

## Village Update

*Futuro del Mañana, Nicaragua*



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Don Pedro, one of the older members of Agros community Futuro del Mañana, is also one of the growing numbers of families in his community that now owns their own land. Although Pedro has suffered from the disbelief of others thinking he could not pay his land loan and the ailments of an aging body, including hypertension, Pedro trembles with emotion when sharing about his success. “There’s nothing more I could want. In my old age I have the help and company of my children.” He refers to children that, though not his own, he provided with love, clothing, food and counsel, and now grown up and married, have returned to give back to the man that gave so much to them. “I saved up the beans that I had harvested, and when the market prices rose, I sold. With this money, and the help from my generous children, I’ve repaid my debt. We are landowners.”

### Community Organization

In Futuro, the families are not only working hard in their fields, they are working hard to ensure that their specific goals are being met and values are being lived out by each of the members. In a meeting with twenty of the community, Agros staff and families discussed obstacles faced in fulfilling their mission as a community, and solutions to these obstacles. These types of meetings speak to the deep commitment both the adults and the

children in Futuro have to becoming a thriving, self-governing community.

Another community discussion was held on leadership as represented in the Bible. The families spoke together about different historical examples and reflected on the implications of these stories in their own lives.

### Land Ownership

Three families in Futuro have completely paid their land loans this quarter, serving as motivation to the rest of the community.

To ensure basic food security with staples such as basic grains, the families in Futuro have planted corn and beans this quarter, including 7 acres of beans and 14 acres of corn.

Reforestation efforts continue as children and their parents work to plant trees in their fields and along the river to protect against erosion. Families also took advantage of this time to clean up areas along the river to prevent contamination of their water source.

## Housing & Infrastructure

This quarter the families worked together to make repairs on the access road that leads from the community to the highway, a road crucial to transporting crops to the market for sale and supplies from the nearby town to Futuro. Working together to ensure the usability of the road has increased the well-being of the community members.

Several members of Futuro participated in maintaining the community center, cleaning and putting the interior in order. Due to the convenient location and open space, the community has allowed members involved in jewelry and bread-baking projects to use the center for their business activities.

The families are also working together to construct a water reservoir on the parcels of some farmers in order to ensure adequate irrigation to their plantain and passion fruit crops. The water reservoir will be 13x13x13 meters in size and just under 3,000 feet from the river.

## Sustainable Economic Growth

This quarter the families are working hard to establish basic grains, plantains, yucca, passion fruit and Tabasco chili peppers. Seven families planted 3.5 acres of yucca. Ten farmers cultivating plantains, passion fruit and chili peppers are using loans from Agros to invest in their projects.

Several families, like Pedro mentioned above, recently held onto their basic grain and plantain harvests from last season in order to sell at the highest market price.

An enterprising group of women involved in the bread-baking project are preparing to sell homemade foods, such as ham and cheese pizza, that they learned how to make with different workshops with Agros. The women recently took out a loan to begin this new menu item within their business.



## Community Education & Training

Families continue to learn how to improve nutrition, health and hygiene in their community through educational discussions together with Agros staff. Participants are learning how to prepare foods using soy and leafy greens and other nutritious vegetables to provide a balanced diet for their families, as well as how to wash hands, food and cooking utensils before and after cooking to avoid contamination and illness.

Families in the community also gathered to learn more about first aid response and using medicines from the first aid kit to treat minor ailments such as coughs, colds, stomach pains, and anemia. Older members of the community also contributed traditional knowledge of home remedies to treat diarrhea, stomach pain, anemia, coughs and colds, spasms, parasites and insomnia. Another discussion was held on risk management, namely in the case of a natural disaster. The families learned the most dangerous areas of the communities during floods or hurricanes and discussed responses in such emergency situations.

In face of normal interpersonal conflict, the families of Futuro have been equipped with training and are putting into practice critical thinking and nonviolent and effective communication and conflict resolution skills to solve differences.

The youth are out of school but remain active and continue learning throughout their vacation. In their free time, they enjoy embroidery and playing sports with each other and neighboring youth. The children are also learning about their human rights, as well as their rights by law as children, adolescents and young women. Specific legislature is shared with them in a way to inform them of their familiar, social, cultural and economic rights.