



Success Story

GUATEMALA: INTEGRATING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (I-WASH) PROJECT



Global Communities staff attending the workshop held by the PBL and LIXIL technical team on June 20, 2024, in Antigua, Guatemala.

Global Communities Meets with LIXIL to Improve Sanitation in Rural Communities in Guatemala through SATO Products

Global Communities is the primary implementing partner of the ***Integrating Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (I-WASH) project*** funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The goal of the project is to improve health outcomes in Huehuetenango and Quiché by expanding and integrating quality WASH and Water Resources Management (WRM) services and establishing a high performing WASH system. Through I-WASH, Global Communities is actively working with local organizations Agua del Pueblo Association (AdP), Mancomunidad Frontera del Norte (MFN) and Mancomunidad del Norte de Quiché (MANORQ) as sub-recipients to promote the strengthening of the WASH market in Guatemala.

Project Objective 4: Strengthening the WASH Market

To fulfill project objective four of I-WASH, Global Communities is promoting the adoption of technologies and new products that meet the needs of populations in the 18 participating municipalities in Quiché and Huehuetenango and identifying affordable and desirable WASH solutions. The project's implementing sub-recipients (MANORQ, MFN, AdP) have identified approximately seven municipalities located in the departments of Quiché (Uspantán, Cunén and Chajul) and Huehuetenango (Concepción Huista, Todos Santos Cuchumatán, Santa Eulalia and Santa Cruz Barrillas) that will participate in this market study.

The I-WASH project partnered with Partnership for Better Living (PBL), an innovative 5-year partnership between LIXIL and USAID to create sustainable sanitation and hygiene markets for more than 2 million people by 2026. LIXIL, a multinational company that is one of the world's leading manufacturers of pioneering water and housing products, develops SATO-branded products to offer safe, affordable and durable sanitation and hygiene solutions to low-income people with little access to water for domestic consumption.

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As part of the collaboration with PBL, the I-WASH project began implementing a pilot market study in mid-August 2024 to measure the product acceptance, effectiveness, cost-benefit, and social and behavior change resulting from local Guatemala communities' adoption of SATO TAP (handwashing device) and SATO STOOL 203 (low-flush toilets). The goal of this partnership is to understand 1) consumer preferences for sanitation and hygiene products, 2) product performance through user trials, 3) local enterprises' position on sanitation and hygiene, and 4) pricing of export vs. local manufacturing.

Prior to initiating the pilot market study, LIXIL met in person with Global Communities staff, and held two workshops, the first being on June 18, 2024, in Guatemala City, and the second being on June 20, 2024, in Antigua, Guatemala. On June 18, LIXIL staff held a Partner Forum to provide background on SATO and its contributions worldwide, a demonstration of SATO products, and to highlight how SATO collaborates with its partners. This brief in-person workshop was also intended to meet and network with implementing organizations. Partners participating in the pilot market study include I-WASH local sub-recipients (such as AdP, MANORQ and MFN), international organizations (such as UNICEF Guatemala and HELVETAS) and other local partner organizations (such as the Association for Integral Rural Development).

One key aspect of SATO's products is that they are environmentally friendly. In the workshop, LIXIL mentioned that its handwashing device called SATO TAP uses a low amount of water. A minimum of 100 mL is used to wash your hands per use, while regular sinks use almost **three liters**. In addition, the SATO stool uses up to **one liter**, which is approximately **20% less** than conventional toilet pans. Considering that local and rural communities have water sources that are distant from

their homes, communities can use water more efficiently.

Like the workshop on June 18, LIXIL held an interactive workshop on June 20 with Global Communities and its pilot partners. The workshop's goal was to train and prepare all implementing partners for the market study, and included technical trainings on the SATO TAP and SATO STOOL, product demonstrations, and an FAQ session with their pilot partners. Global Communities and its implementing partners asked questions with respect to maintenance, installation and costs.



A LIXIL technical staff member explains and demonstrates how SATO products save water usage.

While partners had questions on the SATO TAP's durability, they asked more questions on SATO STOOL's maintenance and potential health and environmental concerns. Attendees asked how to properly clean a SATO STOOL. According to SATO, it should be cleaned only with water by making a small hole in a water bottle, which saves water usage and prevents the use of chlorine-based cleaning products that can potentially leach into groundwater.

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A member from the partner organizations commented that, depending on rain patterns, pathogens may travel when the soil is wet, affecting the groundwater quality. In return, an audience member suggested that it is important to verify water quality parameters through a government entity such as the Guatemalan Commission of Norms to ensure water contains less than the minimum number of contaminants.

More importantly, partners had questions regarding products' costs, as it is vital for low-income families to be able to afford them. Since LIXIL wants to provide affordable WASH products in the Latin American market, they are exploring manufacturing in Mexico or Central America. SATO informed partners they will provide cost estimates by the end of the market study period, which will consider export and manufacturing costs.

After organizing these workshops in Guatemala, the PBL team met virtually with Global Communities and partner organizations weeks later to confirm the number of households, and review the market study plan, protocol and timeline. Since the beginning of September, implementing partners calculated nearly 200 households will be reached by mid-October. Implementing partners will introduce both the SATO STOOL and SATO TAP at the same time to simplify the process.

The I-WASH project plans to finalize the market study by December 2024. Around this time, the I-WASH project intends to reach a total of 600 households sampling the SATO STOOL and nearly 1,000 households sampling the SATO TAP.

As Global Communities continues to work with LIXIL on this market study for SATO products, the timeline will be better defined. For now, the tentative market study timeline can be found below, which is subject to change.



As part of I-WASH project's fourth objective and in partnership with PBL, we hope to introduce affordable hygiene products into low-income communities to improve pit latrines in poor conditions, which can expose people to diseases. Instead, community members will have access to affordable WASH products that will improve their quality of life. Please check Part 2 of this market study update on our Global Communities website by November 2024, where we will provide an update on the preliminary findings presented at the **2024 UNC Water and Health Conference**.