



Regional Health & HIV/AIDS (RHH)



USAID is strengthening care of mothers and children under five in the region by working with African regional organizations and national health providers to reduce mortality.

Background

The health status of East African residents is among the poorest in the world. High rates of infectious diseases and maternal and child mortality challenge national health systems that remain underfunded and overburdened.

Nonetheless, the past decade has seen considerable progress throughout the region, with particular gains in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment as well as child survival rates. USAID contributes significantly to these important achievements.

USAID/East Africa adheres to the principles of the U.S. Global Health Initiative (GHI) by:

- emphasizing sustainability through supporting African-led health initiatives, including both policies and programs
- intensifying synergies between health, agriculture, environment, and other programs;
- promoting new technologies to achieve impact and scale, and
- deliberately fostering gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Programs

HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS program’s long-term goal is to support national health systems to develop programs to improve quality of health services, lower HIV infection rates and mitigate the impact of the epidemic in East Africa.

Current programs focus on high-risk mobile populations including truck drivers, sex workers and the border communities through which they transit. Since 2005, USAID’s Roads to a Healthy Future (ROADS II) project has partnered with USAID bilateral missions to introduce innovative and evidence-based approaches to reduce risky behavior and increase the use of HIV services by high-risk mobile populations.

Through assistance to the Regional Center for Quality of Health Care (RCQHC) in Uganda, USAID/EA has supported development of training materials for pediatric HIV care and treatment, as well as curricula for health-service quality improvement (QI) in both pre-service and on-the-job training for doctors, nurses, and other health-care providers.

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2012 Funding:

\$9.9million

Partners:

- East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA), based in Tanzania
- Regional Center for Quality of Health Care (RCQHC), based in Uganda
- Family Health International
- Pathfinder
- Health Insurance Fund

Geographic Location:

12 countries in East and Central Africa



A community-based distributor of contraceptives teaches a mother how to use “cycle beads” to reduce her chance of pregnancy. USAID is promoting family planning/reproductive health services in Burundi.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

Nearly all countries in East Africa have made headway in reducing maternal and under-five mortality since the 1990s. But none are likely to meet the related Millennium Development Goals. To accelerate progress, USAID/EA is working with African regional organizations and national health providers to advocate for MCH to receive higher priority in health-sector budgets, and to scale up proven, low-cost interventions that save lives. USAID/EA is also engaging global health partnerships and the private sector to increase coverage and impact of MNCH programs.

Nutrition

RHH is working with Feed the Future (FTF) to promote dietary diversity and strengthen regional partnerships for fortification and food safety, including the reduction of aflatoxin.

For instance, USAID is increasing regional trade in staple foods to increase food availability. To reduce vitamin deficiencies, we work with public and private-sector partners to fortify maize, wheat, sugar and cooking oil. We work with African regional regulatory bodies to ensure quality standards.

Tuberculosis (TB)

USAID/EA continues to lead the policy dialogue on TB as a re-emerging threat to the continent, given the rising rate of TB/HIV co-infection and the threat of multi-drug resistant TB. RHH is:

- Supporting a Center of Excellence in Rwanda to coordinate regional training in MDR-TB and infection control
- In partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization, assisting a diagnostic laboratory in Uganda to become a fully certified “supranational” reference laboratory on a par with the highest caliber laboratories in the world
- Working with East Central and South African Health Community (ECSA-HC) to develop a policy on the MDR-TB failures and introduction of TB data management software in the region.

Family Planning and Reproductive Health (FP/RH)

Since both maternal mortality and population growth in East Africa are among the highest in the world, USAID/EA is promoting FP/RH services through:

- improving the capacity of health workers to deliver high-quality FP/RH services;
- integrating FP/RH services with HIV/AIDS, MCH, environmental and other programs to facilitate access;
- addressing sexual and gender-based violence, and
- strengthening health policy and regulation to expand effective delivery of FP/RH.

Polio

USAID supports the Polio eradication initiative in the region of Horn and East Africa, by strengthening surveillance in several countries in the region through the World Health Organization. In addition, RHH plays a crucial role in advocacy, coordination and leveraging of resources for polio eradication and response actions in case of an outbreak.

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