

# Village Update

*Futuro del Mañana, Nicaragua*



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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: 1999

**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:

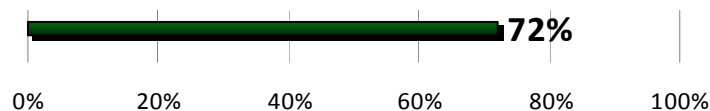
*5 types of crops sold to provide income*

*70% 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:

**97%**

### Leadership Positions Held by Women:

**50%**

Martha and Felix, parents of two, are one of the least materially-blessed families in Futuro del Mañana. Even so, due to their unshakeable positive attitude, they are an example to the rest of their community. Felix and Martha were one of the founding families of Futuro, and began building homes when they arrived. Martha was pregnant and there was so much work to do no one had time to plant corn. "To start this community, we suffered hunger, cold, and nakedness building the houses. Relatives brought us food once a day; we lived from the generosity of others." Eighteen months later when all the homes were built, they finally were able to plant corn and beans. Martha and Felix still occasion hard times, especially with the droughts that have hit their region the last few years. However, two months ago, they paid off half of their land loan and expect to move even closer to land ownership through the plantain project. Also, at just eight years old, their daughter has already finished the fourth grade, and is

looking forward to starting the fifth grade. "We are so thankful for all that Agros has done for us."

### **Community Organization**

This quarter the community reviewed their strategic plan and discussed Agros' exit plan with staff, specifically details regarding completing land payments on time. Payment plans were clarified so that everyone is on the same page.

The Futuro families participated in several community organization workshops this quarter, covering topics such as bylaws, administration and values. The families discussed responsibility, honesty and integrity in both their work and studies. The bylaws workshop involved reviewing the current statutes that help the community run smoothly. Finally, members of the community participated in a workshop about resource and project administration given by the Municipality of Tola.

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

Families continue to provide maintenance and care to their homes, including weekly cleaning of their latrines and routine maintenance of their homes. One family added an additional room to their home and another family built a small home for an older daughter.

Through a partnership with the local government, the access road that leads to the community was repaired, providing improved transportation in and out of Futuro.

### **Land Ownership**

The families have harvested their basic grains, which due to climactic reasons, were not as much as was hoped. Even so, the families will have enough for the driest parts of the year. Also, the negative effects of the global economic crisis are now being felt more strongly by the community as prices for farming inputs sky rocket and their products sell for less in the market. The families are doing their best to seek alternatives on their land and make their loan payments.

The families in Futuro have organized themselves in order to provide follow-up care and watering to the trees that were planted in the community. This will ensure the trees will continue to develop well and improve the environmental conditions of the community.

### **Sustainable Economic Growth**

Agros staff continues to provide accompaniment, support and training in the various productive projects occurring in the community. Presently, families are growing plantains, corn and beans, passion fruit and papaya. Because prices are falling, however, these crops are not selling at prices they once were. The community is running numbers on other crops they could grow with another irrigation system.

As mentioned above, the community is planning on constructing several water basins in the fields that have the least access to water. These water basins would allow production of different crops that may earn more income in the market.

## **Community Education and Training**

Several health workshops took place this quarter. Children at risk for malnutrition were referred to the local health center with their parents to receive information on boosting their diets. Mothers with young infants also received training in games and activities to use to stimulate their children's sensory and motor development.

In another session, girls participated in a reproductive health discussion. The facilitator provided educational materials and answered questions the group had regarding the topic.

A working session on medicinal plants was held this quarter where women shared their knowledge of various homeopathic remedies with one another, such as using mango leaves for arthritis or basil for headaches.

The local health promoter made several house visits this quarter following an outbreak of the common cold in the community. The promoter provided preventative information to keep the cold from spreading to others as well as medicine to reduce symptoms.

Families with special medical cases, such as the three year old with a brain tumor and the man with kidney stones, were provided with special support in order to receive medical attention and are doing well.

Thirteen children are being promoted to the next grade this year after successful completion of last year's studies. Agros provided cloth to the parents to make new clothes for the children. This both helped the parents economically and encouraged the children to continue their education. Youth in the community are also involved

in caring for some basic grain fields, which although did not meet expectations, will provide food for part of the year.

The families continue to practice their spiritual beliefs through weekly gatherings at the local churches. Here they read the bible, make reflections, pray and sing. In December, the families held a special celebration to give thanks for the achievements of the last year, complete with a dance and piñata for the children.