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fintrac

Fintrac Inc.

www.fintrac.com

info@fintrac.com

US Virgin Islands

3077 Kronprindsens Gade 72

St. Thomas, USVI 00802

Tel: (340) 776-7600

Fax: (340) 776-7601

Washington, D.C.

1400 16th Street, NW

Suite 400

Washington DC 20036

Tel: (202) 462-8475

Fax: (202) 462-8478

Email: info@fintrac.com

USAID-ACCESO

Tegucigalpa

Oficina 1804, Piso 18,

Edificio Torre Alianza

Lomas del Guijarro Sur

Tegucigalpa MDC

La Lima

Instalaciones FHIA

Contiguo Instituto Patria

La Lima, Cortés

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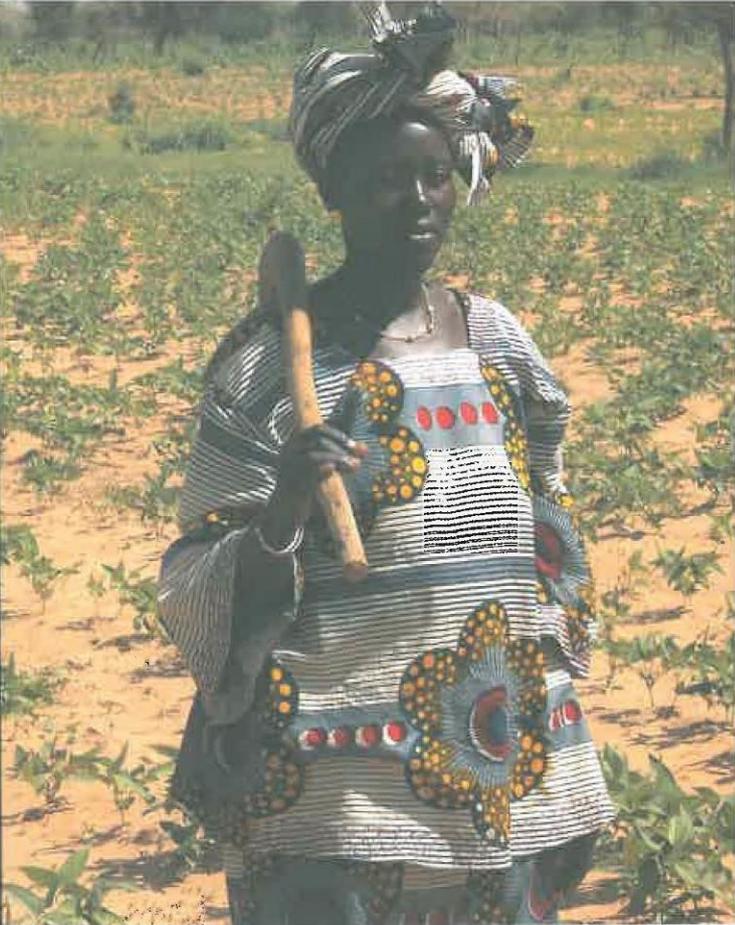


Photo by Agence France Presse (AFP)

Empowering Women to Feed and Lead

By Kimberly Flowers,
Alina Paul, and Elisa Walton

THE U.S. hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, is improving the lives of smallholder farmers by increasing food production, improving nutrition, expanding access to markets, and boosting incomes. Many of the farmers are women, who play vital roles in agriculture and food security. They participate in paid employment, trade, and marketing as well as many unpaid activities such as tending to crops and animals, collecting water and wood for fuel, caring for family members, and

managing household consumption and food preparation.

But a woman's world is often laden with constraints—from less land ownership; to less access to credit, extension, and other services; and less ability to hire labor on their farms. Too often, these production constraints go unrecognized. Closing gaps in women's access to resources increases agriculture productivity and reduces hunger.

“When we liberate the economic potential of women, we elevate the economic performance of communities,

nations, and the world,” Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said at a Sept. 19 U.N. General Assembly event highlighting women and agriculture.

Reaching female farmers is a top priority for Feed the Future to transform agriculture and achieve a sustainable, long-term impact in food security and nutrition. This can include fostering leadership among women in producer groups, encouraging the growth of women-owned farms and enterprises, designing and delivering gender-sensitive training, and introducing



Mallan Aissata Konaté is president of her local women's group, supplying female farmers with high-yield seeds.

FOOD SECURITY

new crops and innovations to increase crop productivity.

For example, one Feed the Future horticulture program in Tanzania targets women in the community by working with women's groups and encouraging other, established groups to include more female members. The program emphasizes gender equality as a guiding principle and provides trainings that benefit entire families. Trainings take place at times that are convenient for women and include nutrition education. The program is implemented by Fintrac, a woman-owned U.S.-based company that has been leading agricultural solutions to end hunger and poverty for more than 20 years and has a long legacy of promoting the participation, autonomy, and well-being of women in all of its projects.

In Tanzania, half of the program's field managers are women, serving as role models and leaders for all farmers. "My work involves helping all family members, but I particularly enjoy seeing women become confident in their ability to contribute to their families' well-being," said Halima Abubakary, one of the program's field managers.

THE UPENDO WOMEN Farmers Group in Mlandizi, Tanzania, has been growing vegetables since 2005, but the crops were plagued by pests, disease, and bad weather. Feed the Future's program provided the members with training on how, what, and when to grow, as well as leveraged money from a local bank to build a low-cost greenhouse. The greenhouse is protecting their crops, extending crop cycles, and

producing more nutritious crops. Most importantly, the farmers now make five times more income a month.

In Honduras, the United Nations' 2008 Gender Inequality Index estimates that the country suffers a 68 percent loss in human development as a result of gender inequality. Although there has been a rise in employment for women over the last two decades, most openings are for low-skill, low-paying jobs with poor working conditions. A Feed the Future-funded project in Honduras aims to lift more

but lacked the experience and technical knowledge to sustain a business. When the project contacted them, they found the ponds filled with contaminated water and unhealthy fish. The project—also implemented by Fintrac—trained the farmers on pond management, fish weighing, breeding, and feeding as well as best practices for water management to produce larger, healthier fish that will provide not only nutrients and vital protein to the local community, but also a self-sustaining food resource and source of income.

In Mali, where women do more than one-third of the farm work, and nearly 68 percent of the population is considered poor, increasing opportunities for women can have a powerful impact on productivity and agriculture-led growth. There, a Feed the Future-supported project helps to train farmers, many of whom are women, to become quality-certified seed producers. USAID has been working with the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) since 2007 to encourage high-quality seed production and improved livelihoods for farmers in the country.

Certified seed, which helps guarantee purity and meets certain quality standards, is more costly to produce but sells at a higher price. The project looks at the entire seed value chain, from training farmers to become producers, to building capacity of rural agrodealers. It also supports active rural marketing—such as demonstration plots, farmer field days, and seed fairs—to develop local demand for

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Aïssata Konaté with her children in front of their new house.

than 30,000 households out of extreme poverty and undernutrition by increasing incomes. The project, which just got off the ground this year, has already made significant progress reaching female farmers.

For example, in Dolores, Honduras, where the average family income is less than \$8 per day, the Nueva Esperanza Women Tilapia Farmers' Group has joined together to raise tilapia to sell in the local market. The first-time farmers inherited two abandoned ponds,

FOOD SECURITY

Cashew Value Chain

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"The first leg is strong focus on technologies [such as research, improved crop varieties, production processes, and fertilizer] to improve productivity for both income and nutrition; the second is integrated programs, so that means building capacity of community-development and farmers groups and giving them better access to inputs, markets, and credit; the third is agribusiness—linking farmer associations together into unions, then federations, so they have better access to international or regional markets and can benefit from economies of scale."

According to McMahon, it is those three pieces working together that makes the program so successful. From 2005 to 2008, the nine processing factories supported by USAID operating in Nampula and Zambezia provinces generated \$31 million in revenues by exporting processed cashews to the European markets. These nine plants, which generated

employment for about 3,400 Mozambicans, had a production capacity of about 20,000 tons of cashews, compared to just 120 tons in 2001, when the first of nine units supported by USAID began operating.

Cashew is not the only value chain that USAID supports. In Mozambique, there is also a focus on oilseeds (groundnuts, sesame, soybeans), fruits (bananas, mangos, pineapple), and pulses (cowpeas, pigeon peas).

And throughout its global network, the Agency has incorporated integrated support of value chains into the U.S. Government's flagship food security program, Feed the Future.

According to William Garvelink, who helped stand up the new bureau leading the initiative and is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "[Feed the Future] looks at the entire value chain, so the U.S. Government can intervene in any way from planting seeds to marketing products; whatever's

needed, we can quickly be involved. It's a broad spectrum."

Downing explains that the Agency's value-chain strategy is anchored in the reality that a focus on production must also consider markets. "There are no incentives for farmers to produce crops unless they can sell them," she says.

IN MOZAMBIQUE, AS in many places with emerging industries, the cashew industry still faces many challenges, among them, how to massively increase production.

Because cashews trees have a productive lifespan of around 50 years, it often takes a great deal of effort to convince a farmer to replace a fully-grown tree—albeit an unproductive one—with a sapling that will take five years to yield nuts. One of the approaches that may work, according to McMahon, is to actually involve processors in commercial seedling production, which they can then sell to farmers for a small price, "giving them a commercial interest in that tree."

Another opportunity, says McMahon, is to start supporting larger-scale commercial agriculture "that includes opportunities for the small-scale farmers either as out-growers, contract farmers, or, in some cases, laborers."

But still, worldwide demand for cashew is increasing at around 5 percent annually. To help quench that thirst, Mozambique now has around 10 processors, when years ago there were virtually none, and the industry is netting to smallholder farmers \$20 million worth of kernels purchased per year. Unless the West decides to shake its nut craze, there is no where to go but up.

Martins of CondorNuts is optimistic: "By improving all parts of the chain, ultimately...cashews produced here will be just as competitive as in India." ■



Photo by Kelly Ramundo, USAID

Through profits made from the cashew, Mozambican farmer Arlindo Chaleira, right, has sent his eight children to school, an anomaly in rural Mozambique.

FOOD SECURITY



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Members of the Nueva Esperanza Women Tilapia Farmers Group, first-time farmers in rural Honduras, are learning best practices for raising and selling tilapia.

Women in Agriculture *continued from p. 45*

better seeds and organize the seed production from farmers' cooperatives.

One participant in the Mali project, Aissata Konaté, is president of a women's group and supplies many other women farmers with high-yielding seeds after increasing her income enough to build a new house for her family.

"This has changed my status in the village," said Konaté. "Here housing is normally the responsibility of men. Now the community can see how women can provide for their families, too."

Each year, Ghana produces approximately 300,000 tons of fish for local and international markets, but unsustainable practices are depleting the country's fish stocks and putting a strain on local livelihoods. While men do most of the

fishing in Ghana, most fishmongers and fish processors are women. Recognizing the important role these women play in their communities, the Feed the Future-funded Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance (ICFG) initiative took several female Ghanaian fishmongers to Senegal to study how communities and the government there are practicing a system of "co-management" of the fisheries resources. They observed best practices in marine conservation, monitoring and enforcement of fisheries regulations, and community participation in fisheries management.

Based on their new perspective, the participants from ICFG plan to form their own association in Ghana to advocate against practices like the use of dynamite, monofilament nets, driftnets, and "light fishing," a practice in which an electric bulb of high wattage is placed

into the water to attract fish. With support from USAID/Ghana, through Feed the Future, these women and their communities are working toward a more sustainable future for Ghanaian fisheries.

"The U.S. Government, through Feed the Future, will continue to work to bring successful programs like those described above to scale, creating sustained, inclusive economic growth which, by definition, incorporates a focus on empowering women," said Tjada McKenna, Feed the Future's deputy coordinator for development. As illustrated by the projects highlighted here, women are clearly the critical force to transform agriculture and food production, reduce poverty, and improve nutrition worldwide. ■

Kimberly Flowers is with Fintrac;

Alina Paul is with ICRISAT;

Elisa Walton is with USAID.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID-ACCESO is a 46-month project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Economic Growth in Honduras to move rural Honduran households out of extreme poverty and under-nutrition by improving their income. The project is working through six key components to enable economic development at the household level: 1) technical assistance and training to enhance the capacity of Honduras' poorest households in production, management, and marketing skills; 2) market access focusing on developing linkages of farmers to market opportunities; 3) rural financial services through existing rural financial intermediaries, village banks, commercial banks, and other services and input providers; 4) assistance in eliminating policy barriers that are impeding rural households' access to market opportunities; 5) a malnutrition prevention component to enhance the capacity of rural households to improve utilization and consumption of healthy food; and 6) sound environmental and natural resource management. USAID-ACCESO represents the core investment by USAID/Honduras in the US government's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative known as the Feed the Future initiative.

USAID-ACCESO is implemented by the US agribusiness firm Fintrac Inc., in association with Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola (FHIA), Escuela Agrícola Panamericana (EAP-ZAMORANO), Fundación para el Desarrollo Empresarial Rural (FUNDER), CARE International, and the Global Village Project. Other local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were subcontracted during the first three quarters of implementation and are now directly implementing activities under USAID-ACCESO. These are Hermandad de Honduras, Save the Children, Cooperativa Regional Agroforestal Erandique Limitada (COPRAFEL), Organismo Cristiano de Desarrollo Integral de Honduras (OCDIH), Proyectos e Iniciativas Locales para el Autodesarrollo Regional de Honduras (PILARH), Comisión Acción Social Menonita (CASM) and Instituto Hondureño del Café (IHCAFE).

This is the third quarterly report for USAID-ACCESO, which summarizes the principal activities carried out from October to December 2011. This quarter period was primarily characterized by the fielding of five of the remaining six Community Technical Units (CTUs), identification and recruitment of client households, the collection of client household profiles and baseline data sampling, and a significant expansion of the technical assistance and training activities. In addition, the project indicator reference sheets (PIRS), data quality assessment worksheets (DQAs), the 2011-2012 work plan, the finalized gender strategy, the PERSUAP, and the Environmental Mitigation Plan (EMP) were completed.

Within the first nine months of implementation, USAID-ACCESO has 11 of 12 CTUs functioning, and all of the technical components are functioning and integrated.

Other highlights include:

- A total of **10,892 client households**, with a total of **45,428 beneficiaries**; and 941 micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), AIN-C groups, community based organizations, and others are enrolled in the project. For those which have income data, 6,574 are households in extreme poverty, 639 are in the poverty category, and 1,171 are non-poor (data remains to be collected for 2,508 client households).
- Technical assistance visits and training were provided to basic grain and small-scale coffee producers on soil preparation practices, increasing planting densities, implementing weed control and improving fertilization use. Plots already harvested have **shown two or**

threefold increases in productivity and in many cases have reduced the risk of climate-related losses. These activities are the starting point for diversification to more profitable high value cash crops. Initial beneficiaries are also serving as demonstration farms for other producers and potential clients.

- A total of **7,102 hectares are under project technical assistance** with **700 hectares already in high-value cash crop fruits and vegetables**. Market-driven production programs have been established with local supermarkets and initial activities have commenced for small scale export programs to regional and international markets.
- Other technical areas are now **fully integrated into the economic development activities** (on- and off-farm), including health and nutrition, business skills, policy, natural resource management, renewable energy, and disaster mitigation.
- Performed a needs assessment for the project's policy and administrative barriers component and prioritized activities to be carried out.
- Three high level US government visits to USAID-ACCESO clients and project activities.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Honduras' social and economic indicators rank it among the least developed countries in the Western Hemisphere, with 65.5 percent of its population living in poverty, the largest portions of which are found in rural areas.

The agriculture sector in Honduras employs 35 percent of the workforce, accounts for an estimated 75 percent of exports, and remains the most important source of income for the poor and extreme poor, over 80 percent of who are involved with agriculture. USAID-ACCESO targets six departments for project implementation that are amongst the poorest in the country. The majority of farm households cultivate traditional crops on small plots, often on hillsides, for which market access is hindered by poor roads and distance. The use of traditional cultural practices has produced poor yields, depleted soil of nutrients, and led to forest encroachment. Malnutrition is also a major problem, with nearly half of all children of extremely poor households exhibiting stunted growth.

USAID-ACCESO represents an important component of USAID/Honduras's new multi-year strategy for Feed the Future. Objectives of Feed the Future include increasing agriculture productivity, preserving natural resources, improving agricultural marketing, increasing the purchasing power of vulnerable households and maximizing food security. This strategy is in line with the economic growth (Agriculture/Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise) and natural resource management related aspects of the "Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity" goal of the US government's Honduras Country Assistance Strategy covering fiscal years 2009-2013.

USAID-ACCESO focuses on six departments: Intibucá, La Paz, Ocotepeque, Lempira, Copán, and Santa Bárbara, with the following high-level targets:

- Bring 30,000 rural households living below the poverty line above the poverty threshold, of which a minimum of 18,000 will be from households living in extreme poverty.
- Generate \$73.95 million in net profits for the client households assisted by the project.
- Create 10,425 permanent jobs in the assisted communities.

USAID-ACCESO will assist at least 31,800 client households in these six departments, distributed as follows: 30,000 households living in poverty of which a minimum of 18,000 households that are living in extreme poverty, 1,000 commercial scale producers of horticultural crops, and 800 off-farm rural MSMEs.

The project is increasing sales and incomes by introducing basic production practices and market-driven programs for high-value cash crops, as well as expanding off-farm microenterprise and employment opportunities. There are six key components being implemented to enable economic development and nutrition improvements at the household level:

- Technical assistance and training to enhance the capacity of Honduras' poorest households in production, postharvest, management, and marketing skills.
- Market access focus, linking farmers to market opportunities.
- Rural financial services through existing rural financial intermediaries, village banks, commercial banks, and other service and input providers.

- Assistance in eliminating policy barriers that impede rural household access to market opportunities.
- Malnutrition prevention to enhance the capacity of rural households to improve utilization and consumption of food.
- Sound environmental and natural resource management.

The details on implementation methodology, strategies, and activities are provided in other documents prepared for USAID, including those on the work plan, gender, and environment.

3. HIGHLIGHTS OF ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

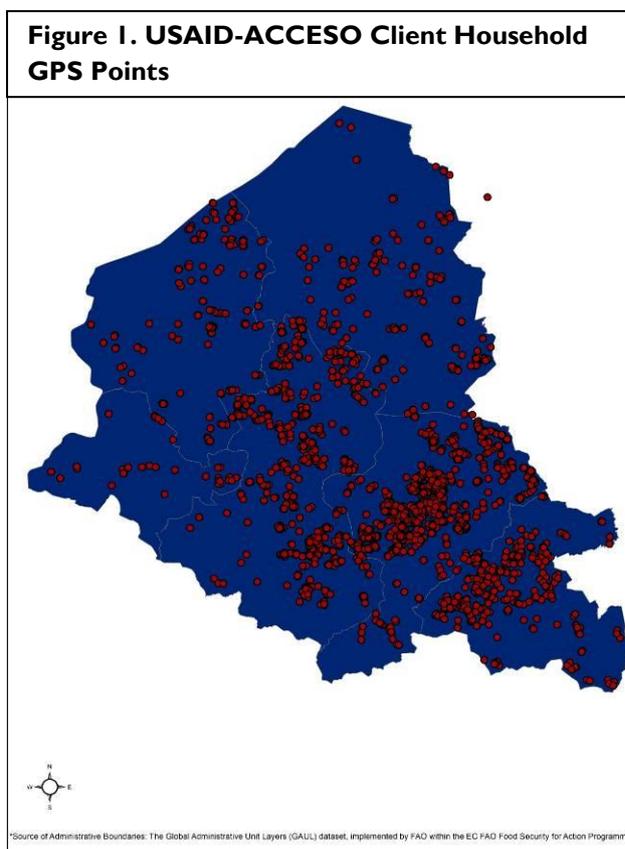
This section highlights some of the activities and results achieved by the project in the different areas of intervention during the reporting period. It details the actions taken by USAID-ACCESO to meet the intermediate and sub-intermediate results established in the contract, and presents the project’s progress in achieving milestones and output indicators. The intermediate results are:

- Rural MSME growth increased.
- Honduran biodiversity and natural resources conserved.
- Capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change strengthened.
- Use of quality maternal and child health and family planning services increased.

A total of 10,892 client households, with a total of 45,428 beneficiaries; and 941 MSME’s, AIN-C groups, community based organizations, and others are now enrolled in the project. For those which have income data, 6,574 are households in extreme poverty, 639 are in the poverty category and 1,171 are non-poor (data remains to be collected for 2,508 client households). The project is working in 127 of 131 municipalities in the six departments. Details on the beneficiaries by income, type, department and age are given in Annex IV. A GPS map of client households is provided in Figure 1.

The principal components and targets of the USAID-ACCESO work plan for fiscal year two (October 2011 to September 2012) and status are as follows:

Activity/Target - 12/2011	Status - 12/2011
Demonstration plot development and commercial production operations for basic grains, horticulture, and tree crops in all six departments	Ongoing. More than 7,102 hectares planted and under the project’s technical assistance program
More than 6,300 individuals will have received agricultural sector productivity or food security training, of which at least 1,975 will be women	Total of 10,832 individuals, of which 3,091 were women
More than 43,000 technical assistance visits to project-assisted households will have been executed	41,234 technical assistance visits to beneficiary households
More than 710 MSMEs will have accessed new market opportunities through a broker	77 MSMEs accessed new market opportunities
A total of 50 brokers will be providing market linkages to MSMEs	17 brokers providing market linkages



Activity/Target - 12/2011	Status - 12/2011
More than 242 off-farm and processing MSMEs will be receiving technical assistance from the project	366 off-farm and processing MSMEs receiving project assistance.
A total of 70 technical materials will be produced for use and distribution by ACCESO staff and counterparts	84 technical materials produced by ACCESO
A total of 395 MSMEs will have accessed market-based financing as a result of the project's assistance	353 MSMEs accessing financing
A total of 13 public-private partnerships and 4 private sector alliances will be developed	2 public-private partnership alliances developed and 5 private sector alliances
All of the Community Technical Units (CTU) will be completed and fully operational	11 of 12 CTUs fully operational. Final CTU approved this quarter with start date in January 2012.

Selected activities are behind schedule in some areas due to the project's start-up at the end of the 2011 basic grain planting season, a delayed start-up of five of the CTUs (December 2011), increased support to improving basic grain production systems, and increased efforts and focus to ensure full integration of the all technical areas alongside production and income generation activities. Those targets that are currently behind schedule will be made up over the next two quarters.

3.1. IR 2.1. RURAL MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE GROWTH INCREASED

USAID-ACCESO's main activities and interventions are targeted towards achieving MSME growth. Not only will increased incomes and increased productivities at the household level have a positive effect on the communities' overall economic growth, it will also provide access to money to increase purchasing power to reduce the food insecurity situation in western Honduras and the related health problems.

In this section, USAID-ACCESO is reporting on activities that are directly contributing to three of USAID sub-intermediate results (Sub-IRs). These are:

- Rural MSMEs access to inputs, practices and technology for market participation improved.
- Rural MSMEs access to new market opportunities increased.
- Barriers to competitiveness of rural MSMEs improved.

3.1.1. SUB-IR 2.1.1: RURAL MSMEs ACCESS TO INPUTS, PRACTICES AND TECHNOLOGY FOR MARKET PARTICIPATION IMPROVED

The greatest impact in the livelihood of USAID-ACCESO-assisted households will occur when market-driven production programs are integrated with the basic production practices to enable access to markets and buyers. Competitive, consistent, and coordinated production operations with defined markets are critical to ensuring increased incomes. To achieve this goal, a range of activities have been undertaken by the project. This principally involves the provision of technical assistance and training to on- and off-farm MSMEs, the development of private sector alliances to strengthen the integration of input and service providers, the work with groups of growers to develop market-led production programs, and increasing the technical capacities of local NGOs, agricultural schools, and the private sector in the technology transfer process.

Implementation of updated production technologies (on- and off-farm)

Over the quarter, a total of 21,018 technical assistance visits were provided to 10,892 client households on good agricultural practices to increase yields, improve product quality, reduce unit costs, and diversify crop production (35,741 technical assistance visits to date). To date, focus has been given to promoting grain production practices that require little or no additional costs, but result in significant increases in productivity. Examples of these include seed selection, planting densities, land preparation, weed control, and the introduction of fertilization practices that allow the plants to maximize the uptake of nutrients. These practices are carried out with the same amount of inputs that farmers use with traditional basic grain production systems. The changes recommended by USAID-ACCESO focus on the efficient and proper use of inputs, rather than encouraging farmers to use more or additional inputs.

The first group of USAID-ACCESO client households has already harvested their crops, and results show an average threefold increase in corn and bean yields. Selected growers have also begun to diversify into higher value cash crops with project assistance. These include a selection of Asian vegetables, avocado, cabbage, broccoli, carrot, cucumber, garlic, loofah, lettuce, onion, passion fruit, peach trees, plantain, potato, strawberry, and tomato, among others. Technical assistance was provided to client households in marketing, postharvest handling, certification, processing, and off-farm activities. Additional data on project technical assistance is provided in Annex IV, Tables 15 and 16.

In addition to technical assistance visits, a total of 2,637 training events were provided to 25,119 participants (19,138 male and 6,081 female) - 8,389 individuals (6,332 male and 2,057 female) received production training (most people participated in multiple training events). Training subjects included soil conservation practices, pest and disease identification and control, planting methods, weed control practices, efficient use of water, fertilization techniques, farm certification, cost of production, recordkeeping, and processing systems. Additional data on project training are provided in Annex IV, Tables 11, 12, and 13.

To date, client households have planted new or rehabilitated planted areas totaling 7,102 hectares. A summary of plantings by value chain is provided in Table I, with detailed information of all the plantings presented in Annex IV.

Value Chain	Hectares	
	As of 09/2011	As of 12/2011
Horticulture	355	700
Coffee	1,203	3,912
Basic Grains	1,196	2,490
Total	2,754	7,102

Capital investment in production-related assets totaled \$103,994 during the reporting period with 193 individual investments. To date, project clients have invested \$308,775 in production-related assets. More than half these investments were for irrigation infrastructure and equipment, while other investments made by client households were for greenhouse infrastructure, farm tools and

inputs, production infrastructure, application equipment, and land purchase. Investment data for production and other areas are provided in Annex IV, Table 19.

Project activities related to off-farm production, food processing, and animal husbandry increased significantly during the quarter. The goal for FY 2012 is to provide technical assistance to at least 483 processors and off-farm MSMEs. The total number of MSMEs assisted by USAID-ACCESO, as of December 2011, was 444. The breakdown of these businesses by department and by type is provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Number and type of off-farm, food processing, and animal husbandry MSMEs assisted by USAID-ACCESO by Department

Type	La Paz	Intibucá	Lempira	Ocotepeque	Copan	Santa Barbara	Total	Percent (%)
Animal Production & Processing	10	1	10	6	31	33	91	21
Bakery	4	6	15	2	6	57	90	20
Canning	3	5	1	17	0	50	76	17
Coffee	6	4	3	3	2	0	18	4
Corn & Wheat Products	3	3	2	4	3	9	24	5
Honey	2	3	9	2	1	2	19	4
Snacks	2	1	7	5	11	0	26	6
Wood and Forestry products	0	3	0	2	0	2	7	2
Off-Farm	3	3	7	9	1	28	51	11
Others	7	9	7	6	12	1	42	9
Total	40	38	61	56	67	182	444	100

Most of the assistance provided to MSMEs over the quarter was in support of animal production and processing, and bakery MSMEs. This includes 91 small poultry, pig, cattle, and fish production operations, as well as 90 bakeries. Fifty-one off-farm businesses received technical assistance and training on production of souvenirs, garments, wood products, toys, and detergents. MSMEs producing snacks, canned products, honey, corn, tortillas, tacos, *baleadas*, tamales and *pupusas*, and coffee also received assistance. The products produced by MSMEs in the “others” category included wine, spices, loofah products, frozen fruit pulp, dairy products, cereals, processed beans, sugar cane juice (*panela*), candies, and purified water and other drinks.

The processing and off-farm component expanded its outreach to 17 additional municipalities this quarter and is now covering a total of 70 municipalities - 16 municipalities in Santa Bárbara, 16 in Lempira, 12 in Copán, 11 in Ocotepeque, 10 in La Paz, and five in Intibucá. During the quarter, 260 training events were held for a total of 2,133 participants (323 male, 1,810 female). A total of 1,326 technical assistance visits on cost structure development, equipment recommendations, good manufacturing practices, licensing and registration, new market contacts, suppliers for packaging materials, and efficiency improvements were provided. Additional visits focused on product formulation, plant layout, silage, improved animal feed and water dispensers, quality improvements to standardize meat cutting for further processing, and milk filtration. Technical assistance began with wood processors in Intibucá, Santa Barbara, and Ocotepeque.

Specific examples of activities during this reporting period included:

New product development: Mujeres en Acción, Copan, began to produce a new product, pizza, for sale in the local market; Boquitas Otoreñas began to produce round plantain chips in smaller packages for sale to schools and began producing pickled vegetables; Vinos Don Tancho in La Paz began processing coffee liquor; Alimentos San Andres in La Paz began packing pickled vegetables in small plastic bags in response to market demand.

Investments and Productivity: Indunosa, a dairy processing plant in Dulce Nombre de Copán, invested \$9,000 in new plant infrastructure, with technical assistance provided by USAID-ACCESO in plant design and layout and equipment requirements (this investment will triple the company's processing capacity); Divegfruit, in Nueva Frontera, Santa Bárbara, invested \$4,000 on new infrastructure to produce frozen passion fruit pulp; Emdipsa, a plantain chip processor in Ocotepeque, began using gas instead of wood fuel, improving productivity by more than 40 percent.

New Technologies and Processes: Farmers learned how to make silage packs to feed cattle during the dry season, how to construct and equip animal housing, and how to improve animal nutrition and reduce costs by mixing feed using local inputs; Honduran National Training Institute (INFOP) instructors are supporting training programs in microprocessing, including bakery and processed corn products.

Overall, USAID-ACCESO delivered 3,630 training events to 38,237 participants (24,337 male, 13,900 female). To date, the project has trained more than 82,437 participants, 10,832 of which are unique individuals (7,741 male and 3,091 female).

Disaggregated training and technical assistance data are presented in IV.

Private sector alliances and integration of private sector equipment, input and service providers

Four private sector alliances were signed during this quarter with private sector input suppliers Del Campo Soluciones Agrícolas, DICONSA, SOLARIS, and the nonprofit eco stove provider AHDESA.

Del Campo distributes irrigation equipment, including PVC pipes, filters, pumps, drip tape, accessories, and agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, and will provide discounted terms to project clients. In addition to their agricultural equipment and inputs, the alliance also includes a small-scale credit option for USAID-ACCESO clients known as AGRO-FACIL.

DICONSA distributes irrigation equipment, including PVC pipes, filters, pumps, drip tape, and accessories. This equipment complements technical activities in agriculture, coffee production, disaster mitigation, natural resource management, and health and nutrition.

SOLARIS distributes solar panel equipment and provides installation and training on use and maintenance.

AHDESA is a nonprofit private organization dedicated to the construction and installation of eco stoves in rural Honduras. AHDESA provides training and capacity building at a local level in the same region where USAID-ACCESO works. This alliance will have a positive impact on the environment, as less wood is used with these stoves, and in health and nutrition from the reduction in respiratory diseases.

To date, five private sector alliances and two public-private partnerships have been developed. An additional six letters of agreement have been developed with NGOs and government institutions.

Grower organization and the development of market-driven production programs

Initial activities to organize grower production programs around buyer purchasing requirements, input supplies, and credit programs are underway. During the reporting period, USAID-ACCESO marketing specialists scouted local, regional, and international market opportunities for smallholder clients. Export market linkages made during the quarter include:

- Snow pea and radicchio produced in Intibucá for export to the US.
- Asian vegetables produced in La Paz and Copán for export to the US.
- Herbs, including basil, thyme, oregano, marjoram and chives produced in Lempira for export to the US.
- Plantain produced in Ocotepeque for export to the US.

These four programs will initially link more than 380 client families with new market opportunities. The volumes from this first season is expected to range between four and seven containers per week, translating to estimated weekly sales of more than \$50,000 – all new income for client families. In addition, these projects will generate more jobs in the field and in packing plants.

Local markets

Establishing market-driven production programs for the local markets was one of USAID-ACCESO's first activities. During the present quarter, the project focused on expanding the existing production programs. These include calendarized plantings of broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, cucumber, passion fruit, plantain, and potato for the local market, including supermarkets such as La Colonia, Wal-Mart and La Antorcha, distributors such as ASOFAEL–CICOM, ECARAI, ODECO, and ISEM; and for municipal markets such as Dandy and Central de Abastos de San Pedro Sula.

The project continued working with off-farm MSMEs in joint sales programs. One of the project's marketing specialists is developing distribution routes with small independent distributors in secondary cities in the western region. These distributors will consolidate products from microenterprises, such as snacks, roasted coffee, bread and other bakery products, pickled vegetables, and beverages to sell to retail outlets. This mechanism will significantly reduce distribution costs of assisted microenterprises.

USAID-ACCESO is developing activities with Community Based Associations and Organizations (CBOs) in order to increase the outreach and improve the quality of services. By working with community level organizations, the project generates client confidence as the problems and opportunities are identified and proposed by the community itself. USAID-ACCESO then collaborates with technical assistance and training to make the improvements.

As of December 2011, a total of 355 CBOs have been enrolled as USAID-ACCESO beneficiaries. These include 143 water user associations, 24 finance service providers (cooperatives, village banks), trade and business associations, 18 grower groups and cooperatives, and 170 health service providers (Atención Integral a la Niñez en la Comunidad (AIN-C) groups).

Increasing the technical capabilities of agricultural schools and local NGOs

USAID-ACCESO has approached agricultural schools and local NGOs to learn about their main activities, objectives, and needs in order to explore synergies with the project. The project has provided trainings to these organizations and schools to increase their technical capabilities. NGOs are invited to participate in the many training events held in all six departments, and in some cases, government organizations and local NGOs have been given exclusive training courses to meet their specific needs. This is expected to increase as more training activities are developed and carried out.

As of December 2011, there were 31 NGOs and donor institutions, and two schools participating in project-related activities. These are: Aldea Global, ANDESAIN, ANED – Consultores, Caritas, CASM, CESAL, CEPUDO, CHF Honduras, Child Fund, CODESSE, COPRAFEL, CRS, Escuela San Pablo, Escuela Agrícola Pompilio Ortega, FAO, FIDA, FIDE, FOPRIDEH, Fundación Adelante, Fundación Banhcafe, Fundahmicro, Fundación Vida, Funder, Heifer, IHCAFE, OCDIH, Veco-MA, Oxfam, PILARH, Save the Children, SOCODEVI, Swiss Contact, World Food Programme and World Vision. Representatives from government organizations receiving USAID-ACCESO training include PRONADERS, DICTA, and selected municipalities and municipal organizations.

3.1.2. SUB-IR 2.1.2: RURAL MSMEs ACCESS TO NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES INCREASED

Development of buyer linkages and logistics

USAID-ACCESO market specialists continued monitoring new product and market opportunities and recommending crops, varieties, and value-added products for commercial trials. For export markets, the project worked with interested Honduran exporters in designing production programs for export markets. Production technicians are now taking these opportunities to farmers and initiating the first plantings to meet buyer demands. At least one export program is being developed in each of the six target departments. Initial sales from these programs are expected in April 2012.

For the regional markets, members of the USAID-ACCESO team visited El Salvador to explore regional market opportunities. During the visit, a total of 27 buyers were approached – 14 commercialization companies, nine independent brokers, two cooperatives, one association, and one exporter. After analyzing and checking references, 15 Salvadoran buyers were identified as good prospects due to their strong presence in multiple distribution channels, including municipal markets, supermarkets, retail distributors, wholesalers, institutional markets (hotels, restaurants, cafeterias), and exporters.

Following the visit, several Salvadoran buyers traveled to Honduras to visit project growers. These buyers are most interested in onion, carrot, cabbage, tomato, pepper, plantain, beans, corn, passion fruit, cucumber, taro, pineapple, watermelon, melon, and soy. USAID-ACCESO will begin shipping one container of produce per week for one buyer and gradually expand into more production and more buyers. Given the existing limitations (infrastructure and limited availability of resources and land) of client households, production will initially meet only a fraction of the demand, and grow gradually and steadily throughout the life of the project.

Another key activity this quarter was the promotion of local produce fairs (*ferias del agricultor* or *mercaditos verdes*). USAID-ACCESO worked closely with local authorities and CBOs to develop these fairs to provide producers and microenterprises a nearby market where they can sell their

goods. Two local market fairs were held this quarter; one in Colinas, Santa Barbara and the other in La Union, Lempira. A total of 22 farmers participated in these fairs.

A total of 77 linkages between MSMEs and buyers were made in the period. These include:

- CICOM, a collection center in Intibucá that sells to markets in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula; COAPIGOR, an allspice cooperative in Santa Barbara; Hortifuti, which supplies supermarkets; Juan Jose Lagos, a cucumber broker with nationwide coverage; and direct links with supermarkets, including Supermercados Esperanza, Junior, La Antorcha, and La Colonia.

Production and systems implementation to meet buyers' quality and standards

In order for micro and small businesses (including farmers) to build a sustainable relationship with new markets, it is essential they comply with buyers' expectations, not only for volumes, consistency, and frequency, but also in terms of quality and product standards. By the end of the project, a minimum of 2,000 producers or microenterprises will have implemented systems to meet buyers' demands. This is verified when actual sales to a specific market demanding a particular standard take place. USAID-ACCESO's postharvest and certifications specialists provide direct technical assistance to farmers so they are able achieve this goal.

Given the informal nature of local markets, there are very few buyers with specifications for produce. For this reason, postharvest specialists, working with marketing specialists, have focused on supporting USAID-ACCESO clients in meeting buyers' quality standards so they can enter these more reliable formal markets. Support has been provided to both buyers and growers in the development and use of product standards.

To date, USAID-ACCESO has worked with selected buyers in developing quality standards. This has been done for passion fruit (three different specifications for fresh passion fruit for supermarkets, for frozen pulp, and for juice), for selected vegetables for La Antorcha Supermarkets, and for potato and carrots for CICOM. During the quarter, this was expanded to include, amongst others, fresh herbs and oriental vegetables for export to the US, a range of fresh products for El Salvador buyers, and cardamom to a European importer. Project specialists continue to work with several coffee buyers in the development of formal quality standards.

Implementation of business certification programs

USAID-ACCESO specialists have been providing support to coffee growers who wish to achieve certain certifications. Farmers seeking re-certification are serving as demonstration farms for those first-time certification seekers. Project specialists are assisting coffee growers meet the requirements for a range of certifications (depending on buyer requirements), including Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, 4C, Certified Organic, and Fair Trade. New organic production operations for organic certifications began this quarter.

3.1.3. SUB-IR 2.1.3: BARRIERS TO COMPETITIVENESS OF RURAL MSMES REDUCED

Increased access to finance

USAID-ACCESO is introducing growers to existing financial services and assisting in the development of new services for clients. Activities include loans through rural banks Funbancafe, La Colonia/FICOHSA, La Antorcha/CADELGA and Del Campo Soluciones Agrícolas with an Inter-

American Development Bank-funded activity. Additional support was provided to client households to access financing with selected cooperatives, NGOs, private sector exporters, and to grower groups with proposals for COMRURAL funding. A total of 47 loans, totaling \$34,121, were made this quarter. To date, 353 loans have been made for a value of \$245,158.

Project managers and business skills specialists in each target department focused on community bank lending to improve and increase access to finance for local farmers. The primary need for credit among farmers is for the purchase of inputs prior to planting and during production.

Support has been provided to various growers groups with projects for funding from COMURAL. These include Empresa Asociativa Campesina del Centenario (Santa Bárbara - plantain production), ECARAI (Intibucá - packhouse improvements), and Industria Mi Tacita de Celaque (Copán – coffee processing equipment).

Finance programs with the private sector were initiated during this quarter with several exporters, including bean seeds, oriental vegetable plantlets, and loofah seeds, and with the input suppliers Del Campo and CADELGA for vegetable cucumber production.

In addition to minimal cash flow, farmers often demand input quantities that are significantly smaller than the quantity in which they are typically sold. USAID-ACCESO began facilitating cooperation between input suppliers and community banks to address this constraint. When finalized, the unique financial instrument will allow farmers to obtain small quantities of seeds or fertilizer directly from their local community bank, who will buy these inputs directly from the supplier. Farmers using inputs from the local community bank will then be able to pay the community bank upon harvest. During the current quarter, the financial products were developed with Syngenta to work through selected village banks for input purchases. This is expected to begin in February 2012.

A similar financial product was developed to link supermarkets to the farmer lending process. The scheme assumes that in the interest of obtaining a higher quality final product, supermarkets will provide inputs to farmers through community banks, for repayment in the form of an appropriate quantity of crop products. This type of agreement is contingent on technical assistance for improved use of inputs, which is being provided by USAID-ACCESO. This is currently being implemented with project clients with La Antorcha Supermarkets and CADELGA, and La Colonia Supermarkets with Funder.

Project finance specialists carried out training of rural bank and cooperative staff in agricultural loan analysis and assessments, risk management, and costs of production. Simultaneous training is being given to project growers on keeping records as part of the financial institutions' requirements.

Policy and value/chain sector constraints identified and eliminated

USAID-ACCESO carried out activities designed to define and prioritize the policy component, including:

- Discussions with COHEP, IHCAFE, the Ministry of Agriculture, FENAGH, and other organizations to determine policy limitations and constraints to agriculture sector growth.
- Identified current Honduran government activities for policy reforms that could benefit project clients.
- Developed a matrix of potential activities related to policy reform, regulations, and administration procedures.
- Developed a matrix of potential activities related to value chain and sector constraints.

- Prioritized activities based on importance to overall targets, including timing, level of effort, and potential for successful implementation.

Outputs from these activities included:

- Eight matrices identifying the policies and regulations that limit value chain and sector growth, together with descriptions of potential activities to reduce or eliminate them, timing and level of effort.
 - Global matrix with possible solutions
 - Access to credit
 - Access to land
 - Access to markets and information
 - Access to technology
 - Hygiene and food safety
 - Institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture
 - Coffee value chain
- Matrix identifying administrative barriers and regulations that limit the value chain and sector growth, including potential project activities for their reduction or eliminations, timing, and level of effort.
 - Titles and company registrations
 - Chamber of Commerce registrations
 - Permit of operations
 - Environmental permits
 - Sanitary permits
 - Sanitary registrations
 - Export documentation and procedures

A total of 11 political and 19 administrative barriers were identified, as given below:

Obstacle Type	Political Sector								TOTAL
	Credit	Technology	Markets	Plant Health	Land Access	Institutional	Coffee	Legal & Permits	
Policy	1	5	0	2	0	0	3	0	11
Barrier	2	1	5	1	1	1	0	8	19
TOTAL	3	6	5	3	1	1	3		22

A long-term policy specialist will be hired in the next quarter to work on the policy and administrative issues identified and prioritized under the work carried out in this quarter.

Applied research and development programs developed

During the reporting period, USAID-ACCESO submitted a partner fund for USAID's approval, which contained the priority activities to be carried out by FHIA in applied research. The designs for

these research activities have been done, and a delivery schedule was submitted to USAID-ACCESO. This applied research will result in information and scientifically validated practices that will help project farmers and Honduran farmers in general achieve higher yields, utilize more resistant and productive crops, and improve production and postharvest practices.

Applied research activities are expected to commence in the following quarter, and a proposed schedule of activities has been drafted through September 2013. Main research subjects include:

- Management practices for bacterial wilt caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum* in Solanaceas (potato, tomato, pepper, eggplant, etc.).
- Optimization of drip irrigation practices for improved soil-borne plagues control and application of agricultural inputs.
- Establishment of adequate volumes of solutions to be used in different types of sprayers for a select group of crops in different development stages.
- The effect in productivity and harvesting curve for plantain with different bed heights and land preparation systems.
- Reaction time and adequate doses of calcium from different sources to apply to the soil for optimum production of vegetables.
- Agronomic behavior of different varieties of onions and shelf life analysis for each variety.
- Identification of virus species affecting Solanaceas, mainly potato, tomato and pepper, in the western region of Honduras.

3.2. IR 2.2. HONDURAN BIODIVERSITY & NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVED

On-farm natural resource management activities that maintain healthy soils and conserve water are integrated into the good agricultural practices that are at the centerpiece of the USAID-ACCESO extension program. Under this component, the project works to improve overall natural resource management practices at the community, micro-watershed, and municipal levels, in collaboration with community groups.

USAID-ACCESO uses a participatory municipal and community planning process to develop and implement municipal-wide natural resource management plans that include identification of existing, proposed, and potential areas of public interest, and identification of biological and economic corridors, including ecotourism and irrigation or hydropower potential, as well as areas under current or future environmental threat due to deforestation, soil erosion and sedimentation, chemical and organic pollution, and natural hazards.

During the life of project, USAID-ACCESO will work with at least 20 municipalities within the target departments to develop and implement natural resource management plans. Work has already begun with 31 municipalities in the six departments (details are provided in Table 4).

Implementation of natural resource management practices on farm

The USAID-ACCESO Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) was reviewed by USAID, and the final document, including edits based on their feedback, was submitted during the present quarter. Staff activities in the field will follow instructions and recommendations

presented in this action plan throughout the life of project. The project also prepared the Environmental Mitigation Plan.

Extension activities this quarter incorporated on-farm natural resource management activities to maintain healthy soils, prevent contamination, and conserve water, as part of the good agricultural practices promoted by USAID-ACCESO. This quarter, as well as the first, emphasized the following practices:

- **Land preparation:** use of contoured beds, raised beds, drainage systems, low tillage techniques, and wind/erosion barriers; introduction of appropriate tools and machinery.
- **Crops:** crop rotation (including use of leguminous cover crops that fix nitrogen in a more economical way than chemical fertilizers), elimination of crop residues, use of border weed control (alternative hosts), use of hybrid seeds and improved planting materials with greater disease tolerance.
- **Water:** protection of water sources from contamination for better water management, better water quality, less soil erosion, and less pesticide and fertilizer use. This also increases yields for farmers, reduces input costs, and increases gross and net incomes.

Implementation of natural resource management practices at community and municipal levels

Activities for this component began in August 2011. During this reporting period, the natural resource management team selected 31 municipalities in the six departments and began providing technical assistance on natural resource management policy implementation. Priority was given to municipalities with more households in extreme poverty, which have also been prioritized by the nutrition and health component (Table 4). The team also developed a technical assistance package for USAID approval.

Technical assistance and training activities carried out during the period included:

- Water chlorination.
- Development of an assessment evaluation sheet for natural resource management policies at the municipal level.
- Began diagnostic of the natural resource management policy implementation in 30 municipalities.
- Provided technical assistance to a recycling microenterprise in Marcala.
- Approved and initiated the process of declaring municipal water producing areas in La Unión, Jesús de Otoro, San Isidro, and Intibucá.
- Held 16 trainings in mitigation coffee effluents in Pavas, Santiago de Puringla, and San Isidro Intibucá.
- Participated in roundtable discussions on environment management at Jesus de Otoro municipality.
- Carried out exchange of experiences on tablet chlorination between the water boards of Santa Catarina and Chinacla, La Paz.

- Achieved community integration for water source rehabilitation in Santa Catarina and Barrio Nuevo in Erandique (fencing, barriers, and soil stabilization activities).
- Provided technical assistance in rehabilitation of sewerage systems in Santiago de Puringla and La Campa.
- Provided technical assistance in proper waste management by evaluation the dumping sites and recollection systems in the following municipalities: Jesus de Otoro, San Isidro, Marcala, Santa Barbara, Nueva Frontera, la Union, Copán, and Belen Gualcho.
- Rehabilitated the water chlorinators in El Tigre, Trinidad, Santa Bárbara, El Zapote, and Las Crucitas.
- Constructed chlorinators for community water systems.
- Advised communities on effluent water treatment, good business practices for water system administration, and recycling. Inspected water source contamination.
- Held 24 training events with 511 participants in water use, water contamination, and community organization for proper water system administration.

To date, assistance is being provided to 145 clients in the following 31 municipalities:

Table 4. Municipalities Receiving Assistance in NRM Practices	
Department	Number and Municipalities
La Paz	5: Santa Elena, Chinacla, Yarula, Santa Maria, Guajiquiro
Intibucá	6: Jesús de Otoro, San Miguelito, San Isidro, San Marcos de La Sierra, Intibucá, Yamaranguila
Lempira	6: Tomala, Erandique, La Igual, San Sebastián, San Manuel de Colohete y La Unión
Ocotepeque	3: Belén Gualcho, San Marcos, Sinuapa
Copán	5: Santa Rita, Cabañas, La Jigua, La Unión, Florida
Santa Bárbara	6: Quimistan, Las Vegas, San Pedro Zacapa, Trinidad, Nueva Frontera y Santa Bárbara
Total	31

3.3. IR 2.3. CAPACITY TO MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE STRENGTHENED

3.3.1. SUB-IR 2.3.3: DISASTER VULNERABILITY REDUCED

Work under this component included support to communities with high vulnerabilities in disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness. As with all other components, reducing communities' disaster vulnerabilities will ultimately put USAID-ACCESO-assisted households in a position to increase their incomes. USAID-ACCESO will utilize the small grants mechanism for select projects. Two main areas of work are being developed under this component.

Development and implementation of disaster mitigation plans

Activities under this component are targeted to reduce vulnerability to disasters both at the farm-level (introducing good agricultural practices that minimize potential losses), and by strengthening or

forming at least 40 community-level disaster emergency committees (CODELs) in the most vulnerable target communities. In order to avoid the duplication of efforts, the final selection of CODEL-supported communities will take into consideration all other USAID-ACCESO activities, as well as the three regional branches within the target departments of the national coordinating agency (COPECO). Local NGOs with experience in disaster preparedness will be contracted to coordinate and implement project interventions in target communities, and a portion of the proposed small grants fund will be used to purchase basic supplies and equipment (emergency radios, tents, first aid kits, stretchers) and upgrade emergency shelters.

Disaster mitigation activities included:

- Identified and selected 35 communities in high vulnerability municipalities.
- Finalized drafting USAID-ACCESO's prevention and mitigation plan for USAID approval.
- Conducted a damage assessment in the community of Chuna Chinguire, Yarula, which spurred the municipality to acquire land to relocate houses.
- Conducted assessments of several Emergency Municipal Committees (CODEMs). These committees need support in drafting protocols and following procedure, and require additional training from the local municipality. A work plan was developed to resolve these issues.
- Conducted assessments of several Emergency Operational Centers (COEs), including Cucuyagua, San Marcos de Ocotepeque, and Las Vegas Santa Bárbara.
- Supported several municipalities in risk assessment after heavy rains in October. As a result of one of these assessments, one municipality purchased a piece of land to relocate families in danger.
- Implemented anti-erosion techniques for water sources in Santa Catarina, Intibucá.
- Held three workshops on introduction to risk management in San Isidro, Jesus de Otoro, and Masaguara.
- Trained seven CODEMs in risk assessment.

USAID-ACCESO will utilize COPECO's curriculum and training programs in risk assessment, mitigation, preparedness, and response and recovery (based on USAID/OFDA-LAC materials). Simulations will be supported in all 40 assisted communities.

Installation of renewable energy technologies

The renewable energy component for USAID-ACCESO initiated activities in June 2011. The project's focus is on identifying and promoting low-cost renewable technologies for both small communities and individual rural households. Priority support is being given to investments that provide energy for economic activities, health clinics, and schools. In partnership with individual households, target communities, local NGOs, community organizations, and the private sector, USAID-ACCESO will cost share (through the small grants fund) the installation of:

- Individual household solar photovoltaic systems (50 to 65 watts).
- Small-scale biogas digesters for cooking gas, lighting, refrigeration and water heating.

- Solar photovoltaic, wind, or hybrid systems (with batteries) for municipal health clinics, emergency shelters, and schools (5 to 10 kilowatts per day of energy consumption).
- Micro, hydro or wind generation systems (10 - 25 kilowatt capacity) for small communities of 20 to 50 households.
- Solar, wind, or hybrid solar-wind systems for electricity to productive enterprises; operation of pumps in drip irrigation schemes; and supply to other micro and small businesses.
- Fuel-efficient stoves for individual household use.
- Solar dryers for coffee and other agricultural products.
- Fintrac-designed zero-energy “cold huts.”

In all cases, capacity will be developed with local micro-enterprises for building and maintaining these technologies.

During the period from October to December, the main focus was to install small-scale systems to demonstrate benefits to clients. Additionally, meetings with municipalities, NGOs, and other organizations took place to continue the screening process to identify opportunities to develop small-scale renewable energy projects.

The project helped install 27 renewable energy systems this quarter with investments totaling \$5,317, of which only 8 percent was financed by USAID-ACCESO, 78 percent by the beneficiaries, and 14 percent by project counterparts. The high leverage of investment from beneficiaries and other counterparts (\$12.50 per every \$1 invested by the project) will allow for a larger amount of renewable energy projects in the upcoming periods. The fact that the end beneficiaries are making the largest contributions reflects the acceptance of these technologies. The main technologies were bio-digesters, solar dryers, and improved stoves.

- Thirteen improved stoves installed in four of the six departments (seven in San Jeronimo, Ocotepeque; one in Pavas and one in Guajiquiro, La Paz; three in Talagua, Lempira; and one in Las Bodegas, Copán). In Ocotepeque, every family paid for their stove; the client household in Copán and Gaiquiero received a donation from OCDIH and CARE, respectively, and the stoves in Pavas and Talagua were built with joint investments from the project and the homeowners. All are being used to promote this technology in the communities.
- Nine tubular polyethylene bio-digesters were built during this period in three departments (Lempira, Santa Barbara, and Copán). Five of these systems were built as demonstration bio-digesters and the investment was shared between USAID-ACCESO and the client households. Other systems were financed by CASH in Copan and CASM in Ocotepeque. All of these systems are working and producing biogas. Investments in bio-digesters totaled \$1,172, of which 47 percent came from the clients, 18 percent from USAID-ACCESO, and the remaining 35 percent from project counterparts.
- Nine solar dryers, with the capacity to dry 2,000 pounds of coffee, were installed in Lempira, Copan, La Paz, and Santa Barbara. All are being used as demonstration systems. As with other renewable energy projects, the beneficiaries invested the largest portion of the cost,

at 88 percent, and the other 12 percent came from USAID-ACCESO and other counterparts. Total investment for solar dryers built in the reporting period was \$3,211.

During the installation of all of the systems, introductory training events were carried out for the users and others interested in these technologies. During this period, a total of 21 training events were carried out on the following topics: basic concepts and benefits of the improved stoves and good practices for use and maintenance of the stoves; basic concepts of bio-digester installation and operation; and installation and use of solar dryers. The project trained 178 people trained in the aforementioned topics and made 20 technical assistance visits to farm clients using different renewable energy systems.

USAID-ACCESO met with municipalities, NGOs, and other institutions to discuss the renewable energy component, to schedule future trainings, and to establish finance opportunities for the purchase and use of renewable energy technologies.

The project developed a poster demonstrating the optimal maintenance of the improved stoves. This will be distributed to users of this technology and to every house where USAID-ACCESO builds an improved stove. Data is being gathered and analyzed from the bio-digesters in order to create a technical handbook to improve the understanding and knowledge of these anaerobic systems.

3.4. IR 4.1. USE OF QUALITY MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES INCREASED

USAID-ACCESO has fully integrated the nutrition and health activities with almost all other technical areas, including economic development (access to food), renewable energy (improved stoves), natural resource management (drinking water access and chlorination), and value-added products and animal production (diet diversity).

The main activities during the present quarter, carried out with the client households, health centers, and the health volunteers, included:

- Training in food preparation to ensure diet diversity and nutrient uptake, including the preparation of fortified tortillas with carrot, broccoli, and leaves (radish and carrot); soups; mixed-vegetable rice; and fruit juices.
- Training of mothers in prevention, symptom identification, and rapid treatment of respiratory illnesses, which are especially prevalent at this time of year due to the weather conditions.
- Implementation of a “healthy household” program, aimed at preventing illnesses, including hygiene practices, cleanliness, garbage disposal, household water chlorination, sealing of dirt floors, and the installation of improved stoves. These households also serve as demonstrations and training for others.
- Coordination with health centers with the application of a basic package of vaccinations, vitamins, and iron supplements.
- Training activities with basic messaging for family planning and pregnancy planning.

- Health volunteers are being incorporated into the project with the household plots and have been trained to promote the “healthy household” component.
- Continued delivery of basic health and nutrition messaging through project specialists and agronomists.

Activities focused on households with underweight children to ensure the quantity and quality of food being provided to the children and to implement preventative measures. Several children have already been lifted out of the underweight range with this focused approach.

Implementation of improved health and nutrition practices at the household level

USAID-ACCESO beneficiaries have started receiving training in health and nutrition related activities complementary to assistance being provided in production systems and economic development. Both men and women are receiving basic training in child care, prevention of illnesses, nutrition practices, and family planning. Initial activities have also begun with expanding and improving the health and nutrition messages to the wider population, particularly through the AIN-Cs and health volunteers. Training is already being provided to volunteers, many of whom are also included in the project’s economic development activities.

During this quarter, the project held 278 training events in nutrition and health, involving 5,133 participants (1,050 male, 4,083 female). Specific attention was given to include males in these training events, which are traditionally directed at females. A total of 1,214 individual technical assistance visits were made to households.

Strengthening of health center services

Initial visits were made to a wide range of health centers to determine needs and priorities and to identify those that can benefit most from USAID-ACCESO support. This quarter, activities centered on household and community services, with referrals being made where necessary to health centers. The project initiated procurement activities to obtain updated poster and reference materials to distribute to the communities’ health volunteers. The grants team identified equipment requirements for health centers in prioritized municipalities (those with the nutritional problems) to permit the delivery of home health extension services. Both will be implemented in the next quarter.

At the end of December 2011, the AIN-C program was suspended. In many cases, USAID-ACCESO has programmed activities to provide technical support to volunteers to continue the monthly meetings for weighing and counseling.

3.5. SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

3.5.1. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Most of the senior level technical and management team were in place within two weeks of project start-up. Contracts were developed in the first quarter, with the initial five sub-contractors operating six of the local field implementation teams. In the second quarter, contract mechanisms were developed with six local NGOs for five local implementation teams who were fielded at the end of the third quarter. Eleven of the 12 CTUs are now operational.

All field logistics are now in place with the final delivery of motorbikes and cars in this quarter – 87 motorbikes and 51 of 52 cars. Computers and field equipment have been sourced for the entire

team. Central offices are operational in Tegucigalpa and La Lima, with field offices in Santa Bárbara, Santa Rosa de Copán, La Esperanza, and Marcala.

The speed of implementation of the local field teams was slower than original anticipated due to delays with subcontract and personnel approvals and with the delivery and tax exoneration of vehicles.

3.5.2. MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Activities carried out by the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) unit enable all project employees to report their activities in the field, to provide recurrent and real time feedback to department managers on major advancements in their regions, and to collect information on assisted households. Specific activities carried out during the period include:

- The M&E team completed 8,591 client household profiles, representing 73 percent of the total number of client households registered in CIRIS. Collection of profile information is ongoing in all six departments.
- Met with USAID Washington to discuss project indicators and data collection tools and methodologies.
- Data entry technicians continued entering information on the individuals participating in training events (as opposed to participants). Given the volume of data, this required additional full-time positions, which were filled in late December 2011.
- Updated the client profile, baseline, and end of harvest forms. These changes will allow for an automatic data transfer between tablets used in the field and CIRIS.
- Collected gender surveys to finalize the gender strategy and work plan and provided support to the gender workshops held in all six departments.
- Prepared baseline surveys and determined sample sizes required for baseline information. Results indicated a total of 562 clients had to be surveyed to ensure a 95 percent confidence level at the department level. As of December 31, 2011, a total of 480 surveys in the six departments had been completed. This represents an 85 percent completion of the baseline process, with the remainder to be carried out in January 2012. Thirty-seven percent of the baseline surveys have been entered into the system, with the remainder to be completed in the upcoming quarter.
- M&E specialists have been present at all department level meeting, presenting CIRIS reports and providing critical feedback on project progress.
- Developed new CIRIS indicators to provide information on activities, outputs, and results disaggregated by individual Community Technical Units and subcontractors.
- Provided specific training for the new Santa Barbara field team on project indicators and relevant M&E tools, and provided ongoing training as required to all project employees on M&E systems and data collection.
- Performed continuous maintenance of the CIRIS database.

3.5.3. SMALL GRANTS, SUBCONTRACTS AND ALLIANCES PROGRAM

USAID-ACCESO's second group of CTUs with local subcontractors was finalized and fielded during this quarter. Only one CTU is now pending in Santa Bárbara, but negotiations have been finalized and approved by USAID, and the team will be operational as of January 2012. The team in Copán is now partnered with World Vision Honduras. The USAID-ACCESO team is now complete. Additional activities included:

- *Regional market visits:* Visited El Salvador to investigate market opportunities; visited Guatemala to observe snow pea production and export operations. This will help increase market linkages, production, exports, and incomes.
- *Business skills training workshops:* Training workshops to develop or improve off-farm income generating activities such as sewing, weaving, or baking. By helping beneficiaries develop skills outside farm activity, USAID-ACCESO diversifies and expands income sources for clients.
- *Snow pea demonstration plots:* Installed demonstration plots in Intibucá and provided technical assistance in best practices for growing snow peas, which farmers will eventually be able to export at much higher prices.

The project also focused on identifying technology funds in renewable energy, marketing, production, postharvest, nutrition and health research and development, and others. Technology funds developed and approved include:

- *Photovoltaic Systems:* 33 solar panels will be installed in Intibucá for an equal number of client households providing them with electricity, which will allow for expanded income-generating opportunities as they will be able to work at night. This activity will contribute to the number of renewable energy projects established by USAID-ACCESO.
- *Solar Dryers:* 300 solar dryers are to be installed for coffee growers. Current drying is done on roads or other inadequate areas, which affects coffee quality and, therefore, price. These dryers can also be used for corn and beans, increasing growers' potential income and reducing postharvest losses.
- *International Market Jumpstart:* Sending trial shipments to potential customers in the US, Canada, or Europe can be prohibitively expensive for smallholder farmers. The project is cost sharing a trial shipment with the growers, allowing them to explore new, more lucrative market opportunities at an affordable cost.
- *Construction of Eco Stoves:* 500 client households will receive eco stoves, reducing smoke emissions that can cause respiratory diseases, reducing the amount of firewood needed, and providing for overall improved health and nutrition in the household. Construction and training will be provided by USAID-ACCESO and AHDESA.

Partner funds developed during this period included:

- *World Vision Honduras:* As described above, this partner fund was developed to complement the USAID-ACCESO Copán team with three production technicians.

3.5.4. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

USAID-ACCESO continued to emphasize its gender mainstreaming strategy and staff awareness. Key activities included:

- *Focus groups:* Fintrac gender specialists conducted four focus group sessions with client households in four of the departments, which provided critical information on the different roles and responsibilities of the family members within the household. Other key findings included division of labor and decision making roles in terms of household expenses and investments.
- *Client visits:* Carried out visits across sectors, including farmers, village banks, households with child nutrition-related activities, and various microenterprises.
- *Training of field staff:* Conducted gender training sessions in all six departments with all project staff. The training included guidelines on how to implement activities taking gender issues into consideration, and created more awareness on the roles and strengths of both men and women through a series of group exercises.

The gender strategy includes details on gender disaggregated indicators and data analysis, as well as for including women in technical training in the cultural context of Honduras. The strategy identifies the types of technical assistance, technologies, and crops that best address the constraints faced by women. Key recommendations include focusing crop selection on production of herbs that are easy to grow and require smaller areas of land for cultivation, garden-grown vegetables to generate food for the family, and fruit. Good opportunities exist to increase women's involvement in the economy in animal production and off-farm and value-added microenterprises. Targeted technologies include drip irrigation and the introduction of low-cost greenhouses. Sowing, harvesting, and postharvest activities are also activities that provide women with labor opportunities. The final strategy document was presented to USAID this quarter.

3.5.5. USAID-ACCESO TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

As part of the technical assistance and training activities, USAID-ACCESO is preparing technical bulletins and manuals to provide to beneficiaries, support institutions, NGOs, government organizations, and others.

Practice Area	Materials
Production	15 bulletins, 1 manual
Business Skills	2 cost of production summaries
Renewable Energy	1 bulletin
Natural Resource Management	1 bulletin
Marketing	1 market survey
TOTAL	21

3.5.6. OTHER

Supporting US government-related activities included:

- Visit of the US Ambassador in Honduras and other representatives of the US Embassy and USAID to project clients in La Campa, Lempira and La Esperanza, Intibucá (October 2011).
- Field visit by the USAID/Honduras interim director and other USAID representatives to project clients in La Paz (October 2011).
- Visit by the Assistant Administrator of USAID for Latin America, USAID/Honduras Mission Director, Honduran Minister of Agriculture and other US government representatives to project clients in Paihislal, Intibucá (November 2011).
- Visit by the US UN Ambassador, US Ambassador to Honduras, USAID/Honduras Mission Director, Honduran Minister of Agriculture and other US government representatives to project clients in Las Pavas, La Paz (December 2011).
- Meetings and communication on possible collaboration with representatives of IPM-CRSP, Peanut-CRSP and Hort-CRSP.

Other supporting activities included:

- Established the USAID-ACCESO consultative committee with the Minister of Agriculture and held the first meeting.
- Met with main subcontractors on project implementation and administration.
- Participated in USAID meeting in Washington, DC, on Feed the Future M&E requirements and systems.

4. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

Rural MSMEs access to inputs, practices and technology form market participation improved

- Initiate and continue the development of market-led production programs in all six departments for high-value cash crops including potato, snow peas, carrot, garlic, Asian vegetables, plantain, a selection of herbs (basil, marjoram, chives, rosemary, and thyme), onion, and cucumbers.
- Continue with recruitment of new project clients, both on- and off-farm.
- Increase the provision of training and technical assistance in production and value-added activities with the expanded team.
- Introduce new technologies, crops, and processed products with high market potential.

- Develop market-driven production programs to meet local and regional demand.
- Establish a pilot kitchen in La Esperanza and train technicians and processors to standardize technical criteria.
- Development of technical bulletins and presentations on value added alternatives for different crops.
- Sales and cost control implementation in all MSMEs.
- Reinforce market linkage with new buyers.
- Continue with value added workshops (dairy, meat, canning, bakery, corn products).
- Continue supporting the nutrition and health component on diet improvement.
- Start new product development for business promotion and diversification: beans, *panela*, frozen pulps, snacks, spices, dried fruits, lemon grass, breaded vegetables, and salsas.
- Develop new distribution channels for MSME clients.
- Develop new production programs linked to value added product development, such as frozen refried beans, cleaned and packed beans, and passion fruit pulp.
- Initiate the development and distribution of a technology investment fund small grants program for productive infrastructure.
- Additional alliances will be sought with NGOs and other institutions in rural Honduras, which may include ODECO, COAGRICSAL, CESAL, Mancoumindad el Higuito, SIGRAH and others. These institutions are working in the Western region and have shown interest in adopting USAID-ACCESO techniques as well as capacity to support project activities.

Rural MSMEs access to new market opportunities increased

- Continue with the development and promotion of local trade fairs.
- Increase the number of local buyers working with USAID-ACCESO for increased market links and production programs.
- Develop local distributors and design routes in local towns for MSME retail sales with off-farm value added products.
- Develop outgrower programs for local buyers, exporters, and processors.
- Establish calendarized production programs for local market buyers.
- Initiate new exports of herbs, radicchio, and snow peas to the US.
- Initiate new marketing relationships with buyers in El Salvador.
- Develop market standards for select buyers.
- Initiate the training of farmers to achieve certification of safe use of chemical inputs.

- Support to growers for certification programs.

Barriers to competitiveness of rural MSMEs reduced

- Training and technical assistance to first and second tier rural banks.
- Expand implementation of project clients' access to financial products developed with input providers and exporters, including Del Campo Soluciones Agricolas, CADELGA, Original Maya, and others.
- Initiate activities relating to barriers and policy issues affecting competitiveness in the agricultural sector.
- Initiate research and development activities targeted to increase productivity for key crops (delayed from previous quarter).

Biodiversity and natural resources conserved

At the farm level

- Expand technical assistance in soil conservation, water resource management, wildlife preservation, pest and disease identification and control, and the safe use of pesticides.

At the municipal and community levels

- Continue providing technical assistance to communities in water management, waste disposition, and soil management.
- Support community boards with their natural resource conservation projects (water boards, community groups).
- Identify communities where pilot projects will be built using the project's technology fund to possibly include the designs for water system improvement, effluent treatment plant, and solid waste collection and treatment.

Disaster vulnerability reduced

- Continue implementation of mitigation plans in 20 communities.
- Define mitigation infrastructure projects and cost share using technology fund.
- Continue training of Municipal Emergency Committees to strengthen their operational capacities.
- Organize and or strengthen at least 30 Local Emergency Committees.

Renewable energy projects to be implemented during the next period

- Install 33 solar PV systems at a household level to promote the technology in isolated communities.
- Install 300 improved stoves, 10 bio-digesters, and 150 solar crop dryers.
- Training on the use and maintenance of improved stoves.
- Training on the concepts and critical points of design and installation of bio-digesters.

- Develop technical handbooks for bio-digesters and solar dryers.

Use of quality maternal and child health and family planning services increased

- Continue identifying specific cases that need attention in the target communities and referring them to the health facility for the delivery of the basic health package.
- Continue promoting family planning and quality maternal and child health practices in the basic messages that are conveyed in the training events.
- Expand the implementation of the healthy household program.
- Provide training in food preparation and diet diversity, to ensure nutrient uptake.
- Coordinate with the renewable energy and natural resource management components to target select activities (water quality, waste disposal, effluent water treatment, fuel efficient stoves, bio-digesters, etc.) to help improve health conditions.
- Initiate the establishment of family lots with suitable crops for improved household nutrition.
- Initiate the establishment of food preparation training centers for teaching mothers how to prepare nutritive food in their houses.
- Expand the dissemination of basic health and nutrition information in targeted communities and to counterparts.
- Continue with the provision of direct technical assistance and training on health and nutrition subjects at the household level, to health volunteers AIN–C groups.

Natural resource management

- Continue supporting community-led projects in municipalities with high vulnerabilities.
- Identify protected area and water sheds to receive project support.
- Develop priority activities to contribute to the achievement of the health and nutrition and economic growth components.

Gender mainstreaming

- Follow up on gender inclusion activities in the day-to-day implementation of USAID-ACCESO.
- Follow recommendations and focus on opportunities highlighted in the gender mainstreaming plan for implementation of all activities.
- Accommodate training events and technical assistance delivery times and methodologies to the intended audience based on focus group findings (male, females, and youth).

Project management and administrative activities

- Continue developing formal alliances with selected counterpart institutions.

Monitoring and evaluation activities

- Coordinate with USAID and IFPRI on M&E baseline and evaluation surveys.

- Continue collecting client profiles and end of harvest forms.
- Present the results of the baseline information in all six departments.
- Analyze and present findings of baseline data surveys carried out in the previous quarter.
- Provide management reports on advancement of all project components to department and zone managers for performance evaluation and decision making.
- Develop activity and status reports for subcontractors.

Small grants, subcontracts and alliances program

As the beneficiary base and field work expands, more client household requirements for the partner and technology fund activities are being identified. Those to be developed in the next quarter are likely to include:

- Alliance with PROSOL-FHIA contributing with a significant cost share element in the Photovoltaic Systems installation activity; this alliance will leverage USAID-ACCESO's activity to install 33 solar panels for client households in Intibucá.
- Irrigation systems rehabilitation and installation.
- Investments in productive infrastructure.
- Home gardens to improve household nutrition.
- Research and development programs with Fundación Hondureña de Investigación Agrícola.
- New private sector alliances.
- Health and nutrition.
- Bio-digesters.
- Market stands for agricultural fairs.
- Herb and snow pea seeds for export programs.
- Export cold chain infrastructure.
- Equipment for improving allspice cleaning, grading, and handling for export.
- Natural resource management activities and investments.
- Disaster mitigation activities and infrastructure.

Annex II: PMP

The PMP and work plan targets for each indicator is provided below, together with the overall status as of December 2011. These are now separated by IRs and sub-IRs to be consistent with the quarterly and work plan formats. Note: data for selected indicators are collected on an ongoing basis while others will be collected via annual surveys. Some indicators require COR approval for technical assistance packages, which were submitted during the present quarter and are pending approval.

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (FY 2011)	YEAR 2 (Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2012)				Total	TOTAL EXPECTED LOP	DELIVERABLE / UNITS	Year 2 Breakdown		Previous Status (09/2011)	Current Quarter (12/2011)	Updated Status (12/2011)
	Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year 2			Male	Female			
1	Program Administrative Activities												
	Start-Up Activities												
1.1	Key Personnel Fielded	done									done		
1.2	Grants Manual Submitted	1				1					done		
1.3	Project Intranet/Internet Sites Designed & Launched	2				2					done		
1.4	Vehicle/Equipment Procurement	cars/motorbikes	on-going	on-going							done		
1.5	Local Project Team Fielded	done	on-going	on-going							done		
1.6	Local staff trained in Fintrac implementation methodology	done	on-going								done		
1.7	Remaining team hired and fielded		on-going								done		
	Communications & Reporting												
1.8	Branding & Marking Plan Prepared & Submitted	1				1					done		
1.9	PERSUAP	1				1						done	
1.10	EMP			1									
1.11	Monthly Reports	6	3	3	3	3	18	46	Reports		6	3	9
1.12	Quarterly Reports	2	1	1	1	1	6	15	Reports		2	1	3
1.13	Annual Workplan	1	1				2	4	Workplans		1	1	2
1.14	Final Report							1	Reports				
1.15	Steering committee meetings		1		1		2	7	Meeting Minutes			1	1
2	Project Monitoring & Evaluation Activities												
2.1	Fintrac M&E System (CIRIS) customized and installed	done									done		
2.2	Staff trained in M&E methodology and CIRIS	done									done		
2.3	M&E Plan / PMP Developed and Submitted	1						1	Plan		done		
2.4	Baseline Data on Program Clients Collected								Data			on-going	
2.6	Follow-up indicator data collected and verified								Data				
2.7	Performance Indicator Review												
2.8	Success Stories Produced and Disseminated	2	3	3	3	3	12	40	Publications		2	4	6

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (FY 2011)	YEAR 2 (Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2012)				Total	TOTAL EXPECTED LOP	DELIVERABLE / UNITS	Year 2 Breakdown		Previous Status (09/2011)	Current Quarter (12/2011)	Updated Status (12/2011)
	Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year 2			Male	Female			
3	Small Grants Program												
3.1	Technology Fund (households)		1,035	1,035	1,035	1,052	4,157						
3.2	Nutrition / Health			5	10	5	20						
3.3	Disaster Mitigation / NRM			5	10	5	20						
3.4	Renewable Energy			50	100	50	200	890					
3.5	Number of grants awarded by community small grants mechanism		1,035	1,095	1,155	1,112	4,397						
High Level Targets													
GOAL: Increased Rural Household Incomes													
PIRS # 1	Number of households living in poverty moved above the poverty line						6,000	30,000	Households	4,800	1,200		
PIRS # 2	Number of rural households living in extreme poverty moved above the poverty line ¹						4,500	18,000	Households	3,600	900		
PIRS # 3	Value of new net income of participant rural farmers and MSMEs						14.79	73.95	US\$ Million	13.31	1.48		
PIRS # 4	Number of jobs attributed to FTF implementation						2,085	10,425	FTEs	1,251	834		
Increased Agricultural Productivity													
PIRS # 5	Value of incremental sales (collected at farm/firm level) attributed to FTF implementation						26.73	133.65	US\$ Million	24.06	2.67		

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (FY 2011)	YEAR 2 (Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2012)				Total	TOTAL EXPECTED LOP	DELIVERABLE / UNITS	Year 2 Breakdown		Previous Status (09/2011)	Current Quarter (12/2011)	Updated Status (12/2011)	
	Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year 2			Male	Female				
IR 2.1: RURAL MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (MSME) GROWTH INCREASED														
Sub-IR 2.1.1: RURAL MSMEs' ACCESS TO INPUTS, PRACTICES, AND TECHNOLOGY FOR MARKET PARTICIPATION IMPROVED														
Implementation of updated production technologies (on-farm and off-farm)														
WP # 1	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	5,045	3,784	3,784	3,784	3,784	20,182	55,500	Individuals	16,278	3,904	7,723	10,832	10,832
WP # 2	Number of extension visits to program beneficiaries	34,400	25,800	25,800	25,800	25,800	137,600	378,400	Extension Visits			16,170	25,064	41,234
WP # 12	Number of technical materials produced (bulletins, manuals, presentations and tools)	50	20	20	20	15	125	225	Technical materials			63	21	84
WP # 10	Number of MSMEs (off-farm and processing) assisted by project	161	81	81	81	81	483	805	MSMEs	193	290	285	366	366
PMP # 6	Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FTF implementation		1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	4.32	21.60	New private sector investment (Millions)			0.211	0.146	0.357
WP # 11	Number of female individuals in training activities	1,800	525	525	525	525	3,900	8,300	Female Individuals			1,935	3,091	3,091
PIRS # 7	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance		1,000	1,000	1,205	1,205	4,410	22,050	MSMEs	3,528	882			
Private sector alliances and integration of private sector equipment, input and service providers														
PIRS # 30	Number of organizations / companies providing business development / extension services to MSMEs	23	5	15	25	25	93	465	organizations / companies providing services to MSMEs					
PIRS # 32	Number of public-private partnerships formed	10	3	3	9	10	35	50	PPP formed			1	1	2
PIRS # 33	Number of private sector alliances developed	2	2	2	2	2	10	15	PSA's Formed			2	3	5
Grower organization and the development of market driven production programs														
PIRS # 31	Number of producers organizations, water users associations, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance	20	15	15	20	20	90	210	Organizations / associations / CBO's receiving assistance			40	143	183
WP # 3	Number of small farmer associations formally established as businesses				2	2	4	55	Associations formally established as businesses					

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (FY 2011)	YEAR 2 (Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2012)				Total	TOTAL EXPECTED LOP	DELIVERABLE / UNITS	Year 2 Breakdown		Previous Status (09/2011)	Current Quarter (12/2011)	Updated Status (12/2011)	
	Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year 2			Male	Female				
IR 2.1: RURAL MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (MSME) GROWTH INCREASED														
SUB-IR 2.1.2: RURAL MSMEs' ACCESS TO NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES INCREASED														
Development of buyer linkages and logistics														
WP # 4	Number of MSMEs accessing new market opportunities through a broker	218	492	492	492	492	2,186	10,932	MSMEs	1,967	219	35	77	77
PIRS # 12	Number of brokers providing market linkages to MSMEs	25	25	25	25	50	150	500	Brokers providing market linkages to MSME's			10	17	17
WP # 6	Number of market surveys conducted	6	2	3	4	3	18	24	Market Surveys			1	1	2
Production and systems implementation to meet buyers quality standards														
WP # 5	Number of MSMEs that have entered formal preferred supplier or contract agreements with brokers		74	150	150	225	599	2,996	MSMEs	509	90	-	-	
Implementation of business certification programs														
PIRS # 13	Number of MSMEs that have been verified to meet market standards for their products		50	50	100	100	300	2,000	MSMEs			35	51	51
SUB-IR 2.1.3: BARRIERS TO COMPETITIVENESS OF RURAL MSMEs REDUCED														
Increased access to finance														
PIRS # 14	Number of MSMEs accessing market-based financing as the result of USG assistance	215	180	210	230	243	1,078	4,314	MSME's accessing finance	862	216	306	47	353
PIRS # 15	Value of Agricultural and Rural Loans made to MSMEs	0.32	0.27	0.31	0.33	0.35	1.58	6.33	Value of loans (millions)	1.26	0.32	0.211	0.034	0.245
PIRS # 11	Number of MSMEs implementing sound business management practices		300	360	480	556	1,696	8,482	MSMEs	1,357	339			
PIRS # 16	Number of value chain / sector constraints identified and resolved			3	5	7	15	40	Constraints					
PIRS # 17	Number of policy reforms, regulations, administrative procedures passed for which implementation has begun with USG assistance	1			1		2	4	Policies, regulations or administrative procedures passed			1		1
Applied research and development programs developed														
	R&D projects and Activities Identified	1					1	1				1		1

ACTIVITY	YEAR 1 (FY 2011)	YEAR 2 (Oct. 2011 to Sept. 2012)				Total	TOTAL EXPECTED LOP	DELIVERABLE / UNITS	Year 2 Breakdown		Previous Status (09/2011)	Current Quarter (12/2011)	Updated Status (12/2011)	
	Apr. 2011 to Sept. 2011	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year 2			Male	Female				
IR 2.2: Honduran Biodiversity and Natural Resources Conserved and IR 2.3: CAPACITY TO ADAPT AND MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE STRENGTHENED														
Implementation of NRM practices on farm														
PIRS # 8	Number of additional hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance		700	700	781	800	2,981	14,904	Hectares	2,683	298			
PIRS # 10	Number of companies (including farms) that have made conservation-friendly changes in their business practices		1,000	1,000	1,205	1,205	4,410	22,050	Companies (including farms)					
Implementation of NRM practices at community and municipality levels														
PIRS # 9	Number of Local Municipal Governments effectively implementing natural resource management policies				3	4	7	20	Local Municipal Governments					
SUB-IR 2.3.3: DISASTER VULNERABILITY REDUCED														
Development and implementation of disaster mitigation plans and systems														
PIRS # 28	Number of communities in high vulnerability municipalities with adequate disaster prevention and mitigation capacity				5	10	15	40	Communities with adequate disaster prevention and mitigation capacity					
Installation of renewable energy technologies														
PIRS # 29	Number of rural micro-generation clean/renewable energy projects established	10	52	90	100	109	361		Projects established			4	26	30
IR 4.1: USE OF QUALITY MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES INCREASED														
PIRS # 18	Prevalence of households with moderate to severe hunger							-20%	% reduction from baseline					
PIRS # 19	Prevalence of underweight children under 5					-5%	-5%	-20%	% reduction from baseline	-5.0%	-5.0%			
PIRS # 20	Prevalence of stunted children under 5							-20%	% reduction from baseline					
PIRS # 21	Percent of children 6-23 months that received a Minimum Acceptable Diet							30%	% increase over baseline					
PIRS # 22	Prevalence of exclusive breast feeding of children under 6 months					5%	5%	20%	% increase over baseline					
PIRS # 23	Prevalence of anemia among women of reproductive age							-5%	% reduction from baseline					
PIRS # 24	Prevalence of anemia in children 5 - 59 months							-20%	% reduction from baseline					
PIRS # 25	Women's dietary diversity: mean number of food groups consumed by women of reproductive age							30%	% Change in HDDS					
PIRS # 26	Number of health facilities with established capacity to manage acute under-nutrition							20	Health Facilities					
PIRS # 27	Modern contraceptive prevalence rate						2.5%	10%	% Increase over baseline	2.5%	2.5%			

Annex III: Snapshots & Monthly Updates



USAID | ACCESO
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SUCCESS STORY

High-quality Crops Increase Incomes

With improved market access and technical support in production systems, small-scale farmers are making more money



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Marco Tulio Chacón is seeing significant increases in income after incorporating cucumber crops into his small farm. With help from USAID-ACCESO, Chacón is learning how to maximize quality and yields and is gaining access to new more profitable markets. "Market security is key to improving profits in agriculture," he said.

"It's a big challenge to develop a planting program, especially with small-scale farmers, but we are already seeing impressive results."

Yovany Cuestas
Technical Advisor

After participating in a recent community meeting held by USAID-ACCESO, Marco Tulio Chacón and his family decided to join the project's planting program. Chacón, a small-scale producer of corn, beans, and coffee in Santa Barbara, Honduras, said he struggled with the decision, but ultimately decided the risk would be worth the reward.

"It was not an easy decision because we did not know the technician, but the market security [offered by the project] was very attractive," said Chacón.

USAID-ACCESO, a multi-year initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development, is focusing on increasing yields and incomes through improved production practices and more access to fair and profitable markets.

USAID-ACCESO has established a partnership with the Cooperativa Agrícola Esfuerzo Occidental Limitada (CAEOL), and together they are working to establish agreements with supermarket chains located in major Honduran cities.

Through this partnership, USAID-ACCESO has established a group of cucumber growers that included 23 households on 1.84 hectares from August to December. These farmers are serving as models for other local growers, using their farms to showcase good agricultural practices and demonstrate the income potential associated with high-value crops.

As a result of the demonstration plots, the project plans to extend its planting program to three additional municipalities in 2012. They will work with 45 households on 4.6 hectares, with an estimated weekly cucumber production of 13,636 kilograms.

The success of the project's agriculture component depends on good crop management, which includes compliance with the volume and quality standards set by the markets. Project staff help the farmers negotiate terms with the buyers, ensuring a fair transaction on both ends.

Thanks to better buyer agreements and quality crops, farmers are seeing significant increases in income. The first three participants to harvest their improved plots reported earnings ranging from US\$645 to US\$1,789. The farmers are now diversifying their farms, adding other high-value crops such as green beans and onions, and further increasing their income potential.

Head of Household	Hectares	Yield (Kg)	Earnings (US\$)
Marco Tulio Chacón	0.12	16,545	\$1,789
Israel Moran	0.08	8,864	\$881
Mario Orellana	0.04	500	\$645



SUCCESS STORY

Pork Producers See Increased Incomes

Better management and production techniques, like homemade feed, help increase profits for group of pork producers.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Handmade feeders like this one are helping pork producers in Santa Barbara raise healthy pigs, which is translating into increased profits and incomes. USAID-ACCESO technicians are also teaching the producers to make their own low-cost and nutritious feed.

With the improved feeding practices, the annual income from piglet production from one sow can total \$588 – or around 10 percent of the annual net income requirements to keep a family of six above the poverty line.

With assistance from the United States Agency for International Development's ACCESO project, more than 30 pork producers in Santa Barbara and Ocotepeque are becoming more profitable thanks to improved production techniques.

The group is learning how to reduce their production costs and increase profits in several ways, namely by preparing their own feed for the livestock; by decreasing the number of days to slaughter, which saves on food costs and improves quality; and by increasing the sows' birth rates.

With help from USAID-ACCESO, the producers are learning how to prepare nutritional and low-cost food that is healthier for the pigs. Using readily-available ingredients and preparing it themselves, the producers are saving money and improving quality.

Prior to receiving project assistance, the producers bought small quantities of feed concentrate and mixed it with bran in order to stretch the rations. This practice was neither cost-effective nor did it result in good-quality feed.

The producers were previously spending nearly \$15 per 100 pounds of feed, but with the homemade feed they spend a little more than \$10 – representing a savings of 42 percent per 100 pounds.

The group also learned to construct and use automatic drinking units and feeders, which allow them to better manage and care for the pigs' nutrition during the various stages of growth.

USAID-ACCESO is also teaching the producers how to better manage the breeding process, which results in more production cycles and an overall improved quality of livestock.

Decreasing lactation periods from 60 to 30 days means better quality pork. It also increases the number of births per sow, who can be impregnated more quickly with a shorter weaning time. All of which is translating to better sales and improved incomes for the pork producers.

In the first five-month cycle with one sow and the sale of 10 piglets, the improvements resulted in an increase of 120 percent in net profits, from \$136 to \$298. When followed by a second cycle, the net profits from the sale of the subsequent piglets increase by 140 percent, from \$120 to \$290.



USAID | ACCESO

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SUCCESS STORY

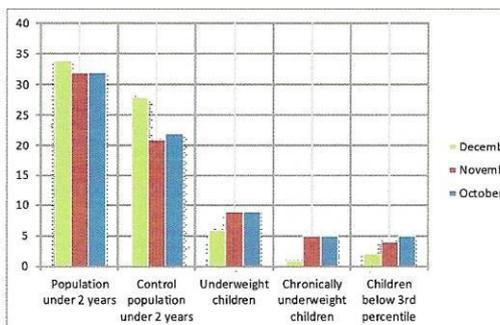
Diversified Diets Improve Childhood Nutrition

Rural community uses affordable, local ingredients to feed families



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Ángela Martínez is serving her daughter healthy and tasty foods made with ingredients from her home garden.



“We give advice to the community, but USAID-ACCESO works on the ground with practical solutions to achieve real results.”

Damaris Paz
Emergency Nurse, El Naranjo Health Center

As part of its commitment to improving health, nutrition, and food security in Honduras, USAID-ACCESO is working with rural families to promote new techniques for healthy food preparation and home garden production. The nutrition component focuses on practical applications of traditional training methods such as cooking demonstrations and garden plot preparation.

Attendance to USAID-ACCESO-sponsored nutrition trainings was on the rise in December in the small community of Las Pavas. Twenty-eight of the 34 area children under two years old participated in December activities, up from 21 in October and November.

Atención Integral a la Niñez en la Comunidad (AIN-C) coordinator, Doña Eugenia Hernández Castillo, says the mothers are motivated by the support and home visits from USAID-ACCESO staff and partners. In addition to attending training sessions, six women have already prepared their home garden plots.

The mothers’ motivation is paying off: the number of underweight children was reduced from 28 percent to 18 percent from October to December. One of the now-healthy children had been underweight for four months before her mother received USAID-ACCESO training. Another overcame a chronic condition after five months in the lowest percentile of children monitored.

Angela Martínez said she was able to improve her young daughter’s health after learning new recipes for nutritious foods at AIN-C monthly meetings.

“I’ve been giving her more food more often and I have made tortillas with carrots and greens. My husband also contributes yuca and other vegetables. It really helped to have the USAID-ACCESO technician and health center nurse visit my house and tell me what I needed to do,” she said.

Eladia Vasquez, another Las Pavas mother, said her daughter’s health has drastically improved since she began preparing the fortified tortillas she learned to make at AIN-C monthly meetings.

“Now I focus on preparing the tortillas with carrots and radishes, and rice with vegetables,” said Vasquez.

With local inputs that were previously not used, and in some cases discarded, the women are preparing better, more nutritious food for their families, contributing to both the overall health and food security of their communities.

USAID-ACCESO plans to replicate its success in Las Pavas through similar trainings and outreach in communities across western Honduras.



SUCCESS STORY

Cooperative Improves Service, Profits

With support from USAID-ACCESO, agroforestry cooperative becomes more profitable while expanding services to rural farmers

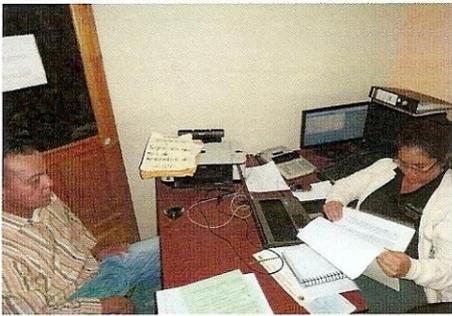


Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Nora Martínez, manager of the COPRAFEL cooperative, works with a USAID-ACCESO technician. With the project's help, Martínez and her colleagues are increasing profits and providing better service and access to area farmers.

“We are pleased with the support provided by USAID-ACCESO. Now we have skills and abilities we did not have before.”

Nora Martínez

Manager, COPRAFEL-Erandique

As part of its comprehensive development approach, the United States Agency for International Development's ACCESO project is working with small financial organizations to help them expand their products and services.

In the small community of Erandique, Lempira, USAID-ACCESO is working with the Regional Agroforestry Cooperative Lempira Limited (COPRAFEL), helping its members improve organizational structure and customer service.

COPRAFEL, in operation since 1997, provides access to credit for small-scale farmers, giving small loans to purchase equipment, inputs, seeds, and selected off-farm activities. They also operate a small supply store, which sells agricultural equipment and inputs. The cooperative had been struggling to make a profit and was often unable to provide adequate goods and service to their customers.

With technical assistance from USAID-ACCESO, COPRAFEL has completed an organizational diagnostic, which is helping them expand their loan portfolio and provide better services to their rural clients. They also developed a work plan that details, among other things, plans to collect outstanding debts.

In September 2011, the cooperative's percentage of defaults on the books reached 38 percent. By December, this number dropped to 26 percent, representing a significant decrease in un-performing loans. By recovering these previously unpaid debts, COPRAFEL reduces its risk while simultaneously carrying more cash on hand, which opens up more financial resources to the local community.

The new business model is helping COPRAFEL increase its membership across the board, rising from 700 to 739 members as of December, 40 percent of whom are women. The number of members accessing credit has also risen over the last three months, from 469 to 492 growers with credit facilities, of which 30 percent are women.

The COPRAFEL supply store is also growing and expanding its inventory, providing local access of key supplies that help underserved farmers increase yields and incomes.

Due to COPRAFEL's recent success, USAID-ACCESO has subcontracted the cooperative to provide technical assistance to local smallholder producers. COPRAFEL recently hired three agronomists to serve as trainers.

Cooperative employees will continue to receive training to further improve their leadership and technical skills, so they will be able to expand their reach to other nearby communities.



Spotlight Analysis: Nutrition and Agriculture

Background

USAID-ACCESO, a four-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is assisting more than 30,000 households in six departments in western Honduras. The project, which began in April 2011, is working to lift rural households out of poverty and undernutrition through access to economic development opportunities and improved health and nutrition practices. The project is increasing sales and incomes by introducing basic production practices and market-driven programs for high-value cash crops, as well as expanding off-farm microenterprise and employment opportunities.

USAID-ACCESO is working to ensure that increased incomes result in improved health and nutrition, not only for the 30,000 families receiving direct technical assistance, but also for the entire population in the project's target areas. To do so, the project integrates nutrition and health into its core agricultural production and economic development activities. These activities help to improve nutrition by:

- Increasing **AVAILABILITY** of micronutrient-rich foods through improved and diversified household production.
- Increasing **ACCESS** to nutritious foods by raising income through commercial production and new on- and off-farm employment opportunities.
- Improving **UTILIZATION** by providing training in food preparation and use, balanced diets, nutrition practices, and basic hygiene and sanitation.

USAID-ACCESO is also implementing small-scale home improvements to prevent and reduce respiratory and intestinal illnesses, which are large contributors to undernutrition. These include improvements to firewood stoves, floors and walls, latrines, water chlorination, garbage disposal, and basic home sanitation practices, such as keeping livestock out of the house.

Guiding Principles

The key to USAID-ACCESO's success is direct interaction with households. Nutritionists and health volunteers make regular visits to clients' homes and *all* project staff – including the 110 agronomists who visit their clients regularly – receive training in key health and nutrition messages. This allows agronomists to continually reinforce important messages to farmers. In addition to this direct and ongoing messaging, the nutrition strategy is based on the following guiding principles:

- **Integrating nutrition activities** with agriculture activities to maximize synergies and ensure that increased incomes translate into improved health and nutrition outcomes.
- **Empowering women** as agents of change to improve household food security and health outcomes, while continually reinforcing the messaging with men.
- **Leveraging partnerships** with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and other service providers, particularly the Atención Integral a la Niñez en la Comunidad (AIN-C) groups.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Children in Intibucá eating fortified tortillas at a cooking demonstration. As part of ACCESO's nutrition program, nutrition experts train mothers to prepare tortillas fortified with locally grown vegetables and plants that are high in important micro-nutrients.

Building Trust, Changing Attitudes

Many of the changes necessary to improve health and nutrition among rural families require cultural and behavioral changes. ACCESO is addressing this challenge by:

1. Building confidence with families by focusing on agricultural assistance first. Once families see quick results in crop productivity, they are more likely to trust the project's advice in other areas.
2. Providing ongoing support – by working directly with the families – until the benefits of the changes are fully demonstrated and implemented.
3. Helping families earn more money so they have greater access to better nutrition and health options.

- **Concentrating efforts** on the critical 1,000 day window of opportunity from pregnancy to two years of age.
- **Targeting interventions** to reach the most vulnerable households (using data from MOH and AIN-Cs), to provide individualized, tailored training to parents, focusing on preventing illnesses and recuperating undernourished children.
- **Building capacity** of AIN-C and other health volunteers by providing better training, tools, and incentives.
- **Monitoring and evaluating** the impact on nutritional status using indicators such as child weight, infant and young child feeding practices, and diet quality, diversity and quantity.

Activities

USAID-ACCESO's nutrition strategy is designed to improve access to a more diversified daily diet through increased nutritional awareness and productive gains made by home gardening or commercial farming. The project's nutrition activities focus on home gardens; Information, Education and Communication (IEC); and small-scale infrastructure and other activities that affect health and nutrition.

Home Gardens

USAID-ACCESO trains women in the cultivation of small home gardens, which provide a reliable source of healthy seasonal fruits and vegetables. Agronomists and nutritionists work in tandem to ensure families reap the nutritional benefits of these gardens. Together, they choose crops that are high in important vitamins and minerals, and are relatively easy to grow. Examples of crops include green leafy vegetables, sweet potatoes, tree fruits, passion fruit, taro, plantains and bananas – crops that do not require the purchase of seeds. Agronomists provide technical assistance, while nutritionists provide information, training and cooking demonstrations. USAID-ACCESO also provides support for small-scale aquaculture and livestock production to further increase household dietary diversity.

Information, Education and Communication

To raise awareness of nutritional best practices, USAID-ACCESO complements its agricultural activities with Information, Education and Communication (IEC). Project nutritionists provide regular trainings to the 30,000 project beneficiaries in nutrition, child care, prevention of illnesses, hygiene and sanitation practices, and family planning. These messages are continually reinforced not only by the nutritionists, but also by the agronomists who visit their clients regularly. This knowledge, coupled with the increased incomes from the agricultural assistance, gives families the means to dramatically improve their health and nutrition.

To expand and improve the health and nutrition messages to the wider population, USAID-ACCESO nutritionists are working to build capacity of AIN-Cs and health volunteers by providing training and tools to the volunteers, involving them in health activities in the community, and including them as beneficiaries of the project's economic development activities.

Infrastructure and other activities

Many of the benefits of increased nutrition intake will not be realized if children are suffering from diarrheal and respiratory diseases. To prevent nutrient loss, USAID-ACCESO is working to improve home conditions and community infrastructure. Priority investments include the installation of latrines to improve sanitation and reduce contamination of water sources; the introduction of fuel-efficient wood burning stoves, which will decrease level of indoor pollution; and improvements in community water infrastructure, water source protection, and in-house water chlorination. USAID-ACCESO extension programs have also incorporated farm chemical safety and integrated pest management trainings to ensure proper selection, application, storage, and disposal of pesticides to prevent illness caused by ingestion of chemicals. Taken together, these measures ensure that USAID-ACCESO has a lasting impact not only Honduran agriculture, but also on the overall well-being, health, and nutrition of those living in the six departments in Western Honduras.

ACCESO nutritionists provide regular, hands-on training and support in:

- **Good eating and supplementation practices:** Feeding children under two years of age, food groups for a balanced and diverse diet, micronutrients.
- **Health:** Monitoring children's growth, providing immunizations, caring for a child with diarrhea and/or acute respiratory infection.
- **Hygiene and sanitation:** Chlorinating water, hand washing, safe handling and preparation of food, managing waste disposal, improving home conditions.

Annex IV: ACCESO in the News

During the quarter, various articles were published in local newspapers on USAID-ACCESO activities and field visits, both in printed and on-line versions. Examples are provided below. The project was also included in a USAID Frontlines article.

<http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/Pais/Embajadora-de-EE-UU-ante-la-FAO-y-PMA-visita-region-central-de-Honduras>

<http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/Pais/Daran-a-Honduras-40-millones-para-nutricion>

<http://honduras.usembassy.gov/pr-121211-eng.html>

USAID aprueba programa hondureño

Mark Feierstein, administrador adjunto para América Latina y el Caribe de Usaid, visitó el país para revisar la ejecución de \$40 millones en programas productivos

Texto, Redacción Ilustración, Sergio Chiuz

La cooperación estadounidense en Honduras, a través de la Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (Usaid), se ha reorientado al sector productivo y uno de los proyectos es Acceso con excelentes resultados en los últimos años.

El proyecto es financiado con cerca de 40 millones de dólares con fondos del Programa Alimentar el Futuro (Feed the Future), e inició en abril de 2011 y tiene como fecha de finalización febrero de 2015.

Los buenos resultados alcanzados en un corto plazo atrajeron el interés de Mark Feierstein, el administrador adjunto para América Latina y el Caribe de Usaid.

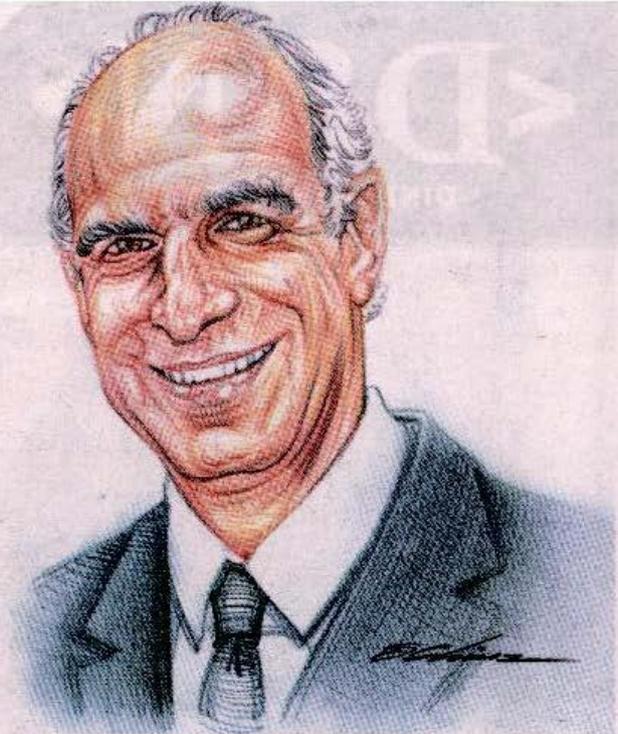
"Estoy muy satisfecho de estar en Honduras y supervisar los proyectos, en los cuales se ven logros, habiendo manejado efectivamente los recursos otorgados a su país", destaca.

"Los 40 millones de dólares otorgados a Honduras se han manejado de manera efectiva, hemos dialogado y visto a los productores de Intibucá y hemos visto logros sustantivos en su producción. No solo cultivan sino que además ellos ya tienen mercados permitiéndoles mejorar su calidad de vida", destaca.

Honduras ha logrado alcanzar las metas dadas, por lo que se está analizando en Washington reconsiderar la ampliación de recursos y retomar el éxito del programa en otros países, agrega el funcionario. Con el proyecto Acceso se ha logrado una mejoría en los ingresos, nutrición y calidad de vida de más de 30,000 hogares en pobreza en las comunidades beneficiadas.

El proyecto tiene cobertura en seis de los departamentos con el Índice de Desarrollo Humano más bajo del país (La Paz, Intibucá, Lempira, Santa Bárbara, Copán y Ocotepeque) y provee asistencia técnica y capacitación directa a hogares, productores y mipymes. Esta asistencia integral consiste en actividades productivas, acceso a mercados, habilidades de negocio y financiamiento, salud y nutrición, manejo de recursos naturales, energía renovable y mitigación de desastres.

Unos 4,215 de los 37,418 beneficiarios (11%) son niños menores de 5 años; 9,315 (25%) son niños entre los 6 y los 14 años; 16,877 son personas entre los 15 y los 49 años (45%); un 10% son adultos mayores a los 50 años. Un 51% de los beneficiarios son hombres (19,112) y un 49% mujeres (18,306). Entre las metas del programa está la de superar el umbral de pobreza de 18,000 hogares rurales viviendo en extrema pobreza: generar \$73.95 millones de ingresos netos por los clientes asis-



tidos del proyecto y 10,425 empleos permanentes en las comunidades.

Apoyo a cafetaleros

Estados Unidos impulsa una asociación público-privada que pretende mejorar la vida y los ingresos de las comunidades de caficultores latinoamericanos.

Usaid y Green Mountain Coffee Roasters Inc. (GMCR), un importante distribuidor de cafeteras y café de alta calidad, anunciaron que trabajarán juntos para "fortalecer el desarrollo social, económico, y ambiental en comunidades caficultoras de toda América Latina y el Caribe".

La nueva asociación amplía los proyectos conjuntos actuales de Usaid y GMCR en Brasil, Honduras y Nicaragua al resto de la región.

La compañía de café ya colaboraba con Usaid en dos proyectos diseñados para ayudar a las comunidades de caficultores. "Esta nueva asociación es una en la que todos ganamos", dijo Mark Feierstein.

Feierstein, asesor político estadounidense, cuenta con 25 años de experiencia trabajando en asuntos relacionados a desarrollo internacional y América Latina y el Caribe. Antes de ingresar a Usaid, se desempeñó como vicepresidente socio de la firma encuestadora Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. En esta función supervisó investigaciones de opinión pública en más de 30 países, adquiriendo conocimientos de las percepciones de los ciudadanos alrededor del mundo en una variedad de temas.

También fue director de la Oficina Global de Elecciones de la Agencia de Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (Usaid). Se desempeñó en el Departamento de Estado como asistente del embajador de Estados Unidos ante la Organización de los Estados Americanos, donde tuvo la oportunidad de tratar temas de interés regional con diplomáticos de los países miembros.

Mark Feierstein

Es administrador de negocios de la universidad de Tufts con una maestría del Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy de la Universidad de Tufts. Ha laborado como periodista en Estados Unidos y México.



Photo by Agence France Presse (AFP)

Empowering Women to Feed and Lead

By Kimberly Flowers,
Alina Paul, and Elisa Walton

THE U.S. hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future, is improving the lives of smallholder farmers by increasing food production, improving nutrition, expanding access to markets, and boosting incomes. Many of the farmers are women, who play vital roles in agriculture and food security. They participate in paid employment, trade, and marketing as well as many unpaid activities such as tending to crops and animals, collecting water and wood for fuel, caring for family members, and

managing household consumption and food preparation.

But a woman's world is often laden with constraints—from less land ownership; to less access to credit, extension, and other services; and less ability to hire labor on their farms. Too often, these production constraints go unrecognized. Closing gaps in women's access to resources increases agriculture productivity and reduces hunger.

“When we liberate the economic potential of women, we elevate the economic performance of communities,

nations, and the world,” Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said at a Sept. 19 U.N. General Assembly event highlighting women and agriculture.

Reaching female farmers is a top priority for Feed the Future to transform agriculture and achieve a sustainable, long-term impact in food security and nutrition. This can include fostering leadership among women in producer groups, encouraging the growth of women-owned farms and enterprises, designing and delivering gender-sensitive training, and introducing



Mallan Aïssata Konaté is president of her local women's group, supplying female farmers with high-yield seeds.

new crops and innovations to increase crop productivity.

For example, one Feed the Future horticulture program in Tanzania targets women in the community by working with women's groups and encouraging other, established groups to include more female members. The program emphasizes gender equality as a guiding principal and provides trainings that benefit entire families. Trainings take place at times that are convenient for women and include nutrition education. The program is implemented by Fintrac, a woman-owned U.S.-based company that has been leading agricultural solutions to end hunger and poverty for more than 20 years and has a long legacy of promoting the participation, autonomy, and well-being of women in all of its projects.

In Tanzania, half of the program's field managers are women, serving as role models and leaders for all farmers. "My work involves helping all family members, but I particularly enjoy seeing women become confident in their ability to contribute to their families' well-being," said Halima Abubakary, one of the program's field managers.

THE UPENDO WOMEN Farmers Group in Mlandizi, Tanzania, has been growing vegetables since 2005, but the crops were plagued by pests, disease, and bad weather. Feed the Future's program provided the members with training on how, what, and when to grow, as well as leveraged money from a local bank to build a low-cost greenhouse. The greenhouse is protecting their crops, extending crop cycles, and

producing more nutritious crops. Most importantly, the farmers now make five times more income a month.

In Honduras, the United Nations' 2008 Gender Inequality Index estimates that the country suffers a 68 percent loss in human development as a result of gender inequality. Although there has been a rise in employment for women over the last two decades, most openings are for low-skill, low-paying jobs with poor working conditions. A Feed the Future-funded project in Honduras aims to lift more

but lacked the experience and technical knowledge to sustain a business. When the project contacted them, they found the ponds filled with contaminated water and unhealthy fish. The project—also implemented by Fintrac—trained the farmers on pond management, fish weighing, breeding, and feeding as well as best practices for water management to produce larger, healthier fish that will provide not only nutrients and vital protein to the local community, but also a self-sustaining food resource and source of income.

In Mali, where women do more than one-third of the farm work, and nearly 68 percent of the population is considered poor, increasing opportunities for women can have a powerful impact on productivity and agriculture-led growth. There, a Feed the Future-supported project helps to train farmers, many of whom are women, to become quality-certified seed producers. USAID has been working with the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) since 2007 to encourage high-quality seed production and improved livelihoods for farmers in the country.

Certified seed, which helps guarantee purity and meets certain quality standards, is more costly to produce but sells at a higher price. The project looks at the entire seed value chain, from training farmers to become producers, to building capacity of rural agrodealers. It also supports active rural marketing—such as demonstration plots, farmer field days, and seed fairs—to develop local demand for

continued on p. 49



Aïssata Konaté with her children in front of their new house.

than 30,000 households out of extreme poverty and undernutrition by increasing incomes. The project, which just got off the ground this year, has already made significant progress reaching female farmers.

For example, in Dolores, Honduras, where the average family income is less than \$8 per day, the Nueva Esperanza Women Tilapia Farmers' Group has joined together to raise tilapia to sell in the local market. The first-time farmers inherited two abandoned ponds,

FOOD SECURITY

Cashew Value Chain

continued from p. 43

"The first leg is strong focus on technologies [such as research, improved crop varieties, production processes, and fertilizer] to improve productivity for both income and nutrition; the second is integrated programs, so that means building capacity of community-development and farmers groups and giving them better access to inputs, markets, and credit; the third is agribusiness—linking farmer associations together into unions, then federations, so they have better access to international or regional markets and can benefit from economies of scale."

According to McMahon, it is those three pieces working together that makes the program so successful. From 2005 to 2008, the nine processing factories supported by USAID operating in Nampula and Zambezia provinces generated \$31 million in revenues by exporting processed cashews to the European markets. These nine plants, which generated

employment for about 3,400 Mozambicans, had a production capacity of about 20,000 tons of cashews, compared to just 120 tons in 2001, when the first of nine units supported by USAID began operating.

Cashew is not the only value chain that USAID supports. In Mozambique, there is also a focus on oilseeds (groundnuts, sesame, soybeans), fruits (bananas, mangos, pineapple), and pulses (cowpeas, pigeon peas).

And throughout its global network, the Agency has incorporated integrated support of value chains into the U.S. Government's flagship food security program, Feed the Future.

According to William Garvelink, who helped stand up the new bureau leading the initiative and is now at the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "[Feed the Future] looks at the entire value chain, so the U.S. Government can intervene in any way from planting seeds to marketing products; whatever's

needed, we can quickly be involved. It's a broad spectrum."

Downing explains that the Agency's value-chain strategy is anchored in the reality that a focus on production must also consider markets. "There are no incentives for farmers to produce crops unless they can sell them," she says.

IN MOZAMBIQUE, AS in many places with emerging industries, the cashew industry still faces many challenges, among them, how to massively increase production.

Because cashews trees have a productive lifespan of around 50 years, it often takes a great deal of effort to convince a farmer to replace a fully-grown tree—albeit an unproductive one—with a sapling that will take five years to yield nuts. One of the approaches that may work, according to McMahon, is to actually involve processors in commercial seedling production, which they can then sell to farmers for a small price, "giving them a commercial interest in that tree."

Another opportunity, says McMahon, is to start supporting larger-scale commercial agriculture "that includes opportunities for the small-scale farmers either as out-growers, contract farmers, or, in some cases, laborers."

But still, worldwide demand for cashew is increasing at around 5 percent annually. To help quench that thirst, Mozambique now has around 10 processors, when years ago there were virtually none, and the industry is netting to smallholder farmers \$20 million worth of kernels purchased per year. Unless the West decides to shake its nut craze, there is no where to go but up.

Martins of CondorNuts is optimistic: "By improving all parts of the chain, ultimately...cashews produced here will be just as competitive as in India." ■



Photo by Kelly Ramundo, USAID

Through profits made from the cashew, Mozambican farmer Arlindo Chaleira, right, has sent his eight children to school, an anomaly in rural Mozambique.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Members of the Nueva Esperanza Women Tilapia Farmers Group, first-time farmers in rural Honduras, are learning best practices for raising and selling tilapia.

Women in Agriculture *continued from p. 45*

better seeds and organize the seed production from farmers' cooperatives.

One participant in the Mali project, Aissata Konaté, is president of a women's group and supplies many other women farmers with high-yielding seeds after increasing her income enough to build a new house for her family.

"This has changed my status in the village," said Konaté. "Here housing is normally the responsibility of men. Now the community can see how women can provide for their families, too."

Each year, Ghana produces approximately 300,000 tons of fish for local and international markets, but unsustainable practices are depleting the country's fish stocks and putting a strain on local livelihoods. While men do most of the

fishing in Ghana, most fishmongers and fish processors are women. Recognizing the important role these women play in their communities, the Feed the Future-funded Integrated Coastal and Fisheries Governance (ICFG) initiative took several female Ghanaian fishmongers to Senegal to study how communities and the government there are practicing a system of "co-management" of the fisheries resources. They observed best practices in marine conservation, monitoring and enforcement of fisheries regulations, and community participation in fisheries management.

Based on their new perspective, the participants from ICFG plan to form their own association in Ghana to advocate against practices like the use of dynamite, monofilament nets, driftnets, and "light fishing," a practice in which an electric bulb of high wattage is placed

into the water to attract fish. With support from USAID/Ghana, through Feed the Future, these women and their communities are working toward a more sustainable future for Ghanaian fisheries.

"The U.S. Government, through Feed the Future, will continue to work to bring successful programs like those described above to scale, creating sustained, inclusive economic growth which, by definition, incorporates a focus on empowering women," said Tjada McKenna, Feed the Future's deputy coordinator for development. As illustrated by the projects highlighted here, women are clearly the critical force to transform agriculture and food production, reduce poverty, and improve nutrition worldwide. ■

Kimberly Flowers is with Fintrac;

Alina Paul is with ICRISAT;

Elisa Walton is with USAID.



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USAID-ACCESO