



USAID
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USAID'S AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS



WHY DOES USAID INVEST IN AGRICULTURE?

Agriculture programs supported by USAID are helping farmers, agricultural input distributors, food processors, and other rural enterprises increase their competitiveness and access to domestic and export markets. Development of well functioning markets act as catalysts to increase the growth and demand for cost-reducing technologies and improved product quality from USAID-supported agricultural research. The resulting improved efficiencies and productivity within the agricultural supply chain enables farms and related businesses to increase incomes and savings and to diversify into high-value labor-intensive products. This in turn provides the financial and operational underpinnings to support rapid growth in other sectors and the national economy. In addition, a more nutritious, stable, and available supply of food and fiber at lower cost leads to higher real incomes of urban residents and a healthier and more productive workforce for an increase in overall national growth and well being.

WHAT DOES USAID DO IN AGRICULTURE

USAID agricultural programs focus on four strategic themes – expanding trade, enhancing sustainability, mobilizing science and technology, and knowledge dissemination and outreach. USAID supports:

- producers and agribusinesses to identify commodities in demand, improve product quality, and connect to local, regional, and global markets;
- policies and practices that build up rather than degrade the fertility of soils and otherwise protect land, water, and forestry resources;
- transfer of modern science and technology and building local research capacity to meet competitive challenges to quality, productivity, and sustainability; and
- agricultural training, education, and extension that help rural producers tap into research and information on markets and technology applications.

WHERE DOES USAID INVEST IN AGRICULTURE?

USAID invests in agriculture in countries that invest in people, adopt sound trade, agricultural and environmental policies, and build roads and other infrastructure so markets can work. In rebuilding and developing countries, the challenges are to get the economy moving rapidly and improve economic predictability; lay the foundations for sustainability; jump start recovery with local applications of appropriate science and technology; and 4) spread new knowledge and techniques within weak institutions. Countries in which the United States has a strategic interest receive agricultural assistance that stimulates economic growth, reduces poverty, and supports U.S. foreign policy goals underlying the overall assistance effort.

WHO DOES USAID WORK WITH?

To ensure that reforms and agricultural programs respond to market and on-the-ground conditions, developing countries and donor agencies like USAID must partner with both the public and private sector. The Agency cultivates strong, cooperative ties with the U.S. agribusiness and cooperative sector, international science and technology organizations, U.S. colleges and universities, non-governmental organizations, and other U.S. government agencies.

USAID Agriculture Programs under the Foreign Assistance Framework

Beginning in FY 2007, USAID agriculture programs are included under the Economic Growth Objective of the Foreign Assistance Framework. The Agency organizes its agriculture program under two program elements – Agricultural Enabling Environment and Agricultural Sector Productivity.

Agricultural Enabling Environment programs support agricultural policies, institutions, and agricultural markets; foster adoption of improved technology; invest in infrastructure at all levels; and enhance the natural resource base in ways that respond to the needs of men and women producers.

Agricultural sector productivity programs sustain the productivity of the agricultural sector through investments that foster increasing returns to land, labor, and capital. Targeted interventions to male and female producers provide improvements in technology and management practices; expanded access to markets and credit; increased organizational and market efficiency; and restoration and protection of resiliency in production and livelihood systems.