



SMALL GRANTS AWARDED TO PROMOTE CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

The US Agency for International Development (USAID), the US Department of State (DOS), and the Costa Rican Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications (MINAET) and its Climate Change Division hosted a regional Adaptation Partnership workshop in late March 2012 on assessing climate vulnerability and building climate resilience in agriculture. At the close of the workshop, attendees from Central America and the Dominican Republic highlighted a need for increased South-South learning and cooperation and opportunities to directly observe and learn from existing efforts to build climate resilience in key agricultural value chains. USAID and DOS set aside funds to support implementation of some of the workshop recommendations. In September 2012, small grants totaling over \$450,000 were competitively awarded to three organizations in Central America. These projects will help hundreds of smallholder farmers to better cope with increasingly severe droughts and other climate change impacts. They will also generate lessons and educational materials that can be used to assist vulnerable farming communities throughout the region and around the world.



Photo credit: Zamorano

Adaptation in the dry corridor's drought-prone hillsides

Zamorano

The Pan American School of Agriculture, also known as Zamorano, is a private international university founded in Honduras in 1942 to serve tropical agriculture in the Americas. This project will target farmers in the hillsides of the dry corridor in El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, who are at risk of severe droughts. Zamorano will conduct a "train-the-trainers" program for farmers on agricultural technologies and practices for adaptation in hillsides. Target crops will include maize, beans, sorghum, and horticultural crops, as well as cattle farming. Once trained, the farmers will then train others, with support

from extension agents and Zamorano technical staff. Model farms will be established in El Salvador and Honduras, for future demonstrations and on-site training. Zamorano will also demonstrate technologies for adaptation to water stress, and integrate that into their curriculum; approximately 350 students from across Latin America will learn from this new curriculum every year.

Building capacity for climate-resilient maize and bean production in Guatemala

ICC

The Private Institute for Climate Change Research (ICC) was founded by the Guatemalan Sugar Association. They will work with maize and bean producers in four sites in the Guatemalan Pacific slopes, including two indigenous communities. Adaptive technologies and practices will be identified, incorporating input from farmers and an expert Advisory Committee, and then shared with farmers through workshops, exchange visits, databases, and/or climate bulletins. Some



Photo credit: ICC

of the technologies and practices that could be transferred include best sowing time (by crop and variety), water use efficiency measures, and improved post-harvest storage systems. The ICC will also launch a certificate course (diplomado) Climate-Resilient Farming Practices, comprised of a series of six training sessions and three exchange visits. Additionally, three undergraduate students from the School of Agriculture at San Carlos University will work on dissertations on climate-resilient farming practices, combining their research with services in support of the project. Finally, the ICC will collect data on crop performance (such as yields under normal and stress conditions) through a methodology that involves strong producer participation, in order to help validate crop simulation models and improve farmers' ability to plan.

Best practices for climate-resilient livestock production

CATIE



Photo credit: GAMMA-CATIE 2011

The Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) is a regional center of excellence that brings science, graduate education and technical cooperation together to reduce poverty through integrated management of agriculture and natural resources in Latin America and the Caribbean. This project will help livestock farmers adapt to climate variability and change in the Copán watershed of Honduras and the Rio Tumas area in northern Nicaragua. Drought, in particular, affects reproduction, animal health, production of milk and meat, and the condition of pastures. CATIE will study the expected impact of climate change on the primary grass and tree species used in cattle farming. The project will support the participatory development of best land use scenarios in two watersheds, aiming to balance climate change adaptation objectives with rural development needs. Stakeholder workshops will be held to identify adaptation strategies; CATIE will share the results in a manual on best practices for livestock farming under climate change, and a regional course for farm school trainers.

More Information

Grants will be administered under USAID's Climate Change Resilient Development (CCRD) project. During design and implementation, careful attention will be paid to measuring outcomes and impact. Awardees were chosen in part based on whether their projects would generate tangible communications materials to share adaptation lessons learned more broadly across the region, and globally. These materials will be made available on the Community of Practice website:

<http://www.adaptationpartnership.org/communities/central-american-climate-resilient-agriculture-cop>