



SUCCESS STORY

USAID-RED teams with local organization to improve agriculture

USAID’s Rural Economic Diversification (RED) program, with funding from the American people, is working to significantly increase rural incomes and employment opportunities throughout Honduras. The program focuses on expanded production and sales of high-value and added-value agricultural products. One of the ways USAID-RED is achieving these goals is by developing strategic alliances with various organizations in Honduras to further their outreach. World Vision started implementing the Yamaranguila Project in 1995 to improve health, education, and livelihoods for Hondurans. In 2007 World Vision initiated an agricultural diversification program and turned to USAID-RED for assistance. USAID-RED provides periodic training and technical assistance to World Vision’s field personnel and program beneficiaries to teach producers new and more effective production methods to increase production and market competitiveness.

Through focused training, USAID-RED is helping World Vision to more accurately formulate recommendations and assessments, so program beneficiaries can have higher yields and better quality. At program farms, USAID-RED is giving hands-on demonstrations of new technologies.

World Vision beneficiaries are adapting USAID-RED-recommended technologies such as raised beds, soil management, integrated pest management (IPM), more efficient crop densities, drip irrigation, fertigation, and improved insecticide and fungicide use.

“We are very happy with the goals set for the third year, and thanks to the alliance, we are already making progress on these goals in the second half of year two,” said Marco Domínguez, the leader of the World Vision program’s agricultural diversification component.

Beneficiaries

Through personal, hands-on visits, USAID-RED agronomist Cristobal Montalvan reaches more than 150 producers through World Vision.

Demonstration Plots

Demonstration plots have been set up and are cared for by World Vision technical experts who receive training from USAID-RE. These plots are visited constantly by



World Vision beneficiary, Alejandro Vásquez, harvests jalapeños. Photos by Fintrac Inc.

“Before, I never considered growing a crop to export. Thanks to the project, I have hope and have managed to produce good yields.”

- Alejandro Vásquez, a farmer receiving USAID-RED assistance through World Vision

World Vision farmers and teach USAID-RED-recommended production techniques. The plots foster an exchange of ideas that can be developed and put into practice on the farm.

Results

Yamaranguila client sales were \$10,059 in 2006. In 2007, sales reached \$12,151, a 20 percent increase. Sales are on track to increase further in 2008.

“Now we can test the pH of the water and we know how to calibrate water pumps. Applications are more efficient and we have fertilizer programs that meet the needs of our producers,” said Nahum Ventura, who has worked as an agronomist for 10 years and is one of World Vision’s field technicians.

Given the excellent results experienced by producers receiving assistance from World Vision, the Intibuca Association of Horticultural Crop and Fruit Producers (APROFHI) has offered to market their products. Producers have started to scale-up production to supply APROFHI with their products starting in the second half of 2008.



Raul Gálvez of World Vision shows off the bell peppers produced at a farm receiving technical assistance from USAID-RED.

“The role of this alliance is very important to us, and seeing the producers’ results leads us to believe that we are on the right track.”

- Raul Gálvez – Finance technician World Vision

Successful Measures Taken by World Vision

ACTIVITIES	TRADITIONAL	AS PROPOSED BY USAID-RED
Crop Selection	Anecdotal information	Market-led
Soil Preparation	Shallow depth, topical weed control	Depth of 30 cm, raised beds, lime application
Planting	Variable plant distances, no variety selection, no seed selection	Seed selection, plantlet production, starter solution, plant distance measured for transplanting
Fertilization	Inaccurate measurements, fertilization only twice per growing season	Fertigation two times per week, or soluble fertilizers
Application of Agrochemicals	Reactionary and indiscriminate use of chemicals	Preventative use, pest and disease identification, pH regulation of water and use of systemic pesticides and spreaders