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DRINKING WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) countries continue to face significant gaps in water supply and sanitation provision. Nearly 34 million people do not have access to safely managed drinking water. Although the region is highly urbanised, half of Latin America's residents live in homes that are still not connected to a sewage system. Wastewater treatment plants process only about 15% of the wastewater produced and, even then, the quality of the treatment is often inadequate. A disproportionate number of the households with limited access to drinking water and sanitation are from lower income brackets, primarily living in the rapidly growing, high-density peripheries of established urban centres, small towns and rural areas.

Drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) are vital for individual health, livelihoods and well-being. The availability and management of water are affected by the increasing occurrence of droughts and floods brought about by climate change in the region. Of all the countries in the region, Haiti stands out with levels of access to these three services considerably lower than anywhere else. In contrast, Chile was the only country in LAC with nearly universal access to at least basic drinking water and sanitation services

Sustainable Development Goal 6 specifically targets the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. Since 2010, access to water and sanitation has been recognised as a human right. Water is a driver of development and plays a crucial role in alleviating poverty: it is vital for human nutrition and health, and essential for ecosystem management, agriculture, energy, industry and global security. Water-related risks can have grave human and economic costs and contribute to migration. Water scarcity has the potential to affect peace and security.

The EU supports the Human Rights Guidelines on Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation to ensure step-by-step implementation of the human right to water in terms of quality, quantity, affordability and access.

The EU supports national and multi-country programmes to increase access to quality WASH services; to improve sustainable and integrated management of water resources; and to promote the interlinkages between water, energy, food and ecosystems - the Nexus approach. This approach highlights the interdependence of water, energy and food security and the natural resources that underpin security. It also provides an informed and transparent framework for determining appropriate trade-offs and synergies that maintain the integrity and sustainability of ecosystems.

The **Latin America Investment Facility (LAIF)** and the **Caribbean Investment Facility (CIF)** finance projects in LAC countries to facilitate access to safe drinking water and effective sanitation systems, contributing to the achievement of SDG 6. LAIF and CIF facilitate and promote public and private investment in water and sanitation infrastructure, seeking environmentally sound and climate-relevant solutions. They have helped to mobilise funding for the construction and repair of drinking water and sanitation systems in several LAC cities in countries such as Ecuador, Nicaragua, Suriname and Dominican Republic. They also support the development of integrated water resources management (IWRM) policies, strengthen water and sanitation management capacities and provide finance for the pre-investment studies required to access favourable financing mechanisms in the water sector.

Main challenges and way forward



Basic sanitation services guaranteed: Half the homes in Latin America are still not connected to a sewage system. Adequate drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene are vital to individual health, livelihoods and well-being.

Legal framework: Local government and EU policies and initiatives must meet the needs of the population in terms of quality, quantity, affordability and access.

Nexus approach: The interlinkages between water, energy, food and ecosystems must be strengthened. It is essential to create synergies between water, energy and agricultural policies to guarantee basic rights and the sustainability of ecosystems.

Indicators



Number of projects:
15



Total number of beneficiaries:
11,058,894



Greenhouse gas emissions reduction:
90 CO₂ kt equivalent/year



Number of jobs created or supported:
1,208



New connections to potable water:
1,393,179

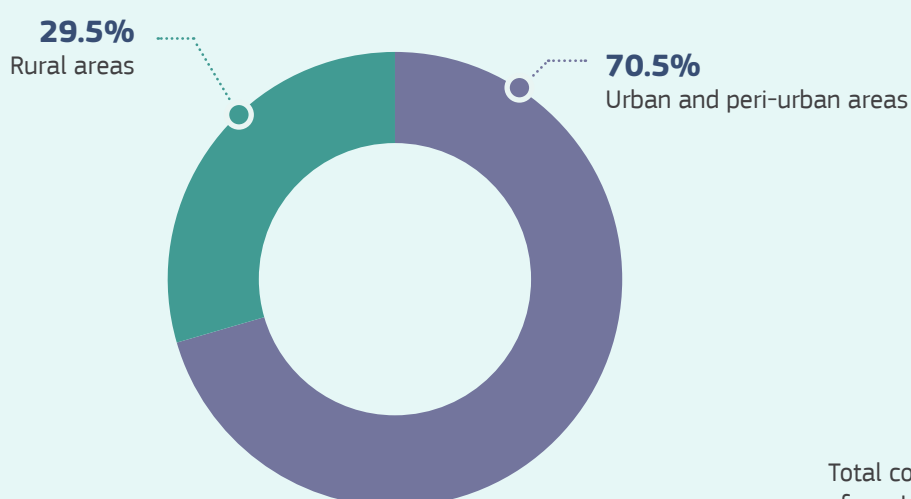


Wastewater treatment capacity:
497,013 M³ equivalent/day



Households with basic sanitation services:
554,807

LAIF and CIF contribution per sector



Total contribution from LAIF & CIF:
€ 142 080 000 

Bilateral and multi-country projects

<https://www.eulaif.eu/en/projects>

<https://www.eu-cif.eu/en/projects>

This fiche was prepared with the most recent information and data available from the banks under their contractual responsibility fully to inform LAIF promptly about the developments in the projects.