

PROOF POINT IDEAS

PROOF POINT: NOTES AND IDEAS DESIGNED TO SHARE INNOVATION, HIGHLIGHT LEARNING, AND ENLIST DISCUSSION. If you'd like to submit a proof point please contact jsauer@waterforpeople.org

Market-Based Sanitation Solutions in Bolivia Summary of Trip Report—April 2011

- **Partnerships:** Water For People—Bolivia has established strong and model partnerships with Business Development Support Service providers such as SNV, finance and loan providers such as Habitat for Humanity, local government, as well as local sanitation businesses—providing a shared vision for facilitating a more market-based approach to providing sanitation solutions.

- **Marketing and Promotion:** Water For People—Bolivia has developed marketing campaigns and financial options so that three households in peri-urban Cochabamba have taken out loans for bathrooms, six more purchased bathrooms on their own through self-construction packages and numerous others are in the process of negotiation. These marketing campaigns and promotional strategies are novel in that they are responding to household aspirations identified through market research as opposed to conventional approaches that only marketed latrines based on health benefits alone.

- **Low-Cost Designs:** Numerous low-cost, alternative bathroom designs are in development, including water-saving pour-flush and incorporating local materials to increase affordability.

- **Supporting Local Businesses:** Water For People—Bolivia is moving forward with supporting local sanitation businesses in peri-urban Cochabamba, encouraging them to try new designs and establish a “one-stop shop” whereby households not only can purchase toilets but access financing options as well.

- **Innovative Finance:** Water For People—Bolivia has identified numerous financial alternatives for households to increase their purchasing power.

Key Lessons Learned on Challenges from the Water for People—Bolivia Program

- **Business Ownership:** Strategies must be put in place to ensure that the entrepreneurs are leading the business, not that an NGO is “carrying them along.”

- **Sustainability:** Working with locally based organizations who provide business development services will be key to the sustainability of the process.

- **Innovative Technical Designs:** We need to think beyond dry-composting latrines so that households have a variety of affordable options to choose from.

- **Market Threats:** When toilets are given away for free, it distorts the market and throttles any chances a sanitation business may have had in the area. In many cases, free toilets aren't maintained, break down, and aren't the type of model the household would have preferred in the first place.

- **Humanure:** Water For People—Bolivia has made significant steps to identify the value that humanure has to offer, but much research is still needed (and being carried out) on the true benefits it can provide for crops, health risks, and best practices in composting processes.

