

## Village Update

*Nuevo Amanecer, Honduras*



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The families of Nuevo Amanecer decided to integrate the family of Lilian Elsenora Parada into their community. Lilian is a single mother with four daughters ranging in age from 3 to 14 years. Although the typical Agros applicant is a husband and wife pair, the families welcome Lilian and look forward to supporting her and her children in productive activities.

### Community Organization

The process of selecting and adding new families to the community continues. To date, three new families have joined the community, although two others were asked to leave due to problems with alcohol abuse and conflict with other families. The community rules continue to affirm that alcoholic consumption is punishable by expulsion due to the fact several of the villagers have had a history of alcoholism and the problems this can cause in the community.

Community organization is a key component of the Agros Model, embracing equal representation and participation. According to the needs of the community, members elect a board of directors to steer the various committees. In Nuevo Amanecer, three members of Nuevo Amanecer recently created a community surveillance committee to collect reports regarding discourteous situations that arise in the community or mistakes on behalf of

the Board of Directors. Other committee activities include a new Infrastructure Committee and the reorganization of the Production Committee.

With the recent hiring of the Agros Honduras' newest staff member, the community will be able to put into process the documentation needed to apply for legal status and membership as a Farmer's Business Association. Leonel Javier Caliz, serving as the Human Development Coordinator beginning in August, will initiate this project.

### Land Ownership

To ensure nutritional security, the families are preparing the land to grow basic grains. Additionally, with aid solicited from the government, the community has been able to use \$500-worth of fertilizers and seeds to improve their crop yields. The families are also looking to improve their diets and incomes growing pineapples in family gardens.

### Housing and Infrastructure

Living conditions are steadily improving in Nuevo Amanecer as construction was recently completed on 8 more homes, totaling 13 houses constructed in the community.

The families rented a tractor to aid in the widening of a road running through the community. Afterwards, a workshop was held regarding simple ways to maintain, repair and widen roads using horse-drawn carts. With these tools the families were able to build the drains needed to maintain the roads and built a type bridge that maintains its structure even with high water levels.

A new model for a fuel efficient stove was recently built in the community as previous models did not reduce the amount of firewood consumed. The new model is being tested in the home of Gloria García and Julio Vasquez.

The families of Nuevo Amanecer recently plowed 38 acres of land, which are now ready to be farmed. Plowing is necessary for improving the soil's ability to drain excess water during the rainy season, a condition that can cause heavy crop damage.

### **Sustainable Economic Growth**

Several of the community's farmers recently participated in two workshops promoting sustainable economic growth. The first workshop was held in producing and growing five acres of plantains to prepare farmers for planting, first in July 2007 and

again in April 2008. The second workshop was held in useful technology for the production of basic grains, also held prior to planting in June.

Two-thousand seeds of the local plant called Flor de Jamaica were planted in the Nuevo Amanecer greenhouse. The flowers of these plants are used to prepare tea, wine, flower essences and candies, all of which are in high demand and have the potential of being exported. The farmers will transplant the sprouts to 2.5 acres of land in August. There is an ample national market for the plant's products and it has strong potential for exportation.

The families have recently begun the process to receive a loan to plant their 2.5 acres of plantains.

### **Community Education and Training**

The community of Nuevo Amanecer has been moving through several transitions over the past few months. Following the move onto the land in mid-February, leadership has been elected twice, both instances resulting in poor leadership. With mediation through Agros staff and training in conflict resolution, the community is making steps through these normal stages marking of the beginning of a new community, to build solid leadership.