



SUCCESS STORY

Community Leader becomes Agent of Social Change and Spokesperson for Maternal-Child Health

USAID helps rural communities improve their maternal-child health

USAID Healthy Communities and Municipalities Project aims to improve maternal and child health, family planning, and reproductive health in poor and marginalized communities.



Adela declares victory over poverty through healthy lifestyles.

“USAID helps communities in the San Martin Region strengthen their local and community health management, and increase their healthy behaviors and lifestyles.”

Adela Estrada Carrera, 28, mother of two children, lives in the rural community of La Victoria (the Victory) in the district of Shunté in the San Martin region. Adela begins each day at four o'clock in the morning by cleaning the house, preparing food, and attending to her family's needs. Once she is finished, she hurries off to start her visits to the homes of neighboring families in the community. Adela is not famous or a politician, yet she leads the fight for maternal-child health improvement in her community, feeling strongly that health is essential to life. The routine visits and counseling that Adela provides to each one of the families in her community represent a tremendous contribution. But for Adela to become and advocate of healthy lifestyles was not an easy decision. Born with a pelvis deformity, she used to refuse medical advice, as a way of rebelling against her own condition. During her second pregnancy, and thanks to the work conducted by USAID's Healthy Communities and Municipalities project, she became aware of the life-endangering risks that she and her baby were exposed to, and with the proper prenatal health care she received, her baby boy was born healthy.

“With the support of USAID's Healthy Communities and Municipalities Project, my family is healthy and we live happily. They've taught us how important health is in our lives... drinking boiled water, washing our hands, cleaning and tidying up our home and, something really important: going to the health clinic when one is pregnant for one's prenatal controls. I breastfeed my baby Josué and I keep him healthy so when he grows up he'll be a hard worker”; (Adela says, her black eyes reflecting her happiness and hope for the women and children in her community that they too may be healthier.)

Adela is a woman who symbolizes and represents La Victoria (the Victory): her physical limitations never deterred her. If she wants something, she goes out and gets it; she is a role model. She made a decision and started to support the community committee to make her community a healthier one, a model in their district. She is committed to this challenge, and considering everything she has done so far, we are certain that she and her community will succeed.