



# SUCCESS STORY

## Switching Courageously to Licit Lifestyles

USAID provides sustainable economic opportunities for Peruvians

**USAID Alternative Development Program seeks to increase investment in ex-coca growing areas to provide sustainable livelihoods for communities.**



*Lorenza Lopez and Regional President of San Martin Cesar Villanueva, hand in hand building licit livelihoods through cacao.*

Lorenza Lopez was born in 1965 in Yamango, Piura, a state in the north of Peru. In 1989, she migrated to Nuevo Horizonte, near Tocache, in San Martin and, like all her new neighbors, started working in coca cultivation, earning ten dollars a day, a huge sum in Peru's depressed economy. A few years later, to the derision of her neighbors, she bought one hectare to grow cacao. In 2007, she joined USAID Peru's Alternative Development Program and planted two more hectares, switching decisively to a licit lifestyle. Two years ago, she was elected President of the central Association of Cacao Producers, with 207 members, 47 of whom are women. They are now exporting their cacao to Switzerland, commercializing 100 tons per year and earning over US\$420,000 in sales annually. Lorenza started out earning money the easy way from illegal coca and then made the courageous switch to a licit lifestyle, leading many others by her example.

***“USAID is engaged in a concerted effort with the Peruvian Government to improve conditions in ex-coca growing valleys through social and economic development projects.”***