



Monthly Bulletin *January 2014*

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 34,769 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 184,884 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.
- During the month of January, 268 new hectares were planted reaching a total production area of 45,352 hectares under project technical assistance, including: 18,510 hectares of coffee, 22,997 of basic grains, and 3,845 of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops with the highest planting area this month were: coffee, corn, sweet potato, beans, green beans, banana, cabbage, onion, and watermelon.
- This month, USAID-ACCESO trained three women’s groups in Ocotepeque on legalization activities for micro, small and medium enterprises. The groups work in bread production and flower production. The Association of Municipalities of Valle de Sesecapa (AMVAS), which includes the municipalities of Santa Fe, Concepción, Nueva Ocotepeque, and Sinuapa, helped facilitate the trainings. The project also trained community groups engaged in waste collection to promote recycling activities.
- In January, the project held an award ceremony for yellow corn production in Erandique, Lempira. The highest yield was achieved by Neftalí Cáceres with 110 quintales per manzana, with Pablo Martínez taking second place with 96 quintales per manzana of production. The average of the 10 most productive producers was 82 quintales per manzana. More than 100 producers attended the event and each could attest that implementing improved production practices and basic technologies increases yields.



All photos by Fintrac Inc.

Access to technical knowledge: Producers in Lempira implementing good agricultural practices such as plant spacing and use of plastic mulch for weed control and humidity conservation for their green beans.



Access to results: Yellow corn producers with the highest yields and quality took home prizes at an awards ceremony in Erandique, Lempira.

USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries and other clients, January 2014

Department	Household clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	5,463	24,130	1,305
Intibucá	5,648	37,148	1,082
La Paz	5,777	27,594	993
Lempira	6,678	44,808	1,863
Ocotepeque	4,404	24,876	810
Santa Bárbara	6,799	26,328	1,457
Others	0	0	726
TOTAL	34,769	184,884	8,236

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

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.



Access to technical knowledge: A producer from Copán receives assistance identifying pests and diseases in his crop.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

USAID-ACCESO carried out 22,940 technical assistance visits this month. Of these, 16,515 strengthened farmers' knowledge in agricultural production topics including basic 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.

1,224 technical assistance visits focused on childhood nutrition and improving personal and home hygiene; 990 on processing; 1,414 on business skills such as production logs and reducing costs. 795 technical assistance visits in animal production focused on poultry farming and livestock management; 461 visits focused on natural resource management; and 777 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, 216 participants attended 43 training events during which they learned good manufacturing and processing practices, and techniques to produce frozen chicken tacos, frozen beans, and other dairy 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 crops: Chia producer in San Sebastián, Lempira learns proper harvesting and cleaning activities to meet sales requirements for domestic and international markets.



ACCESS to new markets: A regional buyer visits green bean crops to verify the quality of the product purchased through a formal contract.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

In January, 45 participants attended eight training events on market information. The producers and buyers learned about quality standards and regulations, supply, and the negotiation process.

Marketing specialists continued coordinating tours of producers' plots to increase market exposure for small-scale farmers and deliver information about market routes and formal buyer requirements. This month, the project organized 204 technical assistance visits that facilitated sharing market information, logistical details, and transportation coordination.



Access to better health and nutrition: Project staff and health volunteers make home visits to monitor children’s weights, as well as the overall hygiene and sanitation of the household.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

The nutrition and health team held 153 training events, giving 1,991 parents the opportunity to strengthen basic nutrition and health practices. This month, 1,079 participants received training in family planning and optimal spacing of pregnancies (two years between pregnancies) to contribute to a better quality of life. 208 participants learned about nutritious food preparation and practiced recipes for natural juices, rice with vegetables, fortified tortillas, bean soup, and other vitamin-rich recipes made from low-cost and accessible ingredients. 220 participants learned “healthy household” practices: the concept of establishing healthy and safe norms within the home to prevent diseases and improve hygiene practices.

COFFEE RUST STRATEGY

USAID-ACCESO and IHCAFE, with support from other public and private organizations, recently launched the Integrated National Plan to Support Coffee Producing Families Affected by la roya. (*La roya* is more commonly known as the coffee rust disease.) Through coordination with IHCAFE, project-assisted coffee producers will be added to IHCAFE’s official records, allowing them to access credit for inputs.



Access to knowledge: The project is supporting coffee farmers affected by leaf rust, helping them access implement good agricultural practices that serve as preventative measures, management of current harvests, and crop diversification.

As another coping strategy, the project is introducing demonstration (but commercial) plots of vegetables in Santa Bárbara to encourage crop diversification. Additionally, USAID-ACCESO is working to establish an early warning mechanism to help prevent pests and disease by using the network of weather stations managed by the World Wildlife Fund. The project is providing technical assistance and training to 16,497 coffee producers on 18,510 hectares.

Trainings – January 2014

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	458	82
Business Skills / Finance	632	69
Natural Resources Management and Disaster Mitigation	326	30
Postharvest and Certifications	596	95
Processing and Added Value	216	43
Production	13,976	2,185
Market Information	45	8
Nutrition and Health	1,991	153
ACCESO project	-	-
TOTAL	18,240	2,665

This monthly update was made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This content is Fintrac’s responsibility, the main implementing partner of USAID-ACCESO, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of USAID or the United States government.

USAID-ACCESO is implemented by Fintrac Inc. in association with FHIA, Zamorano, Aldea Global, FUNDER and CARE, and with CASM, COPRAFEL, Hermandad de Honduras, IHCAFE, OCDIH, PILARH, Save the Children and Visión Mundial.