



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 28, 2006

2006-009

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INAUGURATION OF HANDICRAFT FESTIVAL AT HIPER PAIZ

SAN SALVADOR– With great colorfulness and enthusiasm, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), along with Aid to Artisans and Hiper Paiz stores owner La Fragua, inaugurated a Handicraft Festival today as part of USAID’s Artisan Development Program.

The inauguration ceremony was held at Hiper Paiz Las Cascadas a day after the inauguration of the same festival in Guatemala City. As a result, the Handicraft Festival will remain open to the Salvadoran and Guatemalan public until May 28, 2006, at eight Hiper Paiz stores in both countries. Over 40 handicraft producers will exhibit and sell their original designs.

In San Salvador, 17 artisans will exhibit their products, among them: CASART and Palma City (fabrics); Taller Paty, Artesanías San Ignacio, Jesús Artesano, Acooprac and Renacer Chalateco (new and traditional wood designs); Guatajiagua (new and traditional black pottery designs); Ecobambú and Orbelina Mate (new and traditional purse designs and other hand-woven products); Ana Rosa de Graff (cards and pictures made out of dry flowers); Manos Amigas (dolls and clothes racks); Lonas Marissa (hammocks); Latin Craft (miscellaneous products); Shuchil (shampoo and soap bars), and Alejandro’s Cerámica (traditional ceramics from Ilobasco).

Through the Handicraft Festival at Hiper Paiz, artisans have been able to sell \$50,000 as a result of their hard work.

“Through our Artisan Development Program, we have helped create new employment and income opportunities for poor artisans in the rural and urban areas. We seek to promote local production capacity and handicraft marketing as well as increase their access to the market,” said Larry Brady, USAID Regional Deputy Mission Director during the inauguration ceremony.

The event was attended by a representative of the Embassy of Guatemala in El Salvador, the Wal-Mart El Salvador general manager and the Hiper Paiz Corporate Marketing manager.

USAID has invested \$4.9 million in the development of this program since its beginning four years ago. To date, over 3,731 small and medium enterprises have expanded their business capacity, generating 3,115 new jobs, creating over 2,400 new products, carrying out 114 workshops, and generating local and international sales of over \$1.9 million.

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