



German Toilet Organization



## ECT WASH — Lessons Learned

### Training of Trainers for Environmentally Sound and Climate Resilient WASH in Managua, Nicaragua

Country/ies NICARAGUA, HONDURAS, EL SALVADOR and GUATEMALA	Organisation GTO, ASB, CORDES, CDH, ADEPES, ASORECH	Duration October 1 <sup>st</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> , 2025 (5 days)
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## BACKGROUND

A Training of Facilitators (ToF) on Environmentally Sound and Climate-Resilient WASH was jointly conducted by GTO and ASB for local implementing organizations from four Central American countries: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The workshop took place at the ASB Latin America Regional Office in Managua, Nicaragua.

A key element of the training methodology was the use of a flipped classroom approach. Participants were organized into facilitation teams of four to five members and, four weeks prior to the workshop, were tasked with preparing and leading a 90-minute session during the in-person training.

The primary objective of the workshop was to equip participants with the skills required to deliver effective adult education and to mainstream principles of environmental sustainability and climate resilience into water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions, particularly within humanitarian contexts.

The training brought together a total of 21 participants (9 women and 12 men), including two persons with blindness: one representative from the Nicaraguan Organization of the Blind (OCN) and one from the Nicaraguan Federation of Associations of Persons with Disabilities (FECONORI).

Building on this context, the training simultaneously addressed the mainstreaming of:

- Adult learning principles
- Effective participatory training approaches
- Environmental mainstreaming and climate resilience, incorporating disaster risk reduction (DRR), nature-based solutions, preparedness, anticipatory action, and green humanitarian aid

Inclusivity, with a particular focus on persons with blindness.



Participants and facilitation team together outside ASB office Managua, Nicaragua.

## KEY LESSONS LEARNED

### Challenges:

One of the key challenges—and at the same time a significant opportunity—for the successful implementation of the training was the inclusion of persons with disabilities. For the facilitation team, this represented a new and valuable learning experience that ultimately strengthened the quality and inclusiveness of the workshop.

Prior to the activity, an important oversight related to ensuring that written materials were accessible in advance for participants with blindness. Two specific issues were

identified. First, although the editable documents were translated into Spanish, they did not consistently specify Spanish as the root language, creating barriers for screen readers and automatic voice conversion tools. Second, some materials referred to text highlighted in specific colours, which posed an additional obstacle to comprehension for participants with blindness.

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As is common in many training settings, participants brought diverse levels of understanding and experience in working with persons with disabilities. While some had little or no prior exposure, others had interacted with persons with disabilities mainly as beneficiaries, and a few had experience working alongside them as peers. These differing perspectives influenced initial expectations and approaches to collaboration during the workshop. At the same time, this diversity created a rich learning environment that encouraged reflection, dialogue, and more inclusive ways of working together.

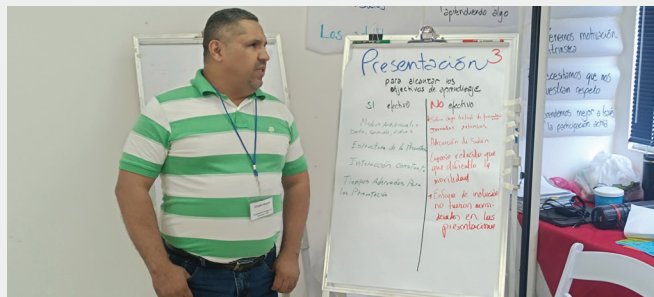
## Challenges:

The final evaluation of the training by all participants was highly positive. The meaningful inclusion of persons with blindness was supported from the outset by establishing clear principles of inclusivity, which were further reinforced during the first two days through continuous feedback and reflection among participants.

Key lessons learned for mainstreaming the inclusion of persons with blindness in future trainings included:

- The importance of clearly explaining the layout of the training space at the beginning of the activity.
- The need for facilitators and participants to verbally introduce themselves—stating their name, organization, and place of origin—before each intervention, particularly during the first one to two days of a multi-day event.
- The use of clear audio cues (such as a clap or a spoken signal) when requesting to speak or choosing not to intervene.
- The importance of verbally describing all visual content, including PowerPoint slides or physical materials, to ensure accessibility.

Through the interactions during the workshop and the strong contributions of the two participants with blindness, noticeable positive changes in participant behavior were observed. As the workshop progressed, participants became more attentive and adaptive in their interactions. The facilitation team reinforced the understanding that blindness is a barrier that can be reduced through awareness, appropriate adjustments, and inclusive practices.



Persons with blindness participants — Jadder (top) and Giner (bottom) — actively facilitating.



Inclusive participation in adapted energizer (water-bacteria-chlorine)

“**The facilitation team reinforced the understanding that blindness is a barrier that can be reduced through awareness, appropriate adjustments, and inclusive practices.**”

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for key actions to be replicated in similar activities include:

1. Ensure that all preliminary and reference materials are fully accessible to all participants.
2. Establish clear principles of inclusion at the outset of each activity, considering the diverse capacities and needs of participants.
3. Design and implement interactive elements that are inclusive and accessible to all.
4. Actively recognize and trust the abilities of all participants and reinforce messages of equality whenever necessary.

An additional recommendation is to strengthen the representation of people with disabilities in published materials related to environmental mainstreaming and climate resilience in humanitarian action. This should be accompanied by greater emphasis on the heightened vulnerability of people with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies, as well as their active role as agents of change rather than solely as beneficiaries.