Resilient Central America (ResCA)
Ahuachapán, El Salvador

THE PROBLEM

El Salvador is a country with an economy that has grown very little in recent years and Ahuachapán has the highest poverty rates amongst El Salvador’s departments. Due to its location in the Dry Corridor of Central America, Ahuachapán is an area with high environmental fragility, and a strong demand for water and land resources. In order to improve the region’s social and environmental conditions, it is important to address the problems of the sugarcane production and livestock sectors. Currently, there is a weak culture among sugarcane producers around sustainable production. Overgrazing in pasturelands and farms is also a major issue that affects 50% of the country’s agricultural area. Therefore, sustainable management practices of water and soil resources must be implemented to generate greater resilience in the face of climate change. Crime and violence also present a major threat to the socioeconomic development of the region.
52% of Ahuachapán’s population lives in poverty and is at risk of becoming food insecure due to unsustainable agricultural practices and the impacts of climate change. Climate variability is causing an increase in temperatures and extreme events including recurrent droughts and floods. Moreover, sugarcane production and pastoral practices are impacting biodiversity and important ecosystem services of the region.

THE SOLUTION

FUNDEMAS will strengthen alternative production opportunities and will provide support to producers in managing their natural resources more sustainably, improve the local economy and the region’s agricultural ecosystems. Implementing the best agricultural practices will also help to increase the value of sugarcane and livestock production, and strengthen the value chain. FUNDEMAS will allow farmers to provide more and better food to markets and households, while being resilient to changing climate conditions. FUNDEMAS will meet its objectives by:

1. **Strengthen and/or influence policies related to sustainable agricultural production:** the project will develop tools and materials on sustainable sugarcane and livestock production; align public policies with incentives for farmers; and provide recommendations for local and national regulations that restore productive landscapes in the local agriculture.

2. **Generating and/or strengthening alliances to develop the best agricultural practices across the sectors:** the project will promote partnerships with the local government, private sector, and civil society by facilitating learning and collaboration, and maintaining an active dialogue platform across stakeholders. It will identify main bottlenecks to promote sustainability in the sugarcane and livestock value chain. Also, FUNDEMAS will focus on reforestation events to create more resilient landscapes.

3. **Strengthening sustainability competencies for agricultural producers:** the project will design and implement training programs for producers on strategies to optimize water use and protect water sources and better soil management practices. It will also promote the adoption of the Best Practices Manual to help producers’ transition to sustainable practices. Additionally, the producers will have a sustainable land use protocol and map for analysis of potential risks to the sugarcane and livestock sectors. FUNDEMAS will organize an international seminar to share best practices from other countries in sustainable sugarcane production and livestock practices.

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