



# Monthly Bulletin *January 2013*

## JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is currently assisting 23,089 client households through the introduction of new technologies and good agricultural practices that improve yields, reduce risks, and create sustainable sources of income. The project is benefitting a total of 87,352 people; 11,272 of which are children less than 5 years old, whose diets have been diversified with high-value, nutrient rich crops, and 48 percent of which are women. Thanks to increased incomes, clients have increased their food security and have access to renewable energy technologies, new rural financing opportunities, and adequate natural resource management systems.
- The total production area expanded to 20,084 hectares under the technical assistance program, which included 10,863 hectares of coffee, 7,313 hectares of basic grains, and 1,908 hectares of fruits and horticulture crops. The most planted crops were: potato, tomato, sweet potato, onion, cucumber, cabbage, plantain, watermelon, and passion fruit.
- On January 23, USAID-ACCESO inaugurated an irrigation system and a nutrition training center in the community of Belén Manazapa, Intibucá. The facility will benefit 70 families, including 25 children less than 2 years old. The community welcomed the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Jacobo Regalado, USAID authorities, and USAID-ACCESO staff to the inauguration ceremony, during which residents showcased improvements in productivity and quality of their corn, potato, and chayote crops. Community leaders expressed their gratitude and commitment to continue improving household conditions.
- To date, 544 eco-friendly stoves, 171 solar dryers, and 56 biodigesters have been installed in targeted communities. Eco-friendly stoves reduce the incidence of respiratory disease and use less wood than traditional stoves. Solar dryers for coffee reduce drying time and produce a clean, uniform product. The introduction of renewable technologies such as these helps clients reduce costs and save resources.

### 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 to lift these rural households above the poverty line and malnutrition conditions through economic development and increased incomes.



Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Jacobo Regalado (center), with producers and USAID-ACCESO staff, inaugurates an irrigation system that will benefit 70 families in the community of Belén Manazapa, Intibucá.

### USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries and other clients, January 2013

| Department    | Household clients | Beneficiaries | Other Clients * |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Copán         | 4,057             | 10,421        | 1,170           |
| Intibucá      | 3,834             | 19,753        | 1,196           |
| La Paz        | 3,202             | 15,333        | 1,335           |
| Lempira       | 4,548             | 21,866        | 1,958           |
| Ocotepeque    | 3,093             | 10,397        | 901             |
| Santa Bárbara | 4,355             | 9,582         | 1,310           |
| Others        | 0                 | 0             | 780             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>23,089</b>     | <b>87,352</b> | <b>8,650</b>    |

\*Includes: MSMES, buyers, input and service providers, municipal corporations, counterpart organizations



A new nutrition training center is equipped with eco-friendly stoves that eliminate smoke inside the kitchen, reduce wood consumption, and are easier to clean.



Producers are trained to identify and manage different weeds and diseases. The Osorio brothers are no longer spending on unnecessary agrochemicals and are saving money and managing their crops more effectively thanks to project assistance.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This month, 3,814 technical assistance visits were made, including 2,277 focused on agricultural production. The visits focused on improving basic production practices for coffee and horticulture crops; soil preparation; pest, disease and weed identification and management; fertilizer management; planting and transplanting; postharvest management; use of agrochemicals; irrigation system installation and maintenance; soil conservation; solar dryer maintenance; and plant nursery management and pruning.

Other technical assistance visits included 588 in health and nutrition focused on healthy foods and household improvements; 84 animal production visits focused on livestock and pork production; 210 in business skills and rural financing, establishing links between producers and rural financing agencies; 195 in postharvest; 244 in processing; and 44 visits on natural resource management, dedicated to water quality improvement and treatment.

### VALUE ADDITION

USAID-ACCESO continues to help develop new processing businesses, expand employment opportunities, and introduce new products to the market. This year began with 21 training events in which 103 participants learned the necessary skills to process milk into cheese (cream cheese and cottage cheese) and butter for sale to local markets. Participants also learned to make sweets from milk, nanche fruit, sweet potatoes, and passion fruit. Other trainings focused on making breads, plantain chips, and dehydrated fruit.

To date, 702 micro, small, and medium enterprises (including rural savings banks) have received assistance from project specialists. The businesses are learning to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and increase profit margins, all of which allows them to access new market opportunities.



Lácteos Chabelita has improved its processing and commercialization practices. The small business is also generating employment opportunities for other local women.

### BUSINESS SKILLS

The technical assistance farmers receive in production is complemented by additional training in business plan development, which helps producers access financing and meet market demand. In La Paz, 43 producers between the ages of 16 and 21 have benefited from financing for livestock projects.

To date, 2,027 clients have received financing of some kind due to project intervention. During January, 187 clients received financing to work on animal production, processing, and horticulture production projects.



Before receiving financial support, young producers receive training in the use of production logs and the design of business plans, complementing technical assistance received in the field.



The use of transparent roof panels, one of the low-cost home improvements promoted by the project, maximizes exposure to natural light in communities without access to electricity.

## NUTRITION AND HEALTH

This month, 81 training events were held for 1,114 parents of children less than 2 years of age, who learned best practices in feeding and food preparation. Topics included exclusive breastfeeding, modern methods of family planning, and personal and household hygiene. 386 participants attended food preparation workshops to learn how to increase the nutritional value of meals by including foods such as tortillas fortified with greens and carrots, mashed potatoes, squash, eggs, and other foods rich in iron and vitamins. 118 mothers received counseling about their children’s nutritional development during weigh-in sessions.

175 participants were trained on the installation of low-cost healthy household improvements, including indoor water connections for kitchen use, safe disposal of waste water, and transparent roof panels to provide natural light in communities without electricity.

## NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: COFFEE PULP TREATMENT WITH MICROORGANISMS PROMOTES ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Nearly 80 percent of coffee fruit is discarded during processing, 60 percent of which is the pulp. Runoff from this waste can contaminate local water sources, jeopardizing the health and safety of entire communities. By treating the coffee pulp with natural microorganisms, coffee producers not only prevent water contamination, but they are also able to produce an organic fertilizer for their crops. The microorganisms can be collected directly from the environment surrounding the farms, or bought from input stores. The commercial variety — which breaks the pulp down faster than the natural version (6 to 8 weeks compared to 15) — is applied to the pulp with a backpack sprayer system. USAID-ACCESO is teaching project clients to treat coffee waste with the naturally-found microorganisms following these five steps: (1) microorganism collection, (2) multiplication, (3) activation, (4) application to coffee pulp, and (5) collection and packaging of the resulting organic fertilizer.



Treating coffee pulp with microorganisms is an easy and low-cost alternative for coffee producers that helps conserve the environment. One liter of activated microorganisms is diluted into 19 liters of water and can be applied to 22 quintals of coffee cherries using a backpack sprayer.

### Trainings – January 2013

| Area                           | Participants | Events       |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Renewable Energy               | 116          | 19           |
| Business Skills / Finance      | 637          | 91           |
| Natural Resources Management   | 267          | 24           |
| Postharvest and Certifications | 388          | 46           |
| Processing and Added Value     | 103          | 21           |
| Production                     | 5,188        | 790          |
| ACCESO project                 | 48           | 3            |
| Nutrition and Health           | 1,114        | 81           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | <b>7,861</b> | <b>1,075</b> |

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