



Monthly Bulletin *July 2013*

JULY HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 35,356 households in the most vulnerable communities in western Honduras, promoting production technologies and practices to increase incomes and improve the overall quality of life. The project is benefitting 190,239 people – 90 percent of whom live in poverty and extreme poverty conditions – through technical assistance and training in production, value-added processing, natural resource management, renewable technologies, disaster mitigation, and nutrition and health.
- The total production area increased to 37,024 hectares: 18,208 hectares of coffee, 15,781 of basic grains, and 3,035 of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops covering the most planting area this month include: corn, bean, coffee, sweet potato, onion, green bean, and Hass avocado.
- In order to sustainably increase the availability of animal protein in priority communities, nutrition and health technicians are training mothers with children under two years old and community health volunteers in the establishment and management of 318 chicken coops for egg consumption and 13 herds of goats for milk production. These backyard chickens and pasture goats will not depend on purchased balanced feed, which is a major constraint to the sustainability of animal protein projects.
- During the month of July, USAID-ACCESO signed an agreement letter with the regional northwestern office of the Forest Conservation Institute (FCI) to establish mechanisms for coordination between the two organizations to improve the management and utilization of national and communal forest resources. Through this partnership, client households and MSMEs working in the forested areas will now have access to technical assistance from FCI.



All photos by Fintrac Inc.
Access to technical knowledge: project technicians and producers calibrate sprinkler systems.



Access to basic coffee practices: shade management, tissue management, liming, and nutrition programs according to their phenological stage.

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 is assisting 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.

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

Department	Household clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	5,463	22,174	933
Intibucá	5,582	44,123	809
La Paz	5,724	33,388	780
Lempira	7,078	45,550	1,288
Ocotepeque	4,660	23,514	638
Santa Bárbara	6,849	21,490	1,142
Otros	0	0	524
TOTAL	35,356	190,239	6,114

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



Access to balanced diets: families in Lempira plant mustard greens in their home gardens. These plants provide leafy greens that fortify food, specifically tortillas, with iron to improve the growth of young children.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

USAID-ACCESO carried out 32,585 technical assistance visits this month. Of these, 26,382 strengthened farmers' knowledge in agricultural production topics, including basic and cultural practices for coffee and horticulture crops; soil preparation and management; pest, disease and weed identification and control; transplant and planting; fertilization program management; nutrient balance; adequate use of agrochemicals; soil conservation; and contour plowing.

1,223 technical assistance visits focused on childhood nutrition, creating healthy households and reinforcing personal and home hygiene; 1,020 on processing; 1,502 on business skills such as production logs and reducing costs; 779 technical assistance visits in animal production focused on poultry farming and livestock management; 669 visits were on natural resource management; and 167 on postharvest and certification.

VALUE ADDITION

USAID-ACCESO processing specialists continued working with communities to create new products from locally-available resources to generate off-farm employment opportunities. This month, 582 participants attended 65 training events during which they learned about good manufacturing practices, vegetable and fruit processing, and the production of milk and bakery products.

Forestry specialists continued promoting legal tree felling and working with woodcrafters to build furniture, doors, chests, and other in-demand products for sale to local markets.



Access to new products: sugar cane producers in Lempira learn better postharvest processing techniques. Improving the production and packaging process extends shelf life, helps increase incomes and makes the product more attractive to new markets.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

In July, 67 participants attended eight training events on market information during which they identified new market opportunities and potential clients, and studied buyer quality standards and regulations.

Marketing specialists continued coordinating tours of producers' plots to increase exposure for small-scale farmers and deliver information about market routes and formal buyer requirements. This month, the project organized 118 visits that facilitated sharing of market information, logistic details, and transportation coordination.

USAID-ACCESO presented agricultural and MSME products at a fair in Gracias, Lempira and at farmers' markets in communities of Copan to improve local sales and reduce transportation costs.



Access to markets: the USAID-ACCESO team displayed project results to date, clients' products, and made contacts with local suppliers at a regional supermarkets exposition.



Access to animal protein: in the community of El Cedral, Copán Ruinas, 25 cross-bred goats are being milked two times a day, producing a daily average of two liters of milk, diversifying the diets and improving nutrition for children older than one year.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

The nutrition and health team held 248 training events, giving 3,712 parents the opportunity to strengthen basic nutrition and health practices. This month, 1,720 participants were trained in family planning and optimal spacing of pregnancies. 769 participants increased their knowledge of healthy households – the concept of establishing healthy and safe norms within the home to prevent diseases and improve hygiene practices.

The construction of 318 chicken coops began and will benefit the same number of households in 13 communities. The access to egg protein will provide these families with balanced diets, ensuring proper growth of children 8 months and older.

BUSINESS SKILLS

1,502 technical assistance visits focused on improving business practices and access to credit. 1,146 participants attended 109 training events. This month, trainings focused on the use of agricultural logbook for producers of yellow corn under calendarized planting programs for formal markets.

Business and finance specialist helped establish 12 legal entities, 11 rural banks and a woman-owned service company dedicated to food processing, as well as working with 59 fruit and vegetable farms to update their agricultural budgets. Technicians made two field visits to Santa Barbara and Intibucá with ODEF and one more in Santa Barbara with BANPAIS to identify new financial opportunities for project clients.



Access to credit: ODEF visits the youth group members of AJAVI Caja Rural in Pueblo Viejo, Intibucá. There are 12 members ranging from 17 to 29 years old (including 3 women) that produce potatoes, carrots, and yellow corn.

Trainings – July 2013

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	195	18
Business Skills / Finance	1,146	109
Natural Resources Management and Disaster Mitigation	1,067	51
Postharvest and Certifications	572	46
Processing and Added Value	582	65
Production	24,878	2,820
Market Information	67	8
Nutrition and Health	3,712	248
ACCESO project	16	2
TOTAL	32,235	3,367

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