

**BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)**

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Programs in Lesotho and Swaziland

In Lesotho and Swaziland, the cumulative effects of recurrent droughts in recent years, particularly pronounced in 2006 and 2007, have severely affected the resiliency of poor households and resulted in serious water shortages in both countries. Decades of intensive agriculture and livestock overgrazing have further degraded agricultural land. According to the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network, food prices remain higher than the five-year average, affecting vulnerable households' food security. In addition, both countries suffer from HIV/AIDS prevalence rates exceeding 20 percent. USAID/OFDA DRR programming aims to reduce the impact of recurrent drought on vulnerable populations through mitigation interventions, including income generation and livelihood diversification, to improve household resiliency and increase food security.



DROUGHT MITIGATION IN SWAZILAND

In partnership with International Relief and Development (IRD), USAID/OFDA is strengthening food security through a community-based drought mitigation program in Shiselweni and Lubombo districts in Swaziland. IRD has installed rooftop water harvesting systems at 14 primary schools located in the two districts, providing safe drinking water to nearly 7,000 schoolchildren, coupled with hygiene training for students, school committee members, and parents. IRD is also training nearly 700 farmers in conservation agriculture, a farming practice that promotes soil and water conservation and reduces losses during drought.

REDUCTION OF DROUGHT VULNERABILITIES IN SOUTHERN SWAZILAND

IRD is implementing a three-year program, initiated in 2009, to reduce drought vulnerability of more than 40,000 people in southern Swaziland. The USAID/OFDA-funded program will build on successes and lessons learned from a previous USAID/OFDA-funded IRD program to expand low-cost and low-input conservation farming techniques. The program combines agriculture activities with livestock management and water provision interventions, including rooftop water-harvesting systems at schools, as well as the introduction of water management schemes that will enhance the sustainability of water supply activities.

MOUNTAIN INTEGRATED CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE (MICA) IN LESOTHO

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) CARE and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are jointly implementing a two-year USAID/OFDA-funded project to strengthen rural mountain livelihoods for 12,000 individuals in Lesotho by combining the promotion of conservation agriculture techniques with improved access to markets and improved seed varieties and fertilizers. The project aims to increase agricultural production while reducing the vulnerability of rural livelihoods to drought and soil erosion. The NGOs also will train community farmer groups in project planning, management, and marketing to enable communities to effectively manage natural resources and surplus production.

LESOTHO IRRIGATION PROJECT II (LIP II)

Building on experience gained from the USAID/OFDA-funded Lesotho Irrigation Project, the one-year LIP II intervention focuses on gravity-fed irrigation of field crops and homestead gardens for more than 8,000 individuals. The project is establishing new irrigation schemes to complement other ongoing agriculture and food security projects while expanding and enhancing current LIP sites to improve community access to water for irrigation. The project, led by CRS, is implemented through a consortium that also includes the NGOs World Vision and CARE.