



# Monthly Update *April 2013*

## APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 32,801 household clients in western Honduras overcome poverty and malnutrition through access to economic development opportunities and improved health and nutrition practices. The project introduces high-value crops, increases access to renewable energy technologies and finance, and works to improve diet diversity for household clients, 20 percent of whom are women. The project is benefitting more than 176,028 people in total.
- The total production area under project assistance is currently 28,775 hectares that include 17,087 hectares of coffee, 9,065 hectares of basic grains, and 2,623 hectares of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops with the largest planting areas this month included: coffee, corn, bean, potato, passion fruit, plantain, cabbage, tomato, sweet potato, and watermelon.
- To improve community response to risks such as floods, landslides, and forest fires, USAID-ACCESO natural disaster mitigation specialists continued training volunteers to conduct damage assessment and needs analyses (known as EDAN in Honduras). The project improves volunteers' capacities to effectively manage and deal with emergency situations. To date, 178 volunteers have been trained in EDAN in 68 of the most vulnerable municipalities in the country. Having qualified residents with the capacity to respond to and solve issues arising from natural disasters helps communities recover better and faster from these potentially catastrophic events.
- Small-scale producers received technical assistance to implement renewable energy technologies such as solar dryers, which increase efficiency and quality of coffee crops, adding value to the product. To date, 227 solar dryers have been constructed and installed thanks to project intervention, substantially improving crops in rural areas. The dryers are also used for basic grains, allspice, and cashew seeds.

### 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.



*Photos by Fintrac Inc.*  
EDAN volunteers practice their acquired skills in a drill organized by USAID-ACCESO partners.

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

Department	Client Households	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	5,209	11,088	813
Intibucá	5,084	22,214	713
La Paz	4,839	17,571	677
Lempira	6,633	23,486	1,151
Ocotepeque	4,568	11,831	534
Santa Bárbara	6,468	10,252	1,017
Otros	-	-	781
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32,801</b>	<b>96,442</b>	<b>5,686</b>

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



Producers receive technical assistance for solar dryer construction and management. These dryers increase efficiency and quality for coffee products, leading directly to increased earning potential.



In Santa Bárbara, producers received training in pest and disease identification and control and in prevention systems for new crops introduced by the project.

## TECNICAL ASSISTANCE

In April, USAID-ACCESO technicians made 24,437 technical assistance visits, 18,898 of which focused on the following topics: improved agricultural production practices in coffee, horticulture, and basic grains; soil preparation and management; planting and transplanting; irrigation system installation; pest and disease identification and control; soil conservation; agrochemical use; fertilization program management; nursery construction; and crop residue management.

Other visits included 400 in accessing markets; 1,056 visits on improved nutrition and health practices; 522 in livestock and poultry production; 1,495 in business skills; 237 visits in postharvest and certifications; 896 in value-added processing; and 574 visits in natural disaster management.

## VALUE ADDED

USAID-ACCESO specialists promote sales and increased revenue through the expansion of off-farm microenterprises and the generation of employment opportunities. In the community of Cabañas, Copán, the project's integrated approach generated new revenue for both producers and micro-entrepreneurs. Teresa Reyes established the first vegetable stand in the community, earning new income for her household and offering residents fresh onions, carrots, cucumbers, peppers, and cabbage produced by USAID-ACCESO assisted farmers.

In April, project staff held 78 training events during which 710 participants learned to process and commercialize products derived from resources that were already part of their diet, such as dairy, corn tortillas, flour tortillas, frozen beans, plantain and sweet potato chips, dehydrated fruits, fruit jellies, and fruit concentrates.



Thanks to project intervention, Teresa Reyes, established the first horticulture market in Cabañas, Copán. The business generates greater income for her household and benefits producers in the area, who supply the fresh produce.

## ACCESS TO MARKETS

Marketing specialists continued to assist small-scale producers through workshops that strengthened their market knowledge. This month, 475 participants benefited from 39 training events where they established new market opportunities and new product delivery routes, which helped strengthen relationships between rural producers and local, regional, and international buyers.

The first shipment of processed sugar cane was sent from the community of La Zumbadora, Copán to the United States. With project assistance, the microbusiness *Flor del Cañal* exported 150 boxes (1,800 units of processed cane sugar) that met international requirements and quality standards set by the market.



For the first time, *Flor del Cañal* exported 150 boxes of whole sugar cane to the United States. The business learned to meet international quality standards with project support.



Children in Guayabal, La Paz enjoy meals prepared by their mothers during food preparation trainings. Diets rich in iron and vitamins are crucial for healthy childhood development and growth.

## NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Nutrition and health specialists held 185 training events for 2,984 parents who acquired the necessary knowledge to improve and implement basic nutrition and health practices. In food preparation workshops, participants learned new healthy recipes such as eggs with green leaves, pumpkin cupcakes, bean tamales, and other recipes made from locally-available resources that are high in vitamins and iron.

Specialists continued motivating household clients to improve the physical conditions of their homes. The improvements promoted by the project included eco-stoves that reduce the incidence of respiratory diseases; sewage systems that discard dirty water outside the house; water filters that enable the consumption of clean water; and improved floors and walls that reduce contact with bacteria. Together, these changes improve the quality of life for assisted families, helping them prevent and reduce the incidence of unhealthy children.

## DRIP IRRIGATION SAVES WATER & IMPROVES PRODUCTIVITY

Drip irrigation technology is an essential component of the updated agricultural practices promoted by USAID-ACCESO. Production specialists introduce drip irrigation to farmers to ensure year round production, increased yields, improved consistency and quality, reduced unit production costs, and increased sales revenues and net income.

Drip irrigation saves water, directing and controlling the volume of water directly to the roots of each plant. This minimizes water loss due to runoff. Thanks to project intervention, more than 2,000 small-scale farmers in western Honduras have installed drip irrigation systems on their plots. Steady access to water allows continuous production, diversification into new high-value crops, and the ability to reach new, more lucrative markets. Crops such as tomato, onion, plantain, lettuce, cabbage, and carrots increase household income, diet diversification, and food security.



To date, more than 2,000 small-scale producers assisted by USAID-ACCESO in western Honduras have installed irrigation systems in their plots.

### Trainings – April 2013

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	73	13
Business Skills / Finance	1,574	152
Natural Resource Management	769	37
Postharvest and Certifications	360	32
Processing and Added Value	710	78
Production	18,230	2,039
Market Information	475	39
Nutrition and Health	2,884	185
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,198</b>	<b>2,576</b>

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