



MONTHLY UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2011

BACKGROUND

This is the sixth edition of the USAID-ACCESO monthly update, with information on current and future project activities. USAID-ACCESO is a four-year initiative funded by the people and government 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 United States government and the main investment by USAID 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 economic development and increased incomes.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

In the six months since the project began, 95 service providers, 40 associations and community organizations, 60 municipalities and 60 counterpart organizations have received assistance from USAID-ACCESO. These partnerships allow the project to better manage existing resources in targeted communities, guaranteeing that efforts are not being duplicated and ensuring all opportunities are explored.

The resources and services provided include production inputs such as fertilizers, seeds and plantlets; infrastructure and installation of irrigation systems; health and nutrition services; and financial services and access to credit.

Of these organizations, 28 are nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), 21 are water boards, 21 are input and equipment providers, 130 are financial service providers, 51 are government organizations, and 59 are health and nutrition service providers.

This month, agreements for planned activities were signed between the USAID-ACCESO project and the following organizations:

- Signed an agreement with **World Vision** to hire technical personnel in Copán.
- Signed memorandums of understanding with **MEXICHEM** and **Bombas y Motores de Honduras (BOMOHS)**. These links will provide client households with better prices, specialized technical assistance and favorable post-sale services depending on the size of their operations.
- Orientation workshops took place for project personnel in the department of Lempira with the participation of **Save the Children Honduras, COPRAFEL** and **CASM**, and in Ocotepeque with the **World Village Program** and **Hermanidad de Honduras**.

Photos by Fintrac Inc.



High density bean planting in beds, Santa Bárbara.



Field visit with USAID-ACCESO producers to see improved pineapple production practices, Cortes.

USAID-ACCESO Clients/Homes, Beneficiaries and Other Clients, September 2011

Department	Client Homes	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	610	2,205	52
Intibucá	1,463	7,988	82
La Paz	1,211	4,567	141
Lempira	1,118	5,920	64
Ocotepeque	575	2,551	64
Santa Bárbara	1,063	4,925	106
Others	602	2,171	83
TOTAL	6,642	30,327	592

*Includes: MSMEs, buyers, input and service providers, Municipal Corporations, counterpart organizations, among others

PRODUCTION

- 2,754 hectares planted (1,177 of the plantings are corn and beans) with 5,796 technical assistance visits.
- 683 trainings with 7,761 participants. A total of 23 training events on animal production took place; 209 participants were trained in livestock management, as well as good agricultural practices to improve the availability of feed for livestock during the dry season.
- Conducted 64 technical assistance visits on postharvest handling. 268 people were trained during 15 events that covered postharvest handling of basic grains, coffee mills, corn seeds, and the collection and management of empty pesticide containers.
- 506 participants were trained during 31 field visits on coffee farm management, high-density plantain production, and production of chayote, pineapple, potato and passion fruit.
- To date investments of \$124,298 have been reported in production infrastructure. Client homes invested \$42,147 from their own funds and counterpart organizations invested \$82,015, mostly on irrigation infrastructure.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

- Project staff conducted market visits in the cities of Ocotepeque, Santa Rosa, La Entrada, Santa Bárbara and San Pedro Sula (Dandy, El Rápido, Medina and Central de Abastos) to find new contacts, coordinate with informal buyers, verify prices, and plan future deliveries based on market requirements. Such visits provide project staff with valuable information to advise clients on consumer demand and market opportunities.
- Five training events were held with 105 participants. Forty-one technical assistance visits were made to buyers and clients.
- Developed a directory of local buyers of corn, beans and coffee, which are the most prevalent crops in the areas of assistance.

MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION OF NATURAL DISASTERS

- Provided technical assistance to the Municipal Corporation of Yarula and the Council of Chuna Chinguire to evaluate damage caused by the August 11th storm. Recommendations included stabilization and surveillance of the most vulnerable zones.



Client farmers learn postharvest handling techniques for yucca, Lempira.



Training on the production of haystacks for silage, Copan.



Training on poultry best practices, La Paz.

Profile of families to date

- 3,876 of the 6,050 families (64 percent) are living in extreme poverty and 397 families (7 percent) in poverty.
- 3,403 of the 30,327 beneficiaries (11 percent) are children under 5 years old; 7,605 (25 percent) are children between 6 and 14 years old; 13,951 are people between 15 and 49 years old (46 percent); and 11 percent are adults over 50 years old.
- 52 percent of the beneficiaries are men (15,761) and 48 percent women (14,566).

FINANCE AND BUSINESS SKILLS

- A total of 65 training events took place with 1,041 participants. The project is assisting 130 financial service providers, 107 of which are rural savings and loan associations.
- The first business fair promoting local micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) took place in Marcala. Thanks to the success of the event, several mayors have asked for the project's assistance in organizing similar fairs in their municipalities.
- Assisted two rural savings and loan associations in Santa Bárbara to develop charter agreements.
- Developed production budgets for snow pea producers.
- Held trainings on administrative and organizational skills for cooperatives and rural savings and loan associations.
- Assisted a producer association to prepare a presentation to the World Bank's Rural Competitiveness Project (COMRURAL) for production and export of plantain. Participated at the public launch of COMRURAL in Copán.
- Evaluated 12 rural savings and loan associations preparing to become "Second Grade Associations" (qualified to lend to other lenders) in collaboration with technicians from the National Program of Savings and Loan Associations.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

- The nutrition and health team held its first orientation and training on the Atención Integral a la Niñez en la Comunidad (AIN-C) strategy at the USAID-ACCESO office in La Esperanza, Intibucá. The entire team then visited the community of Macuelizo, Jesús de Otoro, to evaluate skills and methodologies currently in use.
- Held 18 training events for 296 participants. Training topics included: breastfeeding, hand washing, safe water preparation, latrines, childcare, healthy recipes with local ingredients, the use of improved stoves, and the importance of regularly taking children for height and weight checks.
- The project was presented to health clinics - Centros de Salud Médicos Odontológicos (CESAMOS) - in San Juan de Opoa, San Pedro Copán and Tomalá.

VALUE ADDITION AND MICROENTERPRISES

- Technical assistance provided to the development of new products that generate higher profit margins by using readily-available raw materials and by complying with requirement to obtain sanitary licenses. Technicians are working with microenterprises on product costs, processing records (including yields, processing time, formulas, and size standardization), packaging and labeling.
- Processing specialists trained 245 participants at 27 events.

MAIN GOALS OF 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; and
- Create 10,425 permanent jobs in the assisted communities.



AIN-C monitor gives advice to a mother about the weight changes in her children, Intibucá.



USAID/Honduras and Feed the Future representatives talk to artisans at a business fair, La Paz.

Trainings September 2011

Area	Participants	Events
Business Skills	1,041	65
Management of Natural Resources	78	5
Postharvest	268	15
Production	7,552	660
ACCESO Project orientation	156	17
Market Information	112	5
Health and Nutrition	296	18
Other Topics	873	79
TOTAL	10,376	864

MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- Five training events took place with 78 participants. The events focused on the effects of water contamination and the direct benefits of continual water quality analysis. In Santa Bárbara, where most of the community health problems stem from a lack of clean drinking water, 10 water board members as well as the municipality's community development technician and health promoter were trained.
- The project began collaborating with the Association of Municipalities of South West Santa Barbara Region (MUNASBAR) to establish a solid recyclable waste storage center that will be managed by a local business.
- The Municipal Corporation of Sinuapa received technical assistance to repair an existing hypochlorinator and to build a new one, allowing them to effectively chlorinate the city's water supply.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Five training events held in renewable energy with 89 participants, 83 of whom were women.
- Three eco-friendly stoves installed in Talgua, Lempira. This type of improved stove consumes less wood, lowering operating expenses for families and making cooking more efficient, as well as environmentally friendly. These stoves produce less smoke, reducing the risk of damage to the family's respiratory system.
- Began installing the first biodigester system in the department of Copán, with a volume of 18 m³ and a daily capacity of 1.1 m³ of biogas. The system generates 1.25 kilowatts/hour, which is enough to operate a gas stove for seven hours and a 60 watt light bulb for six hours. Biodigestors not only allow client homes to generate their own energy, they help improve household waste management.



Installation of the first "eco-friendly" stoves at USAID-ACCESO client homes, Lempira.



Installation of the first biodigestors for energy production with USAID-ACCESO client homes, Copán.

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Meeting of Mount Dora Farms, Seaboard Marine, USAID-ACCESO and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock representatives to identify production and marketing opportunities for USAID-ACCESO clients.