

Village Update

Nuevo Amanecer, Honduras



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In 2007, Abdón and his wife, Faustina, joined Nuevo Amanecer's community along with their grandson, Marquitos. They immediately set to work, determined to improve their life. "People couldn't believe how ambitious I was," comments Abdón. "I began to work on the community's 7.4 acres of plantains as well as our own plot of beans and corn. I would work from six in the morning to six at night because hours don't really exist for me when I am working." The hard work paid off, and the family went from living in an adobe house with no doors or windows to what they now call home, a place fully equipped with a cement floor, improved cook stove, latrine, and running water just outside the front door. Abdón has experienced another type of victory as well. Having previously had problems with alcohol, Abdón he has officially stopped drinking since moving to Nuevo Amanecer and is working to improve his relationship with his wife and grandson. Faustina has been able to become more involved in home activities as well, finding a job to contribute to the family income that will eventually pay off the land on which she and her husband have been so diligently working.

Community Organization

There are presently fourteen families in the community of Nuevo Amanecer with plans for more to join towards the end of April. Leadership has been working alongside the families to ensure that

community rules are known and practices, and that processes continue to improve. Lately, the families have been discussing the importance of respect and its central role in all community activities. Through various retreats and trainings this quarter, the leaders have developed skills in communication, conflict resolution, participation, and financial accountability.



Land Ownership

Land measurement for each family's parcel has begun this quarter. So far, eleven parcels have been measured. Previously, all the land was held communally, but after several discussions as a community, the families decided to divide most of the land into family plots and reserve some land for communal projects. The families have begun to plant diverse crops on their family plots as a part of the learning process.

Housing and Infrastructure

All the permanent houses in Nuevo Amanecer now benefit from running water and only a few of the temporary homes are waiting for connection. Presently, the families are negotiating with the Water Committee of San Antonio to add more domestic water connections, but the process is on hold until the water system can be improved. Additionally, the community recently constructed two reservoirs with the capacity to hold up to 160,000 gallons of water to be used to irrigate crops, like the plantains.



Sustainable Economic Growth

Partnering with EDA, the families have been receiving practical training to increase productivity by growing more profitable crops to earn a better income. Currently, the community is growing plantains, corn, beans, rice, and more recently on their family plots peppers, cabbage, onions and cucumbers. With these new crops, the families are learning to experiment with diverse crops.

The families are busy with the plantains this quarter, selling the fruit in both the local and national market. With their earnings,

the community has paid \$2,484 of the loan for this project, providing a great deal of hope among the families as they see the results of their work. To date, the group has harvested 2.4 acres of the plantain field and ten additional acres will be planted as well.

Nuevo Amanecer is also working to select another new crop in which to invest in order to decrease dependency on the plantain project and produce year-round income. Two other products currently being commercialized are corn and eggs.

Community Education and Training

To facilitate spiritual and emotional growth, the community has been participating in various retreats on subjects such as communication, sexuality, conflict resolution, and community rules. Partnering with a local faith organization, biweekly counseling is available to those who desire. Leadership is also working to ensure that new and old families are integrating and spending time together, resulting in positive change in Nuevo Amanecer.

The health promoter recently finished her training with MAP, a partnering health organization, and has already begun cleanliness, hygiene, and nutrition campaigns in the community. The second health promoter is now well into her second year of training with MAP and will soon join in providing trainings and health care.

Culinary activities are being initiated in Nuevo Amanecer to encourage women to generate income for their families, and boost their self-esteem. Additionally, six youth began school this quarter, are involved in recreational activities and have participated in teachings about sexuality.