



# Sanitation for Millions – Wider Caribbean Region

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO WATER AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT USING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AND PROMOTING FINANCING MECHANISMS IN THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION

## Sanitation for Millions

*Sanitation for Millions* is a multi-donor programme which was set up in 2016 by the *German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)* to contribute to safe and adequate access to sanitation. It operates worldwide focusing notably on the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as children, women and girls, refugees and internally displaced people as well as persons with disabilities and indigenous communities. Measures are currently being implemented in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean Region.

The *BMZ* is the lead donor, furthermore the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, the UK-based solidarity fund *Water Unite*, and the *Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade* are contributing to the funding. On behalf of the *Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*, *Sanitation for Millions* executes activities within the *Global Environment Facility (GEF)* funded project “*CRew+ – An Integrated Approach to Water and Wastewater Management Using Innovative Solutions and Promoting Financing Mechanisms in the Wider Caribbean Region*”.



## Overview

The *GEF CRew+* is a partnership project funded by the *Global Environment Facility (GEF)* that is being co-implemented by the *Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)* and the *United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)* in 18 countries of the Wider Caribbean Region (*WCR*). The concept was initially approved in November 2017 for an amount of approximately 15 Million USD by the *GEF Trust Fund*.

This innovative project builds upon its previous successful phase “*The Caribbean Regional Fund for Wastewater Management (CRew)*” project (2011-2017). *GEF CRew+* is being co-executed by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*, the *Organisation of the American States (OAS)* and the *Secretariat of the Cartagena Convention* on behalf of the *IDB* and *UNEP* respectively. The *GIZ* global programme *Sanitation for Millions* is responsible for activities in 11 of the project countries: Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The regional activities include also Barbados, Cuba, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The activities of the *GIZ* will be completed until May 2022.

## Challenges - Safe Water and Sanitation in the Wider Caribbean Region

The Wider Caribbean Region faces multiple challenges in the wastewater and sanitation service provision. About 70% of the region’s population lacks access to safely managed sanitation and hygiene.

Approximately 80% of the wastewater is being discharged to the environment without any treatment as a result of weak legislative, political and regulatory frameworks and lacking financial means to maintain the infrastructure. This causes severe pollution of groundwater, soils, watersheds and ultimately the Caribbean Sea, thereby disrupting the natural water cycle.

*From top to bottom: Photograph of the port in Omoa and people from the indigenous community in La Mosquitia*



Sampling and analysis of waste water in Omoa by the Centro de Estudios y Control de de Estudios y Control de Contaminantes (CESCCO).

## Goals and Approach

The GEF CRew+ project provides innovative and nature-based solutions to mitigate the effects of non-treated wastewater on the environment and public health.

Valuing water as a precious resource, the concept of Integrated Water and Wastewater Management (IWWM) applied in the GEF CRew+ project is based on the four Rs of the circular economy approach: **reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover**. The project treats wastewater not as waste, but as a valuable resource with reuse potential in agriculture, industries and other commercial sections. With regard to the environment, treating wastewater safely supports the process of Blue Recovery aiming at the protection of marine biodiversity. GEF CRew+ thus contributes directly to the achievement of the SDGs 3, 6, 11, 14 and 15.



## Activities

The GEF CRew+

- promotes the development of norms, strategies and policies concerning water resources and wastewater management at the institutional level.
- identifies sustainable finance mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services, blended finance and revolving funds.
- Improves access to sustainable WaSH services through design and construction of climate resilient wastewater treatment plants and sanitary facilities.

GEF CRew+ applies the principles of inclusiveness and equality. Indigenous communities are actively included and participate in the planning and implementation processes. Gender issues matter in design, implementation and monitoring of all measures.

Furthermore, the project's emphasis on establishing an integrated regional knowledge management for all 18 countries will improve the access to an elaborated information exchange mechanism, including valuable practical experiences and lessons learned concerning wastewater infrastructure, reuse, watershed protection and financing tools both at the regional and national level.



From right to left: Photograph of the port in Omoa and people from the indigenous community of La Mosquitia.



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