

Table 1. Main results derived from in-depth interviews

Following, we first characterize the interviews and then present the main recorded responses that have been useful to support results of our work. The answers are grouped into 5 blocks.

Number of in-depth interviews: 6 in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, three at the beginning of the Project and three at the end. The interviews lasted between 25 and 70 minutes.

Responsibility: They were coordinated by Friends of Earth staff in Nicaragua. In each of the territories, the local project partner developed the role of an in-depth interviewer.

Content of the Interviews: There was no questionnaire with questions to answer, but rather open spaces for dialogue with the key informant. The interviews at the beginning of the project consisted in 3 thematic blocks: Food security in the community; Social and economic dynamics for food security; Agroecology and Biointensive Method. The interviews at the end of the project were divided into 2 thematic blocks: Biointensive Method and food security in the Community; Strengths and challenges of the Biointensive Method for participating families...

Notes grouped by Blocks:

1. Food security in the community

- In recent years food security in families has improved, but we are still far from an ideal situation
- We rely heavily on the wages of husbands, who work hard on plantations
- If they had more land, the situation would improve
- Invest to diversify production? In general it is not an option available to families
- Water availability, this is indeed a critical element
- Collect rainwater, we would need more help
- In the local markets you can find everything a family needs, but there are families that cannot make purchases, they are too poor

2. Social and economic dynamics for food security

- Men are the ones who make decisions in almost all families, but changes are observed, especially when women get together to discuss... some women's associations have emerged
- Luckily some husbands work for others; this has allowed them to survive
- All we want is to survive and producing more on our land would help
- Sometimes we have to sell our production (more than we would like) to gain access to medical care (or buy the things we don't produce for ourselves)
- Our houses are very humble, and our families have many young children, and we wonder what will happen when they become adults will they have to go to Managua? What future awaits them there?
- Municipalities would have to support families more: more education for young people, transportation aids, local markets....

3. Agroecology and the Biointensive Method

- We don't know much about new ways of production, we know that so many chemicals are not good
- We can, and want to learn: we do not want to depend on what others sell to us and be able to produce what we consume....
- Seeds, having seeds available to us, this is the crucial point. Seeds used to be saved from one year to the next....
- New crops? Some families in my community would be willing to initiate that change.
- Many women in my community have already started training in agroecology. Some husbands did not want to do so, but they have imposed it on themselves...
- We have nothing to lose, we have time, and if the (cooperation) project is going to help us as much as they say, we think we can move forward with the biointensive method
- The key is to have enough water. In recent years we have detected a significant change in the climate....we cannot continue producing as we did before

4. Biointensive Method and Food Security in the Community

- In general, families in my community have increased the amount of food available to them and new foods have appeared. Women have been central to this. Of course there have been conflicts in families ... and in some cases these conflicts are yet to be resolved. But they have struggled a lot to become food suppliers for themselves and for families.
- The hardest part has been preparing the soil. When male participation is low, sometimes women helping one another has allowed for double digging.
- The (cooperation) project has shown us that it is possible to produce much in a small area. The problem of some families has been that the little land they have. Their food security has hardly improved.
- The families of the community were distrustful of the biointensive method results. The first results (the first harvest) changed everything, but two years is too short a period to establish indisputable conclusions.
- There is so much to do! We have seen that it is possible to produce in another way, and this has helped us, but it is not enough. Too many families in my community have no land.
- Yes, it's true, now our food is more diverse. We have learned to cook what we had never produced before.
- Our women have been the engine of yet a small change, but a change after all. Of course, men have also participated. But the role of women has been the most striking and extraordinary, at least in my community.

5. Strengths and challenges of the Biointensive Method for participating families

- We have been taught the basics of the method and how to apply it. Not having to buy supplies is the best, and exchanging seeds helps us a lot. Luckily, they have provided us (from the onset of the project) with all this. Otherwise, some families in my community would not have been able to participate.
- It is true; with this agroecological technique we have produced more food, healthy foods. In general, it has not been easy to make the decision to allocate land to produce carbon... the most important thing for families has been to produce food, eat.
- Outside of the biointensive garden, families found what was needed to produce compost. It was not easy to comply with the 60-30-10% rule.

- Training for pest control has been detected as a weakness of the project; this aspect should have been more highlighted.
- In my community I have observed many discussions about the compatibility of the biointensive method with territories such as the Dry Corridor (in Nicaragua). We have discussed this lot. The project technicians have done a great job
- I believe that the biointensive method, an agroecological technology with low external inputs compatible with low-income situations (land and money), is appropriate for communities like ours to improve food quality and quantity, but we should also think about how to produce more for the market.
- How to strengthen the participation of young people? This is a major challenge. In my community I have observed how some young people, especially girls, were enthusiastic about learning the biointensive method. Now we, the communities, must assume the boost given to the project (cooperation) by the technicians. Some communities must take advantage of links with the local partners of the consortium to move forward in this dynamic.
- The project greatly served its purpose in the field of agroecological learning. Now we must continue this local food system transformation process. Alliances with local partners (in our case with the Human Promotion Institute) will be crucial to moving forward.