSB, 616.9 MT of bulgur and 53.6 MT of vegetable oil were distributed to the 1,903 PLWHA households and to the 4,952 community volunteers during FY 2009.

A total of 43,420 children (0-5 years of age) from households in cooperatives and associations were registered in the growth monitoring program at 61 different sites in the intervention areas. A total of 29,976 children were regularly weighed in FY 2009. The percentage of children (0-5 years) in cooperatives and associations that participated in the growth monitoring program reached a total of 69.03% ¹⁰ (out of which 92.04% was achieved during FY 2009). However, the percentage did not reach the 75% target because, although a large number of children were registered for weighing, some of them did not report to the nutrition sites, but instead visited the nearest health centers in their locality.

The growth monitoring program for PLWHA receiving food rations at the community level began in FY 2009, enabling the program to monitor the beneficiaries' body mass index (BMI). A total of 2,222 PLWHA (99.55%) out of 2,232 PLWHA participating in the program were found to be in good condition after 6-12 months with a BMI over 18.5 (satisfactory). In addition, only 0.55% (10) PLWHA were moderately malnourished while no beneficiary was found to be severely malnourished.

1.4 Objective 3: Increased access to basic food commodities through monetization and local production

1.4.1 IR 3.1: Increased availability of basic commodities through monetization

A. Sales

As the umbrella monetizer, ACDI/VOCA managed commodity shipments and monetization of donated food commodity for the three Title II CSs, ACDI/VOCA, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and World Vision (WV). In 2009, the program received and monetized 751 MT of donated, refined United States of America (USA) vegetable oil. Additionally, the program received 60 MT of vegetable oil, 601.36 MT of bulgur wheat and 339 MT of corn soy blend (CSB) for distribution to PLWHA through Africare.

Three tender sales were held during FY 2009. The 751 MT of vegetable oil sold received a relatively low sales price compared to the 3,905 MT sold in FY 2008. In addition, 450 MT of vegetable oil called forward by ACDI/VOCA as part of its FY 2009 Program and Resource

¹⁰ Data from the regular growth monitoring program.
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Estimate Pipeline (PREP) was delivered to ACDI/VOCA but not sold; instead it was transferred to the World Food Program (WFP) in October 2009 per FFP's instructions.

Tender sales of small lots (45 cartons per lot) continued to be the mechanism of choice for monetizing vegetable oil, while negotiated sales were used to monetize commodity left over from tender sales. A total of 573.61 MT was sold through tender sales while 178.24 MT were sold through negotiated sales during FY 2009. An average of 10 buyers participated in the three sales held in FY 2009 compared to 19 buyers in FY 2008. The number of bids submitted per sale also decreased from 147 in FY 2008 to 58 in FY 2009.

The average cost recovery for USA vegetable oil from the three sales held in FY 2009 was around 105%. This indicates that demand for the vegetable oil is still strong although indications towards the end of the fiscal year were that the demand may have been affected by the inflow of substitutable vegetable oil coming in to Rwanda from Kenya and Uganda as a result of the economic integration of the East African Community (EAC).

1.4.2 IR 3.2: Strengthened capacity of local traders to market and distribute imported and locally produced commodities

Over the years, ACDI/VOCA has sought to use monetization as a development tool to strengthen the capacity of local traders to market and distribute imported and locally produced commodities. Prior to each tender sale, potential buyers are invited to a training about the monetization process. This helps new buyers understand the process while old buyers get an opportunity to seek clarification where needed.

In FY 2008, six traders participated in the training. Despite ACDI/VOCA's best efforts to invite potential buyers for training in FY 2009, no one showed up. This can be explained by two factors: 1) monetization has been going on in Rwanda for the last 8 years and most buyers who have participated in the past are familiar with the monetization process and do not need refresher training; 2) the tonnage offered this year was relatively small, which reduced the number of buyers participating. In addition, the inflow of substitutable products from Kenya and Uganda may have decreased the number of buyers interested in USA vegetable oil.

Out of the three tender calls held in FY 2009, tender call # 82 offered the largest volume of vegetable oil at 441 MT and was the only sale where vegetable oil was set aside for buyers from outside of Kigali. The other two tender calls held in March (100 MT for CRS) and in August (210 MT for WV) 2009 were relatively small tonnages, thus it was not viable to set oil aside for traders from outside of Kigali.

A total of 17 different buyers participated in the tender sales in FY 2009 compared to 32 in FY 2008. However, the percentage of vegetable oil bought by buyers from outside Kigali increased from 20% in FY 2008 to 53% in FY 2009. Although only a total of five women participated in the FY 2009 tender sales compared to nine in FY 2008, the percentage of women bidders increased in FY 2009 to 48% from around 37% in FY 2008. The percentage of vegetable oil bought by women also increased from 48% in FY 2008 to 60% in FY 2009.

2.0 Success Stories

1. Rural road rehabilitation increases farmers' access to markets

Under the USAID-funded Title II Development Assistance Program (DAP), ACIDI/VOCA has rehabilitated a rural network of tertiary roads and bridges in Rwanda to help farmers access markets and vital social services, thereby reducing food insecurity.

In the Rwamagana district, the state of agriculture for many growing areas has been characterized by low-value farming with little to no improved inputs. It also has been constrained by poor access to markets and high transportation costs. The USAID Title II Program has rehabilitated 55.5 km of tertiary feeder roads and 30 small bridges in the Rubavu and Rwamagana districts over the last seven years, benefiting 21,000 local inhabitants. Another 10 km stretch of road is under rehabilitation between the Rubona and Mwurire sectors in Rwamagana; it will complete a network of 26 km of road with the main provincial road to Kigali and Rwamagana cities (including 15.8 km from previous work).

This road rehabilitation is credited with improving commerce, increasing transportation of goods and services and facilitating farmer access to markets in targeted areas. As a result, tomatoes, sorghum, bananas, livestock and other commodities produced have increased in profitability.

Testimonies gathered during focus group discussions with community leaders, local officials and transporters from Murehe, Nzige and Rubona in the Rwamagana district reported that:

Buyers from Kigali now travel the rehabilitated road wishing to purchase sorghum and tomatoes. They will stop at the “farm gate” if the quantity is large enough, or at designated collection points along the road. Prior to road rehabilitation, these buyers did not travel the roads, and a farmer had to bring his product to local markets to sell. Now he has two options—to sell to the traveling buyers, or continue to journey to the nearby market, with much more significant ease, to sell his product. (From a focus group discussion)

”Before the rehabilitation of these roads, we used to sell our products at a lower price as very few traders could reach our place. To reach our market, traders from Rwamagana town had to use another road and travelled 50 km, but now they only travel 28 km.” Mr. Wikizu Innocent, agronomist of the Nzige sector



Figure 1 - Unrehabilitated road from Rubona to the Mwurire sector, Rwamagana District



Figure 2 - Rehabilitated road from Nzige to Rubona Sector, Rwamagana District



Figure 1 - Local market in the Mwurire sector, Rwamagana District

2. *Wheat harvest jumps seven-fold for a cooperative in Northern Rwanda*

Cooperative Mixte de Buyoga (COMIXBU), which partnered with ACDI/VOCA in a wheat development project in Rulindo district, increased its wheat production from 3 metric tons in 2008 to a record 21.4 metric tons this year. The collaboration between ACDI/VOCA and COMIXBU and their related achievement in wheat production is an example of the type of investments Rwanda must make in agricultural development to realize the country's Vision 2020 Plan for economic development and poverty reduction, said Hon. Governor of Northern Province Aime Bosenibamwe, who attended the harvest celebration. COMIXBU's efforts provide a model for other cooperatives to follow, added Bosenibamwe, highlighting the steps the cooperative took to improve its leadership and management. The project provided COMIXBU's 80 members with a mix of training support and supplies to increase agricultural yields. ACDI/VOCA staff trained cooperative members on agricultural techniques and business management and provided them with improved agricultural inputs, including wheat seed, lime and fertilizer. The cooperative's management also received budget and accounting support to improve the efficiency and type of services offered to COMIXBU members.

Ms. Donata Muragijimana, one of the 20 women members of COMIXBU and the best wheat producer for COMIXBU, provided testimony about the progress she had made as a result of the Title II grant support. She highlighted that while she considered herself to be a good farmer, her previous achievements were overshadowed by the 765 Kgs of wheat she harvested this year which is a significant increase from her previous best of 150 Kgs. This has now put her in a position to comfortably send her kids to school and pay up her family's health insurance premiums, which she struggled with before.



Figure 3 - Ms. Donata Muragijimana, one of the 20 women members of COMIXBU and the best wheat producing member, Rulindo district



Figure 4 - COMIXBU wheat producers harvesting wheat, Rulindo district

3.0 Lessons Learned

ACDI/VOCA has found that working with agricultural cooperatives to be an effective means of reaching a large number of farmers. However, they are often high risk, lack accountability, qualified or skilled personnel and internal controls and effective management. Therefore, they require a lot of oversight and support, in addition to cooperative leadership and management training and experienced personnel if they are to become a viable business. Additionally, training alone is not sufficient and requires extended technical follow up to reinforce the adoption and application of good practices, including skill development using mentoring or coaching methods.

4.0 Closeout Status

ACDI/VOCA has received notification that it will receive an unfunded extension in order to continue implementation of its road rehabilitation activity through March 31, 2010. ACDI/VOCA is currently awaiting the TA modification. All other activities will end on January 31, 2010.

Appendix A – List of Cooperatives Approved for Grants by the FSC in FY 2009

NAME	Commodity	IMPLEMENTATOR	STATUS
Cooptcpe	Wheat	ACDI/VOCA	Canceled
COIMU	Potato	ACDI/VOCA	Implemented
Ngwinurebe	Soy bean	ACDI/VOCA	Implemented
Duhuzamaboko	Soy bean	ACDI/VOCA	Implemented
KDMR	Cassava	ACDI/VOCA/AFRICARE	Implemented
Koronawe	Potato	AFRICARE	Implemented
Abisunzimana	Potato	AFRICARE	Implemented
Cofpa Ongera Cooperative	Cabbage	AFRICARE	Canceled
Icyizere Cooperative	Maize	AFRICARE	Canceled
Koperative Duharanirubuzima Bwacu	Passiflora	AFRICARE	Canceled