

# MCC Partnerships in Smart Design

## Road Construction the Responsible Way

Reina Aguilar has long fought to improve the opportunities for her family's well-being. Her once-distant dream of starting her own business to support her family and provide for her home is on course to becoming a reality. On November 11, 2008, FOMILENIO (the MCA entity in charge of implementing the U.S. Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact with El Salvador) and the Ministry of Public Works, informed Reina that the first section of the Northern Transnational Highway (NTH) would require the use of a small section of her land and that she would be eligible for compensation and technical assistance as part of this project. The MCC-funded Connectivity Project will design and build the much awaited NTH, a generational dream that will help integrate the currently isolated citizens of the Northern Zone with economic opportunities previously out of reach.

MCC required FOMILENIO to conduct full environmental and social impact assessments to include resettlement, gender, and archaeological appraisals, as part of the feasibility studies for the highway construction project. Based on the results, the final road design will be adjusted to allow the least amount of disturbance to the environmental and social fabric of the impacted communities. FOMILENIO invited Reina to a meeting to learn about the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) developed to orient the variety of compensation and resettlement options available as a prerequisite to actual construction of the highway. As she listened to the presentation, it was clear to her that she and the other affected parties would actually prosper in terms of the compensation for the necessary land acquisitions as well as in terms of new opportunities resulting from this new construction. Residents would receive improved residential



*Reina Aguilar formalized the sale of a small section of her land as part of FOMILENIO's Resettlement Action Plan. FOMILENIO can now move forward with the construction of the first segment of the Northern Transnational Highway (NTH), which aims to increase economic opportunities in the Northern Zone. Reina says, "I am pleased because the construction of this road means more customers for my future business."*



*The MCC-funded Connectivity Project will design and build the much awaited Northern Transnational Highway, a generation-long dream that will help integrate the isolated Northern Zone by linking its people with economic opportunities previously out of reach.*

I have no doubt that the project will be implemented successfully and will improve my family's standard of living. Construction of this new road means living in a healthier environment - no more dust-related illnesses, greater accessibility to other regions of the country, and potential new business opportunities for me and my family." This road project marks the beginning of a better life for Reina and her family, and for the population of the Northern Zone of El Salvador.

housing or funds to purchase a home of equal condition.

While road construction may create temporary inconveniences for some, it will also create both short-term and long-term economic opportunities for Reina's community. As Reina said, "I'm pleased because the construction of this road means more customers for my future business. I hope to sell pupusas (traditional handmade pan-fried corn fritters with various fillings), natural drinks, custard, and rice pudding deserts to construction workers and others that will come to the community. Generally, this type of food sells very well."

When Reina picked up her compensation check and gave her fingerprints to legalize the purchase contract, she added, "Since I was first invited to talk to the (FOMILENIO) RAP team, I liked this project.