Success Story

ACDI VOCA
Expanding Opportunities Worldwide

Haiti

Food Aid Nourishes Haiti's Young and Hungry

ACDI/VOCA has an outspoken fan in the southeast Haitian city of Jacmel, where our food distribution activities benefit an orphanage called Faith and Love in Action.

Melissa Jean is 11 years old and in her fourth year of primary school. She is one of 74 children cared for by the orphanage and has lived there for more than five years.

Smiling and surrounded by friends, Jean told ACDI/VOCA representatives that she eats more than any other child at the orphanage: "I love the wheat with peas and the cornmeal. If any of the other kids don't clean their plates, I will do it for them.

"I have plenty of space in my stomach for it," Jean says.

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Food Aid Meets Immediate Needs

Southeast Haiti has widespread food insecurity and high child stunting rates, and was hit particularly hard by the Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake.

In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, ACDI/VOCA worked with Haiti's Bureau de Développement et Nutrition to distribute food to people in Port-au-Prince and the Southeast Department with funding from USAID. The program provided food aid to orphanages in Jacmel and Port-au-Prince, among other activities.

The distributed food was selected to nourish bodies, not just fill stomachs.

"The food rations provide a balanced group of foods—yellow peas, grains, vitamin- and mineral-fortified foods and fats—to the orphanage to help meet the nutritional needs of the

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children during an important time of physical and cognitive development," says KD Ladd, technical director of nutrition at ACDI/VOCA.

And Jean testifies to the importance of eating nutritious foods, telling staff she eats better than before and that her friends say she has grown and become more beautiful.

"I think it is related to the quality of what I have been eating during the last three months," Jean says.

Transition to Food-for-Work, Sustainable Livelihoods

The program's food distribution activities included providing food aid relief in Jacmel; Port-au-Prince and Tabarre as well as supplementary food to moderately malnourished children; and organizing food-for-work activities in the Southeast Department.

At the end of the short-term emergency program in December 2010, recipients transitioned to our Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP), which is funded by the USAID Office of Food for Peace. The MYAP promotes livelihoods, especially in agriculture; improves the health and nutrition of women and children; and supports an early warning system to reduce the impact of disasters on Haiti's farmers.