



WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

USAID Climate-Smart Agriculture Best Management Practices (CSA BMPs) Workshop for the LAC Region

Funded by the USAID Food Security and Latin America and Caribbean Bureaus, and organized by Sun Mountain International and The Cadmus Group, Inc. under USAID's Global Environmental Management Support Project (GEMS II), the workshop's overall goal was to gather key actors in the LAC region to share and document climate-smart agriculture best management practices for climate change adaptation and impact risk reduction.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify tangible **Climate-Smart Agriculture Practices** for USAID-supported rural development, agricultural and food security projects in the LAC Region,
2. Enhance **collaboration, networking, and knowledge exchange** among staff and partners,
3. Develop **technology transfer** strategies to advance CSA and implement BMPs on the ground.



PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

Participant evaluations of the overall quality and value/relevance of the workshop were highly complimentary. Among the **highest-rated aspects** of the workshop were **small-group breakout sessions, interactive field visits, and the desire to continue working together** on promoting CSA/BMPs.

Participants emphasized the need to involve farmers more in future workshops as well as having more government officials participating in similar initiatives.

These results also indicate a strong demand for this type of initiatives and spaces, where specialists and key stakeholders have the opportunity to meet, learn, and share BMPs to continue promoting the CSA approach in their countries and projects.

DETAILS

Dates and location: November 3-7, 2014 in Gracias, Honduras

54 participants from 10 countries with diverse background areas and expertise.

Field trips to 6 farm sites to observe climate-smart practices being adopted by farmers in the USAID-ACCESO project.

6 case studies presented by USAID Implementing Partners from the Caribbean, Central, and South America regions.

Multiple opportunities **for knowledge exchange** among participants like small-group sessions.

OUTCOMES

Identification of crop-specific CSA/BMPs

Value chain-specific “Knowledge Generating Working groups” were formed during the conference, shared their experiences and knowledge and began to document specific CSA/BMPs for maize, beans, banana, plantain, rice, cacao, coffee, mangos, horticulture, and livestock, as well as agreed to continue expanding, sharing and refining this effort.

Identification of key challenges and opportunities for CSA

Workgroups also discussed key challenges and opportunities for CSA/BMPs, some of the key topics discussed were:

- Importance of youth’s involvement in CSA/BMP activities and how to develop their interest
- How to incorporate governments and the private sector into CSA/BMP activities
- Importance of including farmers and producers in future events and using their knowledge
- Importance of local knowledge and culture when planning CSA/BMPs

Development of an Online Community of Practice

One of the most important outcomes of this workshop was the development of an energetic online Community of Practice for CSA amongst the 54 participants, which we plan to expand to include people who were unable to attend, as well as other regions besides LAC.

A CSA BMPs Planning Team with representation from each Working Group and sponsoring agencies is developing plans for key deliverable products, as well as suggestions for the next steps forward.



FUTURE STEPS

This workshop was **the first step** on the long road to achieving changes in best management practices for climate smart agriculture.

The **Community of Practice** created will continue to confront the challenges identified by the participants and workgroups over the course of this initiative. The Community of Practice **can continue to communicate and exchange knowledge** through the wiki page formed for the workshop <http://lms.rmpportal.net/login/>. All resources from the workshop will be found on this page.

These newly formed workgroups will be expected to **share their knowledge of best management practices** with crop and livestock specialists from regional, national, and international institutions.

The CSA/BMPs Planning Team will be soon contacting workgroup members with information pertaining to the next round of activities that will be initiated.