



MONTHLY UPDATE – JULY 2011

BACKGROUND

USAID ACCESO is a four-year initiative funded by the American through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This project is part of the global Feed the Future initiative of the US government and is USAID’s main investment in Honduras.

USAID ACCESO will assist more than 30,000 clients in Copán, Intibucá, La Paz, Lempira, Ocotepeque and Santa Bárbara. The project is working to lift 18,000 rural homes out of extreme poverty and malnutrition conditions through financial development and increased incomes.

ALLIANCES, AGREEMENTS AND APPROACHES TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Led by the US-based agribusiness firm Fintrac, the ACCESO consortium includes Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola (FHIA), Escuela Agrícola Panamericana (EAP-ZAMORANO), Fundación para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural (FUNDER), CARE International, and the World Village Project. As part of its implementation strategy, USAID-ACCESO will work with local NGOs to facilitate financial development activities and expand the project’s reach. The Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH), Hermandad de Honduras, Save the Children and the Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM) will join the consortium.

USAID-ACCESO met with a number of businesses and institutions with a presence or interest in the western departments to determine activities, working areas and goals, and to establish mechanisms for collaboration. In the past month, project staff met with World Vision, signed a collaborative agreement to assist rural honey producers, participated in a national coffee event, and hosted a number of high-level visitors from USAID.



Photos by Fintrac

USAID-ACCESO assists people in rural areas to increase incomes and improve quality of life.



USAID-ACCESO Clients/Homes and Beneficiaries July 2011

Department	Clients / Homes	Beneficiaries
Copán	277	1,351
Intibucá	818	4,480
La Paz	472	2,139
Lempira	512	2,822
Ocotepeque	239	1,104
Santa Bárbara	514	2,374
Other	75	0
TOTAL	2,907	14,270

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July 2011 Trainings

Area	Participants	Events
Health and Nutrition	137	5
Business Skills	439	34
Natural Resource Management	75	5
Postharvest	78	6
Production	5,311	420
Project	282	14
TOTAL	6,676	508

PRODUCTION

During the month of July, USAID-ACCESO trained 5,311 men and women. Trainings focused on implementation of basic practices, nutrition and fertilization, planting systems and distance and integrated pest management.

Technical assistance visits continued to increase as more clients join the program; there were 1,728 visits in July. In Ocotepaque and La Esperanza, staff presented the benefits of greenhouse technology to 139 producers. In Santa Bárbara, 38 allspice producers received training in reducing labor costs, food safety, hygiene and postharvest handling. To follow-up on the assistance provided in June to exporters, a field visit took place in Siguatepeque with 15 chayote producers from Copán.

In Copán, coordination between passion fruit growers and local distributors is underway and more than 30 coffee producers participated in a training session.

In Intibucá, staff held trainings on soil preparation and corn planting with raised beds. Farmers also learned new postharvest techniques for their potato crops.

In La Paz, teams hosted field days with potato, corn and bean farmers.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

USAID-ACCESO is working with several private sector companies in the western part of the country to link clients with business services. Staff compiled product catalogs and price lists from providers of irrigation equipment and with renewable energy and water treatment businesses. Equipment and input providers participated in recent training sessions to meet beneficiaries and increase the availability of products in rural areas.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Another key component of USAID-ACCESO's work is its focus on nutrition and health. In July, staff trained 137 participants on health and nutrition topics, including basic hygiene, sanitation, how to recognize the signs of malnutrition, practices to prevent diarrhea, and the links between nutrition, proper diet and good health.



Application of diluted fertilizer to beans, Santa Bárbara.



Field day with bean farmers, Lempira.



Production of passion fruit plantlets, Lempira.

Photos by Fintrac

Profile of Client families to date

- 1,884 of the 2,683 families (70 percent) are living in extreme poverty and 185 families (7 percent) in poverty.
- 1,661 of the 14,270 beneficiaries (12 percent) are children under 5 years old; 3,768 (26 percent) are children between the ages of 6 and 14; 6,992 are people aged 15-49 (49%); 12 percent are over 50 years old.
- 51 percent of the beneficiaries are men (7,390) and 49 percent are women (6,961).

ACCESS TO MARKETS

USAID-ACCESO continues to focus on opening new markets to its clients. July activities included:

- Researched El Salvadoran export opportunities.
- Finalized new contract for allspice producers to export to the US.
- Contacted with four new plantain exporters in the US and Canada.
- Developed initial planting plans for oriental vegetables for an exporter to the US.
- Established purchase volumes and calendar for a national supermarket chain.
- Began process for coffee farm certifications.
- Participated in training provided by the Honduran Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Secretary (SERNA) on the new procedures manual for the production of pallets for the export of perishable products.
- Obtained technical material on production, marketing and export for the honey making sector.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SKILLS

USAID-ACCESO strives to provide its clients with improved business and financial skills to enable them to increase their incomes. In July, efforts centered on working with savings and loan associations in several departments. Project staff also met with the Secretary of Industry and Commerce to discuss business development opportunities.

ADDED VALUE AND MICROBUSINESSES

As part of its plan to add value to existing businesses, USAID-ACCESO began identifying potential clients across the agricultural sector, including dairy, coffee and honey producers. The team also identified an opportunity to make tea from the leaves of allspice, opening another potential market for these rural producers.

MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

USAID-ACCESO is committed to introducing good agricultural practices to its clients, which include natural resource management. Teams visited water sources in vulnerable zones to evaluate risk and revise protection measures. Conversations with mayors and other government officials are ongoing, particularly around water sources, and cooperation and collaboration continues.

MAIN GOALS OF USAID ACCESO

- Bring 18,000 rural homes living in extreme poverty above the poverty threshold
- Generate \$73.95 million in net profits for the clients assisted by the project
- Create 10,425 permanent jobs in the assisted communities



Producer learns plantain chip processing techniques, Copán.



Potato farmers learn good agricultural practices, Intibucá.

Photos by Fintrac

USAID-ACCESO CONTACTS

For more information or if you are interested in being assisted by the program, please contact:

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