



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



## AFRICA GREAT LAKES REGION COFFEE SUPPORT PROGRAM (AGLC)



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## MISSION AND GOALS

The Africa Great Lakes Region Coffee Support Program (AGLC) is an applied research, producer capacity-building, and policy engagement initiative in the Great Lakes Region of Africa. The Program aims at controlling potato taste defect (PTD) and at improving coffee productivity.

AGLC works around three axes:

- Applied policy, household, and agronomic (field-level) research;
- Capacity building/farmer training and outreach; and
- Policy engagement.



## BACKGROUND

Africa Great Lakes Region produces specialty coffees with unique flavors sought after by connoisseurs. Coffee is the main source of cash income for about one million smallholder farmer households in the Africa Great Lakes region. It constitutes about 20% of the foreign income of these countries.

However coffee plants are threatened by an increasingly prevalent antestia bug infestation that results in potato taste defect (PTD). The coffee yields are also among the world's very lowest. The goal of the program is to dramatically reduce the effects of antestia/PTD and raise farm-level productivity. These changes will improve smallholder farmer incomes and help to sustain the Africa Great Lakes region's reputation for producing among the highest quality coffees in the world. It will contribute to the overall development of these countries.

AGLC addresses these challenges through an integrated program of applied research, farmer capacity building and policy engagement. The proposed solution requires a public-private sector coordinated response across the entire value chain, including producers, washing stations, dry mills, exporters and the government agencies that support the sector's growth.

## AGLC KEY ACTIVITIES

### Applied policy research

The aim of the applied research component of the project is to objectively and empirically inform coffee sector stakeholders in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC concerning the most effective practices for improving coffee quality and productivity, and for establishing a policy environment that will provide the necessary incentives for coffee producers to invest their labor, land and cash resources in these practices.

The project gathers data from 2,048 coffee farm households in Rwanda and Burundi to better understand coffee production, income, farmers' investment, productivity, opportunity for quality based pricing, climate change, food security, gender and youth issues in coffee, as well as the effects of coffee-related policies.

The household survey data is supplemented with agronomic (field-level) data on the efficacy of chemical and organic (pyrethrum-based) pesticides and integrated pest management (IPM) in improving coffee quality and productivity.



### Capacity building and outreach

The project has increased stakeholder awareness of antestia/PTD and the effects of low productivity on the entire coffee value chain. Quick-start capacity building has been accomplished through media programming via radio, and through the engagement of producers in research demonstration plots.

### Policy engagement

The AGLC project encourages development of a policy environment in support of farmer investments that will both improve productivity and coffee quality.

As a result of the various activities, the project was able to establish the real cost of coffee production to the farmers in Rwanda. It turned out to be much higher than believed by traders and governmental agencies managing coffee sales. The Rwanda government used this information to establish a much higher coffee price for the 2017 season, while remaining competitive. This will impact the livelihood of about 350,000 Rwandan households.



## ABOUT

The Africa Great Lakes Region Coffee Support Program (AGLC) is part of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Food Security Policy funded through USAID. The project is coordinated by Michigan State University in collaboration with IFPRI and the University of Pretoria. Partners in Rwanda include the University of Rwanda, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine; the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research (IPAR), Rwanda; Polytechnic University of Gitega in Burundi; and the University of Ngozi in Burundi. Partner based in Washington, D.C., is the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI). Lead capacity building and policy partners include CEPAR, Starbucks and NAEB in Rwanda, and InterCafé, Greenco, and ARFIC in Burundi.

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