



**USAID**  
DEL PUEBLO DE LOS ESTADOS  
UNIDOS DE AMÉRICA

# AFIRMA

Acceso a las Finanzas Rurales para  
la Microempresa en México

## AFIRMA QUARTERLY REPORT

PROJECT YEAR 5, QUARTER 2: January – March 2009



The AFIRMA Project, managed by Development Alternatives, Inc. prepared this publication for review by the United States Agency for International Development.

# AFIRMA QUARTERLY REPORT

## PROJECT YEAR 5, QUARTER 2: January-March 2009



USAID Contractor

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Cover Photo (clockwise): Fishermen in the Upper Golf of California, near Golfo Santa Clara, Sonora; Oyster farm in Puerto Peñasco, Sonora; and two images of the Ciénega de Santa Clara marshland near the delta of the Colorado River (by Ivana Fertziger).

# CONTENTS

- Executive Summary ..... 1**
- Introduction ..... 2**
- AFIRMA Work plan Implementation ..... 2**
  - 1. Task 1 – Strengthen MFI Capacity ..... 2
  - 2. Task 2 – Develop Local, Commercially-based MFI Services ..... 3
  - 3. Task 3 – Support Innovations to Expand Access to Rural Finance ..... 4
  - 4. Task 4 – Strengthen the Regulatory Environment for Micro- and Rural Finance ..... 6
  - 5. Task 5 – Strengthen the Micro- and Rural Finance Industry..... 6
  - 6. Project Management ..... 8
- Project Indicators..... 9**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID/Mexico-funded AFIRMA Project, implemented by DAI, is designed to help build an inclusive, sustainable microfinance sector in Mexico as a means to increase access to a range of financial services and contribute to local economic development. In recent quarters, AFIRMA has focused on strategic sector-wide initiatives, initiatives with public sector institutions with considerable leverage of USAID funding, and initiatives at the frontier of access to financial services, particularly in rural and agricultural markets and in connection with activities to reduce threats to Mexico's vast biodiversity.

**AFIRMA's MFI Partners Serve over 1.4 Million Active Borrowers and over 1 million Savers –** AFIRMA partners under the microfinance institution building task now serve a total of 1,475,721 active credit clients, a 224% increase or 1,020,082 *additional active clients* above the December 2004 baseline. AFIRMA also continued to support redesign or development of financial products, including savings products. Six partners are now offering savings accounts, and have grown well, now serving 1,103,017 savers. AFIRMA has finalized support for specific needs of its partner MFIs, with only a few activities to continuing last quarter with the project's long-term MFI partners. Activities that continued were related to innovation, rural and agricultural finance, and biodiversity initiatives<sup>1</sup>.

**Linking universities to the microfinance sector –** AFIRMA continued to work with 9 of Mexico's leading universities to build the cross-institutional working group on higher education in microfinance through Mexico's Microfinance University Network along with the Microfinance Management Institute. Next quarter AFIRMA will work with university partners to determine whether the network should be further formalized, institutionalized, or remain a working group.

**Rural and agricultural finance –** AFIRMA continued work in rural and agricultural finance, focused on developing new experience with agricultural microfinance in Mexico, one with one of the project's long-term partners to develop rural agricultural microcredit product, and another with a new partner to develop a pilot value chain approach to expanding access to financial services. AFIRMA will continue with these technical activities through August 2009.

**Addressing Biodiversity Threats –** In previous quarters AFIRMA prioritized threats to biodiversity to address and this quarter AFIRMA began analysis of value chains related to of key productive activities in two biologically sensitive areas: the Upper Gulf of California, in Sonora and Baja California, and Marismas Nacionales, Nayarit. The analysis is designed to identify constraints and opportunities to promote productive activities that mitigate previously identified biodiversity threats in these regions, including sustainable fisheries and ecotourism. AFIRMA is working in collaboration with the National Commission for Natural Protected Areas – CONANP – and local stakeholders in each region, and results will be presented next quarter, along with strategic initiatives for USAID/AFIRMA to help promote sustainable activities in both regions.

**Deepening coordination with GoM microfinance programs–** AFIRMA continued collaboration with the Secretary of the Economy microfinance program PRONAFIM, as well as FIRA, along with the UNDP, to strengthen FIRA's approach to microfinance. Within FIRA this has resulted in the establishment of a specialized microfinance unit that will have coordination with and representation from each of FIRA's areas, in order to develop policies specific to microfinance that are workable within the institution. In each initiative with the Mexican Government, AFIRMA continues to leverage minimal USAID investment towards longer term results in partnership with the Mexican Government.

---

<sup>1</sup> Data as of December, 2008, when AFIRMA officially finalized activities with individual microfinance institutions under component 1 and partners were therefore no longer under obligation to report to AFIRMA.

# INTRODUCTION

The Access to Rural Finance for the Microenterprise (AFIRMA) Project, a USAID/Mexico-funded project implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) forms a central part of USAID/Mexico's Strategic Objective 2 (SO2) – **Economic Freedom: Open, Diversified Expanding Economies**. Under SO2 the Intermediate Result (IR) to which AFIRMA contributes is IR3: **Broader access to financial markets and services**. AFIRMA is designed to help build a more inclusive, sustainable financial sector in México, increasing access to a range of services. The project's goal is:

*"To contribute to the development of a dynamic, effective microfinance sector in Mexico that provides sustainable financial services to under-served urban and rural market segments, helping them manage risk and contribute to local economic growth."*

AFIRMA's scope of work and year five work plan outline five distinct, interrelated tasks:

1. Strengthen the institutional capacity of MFIs;
2. Develop the local, commercially-based MFI support services industry;
3. Develop innovative products and technologies that expand access to rural financial services, while addressing threats to biodiversity
4. Strengthen the capacity of the CNBV and federation committees to supervise popular finance;
5. Improve the enabling environment for the microfinance industry.

These tasks, their relationship to one another and to the project goals are outlined in the Performance Monitoring Plan. Progress towards each task over the second quarter of year 5 (December-March 2009) and key priorities for the end of the project are presented in the next section, followed by project indicators.

## AFIRMA WORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### I. Task I – Strengthen MFI Capacity

As planned with USAID, AFIRMA has wrapped up most Task I technical assistance to individual MFIs, with a few initiatives (related to innovation and to rural and agricultural finance) continuing into 2009. AFIRMA will continue to provide limited support on strategic issues to these partners. Through the course of the project, AFIRMA and USAID have been able to anticipate a number of market changes, and to respond to partner needs as they arose, but in the final months will have very limited resources for initiatives not previously defined and budgeted.

The final initiatives under Task I are outlined below.

**Table 1 – AFIRMA primary support of partner MFIs, Year 4**

MFI	Key Initiatives Supported this Quarter	Upcoming Initiatives
AI Sol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hugo Cruz finalized his work as Resident Operations Advisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fernando Fernandez and Nate Bourns will support strategic planning for Social Projects to be carried out by the NGO (legally separated from the SOFOM, but to remain the main shareholder in AI Sol)</li> </ul>
Financiera Súmate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hector Cisneros returned for phase 2 of the rural / agricultural microfinance product to be piloted in 2 rural branches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hector Cisneros and Nate Bourns will finalize design work, methodology, training, and analysis formats to train specialized staff and pilot the product in 2 branches</li> </ul>
FINCA México	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(In collaboration with Task 3) Milagros Chiappe and FINCA's Ricela Muñoz continued developing the Cost/Benefit analysis of different service delivery mechanisms that would further expand FINCA's services into rural communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize Cost/Benefit analysis of different options for delivery mechanisms</li> <li>Support from Victor Valerio on the Excel-based decision tool</li> </ul>
FinComún	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued Loan recovery program implementation</li> <li>Contribute towards Human Resources strategy to reduce staff turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize distance learning program designed by local consultant Atenea Rico</li> </ul>

## 2. Task 2 – Develop Local, Commercially-based MFI Services

AFIRMA worked during the first 4 years of the project to use and support local technical and management services (firms and individuals) to respond to MFIs demands where possible, and to leverage other programs to improve the supply of services and human resources. Project experience has applied a variety of approaches to achieve the goals set forth at the onset of the project:

- Work with and develop local firms and consultants interested in microfinance;
- Carry out microfinance-specific skill-building and link local providers with MFIs;
- Foster and leverage local programs to build the HR base required for the microfinance sector;
- Coordinate with the MFI association and other initiatives to improve support services.

As indicated in the approved work plan for AFIRMA's final year, project work under this task has been phased out to focus more of the remaining resources on Task 3.

### 2.1. Contracting Local Consultants and Firms

AFIRMA continued working on microfinance specialization where applicable, often linked with other tasks, and building lasting ties between young professionals and the Sector. AFIRMA hired local providers Construyamos to work with Sonora-based MFI Lazos del Mar (described under Task 3), as well as Victor Valerio to support efforts with FINCA to develop a cost/benefit analysis tool to address different alternatives for client service delivery.

### 2.2. Microfinance human capital development / University Network Initiative

Due to increasing needs for human capital and sector information and increasing interest of Universities and academics in microfinance and popular finance, AFIRMA continued to work last quarter to strengthen the Mexican Microfinance University network which includes 9 of Mexico's top

universities and the Microfinance Management Institute (MFMI) as key partners. AFIRMA's work with universities included:

- **Participation in the December University Network meeting.** During this meeting, AFIRMA also facilitated a Research Seminar where the first round of research grant recipients presented their results and received feedback from Network participants, as well as guests Anna York from Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) and Jerry Ladman of The Ohio State University (OSU).
- **Participation in the National Week for Financial Education (CONDUSEF – IPN):** AFIRMA's Ivana Fertziger was invited to present on microfinance and financial education at the IPN School of Accounting and Administration (ESCA).
- **Facilitation of proposals for international university collaboration.** AFIRMA helped to facilitate contact between Norway's Agder University and several members of the Mexican Microfinance University Consortium for a collaborative research initiative on Microfinance in Latin America.
- **Support COLCAMI's Training Design** – Willy Escobedo supported COLCAMI's training design for individual loan product development.

Following discussion with USAID, AFIRMA decided to bring this Task to a close at the beginning of 2009, continuing only with periodic support by AFIRMA COP Fernando Fernandez to follow up on the University Microfinance Network Initiative, including an additional Network meeting facilitated by AFIRMA to discuss formalization and continuity of the University Network. Additionally, AFIRMA's Claudette Martinez concentrated her efforts over her last 2 months on the project documenting results of this component as part of her finalization of her work and leadership on this component.

### 3. Task 3 – Support Innovations to Expand Access to Rural Finance

The goal for Task 3 is to expand access to rural and agricultural finance by encouraging innovative business models and technologies for providing financial services. AFIRMA has worked closely with USAID to design the initiatives under this task, giving priority to initiatives that address threats to Mexico's biologically significant areas. This task is AFIRMA's primary area of focus in 2009 and until the end of the project..

Following careful review of the areas in which AFIRMA can make the most significant contribution in terms of reducing threats to biodiversity in a way that is consistent with the project's scope of work, the overarching objective is **to incorporate productive activities into efforts to conserve biodiversity, via participatory planning processes and analysis of economic opportunities and potential.**

Activities last quarter included:

- **Community finance to support alternatives to unsustainable fishing in the Upper Gulf of California** – AFIRMA had worked in collaboration with Conservation International Mexico, NW Region, (an office of CI that was closed in early 2009) to prioritize support to Golfo Santa Clara based NGO, *Lazos del Mar*, initially promoted by the World Wildlife Fund to generate group lending with internal group savings, stimulate non-fishing productive activity. The program was initially designed to conserve the *vaquita marina* (desert porpoise), endemic to the upper Gulf of Mexico and at risk of extinction, by reducing the direct threat of unsustainable fishing practices by providing resources necessary to engage in alternative sources of livelihood (Lazos does not lend for fishing). CI has worked with *Construyamos*, a local service provider for

microfinance AFIRMA had supported previously under Component 2. AFIRMA's initial support to *Lazos del Mar* this quarter included presentation of the market study conducted in December 2008, as well as a strategic planning session to develop Lazos' regional strategy in the next five years, as well as an operational plan for 2009. AFIRMA finalized a purchase order with *Construyamos* to collect and generate key inputs for the session, as well as participation from the community and other key stakeholders (CI, CONANP, etc.).

- **Strategy Development for Marismas Nacionales, Nayarit and Sinaloa** – In collaboration with Conservation International (CI), AFIRMA's Fernando Fernandez, Nate Bourns, and Ivana Fertziger traveled to Marismas Nacionales, a mangrove system that extends nearly 200,000 hectares between the states of Nayarit and Sinaloa. The region, soon to be declared a National Protected Area, is facing various risks to the mangrove's immense biodiversity, including fishery practices and agriculture, as well as general low incomes of communities within the region. As a result of this trip, AFIRMA is working with CI and CONANP to identify next steps, including value chain analyses of ecotourism and sustainable fisheries, as well as a community development planning session with both states and key actors.
- **Mango Production Evaluation** – An identified threat in the targeted marine BSAs is pollution and pesticide use, largely from agricultural run-off. Specifically, agricultural production techniques of mangos grown in the upper watershed area surrounding/in El Triunfo – *La Encrucijada* – Pala Blanco have been identified as a threat in the *Sistema Lagunar Chiapaneco* by the CONABIO / CONANP GAP analysis. Local firm Pronatura Sur continued working with AFIRMA last quarter to identify implications for biodiversity of Ataulfo Mango production in the SOCONUSCO region. The evaluation, which will be presented to key actors in Tapachula next quarter, identifies initiatives to mitigate, reduce, or eliminate threats to this biologically significant area. Subsequently, AFIRMA will incorporate these findings to identify strategies to protect the region's biodiversity and increase opportunities for improved value added for producers in the Ataulfo mango chain.
- **Mango Value Chain Traceability and Finance Concept** – Based on the prior value chain analysis done in the Mango chain, Nate Bourns worked with USAID's Global Development Commons to design a pilot project to systematize and use information on commercial relationships between mango growers and a packhouse (Fergo) as a basis for Solucion ASEA to design savings and loan products. Seema Patel of GDC and DAI accompanied the initial field trip to scope out the pilot to be funded next quarter by the GDC and managed by AFIRMA (including an ICT procurement AFIRMA and GDC prepared) launched on [www.globaldevelopmentcommons.net](http://www.globaldevelopmentcommons.net).

Next quarter, efforts will focus on the following activities:

- Mango production evaluation – Local firm Pronatura Sur will present findings next quarter to identify implications for biodiversity of Ataulfo Mango production in the SOCONUSCO region.
- Assist Soconusco mango association to develop a business case for a pulp processing plant, as well as a voluntary information system to track prices and volumes throughout the chain (P. Hanneman).
- Begin conducting Value Chain analysis of sustainable fisheries in the Alto Golfo and Marismas Nacionales (Ingird Ardjosoediro and Nate Bourns).
- Begin conducting Value Chain analysis of ecotourism in the Alto Golfo and Marismas Nacionales (Miguel Baca and Ivana Fertziger).
- In conjunction with AFIRMA's Task I, Nate Bourns and Hector Cisneros will continue to develop a rural/agricultural finance product for SUMATE.
- Select ICT provider with GDC for the mango traceability and finance pilot

## **4. Task 4 – Strengthen the Regulatory Environment for Micro- and Rural Finance**

Under this task, AFIRMA has continued to periodically coordinate with the *Comisión Nacional de Bancos y Valores* (CNBV) on regulations for microfinance. During this quarter, ICC's Ramon Rosales met with the CNBV and the association of regulated microfinance institutions to share commentaries on modifications to the Popular Savings and Credit Law, as well regulation of credit unions.

Fernando Fernandez will retain primary responsibility for this task, and will coordinate with USAID and with AFIRMA subcontractor International Consulting Consortium (ICC). AFIRMA and the CNBV plan to hold meetings to discuss sector effects of these potentially substantial changes, although no resources beyond some limited time from AFIRMA's full-time staff is planned.

## **5. Task 5 – Strengthen the Micro- and Rural Finance Industry**

AFIRMA efforts for Task 5 include supporting initiatives to improve the enabling environment for microfinance, including initiatives with GoM agencies, initiatives with private sector stakeholders in micro- and rural finance, and other industry initiatives.

### **5.1. Initiatives with GoM Agencies**

#### **PRONAFIM**

AFIRMA and USAID continued to work closely with the National Microenterprise Finance Program (PRONAFIM) within the Secretary of the Economy and its senior leadership. This included, at a **very low level of investment of project funds**, a variety of important activities since late 2007.

Having built a dynamic of trust and collaboration through annual support of the National Microfinance Conference and training and TA programs of PRONAFIM and FOMMUR, AFIRMA Training Specialist, Claudette Martinez, and Chief of Party Fernando Fernandez, worked this quarter supporting PRONAFIM to:

- Continue to assist FOMMUR-PRONAFIM in its new rural Institutional Strengthening program. This AFIRMA activity will continue next quarter.
- Assist PRONAFIM head of Institutional Strengthening to design the Strategy for capacity building for 2009.
- Conduct a Risk Diagnostic for PRONAFIM prepared by AFIRMA consultant Max Errazuriz.

#### **FIRA**

During this quarter, USAID/AFIRMA continued to collaborate with the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and FIRA (Fidecomisos Instituidos para la Agricultura) to strengthen Small loans program of FIRA.

Based on the competitive program to strengthen a small group of MFI (6-8), with design support from the USAID/AFIRMA team, AFIRMA finalized and presented FIRA and UNDP with the 8 institutional diagnostics conducted the previous quarter. Based on a low level of project funds invested in this initiative USAID funds were leveraged investment by FIRA and UNDP, demonstrating the strong

commitment on behalf of both institutions to strengthen FIRA's small loans program. AFIRMA also held various follow-up meetings with FIRA Directors to identify next steps and upcoming collaboration.

To date, one of the primary results of this collaboration, in the December FIRA Board meeting with UNDP, USAID, FIRA/Banxico Directors, FIRA officially communicated the creation of FIRA's Microfinance Unit, and began planning for a rural finance event that FIRA will host, in coordination with AFIRMA and USAID in May 2009.

## 5.2. Other Industry Initiatives

- **Human Capital and Institution Risk** – Upon Prodesarrollo's request to help analyze human capital as a key institutional risk factor identified by the network's MFI members, AFIRMA continued implementing this initiative to help MFIs identify factors that are contributing to high staff turnover, elevated portfolio at risk, and in many cases, restricted growth. This quarter, AFIRMA's Francisco Carbajal coordinated work by consultants Carlos Rodríguez and Patricia Kurczyn to address this challenge at the sector level. The team's final product will be presented next quarter.

Upcoming Task 5 initiatives include the following

- Fernando Fernandez to lead Study tour to Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador with FIRA directors
- Continue to assist FOMMUR-PRONAFIM in its new rural Institutional Strengthening program.
- Finalize initiative to analyze human resources as a key risk factor for MFIs today.

# PROJECT INDICATORS<sup>2</sup>

**Table 3 – Task One Indicators**

Indicator	Baseline Dec. 2004	December 2008	Variance	LOP Target
<b>1. Strengthen the institutional capacity of MFIs</b>				
I.1. Number of active credit clients	455,639	1,475,721	1,020,082	Increase of 500,000
I.2. Number of MFIs mobilizing savings deposits	3 (FC, AMUCSS, CL),	6 (+Finamigo, CAME, Compartamos)	3	6
I.3. Total Value (USD) of outstanding loans by AFIRMA MFIs (CL, AMUCSS not included)	\$139,816,887	\$585,851,139	419%	Increase – no targets set
I.4. Increased Points of Service	338**	814	240%	Incr. POS 50%
I.5. Financial and Operational Self-Sufficiency	5 of 12 FSS.	8 of 12	3	All MFIs FSS
I.6. Operating Expense Ratio	0 (by definition)	7 of 12 improved	7 of 12 improved	10 of 12 improve
I.7. Loan officer productivity	0 (by definition)	7 of 12 improved	7 of 12 improved	All MFIs improve
I.8. Portfolio-at-risk > 30 days	9 under 5%	5 under 5%	-4	< 5% for all MFIs
I.9. Portfolio write-off ratio (average)	1.0%	1.58%		Minimize
I.10. No. MFIs using accepted accounting practices due to AFIRMA support	0 (by definition)	1 (AMUCSS)	1	No specific targets set.

\*The total does not include Caja Libertad, because data can't be segregated from consumer and other lines of business – CL estimates that 25% of the current 379,534 clients are microenterprise clients. Creditos ProNegocio results are counted towards project indicators using a June 2006 baseline (PN had 27,320 clients and 39 points of service in June 2006). Accounting data for AMUCSS was not available at time of reporting, therefore all data for AMUCSS is counted as of Dec 2007. CrediAvance counted as of June 2008.

\*\* Pronegocio baseline points of service were 39 in June 2006, added to the original baseline of 299.

**Table 4 – Task 2-5 Indicators**

Indicator	Baseline Dec. 2004	Dec 2007	Variance	LOP Target
<b>2. Develop a local, commercially-based MFI support services industry</b>				
2.1 Number of quality service providers	0 according to Partner MFIs in 2005 survey.	9 (SIN, SIEM, FINDES, Link, Anjona, Inovatec, Serta, Construyamos, ProNatura)	+9	> 1 quality service provider in each of the 5 most important service areas
2.2 Unsubsidized MFI purchase of local services	Very limited unsubsidized purchase of services	5*	+5	> 6 MFIs procuring services at full cost by Year 5
2.3 Number of local firms used	0 (by definition)	14	+14	No specific targets set
2.4 Number of consultants trained in key areas	0 (by definition)	8**	+8	No specific targets set
<b>3 Develop innovative products and technologies that expand access to rural financial services</b>				

<sup>2</sup> Data as of December, 2008, when AFIRMA officially finalized activities with individual microfinance institutions under component I and partners were therefore no longer under obligation to report to AFIRMA.

3.1	Number of effective innovations supported	0 (by definition)	1. FinComún: refine approach to alternate delivery Channels 2. Compartamos parametric desertion scoring to offer non-village bank products 3. Various others in process within the Mango Chain (pack house with Solucion ASEA), in agricultural microfinance (Súmate), in organics commercialization (Aires de Campo) and in channel strategies (FINCA) to be evaluated	+2	5 effective innovations supported
3.2	Number of new or adjusted products	0 (by definition)	***	+11	Increase – no specific targets set
<b>4 Develop innovative products and technologies that expand access to rural financial services</b>					
4.1	Work plans for key areas	0 (by definition)	2 (LACP reforms, Anti-money Laundering AML)	+2	Annual work plans established and implemented
4.2.	TBD based on work plans with CNBV	Reform LACP law to focus on key areas of MFI risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific LACP reforms passed into law</li> <li>▪ AML report delivered for CNBV review</li> </ul>	+1	Law reformed identifying specific microcredit risks, focusing regulation on key areas of MFI risk
<b>5 Develop innovative products and technologies that expand access to rural financial services</b>					
5.1	Increase provision of Useful market information	Sparse, disparate information available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ OSU/AFIRMA reports published (microlinks)</li> <li>▪ Sector report published, &gt; 30 new MFIs reporting to ProDesarrollo &amp; MIX</li> <li>▪ Regular development of technical informational seminars</li> </ul>	ongoing	Useful Market information readily available online
5.2	Benchmarking system	No effective system	Global-standard with Prodesarrollo / MIX Market, ongoing annually; Bi-annual indicators being published on <a href="http://www.prodesarrollo.org">www.prodesarrollo.org</a>	complete	Global-standard Benchmarking system established

\* AFIRMA has decreased subsidies by 63% on projects with local firms such as SIN and LINK international working for Finca and with Innovatec working for FinComún. Alsol and Prodesarrollo with FINDES without subsidy from AFIRMA, and has had a follow-up rating with MicroRate, which is looking to establish a local office given local demand generated in part by AFIRMA.

\*\* Hector Sanchez worked on management operations systems and procedures. Fernando Palmos with in-depth knowledge of accounting and regulatory topics, has worked as a trainer for MFIs and advisor for ProDesarrollo and will work with PRONAFIM during this year. Juan Omar Flores after a one year of on the job training was hired by CTI, an MFI Systems provider. Samuel Perez was hired by Prodesarrollo after worked closely with AFIRMA staff on best practices in microfinance benchmarking. Alejandro Fernandez was hired by AMUCSS after worked closely with AFIRMA, as resident consultant. Veronica Corzo, Information Systems Specialist is working with Alsol in coordination with international consultant Carlos Paredes for the MIS project. Rafael Cerritos, participant in the AFIRMA mentor program is now full time with Financiera Rural. Ernesto Aguirre worked with Claudette Martinez and the FOMMUR program on an MFI diagnostic.

\*\*\*AFIRMA has assisted in the development of New/Adjusted products at FinAmigo, PMM, CrediAvance, AISol (adjusted loan methodology), Súmate (3: adjusted solidarity group loan, implemented individual loan, and agricultural loan (in process)), FinComún (adjusted 2 products – savings and loan), and Compartamos (re-designed 2: individual and solidarity loan products, designed micro-insurance product and a home improvement loan product).

**AFIRMA Project**  
**Horacio No. 124, Of. 1403**  
**Polanco**  
**Mexico DF, CP 11560**