

Conduct research in GUATEMALA

SBC Food For Progress Sustainability Assessment Introduction

The Stakman-Borlaug Center is conducting a sustainability assessment of three closed Food for Progress agriculture assistance projects. The SBC works closely with our evaluation partners at The Improve Group, to design evaluation questions, create an overall evaluation methodology and plan, and over the winter/spring of 2019 will be conducting field visits to gather data before writing the final reports in summer 2019.

This sustainability assessment is using case study research methods to answer questions related to the sustainability of project and intervention results.

Goal of case study research

The fundamental goal of case study research is to conduct an **in-depth analysis** of an issue, within its context with a view **to understand the issue from the perspective of participants**. The essential requisite for employing case study stems from one's motivation to illuminate understanding of **complex phenomena**.

Seek the particular more than the ordinary

Project Information

Guatemala

We are looking for students with expertise in; extension systems, agricultural financing for small holder farmers, Small scale diversified production, and Spanish language.

Background

In Guatemala, 54% of the population lives in poverty and 13% lives in extreme poverty. Half of all children under five are chronically malnourished, the worst level of malnutrition in the Western Hemisphere.

In the Western Highlands of the country, where the majority of the population is indigenous, the statistics are even more alarming. The poverty rate reaches 76% and extreme poverty is at 27%. The chronic malnutrition rate for children under five is 67%.

Food security is of grave concern. One of the primary reasons for such high levels of chronic malnutrition is that families lack resources to produce or buy nutritious food, as well as knowledge of nutritious diets for children.



Guatemala has tremendous potential for expanding its agricultural production which would lead to rural economic growth, job creation, and poverty alleviation. Guatemala is recognized as a leader in non-

traditional agriculture exports in Central America, such as snow peas, green beans, mini-vegetables, and fruits, which have grown exponentially over the past ten years benefitting smallholder farmers.

Counterpart International Food For Progress Project 2011-2017

This project focused on increasing agricultural knowledge and improving livelihoods of agricultural producers in rural communities in Guatemala. Counterpart International sought to achieve this by improving the capacity Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture's formal extension agents and certified non-governmental agricultural advisers, expanding the financial services available to agricultural producers, and increasing the organizational capacity of local cooperatives representing smallholder producers.

Objectives of the project we are evaluating

- **Improve the capacity** of the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture's formal extension agents and certified non-governmental agricultural advisers to provide technical support to agricultural producers for increased productivity and expanded trade;
- Expand the financial services available to agricultural producers by **developing financial products** tailored to their needs, training credit unions and agricultural extension agents and facilitating new market linkages between buyers and sellers; and
- **Increase the organizational capacity** of local cooperatives representing smallholder producers through the identification of areas of critical weaknesses and executing beneficiary-owned organizational development action plans.

Evaluation Questions

What existing conditions are needed for sustainability?

- Are results more sustainable in low, or middle-income countries?
- What conditions set up market linkages for success?
- How does the combination and sequencing of activities influence sustainability?

What factors of the design lead to sustainability?

- What types of project design are most conducive to success?
- To what extent were local stakeholders involved in project activity design?

What factors about the implementation lead to sustainability?

- How do local partnerships contribute to sustainability?
- What factors lead to training results being sustained?

How valuable to communities are the project activities or practices that have been sustained?

- To what extent have project activities or knowledge, attitude, behaviors continued?

How valuable to communities are the project impacts that have been sustained?

- To what extent have project impacts (positive or negative) continued? (e.g. wellbeing, youth engagement, urban migration, school attendance, diet diversity, market health, environment, income)
- How did beneficiaries respond to subsequent shocks? Is that response attributable (for good or bad) to the project?

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