



Monthly Bulletin *March 2013*

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 31,477 household clients, increasing productivity and adding value to traditional crops (corn, bean, and coffee) and introducing new crops to maximize income sources. A total of 94,555 people (48 percent women) are benefiting from the project's assistance, which also includes the introduction of diversified diets to rural homes.
- The total area under production with project assistance reached 28,460 hectares with the addition of 117 hectares this month. Crop breakdown is as follows: 16,896 hectares of coffee, 9,109 of basic grains, and 2,455 hectares of fruit and horticulture products. Crops with the most planting area this month included bean, corn, plantain, cabbage, sweet potato, carrot, green bean, tomato, and onion.
- To promote the project, USAID-ACCESO staff coordinated with like-minded local organizations to promote their services and present clients' products to potential buyers at the annual FHIA meeting in La Lima.
- TECHO, an organization that helps overcome poverty through the joint action of community residents and volunteers, built 50 emergency homes for USAID-ACCESO clients in Guascotoro and Guayabal, La Paz. The construction took place March 22-26 and provided basic one-bedroom homes to meet the immediate needs of families living in precarious conditions.
- The project continues promoting off-farm economic opportunities in rural areas, eliminating political barriers for small-scale entrepreneurs. To date, through the simplification of procedures, and the reduction of time and costs associated with registration, 56 MSMEs have completed their registration process and acquired legal representation, which allows them to access better financial and market opportunities.

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.



Thanks to the intervention of TECHO, 50 emergency households were constructed in USAID-ACCESO assisted communities, solving the immediate necessities of families living in precarious conditions.

USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries and other clients, February 2013

Department	Household Clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	4,969	11,075	771
Intibucá	4,874	21,306	700
La Paz	4,482	16,803	640
Lempira	6,391	23,361	1,141
Ocotepeque	4,543	11,823	513
Santa Bárbara	6,218	10,187	971
Otros	0	0	739
TOTAL	31,477	94,555	5,475

*Includes: MSMEs, buyers, input and service providers, municipal corporations, counterpart organizations.



The input store *El Esfuerzo* in the department of Lempira was finally able to legally register with the Honduran government thanks to support from USAID-ACCESO.



Through USAID-ACCESO's technical assistance, producers in Lempira now manage fertilization programs and drip irrigation systems, which, coupled with other good agricultural practices promoted by the project, are leading to increased garlic yields.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In March, a total of 13,884 technical assistance visits were held. Of these, 10,657 focused on agricultural production, including best practices for coffee and horticulture crops; soil conservation; bed preparation and contour plowing; proper use of chemicals; and weed, disease, and pest identification and control.

717 technical assistance visits focused on healthy meal preparation and basic household hygiene and sanitation; 353 on livestock production; 752 on business and finance skills, including recordkeeping; 193 on postharvest handling; 614 on processing; 86 on renewable energy; 43 on market access; and 467 technical assistance visits in natural resource management and natural disaster mitigation.

VALUE ADDED PRODUCTS

USAID-ACCESO continues promoting off-farm income generation strengthening micro entrepreneurs through training workshops. During the month, 238 participants learned to make concentrated foods, corn and bean products, pickled good, sweets, and handicrafts during 35 training events.

Forestry specialist continued working with wood manufactures in creating products using legally-sourced timber. Technicians made 79 technical assistance visits to strengthen basic practices in wood management and provide instruction in purchasing raw materials to create furniture, doors, and other in-demand products.



Forestry specialists teach farmers to use legally-acquired raw materials to produce furniture and other household items.



Buyers visit producers in Ocotepeque to discuss harvesting schedules and sales prices. Direct links with reliable buyers help increase earnings for rural smallholder farmers.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

To strengthen market relations, USAID-ACCESO specialists bring potential buyers to client farms, allowing them to establish direct relationships with producers through which buyers and farmers agree on minimum quantities, prices, and delivery schedules.

On March 13 and 14, project marketing and production specialists attended the Agritrade International Fruits and Vegetable Fair in Guatemala, establishing links with potential buyers and ideas for new market-driven projects.



Thanks to promoted techniques, families in rural areas are making important home improvements to better their family's quality of life.

NUTRITION & HEALTH

97 training events were carried out during the month, involving 1,399 participants who learned improved hygiene and feeding practices. Participants also learned and implemented low-cost techniques to make their homes healthier and safer for their children. Techniques include: transparent roof sheets to improve natural lighting; basic water filtration systems to increase access to potable water; construction of eco-stoves that reduce occurrences of respiratory diseases; and plastering walls and floors to reduce contacts with insects and bacteria. Participants also received training in healthy food preparation and meal planning for diverse diets.

HEALTHY RECIPES IMPROVE CHILDREN'S NUTRITIONAL CONDITIONS

To address the difficult living conditions in rural communities, project nutrition specialists promote low-cost recipes that use readily-available ingredients to introduce healthier foods for at-risk children.

There are more than 50 promoted recipes, including plantain cakes, cassava balls, sweet corn soup, all of which are high in important vitamins and iron. Each recipe is comprised of accessible ingredients such as corn, beans, eggs, milk, green leaves, cassava, and plantains. The recipes have been introduced to more than 1,500 household clients in 99 communities, benefitting approximately 9,300 people in western Honduras. Thanks to project interventions, children under two years of age are improving their nutritional conditions, complementing healthy recipes with basic hygiene and health practices.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

Approximately 9,288 people have benefitted from healthy recipes promoted by USAID-ACCESO. The recipes are high in vitamins and nutrients that are important for healthy childhood development.

Trainings – March 2013

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	81	10
Business Skills / Finance	976	137
Natural Resources Management	531	33
Postharvest and Certifications	306	31
Processing and Added Value	238	35
Production	9,108	1,033
ACCESO Project	56	3
Nutrition and Health	1,399	97
Market Information	2	2
TOTAL	12,697	1,381

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