

# FS 1.4 OLAS Household Survey Data Set: Water Access Indicators

The Water and Sanitation Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (OLAS) is a digital platform that provides reliable, comparable, timely and consistent information related to the water and sanitation sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). To this end, the OLAS has created a regional data set from national household survey data, with the objective of creating water and sanitation indicators with uniform definitions for countries in LAC. This fact sheet describes and analyzes the indicators related to sanitation access and their limitations. For general information on the OLAS Household Survey data set, including its advantages, data sources, and limitations readers are invited to download FS 1.3 on the OLAS Household Survey data set and the Methodology document available on the [OLAS](#).

## Water Source Indicators

Water Source Indicators	Definitions
water_distr	Percent connected to the public water network
consume_distr	Percent that consume water from the public water network as their primary drinking water source
consume_other_min	Percent that consume water from other improved water sources as their primary drinking water source (conservative estimate)
consume_other_max	Percent that consume water from other improved water sources as their primary drinking water source (liberal estimate)
consume_bottled	Percent that consume bottled water as their primary drinking water source

**Table 1: Water source indicators from the OLAS Household Surveys data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].**

The JMP classifies water sources as improved or unimproved, regardless of the actual quality of water provided by the water source. The OLAS Household Survey data separates these sources into two separate categories: piped water from the public network and other “improved” water sources [2].

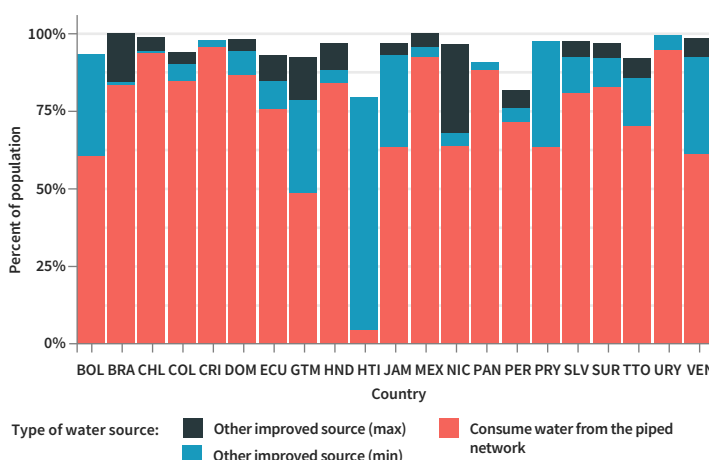
## Piped water from the public network

The OLAS Household Survey data set has two indicators that measure access to the public distribution network. One indicator, water\_distr, is the percent of the population that has access to the water distribution network in their home or property. The data set also includes an indicator consume\_distr that specifies the percent of households that consume water from the public distribution network. In many cases, this indicator is equal to the water\_distr variable, as many household surveys in the region do not differentiate between water sources used for household purposes and water sources used for human consumption. Bolivia, Colombia, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela ask specifically about drinking water sources. Argentina only collects data for urban populations so is not included in national estimates.

## Water from other improved water sources

The incorporation of an indicator to measure access to other improved water sources, such as tubewells, protected dug wells, protected springs, rainwater, bottled water or delivered water, presents some challenges. National Household Surveys are heterogeneous across the region with some countries listing water source categories that align with the JMP categorization, and others using more general categories. For example, some countries have “well” as a response option as opposed to “covered protected well”, which is preferred because it guarantees that the well can be considered an improved source. To deal with this uncertainty, a lower and upper bound were created for this indicator, with the lower bound excluding all responses that are not certain to be improved, while the upper bound includes all responses that are not certain to be unimproved. As a result, both indicators must be taken into consideration when analyzing access to improved water sources using the OLAS Household Survey Data Set.

## Percent of the population with access to improved water sources



**Figure 1: Percent of the population with access to improved water sources according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available) [1]**

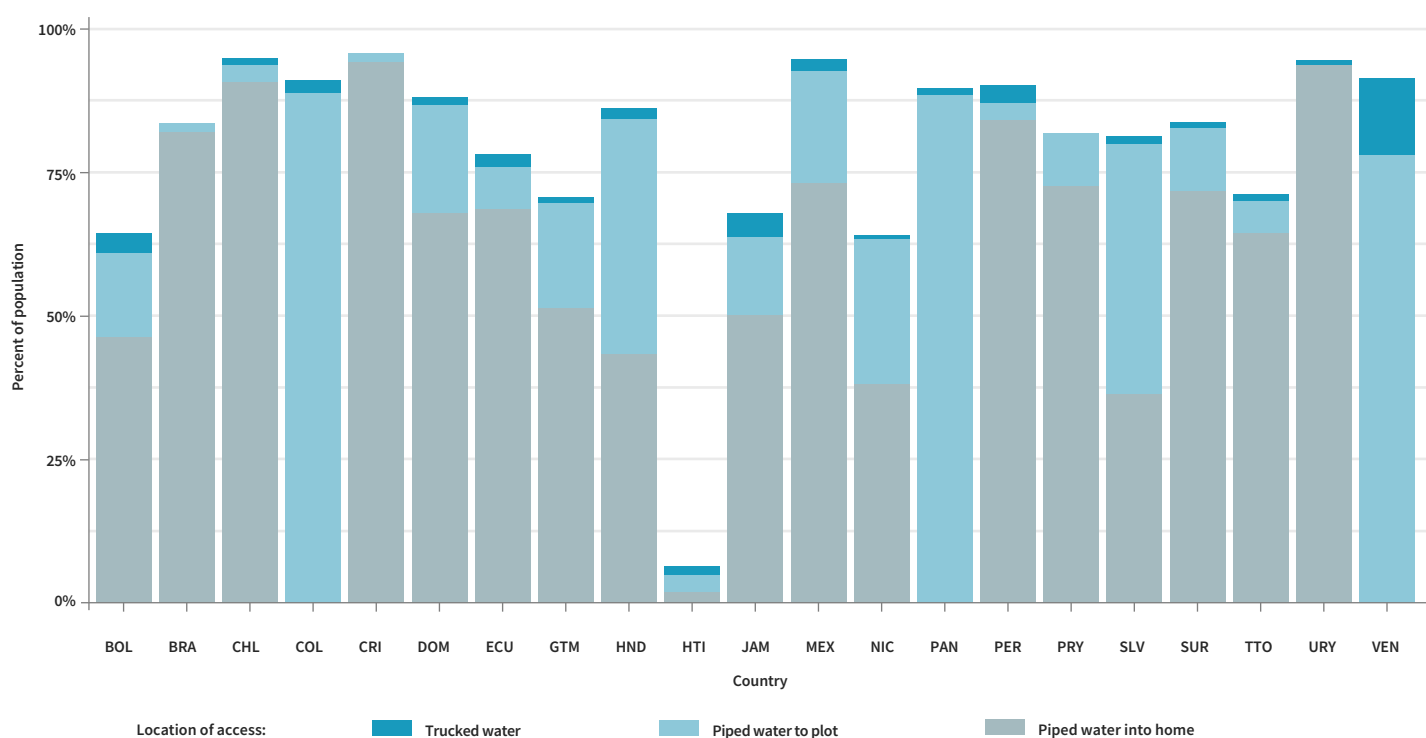
## Location of Access Indicators

Location Indicators	Definitions
access_water_piped_house	Percent that have public water system access piped into home
access_water_piped_plot	Percent that have public water system access piped onto plot
water_trucked	Percent that receive trucked water delivered

**Table 2: Location of water access indicators from the OLAS Household Surveys data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].**

The JMP classifies on premises access as piped water accessed in the home, piped water accessed on the plot, and water trucked to the home [2]. The data set has an indicator that represents each of these types of on premises access. The in home and to plot variables were straightforward to define consistently for all countries in the dataset, except for Colombia, Panama, and Venezuela, where the location of access is not specified. In these cases, all households with piped water access were included in “to plot” indicator, which can be seen in Figure 2. Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Venezuela do not offer trucked water as a response option in their household survey.

**Percent of the population with on premises water sources**



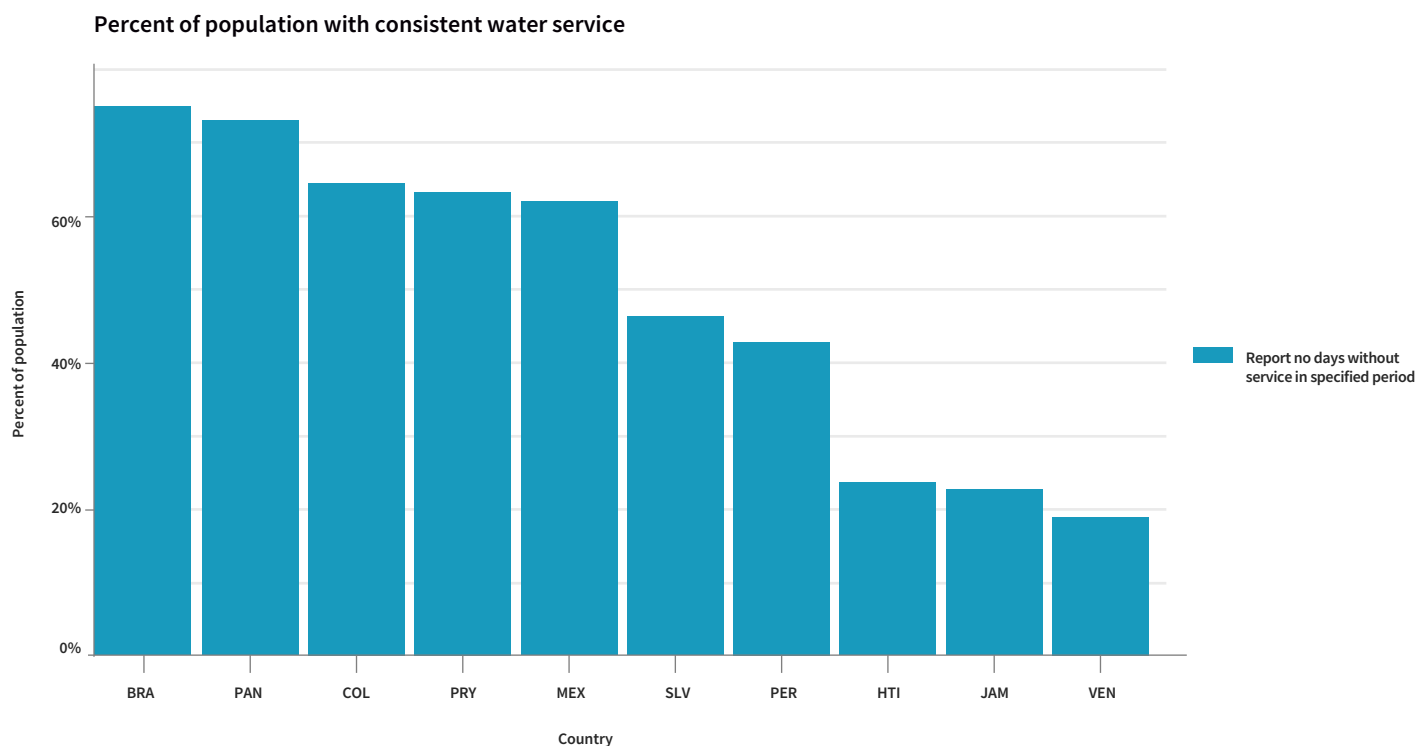
**Figure 2: Percent of population with on premises access according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available).**

## Continuity of Access

Continuity Indicators	Definitions
water_dist_daily	Percent that report no service interruptions in their national survey

**Table 3: Continuity of water access indicators from the OLAS Household Surveys data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].**

Another facet of improved water access is continuity of access. Households must have access to sufficient quantities of water when needed. In the data set this is defined as households that reported no water service interruptions. The time frame during which respondents were asked to report outages were not consistent throughout the region's country surveys, making direct comparisons between countries not always valid. Only Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, El Salvador, and Venezuela include questions about service continuity in their national households surveys [1].



**Figure 3: Percent of population that did not report water shut offs in their national survey according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available) [1].**

All these indicators and additional indicators representing sub-facets of water access (for example, populations using bottled water) are available in the OLAS Household Survey data set. The full data set and the associated methodology document with information on the source surveys and years incorporated for each country is available in the [OLAS](#).

**References:** **1.** OLAS, 2022. "OLAS Household Survey Data Set", The Water and Sanitation Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, Washington D.C. **2.** JMP, 2021. "SDG indicator metadata: Indicator 6.1.1", Joint Monitoring Programme. Accessed at: <https://washdata.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/jmp-2021-metadata-sdg-611.pdf>

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