Facing reality of coffee producing farmers in northern Nicaragua.
– A field study on the effects of the development program FondeAgro.

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Abstract

In 2001 a development program named FondeAgro was implemented in the northern region of Nicaragua with the aim to reduce poverty by rural development. During a ten-year period peasants in the departments of Jinotega and Matagalpa received expert assistance on farming in order to improve their livelihoods and create sustainable businesses as small- and medium-scale peasants.

This study aims to present the reality of coffee producing farmers who participated in FondeAgro, ending in 2011. Research is made on if and how farmers continue with methods learned during the program and its effects on production- and livelihood development. Existing reports present the implementation of the program and farmers’ abilities to adapt and work with new methods, though this stretches only until the end of the program, 2011. Accordingly, there is no information on how farmers’ lives appear after the program’s end, why this research is carried through.

A field study was conducted in the municipality El Cúa, department of Jinotega in northern Nicaragua in 2012. In order to visualize the complex pattern of poverty, access to or lack of capital assets the sustainable livelihoods framework is used for analysis. To further elucidate the effects of the development program and attainment of goals, a manual on development interventions by Sida is used as well.

The conclusion of this research on the development program FondeAgro is that the effects of the program are positive and negative, differing mainly depending on farmers being small- or medium-scale producers. Many farmers have improved their livelihoods through their participation in FondeAgro but for some farmers there is no change to previous life situation. What seems to be decisive in order to continue with methods learned is what type of assistance that has been given to each farmer during the program years as well as possibilities to participate in cooperatives. The methods used to achieve the objectives of the program have not given the results hoped for and many farmers are still facing a future in severe poverty.

Keywords: Nicaragua, FondeAgro, agriculture, farmers, livelihoods, intervention
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Izabelle Blom, January 2014
List of Abbreviations

CATIE – Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center

CEPAL – Comisión Económica para América Latina

DFID – Department For International Development

FondeAgro – Fondo de Desarrollo Agropecuario

FRAMA – Fondo de Rehabilitación Agropecuaria de MAGFOR (Emergency project by Sida after the hurricane Mitch, 1998)

FSLN – Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional

ICC – International Coffee Committee

ICO – International Coffee Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MAGFOR – Ministry of Agriculture Livestock Forestry

MFS – Minor Field Study

OTR - Oficina de Titulación Rural

PLC - Partido Liberal Constitucionalista

Sida – Swedish International Development Agency

SRL – Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

UNO - Unión Nacional Opositora

USD – US Dollar
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1. Introduction

Since 1979 Swedish government has supported Nicaragua with financial aid in order to reduce the extreme poverty situation existing in the country. Nicaragua is a vulnerable country suffering from civil war as well as natural disasters and in 1999 a short-term emergency program called FRAMA was implemented in order to re-establish the country after hurricane Mitch caused tremendous disaster in 1998. After FRAMA, a long-term development program was implemented in 2001 with Sida as financing agency. The program was called FondeAgro, created to reduce poverty among farmers in the northern region of the country.

FondeAgro had a planned durability until 2011. The target group for the program was small- and medium-scale farmers¹ within the coffee and cattle industry in the departments Jinotega and Matagalpa, located in northern Nicaragua. (FondeAgro, 2010:12-3). FondeAgro offered financial and non-financial services adapted to the varying needs, demands and opportunities for the small- and medium-scale farmers able to participate. The program was implemented in order to strengthen farmers in a way making it possible for them to identify and take advantage of possibilities given to them by FondeAgro, and by that increase their chances to overcome poverty and engage in rural development (CATIE Team, 2008:9,11). Accordingly, FondeAgro educated small- and medium-scale farmers taking part of the program on important components such as production, commercialization, finances and use of natural resources with the strategic objectives of achieving the following (Ibid: 2008:12):

- Strengthen producer capabilities.
- Increase productivity and capitalization of farms.
- Use natural, human, institutional and financial resources in the intervention areas.
- Take advantage of market opportunities and promote access to better prices.
- Develop new production items.
- Integrate financial and nonfinancial services to respond to producer families promptly and adequately.
- Farm diversification.
- Integral vision of the farm.
- Institutional strengthening of a variety of stakeholders: MAGFOR, municipalities,

¹ In all tables and figures with statistics presented, as well as when discussing small and medium scale producers
technical assistance firms and others that, together, contribute to the desired territorial and productive development.

To decide the support needed in order to reach the objectives presented above, base line studies were made to identify problems more precise. The findings of these base line studies were among others (FondeAgro, 2010:12);

• Majority of farmers living below the poverty line; USD 1,25 a day (UNDP, 2012
• Social and environmental vulnerability.
• Limited access to credit
• Lack of technical assistance.
• Lack of diversification in production.

The farmers who were suggested to participate in the program were predicted to have a possibility to increase their earnings along with the participation in FondeAgro (FondeAgro, 2010:5,6). Within the program different types of support were given to farmers depending on their socio-economic situation, relating to what would benefit the farmer’s current position. The types of support directly related to coffee farmers productions were (CATIE Team, 2008:11,13):

• Home-garden education including apiculture; how to cultivate a small section of a manzana with vegetables, crops like beans and maize, fruit trees and caring of animals (hens, birds, pigs) to improve the daily diet. For apiculture material and equipment (beehives, centrifuges, wax sheets, breeding stocks) was assisted with and educated on (FondeAgro, 2010:45,52).

• Financial support such as credit possibilities with banks or through cooperatives: short-term credits for farmers being able to decide the use of the money received with the goal of long-term sustainable institutions, with the objective of credit recovery for small- and medium-scale farmers through their partnership with banks. Through cooperatives cooperate with companies offering credit when using methods taught by them to the farmers (Ibid: 24,48).

• Technical assistance in form of training on: use of organic fertilizers, new machinery and tools to render more crops, traps to control vermin as well as new productions methods; recepo de café (Ibid: 47).
1.1 Research problem and relevance

Already existing written material on the development program FondeAgro are produced by participating actors themselves. There are several reports, from the beginning of the program to its final stages (FondeAgro, 2010:i). What are not available are reports on how farmers’ life situation is today, when the project has been completed and farmers have to manage productions on their own.

It is highly relevant to carry through this research as performing a follow-up on a program like FondeAgro will bring new insights, as there have been no studies made focusing on aftermaths of the program until this study. The coffee farmers who participated in the program will be of main focus along with the information they are willing to share. As the farmers are those who’s livelihoods needed to be improved, and for that reason participated in the program, it is logical to keep focus on their views and opinions. It is their opinions that are of interest as they can present information on changes in their lives related to their participation in the development program. The study will show if and how the participating farmers are affected when getting support from a program like FondeAgro. This will give insight on and awareness about program impact among involved organizations and donors.

The information will present if methods taught to farmers have contributed to the aftermaths of the program or if there have been other factors having crucial influence on their current life situation. This can be a change in world market price on coffee, growing or decreasing demand as well as supply caused by weather conditions or political changes in the country having impact on farmers’ livelihoods. The outcomes, either positive or negative, of implementing a program like FondeAgro should be exposed to developed countries that in many cases assist developing countries with aid. Further the study will show which assistance has been most successful regarding possible improvement of farmers’ productions and livelihoods. This information can later on be used when introducing similar programs elsewhere, as it is relevant to consider what has been successfully accomplished previously.

1.2 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to show if the development program FondeAgro has improved farmers’ livelihoods in the rural areas in the department of Jinotega by assistance on more sustainable production and increased awareness of cultivation of crops; thus, methods for socio-economic improvement. The goal is to present if farmers in the coffee industry have
been taught how to make their production more profitable and sustainable during participation in the development program, if they are continuing their production with these methods and if these methods are making a difference on livelihoods.

1.3 Research questions

In order to determine how coffee farmers in the region of El Cúa have been affected by the assistance given by FondeAgro the following research questions will be used:

• How are capital assets affected due to assistance given to farmers on credit assistance, home gardening and/or technical assistance?
• Are there differences in livelihoods among farmers due to the assistance given by FondeAgro? If so, how do they appear?
• How do farmers use their new knowledge gained from FondeAgro after the program’s end?

Answers to research questions will be dealt with in chapters Findings and Analysis.

1.4 Analytical frameworks

1.4.1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Information received through interviews will be analyzed with the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, SRL. This is a framework created to improve our understanding of the situation of the poor (DFIDb, 1999) and is adaptable on programs like FondeAgro as it focuses on a weak group in society aiming for socio-economic development. SRL is a framework that claims five capital assets crucial for this development to take place. These capital assets are social, physical, human, natural and financial capitals. SRL will be used to identify how farmers’ capitals looked like before and after their participation in FondeAgro. Accordingly, how the program affected the content of the capital assets and to what extent changes have taken place within them (DFIDb, 1999).

1.4.2 Looking Back, Moving Forward – Sida Evaluation Manual

The analysis of findings will be presented with the use of an evaluation manual from Sida. This is a manual used when evaluating development interventions and is adaptable in this study as FondeAgro is a development intervention and has been financially supported by Sida. With the use of this manual “Looking Back, Moving Forward” the analysis will be presented in four sections, namely effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability. The
worth of the intervention will be presented with the help of the four standard yardsticks presented above (Molund & Schill, 2007: 27).

1.5 Method
A minor field study (MFS) was performed during the months June and July of 2012 in Nicaragua. To collect data during these two months semi-structured interviews were made with small- and medium-scale farmers\(^2\), who had been the target groups in FondeAgro. Information has also been collected through observations of farmers and the environment in which they are living. Additional information has been collected from reports and documents presented by FondeAgro, Sida and other actors taking part in the program such as MAGFOR. Material on the Nicaraguan coffee industry has been used and national history information brings understanding to the complexity of existing social problems in the country.

1.6 Structure of thesis
The first chapter of this thesis gives an introduction to the development program FondeAgro as well as information on why and how the research is carried through. Further, the second chapter gives detailed information on how the research was conducted, accordingly a methodological framework. Chapter three deals with the analytical framework used during the research. Background information on Nicaragua as well as information on coffee is presented in chapter four followed by a presentation of findings in chapter five with the use of SRL. Additionally, chapter six contains an analysis made with the evaluation manual “Looking Back, Moving Forward” as an analytical tool. A conclusion of the research and its findings is found in chapter seven. References and appendix are found in the very end.

1.7 Limitations and delimitations
A delimitation of the geographical area and its population was necessary for this research as FondeAgro operated in an area too big to cover. El Cúa became the main area for this research, being an area in the northern region of the country where a majority of farmers are involved in coffee production. It is also a region where FondeAgro was active for the entire ten-year period of the program. It was not possible to study all aspects of the program due to its large range of target groups, resulting in a focus only on the participating farmers in FondeAgro within the coffee industry and leaving the remaining farmers of cattle and milk

\(^2\) Farmers interviewed were both males and females but as this thesis does not contain a gender focus there will be no division of or presentations of which farmers being males or females.
industry without any involvement. Neither will the farmers living in El Cúa but not being part of the development program be involved in this thesis.

Interviews and collection of material during the field study were performed in Spanish. With Spanish as third language it may have occurred problems that would not have been an issue if the research had been performed in English or Swedish. Another language than Spanish might however limit the possibility of performing interviews and collecting material without having to use a third party. Due to a risk of misunderstandings during interviews a dictaphone was used as a helping tool. This made it possible to listen to interviews again and diminish the risks of misinterpretation of information received.

It was not possible for the researcher to choose farmers for interviews during the research, due to lack of knowledge of the area and accessibility and availability of farmers. Accordingly, a woman who had been working for FondeAgro during its final years selected them. She was able to assist in the search for farmers living within a distance possible to reach by daytrips that the researcher was not able to carry through on her own as to why this assistance was necessary.

21 interviews were conducted, implying a small number in proportion to the number of all participants in FondeAgro. This means that there may be many other farmers in other areas having different opinions and experiences on FondeAgro than the one’s interviewed in this study. Though the information gathered and presented in this research is of high value as this type of information; farmers opinions and experiences of the program is lacking.

One further limitation is that it was not possible to perform interviews with focus groups such as cooperatives. It was not possible to gather farmers from the same cooperatives during the time spent in field, as they did not necessarily live close to each other. It was instead decided to make sure to interview at least two persons from the same cooperative or region. In this way some correlation between the farmers was ensured.

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3 It is difficult to elucidate how many families benefitted from FondeAgro as some were assisted with one component of the program while others where assisted with several. Further, in one family the husband could receive credit and the wife home-garden education while in another family assistance could be given only to the husband on technical assistance. Hence, depending on how to measure the number of beneficiaries, by families or individuals, the number will differ. The number of beneficiaries also varies between location, agricultural business and socio-economic conditions. In an overall looking perspectives the total number of beneficiaries of the program FondeAgro exceeds 24 000 farmers (FondeAgro, 2010: 94).
1.8 Ethical considerations

There are ethical guidelines one ought to follow when conducting a study within social science where the informants become exposed. Some of these guidelines consist of the importance to inform the interviewees on the purpose of the study, that their participation is voluntary and that their identity will be confidential through the whole research process as well as the compilation of the report (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003: 61-62). The interviewees were informed on the above aspects as well as of the researcher’s non-existing correlation to FondeAgro. They were informed that the research was part of a university degree and not due to any request from FondeAgro or other actors. To keep the farmers anonymous in this thesis the abbreviation P (peasant) will be followed by a number representing the order of the interviews and a letter representing male (M) or female (F) (e.g. P14F) when referring to information gathered through interviews.
2. Methodological framework

This chapter explains the methods used to collect information and argues why these methods are most suitable to receive results possible to analyze with the analytical tool chosen.

2.1 Thesis method

This thesis is a qualitative study with an ethnographic approach. A qualitative research implies through interviews with a selected group of people receive information in order to analyze a specific topic. This type of research is suitable when studying topics that lack former investigation in wider spectra and that is fairly uninvestigated (Johannessen & Tufte, 2002:21). Performing research with a qualitative design require flexibility and ability of the researcher to adapt. There has to be openness to changes as it is an exploratory method of investigation, though it is very important to have a clear research design before conducting a study of this character (Denscombe, 2010:109). Using a qualitative method often includes collection of information additional to interviews. This is often retrieved from data in books and reports (Creswell, 2009:4), which is also the case in this particular thesis, making triangulation part of the methodology. When using different methods in order to make the information received valid it is called triangulation (Mikkelsen, 2005: 96-7).

Conducting a qualitative research on farmers’ perspective on FondeAgro will present their experiences and opinions concerning the program and its actions taken to improve livelihoods. Interviews will show farmers’ current life situation and possible differences from how they lived before assistance started. Thus, if and how farmers’ lives have changed over time as they participated in FondeAgro will be presented and analyzed.

2.1.1 Ethnography

Ethnography mainly refers to observations of a specific group of people during a longer period of time. Matagalpa was the base during the first weeks of the study, when doing the preparation work for the field trip to El Cúa. When time to start interviews approached, the base location changed to the municipality of El Cúa. This was the base during the time the field study was conducted, as this village is located in the mountains close to farmers. This study has partly used an ethnographic approach as a specific group of people has been studied and the researcher have been adapting to the informants lives, though not during a longer time.
The goal in this type of research is to collect a larger amount of information based on a smaller number of interviews. (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003: 84). Thus, 21 interviews were performed, representing small scale and medium scale farmers. According to Steinar Kvale (1997) the goal with qualitative interviews is to distinguish the daily life of informants to be able to further analyze what they explain in a correct and fair way (Johannessen & Tufte, 2003:96-97). Hence, interviews focus on life situation before and after FondeAgro with questions on infrastructure, technical assistance, cultivation of land and possibilities to credit and/or participation in cooperatives.

Interviews were semi-structured; this gives possibilities to change focus of the interview depending on how the dialogue is shaped. This sort of interviews are known for being characterized as a dialogue between the interviewer and the informant rather than a structured interview with fixed questions and answers, as the questions are more flexible and used as a guideline rather than a strict question sheet (Mikkelsen, 2005:89, 169). Further, the information shall be presented with the goal to answer the existing research questions. The researcher will create own reasonings based on the interviews and similarities and differences that can be found among the collected data (Aspers, 2007: 41-45). The research will present farmers point of view and give them a chance to speak about their participation in FondeAgro. The goal is not to collect involved actors stories, as they are already available in published material. Thus, there are no interviews made with actors involved in the program.

2.1.2 Abductive approach

There are different methods of inference when doing a qualitative research. One way of inference is called abduction. It is applicable when using a conceptual framework and with that framework re-contextualize the reality studied (Danermark et al. 2002: 80-95). The conceptual framework in this research is the sustainable rural livelihoods framework from which the reality will be presented through (DFID, 1999). Thus, the use of SRL will present specific information on farmers’ livelihoods that will later on be analyzed. When using abduction comparisons between different factors as well as their combinations are used to reach answers (Wallén, 1996:48). Further, abduction is an approach suitable in this research as it gives opportunity to look at general structures as well as individual events and phenomena (Danermark et al. 2002: 88).

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4 Induction indicate to look at reality and from the answers received create a theory. In deduction a hypothesis is applied on a specific case and if the hypothesis correspond with the outcome a theory is created with this as its base (Danermark et al. 2002:80-95).
2.2 Criticism of sources

Gathering information through interviews is common for qualitative studies (Creswell, 2009:181). It is important to present the information in a way giving the content presented by the primary stakeholder equal meaning when presented by the researcher (Johannessen & Tufte, 2002:84). When analyzing the results it is important to check the material’s validity and reliability. The researcher need to look for accuracy in collected information and in order to do so it is important to consider the terms trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility of references (Creswell, 2009: 190-91).

Semi-structured interviews are a useful procedure to try to receive as trustworthy, authentic and credible results, as open-ended interviews give the interviewee’s a possibility to decide how to share information. If one should be critical towards the use of interviews as a way of collecting primary data, there may be a risk of bias. The researcher may bring bias to the presentation and discussion of the data collected due to different background, gender, culture and origin between researcher and interviewees. This can result in an interpretation of the material different from what the interviewee had in mind. The bias has been considered throughout the research and the ethnographic approach used has hopefully contributed to an authentic presentation of the results.

The three terms mentioned above are important to consider with primary sources as well as secondary sources. In this research secondary sources have been used to receive additional information e.g. statistics and information on coffee but also to increase the trustworthiness of the information presented both by farmers and in reports. Information on the program FondeAgro have been crucial in order to gain pre-understandings while doing interviews as well as to be able to analyze the results to its context. Publications on FondeAgro and the Swedish aid provided to Nicaragua have been collected from public sources such as Sida’s database and through requests to the department of foreign affairs as well as through emails.
3. Analytical Framework

This chapter aims to present the use of SRL when presenting findings as well as the manual “Looking Back, Moving Forward” that will be used as an analytical tool in chapter 6. Further the chapter will present an insight in the debate on livelihoods.

3.1 Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

The framework is used to understand and describe livelihoods through different components and their correlation to each other, depending on different prerequisites, as presented in figure 1 below. The information collected with the use of the framework can be used to explain why livelihoods appear the way they do.

![Sustainable Livelihoods Framework](image)

In this research special focus will be on the asset pentagon and its different capitals (DFIDa, 1999:1.1 DFIDb, 1999:2.1) as they are ought to be changed due to farmers’ participation in FondeAgro. Together with the concepts structures, processes and vulnerability context it becomes evident how livelihoods are affected in several ways. These components will be briefly presented below but will not be used in this research (Ibid).

3.1.1 Asset pentagon

The pentagon consists of five different capitals normally existing in people’s lives to different degrees, it can be seen as a part of figure 1 and in close-up in figure 2 below. By presenting to what extent farmers have access to these capital assets it will show diversity in livelihoods.
The center of the pentagon indicates zero access and the outer perimeter indicates maximum access to any of the five capital assets. The pentagon visible below is an example of a livelihood poor people are unable to have, indicating maximum and equal access to all assets. This is a goal to aim for, as no assets are enough on their own. The pentagon below presents an example of a positive livelihood but many times the pentagons are shaped differently with less access to some capitals than others and even no or very limited access to some (DFIDb, 1999:2.3).

![Asset pentagon and the five capital assets one want to improve in order to achieve a sustainable livelihood (DFIDb, 1999:2.3)](image)

*Human capital* serves for assets that together create a possibility for people to achieve their livelihood objectives. If this capital is not reached at any level it becomes almost impossible to achieve access to any other capitals in the pentagon. Examples of human capital are health, ability to labor, education and skills. Known is that lack of medical aid and health services as well as lack of education are core concepts in peoples’ lives affected by poverty (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.1).

The second capital asset, *natural capital*, indicates water, land, forest and resources used for protection of natural disasters. This capital asset is closely linked to shocks in the vulnerability context mentioned earlier. The capital includes all natural resources possible to use to foster the capital asset and becomes very important for people who rely their income on natural resources (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.3). Accordingly, this is an important asset for coffee farmers and will in this context also include the crops farmers cultivate on their properties and soils.
Financial capital is measured in terms of accessibility to cash or equivalent, through available stocks or through regular inflows of money. This is a versatile asset as there are several sources for finances as well as several ways of usage. Through savings, grants, pensions and other inflows like salary and sales of agricultural surpluses it is possible to create a financial capital. Further, it is achievable to convert the actual money into other capitals as well as it can be used to gain benefits in society and for daily use when buying goods and groceries (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.5).

An additional capital asset is the physical capital, in this context implying equipment for production and infrastructure. When speaking about infrastructure it often includes transportation and fees, secure shelters and buildings, working tools and necessary equipment, water and sanitation suitable for the production, energy and access to information- everything to improve and maintain sustainable livelihoods (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.4).

Further, the last capital asset is social capital. Social capital equals networks, connections, and memberships of formalized groups, relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges. The components of this capital are often interlinked to each other as one often generates the other e.g. a network can create the chance of joining a cooperative (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.2). Important knowledge is that the ranking of the capital assets in this research is made randomly; one do not necessarily evaluate them in this order neither do the social capital have less importance than the physical asset and so on.

The framework indicates a correlation not only between vulnerability context and livelihood assets but also to transforming structures and processes ending in livelihood outcomes. The vulnerability context include shocks; events such as natural disasters, civil war, economic crisis, that have potential to destroy people’s assets immediately. Trends; recurrent events or actions in e.g. government, population, economy and technology that can have both positive and negative impact. Seasonality; changes in prices of products, amount of production, food availability and employment opportunities depending of the time of the year (DFID, 1999: 2.2). Structures imply levels of government and private sectors; those that set policies, legislation and implement them as well as regulate other functions affecting livelihoods (DFIDb, 1999; 2.4.1). Processes imply laws, policies, culture and institutions being affected and executed by structures.
With the use of the asset pentagon information received through interviews with farmers will be presented. In order to answer the research questions there is investigations made on multiple aspects of farmers’ lives, included in the capital assets discussed in the framework making the research questions and SRL interlinked. The findings of this research will show possible affects on farmers’ livelihoods, thus possible changes in the asset pentagons. The level of achievements of FondeAgro will be analyzed with the help of the Sida evaluation manual presented below.


The first criterion in the manual necessary to evaluate is *effectiveness*. This criterion is used in order to decide if FondeAgro has achieved its objectives and to what extent. In this case there are long-term development objectives, like sustainable productions, that should be achieved in order to state the first criterion successful (Molund & Schill, 2007:30).

The totality of effects of FondeAgro is evaluated in the section *impact*. We look at short-, medium-, and long-term impacts and positive and negative impacts as well as expected and unexpected ones. We will look at skills such as how to harvest effectively, and knowledge among the farmers who participated and see to differences within the target groups (Molund & Schill, 2007:32-33).

Looking at the third criterion, *relevance*, the value and usefulness of the development program from the perspective of the target group will be of focus (Molund & Schill, 2007:36). It will be presented if farmers are satisfied with the assistance received by FondeAgro and if they find the assistance useful and important in terms of reducing the poverty situation they are facing. Relevance also implies how the development program is in line with livelihood patterns and how it corresponds to the needs of the farmers.

Further, *sustainability* will be the last criteria evaluated in this research⁵. Here focus is the assistance given and if it can be maintained today and in the future. It will be looked upon how farmers cope with production and cultivation today when FondeAgro is no longer present. In order to claim the program sustainable farmers shall be able to use the methods learned during a reasonable amount of time after 2011, the year FondeAgro ended.

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⁵ In the manual there is a fifth criteria, efficiency, that is normally looked upon when doing an evaluation of an development program. Due to lack of information it is not possible to evaluate this criteria as it implies the costs of the development program and the justification of it in correlation to its results. The relevance of this criterion is not of same importance as the others, as to why it will be left unevaluated (Molund & Schill, 2007).
With the use of the Sida manual Looking Back Moving Forward the empirical data will be analyzed in order to present possible changes in livelihoods, both positive and negative ones. It will also determine the outcome of the development program and give insight in farmers’ livelihoods today. Together the two methods create a framework where empirical data will be collected and analyzed to give perspectives on development interventions like FondeAgro.

### 3.3 Debate on livelihood and application of SRL

Through history development and livelihoods have been discussed on the international arena. There are many experts expressing their opinions on the topic, among others Chambers (1995) together with Conway (1991) and Scoones (2005, 2009). There are discussions on how and if development and livelihood are two concepts connected to each other. What is livelihood and how can it be measured as well as how to make it sustainable. According to Chambers (1995:174) livelihood refers to actions, assets and capabilities in one’s life necessary for a decent standard of living. For poor people this is often equivalent to sources of food, security and income. When discussing a sustainable livelihood one have to consider that a livelihood shall be able to handle shocks, trends and stress in a way that the lifestyle will maintain unchanged (Chambers, 1995; 175, Chambers & Conway, 1991:). It is argued that SRL is a problematic framework as it requires much time in field at the same time as the analysis very often demands limitations, this since it is difficult to analyze every single aspect of a livelihood as they differ among all individuals. Depending on the point of departure of a livelihood study, as well as aims, different aspects are studied more than others. It is possible to study livelihoods on individual levels as well as national and on micro-economic as well as macro-economic levels (Scoones, 2009:173-174). Further, it is important to remember that actions of a person and his/her improved livelihood may have various effects on his/her surroundings. The improvement of one person’s livelihood can be the downfall of another if not dealt with correctly and has to be looked upon when doing analyzes through the sustainable livelihood framework (Scoones, 2005:11).
4. Background

4.1 History of Nicaragua & Swedish phase-out

An earthquake hit Nicaragua in 1972 and international aid ended up in the hands of the governing Somoza dictatorship. Farmers allied with the party Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, FSLN, to show their disapproval of the Somoza regime (Landguiden, 2011c). When FSLN started to govern the country in 1979 farmers benefitted from agrarian reforms implemented to promote agriculture and increased the living standard in the country. The agrarian reform included female farmers as well as male farmers and by that gave women recognition of being crucial in the agricultural business. Mobilizations among the farmers took place as well as an increase in development of cooperatives (Deere, 1983:1043,1045). The most common cooperatives initiated in connection to the new agrarian reforms were credit and service cooperatives where peasants could unite and benefit from organized unions (Bacon, 2010:55).

Further, civil war broke out in Nicaragua in 1981. Not until several peace treaties later there was actual peace in 1990. Further, the ruling party has varied between FSLN, PLC (Partido Liberal Consitucionalista) and UNO (Unión Nacional Opositora) and currently FSLN is the governing party with Daniel Ortega as president (Landguiden, 2011a, regeringen.se, 2012). In connection to president Daniel Ortega’s coming into power in 2007 a new agreement with IMF was established to secure a stable economy in the country. Due to troublesome history the country now increased methods for poverty reduction at the same time as centralization of the state, decreasing the power of local actors and citizens, took place (Ibid).

In 2007 the Swedish government decided to cut down aid to Nicaragua due to results in poverty reduction not being in line with goals of different programs. They were not achieved to the extent needed and insufficient results became the outcomes of interventions. There had been difficulties in partnership due to questionable democratic governance, presence of corruption; issues Sweden as an aid donor do not support. Contributory causes to a phase-out were a non-existing strategy for poverty reduction. The aid was to be finalized in 2011.

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*As mentioned, the party FSLN came into power in Nicaragua in 1979 with a revolutionary government after an overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship ruling the country. Many of FSLN’s supporters came from the poor agricultural sector that through history has been a neglected group in the Nicaraguan society. Already in the 16th century when Spaniards entered the country Indians were forced to start coffee production in the northern regions in order to survive (Landguiden, 2011c).*
(Öström & Lewin, 2009) accordingly the last years of FondeAgro was part of the last aid to be given to Nicaragua from Swedish government.

4.2 Coffee production in and exports from Nicaragua

In the mid 1990’s there was supply scarcity on coffee in the world caused largely due to climate conditions. The following years the prices for coffee increased, making up for lost incomes previous years but this also caused irregularities in the global supply structure leading to the world’s worst coffee crisis so far (Osorio, 2004). In the early years of the 21st century this crisis was a fact.

Producing countries as well as importing countries were affected by the global changes leading to the coffee crisis, but most affected were farmers producing the coffee as their productions decreased as well as their income (Bacon, 2010:51). In countries like Nicaragua, where farmers depend to a very large extent on their coffee production as main source of income, farmers changed into producing other crops easier to cultivate, some were additional to coffee, some changed completely from coffee to other crops (Osorio, 2002). By the time FondeAgro was implemented in Jinotega and Matagalpa the national production of coffee was approximately 1 079 000 bags á 60 kg in production year\(^7\) 2001/2002 (the time of the coffee crisis) and exports estimated to approximately 920 000 bags, approximately 85% of the coffee produced being used for export. This is all visible in figure 3 and 4 below. The farmers earned on average US$ 0.3/lb.\(^8\) at this time. By mid time of FondeAgro, year 05/06 the national production in the country reached approximately 1 431 000 bags and an export of 1 427 000 bags, being more than 98% of produced coffee exported with the earnings of US$ 0.58/lb. for the farmers in 2006. By the final year of FondeAgro, crop year 11/12 the total production of coffee in Nicaragua was approximately 1 774 000 bags á 60 kg each and exports was estimated to approximately 1 676 000 bags. This implies an export of more than 94% of all coffee produced in the country. All these statistics are visible in the figures below where Sweden has been used as an indicator for retail price in a European country. On average retail price is approximately 6 times higher (US$ 3/lb.) in European importing countries compared to the price paid to growers (ICO, 2011, ICOa, ICOb, ICOc, ICOd).

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\(^7\) The Nicaraguan crop year for coffee starts in October and ends in September with the largest harvest period between October and January. The beans need to be picked within a period of ten to fourteen days when ripe in order to not become over-ripe (ICO, 2013). In the department of Jinotega where farmers participating in FondeAgro are situated the characteristics for the environment is a rocky landscape situated approximately 600 meters above sea level (FondeAgro, 2010:32).

\(^8\) 1 lb = 453,59237 gram.
Figure 3. Nicaraguan coffee production and exports in year 2001-2013 (ICOa-f).

Figure 4. Price paid to Nicaraguan growers (US $/lb.) and Swedish retail price (US $/lb.).
According to figure 3 and 4 the amount of coffee produced has varied over the years and when looking deeper into available data during the period 2001 – 2013 it is evident that there has been an increase in coffee production but there has also been setbacks with reduced harvests almost every second year. This can be caused by several reasons, among others weather conditions and political changes in government affecting farmers and their productions. Production of 2012/13 is the lowest since crop year 2004/2005. This means that during the program years the coffee production was unstable but it did also show on a pattern that for every successful growth, there was an increase reaching above the previous period of increased production. The assistance of FondeAgro during the ten-year period from 2001-2011 can be contributory factors to the increased production and the ending of the program in 2011 can be a result of the downfall in production in crop year 2012/2013. Theories exists on correlations between social movements and unions to improve production of coffee as well as a transnational link with global civil society and state governed interventions for improved and expanded production (Bacon, 2010:51-52) as to why it is possible that FondeAgro play a decisive role in this pattern visible in figure 3.

The statistics tell that unlike production, there is a steady but small increase in price paid to producing farmers along with the increasing retail price, though in comparison to retail prices it becomes clear that farmers’ earnings are very small in proportion to what the coffee is sold for in importing countries.
5. Findings

This chapter presents findings gathered from interviews with the use of SRL, focusing only on the results related directly to coffee production. The findings are presented in a division of five capitals; natural, physical, social, human and financial assets.

5.1 Natural Capital

According to existing reports the target groups of FondeAgro are small-scale and medium-scale farmers. This applies to those having between two and maximum 20 manzanas for cultivation of crops and at least two of the manzanas used for coffee production according to FondeAgro (CATIE Team, 2008: 35, 63). Those farmers who had possibility to participate, except being small- or medium-scale farmer were those living outside of the department capitals (also named Jinotega and Matagalpa) (CATIE Team, 2008:63).

Using the scale presented in the introduction on page 9, 14 farmers are considered small-scale farmers. Seven farmers were medium-scale farmers. When asking farmers they did not seem to be aware of which scale they belonged to; one farmer having 30 mz considered himself a small-scale farmer as to why this scale had to be made. The varying number of manzanas cultivated among the farmers implies large differences in possibilities of production, sales and incomes between the farmers as the amount of manzanas affect the socio-economic position of the farmer.

Farmers were targeted with questions focusing on environment and crops produced. The 21 farmers had at the time of interviews access to drinkable water, about 50% of them had tap water and the others accessed water through wells. Irrigation of plants was used with water from wells if possible; otherwise the only water for irrigation was the natural water from rain periods.

Table 1 below presents natural capital for farmers in form of cultivations. The more access to natural resources and numbers of manzanas, the bigger capital, as they can cultivate more crops. What is considered as a home-garden before the implementation of FondeAgro in table 1 below is when a farmer was cultivating one or some of the crops that are today included in a home-garden. A home-garden implies fruit trees and vegetables and standard crops like maize and beans and also animals such as hens, pigs and different birds, making eggs and

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9 See Appendix 1 for detailed information on interviews.
10 P4M
11 P10M, P11M, P12M
milk part of the daily diet and adding on to the goods produced, sold and used privately. Apiculture, seen in table 1 as well, was an additional initiative by FondeAgro introduced to small-scale farmers, sometimes in combination with a home-garden production. The techniques and assistance of home-garden and apiculture will be discussed more in section 5.4 Human Capital.

Table 1 tells us that coffee is the most common crop cultivated by all farmers, either as the only crop or in combination with others. It is also visible that the assets in the natural capital has been changing among the farmers during the time of FondeAgro as shifts occur between the different cultivations if we look at the two different time periods. Coffee is followed by cultivation of bananas, beans, maize and cocoa as these crops are included in a home-garden and are very important for the daily diet and survival in short-term aspects. Along with FondeAgro there has been an increase in the variety of and cultivation of “home-garden crops” for some farmers (depending on what they cultivated before FondeAgro was implemented) while for others it seems to be more a question of improved quality and quantity, not diversity.

A majority of farmers cultivated bananas before FondeAgro and many supplemented this with a small production of coffee (being categorized as having home-garden cultivation in combination with coffee production in table 1). Farmers achieved to produce a more extensive production of crops than previously, implying an increased diversity of crops, hence increased natural capital, thanks to their participation in FondeAgro.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultivation</th>
<th>Before FondeAgro</th>
<th>After FondeAgro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small-Scale Farmer</td>
<td>Medium-Scale Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-garden</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee + Home-garden</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee, Apiculture + Home-garden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 Physical Capital

As previously mentioned, physical capital imply infrastructure and communication of various kinds. The more access the better possibilities for a sustainable livelihood (DFIDb, 1999:2.3.4). FondeAgro supplied farmers with technical education but some also received machinery and facilities, donated for manufacturing coffee to make the cooperatives able to function individually with their own tools for producing coffee of higher quality\textsuperscript{12}. One farmer was lucky to receive tools and equipment for his private production\textsuperscript{13}. Additionally, farmers that received home-garden education received necessary equipment to be able to maintain a home-garden and keep it in shape, such as shovels. Thus, farmers have been able to develop not only their methods of production but have also started to use more advanced equipment on their farms. The use of new tools increases farmers’ skills and competence to control new productions.

Table 2 presents methods used by farmers for transportation of goods to markets, companies and factories before and after implementation of FondeAgro. Paying passing vehicles to transport products is most frequent among farmers using some form of transportation method. This is a useful way of transportation when not in possession of private vehicles or any means for transportation more than the human body. 13 out of 14 farmers who used any sort of transport before FondeAgro used passing vehicles and one farmer used his own animals for transport. The remaining seven farmers did not use any form of transportation before FondeAgro and is still not using any as they sell their products in their village and walk with the goods they want to sell. A few of these farmers also have buyers coming to their properties for trade. Medium-scale farmers are in bigger need of transportation as they are cultivating more crops and are able to achieve a larger business. As they are cultivating more they achieve a larger income, which have made it possible for them to buy their own private vehicles, done by three farmers. One small-scale farmer has been able to buy a private vehicle. Those four farmers who today are owners of private vehicles thanks to the involvement in FondeAgro are not using passing vehicles any more and transport their goods on their own, as it is more flexible and easier than waiting for passing vehicles.

Two farmers being members of cooperatives Flores del Campo and Colibri mentioned that sometimes cooperatives paid for transport. Each member paid a small amount and together

\textsuperscript{12} P10M, P11M, P1M, P13M
\textsuperscript{13} P13M
they reached the amount needed for transport that could be used at special occasions\textsuperscript{14}. For transporting goods from manzanas to storages or to the location for processing the methods have not changed over the years. Farmers used horses and mules if they could but otherwise they carried their products on their own while walking, either on their heads or backs, or with use of wheelbarrows. To summarize, the transportation system of goods changed only in terms of transport to markets, companies or other buyers with products ready to be sold, not when transporting goods between manzanas and factories used for processing or any sort of treatment of the products before sales.

Table 2. Transportation methods used by farmers to deliver goods, in a past (before FondeAgro) and after (2012) perspective (P1-P21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transportation methods</th>
<th>Small-scale</th>
<th>Medium-scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>After</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private vehicles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay vehicles</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of animals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No use of transport</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Social Capital

Social capital includes anything that concerns social interaction of any form. All farmers joining FondeAgro have increased their social capital in some way. Most farmers have done it while participating in cooperatives but there are more aspects to the capital than just cooperatives. As farmers start to interact with FondeAgro and its experts social capital is increasing already at this level. When farmers’ apply new methods learned and some form new businesses there are need for social interaction with new counterparts and an increased social capital is a fact. The next step with joining the program lead for many farmers to cooperatives, further discussed below. Cooperatives on their own are networks of people where new flows of information exist.

\textsuperscript{14} P10M
Before 2001 farmers sold their goods to intermediaries who in their turn sold the products to companies and investors locally or nationally. Farming was a fairly individualistic industry but when FondeAgro started to help peasants to collaborate and unite, cooperatives were developed and a more collaborative way of farming grew stronger. A cooperative is a joint unit for peasants where they can collaborate and take advantage of the market in a way not possible for the individual (CATIE Team, 2008: 40). Being member of a cooperative comes with responsibilities and duties. In one cooperative the members were not allowed to contaminate the nature when processing the coffee beans and each member need to deliver a certain share to the joint final amount\textsuperscript{15}. The farmers interviewed in this research were all given the opportunity to join cooperatives during the time FondeAgro was present but only 16 out of the 21 farmers were members of a cooperative in the summer of 2012, the time of the research.

Table 3. Farmers’ participation in cooperatives before, during and after FondeAgro (P1-P21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of cooperatives</th>
<th>Small-scale Farmer</th>
<th>Medium-scale Farmer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Before</td>
<td>During</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apiculture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee + apiculture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home-garden</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The biggest difference is among the small-scale farmers who had been joining a home-garden association called “La Cuculmeca”. This was as NGO working with home-garden projects (FondeAgro, 2010:45) but according to the farmers this was not a long-term project and was at the time of interviews no longer in action.

For some farmers it did not pay off to be members of a cooperative. It could be due to too high individual demands on production for each farmer that he or she could not reach, or due to obligations as a member keeping him or her from focusing on production as much as needed. The goal with a cooperative in a long-term perspective is to benefit the farmers’

\textsuperscript{15} P4M
individual production with the help and support of others, but for some farmers this was just not possible, resulting in resignation from cooperatives or passive memberships\textsuperscript{16}.

A benefit of the cooperatives the farmers mentioned was the help they could receive from other members. Earlier one had to manage on one’s own but now when they were in need of help they were supported by the cooperative.\textsuperscript{17} As a group they have better opportunities to produce more and also require a higher price for the goods they sell as the products often is of better quality. The cooperatives function as a safety net for the farmers, operating on a horizontal level where members share the same interest and goals, being equals. The cooperative generates a more organized existence for the members as meetings and activities are held together. Additionally, cooperatives are prosperous for the market as the cooperatives are able to sell their products of better quality to buyers and investor compared to when farmers were operating individually and farmers can more easily sell their products and earn a higher income\textsuperscript{18}.

Concluding, all farmers have through participation in FondeAgro improved social capital but mostly for farmers having possibility to be members of a cooperative. Cooperatives make farmers more interlinked with each other than before. They are linked to each other differently and are able to feel connectedness as they are operating in teams, and in the same teams rather than all of them being coffee producing farmers, in its simplicity.

5.4 Human Capital

Some farmers were before FondeAgro in possession of manzanas to be used for cultivation but were unaware of how to use it. With the assistance given by FondeAgro they are now able to care for home-gardens as well as manzanas with coffee, beans or/and bananas. As bananas, beans and cocoa are crops harvested all year round and maize possible to harvest during large parts of the year, it stabilizes the economy as it opens up for sales of products all year round (Bacon, 2005:504). This is a reason to why it has been a large focus on implementing home-garden education to many farmers, both those who were already cultivating some of the crops but also to them that did not.

Individual assistance was given from expert to farmer on how to improve the production and economy while group sessions were focusing on learning-by-doing methods (CATIE Team, \textsuperscript{16}P1M, P16M \textsuperscript{17}P5F \textsuperscript{18}P1M, P3M, P18F, P21F, P6F
To increase quality and quantity of coffee a new method was introduced called “recepó de café en bloque” (FondeAgro, 2010:47). This method is supposed to generate a more stable growth of the coffee plant as one start one year to cut plants in one block from old and ineffective twigs and tissue, increasing the growth of new ones and by that a more reliable plant and a more secure income. If cropped correctly a plant have been completely renewed when using the method of recepó de café en bloque in five years (FondeAgro, 2010:47). Using this new method farmers can have blocks with plants of various ages and by that a more stable production as the renewal of the plants vary between blocks and year. This is a type of renewal of plants that is more effective and cheaper than the traditional method, reseeding19, which was used by the majority of farmers before FondeAgro existed20. Technical assistance also included environmental friendly approaches; on-farm drying21 of coffee beans to reduce contamination, production costs and increase efficiency, wastewater treatment22 and use of organic fertilizer and pesticides.

Being single parent and simultaneously being a farmer is a hard-working lifestyle as one are responsible for manzanas, household and children all at once. It make it difficult to achieve a large coffee production as it requires much time many single-headed farmers do not have. FondeAgro gave home-garden assistance to women and men in this position, having limited access to food and very limited production in coffee. Home-garden crops like cocoa, cassava and banana improved basic nutritional needs and a more diversified diet could be distributed to the whole family (CATIE Team, 2008:71). Home-gardens yield financial improvements as more products are cultivated and sold, a small but essential extra income for these farmers who are not able to cultivate a large coffee production (CATIE Team, 2008:65, FondeAgro, 2010:47,70). Farmers were given home-garden assistance; how to sow and maintain vegetables and fruit trees, banana trees in particular as they were often used for shading.

19 With traditional methods a coffee plant produces cherries first after five years from the time of plantation. When the plants go old new ones need to be seeded and a period of reduced production take place during a five-year period. This cause great instability in production and an uncertain future.
20 P18F, P17F, P4M, P13M, P21F
21 It exists two ways of processing coffee beans; dry and wet methods. The dry method is the oldest and easiest method, as it requires less machinery than the wet one. The drying process can take up to 4 weeks and is important as it decide the quality of the bean. The wet method requires specific equipment and a large amount of water as it is used for cleaning the cherries (ICO, 2013). Even though this process is more demanding for farmers it is the most common way of processing coffee in Nicaragua. The result of the wet method is beans of higher quality and a higher price (ICO, 2013) as to why this is the method farmers prefer to use if possible.
22 The wet processing method of coffee result in contaminated wastewater, which was previously dumped in watercourses. This implies severe contaminations in water. This is now being taken care off differently and farmers are taught how to use residual water treatment systems (CATIE Team, 2008:13).
coffee plants\textsuperscript{23}, as well as caring of animals like pigs, cows, hens and goats. They were donated tools, material, seeds and other necessary equipment for managing a home-garden from FondeAgro (FondeAgro, 2010:47, 53). Further, as table 1 on page 28 shows, six of the 21 farmers were assisted with apiculture. FondeAgro taught farmers how to care for beehives and produce honey and in the apiculture cooperative Flores del Campo members could borrow equipment they needed for this business. One woman produced not only honey, but made shampoo, soaps and lotion out of the honey that she produced and sold\textsuperscript{24}.

As farmers participated in FondeAgro they gained skills on production but also on cooperative work and its benefits. Being member in a cooperative they became aware of efficient production manners as well as how to negotiate with larger companies interested in their products. With other words the farmers became more aware of how to market themselves to achieve a higher profit and how to become more successful farmers in terms of production, cultivation and sales.

Though there are mostly positive outcomes on the human capital there are outcomes not as successful as the program aimed for. There are farmers not able to continue to use the methods they have been taught due to financial problems and lack of labor force for their production. Most difficult is it for the poorest farmers with the smallest properties and smallest productions, being small-scale farmers. Even if participation in activities arranged by FondeAgro did not imply a financial cost it is still a question of time. Some single-headed households were unable to continue the program as they did not have the time it required.

Attending activities by FondeAgro implied less work at the manzanas or home-garden. This means that the normal work pattern; progress and results, were modified to the negative for those who did not manage to keep up the normal production in combination to new skills taught. As a few small-scale farmers did not have the economy to employ day or week laborers they could not continue with the program meant to improve their productions and had to focus on their cultivations with the standards they were before FondeAgro was implemented\textsuperscript{25}.

\textsuperscript{23} P13M, P19F
\textsuperscript{24} P6F, P19F, P18F
\textsuperscript{25} P1M
5.5 Financial Capital

In this research financial capital imply access to banks, credit, accounts (or lack thereof) and incomes and expenses. Farmers in El Cúa earn their living by selling crops they produce. Coffee is the crop of highest value to the farmers as it is the most expensive product among those produced and sold. While other crops are cultivated to a larger extent for private use, coffee is not. Farmers sell almost all of the coffee produced and if possible they put some aside for private use (Bacon, 2005:504). Today coffee is followed by sales of cocoa, maize, beans, bananas and other fruits as well as honey, eggs, milk and sometimes birds and other animals. When the farmers talked about how they earned their living before they participated in FondeAgro they were operating on their own and sold their products to anyone who came in their way, at their properties or at markets. Today the situation is slightly different, but only to those farmers who are part of cooperatives. The cooperatives have opened up for farmers to work together and benefit from each other. Cooperatives have increased the possibilities of reaching out to companies and buyers not only on a local and national level but also internationally and it is also a positive contribution when farmers are in need of labor.

From October to January harvest of coffee beans take place and requires a workload most farmers cannot manage on their own. Due to large amount of work that has to be performed farmers employ laborers. These people are often neighbors or members of cooperatives but can also be randomly chosen persons, mainly men. The more manzanas and the larger production of coffee the more time and labor the harvest requires. Farmers pay the employees a salary based upon the amount of work executed and if salary cannot be distributed in actual money, meals and goods are handed to workers instead as an alternative salary. A farmer who is employing workers one week is most likely working at someone else’s manzanas later on but this is mostly common in cooperatives where the members support each other, and also among the male farmers. Harvesting is a collaborative process and as most farmers need help they also help others when they can. Some of those having bigger productions have a few employees all year round but increase the labor force during harvest anyway, this applies to medium-scale farmers. The method of temporary employment has been passed on through generations. For farmers not part of cooperatives it is very important to find labor force for

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26 P15F, P14F, P2M, P6F, P16M, P8F
27 P7M,
28 P5F, P8F
harvest season, as it is difficult to manage harvest alone, especially in combination with home-gardens, apiculture and single-headed households. This applies to small as well as medium scale farmers.  

The farmers’ income depends to a large extent on their production. A sustainable production reduces the vulnerability context significantly when talking about economy and income, as a reliable harvest simplifies the farmers’ lives when they are able to estimate an approximate income from the sold crops. A sustainable production and livelihood was one of the main goals of FondeAgro and to create possibilities to accomplish this the farmers got the opportunity to credit. Only a few farmers had access to credit before FondeAgro was introduced in the area and the conditions were not preferable. Interest rates were high and mostly only possibilities for short-term loans making it difficult for farmers to accumulate economic capital (FondeAgro, 2010:vi). FondeAgro made it possible for farmers to get in contact with banks in order to create a bond to receive credit on an annual or monthly basis. Credit was given to individuals but also to cooperatives, which in their turn distribute credit to its members. FondeAgro created possibilities of credit and financial support for the farmers together with local actors such as Fonde Ser and 20 de Abril, a cooperative with services for farmers including credit, savings and technical assistance in form of e.g. provision of fertilizer (cooperativa20deabril.coop, 2013). Accordingly, farmers who used new methods to harvest their manzanas were guaranteed credit for agrochemicals, tools and labor if members of 20 de Abril (Ibid: 48).

A negative side of credit is that during the time FondeAgro was present in the area many farmers received credit but when the aid came to an end in 2011 the credit possibilities decreased and many farmers lost their connections with banks when FondeAgro was no longer involved. Some of the farmers contacted banks on their own and are still today in partnership, but five small-scale farmers and two medium-scale farmers mentioned lack of respect and lack of interest from banks now when FondeAgro no longer is involved. This has resulted in no credit or saving possibilities for these seven farmers. Accordingly, when FondeAgro left, it became difficult for farmers to receive credit and if approved it is often followed by high interest rates.

30 P5F, P6F, P10M, P15F
Summarizing, financial capital has many components that needs to be considered in order to understand its complexity. Inflows of money depend on the source; being banks, sales, labor, and outflows depend on purchases for food, tools, salaries for laborers, investments in banks or cooperatives.

5.6 Changing asset pentagons

Two farmers that participated in FondeAgro will be presented below, both small-scale farmers. Based on information received through interviews they had similar preconditions when joining FondeAgro. The similarities in preconditions is why they have been chosen for this comparison of the effects on livelihood due to different assistance:

- Both were in possession of 7 manzanas.
- Before FondeAgro they cultivated a small amount of coffee with addition of banana, orange or beans.
- Sales of coffee and sometimes additional crops generated income.
- They hired one person each during harvests.
- They accessed water through wells.
- Manzanas were located close to property.

Based on this information the asset pentagon on livelihoods for these two farmers before joining the development program can be estimated to look like figure 5 below.

![Asset Pentagon](image)

**Figure 5. Estimated asset pentagon for two small-scale farmers before joining FondeAgro (P17F,P2M).**

This pentagon indicates of very small access to all natural capitals for the two farmers, but slightly larger access to natural and financial capital, before FondeAgro was implemented.
Due to different assistance given to the two farmers their capital assets increased differently. This will be presented with the help of figure 6 and 7 below.

The farmer in figure 6 below was given main assistance on home-gardening; this increases her human capital, meaning that her skills are increasing. This capital will now remain fixed as her skills cannot be taken away from her in the same way as it can in e.g natural capital. The natural capital is improved through diversity of crops for daily diet achieved through the assistance on home-gardening, though this can come to be changed if circumstances arises, e.g extreme weather conditions destroying the crops if not having the means to secure them. This means that the natural capital will increase due to enlarged production but can also decrease depending on circumstances. The farmer was part of the union La Cuculmeca, which means that she is not taking part of a cooperative today, as this one is no longer active, leaving the social capital only partly improved. This can come to change if she in the future is able to join a new cooperative. Her sales increased to a very small extent and she is still employing one laborer during harvest. The financial capital may be the capital that is changing the most as depending on how the asset is increasing; due to credit, due to sales, due to salary it will also be decreasing due to payment of services, purchases of food or tools or investments in banks. Physical capital is left unchanged when referring to transportation.

After presenting changes and possible flows of assets the pentagon for this farmer’s livelihood can be estimated to look like the one presented below in figure 6, after participating in FondeAgro.

![Figure 6. Estimated asset pentagon for farmer P16F after participation in FondeAgro (P16F).](image)
The other farmer, presented in figure 7, was mainly given technical assistance improving quality and quantity of coffee – an increase in natural capital similar to the farmer in figure 6 as they still own the same amount of manzanas. The conditions of possible changes in the capital apply for this farmer as well but due to the increased financial capital this farmer may be more able to secure his crops and avoid destruction. This farmer was able to join a cooperative and is still an active member increasing his social capital, if he would quit his membership his social capital would at once decrease. The financial capital is increasing more than for the farmer in figure 6 as production of coffee generate more income than a home-garden. The increased economy thanks to the increased quality and quantity of coffee can open for possibilities to invest in banks and receive loans to a larger extent than previously, before FondeAgro. The fact that he is member of a cooperative also has effect on the financial capital, improving sales opportunities as well as loans within the cooperative. This means that this capital asset will change even more for this farmers than the other, flows will constantly be taking place. The technical assistance as well as knowledge gained from cooperative work increases his human capital with no risks of decreasing it. His physical capital has increased slightly due to possibilities of transportation within the cooperative. The asset pentagon for this farmer’s livelihood after his participation in FondeAgro can be estimated to look somewhat similar to the one presented in figure 7.

![Asset Pentagon](image)

*Figure 7. Estimated asset pentagon for farmer P2M after participation in FondeAgro (P2M).*
The comparison of these two farmers clarifies that the type of assistance given plays a decisive role in outcome of livelihoods even if farmers have similar pre-conditions. These farmers were small-scale farmers living outside of the department capital with the similarities mentioned above. Looking at the outcomes of their capital assets after being involved in FondeAgro they have both improved their capital assets, but to different extents. As the capitals are improving they are also becoming more diverse and open up for flows of assets, increasing and decreasing, depending on how one decides to use the assets one has. When analyzing the information in the next chapter it is important to compare farmers’ situation in past and present perspectives. Focusing on improvement of the individual farmers as well as comparing them with each other will be of interest.
6. Analysis

This section presents an analysis of the information presented in the previous chapter. It is analyzed with criteria from the manual “Looking Back, Moving Forward” that was presented on page 21, in order to elucidate to what extent the development program, FondeAgro, has achieved its goals and how farmers lives appear today.

6.1 Effectiveness

As farmers possess various numbers of manzanas they have different socio-economic preconditions. This is a reason to why farmers received different forms of assistance as they all had different needs to supply for. The objective was to help farmers to overcome poverty, thus to increase their income above the minimum level of 1,25 USD/day. Farmers received assistance on how to improve the quality and quantity of coffee and other crops in order for it to generate an increased income. Some farmers were introduced to new aspects of farming such as apiculture and home-garden, also this to generate an increased income. Findings show that farmers improved their productions of coffee, both quality and quantity. They also increased their cultivation of other crops generating a more diverse diet and increased income due to sales. Thus, the diversity of crops has increased and some farmers have gained a more varied diet as well as sales.

It would be desirable to say that this applies to all farmers, but some farmers; those who seemed to be living under poorest conditions, did not improve their income. The reason to this is because these farmers were not able to continue with the assistance FondeAgro gave them. Use of new methods required a small financial cost and was slightly more time-consuming as it takes time to learn new ways of production. When FondeAgro left in 2011 these farmers were simply not able to continue without the support of experts and had to return to old methods.

Simultaneously as FondeAgro has been on-going the world market prices on coffee has increased, both in terms of retail price and prices paid to growers. Accordingly, the increased sales price has affected all farmers income positively even if their participation in FondeAgro per se have not had any impact on their productions. Farmers living under poorest conditions before FondeAgro was implemented seem to be the farmers in the most critical situation today. They are struggling to produce an amount enough for private consumption combined with sales, resulting in a very small or even no income as most crops are used privately for daily living. They are continuing with old methods as they have been unable to continue with
new ones due to various reasons. Farmers with larger productions have increased their cultivations and by that sales and economy, and are not facing poverty to the same extent as previously.

6.2 Impact
Farmers’ social capital started to grow at the same time as they joined FondeAgro. There was direct communication between themselves and experts, and farmers had to learn to trust them in order to change their current lifestyle. New social constellations can have unrealized and unexpected potential to effect on a larger scale and had so in this case. Farmers benefit from cooperative businesses when they are part of them themselves. Being in a cooperative comes with an increasing trust to members, partners and associates. Increased trust yield direct impact on individual level. Through increased social capital farmers collaborate to a larger extent by helping each other during harvest. They reach collective goals for their cooperatives and put confidence and trust to each other in order for it to benefit them all individually. The productions of crops become more efficient when working in cooperatives. The cooperative create an informal safety net as farmers can seek help and comfort within their social spheres when needed. The forums created for farmers increase competitiveness on the market concerning the goods these farmers produce. Together they become stronger and better, competing with other producers not only locally and nationally but also internationally, increasing unit prices.

Many aspects of the social capital are positive. Some farmers managed to maintain their membership in cooperatives on an active level, these farmers presented positive aspects on how a cooperative changed their life into the better, like the ones mentioned above. Though there are aspects on the negative side not to forget. Not as successful is it for those farmers that today are not able to join a cooperative. As the society changes and the coffee business in the area of El Cúa become prosperous for cooperatives and their members, it is difficult for those who struggle on their own, not reaching requirements existing for members of delivering certain amount as their share to the cooperative, or those who became members but later on had to resign. It seems like farmers in cooperatives are able to make their progress on the cost of the farmers who are not part of cooperatives. The excluded farmers have to struggle even harder than before FondeAgro settled down in the area as they have to compete with cooperatives, most likely even more difficult than competing with the individual farmer. The poorest and most vulnerable farmers do not have the means to be part
of a cooperative and cannot benefit from the assistance a membership implies. Those farmers this issue concerns are the same ones discussed in the previous section, the most vulnerable farmers with biggest need to improve their livelihoods, that already have problems with their cultivation of not being sufficient and advanced enough. While the poor farmer’s production remains almost unchanged, as they are operating individually and with basic skills and equipment, only with small improvement during the time of FondeAgro, productions of farmers in cooperatives increase. This cause gaps between the farmers that make it even harder for the poorest group of farmers to improve their livelihoods.

Today farmers in cooperatives have the possibility to save and store crops in a different way than before as they have increased their production and received a small surplus. This is an outcome of FondeAgro with long-term goals. If farmers can continue to save and store food it is possible to secure the future in case of crisis. An enlarged income also makes it possible to advance homes and shelters to be more stable and secure from heavy rains and storms, hence also this is a long-term goal of the development program. Adding on to this, those farmers having savings accounts and/or receiving credit have larger possibilities to secure their future than those who do not have the possibility of credit or savings accounts.

Remembering what was discussed in the previous sections, it is accordingly the farmers who has the smallest production and by that the smallest harvest that have the biggest problems of improving their socio-economic conditions. Joining cooperatives and selling products on the market is very difficult and only if they have a surplus of goods there are possibilities to sell it, though most likely for unfair prices. Meanwhile, the slightly wealthier farmers with slightly better socio-economic preconditions seem to successfully adapt to cooperative businesses and more competitive markets.

6.3 Relevance

Through baseline studies experts were able to elucidate what needed to be changed and improved in the coffee farmers lives in order to reduce poverty. These components seem to correspond to the components needed presented by the farmers themselves.

FondeAgro did have significant impact on the development of farmers’ productions as they assisted with skills and techniques to create change they were incapable of creating on their own. Those participating in FondeAgro have therefor learned how to cultivate and manage their productions more effectively. Through assistance given they increased production of
different products along with education of how to manage new crops in more sustainable ways. If accomplishing these new methods it implies an improved food security as they have not only a larger amount of crops, but also a more varied diet that meet nutritional standards one ought to have for a healthy lifestyle.

It is possible to see how the assistance given has had impact on capital assets. Farmers were assisted with techniques of cultivation to increase their production, not only to have increased harvest when the season is profitable but also to be able to have an income when harvests are small and conditions bad. This is maybe the most crucial capacity a farmer can have, as a bad harvest can cause tremendous effects for the whole family this must be avoided to the largest extent possible. As productions are very dependent on weather conditions it is difficult to create and maintain a sustainable production. A year with unpleasant weather conditions can destroy large amounts of plants with a devastating outcome. With new methods farmers shall be able to receive a decent harvest even if the weather conditions are not the most preferable. Those able to apply methods learned should have plants that are stronger and yield a larger harvest and above all of better quality than before.

Farmers learned how to combine plantations of coffee with banana, as coffee is a plant requiring shade for successful growth. Knowledge on how to protect plants from infestations also increases the possibilities for a sustainable production as well as the knowledge of joint production and harvesting methods used in cooperatives.

As cooperatives were created farmers were empowered on trade and how to be successful negotiators. The market can be unfair and exploit people who do not know their rights. To avoid this from happening farmers learned to negotiate with buyers to achieve reasonable prices for the goods sold. The involvement with local actors have generated in more developed markets in the area and the industry has grown, taking more action on the national market and enhancing its position on the social scale of recognition. With the achieved knowledge and improved confidence farmers increase their own value and importance in this industry important for the national economy. Opportunities arise to involve in communities that represent farmers as they become aware of how structures function in a bigger context creating interest and awareness of actions and processes taking place on higher, governmental level. This possibility to social movement increases the chances of farmers being included more in political issues concerning themselves.
Summarizing, FondeAgro have been able to see to the needs of the farmers and through different activities made efforts to improve their livelihoods. The methods have been of right focus, though what seems to be the case is that the way of implementing the methods and activities are defective and insufficient. Farmers have been positive to the assistance given but it is not all of them who have actually been able to manage the assistance given on an individual level when the assistance was finished. The aim has accordingly been accurate but the methods have not, leaving only the already most developed farmers with improved livelihoods.

6.4 Sustainability
Looking at the sustainability of the different kinds of assistance given by FondeAgro, again, some aspects are more positive than others. The main crop cultivated among the farmers is still coffee, even if the production for some farmers is very small. The reason to why coffee maintain as the main crop is due to its economic value. As many farmers have been able to improve their coffee productions in both quantity and quality this production become even more important as it is possible to sell for a better price than earlier. Recepo de café en bloque is a winning concept for farmers in cooperatives and farmers having a hand-full of manzanas. For them the productions are developing and harvests are increasing, the income slowly stabilizing and the future become more secure. Thus, recepo de café en bloque is most successful on a long-term basis for farmers with bigger productions, often members of cooperatives.

For those with just a few manzanas, recepo de café en bloque is not as successful. Here we can see that farmers are unable to keep on to this method of coffee cultivation and have returned to previous methods, used before FondeAgro as they do not have the possibilities to wait for improvement from this new type of cultivation to yield profit. They are so dependent on the small production they have that it is impossible to spare parts of the production to the new method as it can imply less production in the first few years as cropping of plants make them smaller (but stronger) and less effective in their early years.

Home-gardens seems to be one of the most successful interventions of the program when looking on improved diet resulting in many farmers capable of having this business in their homes. The home-garden assistance have been most important for small-scale farmers as they have been in biggest need of this direct improvement of food diversity. For many farmers it is difficult to handle household and productions on their own but many could actually manage
their home-garden simultaneously as having apiculture or a small manzana of coffee. Maybe a reason for this is that the farmers realized how much the home-garden actually paid off and the profitability it yielded to engage in this business even if it requires time they are already short of. The only negative aspect of home-gardens is the fact that it does not necessarily make any impact on income. The goal of home-gardens is foremost to increase diversity of food, not to generate income even if this is a positive side effect some farmers can achieve. Due to the fact that home-garden has the aim to improve food security and see to nutritional needs this can in some cases imply that families improve their living standard in terms of food quantity and diversity but do not improve their living standard in terms of income.

Further, the cooperative business is in most cases also a successful implementation made by FondeAgro. Cooperatives were still active in 2012 implying that there must be some stabilization and sustainability both financially and institutionally taking place. Cooperatives were organized with boards and member positions that create structure. Thus, the cooperatives per se are persistent and will continue to help farmers organize their productions and businesses. The well functioning cooperatives have direct positive impact on its members as it implies a more stable and increased income for each member that are actively participating. Though, there are deficiencies, as all farmers cannot participate in a cooperative, as mentioned before. Those farmers are struggling to achieve any form of improvement on their productions and are still having a difficult time to increase their income and accordingly, there is still a group of farmers that are facing poverty to basically the same extent as before FondeAgro was implemented. Another question mark is La Cuculmeca, the NGO-based union for home-garden participants that are no longer benefitting from a cooperative and by that may decrease their chances of further improvement of livelihoods.

As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, FondeAgro is created through a partnership between the Swedish development agency Sida, Nicaraguan government and national Nicaraguan actors. This is a positive aspect when looking upon chances of sustainability as without cultural integration an intervention is most likely not to be sustainable (Molund & Schill, 2007:38). MAGFOR is a partner in this collaboration that strives for improved agricultural and forestry sectors in the country. With a partner looking out for these farmers there are greater chances of sustainability than if MAGFOR would not be involved. Now this agricultural sector is included in national development as this program has connections up on governmental level. Additionally, the foreign interest FondeAgro wanted to create in
Nicaraguan coffee production as well as involvement of local and national actors in the trade sector are positive elements. The integration of this program in the national and cultural context is of great value as it promotes the agricultural life, very common for poor people. The development of the agricultural sector becomes a fact as there are movement and changes taking place among the coffee producers as they engage in business with new actors in trading, making more companies aware of the existence of these Nicaraguan farmers.

As Swedish government decided to end partnerships with Nicaragua, starting 2008 FondeAgro was one of the last interventions to take place between Sweden and Nicaragua, leaving Nicaraguan actors involved in FondeAgro on their own after 2011. In 2006 Nicaragua also faced a shift in government from PLC to FSNL making impact on political aspects in the country, affecting the work of FondeAgro. The new party was not familiar with FondeAgro to the same extent as the previous party as they had not been involved in the early stages of planning and implementing of the program (FondeAgro, 2009:120). It seems like the final years of FondeAgro did not take place during the best of times considering what was happening in Nicaragua at this time. If these years would have been more politically stable and Sweden would still be in partnership with Nicaragua today, it is likely that the future of the farmers would have looked differently.

The conclusion of sustainability’s different aspects when we look at FondeAgro is that creations of cooperatives have been decisive for farmers’ abilities to improve livelihoods and continue with methods learned by FondeAgro. In a broader perspective FondeAgro has operated strategically involving different actors to see to sustainability of the program and prosperous aftermaths. Due to outer circumstances impossible to avoid and not be affected of, FondeAgro may not have become as successful as planned.
7. Conclusion

Farmers gave similar stories on their participation and the assistance given during the ten-year period FondeAgro existed. None of the farmers seem dissatisfied with the assistance they received, rather the opposite. A majority of farmers are today owners of functioning productions, with the goal to improve the crops and productions even more.

Looking at the farmers’ livelihoods today in correlation to the assistance given during their participation in FondeAgro, we see to a large extent improvement. Livelihoods have improved, as farmers are more self-sufficient with better production methods and better diversity, quality and quantity of their products sold and privately used. They are aware of savings options and credit possibilities as well as some sort of financial support. Social networks have been constructed, creating confidence, friendship, openness and understanding among the farmers and given the whole society a push towards development and sustainability through collaboration of local partners and actors. Farmers have been empowered on agricultural business and how to manage it in a way profitable for themselves, but not all farmers have been able to apply these strategies to their own businesses.

The goal of FondeAgro was to reduce poverty and increase farmers’ incomes but only parts of this goal seems to be achieved for small-scale farmers. It is logical to improve poor peoples diet and nutritional need as a first step to work one’s way out of poverty and as a next step focus on increasing income. But in a situation like this one with the implementation of FondeAgro where the local and national trade market is expanding and developing in the same pace as small-scale farmers are focusing on achieving the most basic criterion of enough food to survive for the day, it seems very difficult to be able to catch up with a developing market and other farmers who have increased their assets faster and are several steps ahead to get out of poverty.

The outcomes are the ones presented in findings; the increasing gaps between small-scale and medium-scale farmers along with a stagnation of small-scale farmers’ productions and a steady improvement for medium-scale farmers. Small-scale farmers remain on a low level of development and are still facing poverty while medium-scale farmers are the ones improving their capital assets and livelihoods at a higher pace. For medium-scale farmers the outcomes are more positive than they are for small-scale farmers. Medium-scale farmers have improved their techniques in agriculture, mainly coffee production, and have accordingly increased quantity and quality of crops and income thereof. With an increased economy and the gained
knowledge of how to administer their finances, investments have been made in banks and cooperatives in order to secure the future, both in a social and human capital aspect as well as production-wise. As new knowledge have been put in practice farmers have achieved a healthier living in terms of a more varied diet (this applies to small-scale and medium-scale farmers) as they have gained knowledge on how to cultivate crops suitable for home-gardens and smaller productions. For small-scale farmers the home-garden concept has been crucial as it opens up for a higher standard of living among the very poor. A more diverse diet often generate better health and the ability for physical work can increase, but the coffee productions has for some of these farmers remained unchanged as there has not been enough focus on this assistance for all farmers.

Further, flaws in implementation and aftermaths of FondeAgro is that during the existence of FondeAgro farmers had better possibilities to a future not characterized by poverty than what they are having today when the program has ended. The farmers had greater possibilities of receiving credit and loans while FondeAgro was in the area. When the program ended it became more difficult for farmers to partner with banks and funds, as they no longer had any higher support or contacts able to give them justice when doubted on. Agreements during the period of FondeAgro were just for the time frame of the program resulting in farmers having to seek for support in other banks and business than when FondeAgro was ongoing. This implies banks using their power, creating unfair deals with their clients as they know farmers do not have many options if they want savings account, loans or other financial support than to see to the local banks and funds. Once again, this is an issue affecting small-scale farmers more than medium-scale farmers as they have back-up from cooperatives.

The coffee farmers in El Cúa need to continue to develop their livelihoods in order to work their way out of poverty and reach a standard of living worthy every human being. Not until they are able to reach a standard of living above the poverty line and are able to maintain this living, created through increased and improved production and cultivation of crops, can we talk about a completely successful implementation of FondeAgro. The conclusion of this study is that, until this has happened, FondeAgro have partly succeeded and partly failed. Farmers have increased their capital assets but not necessarily to the extent needed to improve their livelihoods enough to no longer be living in poverty, especially when it comes to small-scale farmers. Medium-scale farmers are those who are the most successful group in the program as they have made larger improvements on capital assets and accomplished to
maintain production methods taught by FondeAgro. Accordingly, they are most likely to face a brighter future with a higher standard of living.
8. Further research

Performing a more extensive research would open up for possibilities to investigate in topics not possible to cover in this research. When implementing a program like FondeAgro it is crucial to empower farmers in terms of skills and technology concerning production but also introduce them to perspectives on work ethics, importance of education, health, and prioritizing in order for sustainable long-term effects to reach improved livelihoods. These aspects were not possible to cover in this research due to limitations that had to be made. It is important aspects to assess wherefore it would be necessary with further studies.

Future studies should include the surrounding society and the people who did not participate in FondeAgro but live in the area, to see if FondeAgro had impact on their lives, both in negative and positive aspects. As this research was carried out in 2012 a new research would be appropriate in a near future to be able to keep coherency and see if there are patterns and processes distinguishable in farmers lives affecting their livelihoods.

With a research in near future it could additionally be of interest to analyze the country’s status in correlation to the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals to be reached by 2015. That would make it possible to see how the country as a whole is keeping up with their own goals for their population and welfare. Putting FondeAgro and the farmers in a broader context like the MDG’s bring new perspectives on possible national development strategies and methods worth repeating.
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9.4 Literature


10. Appendix 1 – List of Interviewees

The following interviews have been encoded in order to protect the privacy of the informants.


P8F – Small-scale farmer, Peñas Blancas, El Cúa. Female-headed household of eleven persons. 2012-06-18


P13M - Small-scale farmer, Frank Tijerino, El Cúa. Male-headed household of five persons. 2012-06-20


P20F – Small-scale farmer. Castillo Norte, El Cúa. Female-headed household of five persons. 2012-06-21