

# NICARAGUA Techno-Links+



Amid lush rainforests and breathtaking volcanoes, Nicaragua's rich landscape provides many diverse agricultural opportunities. Unfortunately, exports meant to sustain the economy usually only benefit a small percentage of the population. MEDA's goal is to involve small-scale farmers in the larger agricultural sector by introducing new technology and connections to markets.



*Creating business solutions to poverty*

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QUICKFACTS

- 2015 Population: 6.1 million
- GDP per capita: \$2,090
- 29.6% of population lives below the national poverty line
- Small and medium enterprises employ over 70% of the population
- Agriculture accounts for about 50% of the country's exports
- Few farmers have access to improved seeds and irrigation
- Over 60% of the population work as subsistence farmers.

## Background

Due to a difficult history of war, political unrest, economic crises, and natural disasters, Nicaragua is overcoming many challenges as it strives toward economic growth.

Despite recent strides in reducing poverty, Nicaragua remains the least developed economy in Central America. Rural farmers in particular struggle to connect to markets and or prosper in an unstable agricultural economy.

Agriculture plays a significant role in Nicaraguan life, especially for women, but productivity and growth rates trail far behind the rest of the region. Meanwhile, climate change is creating challenges for smallholder farmers' livelihoods.

Since many farmers have little access to technology or technical know-how, they struggle with low productivity. Modern tools and equipment are hard to access as they are expensive, complicated to operate and require training.



## MEDA's Assessment

As a follow-on to MEDA's successful Techno-Links project, Techno-Links+ will accelerate Nicaraguan small farmers' and agri-food processors' adoption of more productive technologies needed to improve output, product quality and profitability at the farm, business and trade levels.

The project will encourage relevant public institutions to adopt productive agriculture and food processing technologies, making them more accessible to distributors and processors.

By improving their knowledge, skills and financial capacity to purchase

and use these technologies, farmers – both male and female – can improve their livelihoods and their incomes. Small-scale farmers, distributors and processors can make an important contribution to gender-inclusive, sustainable economic growth in agri-food exports.

## Outcome | 5-Year Project Budget

- Increased agricultural productivity, product quality and profitability for 35,000 female and male farmers, and for 85 processors and distributors
- Creation of 850 jobs in the agri-food sector

