



USAID | SOUTHERN AFRICA

REGIONAL PROFILE



South African women generate income for their families tending peppers at a USAID-funded greenhouse.

OVERVIEW

In Southern Africa, the United States seeks to increase trade and strengthen economic ties within the region, address the HIV/AIDS crisis, mitigate recurrent food insecurity, and strengthen democracy to reduce the risk of conflict in the region. USAID/Southern Africa, located in Pretoria, South Africa, complements and enhances USAID's bilateral programs, supporting unique and innovative regional activities and providing a range of services to assist USAID missions in the region.



PROGRAMS

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

In southern Africa, multi-party democracy has received more popular support and endorsement than any other form of governance. However, democratic values and practices remain shallow-rooted, and progress toward democratic consolidation is slow, with evidence of regression in some countries. Governance systems are characterized by overbearing executive arms of governments and dominant single parties that rule in perpetuity. And, as recent elections in Africa have demonstrated, post-election transitions can become contentious and even violent. As a result, USAID's regional democracy and governance program aims to strengthen the legitimacy and capacity of key governmental institutions and build the advocacy capacity of selected regional civil society organizations.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Southern African countries recognize that increased trade and open markets are the drivers of economic growth and poverty reduction. However, because of policies and regulations that constrain trade and increase costs, the region is not competitive in world markets. In addition, the private sector needs help to produce goods and services that meet the standards of global markets. In 2002, USAID established the Southern Africa Global Competitiveness Hub in Gaborone, Botswana. The Hub builds regional capacity for negotiation and implementation of trade agreements and supports USAID's African Global Competitiveness Initiative. To promote opportunities made available under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), the Hub facilitates U.S.-southern Africa business linkages and intra-regional trade and advises on national AGOA export strategies. In the priority sectors of agribusiness, textiles

SOUTHERN AFRICA SNAPSHOT

Eleven Countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Population: 168 million (2006)
Income per person: \$1,981 (yr)

Source: World Bank Development Indicators

USAID IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

<http://southernafrica.usaid.gov>



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOUTHERN AFRICA

REGIONAL PROFILE CONTINUED

and apparel, the Hub identifies bottlenecks to market growth and promotes the international competitiveness of southern African products.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

Southern Africa remains the region of the world most severely affected by HIV/AIDS. The burden of the epidemic in the region is staggering. In at least six southern African countries, more than a fifth of the population is infected with HIV/AIDS, and in Botswana and Swaziland nearly two out of three adults may be HIV-infected. Working with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, USAID strengthens U.S. Government efforts to provide AIDS treatment and support prevention and education activities in the region. In addition, USAID seeks ways to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS through activities in all sectors.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

The persistence of chronic hunger, malnutrition, and threat of famine in southern Africa is unacceptable and the cost is enormous, particularly in a region reeling from the effects of HIV/AIDS. People in rural areas depend directly on agriculture and agriculture-related activities for their food and income. USAID's regional program focuses on agricultural research leading to increased productivity of smallholder farmers, and famine and disaster early warning and mitigation. USAID seeks to further agricultural diversification to increase resilience to economic and climatic crises, and supports the Famine Early Warning Systems Network across the southern African countries most affected by drought.

Water scarcity in southern Africa is a growing concern. Population growth and demands for domestic, agricultural, and industrial consumption are increasing stress on finite water resources and the region's rich biodiversity. Seventy percent of the region's watersheds are shared between two or more countries. USAID focuses on improving the management of shared river basins, starting with the Okavango River Basin. USAID is strengthening the Okavango River Basin Commission to help it manage the waterway and other natural resources in a fair and sustainable manner. This initiative is now expanding beyond the initial Okavango River Basin to include joint management of other cross-border natural resources in the region.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Regional Deputy Mission
Director
Leslie Reed
P.O. Box 43
Pretoria 0027
South Africa
Tel: 27-12-452-2000

Director, Office of Southern
Africa Affairs
James Harmon
Tel: 1-202-712-0984
Email: jharmon@usaid.gov