



USAID
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EAST AFRICA

USAID **50** ANNIVERSARY

SNAPSHOT

Saving Lives One Packet at a Time

Increasing Regional Food Security



Photo: Valid Nutrition

Valid Nutrition Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF)

Insta production has significantly increased and orders are immediately shipped to children suffering from severe malnutrition in Northern Kenya, Somalia and Sudan.

Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) is a peanut-based food product used in emergency situations to rehabilitate severely malnourished people. The demand for RUTF by humanitarian organizations in East Africa far exceeds supply, yet few regional businesses are willing to tackle the challenges that RUTF manufacturing presents: stringent regulations, high cost of transport, expensive inputs, ad hoc government regulations and customs, and a patented peanut formula.

With USAID's support, Insta Products has become an exception and now helps supply this life-saving food source to children in need across the region. Insta Products began manufacturing RUTF in July 2009. Insta's 92 gram sachet of highly stable RUTF is unique since it is manufactured on the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya, within reach of vulnerable populations in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.

As part of its efforts to promote regional food security, USAID/East Africa's Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Program (USAID/COMPETE) provided a grant to Insta Products in 2009. The grant has helped Insta meet challenges with working capital, sourcing of inputs, logistics and transport.

With USAID's support, Insta purchased a reliable packaging machine to increase production capacity. They have also upgraded their manufacturing, warehousing, and laboratory facilities. The factory can now manufacture and package 4,500 metric tons of RUTF per year. The facility and manufacturing processes conform to international human foods standards as required by major humanitarian organizations.

Since locally produced peanuts can contain aflatoxin, a carcinogenic fungus that invades crops, Insta started to source aflatoxin-free peanuts from smallholder farmers in Zambia and Malawi, through partnerships with regional traders. The benefits were twofold: Insta reduced costs by sourcing inputs from within the region, and farmers increased revenue and production capacity.

Telling Our Story

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As of July 2011, Insta's production output has tripled and they are operating around the clock to meet demand. The product is being shipped to drought affected areas in the Horn of Africa.