



MONTHLY UPDATE – OCTOBER 2011

BACKGROUND

This is the seventh 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 households out of extreme poverty and malnutrition conditions through economic development and increased incomes.

NEW IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

USAID-ACCESO is implemented by Fintrac and a consortium of partners that includes Global Village, CARE, FUNDER, FHIA and EAP Zamorano. In October, the team welcomed the following new partners:

LEMPIRA

- **Save the Children** joined the project with nine technicians making up one Community Technical Unit (CTU). Six production technicians are working in the municipalities of San Rafael, La Unión, Gualcinco, Gracias, Lepaera and Las Flores, one nutrition and health technician is based in the municipality of Lempira Norte. A business skills/finance technician and a monitoring and evaluation technician will provide services across the department.
- **La Cooperativa Regional Agroforestal Erandique Limitada (COPRAFEL)** has deployed three production technicians to work in the municipalities of San Rafael and Erandique.
- **La Comisión Acción Social Menonita (CASM)** has hired three production technicians to staff a CTU working in the municipalities of La Campa, San Marcos de Caiquín, San Sebastián and San Manuel. One nutrition and health technician covers the municipalities of Lempira Sur and one processing technician covers the entire department.

OCOTEPEQUE

- **Asociación Hermandad de Honduras (HDH)** joined the program as an implementing partner with eight agronomists and six production technicians working in the municipalities of Dolores, Fraternidad, La Labor, Sinuapa, Nueva Ocotepeque, Concepción, and Santa Fé. A nutrition and health technician is working in Ocotepeque Este; and a business skills/finance technician is providing service across the entire department.

COPAN

- **Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras, (OCDIH)**, joined the project with a total of eight technicians: six production technicians working in the municipalities of Dulce Nombre, Concepción, San José, San Agustín, San Jerónimo, Florida, La Jigua, Dolores, Santa Rosa, and Nueva Arcadia; one nutrition and health technician covering municipalities in Copán Norte; and one processing technician covering the department.
- **Proyectos e Iniciativas Locales para el Auto Desarrollo Regional de Honduras (PILARH)**, has one CTU with three production technicians in the municipalities of Corquín, San Pedro Copán, La Unión and Cucuyagua; a monitoring and evaluation technician and a business skills/finance technician for the department.
- **World Vision**, forms part of one CTU with three production technicians in the municipalities of Copán Ruinas, Santa Rita and Cabañas.



Corn and bean producers using improved practices are tripling their yields, drastically increasing their incomes.



All photos by Fintrac Inc.

USAID-ACCESO Client Households, Beneficiaries and Other Clients, October 2011

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	708	2,558	96
Intibucá	1,748	10,312	99
La Paz	1,488	6,658	157
Lempira	1,315	8,278	87
Ocotepeque	773	3,306	91
Santa Bárbara	1,301	6,306	142
TOTAL	7,333	37,418	672

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

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PRODUCTION

- An additional 117 hectares were planted during the month, bringing the Project total to 3,863 hectares of plantings under the technical assistance program. Of the total, 1,788 hectares are planted in coffee, 1,555 hectares in basic grains, and 520 hectares in horticulture products (including vegetables, fruits and ornamental crops).
- 838 training events were carried out with 8,558 participants; training areas included soil management and land preparation, basic coffee production practices, programming of farm activities, and good agriculture practices including soil conservation, raised beds, contour plowing, seedling transplant, and integrated pest management.
- 431 participants were trained in 34 training events on animal production, including topics such as animal health and proper feeding techniques, establishing good grazing practices, and the construction of alternative eating and drinking equipment.
- Twenty-seven field visits were made with 320 producers to see the implementation of good agricultural practices and to promote their use in new production operations of carrots, coffee, high-density corn, oriental vegetables, plantains and pineapples.
- A total of 430 participants were trained on postharvest handling in 26 training events. Topics included the use of coffee mills and best practices for grain harvest and storage. A plan to establish local grain reserves was developed and is being presented to local authorities.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

- USAID-ACCESO participated in a Gift Fair in San Pedro Sula organized by the Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada (COHEP). The event featured 166 products, including handicrafts, textiles, jams and fruits, wines, sweets, coffee, and breads produced by 29 businesses working with the project. This type of event affords small businesses an excellent opportunity to network and promote their products.
- The Project began discussions with mayors interested in opening local markets to sell fresh fruit and vegetables and other products from small-scale producers and microenterprises.
- Other technical assistance activities included: visits to collection centers to provide training on calendarized planting; providing assistance for an allspice shipment to the United States; initiating the use of provider codes with buyers; and developing a digital catalog for craft sales.



Selection of loofah plant seedlings, Lempira.



Application of diluted fertilizer to a garlic crop, Lempira.



Lettuce preparation for delivery to supermarkets, Intibucá.

Baseline profile of USAID-ACCESO families to date

- 4,860 of the 7,333 family households (66 percent) are living in extreme poverty and 477 family households (7 percent) in poverty.
- 4,215 of the 37,418 beneficiaries (11 percent) are children under 5 years old; 9,315 (25 percent) are children between 6 and 14 years old; 16,877 are people between 15 and 49 years old (45 percent); 10 percent are adults over 50 years old.
- 51 percent of the beneficiaries are men (19,112) and 49 percent women (18,306).

FINANCE AND BUSINESS SKILLS

- Finance and business skills specialists held 65 training events with 924 participants. To date, 138 financial service providers are receiving project assistance, including 113 rural loan and savings associations.
- Trainings focused on organizational skills, good business practices, planning, access to credit, financial products, production costs, manufacturing costs, and recordkeeping.
- Project specialists began providing technical assistance and training to young entrepreneurs from the “Joint Program,” a Ministry of Labor initiative that seeks to strengthen rural, youth-led businesses.
- Project specialists developed cost budgets for hand-made roof tile production.
- New collaborative activities include working with Peace Corps volunteers in Lempira to design a credit analysis tool, and working with a volunteer group in Santa Bárbara to create a recycling company.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

- Nutrition and health technicians held 80 training events for 1,870 participants, of which 1,493 were women. The main topics included: the importance of breastfeeding during a baby’s first six months of life, use and preparation of locally-available food, good hygiene habits to prevent illnesses, care of children during the winter, safe water preparation, and good practices for a “healthy home.”
- Technicians are working with 28 groups of mothers and 75 health service providers under the Atención Integral a la Niñez en la Comunidad (AIN-C) strategy.
- ACCESO’s health and nutrition activities were prioritized to provide focused support to households with children less than two years of age. To date, 1,235 children under age two and a total of 4,215 children under age five are participating in the Project, representing 11 percent of total beneficiaries.
- Project technicians coordinated a health fair in Jesús de Otoro, Intibucá, in coordination with the Ministry of Health and World Vision. The 58 participants (45 women) learned best ways to prevent childhood malnutrition.

VALUE ADDITION AND MICROENTERPRISE

- A total of 104 training events took place with 748 participants. The trainings covered good manufacturing practices, health and hygiene at food processing plants, and legal requirements for the operation of food, bakery and confectionary processing plants.
- Technical assistance is being provided to 22 micro-, 39 small-, and four medium-sized businesses, and to 92 household businesses. This last group is made up of family members that have developed off-farm businesses to increase their incomes, such as production of jams, tortillas, homemade bread, plantain chips, sweets, pickled vegetables, and handicrafts.

MAIN GOALS OF ACCESO

- Bring 18,000 rural households 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.



Training of microprocessors on production of bread and other bakery products, Santa Bárbara.



Introduction of homemade feeding areas for chickens, Santa Bárbara.

Trainings October 2011

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	84	10
Business Skills	924	67
Management of Natural Resources	421	13
Postharvest	430	26
Processing and Added Value	748	104
Production	8,558	838
Project Presentations	166	12
Market Information	79	6
Health and Nutrition	1,870	80
Other Topics	569	47
TOTAL	13,849	1,203

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Trained 421 participants at 13 training events, covering solid waste management, construction of hypo-chlorinators for community water systems, management and protection of micro-watersheds, contamination problems from coffee mills, and water analysis and treatment. These activities will help prevent gastrointestinal diseases among vulnerable families.
- 149 residents of Erandique participated in a field workshop on stabilizing and protecting an important local water source. This project required an investment of \$6,974 in materials and community labor.

NATURAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION

- Technicians held three trainings for 40 participants on the roles and responsibilities of Municipal Emergency Committee (CODEM) commission members, and identified ways to improve operations.
- The Board of Directors and representatives from four of the five CODEM commissions in Santa Bárbara participated in ACCESO training activities.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- A total of 86 participants were trained at 10 workshops on renewable energy; 46 participants were women. The workshops covered the basic concepts of the use, construction and maintenance of eco-friendly stoves and included field demonstrations on the installation and operation of biodigestors that will provide household lighting and fuel cooking stoves.
- Planning was initiated for the installation of solar dryers with small scale ACCESO coffee growers, in collaboration with Instituto Hondureño del Café (IHCAFE).
- Adjustments were made to improve the efficiency of the first USAID-ACCESO biodigester.

US Ambassador visits client households

The US Ambassador to Honduras and representatives from the US Embassy and USAID visited USAID-ACCESO field activities and project beneficiaries in La Campa, Lempira, and La Esperanza, Intibucá. The visitors witnessed technical assistance and training activities in vegetable production in the growers' commercial field operations, together with market linkages and the integration with health and nutrition activities.

USAID-ACCESO CONTACTS

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

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Ocatepeque	Eddy Flores	9949-6747
Copán	Hugo Ávila	9923-6826
Santa Bárbara	Leopoldo Aguilar	9997-0130



Assessment of a drinkable water system in the community of Santa Cantarina, Intibucá.



Installation of an eco-friendly stove at a project beneficiary's house, Ocatepeque.



Visit by the United States Ambassador to a group of producers from Rancho Ovispo, Lempira.

BUSINESS FAIRS OFFER NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Every September the municipality of Marcala, La Paz, holds a festival in honor of its patron saint, featuring cultural activities and a sales exposition for Honduran and Salvadoran vendors.

This year, USAID-ACCESO approached the Marcala municipality to propose co-organizing a one-day business fair as part of the celebration. The participants included microbusinesses, financial institutions, input providers, and business assistance organizations from Marcala and surrounding areas. The objectives were to:

- Present products from local micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- Establish a meeting place to give local MSMEs an opportunity to establish new commercial relationships.
- Promote business cooperation and access to loans.
- Provide technical workshops on production and business skills to promote USAID-ACCESO's integrated technical assistance program.

The municipality of Marcala agreed, and 24 businesses exhibited a variety of products such as agricultural inputs, coffee, wines, pickled vegetables, jams, Lenca crafts, plantain chips, ground beans, plantlets, nuts, handicrafts, recycling, baked goods, and silk screen printing.

In addition, Banco Nacional de Desarrollo Agrícola (BANADESA) and Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito Intibucana Limitada (Cacil) were on hand to provide information on financial products available to small business owners.

"We had never seen so many microbusinesses offering their products before. Only two or three used to participate. In addition, there are a lot of people finding out what Marcala has to offer. This is great and we have to support what is ours ..."

Said Ramos, ISEN

"The fair was well organized and products were sold. Those of us starting out let people know about our companies and products..."

Delmi Pineda



The mayor of Marcala, Rigoberto Hernández, welcomes participants to the One Day Business Fair.



The Alfarrería Lenca microenterprise from San José, Guajiquiro, La Paz.



Products from the microenterprise Industria de Alimentos Marcalina. Marcala. La Paz.