



Monthly Update *June 2012*

JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

- Total production area reached 11,373 hectares under the technical assistance program which included new plantings of corn, beans, coffee, potato, carrot, loofah, cabbage, plantain and cucumber. By incorporating new agricultural techniques and basic business tools, USAID-ACCESO is helping more than 16,000 families (71,397 beneficiaries) improve their incomes and productivity. In June, 1,337 new client households joined the project and now have direct access to trainings and technical assistance from all the integrated project components.
- Representatives from USAID/Honduras visited communities in the department of Intibucá, observing project activities and meeting client households to hear firsthand the results and impact of project intervention and improved living conditions.
- A Damage Assessment and Necessities Analysis Course was sponsored by USAID-ACCESO, developed under the U.S. Disaster Relief Abroad Office (USAID/OFDA/LAC) methodology. An intensive training was held in the department of Copán, with the active participation of 38 municipality technicians, volunteers and COPECO regional staff. The training covered evaluation techniques to identify the damage and determine disaster related needs in communities assisted by the Resource Management and Disaster Mitigation Specialists.
- As a part of implementing the renewable energy options for project beneficiaries, USAID-ACCESO trained 99 participants in the installation and use of ecofriendly stoves and biodigesters. Biodigesters create gas that can be used to fuel stoves or lamps, saving families hundreds of dollars in energy costs. In June, household clients installed 26 ecofriendly stoves and 11 solar dryers.

About USAID-ACCESO

USAID-ACCESO is a four-year initiative funded by the people and government of the United States of America through the US Agency for International Development (USAID). This project is part of the global Feed the Future initiative of the US 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 these rural households above the poverty line and malnutrition conditions through economic development and increased incomes.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

A USAID-ACCESO producer trellising cucumber plants in Lempira.

USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries and other clients, June 2012

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	2,631	8,519	235
Intibucá	2,753	15,005	270
La Paz	2,258	10,975	474
Lempira	3,648	19,039	475
Ocotepeque	2,514	9,122	261
Santa Bárbara	2,215	8,640	453
Others	23	97	99
TOTAL	16,042	71,397	2,267

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



NUTRITION AND HEALTH



Little girl eating tortilla fortified with carrots, as a part of a food preparation workshop held in Intibucá.

1,682 parents were trained in nutrition basic practices. Mothers actively participated in different food preparation workshops, learning to prepare thickened soups, rice balls and fortified tortillas with leafy greens and carrots. Participants also received key message information about exclusive breastfeeding for infants 0-6 months and maintaining clean and healthy homes. Through dynamic trainings, community leader participation and constant home visits, USAID-ACCESO continues improving health and hygiene conditions for household clients, enabling access to 9,219 children under 5 years old to personalized nutrition assistance.

VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS

USAID-ACCESO provides processing training in new product development to help beneficiaries identify ways to add value to their products. This month, 396 participants received diverse trainings where they learned how to prepare chicken tacos, pizza, plantain chips and nachos, with a focus on market needs. 89 participants benefitted from bakery workshops, allowing them to bake cakes, cookies and other pastries, develop recipes and implement new alternatives to reduce costs, improve competitiveness and increase market participation.

Project specialists also conducted trainings on adding value to previously discarded wood, developing new products including trunks, decorative tables and jewelry boxes for sale on the local market.



With project support, these women of San Francisco, Ocotepeque are associated partners that produce and sell baked goods, with techniques learned in bakery trainings provided by the project.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

To provide project beneficiaries with contacts and a better understanding of market access, USAID-ACCESO is introducing smallholder farmers and MSMES to potential buyers during meetings, field visits and regional events. 40 participants received market information in training events; some had the opportunity to deliver plantain, cucumber and carrot plantings to markets and supermarkets in different localities, while others sold directly to final consumers in different events.

Activities with export markets were expanded through the development of calendarized plantings and direct links to buyers and importers of Allspice, oriental vegetables, snow pea, fresh herbs, sweet potato and others.



Training of growers on calendarized planting systems, and the buyer quality and service requirements, is essential to assure constant market participation.



A family dedicated to cucumber production, selling their product in the Zacapa fair, Santa Bárbara.

EMPOWERING USAID-ACCESO CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS THROUGH COMMUNITY EVENTS

In order to encourage project clients' market participation and direct links to the final consumer, USAID-ACCESO participates in various community events or popularly known as *fairs*, throughout the six departments in Western Honduras.

The specialists have participated in more than 20 promotional events where MSME products were introduced to new market options. In some cases, the producers directly participate by selling their products. USAID-ACCESO contributes with demonstrations and project promotions to increase access to information and new and potential clients. Initially intended for community recreation and entertainment, local fairs, have become a new-valued tool for impact and communication.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1,377 events were held where 12,350 participants received direct training from all project components. In production, 8,781 participants were trained in different technical areas including cultural and basic practices, pest control and disease identification, fertilization requirements and programs, soil conservation and raised bed preparation.

Trainings were complemented by 12,334 technical assistance visits that were carried out in farms, processing plants and clients' homes. Through the technical assistance visits, the implementation of the improved practices is assured in the assisted farms, small companies and households. This month, basic grain and vegetable plantings were the main focus, in addition to fruit and vegetable processing.



Group trainings and exchange of experiences are key for producers and the dissemination of project recommended technologies; in this case, plantlet production and transplant in Intibucá.

Trainings - June 2012

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	90	11
Business Skills / Finance	778	69
Natural Resources Management	410	32
Postharvest and Certifications	160	14
Processing and Value Added	396	48
Production	8,781	1,097
ACCESO project	13	1
Market Information	40	3
Nutrition and Health	1,682	102
TOTAL	12,350	1,377

This monthly update was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This content is Fintrac's responsibility, the main implementing partner of USAID-ACCESO, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of USAID or the United States government.