



PROGRAM IMPACT

Brief: Water Systems Strengthening in Guatemala and Perú: 20-30 years

OVERVIEW Perú and Guatemala are two examples of CARE country programs where staff have taken a systems approach to WASH programming. CARE advocates for policy change, works with government at various levels, strengthens financing and monitoring mechanisms and addresses technical capacity within government and the private sector. CARE works with communities, expands the skills and gender inclusivity of water committee members, and collaborates with other local and international partners to ensure alignment of efforts and messaging.



Systems Strengthening

Systems strengthening, systems building and institutional strengthening are all terms used to describe areas where WASH programs need to put more emphasis. CARE programs have contributed to systems strengthening without using this specific terminology or framework. Instead, many CARE programs committed to *sustainable programming*, which inevitably meant that programs planned for and worked towards developing and strengthening WASH systems through working with multiple partners, at multiple levels (coordination), monitoring, technical capacity, water resources management, financing and learning. Many of these are described further in the [building blocks](#) for WASH systems strengthening described by Agenda For Change.

Perú

BACKGROUND

CARE Perú has worked in the WASH sector for over 30 years. CARE Perú was the implementing partner, technical expert and manager of operations for over 15 years of delivery, building and scaling up WASH systems in Perú. CARE did this under the funding and overall coordination of the Swiss Development Cooperation (COSUDE) and the World Bank, among others. COSUDE provided support for the WASH sector in Perú for over 20 years, functioning under different names: SABASUR (before CARE was heavily involved), PROPILAS, SABA and SABA+ between 1996 and 2016.

KEY SUCCESSES

As of 2016 the integrated model for rural WASH developed by CARE and partners was scaled up to 14 of the 25 regional governments within Perú. It successfully linked key public and private actors and benefited from their active participation across all levels. Some of the learnings and approaches of the SABA model have been utilized in at least 7 different country contexts including Colombia, Mozambique, Uganda and Brazil.

KEY APPROACHES

- Established clear roles and responsibilities of all partners (from community to government and donors).
- Participation of different levels of government and facilitation of dialogue with communities .
- Creation and coordination of an alliance of NGOs and stakeholders to maintain focus and streamline efforts.
- Political activism to create policy change while *aligning advocacy messages with interests of politicians*.
- Increasing capacity of local government technicians.
- Increasing capacity of local water commissions.
- Sharing lessons learned and arranging exchanges between actors.
- Evaluating impacts with key stakeholders discussions on how to improve programming and coverage.

NEXT STEPS

It took over 20 years of consistent advocacy, service delivery, coalition building and using data to demonstrate health and coverage impact for over half of the regional governments to adopt the SABA model. What is needed now is formal incorporation of the SABA model into the national government including recognizing the rights and role of water commissions within the Peruvian government system. The alliance needs to continue to document and disseminate program evidence of impact to increase investment in the sector and continued strengthening of the system.

Guatemala

BACKGROUND

CARE Guatemala has been working in WASH for over 40 years. One major feature of the programming within the last ten years, is the creation of Municipal Offices of Water and Sanitation (OMAS). These government offices, established through CARE funding, had a model of scheduled reductions in financial support over 3-5 years. OMAS were established in order to implement, support, and monitor water and sanitation initiatives within the municipality. Other responsibilities of the office include preserving natural resources, working closely with other government sectors and promoting improved water and sanitation practices in communities.

KEY SUCCESSES

In Guatemala municipal WASH offices are now found in nearly 100% of the municipalities of the San Marcos department. After the first 3 were co-funded by CARE, the remaining 25 OMAS are funded entirely by local government budgets. Overall 117/340 municipalities have recently established OMAS. Municipalities who have received technical training from CARE see their new skills in maintenance, monitoring, community engagement, and inclusion as necessary for their success in delivery of water services and contributing to the improved health of their constituents.

KEY APPROACHES AND NEXT STEPS

- Supporting and strengthening local capacities (government technicians and water committees) including engineering, monitoring, transparency, planning and involving women in the process.



- Developing modules to train government technicians.
- Advocate with local and national governments to establish OMAS to support potable water services.
- Integrate environmental considerations and watershed management into all trainings and work plans.
- Leadership within the National WASH Network to solidify gender considerations within the “ASH” (water, sanitation, hygiene) model .

CARE, along with government representatives and other NGO partners, is advocating for national adoption of the ASH model to bring sustainable WASH services to all Guatemalans.

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