



Monthly Update *July 2012*

JULY HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is currently assisting 16,839 client households (82 percent live in extreme poverty and 8 percent in poverty). These households, with more than 76,040 beneficiaries, receive technical assistance to increase productivity and income and are connected with economic opportunities to overcome poverty. The project’s integrated approach works with the client households to improve practices in nutrition and health, off-farm businesses, renewable energy, natural resource management, and agriculture.
- The total area under production has reached 13,419 hectares, including new plantings of soy bean, avocado, lime, tomato, parsley, passion fruit, loroco, lemon grass, and white cassava.
- The First Lady of Honduras, Rosa Elena de Lobo; United States Ambassador to Honduras, Lisa Kubiske; and Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Jacobo Regalado, visited communities in the municipality of El Tabor, Intibucá. They were impressed by USAID-ACCESO’s focused, integrated strategy and the impact it has had on rural client households in the area. The visitors were able to see firsthand that small-scale producers are more economically independent thanks to project support.
- Under the policy component, USAID-ACCESO contributed to the simplification of legalization procedures for MSMEs under the Economic Social Sector Law, which was put in place to better serve small businesses. The first 35 applications for MSME legalization have already been approved, allowing the small businesses to operate legally with more access to markets and financing sources.
- Forestry specialists continue to work with the Forestry Conservation Institute to establish mechanisms to legally obtain timber resources and reduce illegal logging. Specialists continue to providing support to forest product manufacturers, helping them expand their job opportunities.



Rosa Elena de Lobo (left) and Lisa Kubiske meet with producer, Antonio Pérez, on his farm in El Tabor, Intibucá.

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.

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

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	2,632	8,917	230
Intibucá	2,962	16,019	313
La Paz	2,529	12,250	523
Lempira	3,860	20,188	529
Ocotepeque	2,610	9,598	281
Santa Bárbara	2,223	8,968	489
Others	23	100	100
TOTAL	16,839	76,040	2,465

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



Technical assistance in agricultural production helps improve yields and quality. Carrot producers are already seeing how good agricultural practices lead to higher incomes.

TECNICAL ASSITANCE

The project made 13,427 technical assistance visits, 10,664 of which focused on improving agricultural production and building producers' capacity in technical areas such as basic agricultural practices, soil preparation and management, use of agrochemicals, fertilization programs, and assistance in planting and transplanting.

534 business and finance technical assistance visits were made to train participants on the use of production logs and how to prepare business plans. This month, the project also focused on credit analysis and financing sources, helping household clients better understand opportunities for accessing credit and loans.

VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

USAID-ACCESO continues supporting processing and new product development activities to help beneficiaries diversify their income sources and generate self-employment. In July, 356 participants were trained in 57 events. 161 project clients participated in bakery workshops, where they learned to make cookies, donuts, pineapple pastries, and cakes for sale in local markets. Participants plan to continue improving their skills and recipes to expand their potential markets and distribution channels.

Three events focused on packaging this month. Participants learned packaging procedures for food products, methods for improving product appearance, and hygiene requirements. They also learned about opportunities for accessing credit and other financial services, which will allow them to further expand their small businesses.



In bakery workshops, participants learn how to bake cookies, donuts and other pastries to sell, generating additional income for their families.



Supervision and quality control during the oven drying of allspice in Ilima, Santa Bárbara.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

44 clients received training on the use of market information; on how to create a calendarized planting program; and the importance of consistent presence in the local and international markets.

To improve market access for small producers and strengthen the sustainability of new producer-buyer relationships, project specialists continued buyer visits to farms in production and encouraging direct participation in events and local fairs.

In July, five containers (200,000 pounds) of Chinese eggplant and the season's first container of allspice (12,000 pounds) were exported to the USA. Local markets continued to serve as distribution points for clients' products.



During household visits, mothers incorporate improved nutrition practices, such as feeding children iron- enriched soup, Intibucá.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

With assistance from community health volunteers, 1,852 heads of households received hands-on training in health and nutrition workshops. Mothers learned about the importance of diet diversification and balanced nutrition, according to the child's age. The health and nutrition team made household visits to address specific concerns and questions with each family, with emphasis also being given to include the local health volunteers in these activities. Household visits also allow the team to reinforce important daily practices such as techniques for proper water storage, food access, and basic hygiene practices.

1,004 technical assistance visits were made during the month, highlighting the importance of consuming iron-rich foods such as yellow fruits and leafy greens.

EMERGENCY DRILLS: STRENGTHENING UNITY AND KNOWLEDGE IN ASSISTED COMMUNITIES

Natural resource management and disaster mitigation specialists work with local government committees and nongovernmental organizations to strengthen communities' knowledge of and ability to respond to natural disasters. Community members are actively involved in identifying high-risk areas and developing disaster prevention plans. In July, with support from the Red Cross, the Secretary of Education, the Forestry Conservation Institute, and local emergency commissions (CODELs), USAID-ACCESO trained 257 people in emergency preparedness in 16 events. Activities included simulation drills and prevention planning.

Simulations are a basic tool for participants to practice what they learn in trainings. The exercises promote teamwork, problem-solving skills, and a better understanding of the local geography.



Community members and volunteers from local institutions participate in an emergency drill, Copán.

All photos by Fintrac Inc.

Trainings - July 2012

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	105	12
Business Skills / Finance	1,899	106
Natural Resources Management	639	53
Postharvest and Certifications	143	11
Processing and Value Added	356	57
Production	8,717	1,147
ACCESO project	81	7
Market Information	44	2
Nutrition and Health	1,852	109
TOTAL	13,836	1,504

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