

Life-Changing Loans

Rosa Alba Sandoval de Granados

If you were to leave San Salvador and take the highway East, you would pass through the semi-rural town of “Las Delicias”, The Delights in English. And should you leave its paved roads behind, roads lined by broken down factories and lean-to eateries, and walk through a corridor of vegetation, you would descend a steep stairway made of used tires. It is here where you find Rosa and are welcomed into a small, cement patio strewn with hanging plants and stream-washed clothes drying in the humid air. It is here where you discover the unexpected reality of hope and delight.

Rosa Alba Sandoval de Granados, a wife and mother, is among the few women here who work in agriculture, farming being a typically male profession in El Salvador. She is no stranger from doing what is necessary to feed her 10 children and she dedicates much of her time to cultivating beans and corn on two acres of rented land. Her husband works long hours as a security guard at a local market, a job that is tiring and dangerous but provides some consistent income. Despite their long hours, Rosa is proud that she and her husband have put seven of their children through High School and the three who are in elementary school are well on their way to graduation. This is an accomplishment indeed, as most in rural El Salvador do not go beyond a sixth-grade education.

When they are not studying, all the children help in the field alongside their mother planting, weeding and harvesting. However, three years ago, Rosa knew that her family needed to expand their farm in order to have the income to cover living expenses and create savings. Despite their hard work and successes, she did not qualify for a loan from formal financial institutions; Small loans to lenders who straddle the poverty line are seen as too risky and expensive to manage. That was when she turned to CREDATEC, the micro-lending arm of ENLACE.

While she had initial success with her farming and was enjoying the first fruits of a productive season, tropical storm Ida crossed El Salvador and eighty percent of Rosa’s crops were ruined. Her home’s roof was also heavily damaged. ENLACE’s credit program worked together with Rosa until she was able to repay her loan and repair

her home. The inflexibility of a traditional bank’s loan repayment schedule would have undoubtedly disabled Rosa from repaying and crippled any possibility of a prosperous future. In November 2009, Rosa took out her second loan for seeds and fertilizer. Through more hard work, she and her family experienced an excellent growing season.

What the future brings is always uncertain—especially for those who live on small daily margins. But the access to financial help that looks to prosper micro-entrepreneurs rather than prey on them, is a delight that Rosa and her family know first-hand.

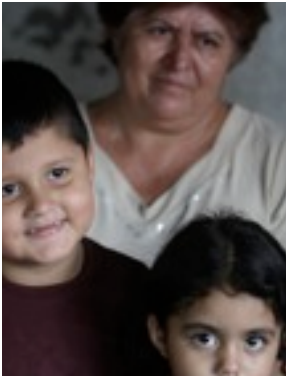


ENLACE Credit Officer, Israel Melendez, talks with Rosa Alba outside of her home.

Since 2005, through its micro-lending arm CREDATEC, ENLACE has...

- Help to start or expand more than 1,000 businesses through more than 2,000 loans.*
- Circulate more than \$1.3 million in loans.*
- Maintained a 98% repayment rate.*

Profiles of Transformation: Ana Rosa and María Dolores



“Everyone is impressed at how my business has grown and improved. For someone without a lot of money, these little loans help in a big way.”

-María Dolores Ayala



Ana Rosa Cárdenas de Díaz

Ana Rosa has been a CREDATEC client since 2006. The loans have not only helped start a food preparation business but also brought her family closer. Previously, Ana worked long hours at a factory but missed seeing her children. Starting her own business enabled Ana to support her family financially and spend time with them. Through hard work and micro-loans, Ana has built up a strong and diverse clientele serving more than 25 regular customers. After losing his job, her husband decided to work alongside Ana in effort to grow the business even more. They recently used CREDATEC loans to purchase an industrial bread oven and two cornflour grinders. Ana says proudly that due to the education her children received, one is now an accountant and the other a secretary.

María Dolores Ayala de Soriano

María Dolores has more than 12 years of experience working as a food seller in the San Martín market. Many of her clients were fellow vendors. Two years ago she took out and successfully paid her first CREDATEC loan of \$400 that she used to expand her business and make repairs to her son's home.

With her latest loan and business coaching from ENLACE, she bought additional seating, tables and accessories, painted the walls and tiled the floor, all helping to attract more clients. She also added a delivery service. She proudly says that her hard work gives her the blessing of joyfully preparing food for dozens of individuals on a daily basis.

\$100 = \$1,500 in Loans: Give Today!

A donation of \$100 will be lent nearly 30 times in the next 15 years totaling more than \$1,500 of credit for ambitious entrepreneurs in El Salvador.

\$100 = \$1,500

DONATE TODAY at www.enlaceonline.org/support

