

USAID Integrated Improved Livelihoods Program (IILP) Rwanda - Nutrition Integration

Program Brief

Nutrition is a key sector for a country's sustainable development. It contributes to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, to which Rwanda has committed itself as a member of the international community. In Rwanda, 44% of children under age of five face chronic malnutrition with the Western province among the highest (49%) (DHS2010). Child feeding practices of children between 12 and 23 months (types of foods consumed by children)-are significant predictors of their stunting. In particular, 11% of children receive breastfeeding before 6months and children between one and two years old who had consumed milk products were significantly less stunted than other children of the same age category (CFSVA 2012). USAID Integrated Improved Livelihoods Program (IILP), locally known as USAID Ejo Heza (Kinyarwanda for "Brighter Future"), is a five year program (2011 – 2016) funded by the USAID Feed the Future initiative that seeks to improve the livelihoods and food consumption of 75,000 of Rwanda's very poor, particularly women. To date over 87,646 households (84%) have been reached by the program (GC Report, March 2015). The integrated approach to development facilitated by the program provides an opportunity for community members to participate in a broad range of activities whose result is a more rounded positive change in their well being.



A woman harvests beet roots from her kitchen garden

It is funded by USAID's Presidential Feed the Future initiative (www.feedthefuture.gov). Shaped in line with Feed the Future's global mandate to sustainably reduce global hunger and the Government of Rwanda's (GOR) goals as outlined in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) II and the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA) III, USAID Ejo Heza activities continue to be implemented around four main components; Increase demand for financial services, Increase supply of financial services, Behavior Change Communication (BCC), Health and Nutrition.



A woman shows off the green peppers she harvested

Partnerships

The project is led by Global Communities, working with a consortium of partners including: Save the Children International, CARITAS, DUHAMIC-ADRI, AEE and ADEPR. Global Communities and Save the Children provide technical leadership on the program, transferring knowledge, skills, and tools to assure consis-

tent, quality services to program beneficiaries across the areas of operation. The local Rwanda Partner Organizations (RPOs) implement the program on the ground and work directly with local authorities and community volunteers to deliver services through the program entry points: Literacy, Integrated Savings and Lending Groups, Cooperatives and Nutrition. Save the Children leads all nutrition activities by implementing complementary short-term and long-term actions to ensure that the most vulnerable populations attain skills and knowledge that lead to greater food security and greater understanding of diet, nutrition and hygiene, especially within the critical first 1,000 days of newborn children and their mothers. The messages focuses on Infant and Young Child Feeding (1000 Days), Maternal nutrition during pregnancy and breastfeeding, How to breastfeed a baby up to 6 months, How to feed a baby from 6 to 24 months, Kitchen gardens, Hand Washing and Healthy Cooking.



Two women study nutrition concepts in their adult literacy class

Program Specific Objectives:

All nutrition activities are linked closely with both education and extension services within this program as well as with the stringent approval requirements of the Government of Rwanda to achieve the following objectives:

1. **Incorporating Nutrition into Adult Literacy Education**
2. **Improving Production, Storage, and Handling**
3. **Establishing Kitchen Gardens**
4. **Promoting better food utilization**



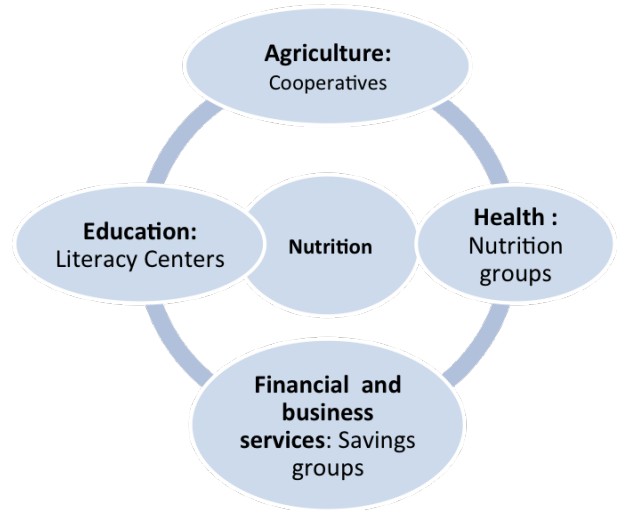
From left to right: A man proudly displays his carrots of better quality due to better storage and post-harvest handling, a woman plants a kitchen garden, a mother feeds her child a balanced diet

Geographic Coverage:

The IILP Program covers eight districts of the Southern and Western Provinces of Rwanda: Nyaruguru, Nyanza, Huye, Nyamagabe, Gisagara in the Southern Province and Rutsiro, Karongi and Ngororero in the Western Province.

Implementation Strategies/Methodology:

In order for USAID Ejo Heza activities to be sustainable, “Be the Change Volunteers” (BCVs) are used to facilitate grass root program activities. BCVs assist in training individual beneficiaries and mentoring them on the four program elements surrounding nutrition, agriculture and savings. BCVs also collect data on services provided to the community. To date over 2000 BCVs have been trained in the program elements and using this approach-cascade training, over 40,000 people are trained in health and nutrition and more than 8,000 kitchen gardens are established. Those community volunteers (BCVs) work with local authorities to deliver services through the program entry points: Functional Adult Literacy (FAL), Integrated Savings and Lending Groups (ISLGs), Cooperatives and Nutrition groups.



The particularity of nutrition groups provide a channel through which community members can learn about better methods of food utilization and cooking for healthier diets. They use the knowledge within their own households and share it with their neighbors through establishment of kitchen gardens. Each nutrition group has on average 30 members.

Key Achievements in the Nutrition Program:

No	USAID Ejo Heza Indicators	Progress - March 2015	LOP Targets - June 2016
1	# of rural households benefitting directly from USG interventions (CA, F, FTF, 4.5.2-12)	87,646	104,350
2	% of beneficiaries consuming a diet with increased diversification (GC)	26%	85%
3	% of beneficiaries with increased knowledge about balanced & diversified diet (GC)	87%	90%
4	# of people trained in child health and nutrition through USG supported programs (FTF 3.1.9-1)	75,016	75,000
5	# of kitchen gardens established (GC)	11,591	11,000