



Reducing Stigma And Discrimination in Honduras



Photo: USAID/Honduras

José Antonio Escada (Tony) is a member of the Genesis Self-support Group.

“Today I can serve the people living with HIV/AIDS in my community as a member of the self-support group Genesis and the Acción SIDA prevention planning committee. I am familiar with the national HIV/AIDS law and my rights. My self-esteem is higher, and I am capable and comfortable counseling my peers.”

- José Antonio Escada

As in many countries, people living with HIV/AIDS in Honduras face challenges and obstacles as a result of their HIV-positive status. Puerto Cortés, the country’s leading port, is no exception, and in some cases HIV-positive people have even been denied medical and educational services. Frustrated with this treatment, the people living with the disease in Puerto Cortés soon began to openly voice their HIV -positive status and fight discrimination.

Through USAID’s HIV/AIDS program, Acción SIDA began to work with the HIV -positive people in Puerto Cortés and helped them organize a support group called Genesis. With over twenty members, Genesis has demonstrated that there is strength in numbers. In 2003, the group created alliances with local health staff, media, religious groups, local authorities and public and private schools. One of the first achievements of the group was to open an activity center providing individual counseling, support meetings, referral services, and occupational training activities. Genesis has also been very successful at increasing awareness of AIDS in the community. José Antonio (Tony) Escada is one of many Genesis members who have participated in teaching others about people with HIV through testimonies and informative discussions.

First Person

