



## **More than 450 Latin American communities fulfil a dream with multi-sectoral investment: to have sustainable drinking water**

*Thanks to their commitment and creativity, more than 200,000 people in rural, indigenous, dispersed and peri-urban communities in five countries have access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.*

(Mexico City, Mexico, 29 November 2022) - Following the completion of the first phase of the Lazos de Agua Program, more than 200,000 Latin Americans now have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, overcoming the challenges still faced by millions of people in the region.

Latin America is making progress in WASH coverage. However, 240 million people still lack a safely managed water source and more than 490 million people do not have access to safely managed sanitation facilities. At the current rate of investment and increased coverage, the region will not meet the 2030 targets of [Sustainable Development Goal 6](#), according to the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF. The sector recognises that, to meet SDG 6, greater mobilisation of public-private financing is required, and innovation and multi-sectoral collaboration must be fostered.

On the other hand, as emphasised by the United Nations (UN), successfully delivering adequate levels of water and sanitation services requires the right systems to be in place. That is, institutions that are properly resourced and capable of delivering services and changing behaviours in an appropriate and resilient manner.

In this context, the Lazos de Agua Program, launched in 2016, officially closes its first phase in December 2022, exceeding its goals. Together with communities, this initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank, The Coca-Cola Foundation, FEMSA Foundation and One Drop

Foundation generated technical and behavioural change solutions adapted to each context. As a result, empowered women and men of all ages have the skills and knowledge to operate, manage and maintain WASH solutions. The Program also strengthened micro-entrepreneurs in the region and thus local economies.

*"Art is the vehicle that allows us to bring a relevant issue like water to the communities, and it really makes a difference; we have seen this very clearly in behaviours such as paying fees or washing hands. If we strengthen this approach by integrating all learning, we will be able to innovate and evolve the model we already have and, with it, continue to build trust and add new allies, because we need many more to achieve the impact we require,"* said Lorena Guillé-Laris, director of FEMSA Foundation, during the culmination event of the first phase of the Program.

*"The Lazos de Agua Program is particularly significant for the One Drop Foundation. Because of the results achieved in its first phase, but also because of the way they were achieved. Through a creative, people-centred approach that believes in the power of art to elicit emotions, action and sustainable change and with an ecosystem of NGOs, private and public entities, artists and, most importantly community members -Maria from Mexico, Jennifer from Colombia, Liz from Paraguay and Saqueo from Guatemala, just to name a few of the 211,000 people positively impacted with safe water and sanitation. They are the reason we are, together, turning water into action!,"* explained Jean-Louis Dufresne, CEO of the One Drop Foundation.

## **The key to success**

Collaboration, innovation and creativity have been key in achieving the programme's goals, overcoming sector-specific challenges such as covering communities in vulnerable situations; reducing or eliminating open defecation; and working together with users, local providers, microfinance institutions, public entities, private enterprise and development organisations. The Program's intervention approach, the One Drop Foundation's Social Art for Behaviour Change™ (SABC) approach, has also enabled the adoption of healthy practices, as well as community ownership of technical and administrative processes related to their new or improved WASH systems.

*"The Lazos de Agua Program is unique because it promotes public-private articulation that achieves greater outreach and sustainability, but also promotes a participatory construction, understanding that solutions must come from the people of the communities,"* said Andrea Mota, Director of Sustainability and Partnerships for Coca-Cola Latin America.

After completing the first phase, Lazos de Agua is mapping out the route for its second phase to 2030 to continue impacting the lives of Latin American communities, joining forces with governments and encouraging the mobilisation of public-private financing.

Based on what has been built, the Program will reinforce its systemic strategy based on the One Drop Foundation's [A·B·C for Sustainability™ model](#), which includes linking sectors and actors at the strategic, technical and financial levels. It will also continue to use social art as a powerful tool to promote behavioural change in communities, increasing the sustainability of projects and the impact of interventions.

*"With Phase I of Lazos de Agua we were able to prove that by linking access, behaviour change through social art and access to capital, we achieved greater sustainability and community ownership of water and sanitation systems. Its proven effects and the lessons learned are the fundamental inputs to design the second phase, where we can scale up the model, bringing together governments, the private sector, the public sector and communities,"* said Sergio Campos, Head of the Water and Sanitation Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

## **An achievement with, by and for the communities**

- By the end of 2022, more than 211,000 people will have sustainable and adequate access to WASH in Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua and Paraguay.
- Around 228,000 people will have participated in SABC processes.
- More than 311 water committees will have been trained in administration, management and maintenance of water and sanitation systems.
- More than USD 341,530 will have been invested in WASH products and services through microfinance institutions.

For more information, to hear stories from the Program's Leaders of Change, or to request interviews with Lazos de Agua founding, government or implementing partners, please contact Lina Tangarife ([Lina.Tangarife@onedrop.org](mailto:Lina.Tangarife@onedrop.org)).

### **About the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)**

The Inter-American Development Bank is dedicated to improving lives. Founded in 1959, the IDB is a leading source of long-term financing for economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB also conducts cutting-edge research and provides policy advice, technical assistance and training to public and private sector clients throughout the region. Access our [virtual tour](#).

### **About FEMSA Foundation**

At FEMSA Foundation we envision a better future for Latin America and therefore, we focus on combating social and environmental problems in a systemic way. Our solutions and tools are based on science, on the effect we want to generate through our interventions, and on

strategic alliances to achieve change. To achieve the future we envision, we focus on four causes: Early Childhood, Circular Economy, Arts and Culture and Water Security. For more information, please visit: [www.fundacionfemsa.org](http://www.fundacionfemsa.org) or follow us on our social networks FB, IG, TW (@FundacionFEMSA) and LI (/Fundación-FEMSA).

#### **About the Coca-Cola Foundation**

The Coca-Cola Foundation is the leading international philanthropic arm of The Coca-Cola Company. Since its inception in 1984, the Foundation has awarded more than \$1.4 billion in grants to support sustainable community initiatives around the world. For more information, please visit [www.coca-colacompany.com](http://www.coca-colacompany.com) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

#### **About the One Drop Foundation**

The One Drop™ Foundation is an international philanthropic organisation created by the founder of Cirque du Soleil and Lune Rouge, Guy Laliberté, with a vision of a better world, where everyone has access to empowering living conditions and development. Its mission is to ensure sustainable access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene for communities facing extreme barriers through innovative partnerships, creativity and the power of art. Together with its partners, the One Drop Foundation deploys its unique Social Art for Behaviour Change™ approach, designed to promote the adoption of healthy water, sanitation and hygiene behaviours and empower communities. To make this possible, the One Drop Foundation creates innovative fundraising initiatives with the support of a visionary community of partners and donors. The One Drop Foundation celebrates 15 years of turning water into action, with projects that will soon have improved the lives of more than 2.7 million people around the world. Visit [www.onedrop.org](http://www.onedrop.org) and interact with the One Drop Foundation on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#).