

# **WATER AND SANITATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**



**UN**  **HABITAT**







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# FOREWORD

Ensuring access to water and adequate sanitation services is one of the most efficient ways to break the poverty cycle. The Millennium Development Goals, adopted by 189 countries in 2000, included the target of halving by 2015 the number of people without access to water suitable for human consumption and adequate sanitation services. In order to comply with the goal of halving the proportion of people without drinking water supply services in the LAC Region, access would have to be provided to over 120 million persons.

Despite the efforts, the Latin American and Caribbean region still shows a high level exclusion from services. The rate of overcoming coverage problems has diminished while the numbers of the socially excluded have been growing in many countries. There are serious deficiencies in access to services, which disproportionately affect low-income groups, improvements in access to sanitation is clearly behind water, where most of the sector efforts and funds have been focused during last years. The insufficient coverage and poor quality of the sanitation and waste water treatment services not only have negative impacts on the health of the population but also affect the environment, the economy and the availability of water for other uses.

UN-HABITAT launched the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund (WSTF) in October 2002 to help governments meet their commitment to the water target of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). That target seeks "to reduce by half the proportion of people

without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation by the year 2015". The Trust Fund's mission is to create a hospitable environment for pro-poor investment in water and sanitation in urban areas of all sizes in the developing world and thus provide the means to improve significantly the volume and effectiveness of the Official Development Aid and local financial flows into the water and sanitation sector. The Trust Fund's activities are targeted to create smarter water policies and increase investment in water and sanitation for the urban poor.

The Water for Cities Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean (WatSan-LAC) is a regional operative initiative of the WSTF created in response to the regional consultations undertaken during the Americas' Regional Preparatory Process and during the working sessions at the 4th World Water Forum, held in Mexico City, in March 2006. The Programme has been conceived as a collaborative effort among the countries of the region, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and UN-HABITAT. The Programme has been conceived along the lines of other UN-HABITAT supported water and sanitation Programmes, supported by the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund; following examples of the Water for Asian Cities Programme and the Water for African Cities Programme.

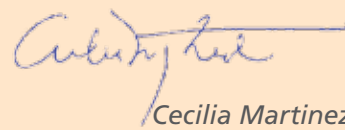
Since 2008, UN-HABITAT has made efforts to develop and manage a collaborative network for the Water and Sanitation for Cities Programme in Latin America and the Caribbean with the participation of



different stakeholders, including intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, national governments, local authorities, organizations of civil society, universities, research centers and community based organizations. The Programme aims to support developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to achieve sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation for the poor, particularly in the urban and peri-urban areas. The Programme combines policy dialogue and normative work with on-the-ground pilot and demonstration water and sanitation projects focusing on pro-poor water and sanitation service delivery. A strategic partnership has been forged with the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) to achieve greater leverage in the flow of resources and concerted actions in selected countries across the region. This strategic partnership with the IADB for the Latin America and the Caribbean (WatSan-LAC) Programme was formalized in 2008 with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both institutions. Different forms of cooperation between both institutions are being formalized in Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico and Peru.

The Programme also aims to increase the flow of investments to the water and sanitation sector in Latin America and the Caribbean through strategic partnerships amongst different agents, including the IADB, donor countries, central governments, local authorities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and local communities.

This brochure has been prepared to describe the results achieved in the implementation of the UN-HABITAT WatSan-LAC work Programme since 2008, focus has been on supporting policy dialogue and normative work combined with community-based demonstration projects, including the construction of decentralized water and wastewater systems (small bore sewerage networks), community-based environmental sanitation, including demonstration toilets and solid waste management, human values-based water, sanitation and hygiene education in schools coupled with awareness creation. This brochure also aims to share the challenges encountered thus far in implementing the Programme. We would like to continue these efforts to improve the living environment in urban areas through improving basic urban services in an environmentally friendly manner and to contribute to the global efforts to adapt to the effect of climate change. The focus of this brochure is on the current and planned activities in the following areas: i) Overall global normative work; ii) Water and Sanitation for Latin America and the Caribbean Cities Programme (WatSan-LAC); iii) Solid Waste Management Programme.



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