FS 1.5 OLAS Household Survey Data Set: Sanitation 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 the region. To this end, it 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 Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). This fact sheet 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.

Sanitation Facility Indicators	Definitions
access_sewer	Percent with access to facilities connected to a sewer system
access_septic	Percent with access to facilities connected to a septic system
access_latrine_min	Percent with access to another type of improved facility (conservative estimation)
access_latrine_max	Percent with access to another type of improved facility (liberal estimation)

Table 1: Sanitation facilities indicators from the OLAS Household Survey data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].

The JMP classifies sanitation facilities as improved or unimproved, with improved facilities being those that adequately separate waste from humans and the environment. The OLAS Household Survey data separates these sources into three separate categories: flush/pour toilets connected to sewer systems, flush/pour toilets connected to septic systems, and other "improved" sanitation facilities **[2]**.

The incorporation of an indicator to measure access to other improved sanitation facilities 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 "latrine" as a response option as opposed to "covered latrine with slab", which is preferred because it guarantees that the facility is improved. 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 Regional Household Survey Data Set.

Countries that only have lower limits generally have surveys that allow for specific categorization of sanitation facilities, while those that only have an upper bound or have a large difference between the lower bound and upper bound tend to have more vague categories on their surveys.

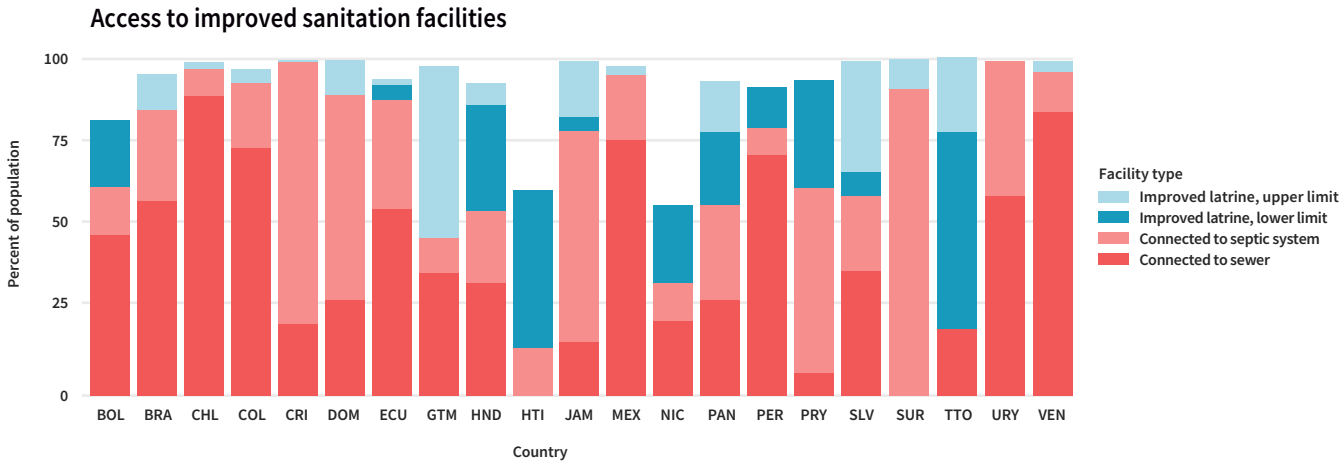

Figure 1: Percent of the population with access to improved sanitation facilities according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available) [1].

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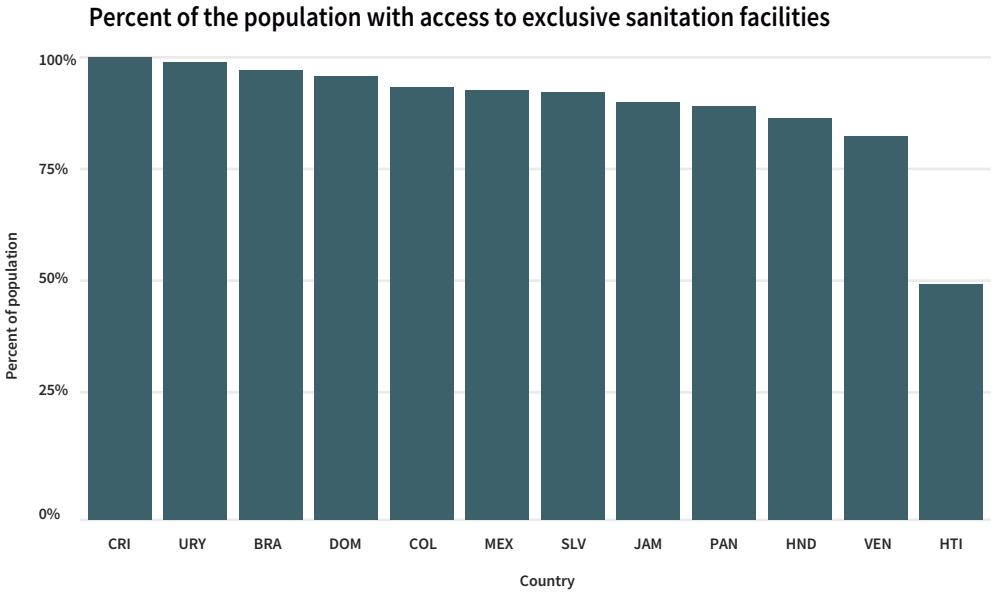
Exclusivity

Exclusivity Indicators	Definitions
access_san_exclusive	Percent that has exclusive access to a sanitation facility

Table 2: Exclusivity indicator from the OLAS Household Surveys data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].

The JMP requires that sanitation facilities be unshared to consider them "safely managed". The variable access_san_exclusive measures the percent of the population or percent of households that have access to exclusive sanitation facilities in each country [2]. Bolivia*, Chile, Ecuador*, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Peru, Paraguay, Surinam and Trinidad and Tobago do not ask respondents in their household surveys about exclusivity and, as a result, are assigned null values for this indicator.



*These countries do not ask about exclusivity in the most recent year of the survey but have included a question about exclusivity in past years.

Figure 2: Percent of population with exclusive sanitation facility access according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available) [1].

Unimproved or lack of sanitation access

Unimproved Access Indicators	Definitions
access_latrines_unimproved_min	Percent without access to an improved sanitation facility (liberal estimate)
access_latrines_unimproved_max	Percent without access to an improved sanitation facility (conservative estimate)
no_sanitation_access	Percent without access to sanitation facilities

Table 3: Indicators of no sanitation access from the OLAS Household Surveys data set. Percentages are available as percent of households and percent of population [1].

The OLAS Household Survey data set also contains metrics on access to unimproved facilities and lack of access. Measuring lack of access to improved facilities presents the same issue with heterogeneity of response options which was discussed earlier, making it necessary to create this variable as an upper and lower bound. These indicators (access_latrines_unimproved_min, access_latrines_unimproved_max) represent the population with access to unimproved sanitation facilities and those with no access. If visualizing sanitation access for a whole country, access_latrine_min must be paired with access_latrines_unimproved_max as represented in the graph below.

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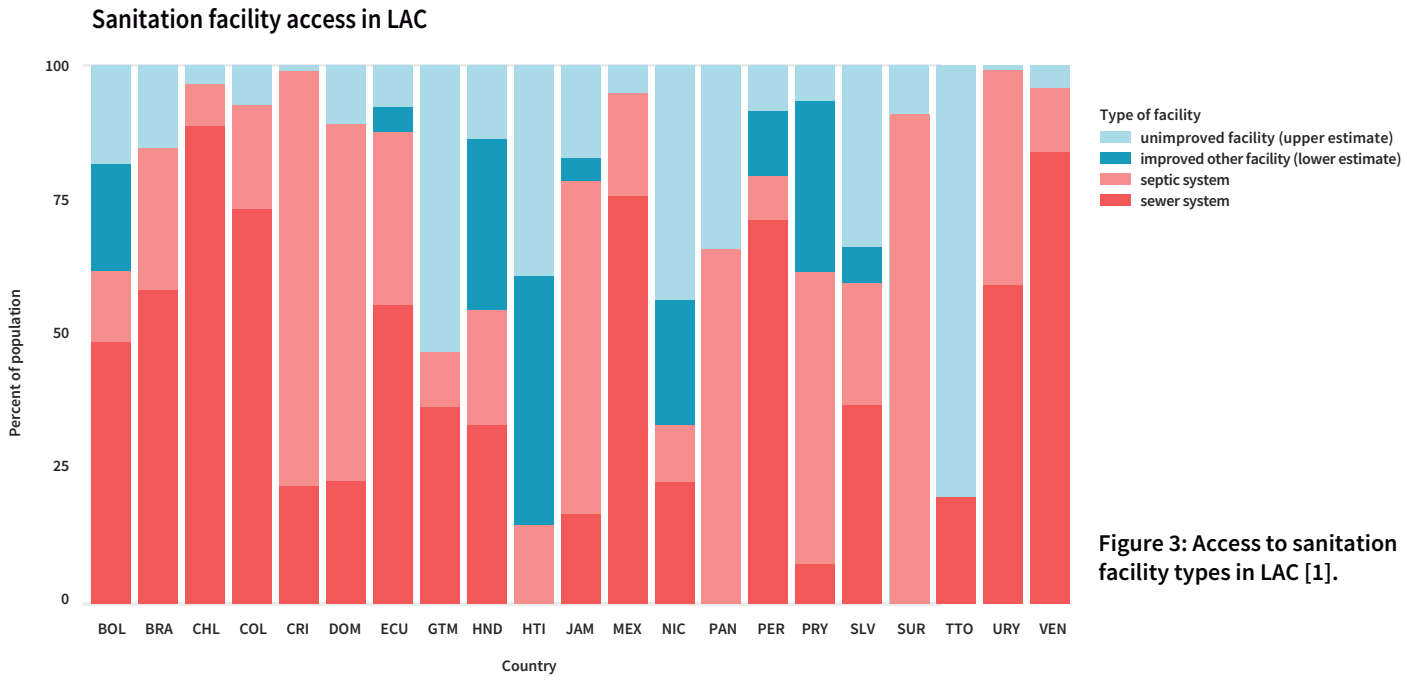

Figure 3: Access to sanitation facility types in LAC [1].

The data set also has an indicator that represents the complete lack of access to facilities: no_sanitation_access. This indicator represents the percent of the population or households that reported not having any sanitation facilities available on premises. Peru and Suriname do not collect this information.

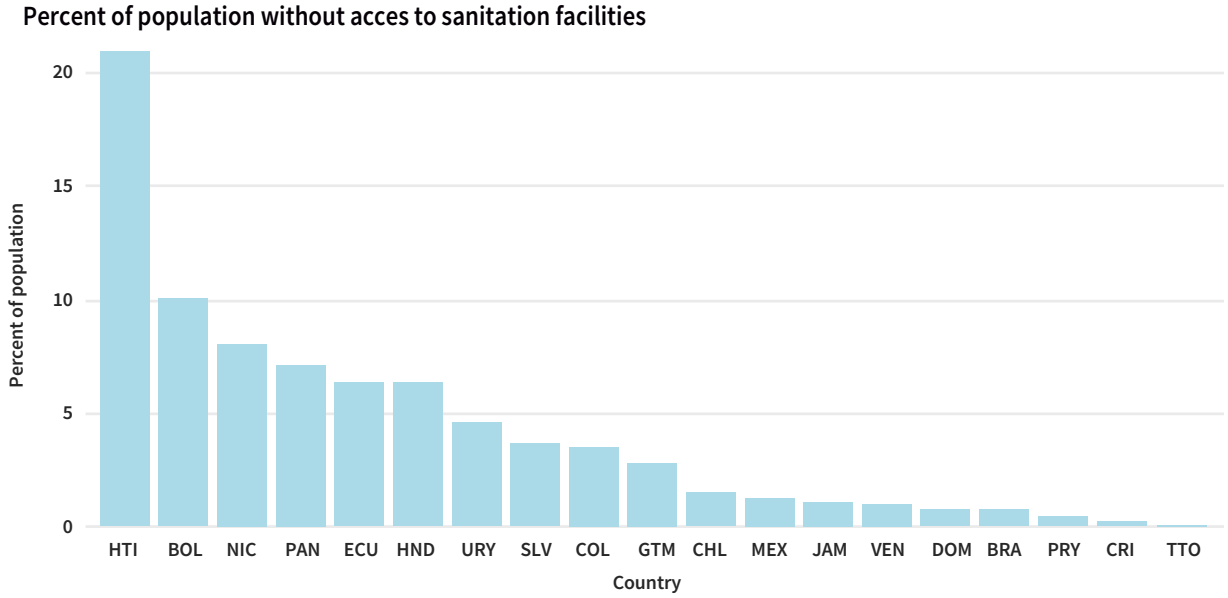

Figure 4: Percent of population without access to sanitation facilities according to the OLAS Household Survey data set (latest year available) [1].

All these indicators and additional indicators representing combinations of the indicators described in this fact sheet (for example, percentages using exclusive, improved sanitation facilities) 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 6.2.1", Joint Monitoring Programme. Accessed at: https://washdata.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/jmp-2021-metadata-sdg-621a.pdf

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