



**ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT**

HONDURAS THRIVE

As of October 2018



HONDURAS | ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Project summary

Against a backdrop of extreme poverty and drug-related violence, families in rural Honduras are losing hope. This translates to a great migration, in which young adults leave rural areas for urban centers or the United States in search of a better life. This results in splintered families and children left behind. Through this six-year economic empowerment program, World Vision seeks to partner with smallholder farmers and small business owners to make critical improvements that will impact the lives of their children and change the trajectory of their communities.



Madison Samahi, 2, holds a malanga, a tuber similar to a yam or potato. World Vision is helping mothers think about new, more nutritional ways of cooking tortillas that include herbs and vegetables such as malanga, yucca, and onions.

IMPROVING RESILIENCE

Honduras THRIVE (Transforming Household Resilience in Vulnerable Environments) is a six-year economic empowerment project that will help 14,000 farmers sustainably provide for 70,000 household members by generating income and improving resilience by 2022. It will radically improve the lives of children in World Vision community development areas in western, central, and eastern Honduras. By improving incomes, this project will increase the likelihood that parents can remain in their communities and provide well for their children.

The project aims to help families and communities become more resilient by:

- Promoting sustainable economic solutions to lift them out of poverty
- Helping them adapt to a changing environment
- Stopping them from falling too far when they experience crises

Honduran farmers are at the mercy of an unpredictable climate, one with increasingly variable rainfall and frequent droughts that kill crops and livestock. THRIVE will give farmers technical agricultural training and natural resource management strategies that will help them compensate for a lack of rain, and it will connect them to markets for their products. It will give them tools to increase their business profits and move to a higher economic level.

By focusing on behavior change strategies, THRIVE will help farmers develop a mindset to be less dependent on government and nonprofit organizations, and more reliant on themselves and their peers. It will introduce biblical values that can help families make better decisions about using household incomes—to benefit all household members, especially children.

RIPE FOR JOB CREATION

Coffee, fruits, and vegetables are the crops with the greatest potential for growth in the project area. Together, these products are 36 percent of the national agricultural gross domestic product.

Opportunities exist to improve local prices and farmer incomes by establishing direct relationships to sell these crops to major retailers.

High unemployment

Almost 60 percent of those who work in rural Honduras derive their livelihoods from agriculture and depend on managing natural resources (particularly water and soil) in order to farm. The lack of agricultural employment opportunities is a driving cause of the high level of migration out of the country.

Many earn less than \$2 a day

Sixty-three percent of the rural population lives in poverty, with half of those earning less than \$2 a day. With limited financial resources, families find it difficult to recover from unexpected events like drought or a drop in crop prices. When farming fails, parents are forced to migrate in search of income to help the family survive.

Households targeted through THRIVE already are using their small plots of land to grow coffee, corn, and beans, mostly for family use or to sell to neighbors.

This initiative will strengthen the local economy of 31 targeted communities, reaching 14,000 farmers in the seven states below.

HONDURAS

Honduran departments (states) and villages served are indicated in the key below.



COPAN

Corquin
Jigua Copan
Florida Copan
La Union
Nueva Arcadia
San Pedro Copan

INTIBUCA

Dolores
Intibuca
Jesus De Otoro
La Esperanza
San Isidro
San Juan
Yamaranguila

LA PAZ

Marcala

LEMPIRA

Belen
Cololaca
Gracias
Guarita

EL PARAISO

Danli
Jacaleapa
Moroceli
Teupasenti
San Matias
Yuscaran

OCOTEPEQUE

La Labor
Mercedes
San Marcos
Sensenti
Sinuapa

SANTA BARBARA

Nueva Frontera



Marvin Cortez, 26, considered leaving his home in Gracias in western Honduras. But then he found work on the farm of Jose Gustavo Benitez with members of World Vision's Fountain of Life savings group.

World Vision assisted the group by helping them build a water system, select seeds, and engage child sponsors. Working and belonging to the savings group gives Marvin the income he needs to support his wife and four children.

Households living on \$2 a day or less will be given preference, along with high-risk youth (ages 16 to 29) who are among those most inclined to migrate.

Because the project area has seen significant migration by men seeking economic opportunities elsewhere, a high proportion of poor households are headed by women. THRIVE will seek equal participation by men and women, and address the distinct needs of women.

Project goal

The project goal is to empower 14,000 vulnerable families to sustainably provide for 70,000 household members by improving their resilience and increasing their incomes.

Project outcomes

Outcome 1: Rural families thrive in their own communities through increased and diversified household incomes. An emphasis will be placed on helping women and youth.

Smallholder farmers are among the least powerful players in the agricultural markets in which they operate. They are isolated from market information, including information about how to improve the quality of their crops or diversifying what they grow. They don't have a tradition of saving money, and have no access to financial information or credit.

The project will focus first on organizing smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs into savings groups to develop a tradition of saving and gain financial information. Later, farmers will be organized into producer groups to combine harvests to sell to larger markets. The project will use train-the-trainer methods (farmers being trained by their peers) and exchange visits to successful farms to help farmers develop better technical skills.

Farmers will receive financial education and financial access through VisionFund, World Vision's microfinance institution. They also will receive agricultural training and information on developing microfranchise enterprises, such as coffee shops.

The project will emphasize strengthening the employment skills of youth 16 through 29, and provide business financing for those over 21.

Outcome 2: Households and communities practice sustainable on- and off-farm natural resource management.

Strong natural resource management makes farmland—and farmers—more resilient.

PARTNERSHIPS

Many public and private partnerships are helping World Vision provide support to smallholder farmers including: CoHonducafe, the largest coffee exporter for Central America; TANGO International (Technical Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations), a global leader in assessment, design, monitoring, and evaluation for development programs; and the Honduran Foundation for Agricultural Research, a government agency providing research and technical support.

On-farm natural resource management

THRIVE Honduras uses a multipronged approach to train farmers about on-farm natural resources. The project will:

- Develop forest management plans for priority areas.
- Establish nurseries to support forest regeneration.
- Establish and support farmer field days, in which farmers showcase innovative farm practices. World Vision also will share on-farm research results to help build farmer understanding.
- Work with national and international universities to research and develop innovations.

Off-farm natural resource management

This project also will help farmers rehabilitate, protect, and sustainably manage off-farm natural resources by organizing local community members to manage watersheds, water resources, and forests. Community land-use maps will be developed.

Outcome 3: Children live in families whose livelihoods are resilient to stress and emergencies.

Rural families that live in poverty are disproportionately impacted by emergencies of all kinds—including changing weather patterns, fluctuating crop prices, plant and animal diseases, and unexpected family medical emergencies.

THRIVE addresses ways families can be informed and prepared for emergencies. And, in some cases, how they can prevent emergencies from striking.

It starts with helping communities analyze where they are most vulnerable and where they lack the capacity to take action if the need arises.

THRIVE will map potential risks with Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping and connect communities with an early warning/early action system based on cellphone technology. Through this system, rural farmers can connect to regional and national information on changing weather patterns, recent disease outbreaks in plants and animals, and up-to-date information on crop prices. Nutritional status monitoring also will be provided for children to prevent health risks during a food crisis.

Developing community groups that focus on risk management are a key to sustaining inroads made toward resiliency.



Gennri Herrera and his wife, Marisol, have partnered with World Vision for years and now run a coffee cooperative with 125 farmer members that has savings and capital of \$280,000.

Outcome 4: Smallholder farmers and their families are transformed from dependency to empowerment and collaboration.

THRIVE is built on the foundation of giving farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs and their families an empowered worldview in which they know they are valued by God and can play a powerful role in moving their own lives forward.

World Vision will be using a variety of programs during the life of the project to help family members develop confidence, enjoy healthier relationships, and depend less on government and nonprofit organizations for support.

Empowered Worldview is a biblically based model for transforming participants' worldview from one of dependence to one of empowerment and personal responsibility.

Through **Channels of Hope**, World Vision partners with local churches and faith-based organizations to change deeply held cultural beliefs. This biblically based program has been adapted to address issues related to gender inequality, child protection, and maternal and child health.

Raising Children with Tenderness responds to and helps prevent violence against children, helping families build unbreakable relationships with children based on trust and dignity.

Cross-cutting interventions

Child Well-Being The overarching goal of Honduras THRIVE is to work with families and communities to help parents and caregivers turn their increased incomes into improved care of their children. This includes providing children with physical care (good food, healthcare, and safe shelter), as well as the opportunity to go to school, participate in their communities, and know the love of God.

Microfinance In rural Honduras, 75 percent of people have no access to formal financial services and resort to borrowing from family members or money lenders who charge exorbitant interest, compounding the poverty of families.

In these same rural communities, World Vision provides microfinance through VisionFund Honduras, which equips farmers and entrepreneurs with small loans and other financial services. The economic activity generated by a small loan not only impacts borrowers, but also their families and communities. Empowering communities with access to financial services leads to improved child well-being outcomes such as better health, education, and nutrition.



Gender Mainstreaming A goal of this program is to value what both women and men bring to their communities, and offer both equal opportunities to participate in program activities and hold leadership roles. In Honduras, 22 percent of rural households are headed by women. Women have little access to land, credit services, information, and technology, plus they face barriers when interacting with government and other institutions. Traditionally, women are not recognized for their contributions to the agricultural economy. The tasks they are assigned within their families almost exclusively relate to taking care of other people and limit their ability to continue academic studies or pursue additional training.

These seven women started as girls in a World Vision savings group. Now, they operate a cafe that they are franchising in two other communities.



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Honduras THRIVE supports families in rural Honduran communities that are attempting to increase their incomes to improve the lives of their children. It will provide smallholder farmers with education and training on improved farming methods, help them manage their natural resources, and cope with and prepare for the unexpected.

THRIVE will help transform families economically and spiritually. It will change mindsets by introducing a worldview based on the idea that each individual is created in the image of God and has a unique purpose.

It will give children the chance to thrive—at home, in school, and in their communities—by giving families the opportunity to provide improved nutrition, shelter, healthcare, and education.

We would be privileged to have you join us by helping to fund this six-year, \$19.4 million project that will bring lasting hope to so many families.

May God bless you as you consider this opportunity.



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