Guatemala



Organization: Natün Guatemala
Location: Sololá, Guatemala
Solution: This solution aims to implement a sustainable farming model that revives traditional Maya agroecological farming practices and achieves increased resilience
Factsheet Period: First round of UNDP AFCIA funding (16 months); Second round of UNDP AFCIA funding (12 months)



Community members and local leaders working in reforestation initiative @Natün Guatemala

Maya communities in Sololá, Guatemala, are facing declining agricultural productivity due to unpredictable rainfall, soil degradation and the loss of traditional farming methods; trends which are also driving severe pollution and biodiversity loss in the Lake Atitlán basin, Central America's largest drinking water source. To address this, Natün Guatemala is implementing a climate-resilient farming model that includes community and family food gardens, seed banks and the planting of 200,000 trees. In partnership with local communities and the government, the initiative aims to restore traditional Maya agroecological practices, improve agricultural resilience and protect the watershed.

Key achievements

- Established 303 family gardens, 6 community agroforestry gardens and 266 small poultry farms, benefiting 18,752 people by improving access to nutritious food and supporting sustainable livelihoods.
- Promoted women-led and community-driven implementation, with 96% of gardens managed by women; established 14 field schools supporting effective community-led implementation; and trained 25 women community *promotoras* (local trainers) in sustainable agriculture, climate change and environmental practices.
- Strengthened institutional collaboration through four agreements with government agencies, for implementation of the solution and joint work.
- Improved water access and management by delivering WASH training to six community water committees and beneficiary families, complemented by community-led infrastructure improvements and a specialised diploma, training 12 committees in plumbing and system maintenance.
- Enhanced environmental sustainability through forest assessment (15 ha), reforestation (2.64 ha) and the planting of 4,720 trees, alongside community engagement—particularly of women—in environmental education and conservation.
- Built local capacity through training on environmental protection, family agriculture and WASH, and developed a practical guide for producing high-nutritional-value food, contributing to improved practices, awareness and community resilience.

Social impact

- Capacity-building activities and policy-level influence have the potential to create a wider impact.
- Focus on women's empowerment through training and leadership roles.
- Increase Indigenous Peoples and women’s participation in community decision making processes related to food and health.

Adaptation benefits

- Enhanced economic resilience for farmers through increased household earnings.
- Improved nutritional security for families by strengthening local food systems and reducing reliance on external sources through healthier diets.
- Prevention of additional contamination to the lake Atitlán.

Innovation

- Supports the continuation of Indigenous knowledge and languages through Maya-led community efforts.
- Revives sustainable Maya farming practices like seed banks, and organic farming.
- Introduces vertical gardens in small spaces.
- Enhances families income through increased production and extends climate-smart agriculture education.







Replication potential

- Bridges information gaps between government and communities.
- Trains local leaders on climate-smart agriculture for potential policy influence.
- Collaborates with government entities and other NGOs for broader adoption.
- The model is designed to scale easily, utilizing and building upon local resources and knowledge.

Funding snapshot

- UNDP-AFCIA grant: US$170 000 (initial grant: $60,000; scaling grant: $110,000)
- Crowdfunding campaign: $20,987



Investability	
Revenue per year	**Annual Credit Generation:** ~1,500 tCO_2e **Estimated Revenue:** US$30,000 per year (at $20 per ton) NGOs or schools pay US$10 per family trained via a WhatsApp course Agro-ecological kits sells for US$18 Advisory engagement results in $6,000 (2-4 weeks average)
Sustaining criteria	Natün's verified tree planting and Indigenous-led gardens enhance carbon credit value through story, accountability and additionality.
Financial innovation	Natün monetizes its existing community programmes by combining short-term contracts, carbon credits and sellable learning kits, creating scalable revenue streams while leveraging local partnerships.

ADAPTATION FUND Climate Innovation Accelerator

ADAPTATION FUND

To read their story, visit UNDP-AFCIA

To watch their video, click here

To contact the organization, visit Natün Guatemala