



Monthly Update *November 2012*

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is currently assisting 20,266 client households, providing integrated technical assistance in production, postharvest, nutrition and health and other project components, benefitting over 84,369 people through new crop introduction, renewable technology implementation, farm certification and access to formal markets, among other activities that promote income generation. 48% of the total beneficiaries are women while 13% are children under 5 years old. The project works to improve living conditions for all client households in six Western departments in the country with high levels of poverty and malnutrition.
- The total production area under project assistance is currently 18,146 hectares which includes 9,416 hectares of coffee, 6,797 hectares of basic grains and 1,933 hectares of fruits and vegetables. The crops with the largest planting areas this month include rice, broccoli, cauliflower, Chinese eggplant and onion. Banana, avocado, peach and mango are some of the principal fruits in terms of production area. The total area reported in November decreased slightly compared to the previous month following a revision of the project's client database.
- USAID-ACCESO held a Financial Business Conference in the department of Intibucá with the participation of 115 producers and financial service providers, local banks and other organizations such as BANCO DE OCCIDENTE, BANADESA, Banco Azteca, COMIXMUL, FINACOOOP, Del Campo and PACTA. Credit products and requirements were presented to promote the benefits and opportunities of formal financing. The project actively develops relations between small-scale producers and financial service institutions. To date, 1,895 clients have accessed credit due to project intervention.
- In Santa Bárbara the project organized a plantain field day event to bring together growers, buyers, financial service organizations and plantain specialists to demonstrate production technologies and to develop market linkages, business opportunities and financing. 215 producers actively participated in the event, developing direct contacts with buyers, input providers and financial institutions.

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.
As part of the technical assistance, updated technologies are introduced, such as plastic mulch and micro-tunnels, which help increase crop yield and reduce unit production costs.

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

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	3,225	9,797	1,219
Intibucá	3,635	19,143	1,147
La Paz	3,117	15,018	1,324
Lempira	4,296	20,948	1,880
Ocotepeque	2,969	10,097	883
Santa Bárbara	3,000	9,262	1,308
Others	24	104	988
TOTAL	20,266	84,369	8,749

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



Producers, buyers and plantain specialists at a USAID-ACCESO field event in Santa Barbara, to demonstrate technologies and develop market linkages.



USAID-ACCESO provides regular technical assistance visits, developing options and establishing solutions to meet producer needs. Participants learn basic and cultural practices for vegetables production, pest and disease prevention and control and range of other production systems and techniques.

TECNICAL ASSISTANCE

The project conducted 10,036 technical assistance visits, of which 7,572 focused on agricultural production including the use of basic and cultural practices in coffee and horticulture crops; land preparation, contour plowing and soil management; field visits among producers; installation, management and maintenance of drip irrigation systems; among many others.

494 visits to households were made in nutrition and health, focused particularly on vitamin enriched meal preparation; 339 visits in animal production were carried out by project specialists in poultry farming, livestock and bee hive management for the production of honey, pollen and other derivatives; 475 technical visits made to MSMES on business skills and financing opportunities; 294 technical assistance visits in postharvest and 419 in processing, where clients learned to add value to fruits and vegetables through wine, jams and concentrate processing as well as dairy, meat, bread and candy production; 57 technical assistance visits were made on natural resources management activities which focused on water and coffee waste management.

VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS

Project specialists held 55 training events with 430 participants, who learned to add value to available resources and transforming raw materials into commercial products. 27 bakery workshops were held where participants learned to prepare cookies, cakes and local pastries high in demanded in local communities. Other participants received assistance in dairy, bean and wine processing, establishing relations with buyers in different areas. To date, the project has linked 1,500 MSMES to new markets and buyers.

Forestry specialists continued coordinating with selected environmental organizations to help wood transformers in legal procedures to obtain the raw materials to produce their commercial products. These and all the integrated component activities have promoted employment in assisted communities; to date more than 2,300 new jobs have been created due to project implementation.



Forestry specialists promote legal logging and eco-friendly activities, assisting wood transformers in the definition of procedures to obtain their raw materials and transform them into income generating products.



In Santa Bárbara, a buyer visits USAID-ACCESO's assisted farmers to determine product requirements for weekly deliveries of cabbage and other horticulture crops. In the visits, direct communication is established between buyers and assisted clients, where quality standards, delivery dates and market requirements are defined.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

Where necessary, project-assisted producers are being organized into legal or formal working groups. This not only helps open market opportunities, but also facilitates logistics, financing and purchasing. This month, 16 participants were trained in market information, on-farm negotiations with buyers and defining specific crop quality requirements.

63 producers received technical assistance from USAID-ACCESO's specialists, contributing to formal deliveries of potato, plantain, cabbage, radish, carrot, broccoli, lettuce, etc. Approximately 9,230 hectares of the total project assisted area represents new crops.



Two beneficiary children in a meal preparation workshop in the department of Lempira. Mothers are shown to diversify diets by including fruits and vegetables rich in vitamins and nutrients necessary for optimal child growth and development.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

During the month, 86 training events were conducted, where 1,323 community leaders, health volunteers and parents learned the health and hygiene basic practices, adequate water storage, diet diversity and home cleanliness, among other important subjects.

26 workshops were carried out on nutritive meal preparation, putting into practice recipes that include yellow fruits and green leaves, and promoting their consumption especially in children under two years of age. 13 workshops were held focused on spacing pregnancies and establishing adequate pregnancy timing, to provide better living conditions for both mothers and their children.

To date, 26 hectares of the total project assisted production area represents family plots. Each family plot includes crops such as sweet potato, cassava, plantain, and green leaves, all rich in iron and vitamins. These are used in the recipes learned in nutrition workshops.

FIELD VISITS BOOST GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

With the objective of increasing yields in different crops, USAID-ACCESO's specialists promote exchange field visits among producers in the departments assisted by the project.

The field visits promote production technologies and new crops and they motivate new small scale producers through real testimonies from other assisted farmers. The technologies, changes and the results speak for themselves. This month 22 field visits were made, where 237 producers were able to visit other farmers and commercial farming operations. During the year, thanks to coordination between departments, more than 3,800 women and men have been benefitted from 197 exchange field visits, promoted by the production and postharvest staff.



Field visit in Intibucá, demonstrating proper implementation of basic practices such as land preparation, raised beds and planting distance, among others.

Trainings – November 2012		
Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	336	45
Business Skills / Finance	1,287	102
Natural Resource Management	522	26
Marketing	126	13
Postharvest and Certifications	505	51
Processing and Added Value	420	55
Production	7,289	910
USAID-ACCESO project	6	1
Nutrition and Health	1,323	86
TOTAL	11,814	1,289

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