



Monthly Bulletin *March 2014*

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 34,724 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 184,668 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.
- This month, 164 new hectares were planted reaching a total of 52,809 hectares under project technical assistance, including: 23,417 hectares of coffee, 24,656 of basic grains, and 4,736 of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops with the highest planting area this month were: maize, coffee, cabbage, potatoes, beans, cucumber, passion fruit, banana, carrot, and red onion.
- This month USAID-ACCESO held a workshop on the use of microorganisms to treat organic waste for conversion into fertilizer. Thirty-one students and two teachers from ESNACIFOR attended the training. The project is also counseling a forest engineering student on his thesis.
- In March, project technicians held a training session for the first micro measurement of potable water in La Sierra, La Paz. Currently 96 homes have micro measurement capabilities and 14 more will be added, along with various churches and schools in the community. Micro measurement allows water management boards and municipalities to determine water consumption per household and calculate pay rates.



All photos by Fintrac Inc.
Access to technical expertise on high value crops: Producers review their crop prior to harvest in San Antonio, Ocotepeque bean.



Access to results: Thanks to the technical assistance provided by USAID-ACCESO and the implementation of good agricultural practices, farmers are realizing excellent yields in the department of Intibucá.

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

Department	Household clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	5,458	24,121	1,471
Intibucá	5,639	37,127	1,185
La Paz	5,776	27,622	1,044
Lempira	6,679	44,787	1,978
Ocotepeque	4,408	24,925	847
Santa Bárbara	6,764	26,085	1,690
Others	0	0	789
TOTAL	34,724	184,688	9,004

*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 production technology: Producers have adopted good agricultural practices such as raised beds, drip irrigation and plastic mulch for green bean crops in Gracias, Lempira.

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, 365 participants attended 56 training events during which they learned good manufacturing and processing practices, and techniques to produce frozen chicken tacos, frozen beans, and 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 product and promotion: Small businesses participate in markets and fairs to increase exposure to buyers, at both the national and international level.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

USAID-ACCESO carried out 24,574 technical assistance visits this month. Of these, 17,414 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 and safe use of agrochemicals; soil conservation; and contour plowing.

1,936 technical assistance visits focused on childhood nutrition and improving personal and home hygiene; 1,149 on processing; 1,453 on business skills including production logs and reducing costs. 921 technical assistance visits in animal production focused on poultry farming and livestock management; 503 visits focused on natural resource management; and 680 on postharvest handling and certifications.



Access to technical knowledge: Farmers prepare the soil, raised beds and apply lime for the next planting, Yamaranguila, La Paz.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

In March, 15 participants attended two 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 logistics routes and formal buyer requirements. This month, the project organized 111 technical assistance visits that facilitated sharing market information, logistical details, and transportation coordination.



Access to better nutrition and health: Parents attend nutrition training sessions on best feeding practices for their newborn children.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

The nutrition and health team held 205 training events, giving 3,039 parents the opportunity to strengthen basic nutrition and health practices. This month, 1,144 participants received training in family planning and optimal spacing of pregnancies (two years between pregnancies) to contribute to a better quality of life. 257 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. 477 participants learned “healthy household” practices: the concept of establishing healthy and safe norms within the home to prevent diseases and improve hygiene practices.

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

USAID-ACCESO animal production specialists are training livestock farmers in various aspects of good livestock management, including how to reduce production costs and improve animal feed practices through preparation of concentrate. Livestock farmers are also learning to build waterers and feeders to improve feed monitoring and ensure appropriate rations to the animal in its various stages of growth. Currently the project is also assisting tilapia farmers, as well as poultry farmers, dairy cattle production, and pig rearing.

During this month 921 visits of technical assistance in animal production have been made, mainly focusing on proper handling of poultry and livestock.



Access to different sources of income and diversification: A group of producers shares their experiences in managing, breeding, and feeding livestock with visiting livestock farmers in the community of Agua Zarca, Intibucá.

Trainings – March 2014

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	414	72
Business Skills / Finance	909	92
Natural Resources Management and Disaster Mitigation	505	21
Postharvest and Certifications	638	59
Processing and Added Value	365	56
Production	16,184	2,197
Market Information	15	2
Nutrition and Health	3,039	205
ACCESO project	-	-
TOTAL	22,069	2,704

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