



# Monthly Update *October 2012*

## OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is currently assisting 19,951 client households, benefiting 82,956 people in rural communities through technical assistance in all integrated project components; 39,833 are women and 10,671 are children under 5 years old. Client households are improving their quality of life through improved yields in basic grains, cultivation of high-value crops, new off-farm businesses, better nutrition and health practices, better natural resource management, and implementation of renewable energy technologies.
- To date, the total area under project assistance is 18,376 hectares: including 9,570 hectares of coffee, 6,989 of basic grains, and 1,817 of fruits and vegetables. The crops under the largest areas of production this month included bean, corn, potato, Chinese eggplant, onion, and sweet pepper.
- USAID-ACCESO assisted 39 micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) legally register in Lempira and Santa Bárbara. An official event to hand out the legal documents took place October 26 in San Vicente, Centenario, with the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, the municipal mayor, and other government authorities in attendance. 152 clients had the opportunity to thank USAID-ACCESO, UNITEC, and SIC for their efforts in formalizing and legalizing small businesses. These businesses now have legal status and better opportunities for credit and financing.
- Natural resource management and disaster mitigation specialists held a workshop in disaster preparedness and response for leaders and officials from organizations such as the United Nations Development Program, Firefighters of Honduras, the Development and Cooperation Institute (ICADE), the Permanent Contingency Commission (COPECO), the Secretary of Social Development, the Planning and External Cooperation Secretary (SEPLAN), and seven municipal emergency committees.

### 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.



*All photos by Fintrac Inc.*

A sweet potato farmer harvests his second crop cycle, bound for international markets.

### USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries, and other clients, October 2012

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	3,265	9,671	637
Intibucá	3,649	18,697	790
La Paz	3,052	14,007	1,067
Lempira	4,293	20,902	1,337
Ocotepeque	3,062	10,467	439
Santa Bárbara	2,607	9,112	977
Otros	23	100	134
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19,951</b>	<b>82,956</b>	<b>5,381</b>

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



A small family business receives its legal registration, affording more opportunities for protection and investment.



Thanks to technical assistance from USAID-ACCESO, smallholder farmers are implementing good agricultural practices such as land preparation to improve yields.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The project conducted 12,238 technical assistance visits, of which 9,962 focused on improving agricultural production and building producer capacity in technical areas such as biological pest control, fertilization best practices, installation and management of irrigation systems, weed management, livestock, nursery management, and poultry management.

Under the health and nutrition component, 735 technical assistance visits focused on food preparation and personal and household hygiene. Additional technical visits included 194 in animal production, 542 in business skills (use of log books and recordkeeping), 136 in postharvest (export regulations and processes, packaging, and product classification), 446 in value-added processing, and 186 visits on solid waste and coffee effluent management.

## VALUE ADDITION

USAID-ACCESO continued expanding employment opportunities across the agricultural value chain, promoting new product development and transforming available resources into commercial goods. In October, 61 workshops with 580 participants were held. Nearly 300 clients learned improved baked goods recipes for desserts, sweet rolls, breads; 58 participants attended workshops on processing fruits and vegetables into pickled goods, jellies, dehydrated fruits, and concentrates, all for sale in local markets.

The project assisted 714 MSMEs, many of which are family-owned and operated businesses, to develop and market products such as flour tortillas and frozen beans to local markets and supermarket chains. Small businesses are key drivers of economic growth in rural communities.



*La Exquisita*, a family business, received technical assistance from USAID-ACCESO in reducing costs and improving efficiency in tortilla production. They are also receiving valuable support in marketing, helping to improve their sales and incomes.

## ACCESS TO MARKETS

USAID-ACCESO participated in a regional Gift Fair in San Pedro Sula to promote 25 client businesses' products, including coffee, honey, hats, and accessories. More than 5,000 people attended the fair, providing a great opportunity for project-supported businesses to reach new potential clients.

Marketing specialists continue assisting allspice, eggplant, and sweet potato producers to export their high-quality crops. To date, export sales have totaled nearly \$360,000 in Santa Bárbara, Copán, and Ocotepeque. Sweet potato not selected for international markets is processed locally to make candy and sweet potato chips, creating employment opportunities and additional income sources.



Marketing specialists display project-supported goods at the Gift Fair. Large events such as these expose clients to potentially lucrative new markets.



A mother grinds iron-rich greens to fortify tortillas at a food preparation training in La Paz.

## NUTRITION AND HEALTH

More than 1,600 participants received training at 105 events covering good nutrition and health practices, leading to improved conditions in client homes this month. 575 parents attended food preparation trainings, learning new recipes for nutrient-rich meals, including rice cakes, soups, and fortified tortillas. 163 participants received training on diet diversity and the impact it has on children less than two years old, especially those in the bottom nutritional percentile.

Specialists are also promoting health and nutrition education through dynamic methods, including 5,000 “educational wheels,” an interactive tool showing types and quantities of foods appropriate for children according to age. Additional creative and fun educational tools, such as puzzles with images of healthy foods (leafy greens, yellow fruits, fortified tortillas), are being distributed in target communities.

## STIMULATING HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH HOME IMPROVEMENTS

In rural communities, USAID-ACCESO promotes home improvements to reduce preventable diseases. Using low-cost, readily-available resources, the project helps household clients improve their floors and walls, construct and maintain eco-stoves, construct mini composting systems, and connect their homes to water systems. Together, these activities reduce contamination from insects and bacteria, dust- and humidity-related illnesses, respiratory diseases caused by smoke-heavy traditional stoves, and illnesses, such as dengue and diarrhea, related to unhygienic living conditions. Sixty-four households (384 people) have made one or more home improvements that are directly tied to better overall health and quality of life, especially for young children.



Merari Pacheco stands with his family in their home, now featuring concrete walls and floors. An eco-stove directs smoke outside of the home, providing a healthier and more comfortable atmosphere for their young son.

### Trainings – October 2012

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	215	28
Business Skills / Finance	592	69
Natural Resource Management	670	33
Market Information	35	5
Postharvest and Certifications	265	19
Processing and Added Value	580	61
Production	8,304	1,020
ACCESO project	11	1
Nutrition and Health	1,601	105
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,273</b>	<b>1,341</b>

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