BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation

Backgrounder: International Standard Organization – ISO 30500

ISO 30500 is a technical standard that defines the operational requirements for the reinvented toilet, as well as other existing and future stand-alone, non-sewered sanitation technologies. It sets targets for safety, processing capability, operational performance, and waste by-products – and mandates that systems meeting the International Standards Organisation (ISO) standard fully disinfect human excreta and meet environmental, odor, and noise performance and testing requirements.

The standard applies to any prefabricated, "integrated sanitation system" that is not attached to a sewer, which ISO 30500 refers to as non-sewered sanitation systems. A non-sewered system is comprised of both a frontend element ("toilet facility") that collects and conveys input, and a backend element ("treatment facility") that treats the input to allow for safe reuse or disposal of the generated solid, liquid, and/or gaseous output.

International standards, across industries, set thresholds of performance for safety, functionality, usability, reliability, maintainability, and compatibility with environmental protection goals. They are important to businesses, consumers, and regulators because consistent technical requirements across countries and regions allow products to be supplied across different markets, while maintaining the quality and reliability of products in a product category. International standards can also significantly reduce compliance costs for companies manufacturing and distributing a product, because they can obtain one certificate of conformity rather than establishing compliance on a country-by-country basis.

Experts from industry, government, academia and non-governmental organizations representing 31 countries collaborated with the International Standards Organisation to develop and agree to ISO 30500.

The new ISO 30500 will be catalytic to the emerging reinvented toilet category because it establishes a clear outline for what a high-quality product should achieve for users. Manufacturers will be able to demonstrate that their products are safe according to an established set of benchmarks, and governments and consumers can be confident that such products meet those requirements. In other industries, international standards have helped companies reduce costs, increase efficiencies, facilitate and maintain market access, and effectively market product benefits.

About the International Standards Organization
The International Standards Organization is a prominent, non-governmental international standard-setting body based in Geneva, Switzerland. The organization is composed of representatives from various national standards organizations of its 162 member countries. To date, the International Standards Organization has published over 22,000 international standards and related documents, covering almost every industry.