

Latin America approaches to rural water supply and sanitation service provision

Workshop *“The last mile: Rural water service delivery in the Danube region”*

April 17, 2024

Changes in connectivity, economic growth and climate over the last decades have driven relevant improvements in the rural WSS sector of LAC

Triggers / Trends

Physical distance between urban and rural areas has reduced while virtual connectivity has increased



Rapid urbanization and sustained economic growth have changed rural environment



Changes in weather patterns have affected water sources and WSS service infrastructure



Impacts / Emerging changes

- New relationships among urban and rural areas, based on emerging cultural patterns and rapid spread on the use of ICT and social networks
- Changes in sanitation service level patterns (bathrooms rather than latrines, sewerage networks and WWT plants rather than on-site solutions)
- Recognition of water and sanitation as a human right have driven changes in rural WSS policies, specially on promoting visibility of the “invisibles”.
- Decrease in big urban city migration; now, people increasingly migrate to intermediate cities and small towns. While rural poverty in LAC saw a significant decline, rural poverty remains higher than urban poverty.
- Changes in income composition of rural households (less than 40% of families depend on agricultural activities).
- A new perception addressed to protect water sources has strongly emerged in population and civil society
- New approaches and tools have developed such as the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), the river basin planning, and the compensation or payment for environmental services.

However, important challenges in WSS access -especially of the most vulnerable- and quality and sustainability of service provision remain!

Lack of sustainability of schemes & providers

- Rural WSS providers are not financially sustainable.
- Free community management is not long-term sustainable.
- TA to providers is not provided as much time as it is required.



The rural WSS institutional and policy framework should embrace innovation. Service provision sustainability is related to increase **decentralized approaches and multi sectoral intervention in the territory.**

Lack of policies and RWSS subsector governance

- The community management model for RWSS service delivery is highly reliant on volunteer work, lacks external support, and is financially weak.
- The role of local governments in RWSS service management remains unclear and regulation is often weak or nonexistent.



Specific policies and interventions for the governance of the RWSS subsector are required. They should be thought as a bridge between concentrate and dispersed rural areas, promoting **institutions and regulation** for the subsector.

Sustainability of behavior change

- Families' adoption of sanitation and hygiene practices
- Water culture and gender challenges
- Watershed approach vs political borders
- Role of mining and extractive industries
- Water use rights of multiple users



It is not just about WSS infrastructure, the WSS services in rural areas should be the pillar of **social interventions to promote changes in sanitation and hygiene behaviors** and the harmonization water use rights of multiple users.



LAC RWSS service delivery models are diverse



Costa Rica ASADAS model

Community empowerment

5M inhabitants, 27% in rural areas
93% / 85% water supply access
96% sanitation access

- 32% rural people served by 1,498 ASADAS.
- ASADA is a communal organization that builds, administrates, maintains, and operates the RWSS systems.
- A national entity (AyA), which is the technical governing body, offers centralized TA, supervision and evaluation to ASADAS.



Brazil – Ceará SISAR model

Alliance for efficiency & control

190M inhabitants, 16% in rural areas
8.5M inhabitants in Ceará, 25% rural areas
78% water supply / 44% sanitation access

- 33% rural people served by 8 SISAR
- SISAR is an alliance of communal organizations in the same watershed that maintains and gets in charge of supplies for operation of RWSS systems, including social & environment training. SISAR also makes commercial processes and water quality assurance.



Colombia Differential schemes Territorial approach

49M inhabitants, 23% rural areas
92% / 73% water supply access
88% / 70% sanitation access

- 27% rural people served by 2,455 providers.
- Differential schemes have ad-hoc regulations and policies to offer progressive WSS services improvements.
- This territorial approach includes a M&E system, intersectoral coordination, subsidies, water quality control, ad-hoc technologies.



A transformational-holistic approach to reach the last rural mile is needed

To be transformational the approach calls for building resilience and sustainability of the subsector and the recognition of the new rural identity, while for be holistic, it should call for collaboration and inclusion.

Builds on resilience & sustainability

- Financial efficiency & models (decentralized, aggregation, association, indigenous business model)
- Improve lack of information (M&E)
- Supervision & Regulation
- Institutional capacity and sub sector governance

Recognizes new rural identity

- Sanitation solutions that fit with new service level patterns (bathrooms vs latrines)
- SDG6 raises the bar, measuring accessibility, availability, and pollution.

Embraces cross-cutting & integrated approaches

- Go beyond the HH level, (Health centers & schools)
- Water-energy
- Water-agriculture-food
- WASH in schools
- WASH-nutrition-health

Promotes social inclusion & behavior change

- Go beyond infrastructure approach
- Hygiene & handwashing
- Sanitation use
- indigenous population
- Gender and CE
- Behavioral economics & tariffs
- Monitoring of change on behaviors

A renew rural WASH agenda requires:

Recognize there is a new rural identity, that demands better service standards

Accelerate government efforts to count with reliable in-country information systems that can estimate the real financial and management effort that must be made to meet the SDG6 targets by 2030. It is not more about access, it is about safely managed that requires accessibility, availability, and no pollution.

We do not leave anyone behind, especially the last rural mile, where poorest, vulnerable and mostly indigenous population used to live.

For that, a transformational-holistic approach is needed. An approach that calls for building resilience and sustainability of the subsector, the recognition of the new rural identity, and calls for collaboration and inclusion.

Focus on results, scale, resilience and sustainability



Many thanks
Muchas gracias
Muito obrigado



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Recent Bank engagements globally are focused on results

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Program for Results helps to shape green, inclusive, and sustainable service delivery. It benefits from the Bank global learning, which it is applied in national programs (using country systems) for scale and sustainability.

Reward functionality and sustainability

- Water quality and functional connections
- Cost recovering tariffs
- Use of solar pumping
- Innovations for reliability and reducing level of downtime
- Better designs leading to cost savings
- Sustaining ODF

Incentivize capacity building

- Regular M&E and use of sector M&E systems
- Development of Human resources
- Use of sub-national planning tools
- Area-wide approaches with coordination across sectors (Health/Education)

Accelerate rural water sector reforms

- Stimulate PPP through performance-based contracts between regulator and operators
- Establishment of a dedicated rural water agency
- Professionalized management
- New tariff policies

Include citizens in rural water governance

- Requirements for inclusive consultation
- Women leadership positions in rural water supply
- Citizen engagement and feedback requirements for WSS operators