



SUCCESS STORY

Rural farmer creates new job opportunities for women

Rafael Antonio Coello has made significant improvements in production since USAID-RED started helping him grow tomatoes three years ago. But perhaps the most important thing Coello has done on his 2.9 hectares is create new jobs in his community, particularly for women. The women perform all the regular agricultural activities, including soil preparation, mulching, transplanting, trellising, and weeding.

“I let these women work even when I’m not there, because I know they carry out the activities as if I were in the tomato field,” Coello said.

Coello is one of the few producers still planting tomatoes because of recent viral attacks in the area. There are few jobs in the community, but on Coello’s farm, women can earn some extra money for food, medicine and education.

“Before, there was little work on the tomato farms, but now a lot of people are working. We always have work with Rafael,” said Ana Rosa Mejía, who works on the farm.

“They value our work,” said Ilesia Licona, another worker. “With what we make here we can buy food and help our husbands support our homes. Sometimes we can even save enough money for medical appointments.”

Prisca Torres has been working for Coello for two years. She lives in El Nance with her husband, who was left incapacitated after a stroke. The money Prisca makes on Rafael’s tomato farm helps her support their household.

Estéfana Hernández is a single mom with eight children. She has been working on Coello’s farm for four years, using the income to pay for her children’s schooling.

The Rural Economic Diversification Program (USAID-RED) is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and made possible by the generous support of the American people. Its main objective is to increase incomes and employment opportunities in the rural communities of Honduras.



Photos by Fintrac Inc.

Rafael Antonio Coello proudly shows off his tomato field



A woman uses twine to support a tomato plant. Seventy percent of the workers on Coello’s farm are women.

“They value our work. With what we make here we can buy food and help our husbands support our homes, because they work in the corn fields and bring very little money home. Sometimes we can even save enough money for medical appointments.”

— Ilesia Licona, farm worker