



USAID
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ACCESO

MONTHLY UPDATE – AUGUST 2011

BACKGROUND

USAID ACCESO is a four-year initiative funded by the people of the United States of America 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 USAID's main investment in Honduras.

USAID ACCESO will assist more than 30,000 clients in the departments of 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, USAID ACCESO's strategy is to work with governmental and nongovernmental organizations in order to best manage resources to benefit clients and counterpart organizations.

Signing of agreements

USAID ACCESO is excited to welcome the following implementing partners: La Cooperativa Regional Agroforestal Erandique Limitada (COPRAFEL) in Lempira, and La Asociación PILARH in Copán. The project now has 10 partners managing its Community Technical Units. Negotiations are still pending with two organizations in Copán and Santa Bárbara.

USAID ACCESO met with a number of businesses and institutions in August, particularly with partners that can provide finance alternatives for project beneficiaries. Current strategy includes segmenting financial service providers in accordance with the client group targeted.

Discussions were held with USAID, Banco Mundial, Del Campo, Camosa, BANHCAFE, Seguros Atlántida, Seguros Equidad, La Colonia, PRONADERS, CEMCOL, SEAGRO, ComRural, FUNED, Finca, Disagro, Bayer, Cajas Rurales en La Paz, FINACOOOP, Banco de Occidente, BANADESA, Comproil, and Comixmul.

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Photos by Fintrac

Coffee field visit, Ocotepeque.



Bean producers learn good agricultural practices, such as planting with raised beds, Lempira.

USAID ACCESO Clients Households, Beneficiaries and Other Clients, August 2011

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	372	1,860	43
Intibucá	1,176	6,097	105
La Paz	688	3,065	173
Lempira	901	4,778	42
Ocotepeque	347	1,440	47
Santa Bárbara	740	3,516	82
Others			79
TOTAL	4,224	20,756	571

*Includes MSMEs, buyers, input and service providers, municipal corporations, counterpart organizations, and others.

PRODUCTION

- During the month of August, USAID ACCESSO held 632 trainings for 6,846 participants. The topics covered included good agricultural practices, soil preparation, nutrition and fertilization, transplant, and Integrated Pest Management.
- Participated in field visits with USAID personnel to associations of municipalities in Ocoatepeque and Santa Bárbara.
- Trained 200 coffee producers in field day events in Copán.
- Training was carried out for 369 participants in postharvest handling of grains, vegetables and fruits. Participants also learned how to classify and select products that will yield the highest prices on the market.
- Zone managers held 33 field visits where they trained 370 participants on best practices for chayote, oriental vegetables, beans, carrots, coffee, avocado, potatoes, loofah and corn.
- To date, Project clients have planted 1,626 hectares, half of which are basic grains.
- Producers have reported total investments of \$6,915 in production infrastructure, including improvements to irrigation systems and greenhouses, plant propagation systems, and equipment for processing operations.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

- The first shipment of carrots, potatoes and beets were delivered to La Colonia supermarkets in Tegucigalpa from producers in Ocoatepeque.
- Project staff visited coffee exporters to establish new distribution channels for small producers.
- Local supermarket buyers visited producers to finalize delivery volumes and the terms of their agreement.
- Continued exploration of export opportunities for loofah producers in Lempira and bean producers in Copán.

FINANCE AND BUSINESS SKILLS

USAID ACCESSO strives to provide its clients with improved business and financial skills to enable them to increase their incomes. In August, staff helped producers create budgets based on their export potential and sought new financing alternatives for clients. 60 training events were carried out involving 800 participants, covering recordkeeping, business plans and cost analysis. Teams also developed a basic grain pledge proposal that will support the creation of a local grain reserve and help establish a fairer price, creating a more stable market overall.



A women's group learns better knitting practices



Coffee plants use raised beds, uniform densities, drip irrigation and fertigation, Intibucá.



Field agronomist develops fertilization plans for ACCESSO producers.

Profile of Client Families to Date

- 2,815 of the 4,221 families (67 percent) are living in extreme poverty and 300 families (7 percent) in poverty.
- 2,495 of the 21,296 beneficiaries (12 percent) are children under 5 years old; 5,616 (26 percent) are children between the ages of 6 and 14; 10,296 are people aged 15 and 49 years old (48 percent); 11 percent are adults over 50 years old.
- 52 percent of the beneficiaries are men (10,971) and 48 percent are women (10,325).

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Another key component of USAID ACCESO's work is its focus on nutrition and health. In August, technicians began visiting clients' homes in La Paz, Intibucá and Ocotepeque. The first technical assistance visits focused on identifying malnourished children, emphasizing the importance of infant health, and providing care for pregnant women and children under 2 years old. In Santa Bárbara and Copán, staff began to establish links and coordinate activities with mother-infant care centers.

ADDED VALUE AND MICROBUSINESSES

To date, USAID ACCESO is providing assistance to 80 micro, 25 small, 17 medium, and 20 large businesses. Businesses in a variety of sectors are receiving assistance in designing marketing pieces to introduce them to credit institutions. Processing specialists trained 55 participants in market diversification and identifying new business opportunities.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

USAID ACCESO is committed to introducing good agricultural practices to its clients, which include natural resource management. In August, ACCESO Specialists trained 17 participants in a clean water workshop, and 31 participants in solid waste management activity. Trainings were held in the El Platanar basin on the importance of community participation and cooperation in protecting natural resources. Teams continued to work with local water boards and other municipal authorities in natural disaster-prone regions on disaster preparedness plans.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

The renewable energy component was launched this month. USAID ACCESO plans to help generate clean and renewable energy that will improve the living conditions of its clients. Teams met with providers of solar panels and turbines to plan for future activity.

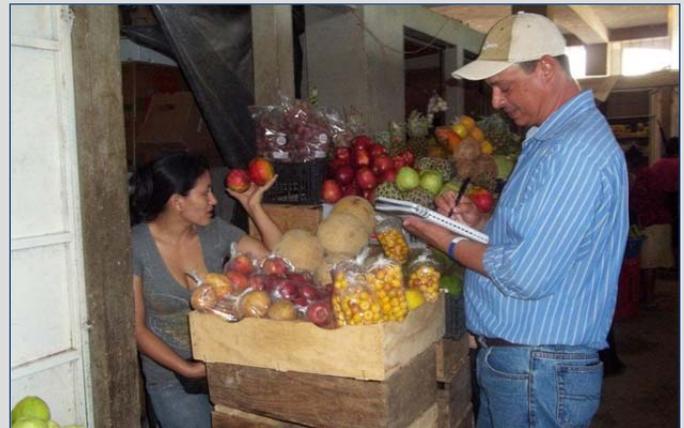
USAID ACCESO CONTACTS

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

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Santa Bárbara	Leopoldo Aguilar	9997-0130

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



Market visit in Jesús de Otoro, Intibucá, to identify sales opportunities and improvements.



Training of producers on recordkeeping, Intibucá.

August 2011 Trainings

Area	Participants	Events
Business Skills	838	60
Natural Resource Management	65	5
Postharvest	369	16
Production	6,846	632
Project	240	16
Market Information	96	5
Other topics	365	27
TOTAL	8,819	761