



Mangrove forests line the southern coastal region of El Salvador. Gracefully rooting themselves into the wet landscape, they provide to local communities a form of ongoing protection, from both the devastating effects of tropical storms and the increasingly severe weather patterns now being linked to climate change.



The mangrove forests also help to create a coastal environment in which warm water shrimp are able to thrive. Today the people of Jiquilisco Bay, many of whom came to the region as resettled refugees following El Salvador's 12 year civil war, are well on the way to building a sustainable livelihood for themselves and their communities, thanks to the shrimp.



The El Zompopero Co-operative Society is a local initiative, whose formation has enabled four shrimp farming co-ops to begin to work together. Their aim is to create reliable local and international markets for the El Zompopero brand, by producing high quality shrimp and getting their product from shrimp pond to table through a seamless and fully traceable process.



Dimas Hernandez Lopez is a member of the board of the El Zompopero Co-operative Society. An ex-combatant, he is now fully involved in his community's efforts to build a new future for themselves in this fragile and beautiful coastal region. He is determined that the lives of his children, who are now all in school, will be lived out in a different El Salvador.



Luis Miguel Hernandez, Dimas' son, has learned the highly skilled art of mending shrimp nets. Members of the El Zompopero Society have received training and support in accounting and business skills – and in the work of mending nets – from PROCARES (Programme for Capacity-Building and Reconstruction in El Salvador), one of our partners in the 2016 World Development Appeal.



Miguel is also an accountant, and oversees the finances of El Zompopero. He and others have begun to arrange visits from local students, who are eager to learn from the development of the Co-operative Society, and are inspired by its focus on the economic development and well-being of all.



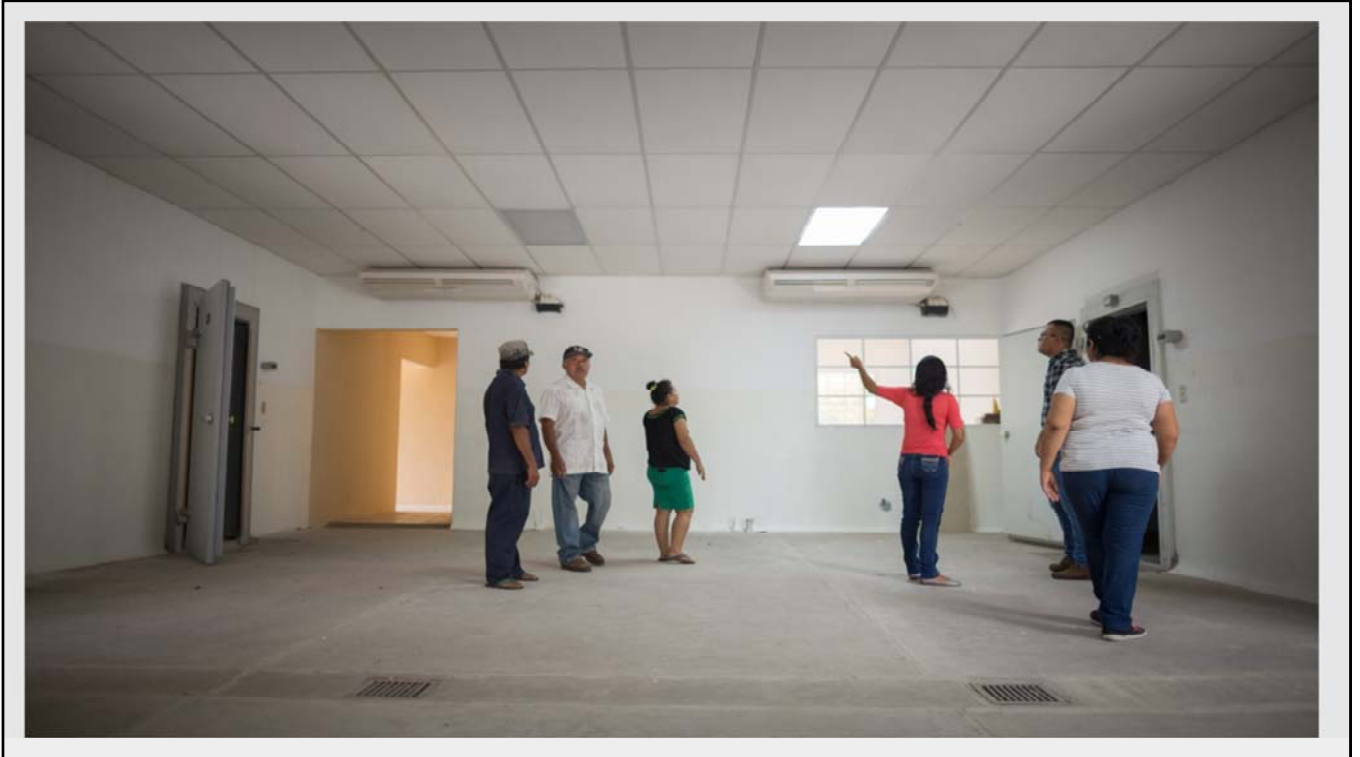
Also with the help of PROCARES, the shrimp ponds have been strengthened, weather monitoring stations have been established, the protective mangrove forests are being preserved and replanted, and the water temperature of the ponds is being more easily maintained at an optimal level for the healthy growth of the shrimp.



One member of El Zompopero has already suggested a slogan for their developing brand: “Our shrimp are not to be eaten; they are to be enjoyed!”
Rene Obed Amaya, a shrimp farmer from the neighbouring San Hilario Co-op, looks like he would agree!



The current President of the El Zompopero Co-operative Society is Moises Hernandez. Along with Ana Ruth, his wife, and his two sons, Christian Daniel, who is 4 ½ years old, and Moises Esau, who was just born last spring, Moises too is working hard to bring a new El Salvador into being, one flourishing community at a time.



A new distribution centre for El Zompopero has now been provided by the government of El Salvador, but the centre remains to be equipped. With the help of the 2016 Appeal, electrical infrastructure will be provided, along with refrigeration and storage equipment, an emergency generator, a refrigerated truck, and ongoing training. El Zompopero is proving that with resilience and determination, sustainable development is possible, and serves the well-being of all. In the 2016 Appeal, we stand with them as they take the next step into a more just and equitable future together.