Phone Interview Questions with Luis (CRS): translated

**Administración**

1. La cooperativa recibe fondos de otros lugares, o es solo mediante USAID? Por ejemplo, leímos que recibieron fondos de Howard Buffett Foundation para CAFÉ Livelihoods. *Is the coop receiving funding from other sources other than USAID?*
   1. Actually, a point of clarification here. We (the coop) are not getting any funding from anyone. The USAID funding that CRS Guatemala got is for another project in another area of the country. We only received private funds to establish basic start-up needs (building, office supplies) but as of right now, we are not getting any funds. We are in the process of having some conversations with Green Mountain Coffee and looking at the potential of some kind of 3 year partnership.

**Plátano y Café**

1. Exactamente cuál es la especie de plátano criollo que crecen en la cooperativa? *What exact banana species are the farmers growing?*
   1. We are trying to pinpoint the exact species, but we think it is the Gros Michel. Now, there are various strands from within this type and the farmers grow many of these subgroups. We’ll work on getting you the scientific name soon, though, just to make sure.
2. Tenemos entendido que cada familia tiene aproximadamente 200 tallos por hectare - cual es la producción de plátano por tallo – nosotros estimábamos que es alrededor de 15-20 kilos (35-45 libras), es correcto? *We understand that you have about 200 plants per hectare – what is the yield per stalk? Is it around 15-20 kilos?*
   1. Karla needs to verify he meant stalk (and not plant), but it sounds like he said that “each stalk yields 30 kilos per year” Which, if it’s kilos, is double what we estimated? Is that right?
3. Que tipo de café estan creciendo – es Arabica? Cuanto café producen actualmente? Hasta que punto del **flujo del proceso de producción es que procesan el café en la cooperativa? *Are you growing Arabica coffee? Until what point in the coffee process are you growing the beans?***

**Yes, it’s Arabica. Most of the farmers only grow the cherries. However, somewhere between 1/4 and 1/3 of the farmers also partly process. They would peel it (despulpado), wash it (lavado) and take it humid over to the coop offices to dry by laying them on the patio (apparently they have a pretty good sized patio). The coffee gets sold according to the market value. Right now, the coffee pricing is low. For every 5 cherry quintales, they can make 1 quintal of pergamino; 130 lbs of pergamino = 1 quintal of café de oro (aka: ready for export).**

1. A cuanto se venderia el platano en el mercado local? A cuanto se lo venden a los intermediarios? *How much are bananas sold for at the local market? How much do farmers sell them for to the intermediaries?*
   1. There is very little difference in pricing that the farmer would get by going to the local market versus just using an intermediary. The prices at the local market vary depending on distance (from the coop) and banana quality, but it can range anywhere from 35-50 Quetzales per quintal. The intermediary would pay pretty much the same price, which varies according to the commodity prices at the time. **The issue with the local markets is that they’re very small and so the farmers can’t sell very much**, so it’s easier for them to use intermediaries since that eliminates transportation. **So essentially, an intermediary calls the farmer and tells them their desired pick-up day and quantity; the farmer then gathers the requested bananas.** The largest market nearest the coop with relatively high traffic is about 160 km away.
   2. *Would there be demand for more bananas if we were able to figure out a way to produce more?* Yes…but we’d have to figure out what other markets they could sell to because right now, the local communities are consuming pretty much what we are producing.
   3. ***What about plantains? How much would they sell for?* I don’t know how much plantains would sell for, but it’s definitely a lot more….somewhere between 2-3 times as much. Plantains get sold by “ramal” (instead of quintal). No one is currently growing them, because it’s not used very much here. *But if people had access to plantains, would they buy them?* Yes.**
   4. *What about transport? How much would it cost to rent a truck? It depends on distance. If a farmer were to rent to sell around the community, it would cost about 40-50 Quetzales. If one were to drive over to the capital, a truck that could carry 200 quintales would cost about 1,000 Quetzales.*

**Cooperativa**

1. Tiene usted alguna idea del precio por platano que se obtendría si hubiera posibilidad de exportación? Nos podría dar la información de su contacto de Walmart que se encarga de las compras del plátano deshidratado? Do you know what the price might be for an export banana? *Could you share your contact information for the Walmart person who manages the dehydrated banana?* 
   1. I was asking my contact who dabbles a little in export processing and he said that **Chiquita would probably only pay about 20-30 Quetzales per quintal**. In fact, would you be interested in trying to make it out to a Chiquita plantation while we’re out in Zacapa? We said yes so he’s going to try to get us a visit.
2. Todas las familias tienen acceso a electricidad continua o es que utilizan generadores? *Do all the families have access to continuous electricity or are there some that run on generators?*

We didn’t get to ask him this specific question, but we did ask “Do you think the coop has the capacity to someday reach the productivity level of the Finca (more successful co-op)?” and he said: Yes, that is ultimately the objective of the coop. We have a pretty good infrastructure, plenty of space and electricity already. We would like to be going to market ourselves. So essentially, they have the foundation (and hopes) to continue growing. We then asked “Do you think the local Walmarts would be interested in purchasing from you, say in dehydrated and banano criollos? How far is the nearest Walmart?” To which he replied: **Yes, I think they’d sell the processed ones and maybe the criollos. We’d have to look into that. Yes, we have a local Walmart about 20 minutes away.**

**Interview 2 – email questions translated:**

1. Do you have a map of the co-op we could use to get acquainted with the farmer plots and distances between locations?

No, we do not have a map of the cooperative.

1. Is there more land available that is currently not being used? Is the land collectively held or owned by each farmer?

No. In general, all land is being used. The land is owned by each farmer (each farmer has a plot of about 0.4-0.7 hectares)

1. How do the farmers get the tools they need for planting, growing, harvesting? Does the co-op provide tools or assist in purchasing? Where would farmers go to get more tools if they needed them?

Many of the farmers get their agriculture and input by taking up loans which they re-pay at the time of harvest. Lenders charge high interest rates.

1. Does rainfall provide enough water for the coffee and bananas or do the farmers need to get additional water? If so, how much and what are the additional costs?

Yes, rainfall is enough for coffee and banana. There may be water shortage for banana production in some of the lowest parts of the department during the dry season, but they do not get additional water.

1. Do the farmers or the co-op ever employ additional labor and if so what is the cost?

At the time of coffee harvest, besides having the entire family help out, famers hire additional labor to pick coffee. A day laborer will get paid about Q50 ($6.41) per day. They do not hire extra labor for banana production.

1. If a farmer wanted to start growing bananas would there be an adequate number of stalks available from current plants or would he/she need to purchase additional stalks? Would you happen to know the going price of these stalks?

Yes, they would have enough stalks available. A farmer usually have an average of 150-200 stalks per hectare.

1. Do the farmers currently use any fertilizer or pesticides in growing the coffee and/or bananas? How much do these inputs cost on average locally? What pests cause the greatest concern for farmers?

They use a little of chemical fertilizer for growing coffee. They do not use any chemical fertilizer for banana production. Pests that cause the greatest concern are (in Spanish): *Plaga de la hoja (sigatoka) (*see it in one of the photos *labeled Sigatoga disease)* and *gorgojo.*

1. How often do the farmers harvest their bananas? Do they try and harvest on the same schedule? How often do the intermediaries from the main town come to pick up bananas?

Every 20-30 days throughout the year. Intermediaries live in the main town and are always buying banana from different producers.

1. How do the farmers transport the bananas from the fields to storage and how long can they be kept in storage (we read 30-40 days – is that about right?) Where do they store the bananas?

Farmers transport the banana from the plot to the household or community by foot (see photos). Intermediaries hire a vehicle to pick up the banana in the communities and transport it to the main town or collection center. Intermediaries store the banana in warehouses.

1. Do you know approximately the percentage of bananas sold locally, sold in the main town, used for animal feed, and consumed by the farmer and his family? Rough averages will work.

About 25% of the banana production (that did not grow adequately) is used for animal feeding. (this percentage includes family consumption which is very little). The majority of farmers sell the remaining 75% banana production in the communities.