

## Village Update

*San Diego de Tenango, El Salvador*



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Cipriano Hernández, a member of the community who recently acquired a pick-up truck to aid in transportation to and from San Diego, has continued to be an example of good stewardship and dedication to his community. The personal and communal use of his truck provides a means of transportation between the markets in San Martín, thereby benefiting the local economy and encouraging other families of San Diego to continue ahead with their production plan. Owning this vehicle is not only helping Cipriano to generate income but is serving as a source of optimism and support to the lives of those in his community.

### Community Organization

The community conducted a workshop addressing communication and values within the family. This well-attended discussion proved successful in expressing the importance of healthy communication between children and their parents.

### Land Ownership

As a result of the work of agricultural technicians and families of the community, San Diego has begun to experience the benefits of crop diversification in their improved nutrition. The Food Security Program has given the families the opportunity to

improve their diets with the incorporation of eggs, chicken, goat milk and goat cheese, several varieties of tilapia and various fruits and vegetables.

### Housing and Infrastructure

A group of members concerned with the deterioration of the road are forming a new committee in order to discuss how to best address the issue. Agros staff is also in discussions with the Suchitoto mayor regarding the possibility of building a new road that would provide better access to the communities in the area.

With support and technical assistance from the Microregion, the community is moving forward with the construction of a dam on the river. This project will provide a reservoir for raising tilapia and irrigation of vegetable crops during the dry summer season. Agros will help provide loans to the families to buy the needed tubing and equipment to carry the water to their fields.

Further progress is being made in the construction of improved cookstoves for all of the families of San Diego. Trained volunteer Ernest Recinos has trained and supervised the project through which eight of the community's twenty-two families are already enjoying their efficient cookstoves that use less firewood and

channel harmful smoke carcinogens out of the house. The remaining families have already begun to build or will begin shortly.

Through the coordination between the community and the Mayor of Suchitoto, installation of posts and wiring have been installed in the community so the families can enjoy electrical lighting in public spaces of the community and their homes if they pay the connection fee. To date, sixteen families have paid the fee and have electricity in their homes.

### **Sustainable Economic Growth**

A technical study of the agricultural land has been finalized, providing an in-depth understanding of the crops most adapted to the community's climatic location and the best potential sites in which to market these crops. Two meetings were held to inform the farmers of the study's recommendations and Agros' production program for the 2007 Fiscal Year. In addition, twelve farmers attended a follow-up training for the establishment of the community's different farm plans.

San Diego continues to diversify its production activities. In October, fruit trees were distributed to those participating in creating farm plans. Currently, fourteen farmers have become involved in the effort to continue to develop this plan and are making significant contributions to the diversification of their agricultural production.

### **Community Education and Training**

In the past few months, plans have been made in collaboration with the Suchitoto Hospital to train health promoters in the community. With these trainings, the community will be able to offer much improved health services to their families. A workshop themed in conflict resolution, offered upon the request of the women of San Diego, is equipping them with the proper tools to resolve community issues.

The community is tackling adult illiteracy with the help of the Christian University Movement (MUC) by initiating a series of trainings which will provide literacy promoters with the resources needed for those that would like to learn how to read and write.

In September, MUC held a training session in nearby Agros community El Milagro for community news reporters on several topics. Four young women and one young man went to the trainings from San Diego about mediums of communication, how mediums of communication benefit the community, how news is expressed in newspaper and how to develop a community bulletin board.

