



Monthly Bulletin *December 2014*

HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 34,041 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 181,231 people – 89 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, 275 new hectares were planted reaching a total of 73,059 hectares under project technical assistance, including: 26,286 hectares of coffee, 40,262 of basic grains, and 6,511 of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops with the highest planting area this month were: maize, coffee, bean, onion, potato, plantain, cabbage, squash, tomato, and lettuce.
- In La Paz, the project held the third annual award ceremony for best corn production to publicly recognize the producers who apply project-recommended practices and technologies, and who encourage others to do the same. The event was held in San Miguel, Santa Ana, La Paz where first place winner Juan Norberto Martinez Mendoza lives. Martinez yielded 169 quintales per hectare. Of the 57 registered entrants, 15 obtained yields above 60 quintales per hectare, two of which were women.
- This month, USAID-ACCESO's production manager held a training event in Comayagua on the management and maintenance of irrigation systems. More than 140 people participated, including producers, technicians, and suppliers.
- USAID and Minister of Agriculture officials attended an inauguration for a new drip irrigation system in El Sauce, Opatoro, La Paz.



Access to technical assistance: A project technician discusses the development of a potato crop with a producer in Guise, Intibucá. He also helps the farmer identify and prevent potential diseases.



Access to knowledge: Juan Martinez, winner of the third annual corn production competition in La Paz, shucks corn with the Minister of Agriculture during the event; Santa Ana, La Paz.

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

Department	Household clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients*
Copán	5,372	23,640	1,721
Intibucá	5,583	36,788	1,603
La Paz	5,642	27,023	1,258
Lempira	6,635	44,429	2,186
Ocotepeque	4,335	24,422	1,154
Santa Bárbara	6,475	24,929	1,826
Others	0	0	814
TOTAL	34,041	181,231	10,562

*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 households above the poverty line and malnutrition conditions through economic development and increased incomes.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

USAID-ACCESO carried out 9,466 technical assistance visits this month. Of these, 6,140 (65 percent) strengthened farmers' knowledge in agricultural production topics including basic practices for coffee, basic grains, 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.

1,100 technical assistance visits focused on health and nutrition, focusing on preventing childhood anemia, proper administration of micronutrients received from health posts, pregnancy spacing, and improving personal and home hygiene; 465 on processing; 543 on business skills including production logs for both producers and MSMEs and reducing costs; 269 technical assistance visits in animal production focused on poultry farming and livestock management; 248 visits focused on natural resource management and disaster mitigation and prevention; and 386 on postharvest handling and certifications.

VALUE ADDITION

USAID-ACCESO processing specialists continued working with communities to help microenterprises perfect their processes and products in order to guarantee improved profitability and success on the market. This month, 111 participants attended 19 training events. One event in Lepaera, Lempira trained a livestock cooperative in yogurt production using seasonal fruits. Thanks to this training, the cooperative is increasing the number of products they can offer and plan to supply schools.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

This month, marketing specialists continued activities to identify new markets and confirm agreements with new buyers, specifically working with supermarkets and other buyers to plan for 2015.

The project organized 40 technical assistance visits this month that facilitated sharing market information, logistical details, transportation coordination, and sanitary requirements for export. Three events trained 13 participants in meeting market and buyer requirements for specialty coffee.



Access to technology: A producer grows madriago using basic practices and high-density planting as part of a cattle feed program to increase milk production; Mejojote, Lempira.



Access to infrastructure: Drip irrigation system inauguration attended by the Minister of Agriculture and representatives from USAID/Honduras; El Sauce, Opatoro, La Paz.



Access to knowledge: Producers and technicians participate in an irrigation installation training course led by USAID-ACCESO in Comayagua.



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Access to income-generating activities: Health volunteers are participating in a pilot project in Ocotepeque between USAID-ACCESO and Unilever to offer basic cleaning, hygiene, and cooking supplies in rural communities.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

The nutrition and health team held 120 training events, giving 1,628 parents the opportunity to strengthen basic nutrition and health practices. This month, 483 participants received training in the importance of closely monitoring their children’s nutritional status, especially their weight; 659 received training in family planning and optimal spacing of pregnancies (two years between pregnancies) to contribute to a better quality of life. 199 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. 215 participants learned “healthy household” practices to establish healthy and safe norms within the home to prevent diseases and improve hygiene practices.

ANIMAL PRODUCTION

USAID-ACCESO animal production specialists are providing training and technical assistance to livestock farmers to improve their animals’ productivity, reduce costs, open access to new markets, and, in some cases, diversify into new income sources. In December, project specialists conducted 269 technical assistance visits focused on good livestock and poultry management. Seventeen events provided 170 individuals the opportunity to improve their understanding of animal management, commercialization requirements, and fodder preparation at the community level.



Access to technology: Integrating agricultural production, animal production, renewable energy, and health and nutrition components: fodder production for dairy cows helps improve milk production for home consumption and sales, and manure powers a biogas digester, which in turn produces cooking gas.

Trainings – December 2014

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	252	38
Business Skills / Finance	282	23
Market Information	13	3
Natural Resources Management and Disaster Mitigation	175	14
Nutrition and Health	1,628	120
Postharvest and Certifications	284	34
Processing and Added Value	111	19
Production	5,478	748
TOTAL	8,233	999

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