

Addressing Food Insecurity in Rwanda

The people of Rwanda, along with the government and national and international non-government organisations, have been using a range of methods to respond to the problems of food insecurity and malnutrition. World Vision uses a model called an Area Development Program (ADP) when working with poor communities to address the issues of poverty, such as food insecurity. Some examples of projects designed to address food insecurity and malnutrition, as part of the ADPs in Rwanda, are outlined below.

What is an Area Development Program?

An Area Development Program is an approach to poverty reduction and community-based development. An ADP operates in a geographical area that is large enough to have some regional impact, but small enough to make a major impact on the individuals and communities in that area. Typically an ADP may cover an area with a population of between 20,000 to 40,000 people. The activities that take place in an ADP vary according to the context and the expressed needs of the community. They may have projects that focus on issues such as clean water, education, agriculture, health and nutrition, preparing for disasters, improving livelihoods, and advocacy and leadership skills. ADPs typically run for 10 to 15 years, and are designed to be sustainable.

Projects that assist in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition

When World Vision began working with communities in northern Rwanda, prior to starting, an assessment was made of their needs. It was found that over 80 percent of community members experienced regular food shortages. For many people these shortages lasted for one to three months, for some families however the shortages could last for four to six months or longer.

As part of the ADP programs, several projects were started with the aim of reducing malnutrition and food insecurity. These included:

Providing training in agricultural skills such as modern farming techniques like seed harvesting, financial management and entrepreneurship, and how to farm new types of crops. This helped farmers to improve the productivity of their farms, and diversify the range of crops they grew. As a result, they had more food, were able to eat a wider variety of foods, and had additional crops to sell which improved their income.



Providing nutrition education, and helping community members to supplement the food consumption of malnourished children. Community members, in particular parents of young children, received training in how to have a balanced diet. Young children, who were

identified as malnourished, participate in an intensive feeding program. Children are also able to receive breakfasts and lunches at a nutrition centre that provides parents with the opportunity to contribute and share food.



Assisting the poorest community members by providing them with seedlings and livestock, such as goats and cows. These community members were able to make their farms more productive. Cows, for example, provide milk, which can be consumed and the excess sold to help generate income, and the manure can be used as fertilizer to assist in growing crops.

Case study: Mugabo's story

Mugabo used to farm a very small plot of land. He and his family had a limited income, and typically only ate one meal a day, usually of sweet potato and beans. They were often ill. Mugabo received training in income generation and management, and was given onion seeds for his farm. Using income from the sale of the onion crop, he purchased a cow to provide his family with milk. He also received training on how to farm mushrooms. Using the income generated from the farm, he and his family are now able to eat three meals a day and are healthy.

For you to do

1. Create a mind map showing the different strategies for improving food security and reducing malnutrition.



2. Write a short paragraph explaining how improving incomes helps to reduce food insecurity and address malnutrition.

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