



# GANASOL

LIVESTOCK AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE  
ON LATIN AMERICAN HILLSIDES PROGRAM







# GANASOL

## INTRODUCTION

This document presents a carefully designed rural livelihoods program rooted in field-based evidence, experience and analysis to generate lasting positive development across select countries in Latin America. With ambitious goals and clear outcomes, the *Livestock and Sustainable Agriculture on Latin American Hillside program*, or *GANASOL*, will, over its ten-year trajectory, offer important support for small-scale farmers, particularly those of indigenous and afro-descendant history, to secure a more competitive position in their relevant market systems. These farmers will do this by increasing their farm productivity, improving overall nutritional levels, becoming more meaningful business actors and running more effective local organizations; doing this in environmentally sustainable ways will help to ensure the health of vital ecosystems in the affected areas. Diverse and collaborative analysis of poverty trends, government priorities and policies, and thoughtful community and partner consultations, shape this program with a particular focus on gender equity and inclusion.



By 2024: 696,000 organized, small-scale farming, indigenous and afro-descendant families living on hillsides and in valleys in the Americas have increased the competitiveness of their agricultural and livestock production, which is their primary source of livelihood, by 50 percent.

GANASOL program objective

## BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

In many areas of Latin America, the traditional development landscape is rapidly changing. As aid agencies reduce their overall role in development, governments are becoming more involved in shaping and driving such agendas.



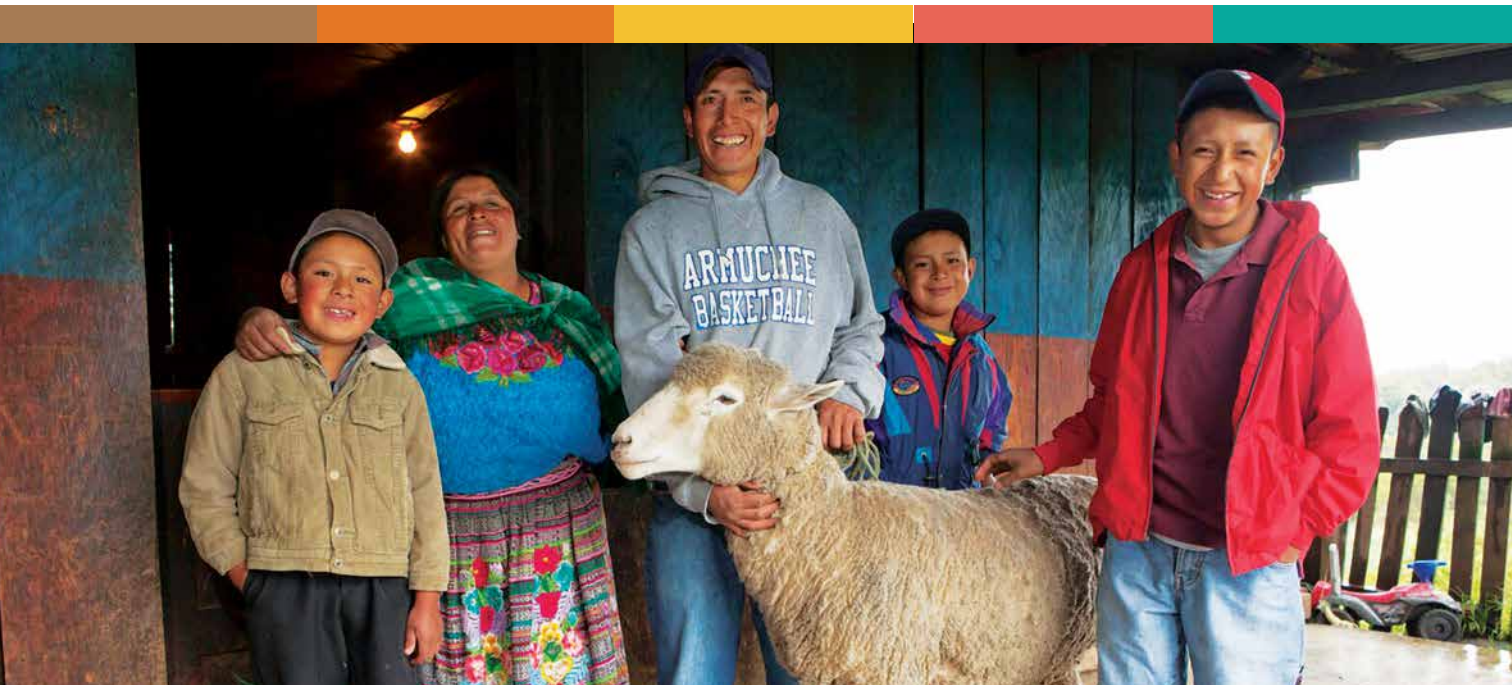
**M**ore countries are entering higher development levels as they become middle income countries and ongoing urbanization continues to shape economic demands and opportunities for rural populations. This is particularly true for small-scale farming communities that can positively benefit from the changing consumption patterns and new demand for relevant products. At the same time, well-known threats of ongoing poverty, increasing economic disparity, continuing marginalization of women and children (especially within indigenous communities) and deepening negative effects of climate change remain significant barriers to optimal progress across the regions. Remittances remain a backbone of livelihood support for families left behind as family members (mainly male) emigrate to earn better wages and opportunities abroad.

In rural areas, poverty is most highly concentrated on hillside and valley ecosystems due largely to the Spanish colonial land distribution allocations still in place today. The small-scale agriculture and livestock activities in these areas are managed mainly by indigenous populations that have historically been restricted to more remote, less productive areas. This exclusion has generated a tenuous livelihood dynamic mainly focused on direct consumption production and limited value chain participation. The more level and fertile areas for agriculture and livestock remain under the control of larger landowners, private, national and global agribusinesses and other large-scale industry. Expansion of these larger businesses, fueled by urbanization consumption demands, places more pressure on the hillside communities to relocate to even more unproductive areas. These communities are viewed mainly as potential new consumers of agri-business products (such as seeds and

pesticides) that have further stressed their vulnerable status. Also, such large-scale agri-business practices are generally not compatible with the frameworks of small-scale agriculture due to their inefficient natural resource use, different production scale approaches and a lack of diversity that is required at the small-scale level for the hybrid direct consumption/minimal market production models in these hillside areas. Launching a regional program where rural communities can more independently build their production and organizational capacities to positively benefit from these trends has multiple benefits; it strengthens not only particular target communities but also the overall development progress and security in the region.

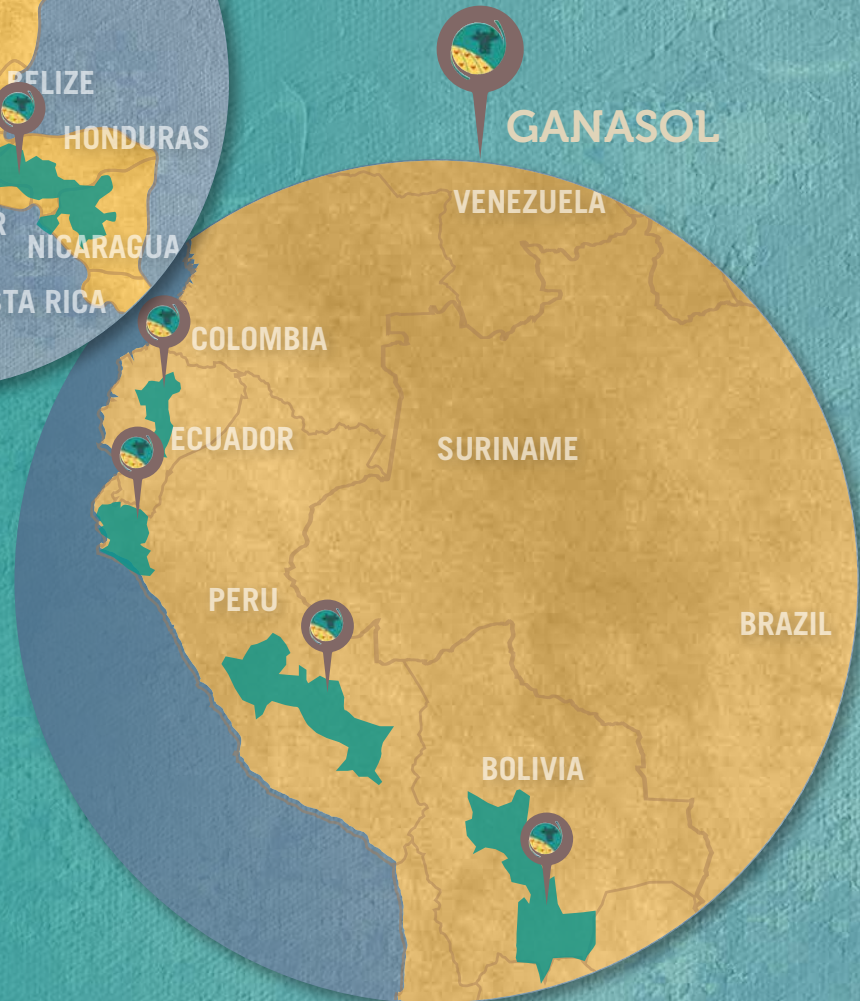
*GANASOL* offers a field-based and result-oriented set of interventions that will generate sustainable, improved and

environmentally responsive agricultural and livestock management production as well as sound use of forest resources. It will also integrate communities into relevant market value chains and systems so that target communities become more stable and resilient. Producing nutritionally appropriate, environmentally viable and market-attractive products will better align these rural communities with the rapidly changing market dynamics relevant to achieving improved livelihoods. Several key socio-economic trends shape the *GANASOL* interventions: increasing urbanization and demand for locally sourced, traditional products, improved government policy responsiveness to a more integrated development approach and decentralization process, a deep foundation of diverse and multi-level programmatic experience and partnerships and finally, various trade agreements that together create a ripe environment for continued progress.





## IMPACT GROUPS



Targeted communities for *GANASOL* are located in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras and southern Mexico. Approximately thirty-five percent of this multi-country population lives in rural areas; half of this rural population lives on the targeted hillside ecosystems, constituting the potential target population.

*GANASOL* will work with twenty percent of this multi-country population, all of whom live on rural hillsides (696,000 families). There is a particular focus on indigenous and afro-descendant families and women and children. Heifer International uses a multi-dimensional selection system to determine the most effective target groups via three main groupings: sub-subsistence families, who are the most vulnerable (Type A) and represent 65 percent of the overall target

community; subsistence families with a degree of productivity and assets along with significant vulnerability to further shocks (Type B) and represent 30 percent of the target group; and surplus income families (Type C), who as 5 percent of the target group have a degree of stability and serve as a pull anchor for other target communities to join these more productive ranks. Overall, the *GANASOL* program expects to directly support 696,000 families, or approximately 3.5 million individuals.

## PROGRAM ANALYSIS

**I**n-depth analysis of the targeted areas development contexts confirms the value of an integrated program approach to poverty alleviation as that of *GANASOL*. Despite significant resilience and other coping capacities, the targeted communities regularly face challenges of underproduction, food insecurity and systemic exclusion from meaningful participation in –and benefit from–relevant market value chain interactions. Stronger participation would provide significant support and stabilization to their livelihoods and futures. These challenges come together to present a formidable obstacle to beatable poverty and overall insecurity for hillside families. These communities also rely heavily on various intermediaries who manage their production, marketing and participation aspects of broader market value chain engagement.





This is due to weak community organization, insufficient business management capacities and the need for constant prioritization of meeting household level needs. Rather than continuing to rely on such various intermediaries/large scale business actors (whose expanding business practices threaten the empowerment of hillside communities), *GANASOL* communities have opportunities to broaden and strengthen their own capacities to assume a more equitable position in society while also becoming more effective producers and participants in broader market value chain systems. Again, this will help them to better contribute to development and productivity at the country and regional levels.

The action framework of *GANASOL* has been termed the four action fronts. They are: 1) agricultural production, productivity and diversification; 2) training in capacities for sound nutritional practices; 3) linkage to markets, applying a value chain approach; 4) training in organizational capacities for organizational and business management; and generating proposals for public policies. By diversifying and improving agricultural and livestock production, communities are more strongly able to provide for themselves and to offer more products to the growing demands for locally crafted and environmentally sound products. Improved preparation for, mitigation against and response to various environmental conditions, threats and opportunities supports hillside communities to not only survive but to thrive in challenging environments and evolving climate change contexts. Government policies are increasingly responsive to these issues, and *GANASOL* will leverage this more favorable political environment. Detailed analysis shows that gender inequity remains disproportionately higher within hillside communities and especially among indigenous and afro-descendant communities. Longstanding patriarchal practices favoring males over females have shaped many inequities regarding land access and ownership, education and paid labor opportunities, access to safe health and social services and job and technical training. Recent trends in rural organizational structuring show a complex picture; although indigenous organizations have strengthened as policies are more responsive to collective action and effectiveness, there has also been a breakdown of the organizations responsible for managing



such integrated development as they are replaced by organizations prioritizing broader larger scale economic development. This shift has moved away from the prioritization of indigenous communities. Strengthening the social capital of hillside farmers and related stakeholders to better organize themselves will help them to achieve more livelihoods and business practices.

As mentioned, meaningful participation of target communities in value chains plays a central role in *GANASOL*. By further diversifying agricultural and livestock production, hillside communities will more sustainably manage their own livelihood improvements and reduce vulnerabilities related to singular product sourcing.

The target areas have unique production systems that will be further analyzed for detailed implementation; initial *GANASOL* research indicates six value chains relevant to input supply, production, processing, and markets: basic grains, beekeeping, guinea pigs, fruits, poultry and organic vegetables.





# TECHNICAL APPROACH

**G** ANASOL program projects will achieve success and impact through technical interventions oriented around and in support of current and expanding government and partner poverty alleviation efforts related to food security. Several expected key results reflect this broader goal:

- 1** 696,000 organized families increase production and productivity on their farms by 30 percent through applying agroecological production systems through a value chain approach and increase their income by 30 percent.
- 2** By 2024, 696,000 rural, organized families have improved their access to nutritious and hygienically prepared foods through diversified and planned family production, covering 70 percent of their food needs.
- 3** 140,000 participating families are actively involved in managing the value chains of local products with high potential for efficient market entry and increase their income from agricultural and livestock production by 50 percent.
- 4** 696,000 men and women producers have organizations that are capable of managing value chains and proposing equitable models for rural development.



Various diverse activities are planned for these action fronts: technical trainings in appropriate agricultural and livestock production, management, value chain analysis, business and organizational capacity building, scalable and practical nutrition interventions and awareness raising as well as proven Heifer practices such as Passing on the Gift and Cornerstone Training<sup>1</sup>. Through these action fronts and activities, target communities will secure stronger livelihoods in these rapidly changing environments. Importantly, cascade training – in which directly trained individuals further work with additional farming families to train those individuals for a next round of training – serves as a particularly empowering aspect of capacity building. A number of key drivers of change shape these implementation activities: agroecological production, value chains, income, nutrition and food security, social capital, gender equity, and proven Heifer approaches of Cornerstone Training based on the application of Values-based Holistic Community Development model and practicing Passing on the Gift.

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1. Additional activity details include: preparing climate change adaption strategies, changing home health practices, establishing quality standards for products and developing additional private-public partnerships





## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

**H**eifer International uses a comprehensive program approach to track and achieve lasting and meaningful positive impact for all its programs. *GANASOL* will have a complete monitoring and evaluation plan that fosters learning, tracks implementation progress, and strengthens partnerships and ensures sustainability. Using the program goals, drivers and action fronts discussed earlier, the M&E plan will be anchored in the Heifer global impact monitoring system that will incorporate the regional, country and local contexts. Stakeholders and program partners will play a core role to ensure ongoing in-country commitments and quality.



## RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

**A**s a ten-year regional program, *GANASOL* has a financial goal of USD \$204 million to generate the anticipated breakthrough changes and sustainable impact that the program has set to achieve. The financial support needed to reach this goal is being fundraised by Heifer International, development agencies, governments, foundations, corporations, and other public and private sources.



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