

Monthly Bulletin *February 2015*

HIGHLIGHTS

- USAID-ACCESO is assisting 34,033 households in the most vulnerable communities of Honduras by promoting technology transfer, good agricultural practices, nutrition and health, and business development to increase income and improve quality of life. The project is benefitting 181,188 people – 89 percent in poverty and extreme poverty conditions – through technical assistance and training in production, value-added processing, natural resource management, renewable technologies, market linkages, disaster mitigation, and nutrition and health.
- In February, 119 new hectares were planted reaching a total of 73,669 hectares under project technical assistance, including: 26,353 hectares of coffee, 40,598 of basic grains, and 6,718 of fruit and horticulture crops. The crops with the highest planting area this month were: bean, maize, potato, coffee, hot chilies, bananas, cabbage, watermelon, onion, tomato, and lettuce.
- A drinking water scheme was inaugurated in the Quebrada Seca community, San Manuel de Colohete, Lempira.
- This month, the Honduran president, the US ambassador, the deputy USAID/Honduras Mission director, senior government officials, and others visited USAID-ACCESO production plots and drip irrigation schemes in Santa Rosita (Guajiquiro, La Paz) and spoke with beneficiaries of the project, who relayed the positive changes to their agricultural systems thanks to assistance from USAID-ACCESO. Also, President Hernandez awarded five health volunteers in La Paz with certificates of recognition for their outstanding service to the community and an official permit from SENASA to a small poultry business.
- Activities transitioned to Feed the Future MERCADO in Ocotepeque, Copan, and Santa Barbara. The transition necessitated new subcontracts with FHIA, Zamorano, Aldea Global, OCDIH, and PILARH. USAID-ACCESO activities in Intibucá, La Paz, and Lempira will continue until the start of ACS-USAID.



Access to technology: Bean planting area with basic practices, including soil preparation, contour plowing, beds, planting density, and irrigation through drip and fertigation; Cerro Colorado, Lempira.



Access to technology and markets: President Hernandez initiates the water line and drip irrigation; Santa Rosita, Guajiquiro, La Paz.

USAID-ACCESO client households, beneficiaries and other clients, February 2015

Department	Household Clients	Beneficiaries	Other Clients *
Copán	5,373	23,636	1,722
Intibucá	5,583	36,782	1,622
La Paz	5,636	27,018	1,258
Lempira	6,634	44,408	2,194
Ocotepeque	4,333	24,418	1,159
Santa Bárbara	6,474	24,925	1,828
Otros	0	0	813
TOTAL	34,033	181,188	10,596

*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 10,832 technical assistance visits this month. Of these, 7,520 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.

1,186 technical assistance visits focused on health and nutrition, emphasizing the importance of preventing childhood anemia through proper feeding and hygiene care; proper administration of micronutrients received from health posts; growth monitoring; pregnancy spacing; food preparation; and improving personal and home hygiene. Of these visits, 450 concentrated on processing; 566 on business skills including production logs for both producers and MSMEs and reducing costs; 195 technical assistance visits in animal production focused on poultry farming and livestock management; 328 visits focused on natural resource management and disaster mitigation and prevention; and 354 on postharvest handling and certifications.

VALUE ADDITION

USAID-ACCESO processing specialists continued working with communities to help microenterprises perfect their processes and products to guarantee improved profitability and market success. This month, 93 participants attended 16 training events. One event trained eight women in San Manuel de Colohete on canned vegetables, thus diversifying their economic activities and opening other markets.

ACCESS TO MARKETS

Marketing specialists continued activities to identify new markets and work with existing agreements. This month saw continued activities around specialty coffee under the OLAM agreement, which reached 270 quintales of the goal of 300 quintals of specialty coffee micro-lots (101 quintales in Santa Barbara and 169 quintales in La Paz). With this achievement, OLAM has completed the first container for export to the US, and is projecting a second container for April 2015. Additionally, various producers in Ocotepeque delivered their first Hass avocados to supermarkets in San Pedro Sula.

A field visit by the US Embassy to USAID-ACCESO producers in La Paz featured an international chef using fresh ingredients from these farmers to prepare certain dishes for Embassy promotions and trainings.

The project organized 76 technical assistance visits this month that facilitated sharing logistical details, transportation coordination, linkages with buyers, and sanitary requirements for export.



Access to technology: Production of high-value vegetables with basic practices, technology, and planting by 11 producers in the irrigation scheme; El Aguaje, San Pedro, Copan.



Access to market options: Members of the San Francisco community bank measure the humidity of maize before receiving it for storage and grading; Nahuaterique, La Paz.



Access to markets and buyers: Cupping micro-lots of coffee to identify and reward (with better prices) the producers based on the quality of the rate; Santa Rita, Santa Bárbara.



Access to technology: With the goal of reducing soot in kitchens and easing the pressure on forests from firewood, USAID-ACCESO has introduced bio-digestors in conjunction with animal production for use with gas stoves. Consequently, the stoves are clean and save time and money for the families; Los Planes, Erandique, Lempira.

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 February, project specialists conducted 195 technical assistance visits focused on good livestock and poultry management. Thirteen events trained 80 people to improve their understanding of animal management, commercialization requirements, and fodder preparation at the community level.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

The nutrition and health team held 134 training events, giving 1,628 parents the opportunity to strengthen basic nutrition and health practices. This month, 563 participants received training in the importance of closely monitoring their children's nutritional status, especially their weight; 653 received training in family planning and optimal spacing of pregnancies (two years between pregnancies) to contribute to a better quality of life. 191 participants learned about nutritious food preparation and practiced recipes rich in iron and vitamins consisting of low-cost and accessible ingredients for rural communities. 316 participants learned healthy household practices to establish healthy and safe norms within the home to prevent diseases and improve hygiene practices.



Access to markets and nutrition: Members of the Buenos Aires rural bank work on billing WFP for the sale of fresh produce and eggs delivered to the schools to complement school meals; Sabanetas, La Paz.

Trainings – February 2015

Area	Participants	Events
Renewable Energy	123	20
Business Skills / Finance	222	20
Market Information	39	4
Natural Resources Management and Disaster Mitigation	350	20
Nutrition and Health	1,830	134
Postharvest and Certifications	294	37
Processing and Added Value	93	16
Production	6,128	849
TOTAL	9,079	1,100

69% of participants were male and 31 percent were female.

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