

Fintrac Harvest

Reporting on Fintrac's worldwide agriculture and food security activities

Fall 2010



Fintrac Photo by Dr. Richard Pluke

Fintrac actively recruits women to participate in our program in Tanzania and other projects around the world.

Fintrac programs find ways to incorporate more women

With the Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program (USAID-TAPP) Fintrac has a client base that is 50 percent women, which is on track to meet project goals and in line with Fintrac's policy to incorporate more women.

Fintrac sets, tracks and meets gender goals because we believe that women are critical forces in agricultural value chains and because empowering them through agriculture enhances the lives of everyone in the rural household and contributes to food security, quality of life and education.

According to the U.S. State Department's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, economic output could be increased by 15 to 40 percent and under-nutrition reduced by 15 million children simply by providing women with assets equal to those of men.

In Ethiopia, Fintrac's Agribusiness and Trade Expansion Program has reached 146,781 women since 2006.

In Honduras, Fintrac's EDA program has helped hundreds of women establish profitable farms.

In Nepal, Fintrac has helped more than 1,200 women develop kitchen gardens to feed their families and provide income from surplus.

Fintrac promotes crops that benefit all members of the

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Photo by Fintrac

Youths are learning leadership skills through a Fintrac program in Nepal.

Learning to lead

1,200 Nepal youths learn skills in health, nutrition and leadership

KATHMANDU, Nepal — Fintrac's Nepal Flood Recovery Program (USAID-NFRP) conducted comprehensive youth leadership training for 60 youth clubs throughout flood-affected villages of the central and western Terai region. Along with training for community-based organizations and disaster management committees, members of youth clubs participated in a program encouraging young people to take on leadership roles in local development initiatives.

More than 1,200 young men and women between the ages of 14 and 24 completed the training curriculum, which emphasized confidence building and communication and conflict resolution skills for working in communities and with local governments. Topics included leadership, participation and democracy, networking and collaboration,

"There are changes in my daughter since she joined the youth club. Sushila is more mature now and can express herself better."
— Surya Gautam's daughter is taking part in Fintrac's youth training in Nepal

organizational planning, decision-making, community assessments, the project cycle and leveraging assistance.

Many of the youth centers also double as training centers for women and girls under NFRP's Better Life Option Program, created to advocate for the protection of women and children. More than 1,800 girls have attended youth empowerment sessions, which re-inforce skills taught at youth club trainings and encourage women to educate themselves.

"There are changes in my daughter since she

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Looking back on a decade of change in Honduras

Fintrac helps a nation recover and get ahead with sustainable agriculture

LA LIMA, Honduras — Fintrac has been transferring technologies and providing technical advisory services to farmers and allied enterprises in Honduras for ten years. In celebration of our 10-year anniversary, we took a look at the impact we have had in collaboration with our partners and clients – including quadrupled crop yields, calendarized planting, and diversification into new crops such as yuca, sweet potatoes, chayote, pineapples, bell peppers and cucumbers, which are now major items in local and export markets.

Together, we have put more than 100,000 hectares into sustainable production, introduced drip irrigation to thousands of small-scale farmers, and expanded/operationalized ten private processing plants that have created more than 1,000 jobs. Fintrac introduced high-density plantain production to Honduras, which increased yields from 20,000 to 100,000 pounds per hectare, and established outgrower programs for processing and exporting.

We set up supply chains for jalapeños for small outgrowers, with volume increases from 3 million to 26 million pounds per year, and yield increases from 45,000 to 150,000 pounds per hectare. We established new supply chains with local and regional supermarkets, helped farmers earn certifications, built the first computerized on-line database for pesticide registrations, and expanded the capacity of NGO field technicians through training. Fintrac has generated new sales of almost



Fintrac Staff Photo

Countrywide Fintrac has put more than 100,000 hectares under sustainable production in Honduras.

\$200 million for farmers, processors and exporters in Honduras and has leveraged and tracked tens of millions of dollars in new private investment.

And it all started with a 22-month grant to help the agriculture sector recover after Hurricane Mitch, which hit Honduras in October 1998. Based on the crop production and diversification results that Fintrac and its first local partner, FHIA, achieved at that time, USAID provided grant extensions, and ultimately awarded Fintrac

and its growing consortium an additional multi-year project (USAID-RED), as did MCC, which awarded us MCA-H/EDA. Fintrac staff in Honduras has grown from nine to nearly 100 – all local professionals – and we have formal partnership alliances with grower groups, consulting firms, agriculture schools and universities, NGOs, input suppliers, and financial institutions, and work closely with the Honduras government.

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household and provides training in high-value and value-added products and processing, where women often excel and have opportunities for growth. Even the technologies that Fintrac introduces are designed to decrease workloads, freeing up time for women to find other opportunities to increase household incomes and food security.

Fintrac also helps commercial farms meet export standards, which generates opportunities for thousands of women. Women trained in certification standards such as GLOBALGAP learn valuable skills that can lead to promotions or to other positions, one of these women is Asrat Nega, who started as a packer at a large farm packhouse in Holet. Because of skills she learned through Fintrac assistance, she was promoted to packhouse supervisor and now earns 50 percent more.

“I am proud because I worked hard to earn this job,” Nega said.



Photo by Fintrac

A woman harvests strawberries on a farm in Ethiopia.

Fintrac supporting Haiti relief

Fintrac works in earthquake and flood-ravaged countries across the globe, so we know first-hand the devastation wrought on families, infrastructure and food supplies. So when the 7.0 earthquake rocked Haiti's capital last January, we sprang into action. First, Fintrac corporate headquarters matched employee contributions, which immediately went to supporting flights of medical equipment, supplies and personnel into Port-au-Prince. Next, we provided pro-bono advisory services to a Caribbean foundation seeking to provide health, education, housing and agricultural support in Haiti. We are currently collaborating with long-time Haitian colleagues on a small pilot project incorporating Fintrac's production approach, which can quadruple yields and mitigate vulnerability during disasters. This approach has proven successful in Jamaica, Honduras, El Salvador and Nepal. Fintrac's BEST team also recently returned from a research trip to Haiti to determine food aid needs.

Fintrac health initiatives reach thousands of Ethiopians

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia – Fintrac’s Agribusiness and Trade Expansion Program (USAID-ATEP) is having an enormous impact on health by leveraging our presence in the field and teaching people about nutrition and HIV prevention. A recent UNAIDS report on poor AIDS-affected households in Africa found that monthly income fell by 66-80 percent from coping with AIDS-related illness.

In Metema, Ethiopia, Fintrac is helping the Kokeb Association, a group of people living with HIV/AIDS. The group was given 10 hectares by the Ethiopian government, which Fintrac is helping them develop into a sustainable horticulture farm that provides income and nutrition in their ongoing fight against disease.

The 30 group members are learning to establish crops such as barley, tomatoes and green peppers. In only two growing cycles, the group has harvested 60 quintals of barley, 25 quintals of tomatoes and 15 quintals of green peppers.

In less than a year, the sales generated from these crops alone are \$626, a lot of money in a nation where 39 percent of the population live on less than \$1.25 per day. With higher yields and better production, the members of the association are able to grow and buy healthier food, which is helping them maintain their weight, improve the effectiveness of HIV medications and increase tolerance of medications.

After their first harvests, the group started to see that they can support themselves. Others in the community are now coming to their farm to learn new agricultural technologies and about HIV/AIDS prevention and nutrition. This has inspired others in the community to get tested and learn about health and prevention.

“Because of this program, we realized that we are capable of being productive and supporting ourselves and even others,” said Kokeb’s Ato Ibrahim Dejen.

The group is starting to diversify with production of cabbage, onions and bananas as well as different varieties of tomatoes and peppers.



Fintrac photo

A woman’s group holds a monthly meeting in Amhara, Ethiopia.

Fintrac is implementing health initiatives in 34 woredas of Oromia, SNNPR, Amhara and Tigray, which will help more than 50,000 farmers. Funding for this effort comes from USAID through PEPFAR.

The major objectives of Fintrac’s health component in Ethiopia are to set up and improve income generation activities for vulnerable populations and people living with HIV/AIDS, mainstream HIV/AIDS education into horticulture and provide capacity building of partner NGOs.

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joined the youth club. Sushila is more mature now and can express herself better. Now she actively participates in community meetings,” said Surya Gautam, a father whose daughter, Sushila, was in the training.

At the end of their training, youth club members were given a chance to apply their new skills, following Fintrac’s “learning-by-doing” philosophy. Each club designed and implemented their own community support project, with technical and financial assistance from Fintrac. Projects included construction of roads and culverts, improvement of school structures, and creation of potable water sites. The communities’ enthusiasm for the program was reflected in the donations the trainees received – in all, youth clubs raised \$12,007, in addition to the \$8,000 provided by Fintrac through NFRP.

Representatives from the youth clubs came together to share their experiences at two regional workshops organized by NFRP. Representatives of government, Nepal Red Cross Society, UNICEF, WDO, Mercy Corps and Save the Children attended to see what the youths accomplished.

Fintrac’s NFRP works with flood-affected communities throughout the Terai region to increase farmer productivity and income, develop community infrastructure, improve awareness of sanitation, nutrition, and gender protection issues, and strengthen local organizations by expanding participation among youths and vulnerable populations.

Food security in Kenya improves under Fintrac program

NAIROBI, Kenya – Despite facing drought, political turmoil and a global economic crisis, Fintrac’s Kenya Horticultural Development Program (USAID-KHDP) increased incomes and food security for 58,000 smallholders, sparked Kenya/US trade, expanded domestic markets, pioneered public/private initiatives to help thousands of farmers earn international quality certifications and developed entirely new value chains for crops including passion fruit, African Bird’s Eye chili, tea tree, mangos and cashews.

The program, which ended this summer as Fintrac launched the new USAID-Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Program, built strong working relationships with nearly 70 private sector companies and government agencies to deliver services to smallholders and provided direct technical assistance through agronomists based in xx provinces.

Fintrac-assisted growers increased average passion fruit yields from an average of less than 10 tons per hectare to more than 17 tons per hectare.

Peter Gicheru, one of the program’s passion fruit farmers in Thika, made nothing from his land until becoming one of Fintrac’s clients and now he can earn as much as \$1,890 per month by selling to buyers and processors connected to him through the program.



Photo by Fintrac

Penina Omollo built a greenhouse on her land in Homa Bay.

“My home was built with the proceeds of passion,” Gicheru said.

Fintrac helped the Bwogi group in Kisumu establish a demonstration farm with water tanks and drip irrigation so they could get by during times of drought. In one year the group managed to harvest onions three times and generated \$21,000.

“This program has put knowledge into our heads,” said Bwogi group member Joshua Owuor. “Now that we know, we can push poverty away.”

Fintrac also taught small farmers other new technologies such as low-cost greenhouse production. Penina Omollo of the Karawa

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News Briefs

NAIROBI — Kenya smallholder flower bouquets hit UK supermarkets. The UK supermarket chain Asda now sells bouquets of flowers grown by smallholder farmers in Central Kenya. Fintrac helped the smallholders become the first-ever Rainforest Alliance-certified flower growers.

“We look forward to the new market that will offer stable prices and consistent demand throughout the year,” said one of the participating farmers.

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Access to veterinary drugs and equipment expanding in Ethiopia. Fintrac’s ATEP program is in the process of opening 12 pilot veterinary drug stores in rural regions of the country. Community animal health workers – trained through Fintrac – will now have access to drugs and veterinary equipment to treat the livestock in remote areas where there were previously no veterinary clinics.

ARUSHA, Tanzania — Tanzanian prime minister visits women smallholders. Tanzanian Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda visited one of Fintrac’s client groups made up of women smallholders. The TAPP-sponsored Mtazamo Vegetable Growers is located in Arusha and operates out of the larger Mailer Farm. Prime Minister Pinda talked with the women about how they have benefitted from horticulture and was so impressed by their efforts that he donated 5 million Tanzanian shillings, about \$3,250, for production activities.

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Fintrac’s program sets example for Feed the Future. In a speech entitled “Africa: The Donor View on Development,” USAID/Ethiopia Mission Director Thomas H. Staal noted that Fintrac’s ATEP program is an excellent example of how the Feed the Future program will address hunger and poverty in Ethiopia. Staal was participating in a symposium in that included such distinguished guests as former President Jimmy Carter.

Staal said that cross-cutting programs like ATEP in Ethiopia offer “comparative advantages for future growth and poverty reduction, and we will target future investments to exploit these opportunities, and build on the successes of current programs.”

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia – Ethiopian shoe factory exporting footwear to the U.S. Fintrac helped Anbessa Shoe Factory deliver its first commercial order for more than 10,000 shoes, valued at more than \$100,000. Fintrac helped create market linkages for Anbessa, and helped six other Ethiopian footwear companies develop products and market themselves to U.S. buyers. They started receiving large commercial orders after sending test orders to various American companies to verify quality standards.

LA LIMA, Honduras – Small farmer increases income by more than 400 percent. Through Fintrac’s EDA program, José García of Los Charcos, La Paz, learned to diversify into green bean, lettuce, tomato and strawberry production. He also built a small-scale greenhouse for table tomatoes. After his first year with the program his first harvests on just 0.11 hectares of lettuce, green beans and tomatoes generated \$974 in sales and net income of \$555 – 423 percent higher than his income before the program.

Fintrac’s EDA program works with small growers in 16 of Honduras’ 18 departments. Direct technical assistance and training now reaches 7,460 growers, most of whom grow on less than 1 hectare.

LA LIMA, Honduras – Brothers double yields through Fintrac alliance. Through an alliance with FUNDER under our RED project, 250 farmers increased sales by \$980,000 in 2009. Two of those farmers, brothers Darwin and Omar Andino more than doubled carrot production from 10,800 kilogram to 22,680 kilograms. Profits from the first harvest were \$5,478. In the final year of the RED program, Fintrac focused on building alliances such as this one to create sustainability when the program ends.

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Women’s Group in Homa Bay, had no income until starting her greenhouse and her first harvest generated \$625.

“The nutrition of my family has really changed,” Omollo said. “Now I can buy what I couldn’t before.”

Fintrac also helped farmers such as John Onkeo establish new lives after being displaced by

2007/2008 election violence. Onkeo was forced to start from scratch and move his family but was still able to increase his income by more than 300 percent.

“With the assistance I have completely transformed life for me and my family,” Onkeo said.

With the June launch of the KHCP, Fintrac plans to build on our success. KHCP is a five-year program that aims to improve food security and increase incomes for 25,000 farmers.

Fintrac expands analytical division

WASHINGTON — Food aid decisions in developing countries are getting easier as Fintrac’s D.C.-based BEST program continues to refine and standardize the analysis that the U.S. government needs to make food aid decisions.

In its third year of implementation, the BEST team, which is short for Bellmon Estimation for Title II, added new economists, analysts and editors.

The reports are in-depth looks at food security, markets and logistics that help the U.S. government decide how food aid will affect markets and deliver the most effective assistance.

“I cannot say enough about how important and valuable this document is,” said Mark Wentling, a USAID/WA Country Program Manager for Burkina Faso, of a recent BEST analysis.

The team recently returned from Haiti, to assess the situation there in the aftermath of the January earthquake and also conducted in-country studies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Agricultural solutions to end hunger and poverty

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