

Rwanda, USADF sign \$92,000 grant

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THE United States African Development Foundation (USADF) on Monday signed a US \$92,000 (about Rwf 50.6m) grant to support economic development in Rwanda, a press release from the U.S. Embassy has indicated.

The grant's beneficiary - Coopérative des Agriculteurs de la Culture de Pomme de Terre de Karago, is a cooperative located in Mukamira, Nyabihu District,

Western Province.

The grant, the first to be signed with Rwanda this year, will support the expansion of potato production to which is to be done on larger scale.

"By directly funding this cooperative, USADF is promoting economic development at the grass-roots level in Rwanda in an effort to create jobs and secure a higher quality of life for members," USADF President, Lloyd Pierson, was quoted saying.

The cooperative has a membership of 363 people, 71 percent of whom are widows of the 1994 genocide.

The funding will increase potato production by constructing a storage facility, hiring technical assistance to develop a five-year business plan, acquiring training, and establishing a stock of new seed varieties, fertilizers, fungicides, hoes, packaging materials, and protective gear for pesticide applicators.

"Members' production is projected to increase from 806 metric tons to 1,210 by the end of the project". The USADF reportedly re-established programming in Rwanda in 2004 and its current portfolio includes 17 projects totaling US\$2.7 million.

According to the release, USADF is a US Government agency "dedicated to expanding access to economic opportunity in Africa" and currently, it operates in 20 African countries.

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