



SUCCESS STORY

HAITIAN LANDOWNERS TO CO-INVEST WITH USAID IN SUSTAINABLE, PRODUCTIVE LAND-USE

Investments in infrastructure and irrigation to bring idle land along Haiti's Arcadins coast into environmentally sustainable production.



DEED's Community Action specialist, Vernande Joseph, and Consultant Glenn Smucker facilitate discussion between important landowners and representatives of rural producer groups operating along the Montrouis watershed's Arcadins coast.



Plot of irrigated land in the Montrouis watershed.

In conjunction with the Haitian ministry of agriculture, repairing irrigation infrastructures and extending the area of irrigable land will dramatically increase the rural farmers' livelihoods and reduce hillside erosion by increasing opportunities for sustainable, irrigated agriculture along the plains. By improving and expanding irrigation, while investing in new approaches to sustainable agricultural production on privately-owned land, DEED and its private and public sector partners contribute to environmental recovery and economic growth along Haiti's Arcadins coast.

Economic Development for a Sustainable Environment, (DEED), is a three-year USAID project focused on improving livelihoods through sustainable land-use in two Haitian watersheds - Montrouis in Haiti's western department, and Limbé in the North. DEED achieved an encouraging milestone by engaging important landowners in plans to bring land along the coastal plain of the Montrouis watershed's Arcadins coast into sustainable, productive use. DEED brought together 23 private individuals who own plots of idle land along the Arcadins coast with representatives of rural producer groups operating in the area. Often, the rural producers exploit these vacant plots of privately-owned land (for lack of access to other land) or engage in unsustainable farming practices on the steep slopes. DEED seeks to engage the landowners in developing land-use plans that are environmentally sustainable, that improve farmers' livelihoods, and bring revenue to the land-owners.

Depending on location, soil quality, access/proximity to water, these plots of land may be used for high value market vegetable production, sustainable charcoal production, fish farming, fruit tree, Benzolive (*Moringa oleifera*) or Jatropha production. Both Benzolive and Jatropha produce valuable oils that can be transformed into biodiesel. Through one of its funding mechanisms, DEED will co-invest with landowners in infrastructure, inputs and other requirements to bring their land into productive, sustainable agricultural use. Out of 23 private landowners involved in the discussions, seven have already agreed to co-invest in using their land in productive, environmentally sustainable ways - providing improved livelihoods to rural producers, and increasing landowners' revenues.

Another promising milestone in bringing the land along Haiti's Arcadins coast into more productive and sustainable use is a newly established collaboration between DEED, the Ministry of Agriculture, and irrigation associations in the area to repair storm-damaged irrigation structures and extend the area of land under irrigation - providing increased employment opportunities for hillside farmers.