



## Life-Changing Loans

*Like tools in a tool box, micro loans and business training are necessary tools in community transformation. And so along with helping churches identify needs in their communities such as infrastructure (roads, homes) and health (home gardens, clinics, improved stoves), the need for economic help in the forms of business training and micro lending is also important. In the following stories, we learn how a small loan and business support have had a huge impact on the lives of hardworking entrepreneurs living in impoverished communities in El Salvador.*

Carlos Cruz is both talented and a visionary. A year ago he became the pastor of his local church. Before that he had studied to be a mechanic at the Industrial Technical Institute (ITI) and continues his work with a local co-op of minibuses. Additionally, to supplement his family's income, he and his wife also raise pigs, chickens, and hens in a small pen behind their house.

A few months ago, Carlos recognized the need to improve his pig pen to create better living conditions for his family and prevent problems with his neighbor, but he did not have the cash. After applying for a small loan from CREDATEC (the organization that handles all of ENLACE's microfinancing projects), he received invaluable training from Financial Coach Israel Melendez. Through the coaching, Carlos was able to make and execute plans for a new and improved pig farm. He used the financing he received to invest in paving the pen, making a wall of bricks, and building a septic tank in which animal waste would drain.

The farm currently has two adult pigs, two piglets, and a sow that will soon birth seven to eight piglets. Each pig can result in a two-fold profit. Like other CREDATEC entrepreneurs, Carlos looks for ways to maximize his resources. For Carlos, this means collecting leftover market produce and corn from the local tortilla-maker to feed his pigs, reducing his costs. Creativity and hard work can make the difference between failure and success.

Although Carlos lives a simple life with his mother, wife, and three children, his hard work and access to microloans and business support ensures that his family has everything they need. And while it is rather common for adults to seek more than two jobs to make a living in El Salvador, Carlos is unique in the way he combines working for himself and his family with caring for his community.

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

- Helped to start or expand more than 1,200 businesses through more than 2,270 loans.
- Circulated more than \$1.5 million in loans.
- Maintained a 98% repayment rate.



***"This is a difficult job that many people don't want to do because it requires a lot of effort. So...here there is high demand for pork, but no competition for breeding pigs."***

Watch an interview with Carlos at [www.enlaceonline.org/video](http://www.enlaceonline.org/video)

# Profiles of Transformation: Eleonora and Engels



Many years ago, Eleonora Antonio began her business with a small store in her home. However, her household's needs were ever-increasing, especially over the last 15 years after her husband went to the

U.S. to find work but can rarely send help home.

Eleonora began to take out loans from a local bank intending to expand her small business. Her family's food needs, school supplies, and household expenses, however, drained her profits and made it difficult to repay.

Five years ago, Eleonora learned about CREDATEC when she moved her business to the central market in San Martin where CREDATEC has offices. CREDATEC provided her with low-interest loan and business training that helped her to create separate books and accounts for her business and household finances. Her business is growing faster than she thought possible.

Originally from Nicaragua, Engels Castellon moved to El Salvador to marry his wife, Ellen. Beginning a medical career while settling into his wife's country hasn't been easy.



Engels opened a clinic six years ago but needed an on-site pharmacy in order to make ends meet. He searched for a loan, but was unable to qualify as a foreigner.

With two small loans from CREDATEC, Engels was able to open his own pharmacy. After he repaid the first loans, Engels expanded again and established a laboratory and hired on two colleagues. Together they see an average of 15 patients per day.

Engels now dreams of building a mini-hospital and one day hopes to invest in equipment for X-rays, EKGs, and ultrasounds.

*See more photos of Carlos, Eleonora and Engels at:*  
[www.enlaceonline.org/picture-gallery](http://www.enlaceonline.org/picture-gallery)

## \$100 = \$1,500 of Life-Changing Loans

***Your donation of \$100 will be lent nearly 30 times in the next 15 years totaling more than \$1500 of credit for ambitious entrepreneurs in El Salvador!***

- \$100 - One-time donation
- \$100 per month
- \$1000 - One-time donation
- Other Amount: \_\_\_\_\_



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