

# OXFAM IN HONDURAS

Honduras is the third poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean. Farmers, women, ethnic groups and indigenous groups in rural areas are most affected by inequality and poverty. 71% of American Indians and afro descendants live in extreme poverty.



## THE SITUATION

Safety conditions are terrible, especially for women: from 2003 to 2009 more than 1,200 women were murdered, and most cases have not been investigated.

9% of small growers in Honduras are women. 70% of them are illiterate. Income in women-led households in rural areas is 30% smaller than income in households led by men.

More than 50% of people in Honduras are young people, but public policies aimed at them and at women are scarce. Demands from their organisations and other associations are not considered when designing and implementing public policies.

## IN NUMBERS\*

**15,000**  
total people helped

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO RURAL SERVICES

We try to help small producers (men and women) by improving their livelihoods, food security and access to water sources and market systems. We try to influence the Government to ensure public policies will support small-scale agriculture and develop women's leadership.

We're working with local organisations to do the following by 2015:

- Increase income and food security in households, especially where women are the head of the home
- Work with different organisations to ensure women participate in decision making processes and business chain management
- See local organisations and authorities improve the "integrated watersheds" and sustainable water sources in the north-eastern region
- See the Government increase the national budget for small-scale agriculture from 1.4% to 2.5%.
- Decentralise the national budget and local initiatives on behalf of small producers (men and women).



Osmin Guerre, 18, turning the coffee beans in the solar drying green house at Sesesmil, Copan, Honduras.

## PRODUCING AND MARKETING COFFEE

Marlen Contreras is one of more than 250 women who have increased their income and quality of life by producing and marketing coffee. She has succeeded thanks to the support and training the COMUCAP organisation gave her.

Training women and helping them own their production sources hasn't been easy in a society where women are marginalised and denied their rights. But Oxfam's support and collaboration have helped turn this into a reality in one of the poorest areas in Honduras.



Photo: Gilvan Barreto

Erica Hernandez, 23 and Candida Fajardo, 44, removing any bad coffee beans to maintain the high quality export coffee.



Photo: Gilvan Barreto

## SEEDS THAT YIELD FRUIT

At the end of 2008, the EROC (Espacio Regional de Occidente, which includes 400 autonomous foundations, six youth networks, 20 women's networks and 30 civil society co-ordinators in 57 municipalities) signed an agreement for \$3.8m so that 30 of the poorest municipalities in the region could receive direct support in their municipal budget.

The signing of this document is without precedent. Citizen organisations not only lobbied for the funds, but also made the joint decision on the development plans

for each municipality, as well as on the fiscalisation mechanisms. This process has its roots in the moment when ASONOG (Asociacion de Organismos No Gubernamentales) set in motion the "Citizen Participation" programme, with the support of Oxfam and Diakonia. What started as a programme is yielding specific results in the fight against poverty and the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable population in the poorest areas of the country.

## STRENGTHENING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

There's an urgent need to strengthen the links between social organisations of women and young people and create a joint political agenda, especially in the north-east, to bring about change.

Oxfam is working with women and youth organisations to achieve the following by 2015:

- Design and implement public policies that address the needs of women and young people
- Ensure there are spaces for dialogue and encounters between women, young people and authorities



Emelina Dominguez, 42, watering her broccoli at COMUCAPs collective vegetable garden, Mescalito, Marcala, La Paz.

Photo: Gilvan Barreto

## NATIONAL CAMPAIGN SUPPORT

Our programmes have the support of national campaigns:

- The “Vamos al Grano” campaign works to raise the voices of small women growers and highlight the need to guarantee their food security
- The “National Campaign Against Femicides” strengthens women’s participation and leadership, and works to prevent violence against women.

## ADAPTATION, REDUCING RISK AND EMERGENCY RELIEF

The likelihood of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and hurricanes in Honduras is very high. Oxfam is working with others to:

- Build political, technical and management capabilities in preparing for disasters. We are helping prepare a joint risk assessment with other municipal and local committees in the most vulnerable regions

- Help develop and implement mitigation strategies
- Give prompt and efficient responses during emergencies
- Build strategic alliances to be better prepared to respond during an emergency
- Help build capacity to deal with disasters in local organisations



Photo: Gilvan Barreto

## INCREASING FOREST COVERAGE

Forest coverage has decreased alarmingly because of livestock and agricultural activities. But thanks to Oxfam, the Ecological Association in San Marcos de Ocotepeque (AESMO), community and local governments and other national and international agencies, in the Ocotepeque area forest coverage will increase by 28%. More than 14,300 people will benefit from agriculture and clean water sources.

The aim is to protect the forest and adapt

to ensure growth and sustainability. Work includes:

- preparing organic fertilisers
- ending the burning of plots
- stopping landslides with stone walls or terraces
- using technology to help preserve the area and turn it into one that is more productive, safe and sustainable

Felipe Hernandez Agulier, 24, drying coffee. Comucap.



Photo: Gilvan Barreto