

Title USAID's agricultural research strategy and the role of horticulture and post-harvest loss

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Abstract

The United States Agency for International Development (US AID) Office of Agricultural Research and Policy manages a global portfolio which supports President Obama's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, known as "Feed the Future" (FTF). Horticultural production, marketing, and research features prominently in FTF's overarching goal to sustainably reduce global hunger and poverty. Shorter term impact is attained through high priority horticultural value chain projects managed by USAID field missions in countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Kenya, Nepal, and Tanzania. Longer term impact is attained through global research activities which pursue sustainable intensification (SI) of agriculture in high priority agro-ecological zones. SI efforts focus on environmentally sustainable productivity gains that will transform production systems in those areas where poverty and malnutrition are concentrated. FTF horticultural research interventions focus on income generation, improved provision of micro nutrients, the needs and roles of women as producers, seed production and quality, post-harvest loss reduction, and measures to ensure food safety (such as integrated pest management). US AID works with partners such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. land grant universities, international centers such as A VRDC, and the private sector in order to make advances in the productivity, sustainability, nutrition, and food safety associated with horticultural crops. Significant technical assistance in post-harvest loss reduction is being provided in over IO countries as a component of fully integrated horticulture value chain projects. Research efforts in the area of post-harvest focus on solar-powered cool storage, food preservation techniques, seed preservation, and breeding for insect/pest resistance.