



USAID | FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

ACCESO

SUCCESS STORY

Women's Group Learns to Plant Smarter

Using good agricultural practices, female farmers more than quadruple their production.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Members of the *Mujeres Corazón de María* Group observe the correct way of planting seedling trays.

“USAID-ACCESO has provided us with very good information. We are happy with their assistance and help in organizing ourselves; we now invest only a few hours and have improved our production.”

Edy Gloribel Santos Calderón
Secretary, *Mujeres Corazón de María* Group

Mujeres Corazón de María, a small group of women producers, formed in 2010 so the women could earn extra money for their families. The nine women received an initial funding to build a greenhouse but they lacked understanding of basic production techniques and business administration processes. Without this fundamental knowledge, the women were unable to turn a profit.

USAID-ACCESO stepped in earlier this year to teach the group better agricultural practices, especially those related to greenhouse growing. The women learned how to use fertilizer, how to prevent disease, and how to handle young plants.

As a result of these new techniques, the women were able to reduce losses of many of their crops, which had previously been lost prior to germination due to improper handlings.

Thanks to improved handling and care, the women are expanding their client base. They have gone from two clients to eight clients, greatly increasing their income potential.

USAID-ACCESO also taught the women basic business skills, including organizational management. The women have reorganized themselves to work in shifts, improving their productivity and allowing them more time at home with their families.

The greenhouse is currently operating at full capacity with 100,000 plantlets. Before the USAID-ACCESO trainings the women were using only 25 percent of the greenhouse's capacity.

In the four months since USAID-ACCESO's intervention, the group has seen their revenues jump by more than 500 percent, during which they earned 5,505 lempiras each (\$290) as compared to their previous earnings of 880 lempiras (\$46). This type of income growth translates into life-changing income increases for the women and their families.

Inspired by their early success, the women plan to invest some of their earnings back into the business, buying more seed trays and installing an improved irrigation system, which will allow them to continue to increase both their yields and their incomes.