



Food and Nutrition Make the Difference in Uganda



Photo: Sandra Kugonza

USAID helps people living with HIV/AIDS through a food distribution point in Mbale-Ngagama, Uganda.

Since 2003, USAID has provided food worth more than \$30 million to people living with HIV/AIDS and their dependants in selected regions of Uganda. In addition to providing food, the program distributes a food supplement (corn-soy blend) and vegetable oil, and conducts a nutrition campaign to educate people about the benefits of healthy-eating practices.

For some, this program is critical to life-saving medical treatment. Irene Nakitto, an 11-year-old girl, was too weak to receive the food rations when they were first being distributed in her hometown of Kitovu in Uganda. A few weeks later, she was hospitalized for three months and given anti-retroviral (ARV) medication to control her symptoms related to HIV. Her family brought rations from the USAID food distribution site to the hospital which was crucial for her to gain strength and weight.

The ARV medication helped to control the disease, but without the correct nutrition, Irene would have remained weak. Proper diet is recommended for all people living with HIV/AIDS. With or without ARV's, nutritious food can prolong the length and quality of life of HIV/AIDS patients. Irene was soon able to return to school and join her classmates.

Photo & Caption

