

## Village Update

*San Diego de Tenango, El Salvador*



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Cipriano Hernández, a member of the community, recently acquired a pick-up truck to aid in transportation to and from San Diego. Having means of transportation to and from the market in San Martín has been a source of optimism and support for the members of the community. During the months of March and April, Cipriano loaned his vehicle to some of the families in order for them to transport the materials necessary to build seven houses and improve three. Owning this vehicle is helping Cipriano to generate income and improving the lives of those in his community.

### **Community Organization**

The families plan to continue implementing their farm plans during the 2007 fiscal year. At the moment, 14 farmers are involved in developing the plan, which contributes significantly to the diversification of their crops. Furthermore, some farmers have begun growing vegetables for their families' consumption on their own initiative.

The board of directors has been meeting during recent months to discuss the different activities that they would like to implement in the community. They are currently deciding

which activities will most benefit the members of the community.

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

During the months of April and May, the families of the community, in coordination with the local government, worked to bring electricity to the community. The introduction of electric energy in the community is already a reality and constitutes a major accomplishment for the board of directors. This achievement not only makes the members of the community proud, but will also allow more development activities to take place. At this point, no families have been able to pay the \$100 connection fee to have electricity in their homes, but are making plans to be able to do so.

There are currently 7 families in the community that have built their permanent houses out of adobe (a material used for building houses made from a mixture of earth and water), and three families that have improved their homes. Arturo Avilés, Calixto Rodas, Antonio Leiva, Santos Torres, Angel Arias, Bibiano Leiva and Adolfo Leiva were the ones to build adobe homes, and Jesús Hernández, Rosalío Ramírez and Rigoberto Leiva made improvements on their homes.

The community has planned, in coordination with the local government of Suchitoto, to explore the opening a stretch of road that will run to Tenango (the region where the communities of San Diego and La Esperanza are located). For the moment, they have scheduled a meeting with the local government in order to discuss the details of the project. This project could benefit the farming families in the area to get their products to the local market.

With support and technical assistance from Micro region, a small dam is being built in the channel of the creek running from the water tank. The dimensions of the dam are 131 x 15 x 13 feet. It is being made for two purposes: a) to raise tilapia and b) to irrigate the vegetables during the dry season. They have calculated that the water from the dam will provide all of the families that own land with irrigation that will allow them to grow vegetables during the dry season.

The board of directors has coordinated a stove improvement project for all of the families in the community. They already trained two people in the community to direct the project and got a price quote on the materials necessary for the project. The

construction began in the month of July. These stoves are more fuel-efficient and channel the smoke outside of the homes, to reduce health problems.

### **Sustainable Economic Growth**

During the month of June, two trainings were held in the community on the development of farm plans. Thirteen people attended the workshops and made a commitment to developing their farm plans. Community involvement in the farm plans has been slow, but once the families understand the benefits of the plan participation will improve.

### **Community Education and Training**

Meetings have been held with the group of women this month in order to choose some activities for them to do, such as making handicrafts and sewing. A group of them expressed the desire to make necklaces and bracelets and others expressed the desire to embroider and sew clothing.