

## Press release

June 4th, 2020

### Hygiene habits and safe water are key for sanitary emergencies: Lazos de Agua (Water Ties)

- The program Lazos de Agua aims to increment the access to safe water and sanitation and hygiene services for 200 thousand people in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay.
- Lazos de Agua incorporates the focus Social Art for Behavior Change™ to promote the sustainability of interventions, including the adoption of hygienic practices.

**Mexico City, June 4th, 2020.**— More than 98 thousand people in Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay are facing the COVID-19 pandemic well prepared thanks to the interventions made since 2016 for the program Lazos de Agua, which promotes the sustainable access to safe water and sanitation and hygiene services.

Lazos de Agua is a program supported by FEMSA Foundation, the IDB, The Coca-Cola Foundation and One Drop, who since 2016 work in more than 230 communities of Latin America to increase the sustainable access to safe water and sanitation and hygienic services, key components to promote human development, but also to confront problems of public health, such as gastrointestinal illnesses and the acute respiratory syndrome caused by COVID-19.

“It is important to emphasize the importance of water access, sanitation installations and basic inputs such as soap, to face sanitary emergencies, such as the one generated by COVID-19. Lazos de Agua aims to guarantee the continuous access to these resources”, said German Sturzenegger, Senior Specialist of Water and Sanitation of the IDB.

To date, more than 98 thousand people have benefitted from the projects of safe water access and sanitation in Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay. However, the investment in infrastructure is only the beginning: Lazos de Agua promotes the adoption and permanence of habits that contribute to the sustainability of interventions, including hygienic practices.

“One of the things that we have learned, as we are seeing with COVID-19, is that personal hygiene becomes very important to capitalize the benefits of having water. It is clear that the infrastructure is a necessary element (and a basic one), but the interventions must focus on the people, in habilitating them to be able to develop”, Carlos Hurtado, Sustainable Development Manager at FEMSA Foundation, explained.

For further information:

Hanako Taniguchi  
+52 55 5249 6820

Óscar Martínez  
+52 81 8318 1863

[femsa.com](http://femsa.com)

[relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx](mailto:relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx)

## Press release

June 4th, 2020

To achieve it, Lazos de Agua focuses on the model A·B·C para la Sostenibilidad™ (A·B·C for Sustainability) which incorporates the focus on Social Art for Behavior Change™. With collaborative activities of social art, such as theatre productions, puppet workshops, audiovisual creation and muralism, among others, which are based on the local culture and concrete evidence, the adoption of healthy habits that favor the health of the participants as well as the sustainability of the water and sanitation systems is promoted.

At the beginning of the program, only 28% of the inhabitants of the communities where Lazos de Agua intervenes washed their hands regularly. To date, 41% have already adopted this habit. This taking into consideration that until December 2019 more than 120 thousand people had participated in Social Art for Behavior Change™ interventions and almost 100 thousand had improved their access to water, sanitation and hygiene. According to the representatives of the program, the elements that have helped promote this behavior could be the base to reinforce others, such as social distancing or the input of protective items, such as facemasks.

“The arts, when creating a response of emotional connection with the participants, inspire and invite them to act to change their behaviors; creativity becomes a powerful motor for change. The people become protagonists of their own change”, added Isabelle Viens, Expert at Social Art for Behavior Change™ of One Drop.

###

### About FEMSA

*FEMSA is a leading company that generates economic and social value through enterprises and institutions and aims to be the best employer and neighbor of the communities where it is present. It participates in retail trade through FEMSA Comercio, which englobes the Proximity Division, a chain of small stores of which OXXO is a part; a Health Division which includes pharmacies and related activities; and a Fuel Division that operates the OXXO GAS chain of service stations. In the beverage industry it operates Coca-Cola FEMSA, a public bottler of Coca-Cola products; and in the brewer sector it is a stockholder of Heineken, a Company present in more than 70 countries. Additionally, through Strategic Businesses FEMSA, it offers logistics services, refrigeration at selling points and plastic solutions to FEMSA companies and external clients. Through its Business Units it employs approximately 300 thousand collaborators in 13 countries. FEMSA is a member of the Dow Jones Sustainability MILA Pacific Alliance Index, the FTSE4Good Emerging Index and the Sustainable Prices and Quotation Index of the Mexican Stock Market, among other indexes that evaluate its performance in sustainability.*

### About FEMSA Foundation

*Since eleven years ago, FEMSA Foundation generates positive impact in people and communities through social investment projects for sustainability. We seek to ensure water safety and the sustainable use of water in Latin America and we take action to help early childhood development. We have also incorporated the diffusion of Latin American art and culture through the Cultural Program FEMSA. For further information visit the website [www.fundacionfemsa.org](http://www.fundacionfemsa.org) or follow us on Facebook (FundacionFEMSA) and Twitter (@FundacionFEMSA).*

#### For further information:

Hanako Taniguchi      Óscar Martínez  
+52 55 5249 6820      +52 81 8318 1863  
[femsa.com](http://femsa.com)  
[relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx](mailto:relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx)



## Press release

June 4th, 2020

### About IDB

---

The [InterAmerican Bank of Development](#) is one of the main sources of long-term financing for economic, social and institutional projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. Besides loans, donations and credit guarantees, the IDB has cutting edge research projects to bring innovative and sustainable solutions to the most urgent problems of our region. Created in 1959 to help accelerate the progress of its developing country members, the IDB works daily to improve lives.

### About One Drop

---

One Drop Foundation was created on 2007 by Guy Laliberté, Cirque du Soleil and Lune Rouge founder, with the vision of a better world in which everyone has access to life conditions that allow their empowerment and development. Its mission is to ensure the sustainable access of safe water and sanitation in some of the most vulnerable communities, through innovative alliances, creativity and the power of art. Along with its associates, One Drop implements its projects based on a unique focus: Social Art for the Change of Behavior™, designed to promote the adoption of healthy practices related to water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as empowering communities. For more than 12 years, One Drop has transformed water into action with projects that will soon have improved the life conditions of more than 2.1 million people around the globe. More information in [onedrop.org](#).

### About Lazos de Agua

---

The program Lazos de Agua, from the IDB, The Coca-Cola Foundation, FEMSA Foundation and One Drop, is an innovative initiative in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector, implemented using the model A·B·C para la Sostenibilidad™ (A·B·C for Sustainability) of the Social Art for Behavior Change™ focus. The program promotes the active participation of the communities, governments, associate execution experts in the sector, social artists and diverse local actors, facilitating the durability of the systems and the autonomy of the communities. Participants and other actors of Lazos de Agua have strengthened their capacities in context of the three components of the model: Access, Behaviour Change and Capital. For December 2022, the program Lazos de Agua will have facilitated the sustainable access to water services and/or sanitation and hygiene to approximately 200 thousand people in Latin America, of which around 160 thousand will also have participated in SABC activities. More information in [lazosdeagua.org](#)

For further information:

Hanako Taniguchi  
+52 55 5249 6820

Óscar Martínez  
+52 81 8318 1863

[femsa.com](#)

[relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx](mailto:relacionconmedios@femsa.com.mx)