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Female Entrepreneurs Find Success at Long Last

With hard work, perseverance, and support from USAID-ACCESO, women's group starts turning a profit on value-added baked goods.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Empowered women packing plantain chips destined to supply local businesses in the area.

“If it weren’t for USAID-ACCESO, we wouldn’t have specialized on anything.”

Reina Salazar, Treasurer

Mujeres Emprendedoras de La Laborcita

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
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For years a group of women in La Laborcita, Sinuapa struggled to find ways to earn extra money for their families. In between their household chores and responsibilities, they cooked tamales and other types of food to sell to their neighbors. But without a formal business plan, it was difficult for them to earn a substantial income.

The 18 women of the *Mujeres Emprendedoras de La Laborcita* group began receiving assistance from USAID-ACCESO specialists. The program taught the women how to process value-added goods such as plantain chips, which are a popular snack in Honduras with a high demand on the local market.

“If it weren’t for USAID-ACCESO, we wouldn’t have specialized on anything,” said Reina Salazar, current treasurer of the group.

Now the women are specialists in plantain chip processing. They have received additional training in packaging, delivery, and basic accounting. They are better organized now, scheduling weekly meetings and dividing labor to improve efficiency and productivity. The group already has steady buyers in local stores, restaurants, and schools.

USAID-ACCESO is also helping the women think more about their market; based on their observations, the women now offer different package sizes at different price points. The four-ounce bag (L. 10 or \$0.50) is their current bestseller.

Thanks to project support and the women’s dedication, their business is now turning a profit. The women earn an average of L. 500 (\$25) a day, all of which is new income. Their success is also benefitting the larger community as the women purchase their plantains from local farmers, many of whom are neighbors or family members. These producers are also receiving technical assistance from USAID-ACCESO to improve quality and yields.

With the support of the municipal government of Laborcita, the women were able to purchase industrial-grade equipment, allowing them to cost-effectively increase production, thereby further increasing their income potential.

The women are not content to rest on their newfound success. They already have an eye to the future – they plan to build their own store and production space.

“We all like to work, that is why people believe in us,” Salazar said.

USAID-ACCESO will work with more than 800 off-farm small- and medium-sized businesses, providing the training and market access they need to become profitable engines of rural economic growth. Many of the businesses are female-led, empowering women to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.