

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Pure Water for the World Announces *Safe Learning Spaces* Project in Honduras**

**Rutland, VT - July 9, 2020.** Pure Water for the World, Inc. (PWW) announces the official launch of a comprehensive UNICEF-sponsored program in Honduras, *“Establishing Safe Learning Spaces: School Safety Plans with Gender-Focused, Climate-Resilient WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) Services.”*

The project launch took place on June 25, 2020, with a virtual meeting formally introducing the program to principals and teachers representing schools across Honduras. The meeting included representatives from all of the organizations that have come together to make the *Safe Learning Spaces* project possible, including: UNICEF (Canada, KOICA FT Global WASH), PWW, GOAL, and the Honduras Secretary of Education/DECOAS (Department of Education, Communication, Environment and Health).

PWW and GOAL were selected for the development and implementation of the project activities, which will cover six country regions of Honduras. The comprehensive program will reach schoolchildren (grades 1-9), supporting their right to receive an education in safe learning spaces. The program is expected to take two years, reaching 220 schools and over 8,000 people from educational communities (students, teachers and parents) across nine municipalities in Honduras that have been identified with high rates of “climate risk”.

This program directly contributes to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDG6, safe access to WASH) and supports the 2018-2022 Honduras Government Strategic Plan.

Honduras has been identified as one of three countries with the highest global climate risk index over the past two decades. According to the Risk Management Index (INFORM), 144 municipalities (48.3%) have a high or very high level of risk; 31% of the population lives in areas exposed to the

risk of natural disasters, while 33.2% of GDP is vulnerable to such disasters. Children make up 50-60% of the world's natural disaster victims. This situation leads to the perpetuation of poverty, increasing the dropout rate, malnutrition, inequity, and violence.

The proposed activities are aligned with the Honduras Secretary of Education (SEDUC) Green Education and Safe School Strategy and with the Minimum Standards for Education of the Interagency Network for Emergency Education in the field of 'Protection and Welfare', which is aimed at strengthening the capacities of schools and communities to promote access to climate-resilient and gender-focused WASH services.

*The WASH sector is already affected in many different ways by weather and climate events (such as variability, seasonality and extreme events). This translates into negative impacts on drinking water availability and quality, and negative performance of sanitation and hygiene services. Future climate change will put an additional stress on delivering and sustaining health and well-being related outcomes. Improvements in water resources management will help manage climate risks now and in the future through better information, policy, regulation, allocation and cooperation. This reduces the vulnerability to current climate variability to be more proactive climate change adaptation. (source: UNICEF)*

“Schools are important for WASH resilience because schools are often used as emergency response centers and provide accommodations during disasters. If traditional water systems are destroyed, schools that have effective WASH facilities in place can support community members and reduce the risk of community members getting sick,” said Maria Inestroza, PWW Country Director, Honduras. “Climate-resilient WASH prepares families and communities, supporting safe health and less vulnerability to any situation of emergency, including pandemics, like COVID19.”

PWW will be delivering comprehensive WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) training programs, including menstrual hygiene management education, to 220 teachers, representing 220 schools.

Additionally, PWW will be installing and/or repairing school WASH stations (latrines, handwashing stations, biosand water filters) to meet the requirement of “safe spaces” for the schools that are designated in need. Included in these efforts will be ensuring the availability of gender-specific latrines to support safe and private facilities for menstruating girls.

“We are grateful for this opportunity to work together and bring these essential WASH programs and facilities to teachers, students and communities in need,” said Maria Inestroza, PWW Country Director, Honduras. “We want to give special recognition to our partner, CAWST (Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology), who has been with us every step of the way, supporting us with creating the new virtual training program. God bless these programs, and let it be a success.”

Learn more at [www.purewaterfortheworld.org](http://www.purewaterfortheworld.org).

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### **About Pure Water for The World:**

Pure Water for the World is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to improve lives by empowering people with access to life’s most basic necessities...safe water and sanitation.

Pure Water for the World has partnered with over 200 communities, reaching more than 750,000 people in Haiti and Central America with life-changing, sustainable safe water, hygiene and sanitation solutions.

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