



# OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

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## Burundi Program Summary – March 2006

The assassination of the democratically elected president in October 1993 marked the beginning of an ongoing conflict in Burundi that has claimed more than 300,000 lives and displaced 1.3 million people at its peak. While large-scale fighting subsided following the signing of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement in August 2000, the effects of the conflict and ongoing skirmishes continue to exacerbate the vulnerability of Burundians with limited access to social services, health, and educational or economic opportunities. In January 2006, U.N. agencies estimated that approximately 117,000 Burundians remained displaced and an additional 448,000 Burundians lived as refugees. In late February, the Government of Burundi issued an appeal for emergency food assistance to more than 400,000 families in north and eastern provinces affected by current drought conditions. Since 1993, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$126 million in vital emergency assistance to vulnerable populations in Burundi, including emergency relief supplies, health care, nutrition programs, and water and sanitation improvements, as well as food security and agriculture activities.

### USAID/OFDA ASSESSMENT

In February 2006, a USAID/OFDA assessment team visited Burundi to assess conditions and review ongoing programs. The USAID/OFDA team was composed of the East and Central Africa Regional Coordinator and Disaster Operations Specialist, as well as the USAID/OFDA Burundi Emergency Disaster Response Coordinator and Program Assistant. The team visited water and sanitation programs in Bujumbura Rural Province, observed distributions of emergency relief supplies in Cibitoke Province, and monitored food security and nutrition initiatives in Muyinga Province. The team confirmed the need for continued assistance to vulnerable populations, yet noted that the problems facing Burundians were the effects of structural poverty and limited basic services, rather than an acute humanitarian crisis. In light of the impending food security crisis, the team recommended enhancing food security initiatives, such as seed distributions and nutrition programs.

### FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE

According to the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), 2.2 million Burundians are food insecure and in need of food assistance in 2006 due to a combination of drought, crop disease, and chronic poverty. With support from USAID/OFDA, two implementing partners are carrying out programs aimed at increasing food security and decreasing vulnerabilities in Bujumbura Rural, Kirundo, Ruyigi, Gitega, Bubanza, and Muyinga provinces. Initiatives include seed fairs, seed and tool distributions, and livestock health programs. USAID/OFDA supports the International Agriculture Research Center's efforts to mitigate the impact of Cassava Mosaic Disease on vulnerable and resource-poor farmers in Burundi. In addition, USAID/OFDA provides support to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to enhance food security early warning and coordination systems.

### HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Years of conflict, compounded by drought, poor agricultural outputs, and chronic poverty, have severely impacted the health and nutrition of rural Burundians. Through five implementing partners USAID/OFDA aims to improve access to health care by funding health clinics and education campaigns, as well as supplementary and therapeutic feeding centers in Kirundo, Muyinga, and Bujumbura Rural provinces. Additionally, through the U.N. World Health Organization, USAID/OFDA supports epidemiological surveillance of diseases in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health.

### EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES

The need for emergency relief supplies remains great among populations affected by ongoing security incidents, as well as refugees returning from neighboring countries. One USAID/OFDA partner distributes relief supplies, including water containers, blankets, soap, and clothing, to vulnerable populations throughout the country.

*March 21, 2006*