

## Village Update

*Villa Linda, Guatemala*



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Thanks to the strong appeal from Angelina de Pablo of Villa Linda, the first women's Community Bank was established this February. With Angelina's continuous guidance and support, the women are now paying the first cycle of their loan and are using the funds in the most responsible and cost-efficient manner possible. Angelina is a strong example of accountability and even neighboring communities will be feeling the effects of her work.

### **Community Organization**

The Agros communities located in the Barillas region have agreed to initiate an investigation of their communities' characteristics by the youth. As a part of the project, twelve teens from Villa Linda walked the land to create a sketch of the community. With this topographical information, the youth will help outside constituents witness the achievements being made in the community.

### **Land Ownership**

The twenty families of Villa Linda are very excited to have access to land and, as of March, have completed 90% of the construction work on their houses. Two corn and bean harvests have already been gathered and each family has planted a small area of coffee to increase their economic incomes. These

prosperous projects have given the families a newfound sense of security. Additionally, 80% of the land has been measured, indicating that promissory notes will be ready shortly. Members of Villa Linda are feeling positive about the projects and future steps they have planned together with Agros Guatemala.

The families have measured and divided evenly all of the farmland among each other. Each family received about 5.4 acres on which to grow their crops. In the midst of a resource conservation discussion, the families are deciding the best use of the communal land and natural areas of water and forest covering about 80% of their land of about 107.5 acres.

### **Housing & Infrastructure**

As a part of the housing and infrastructure component of development, the families of Villa Linda recently completed the construction of the seventeenth home. The remaining three homes are planned for the end of May 2007.

### **Sustainable Economic Growth**

The twenty farmers of Villa Linda were given technical assistance in pruning and fertilizing their coffee crops. The community

recently increased the area reserved for growing coffee and now each family now has roughly 0.75 acres.

### **Community Education & Training**

Two students from Villa Linda were recently enrolled in the private high school Nueva Esperanza located about 1.2 miles from the community.

Villa Linda is the newest Agros community in the Barillas region. Shortly after beginning their work with Agros, fourteen women

from the community formed the first Community Bank to facilitate projects with chickens and other small livestock. Their first credit cycle ended February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Twenty members of the community recently participated in a sewing workshop given by INTECAP (The Technical Institute of Training), a Guatemalan governmental institution. All involved in the project were able to complete the first course within the 90 day period with a second course planned in the near future to help the participants to use their new skills to initiate sewing projects and generate income.