

Village Update

Villa Linda, Guatemala



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Agros uses 20 indicators to measure the impact of our work in Agros communities. Indicators measure predetermined outcomes, such as improved access to water, that are hoped to be achieved through Agros' work and make up the greater vision of Agros, to restore hope to the world's poor. The eight indicators below are measured on an annual basis and are now included in each quarterly Village Update.

ANNUAL INDICATORS OF VILLAGE PROGRESS (June 2009)

Founded: 2005

Development Level: Progress through the Agros Development Model
(100% reached when community has paid off their land loans)



Economic Indicators:

Diversification of income-generating crops:

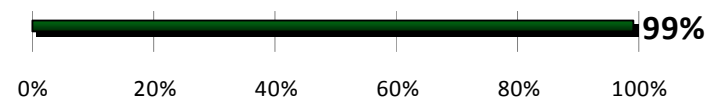
9 types of crops sold to provide income

100% of people have livestock

Participation in commercialization of products:

100% of people commercialize their products

Enterprise loan repayment rates:



Community Indicators:

Access to water for domestic use:

100% of families have water at 0-100 meters from home

Presence of health promoters in community:

Yes

School-aged children attending school:

78%

Leadership Positions Held by Women:

54%

Ana is a member and the current Secretary of Villa Linda's Community Bank. Since the bank began three years ago, Ana has been working with Agros and the other women to form a sustainable way for women to start and invest in new business endeavors through access to credit. Ana began with a chicken and pig project which did not earn very much money. However, after several workshops from Agros, Ana and others have learned more profitable business ideas, and currently Ana is doing well with a textile business and a small general store. With the income from these projects, Ana can provide the needs for her two young children.

Maria is another prime example of the stories of women using credit for the first time in their lives to improve the lives of their

families. Fearing going in to debt, Maria held back until two loan cycles ago before joining the Community Bank. After seeing the success of her neighbors, and wanting her four children to have the education that she never did, Maria took a leap of faith and invested in animal projects. This last cycle Maria earned \$34, saving \$16 and using the remainder to send her oldest to secondary school and keep her younger three in elementary school. Maria says "It's good to take a risk to learn how these projects work and I'm so grateful to Agros for the great opportunities we've received." Her only regret? "That more women are not involved!"

Land Ownership

This quarter one family was able to partially repay their land loan and another family paid off their land loan in full. The families are very motivated and have inspired other families in the community to continue their commitment to becoming land owners.

Sustainable Economic Growth

The coffee project is a major source of income for the twenty families in Villa Linda. In 2009, the families harvested an average of 1,250 pounds of coffee each, earning a total of \$30,340 among the community, or \$1,517 per family! This income will enable the families to make an early payment on their land loan in 2010 even though their first payment is not due until 2011. Agros staff continues to work with the coffee farmers, showing them how to prune branches, care for coffee starts before transplanting, and terrace and fertilize their coffee fields to ensure higher production in the long-term.

Agros staff and eighteen families took time this quarter to walk through the area planted with a new type of pasture. It was confirmed that 100% of the seed had germinated and reached the required height before using the grass as feed for their various animal projects.

Other diverse productive activities in the community include four families growing jalapeño peppers, twenty families growing plantains and fourteen families growing cardamom. Agros staff provides hands-on assistance growing these nontraditional products that earn more income in the local market. The families are learning how to prevent diseases among their pepper plants, the families received 1,000 plantain plants for their fields and 0.2 acre of cardamom was successfully planted this quarter.

The tilapia project is going well this quarter as the four families continue to care their fish. A sample of fish is weighed every month to ensure proper development before selling in the market. The families took out a loan to invest in the project and help them be more competitive in the market. Food for the fish was provided this quarter, and 600 additional baby fish were delivered to begin raising in one of the tanks. As the group continues to gain experience and success, they hope that other families will join in the endeavor.

Fifteen families also received sixty egg-laying hens this quarter to ensure food security in Villa Linda. The eggs will provide an important source of protein for the community.

Community Education & Training

Twenty-two youth and adults have been busy taking literacy classes. This last quarter, the ten enrolled in the first level graduated, as well as the twelve in the second level of the course. All were extremely proud to have learned how to read and write, an invaluable skill.

The twenty families in Villa Linda participated in a training this quarter about sexual and reproductive health, in which both youth and adults gained important information regarding the topic.

Follow-up and support was provided to the community member in charge of Villa Linda's medicine and first aid supply. Together with Agros staff, the supplies were inventoried to ensure that everything was in stock and new purchases were made.

Accompaniment and technical assistance was also provided this quarter to the three promoters in charge of the medicinal plant garden in the community. The gardens are being well-maintained and utilized frequently by the members of the community.

The group of youth from Villa Linda that participated in the educational field trip last quarter shared what they learned with the rest of the youth in the community, contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment.