



THE COMMUNITY OF EL ESPINO, SAN PEDRO PERULAPÁN

El Espino is a rural town located about 15 miles east of San Salvador and has a population of almost three thousand people. Most residents are small-scale subsistence farmers working less than two acres of land. The local church has been working with ENLACE since March 2008 and after just one year, the community has experienced substantial changes. We would like to share with you some of the wonderful things happening in the area.

30 Home Gardens

The home garden initiative has become very successful and has recently generated the interest of many community members. Incorporating home gardens helps families generate income while increasing their health. The initiative has also been a fantastic way for people to build friendships with one another as they work together toward a common goal.

Tilapia Farms and Small Animal Production

Community members built “backyard tanks” to cultivate tilapia, a fish rich in Vitamin B, Omega 3 and Calcium, in **26** homes. **10** families are also producing rabbits, ducks, chicken and quail. The projects provide both financial and nutritional benefits, as most sell about **50** percent of their production and consume the rest.



Teresa Chavez prepares the earth to expand her home garden.

Effective Leadership

The church of El Espino has more than just a dynamic pastor, it has 32 leaders who have been actively involved in every endeavor, from relationship building to project development and implementation. This demonstration of unity has provided a powerful testimony to the community and growth to the church.

Food for My Neighbor

A new ministry has developed that helps men who struggle with alcoholic addiction. In effort to show God’s love through service, *Comida Para Mi* ministry provides men from the community with food, personal care and Christian counseling.



ENLACE ag engineers train local leaders in El Espino on home gardens.

Visionary Leadership and a Servant's Heart

Personal Profile: Santos Estanislao Carpio Rodríguez

Santos Estanislao Carpio is the pastor of Salem Bible Tabernacle of Christian Church Assemblies in El Espino. His congregation knows him as a 54-year-old father of six whose humility and service have cultivated a thriving fellowship in their rural community since 1988. He and his church have partnered with ENLACE for only a few months, and yet the results of their hard work have been exponential.

For many years he dreamed of a day when he could reach out more to his community but didn't know ways a small, poor church could connect substantially to those in need. Once learning about a neighboring church and its work with ENLACE, Pastor Santos contacted ENLACE and began a new journey to making a dream become a reality.

In March of 2008, he and his leaders began their outreach with tilapia farming, home gardens and small-scale animal production. But they don't want to end there.

As Pastor Santos commented in a recent interview,

“This kind of work is, first of all, a commandment from God and secondly, a great strategy to have better relationships with our neighbors.”

He also said that while their initiatives have a commercial aim and help families by providing extra income, “they also help them to save money and consume from their own work. This all means better health and a community full of excitement.”



Pastor Santos giving introductions at a home garden meeting in his church.

“But there's still much to do,” continued Pastor Santos. There are more opportunities to serve than ever “such as building roads and supporting better community health.”

Pastor Santos and his church's vision is one that sees serving as a bridge, a way to connect to their neighbors. “By being trained and becoming ready to serve,” Pastor Santos declared, “God opens doors and we can find new ways to show the love of Christ... We are thankful to God for what He's doing and for what He lets us do through our service to the people in most need.”



Pastor Santos sharing before a recent church meeting.

Get Involved

Check out an interview of Pastor Santos at www.enlaceonline.org

Help **support ENLACE's** ongoing work with more than **20** communities in rural El Salvador by becoming a **friend of ENLACE** for **\$50** or **\$100** per month!

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