

THE DIGNI-LOO: A MARKET-BASED APPROACH TO IMPROVED SANITATION

The Development Challenge

In Ghana, only 15% of the population has access to improved sanitation facilities.¹ Through the five-year, USAID-funded WASH for Health Project, Global Communities has worked in 30 districts in Ghana, increasing and improving access to water and sanitation, improving sanitation facilities, and promoting hygiene behaviors. Since February 2015, WASH for Health has worked with communities to install nearly 15,000 improved household latrines, providing more than 123,712 people with access to basic sanitation services. These efforts have been made possible, in large part, through the interactive community-led total sanitation technique, through which communities are educated on hygiene practices, supported in their efforts to acquire household latrines, and become certified as “open defecation free” (ODF). WASH for Health has supported more than 660 communities in acquiring ODF status and aims to have over 700 communities throughout Ghana certified by February 2020.

However, many Ghanaians still face significant challenges in acquiring a latrine at home. The typical technologies available in Ghana require cement and other construction materials, time, and resources, such as labor and technical assistance. Construction can take between two to three weeks, assuming all materials are available, and can cost up to \$400, which is prohibitive for households living on less than \$2 dollars a day.²

The Market-Based Approach, Opportunities, Challenges, and Role and Interest of the Private Sector

In order to make household latrines more accessible, Global Communities, under WASH for Health, designed the Digni-Loo, an affordable, durable and reusable plastic latrine slab that is both visually appealing and easy to install and maintain. Global Communities identified the Ghanaian company Duraplast Ltd as an ideal partner for the Digni-Loo based on their specialization in the production of unplasticized Polyvinyl Chloride (uPVC), Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) Pipes and Fittings – a product used in creating the Digni-Loo. Global Communities and Duraplast Ltd developed and tested a series of prototypes, and the newly developed Digni-Loo was submitted to the Technical Assessment Framework carried out by the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources as well as the tests conducted by the Ghana Standards Authority, giving the Digni-Loo all the required certifications to be sold across Ghana.

Priced at approximately \$85, the Digni-Loo costs 80% less than traditional latrines. Once purchased, a household only needs to dig a pit near their home, install the latrine (which has an adjustable plastic lining to reinforce weak pits), attach the plastic vent pipe, and construct privacy walls. When a pit is full, the latrine slab is easily removable; the hole is covered and the slab is re-installed in a new location. It requires very little water and is easy to keep clean.

¹ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.ACSN>, accessed April 5, 2017

² Ghana Statistical Service (2014). Ghana Living Standards Survey, Round 6

The Development Outcome

Since developing the slab, more than 9,000 latrines have been installed in eight regions in Ghana. Digni-Loos are being produced in large quantities and sold in the local market to individuals and local and international organizations; the Government of Ghana’s (GoG) Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), with funding from the World Bank, has purchased 20,000 units. Through WASH for Health, Global Communities is also working with local sales agents to ensure the long-term availability of the slabs for households and contribute to economic growth. The innovative technology has changed to the lives of many families already. “This plastic slab is fast to install and use. It is easy to clean, flies do not disturb and there is no bad scent,” said Anani Abeena, a 54-year-old farmer with five children. In the coming months, Global Communities will continue working with government, private sector and community partners to make the plastic slabs available to all Ghanaians.

The Digni-loo is beneficial for all stakeholders: the GoG, Duraplast, USAID, Global Communities, and the poorest Ghanaians. It generates profits for Duraplast in a niche market, allows the GoG to collect taxes on profit and the VAT on sales, and allows USAID, Global Communities and the GoG to progress towards attaining the goal attaining ODF free status nation-wide by 2030. The poorest Ghanaians now have a product that meets their sanitation needs at a more affordable price, and the market-based sales approach will ensure the product’s sustainability and continued availability well into the future.

Water is life. Sanitation is dignity.



DIGNI-LOO™

What is the Digni-Loo?

A durable, affordable plastic slab that serves as an alternative basic sanitation option for households.

Why is the Digni-Loo Unique?

	<p>Affordable Locally produced by Duraplast Ghana Ltd. guarantees low cost</p>
	<p>Easy to Install No need for skilled labor or special tools</p>
	<p>Durable One piece of sturdy plastic approved by Ghana Standards Authority up to 1 ton</p>
	<p>Hygienic Easy to clean and maintain</p>
	<p>Sustainable When the pit is full, the Digni-Loo can be removed and relocated</p>



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