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Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Results Report

**Save The Children Federation, Inc/Guatemala
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

A&F	Administration and Finance
BANRURAL	<i>Banco de Desarrollo Rural</i> (Bank Rural Development)
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
CEPAL	<i>Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe</i> (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
COCODE	<i>Consejo Comunitario de Desarrollo</i> (Committee Development Committees)
COMUDE	<i>Consejo Municipal de Desarrollo</i> (Municipal Development Comités)
COMUSAN	<i>Consejo Municipal de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional</i> (Municipal Food Security and Nutrition Committees)
CONRED	<i>Coordinadora Nacional para la Reducción de Desastres</i> (National Disaster Coordination agency)
COSAN	<i>Comité de Seguridad Alimentaria Nutricional</i> (Food Security Committees)
COTONEB	<i>Cooperativa Todos Nebajenses</i> (Cooperative of the People of Nebaj)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DIP	Detailed Implementation Plans
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FFP	Office of Food for Peace
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance project
FS	Food Security
FY	Fiscal Year
GM	Growth Monitoring and Promotion
GtCO	Guatemala Country Office
ICEFI	The Central American Institute for Fiscal Studies
IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
IR	Intermediate Result
LOA	Life of Activity
LQAS	Lot Quality Assurance Sampling
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MCHN	Maternal and Child Health & Nutrition
MFEWS	Mesoamerican Food Security Early Warning System
MOH	Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance
MPO	Municipal Planning Office
MT	Metric Tons
MUAC	Mid Upper Arm Circumference
MYAP	Multi-Year Assistance Program
NCHS	National Center for Health Statistics
PROMASA II	Programa Maya de Seguridad Alimentaria II (Mayan Food Security Program)
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SAPQ	Standardized Annual Performance Questionnaire

SARAR	Self Esteem, Associative Strengths, Resourcefulness, Action Planning & Responsibility to follow-up.
SC	Save the Children
SESAN	<i>Secretaría Ejecutiva de Seguridad Alimentaria</i> (Food Security Executive Secretariat)
SHARE	Asociación Share Guatemala
SO	Strategic Objective
TOT	Training Of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

1. INTRODUCTION

This report documents the results obtained by the Maya Food Security Program (PROMASA II) for fiscal year 09. PROMASA II is being implemented by Save the Children Federation, Inc. (SC) in six municipalities of the department of El Quiché. The report begins with a description of the impact that the financial and food crisis has had on the country as well as the repercussions for the PROMASA II program. In addition, the reader will find a summary of the program's anthropometric evaluation as well as an analysis of progress made regarding the established goals for each strategic objective.

The 2009 financial and food crisis in Guatemala

The meltdown of the world financial markets that started in the second half of 2008 is causing a severe recession of the Guatemalan economy. According to -ICEFI¹ - The Central American Institute for Fiscal Studies), projected economic growth for Guatemala in 2009 was 4.6%, as of July of 2008. However, one year later -CEPAL- Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean- estimated that the country's economic growth was -1%. Given the strong ties between Guatemala and the United States, this crisis has resulted in a reduction in the amount of remittances sent from the US, a stagnation of the exports of Guatemalan products, a drop in tourism and a reduction in available credit for businesses and individuals. According to the Bank of Guatemala², there was an 11% reduction in family remittances sent from the United States. According to the COTONEB Finance Department, in some of the PROMASA program coverage municipalities, such as those in the Ixil region, family remittances dropped by 13% between July to September of 2008 and July to September of 2009. In some areas, such as Uspantán, the situation was even more critical, with BANRURAL reporting that remittances decreased by 50% beginning in July of 2009. In addition, information collected during the first week of October 2009 at municipal markets in Quiché where the PROMASA program is being implemented, shows that the price of staple foods such as corn, beans, oil and sugar increased between 15 and 100 percent, which has further limited access to basic food products for area families. One result is that poor families trying to cope with livelihoods insecurities are reducing the amount and quality of their food consumption (number of meals per day) as well as other services.

Complicating even more the scenario described above, the El Niño weather phenomenon led to an irregular rainy season in Guatemala this year, especially in the eastern part of the country. The food security situation in some areas of the country has become critical and cases of acute malnutrition are reported in an increasing number of locations in Guatemala, all of which forced the Government of Guatemala to declare a "state of emergency" and request international humanitarian assistance. According to -SESAN³-Food security Executive Secretary-, the percentage of communities at risk of food insecurity increased by 213% between June and August of 2009. -MFEWS⁴- Mesoamerican Food Security Early Warning System- reports that

¹ Crisis Económica, alza de los precios e impacto para la SAN. Fernando Carrera. The Central American Institute for Fiscal Studies ICEFI. Presented at World Food Day 2009, Guatemala

² Bank of Guatemala. Foreign currency influx from family remittances. September, 2009.

³ SESAN Report. August 16, 2009.

⁴ MFEWS Bulletin. September, 2009.

the western highlands region will also be affected by a rainfall deficit this year, which will result in low crop yields and a reduction of food reserves.

In the following sections, the Annual Report identifies the processes and interventions implemented according the Annual Workplan. The results obtained for most process indicators, evidence an important program progress.. However, the magnitude of the financial and food crisis in Guatemala, is adding new contextual challenges (causes) that are reflected (effect) in the lack of improvement of overall impact indicators for global malnutrition. At the same time, however there is strong indication that interventions supported by PROMASA have a real buffer effect when compared with non-PROMASA communities minimizing the overall impact of the economic, climate and food crisis that is affecting the region.

Annual indicator evaluation

In accordance with agreements made between the Title II consortium and the USAID Mission in Guatemala, an annual survey of PROMASA indicator progress was conducted in September of 2009. Please see Appendix Gi for more information. In the survey, the lot quality assurance sampling (LQAS) methodology was used to collect data on key practices. Anthropometric data (weight, height and mid upper arm circumference) that are collected on a quarterly basis by the program's monitoring and evaluation system were also used for this survey⁵ to report on trends. In FY10, our data indicate that global malnutrition rate (low weight for age in children less than 36 months) was 49%, which represented an increase of 12% compared to FY08.⁶ Moreover, Chronic malnutrition (low height for age) and acute (low weight for height) malnutrition increased by 2% and 0.9% respectively (compared to program data from February 2009). This indicates that the food security situation has deteriorated as a result of the food and financial crises mentioned above and as mentioned in the SC PREP for 2010, PROMASA is consolidating efforts help the worst off families mitigate the impact of this food and hunger crisis.

FY09 Results Progress by SO

SO1 – Increased adoption of Maternal Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN) practices and use of services: To achieve this SO, PROMASA implemented activities and provided support to improve the health and nutrition practices of caregivers of children under 36 months, in order to decrease the rates of illnesses and malnutrition in this age group. This Strategic Objective, seeks to achieve four Intermediate Results (IRs): Improved access to MCHN services (IR1.1); Improved quality of key MCHN services (IR1.2); Improved knowledge, attitudes and skills related to key MCHN practices (IR1.3); and Strengthened community capacities and policy environment for sustainable MCHN services (IR1.4). PROMASA II made significant advancements under these IRs in FY09, including:

⁵ Anthropometric indicators used in this report are defined as follows: a) Acute malnutrition: height for age
b) Global malnutrition: weight for age, c) Acute malnutrition: weight for height and d) MUAC: mid upper arm circumference, used to measure acute malnutrition. The results indicate a much more serious deterioration in underweight status, than in acute malnutrition in children. This may be an error in the data and we will monitor our nutritional status results carefully in our monitoring data and in the MTE forthcoming.

⁶ Weight for height indicator is obtained for this report from data available through the program's monitoring and evaluation system, not from a sample. FY08 results are based on a total of 8,962 children participating in the program and data for FY09 is from 8,274 children.

- ◆ Recruitment and training of 448 community level volunteers in health and nutrition, who serve in the critical role of extending coverage of program strategies and disseminating messages.
- ◆ An average of 9,360 caregivers of children received counseling in maternal and child health and nutrition from PROMASA II trained community health/nutrition volunteers
- ◆ Quarterly community based growth monitoring of an average of 8,274 children under the age of 3, with the support of trained volunteers
- ◆ Joint work with SO2 team in providing education and follow up to 21 families with malnourished children (-2 z scores) who received goats, and were included in a specific study to assess the impact of the daily consumption of goat milk, on the daily weight gain of malnourished children. Results from the study can be found in success stories section in this report.

- ◆ The BCC Strategy design has been completed and includes two phases. Phase I includes community based activities to raise awareness about the magnitude of malnutrition effects on children's development. Phase II will emphasize the reinforcement of key messages of appropriate infant and maternal feeding and caring practices, through mass media communications, informal education, caring practices, and communications campaigns.

Table No. 1
SO1 Process Indicators
September, 2009

Indicator	Baseline	FY08	FY09
% infants under 6 months of age exclusively breastfed within the past 24 hours	66%	56%	62%
% of mothers and caregivers with children under 36 months who know at least two danger signs of childhood illnesses that indicate the need to seek health services	50%	38%	64%
% of mothers and caregivers with children under 36 months who know at least two danger signs during pregnancy, that indicate the need to seek health services	30%	42%	75%
% of mothers and caregivers with children under 36 months who know at least two neonatal (<28 days) danger signs that indicate the need to seek health services	26%	38%	54%
# communities with capacity strengthened community capacity	60	123	123

Although household income of program families has been severely deteriorated and most of them are facing a strong food and economic crisis, activities promoted under SO1, made good progress during FY09. Results of the annual evaluation using LQAS, evidence progress in relation to knowledge and attitudes of certain MCHN practices. The results show that knowledge of danger signs (pregnancy, newborn and infants) is strong in four of six municipalities, compared to only two in the previous year evaluation. LQAS analysis by municipality suggests that the program should still prioritize education to families regarding danger signs in the municipalities of Sacapulas and Cotzal. Exclusive breastfeeding prevalence has increased across all program municipalities, overall prevalence reached 62% in FY09, achieving almost 90% of this year's target, and above FY08 level (56%). LQAS analysis by municipality suggests that breastfeeding practices are also strong in four of six program municipalities, and some emphasis needs to be put in Sacapulas and Cunen. Detailed results of the LQAS study can be found in Annex G.i (See Table 1). These results are extremely positive given that increased knowledge of MCHN

practices among mothers and caregivers is the first step towards accomplishing the adoption of these practices.

Results of the annual evaluation using LQAS, evidence progress in relation to knowledge and attitudes of certain MCHN practices. The results show that knowledge of danger signs (pregnancy, newborn and infants) is weak in only 2 of the 6 municipalities, compared to 4 in the previous year. LQAS analysis by municipality suggests that the program should still prioritize some danger signs in Sacapulas and Cotzal.

Intermediate Result 1.2: Improved quality of key MCHN services

In order to improve access and quality of MCHN services at the community level, PROMASA II implements activities which complement the IMCI (Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses) strategy, of the MOH. The following paragraphs present the main results of these activities.

To increase both access and quality of these services, quarterly coordination meetings were held throughout the year with local MOH's *Equipos Básicos de Salud* (Basic Health Teams) to promote a high level of complementarity of activities and strategies. In the COTONEB area (municipalities of Nebaj, Cotzal and Chajul), PROMASA has been heavily involved in the Food Security Regional Commission (Mesa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria Nutricional) in which members of MOH, Basic Health Teams and representatives of other local projects, discuss, prioritize and plan appropriate food security strategies for the area. In the last quarter of the year, the coordination meetings between these projects increased; prompted by the food security crisis that is currently affecting the country. For this reason, out of 4 quarterly coordination meetings were planned, a total of 7 were held, achieving more than 100% of the target for this activity. Although coordinated work was done with the *MOH*, throughout this year, it was particularly difficult given several changes in local staff, responding to the constant changes in the political situation in the country.

Growth monitoring and promotion (GMP) events were conducted in all PROMASA targeted communities, achieving 100% of the planned activities. PROMASA II staff assisted in the training and providing technical support to MOH community health staff, including *Educadoras* (Educators), *Madres Monitoras* (Mother Monitors) and *Facilitadores Comunitarios* (Community facilitators) who provided MCHN counseling services in rural communities, to complement the GMP activities. To ensure appropriate settings for the GMP events, the program identified and negotiated the use of community settings where individual counseling can be provided; in addition, 50% of program communities received a thick blanket that can be hung from poles or ceilings to create private spaces. In FY10, these blankets will be used in all program sites.

Moreover, preliminary results from an internal SC study of the goat milk component of PROMASA show that goat milk, when used as a diet complement for children under the aged 6-36 months, facilitated an adequate weight gain in those that consumed 250 cc/day. In contrast children participating in PROMASA without access to goat milk, scarcely had an adequate weight gain (see annex Gii).

In FY09, 447 community volunteers and field staff were trained in MCHN key areas, including GMP, breastfeeding and complementary feeding, water treatment and diarrhea prevention,

neonatal survival, and danger signs of in pregnancy, for newborns and infants. All topics were conducted both in initial and refresher trainings, totaling of 6 events; 75% of the target planned of 8 events. All 21 health/nutrition technical field staff were also trained in the above topics and in other additional ones, with special emphasis in appropriate use of adult education methodologies, including the SARAR-PHAST technique in which adults paint drawings and construct stories to better learn about health practices. In August, a one week intense TOT was conducted by an independent consultant, with expertise in such methodologies. Based on the training, a checklist of skills and steps was developed to evaluate the quality of adult education activities that field staff will be implementing in FY10 as part of the BCC strategy (Behavior Change Communication).

Field team also received initial training on Early Childhood Development (ECD). The team in turn conducted short sessions with community volunteers to share the basics of ECD. During FY10 the team, with the support of an ECD expert will design a strategy appropriate to reality and needs of children in the program impact area. A pilot ECD strategy will then be tested and evaluated in 20 communities.

To strengthen local capacities in food security, this year PROMASA supported the participation of 16 persons including field staff and community based volunteers, in the FS Certified Training. This is being conducted by SESAN (*Secretaría de Seguridad Alimentaria Nutricional*), with support from MOH and UNICEF. Participants have completed 50% of the modules and are expected to graduate in February 2010. Due to the work overload and the lack of experience in water supply systems of the current SO1 field team, the establishment of water reservoirs to collect rainfall will be implemented in FY10 and two expert technicians will be hired in FY10.

Intermediate Result 1.3: Improved knowledge, attitudes and skills related to key MCHN practices: During FY08 PROMASA II conducted formative research to collect information on food and nutrition knowledge, attitudes and practices of families in the program impact area⁷; this information is the foundation upon which the program developed in FY09, its Behavior Change Communication (BCC) strategy. The operational research confirmed the necessity of strengthening activities to raise awareness of local authorities and families, concerning the problem of child malnutrition as a direct way to adopt best food security practices. The BCC strategy includes two phases, Phase I includes community based activities to raise awareness about the magnitude of malnutrition effects on children's development. Phase II will emphasize on key messages reinforcement of appropriate infant and maternal feeding and caring practices, through mass media communications, informal education and communications campaigns. As of today, Health and Nutrition field team has been trained in Phase I: Awareness and is preparing to begin field implementation in October 2009. The design and planning of the communication materials for the strategy are well underway under work done jointly as part of Title II Consortium in Guatemala. In addition to the BCC strategy, the following activities were conducted during FY09 to improve the knowledge, attitudes and skills of caregivers of children under three.

⁷ Detailed explanation of the methodology and main results of the formative research was sent in the FY08 Annual Results Report

To complement the formative research results, a Short positive deviance study implemented in the region identified practices of positive and non-positive deviant families. The population researched is too small for conclusive recommendations but it does suggest PROMASA should implement a fast and easy methodology that identifies positive deviant households that have the greatest impact for their replication and support. To provide better follow up of SO1 activities, this year the team organized participating families in groups of around 25, in approximately 25% of program communities. This strategy will continue during FY10 with the support of community volunteers.

During FY09 community based volunteers conducted monthly home visits to participating families to provide appropriate follow up of pregnant mothers, newborns and low weight children. Based on an approach developed with the technical assistance of Calidad en Salud (USAID funded project which provides technical assistance to the MOH), volunteers conduct active and participatory visits during which they ask, observe, counsel and actively demonstrate about health, nutrition, and hygiene aspects. Each volunteer conducted approximately 6 home visits each month, totaling as planned 72 visits per year (100% of the target). In some communities, health volunteers conducted less visits than the average planned per year, due to both lack of time, and appropriate planning and to the high turnover of volunteers in some cases.

Health/nutrition volunteers worked with groups of 25 mothers/caregivers, conducting monthly food preparation demonstrations of nutritious meals for children, totaling 12 demonstrations during FY09 in every project community (100% of the annual target). Volunteers engage mothers in the activity by assigning specific tasks when preparing the recipes, ensuring that all participants understand the importance of the recipe and practice it at home. Nutrition volunteers, with the support of PROMASA field technicians also conducted monthly group education sessions during the ration distribution activities in all communities, in 10 consecutive months.

Nutrition Schools began operating since FY08, and 16 of them were still active in the Ixil area (municipalities of Nebaj, Cotzal and Chajul) during this FY (80% of 20 nutrition schools planned). A total of 308 children attended at least 2 nutrition school sessions. Of these, 153 children completed the full cycle of 9 sessions. Preliminary analysis suggests that the strategy achieved 7 % reduction in the malnutrition rate among the 153 children. In FY10 this strategy will be merged with the awareness and reinforcement activities of the BCC strategy in order to continue its implementation and achieve an even greater impact, reaching approximately 65% of program communities.

Intermediate Result 1.4: Strengthened community capacities and policy environment for sustainable MCHN services

Working with communities and COSANS: In 2009, the program continued to improve the operations of the 123 COSANs in the intervention coverage area. Of these, 36 were provided training on issues related to advocacy, negotiation techniques, leadership and participation legislation, in accordance with the 2009 work schedule. 71 COSANs received training on basic administrative procedures and the Food Security-FS- approach. These trainings were held to ensure transparent resource use as well as to implement the FS approach in each community in order to build the community capacity needed to ensure effective program results. In addition 25

COSANs (50% of those proposed) now have a representative in the local COCODE, who are participating in council meetings in order to advocate for the inclusion of FS issues in community projects.

Among activities that should be highlighted for this result is the creation of two municipal COSAN networks with members from 14 communities from the Sacapulas municipality and 23 communities from the Cunén municipality. These networks now have representatives participating in the municipal COMUDEs, where they are promoting FS issues. These networks also function as early warning systems at the community level, sounding the alarm when drought or food shortages begin to affect municipalities where the program is active.

Building the Capacity of the Community Development Councils (COCODEs): The project trained 55 COCODEs (92% of those proposed) on issues related to democracy, governance, problem analysis, the FS approach as well as project development, fund-raising and implementation. Using knowledge acquired during program trainings, some COCODEs have begun developing, raising funds for and implementing FS projects in their communities. In addition, in observance of the program’s FS analysis methodology, intervention results were shared with 33 COCODEs so that community members could reflect on their food and nutrition security situation.

Training the Municipal planning Office –MPOs- and working with the COMUDEs: This year the project trained two MPOs on issues related to democracy, governance and the FS approach so that they are able to assist the community coordination efforts of their local COCODEs. In addition, municipal program results were shared with two COMUDEs during meetings organized by the program. Program representatives participated in 28 of the 30 meetings (93%) that were originally programmed for the COMUDE. This participation was via the COMUSAN, which are now operating in four of the six municipalities covered by the program. These changes are all evidence of the advocacy efforts the program is making to prioritize FS issues at the municipal level.

Building the capacity of COTONEB to cover 30,000 program participants

Through visits, project support and assistance from the partner liaison, the program continued to support the implementation of interventions covered by a sub-agreement with COTONEB. This enabled the program to provide coverage and improved FS for 30,000 beneficiaries in the three municipalities of the Ixil region of the country.

SO2. Increased adoption key food production and market practices and use of services

In accordance with the project proposal, SO2 activities for FY09 focused on increasing food availability as well as facilitating access to nutritious foods for participating households, to be achieved through agricultural diversification, the provision of micro credits and facilitating access to markets. An important component of this process was the training of community leaders and program participants, using a non-formal education model.

Table No. 2
SO2 Process Indicators
September, 2009

Indicator	BL	FY08	FY09
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Results obtained for this Objective demonstrate impressive progress. (See table 2). According to the annual survey results, household food provisioning is assured during a period of 10 months of the year, remained the same when compared to the previous

Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning (MAHFP)	11	10	10
Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) Guatemala	6	6	5
% of participating farmers that adopt at least 2 improved AGRICULTURAL production practices	11%	Not measured	70%
% of participating farmers that adopt at least 2 improved LIVESTOCK production practices	11%	Not measured	44%
% of participating farmers that adopt at least 2 improved formal marketing production practices	15%	Not measured	14%
Women with children under 5 year receiving credit	567	997	1384
Women receiving credit and participating in at least one SO2 activity	Not measured	106	1107

year, indicating that food availability has not changed significantly. This differs from that reported by MFEWS⁸ for the Western Highland (including the department of El Quiché), indicating that poor families have four months of food reserves under normal conditions. This year, due primarily to the price increase of staple foods and the reduction of remittances, families have faced the crisis by reducing their food consumption. As a consequence, foods such as sugar and oil are less prominent in the family diet. The current situation faced by families in the coverage area has also meant that consumption of other food groups has not increased.

The annual evaluation found that in FY09, 70% of participating farmers had adopted at least two best agricultural practices. This exceeds the established goal for the year, which was 21% (see the IPTT appendix). In terms of livestock production, to date 44% of participating farmers have adopted at least two best livestock production practices, exceeding the established goal of 21%.

Finally, the annual survey found that 14% of participants have adopted at least 2 formal marketing practices. This is 6% lower than the established goal and is primarily due to the fact that the program's specific marketing and commercialization personnel was only recently employed, so the farmer training process is in its preliminary phase. In addition, due to the generalized economic crisis, many small producers have stopped planting commercial crops as these crops require a greater investment.

Intermediate Result 2.1: Improved knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to key food production and marketing practices: One of the keys to achieving this objective is to increase the technical knowledge and skills of agricultural leaders in order to implement capacity building process to transfer agricultural technology to participating families through a non-formal education methodology. The trainings employed a “learning by doing” methodology that involved group dynamics and practice. A total of 39 agricultural leaders took part in this process and, together as a technical team, trained 3,336 farmers on new production techniques. These techniques emphasized the farming of basic grains, agricultural diversification, the transformation and commercialization of agricultural products and raising poultry and goats for family consumption. It should be mentioned that 60% of the population involved in these activities were women.

⁸ MFEWS. Guatemala Food Security Situation. September 2009

The program also initiated activities designed to improve knowledge and skills related to the marketing and sale of agricultural products. Farmers that took part in these activities (150) grew crops with commercial potential such as cardamom and allspice. In terms of the marketing of non-agricultural products, in January the program, through a subcontract with the *Kiej de los Bosques* organization, began implementing business development and business relationship building activities with groups of producers. By the end of the fiscal year, the following goals had been achieved: 1) preliminary identification of communities and groups of producers; 2) preparation of a report on the analysis and selection of groups of producers (59 groups were analyzed of which 8 were identified as potential participants); and 3) the production of a rural business development manual. To date, the total number of participants involved in this process is 206, of which 88% are women.

In addition, *Genesis* continued providing support to groups of women in terms of the effective micro credit management. The goal is to strengthen these women's small businesses and increase their family income. An additional 387 women became involved in this activity who, together with those reported for the last fiscal year, total 1,384 participants. This figure is equivalent to 94% of the goal established for this fiscal year. Funds received through the community women's banks are used for diverse productive activities such as the production and sale of food, small basic needs stores, raising chickens as well as making jellies and shampoo. In addition to the provision of capital through loans, participants receive trainings especially on cost analysis.

Intermediate Result 2.2: Improved quality of key food production and marketing services.

To improve the quality of program interventions, during FY09 the project reviewed and adapted different technical guides to serve as specific project manuals on goat management, poultry management and rural road maintenance. These technical manuals were used to train and empower the technical team, especially new SC and COTONEB personnel. As a complement, the program also offered the entire technical team reinforcement training on the program's non-formal education methodology.

Intermediate Result 2.3: Improved access to key food production and marketing services and supplies:

The program continued to support activities designed to increase food availability and promoted the production of basic grains such as corn and beans. The established goal of FY09 was a total of 2,760 farmers involved in this process, of which the program achieved a coverage rate of 85% of this goal. One significant obstacle to achieving this goal was the limited supply of certified seeds in the market. This situation is being addressed and should be resolved the next fiscal year through creating a network of artisanal seed producers at community level.

With the goal of improving and diversifying the family diet, the program continued to establish family gardens where families grow vegetables that are native to the area and that have a high nutritional value. The program exceeded the goal for this activity (1,980 families), and ended the fiscal year with a total of 2,205 families with a garden. This achievement was due to the fact that families could easily see the benefit of having fresh food available at a very low cost. In terms of livestock production, the program continued to promote poultry production, for meat and eggs, as well as goat production for milk and organic fertilizer. To date, there are 1,100 goat farms and 1,150 poultry farms distributed throughout all six project municipalities. As refers later in section

of lessons-learned production of milk, eggs and meat at family level as an important strategy to ensure nutrition and facilitate small holders can better cope during crises through self production

In order to contribute to the sustainable livelihood of beneficiary families, the program engaged in soil protection activities such as the establishment of soil conservation structures. These structures were established using grasses and forage trees, which also served as a source of food for family goats. A total of 1,769 households participated in this activity.

In terms of marketing and commercialization activities to help families increase their income, the program provided materials needed to construct drip irrigation systems. In FY09, a total of 239 families (60% of the program goal) participated in this activity. The main reason the program did not meet the established goal was the scarcity of water sources to be used for irrigation purposes. With, *Kiej de los Bosques*, after a group identification and analysis process, a total of 59 groups were involved in these activities. Currently, the program is providing these groups with training and capacity building activities.

In regards to the other indicator covered by the sub-agreement between SC and the Genesis foundation, women that benefit from small loans and also participates in activities of the livelihoods component (SO2), 1107 women were benefited this year, representing 189% of the established goal of this activity (584 women). This reflects the efficient implementation of different program components related to this goal, including micro-finance services. Over time, this activity will help improve access to food not produced on family land. To establish links between producers and markets, PROMASA II has used food as an incentive for the maintenance of rural roads (both paths for individuals and roads for vehicles). There was high demand for this activity, due to the need to facilitate access to area communities. A testimony to this statement is the fact that 27 kilometers of road were maintained in FY09, despite the fact that the program originally only planned to maintain 20 kilometers of road.

IR 2.4: Strengthened enabling environment for management of livelihood systems

For different program interventions to have a greater impact on beneficiaries, the program has established strategic work alliances with institutions such as the Peace Corps, the Veterinary and Animal Husbandry and Agronomy Faculties of the San Carlos University, the Household Education School and the Mayan Natural Resources Technical Institute (ITEMAYA). At the municipal level, the program is coordinating with the municipal planning offices and at the community level with the COCODEs and COSANs.

SO3 – Increased adoption of key natural resources management practices that strengthen community and household preparedness for natural disasters

PROMASA continued to promote key natural resource management practices, with an emphasis on soil management, forest management and water conservation, in order to contribute to the establishment of improved and sustainable livelihoods for area families as well as to reduce household and community vulnerability to natural disasters and other negative effects of environmental degradation. A key component to natural resource management is raising the awareness and educating participating families on local forest and crop production as well as reforestation. As a result, 7.06 hectares of land have been reforested with 8,407 forest plants

produced at eight nurseries. The annual goal for plant production fell short due to problems with drought in some areas. As a result of the drought, some trees had to be re-planted, which slowed their growth. In addition, plant production was begun in 13 new nurseries, with which the program estimates a total of 81,250 plants will be produced for use next fiscal year, meeting the goal not reached in FY09. A total of 1,200 farmers participated in this activity.

IR. 3.1: Improved access to quality natural resource management and emergency

preparedness services and supplies: During FY09, the program established a total of 8 nurseries. In these nurseries, a total of 8,407 plants (local species) were produced, with which the program reforested a total of 7.06 hectares of land around 8 different water sources. Currently there are 21 forestry nurseries in different communities, where the program expects to produce 81,250 plants that will be used to reforest areas around water sources in order to protect them. These soil protection measures will help minimize the magnitude of damage caused by natural phenomenon.

The species being produced are native to the region and will provide wood, firewood and other useful forestry products for the local population in the mid and long-term. Among species being produce are pine (*pinus spp*), cypress (*cupressus lusitanica*), palo blanco (*Cybistax donell smithi*), Guanacaste (*Enterolobium cyclocarpum*), casuarina (*Casuarina esquistifolia*), madre cacao (*Gliricidia sepium*), alder (*Alnus acuminata*) and aaripín (*Caesalpinea velutina*).

IR 3.2 Improved knowledge, attitudes, and skills to manage natural resources and respond to

natural disasters: During the past year the program organized trainings for 1,200 participants located in 21 communities. The trainings covered issues related to reforestation techniques and the protection of water sources (for which the forestry nurseries were established).

In regards to emergency preparedness, the program began organizing, awareness-raising and training activities for community leaders and decision makers. To this end, the program first selected the communities that were at the greatest risksuch as mountain slides, drowns and fires which have been categorized as communities that will be given priority for emergency prevention actions. In total, the program is working with 21 communities in which it is implementing activities related to disaster awareness-raising and training, the development of risk maps and the creation of local risk reduction coordinating committees (COLREDs). The development and implementation of community plans is still pending. This process is expected to be expanded to an additional 21 communities next fiscal year, in compliance with the goal of 42 communities established for the program. Specific interest groups and community members will be trained in risk reduction, preparation and mitigation. All of these activities are being coordinated together with the National Disaster Reduction Coordinating Committee (CONRED) as well as with other institutions working in the PROMASA II coverage area. PROMASA prepared a proposal to implement a food and nutrition insecurity early warning system, which was implemented with the SHARE and CRS. A consultant was hired to develop the general system characteristics. It is expected that the results of this system will be seen beginning the second quarter of FY10.

2. SUCCESS STORIES

GOAT MILK MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN THE GROWTH OF CHILDREN LIVING IN GUATEMALA'S WESTERN HIGHLANDS

This is the story of families living in the department of Quiché, in the western highlands of Guatemala, within communities covered by the Mayan Food Security Program (PROMASA), implemented by Save the Children-USA- with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Guatemalan children have the highest chronic malnutrition rate in Latin America, 49% of children less than five years of age. The situation is even worse for children in Quiché where, in some municipalities, chronic malnutrition is as high as 80%. One of the most serious obstacles to post-breastfeeding child growth for children between 12 and 24 months of age in the PROMASA intervention area is the lack of adequate food for a balanced diet. Another serious problem is the scarcity or inexistence of animal protein in children's diets. In this regard, the program has strived to identify food alternatives that would improve the nutritional state of children. Among these alternatives is the production of goats for milk production.

The value of goat milk for human consumption has received little attention over the years. However, it has recently begun to generate interest both as an option to improve the diet of rural families as well as for industrial cheese production. In addition, it is recommended by pediatricians as an alternative milk source as it is better tolerated by children with allergies than cow milk. Rural families generally have very little access to foods such as beef or fish. In these conditions, goat milk can be an important source of protein, phosphorus and calcium, especially for children.

PROMASA promotes a goat module suitable for very small farmers, so owning little land like less than 500 square meters is not a constraint for goat raising. The module consists of facilitating the construction of household goat pens. The program identifies and selects potential families with malnourished children and who are interested in participating in and supporting the intervention. The goats are provided through a revolving fund mechanism, where recipient households are required to provide another beneficiary family with a female offspring after four months after delivery. This methodology results in an increased number of beneficiaries. The materials as zinc for the roof, is provided by PROMASA and other materials like wood and labor required to build the goat pens are provided by beneficiary families. Prior to receiving their goats, beneficiaries households are required to attend trainings on goat management, the production of fodder in order to be able to feed their goats, hygienic milking and how to prepare goat milk for children. The primary objective of this module is to obtain goat milk in order to improve the diet of children between one and three years of age. In addition, the goats provide other benefits for participants such as: manure and urine, which can be used to prepare crop fertilizer; the sale of male offspring; and, in the future, the production of additional goat milk products such as cheese to increase family income.

After more than two years of work, PROMASA realizes that for households and other agencies; just knowing benefits of goat raising is not enough to going to scale with this practice. So it decided to conduct a small research about the effects of goat milk used as a "food supplement" for non-breastfeeding children between one and three years of age, within 23 children each one

belonging to a different family. The study was carried out in 13 communities from three different municipalities (Uspantán, Cunén and Sacapulas).

During three months, caregivers gave a glass of goat milk daily to their children. PROMASA specialists and volunteer personnel supported the study by visiting the homes of participating children in order to promote both goat production and goat milk consumption.

Results obtained were amazing. Children that consume goat milk gained 5 ounces/month in comparison with, children that did not participate in the goat's milk study gained only 0.85 ounces/month.

The monthly weight gain recorded for children that consumed goat's milk exceeded the minimum expected weight gain rate established by the Ministry of Health's Care Norms (4 ounces/month). Therefore, the preliminary study results suggest that goat's milk is an effective food to be used for complementary child feeding.

In summary, the benefits of the goat module for small farmers are notable. This activity helps to combat child malnutrition, is easily integrated into and improved existing production systems and increases family income through the sale of goat products and sub-products.



Rosa María Acabal and his soon Felipe aside of their goat shed Chacaguex community, Municipality of Sacapulas. El Quiché. October, 2009. Photographer: Alejandro Cali.



Catarina Pu Osorio, cools milk's goat after been boiled for her daughter consumption. Poblaj Community. Uspantán Municipality. El Quiché. October, 2009. Photographer: Alejandro Calí



Rosa María Acabal, feeding her soon Felipe with goat milk. Chacaguex community, Sacapulas municipality. El Quiché. October, 2009. Photographer: Alejandro Calí

3. LESSONS LEARNED

- a. Even though the current financial and food crises has had a high negative impact over most communities, PROMASA has implemented interventions that clearly show progress and have a buffer effect reducing the risk faced by non-PROMASA communities, the overall result is one of increasing challenges that hinder the expected level of accomplishment to reduce global malnutrition. To overcome this situation, PROMASA identifies the need for a more detailed analysis that will emphasize the interventions with the highest impact and low cost. For example, the intervention implemented by PROMASA to secure animal protein intake for children under 2 by drinking goat milk is showing remarkable results and suggest the need

to expand similar components that, despite all other contextual challenges, allow for a notorious improvement in weight gain among beneficiaries.

- b. Despite the significantly larger number of people who have access to credit, or the increased number of households that have learned best practices to increase food production and/or have improve their level of knowledge about health risks, danger signs, diversified diets, etc, the ACCESS to food supplies continues to be severely limited as result of the increased cost of food and decreased household income.
- c. It is evident that a standardized intervention model is not suitable for all communities in the coverage area. Distinct models are required that take into account local factors.
- d. It is essential to identify communities and participants that have the interest, potential and capacity to adopt best practices in order to turn them into project catalysts in scaling up lessons learned. This approach could prove to be critical generating a “cascade effect” for neighboring communities not supported by PROMASA.
- e. It is important to find effective mechanisms for coordination with other local actors in order to make the most of program interventions, avoid problems and prevent effort duplication.

4. ATTACHMENTS
