

CRew+ LETTER

Implementing solutions for an integrated water and wastewater management for a clean and healthy Caribbean

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1

Wrapping up implementation

An exciting end of 2024 awaits us! Final steps to achieve outcomes are taking place in multiple countries.



Barbados, Belice, Guatemala and Suriname have completed their activities!



OAS

More rights for more people

Colombia, Mexico and Trinidad & Tobago are being guided by the Organization of American States in their pilots from component III. While also assisting Honduras and Dominican Republic.



On the other hand, the Cartagena Convention Secretariat is working with Costa Rica on the indigenous consultation of the National Water Policy and their pilot project, and continuing the work with Cuba, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Jamaica and Panama.



Check out our outcomes so far in the following article!

2

The GEF CReW Project: A Summary of Progress and Achievements

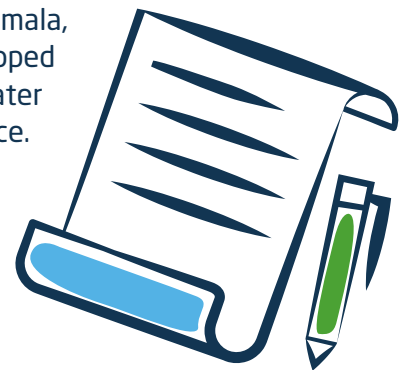
The GEF CReW+ project has been instrumental in advancing integrated water and wastewater management (IWWM) across the Caribbean. As we review the project's progress, we see substantial achievements in institutional reforms, policy advancements, financial readiness, and wastewater management, benefiting numerous countries and setting a foundation for sustainable water practices.

Component I

Institutional, policy, legislative and regulatory reforms for Integrated Water and Wastewater Management (IWWM).

One of the critical achievements of the GEF CReW project is the consolidation and improvement of institutional, policy, and legislative frameworks for IWWM. So far, twelve countries have benefited from implementation of institutional advancements, with an additional three countries set to benefit during 2024.

Three countries—Belize, Costa Rica, and Jamaica—have received support in developing national policies through draft and concept notes. Five other countries—Honduras, Mexico, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago—have undergone normative and regulatory reforms and received recommendations related to water reuse, wastewater discharge, and water management in indigenous and national contexts. Furthermore, six countries—Barbados, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, and St. Kitts—have developed national plans, strategies, and guidelines to support water reuse, watershed management, and water governance. Colombia and Suriname have conducted diagnostics to support wastewater discharge compliance and evaluated their institutional and regulatory frameworks.



Additionally, by the end of 2024, Grenada and Saint Kitts and Nevis are expected to benefit from national policy reviews and developments, while Cuba will strengthen its Water Councils.

The project has also made strides in enhancing regional and national coordination, information exchange, and science-based decision-making. Four countries—Costa Rica, Guyana, St. Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago—are in various stages of implementing national databases for water resources management. While there have been delays due to challenges in engaging countries and internal consultations, the completion of these databases is expected soon. Jamaica is also anticipated to benefit from the enhancement of its national database. The development of the Regional Platform by GRID Arendal has been finalized, further supporting these efforts.

Component II

Sustainable and tailor-made financing options for urban, peri-urban and rural IWWM.

A major accomplishment under this outcome is the completion of a Compendium on financing for Water and Sanitation in 2023, aimed at improving understanding of different financing options in the water sector. Additionally, eight countries have benefited from financial interventions to enhance readiness for IWWM financing. These interventions have established enabling conditions for developing financial instruments in Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, and Suriname, and have contributed to developing and enhancing financial instruments in Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

Further, four countries have received support for sustainable financing options for IWWM. Costa Rica has worked on establishing conditions for structuring public-private partnerships (PPPs), while Belize, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic have received recommendations to enhance environmental policy and regulatory frameworks aimed at improving the financial sustainability of the sector.



Component III

Innovative small-scale, local, peri-urban and community-based solutions for IWWM.

Despite challenges, the project has made significant progress in improving wastewater treatment, including reuse in rural and peri-urban hotspots. All interventions are aimed at supporting integrated and innovative water and wastewater low tech solutions design and/or implementation. It is noted that several interventions were not able to reach the implementation stage due to limited financial resources. It is estimated that 2,000 m³/day of wastewater will be treated by the end of the project. This achievement will benefit countries including the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Additionally, interventions are expected to impact 20,000 households, providing them with improved wastewater treatment.

Moreover, Guatemala has benefited from activities supporting improved life cycle management and efficiency in water use, promoting source protection and water reuse in managing surface and groundwater resources. By the end of 2024, Guyana is expected to benefit from an improved water source protection plan for a specific watershed..



Component 4

Knowledge management and Advocacy on the importance of IWWM order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

The project's communication strategy and plan have ensured that all 18 participating countries benefit from awareness and understanding of integrated approaches to water management. Under the GEF CRew+ Academy, thirty webinars were held between 2021 and 2023, with 95% of participants reporting increased knowledge and skills in monitoring national and regional reforms for IWWM, designing financial mechanisms, and implementing innovative low-cost water and wastewater management solutions.

Overall, the GEF CRew+ project has made remarkable strides in advancing IWWM across the Caribbean. With continued efforts and collaboration, the project is set to achieve even greater impact, fostering sustainable water management practices and improving the quality of life for communities in the region.



3

All is water: Wastewater reuse in Barbados

All is water is a communication strategy born under the National Water Reuse Policy 2018 that aims to achieve a greater understanding of the value of water through a comprehensive public awareness campaign, focusing on the importance of water and wastewater management to improve awareness of water reclamation and reuse by the Ministry of Environment, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Health, other stakeholders and the general public.



National Education Campaign on Integrated Water and Wastewater Management to Address the Water Crisis

The strategy was developed by local public relations firm PRMR Inc. under **the Global Environment Facility (GEF) GEF CREW+ Project**, which is being implemented in Barbados by the **General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS/OAS)** in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) of the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy.

The National Communication Strategy for Integrated Water and Wastewater Management is expected to play a crucial role in promoting public acceptance of the measures to be implemented through Barbados' new Water Reuse Act.

Reclaimed water, also known as recycled or treated wastewater, represents a key solution to the Caribbean nation's current water challenges. This approach conserves potable water for human consumption, which in turn can help mitigate the impact of water scarcity on the island.

Public education is crucial to dispel misconceptions about reclaimed water. Communities and individuals need to be informed about the rigorous treatment processes that ensure its safety and the many benefits it offers. Raising awareness can foster greater acceptance of reclaimed water and its role in addressing Barbados' water challenges.

Strategic Partnerships for Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management

With proactive action and commitment, Barbados can transform the current plight of water scarcity into an opportunity to strengthen its future. By addressing water challenges with determination and innovative solutions, the country can not only overcome its current difficulties, but also lay the foundation for a more prosperous and sustainable tomorrow. This approach will not only benefit present generations, but will also leave a positive legacy for future generations, ensuring a more secure and sustainable water supply for all.



“From the Americas Water Program we consider this campaign to be a leading model to apply in other places facing similar challenges. Its comprehensive and inclusive approach, as well as its emphasis on public education can serve as an example to promote sustainable water and wastewater management in different contexts, thus contributing to the improvement of water security at the regional level.” ”

Andrés Sánchez

Manager of the Water Program of the Americas, Department of Sustainable Development of the GS/OAS Executive Secretariat for Integral Development.

The GS/OAS Americas Water Program supports Member States in their efforts to improve the management, conservation and sustainable use of surface and groundwater resources by promoting social and economic growth in these regions. Specific actions include promoting water governance; assisting in the development of policies, laws and regulations for integrated water resources management; capacity building in regional, national and local institutions; and supporting information exchange through specialized water resources networks.



4

Don't Forget! Use GEF **CRew+** **ACADEMY** to boost your knowledge at any time!

Under the GEF CRew+ Academy, more than 2,000 persons have benefitted from the vast knowledge shared in topics related to Integrated Water and Wastewater Management (IWRM). On average more than 90 percent of the participants indicated they had improved their knowledge and skills to enable the monitoring of national reform processes for IWRM, design, establish and manage appropriate financial mechanisms, and implement innovative low-cost integrated water and wastewater management solutions.

During 2020 and 2021, four modules were launched, focusing in the following areas:

BLOCK I

Solutions for Sustainable Water Management.

This training module covers diverse topics, including wetlands as nature-based solutions for WASH, gender aspects, climate resilience of wastewater infrastructure, sanitation technologies in indigenous communities, biofilters for wastewater treatment, examples of decentralized wastewater treatment in Bolivia, integrated water management, and credit enhancement in the water sector.

BLOCK II

Reuse of Treated Domestic Effluents.

This module addresses the global challenge of wastewater with local solutions, covering technical aspects of starting a reuse project, governance models, and regulations. It explores sustainable business models for reuse and presents case studies on implementing medium-scale and decentralized systems in rural communities.

BLOCK III

Methods to Develop the Blue Economy and the Good Use of Wastewater.

This module explores the current state and prospects of water quality in the Caribbean, transformative changes in watershed regeneration, wastewater management, and flow regimes. It discusses urban water vision, green and blue infrastructure, financing wastewater management, and innovative solutions for handling hazardous chemical and biological waste.

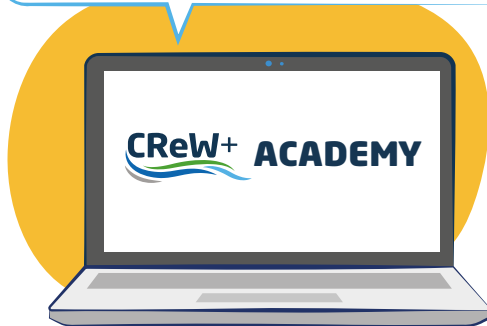
BLOCK IV

Project Formulation for Water and Wastewater Management.

Practical and strategic, this module guides participants through the intricacies of formulating effective projects for water and wastewater management.

If you miss any of the modules,
no need to worry!

 <https://gefcrew.org/academy-crew>



Accessible via video format (<https://gefcrew.org/academy-crew>), the CReW+ Academy makes learning flexible and inclusive, so anyone can benefit from the expert knowledge and practical insights on offer. By building a community of informed practitioners and decision-makers, the GEF CReW+ Project is helping create a future where caring for the environment and economic growth go hand in hand.

5 Omoa's Testimonial



<https://youtu.be/xtQoPIRxvNg>

6 Looking forward to IW10

GEF's Biennial International Waters Conference (IWC10) will be held on 23-26 September 2024 in Punta del Este, Uruguay. This is the **key learning and exchange event** for projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in the focal area of International Waters.

The key topic of the conference is

“Transformative actions and impacts for the water and ocean SDGs: The GEF IW response to the global challenge”.





 **23-26 september, 2024**

 **Punta del Este, Uruguay**

 **+300 participants**

 **100 active GEF IW projects, from 80 countries**

IWC brings together more than 300 participants, including GEF IW project managers, institutional stakeholders from beneficiary countries, non-governmental and civil society organizations, transboundary and regional management institutions, UN agencies, Development Banks and Intergovernmental Organisations, and the private sector. Collectively they represent approximately 100 active GEF IW projects, from 80 countries and various GEF Agencies which aim to facilitate cross-sectoral and portfolio-wide learning & experience sharing. It is an interactive training and experience-sharing event, where we discuss challenges, highlight solutions and showcase good practices. Furthermore, this conference summarizes the impact achieved and generates ideas for new projects.

The conference will engage participants in a variety of session formats, including plenary sessions and roundtable discussions, workshops and interactive sessions. It will also feature an innovation marketplace, where projects, partners and sponsors can display their results, unique approaches, and catalytic outcomes, with emphasis on how these may be leveraged and replicated. Furthermore, it will offer the opportunity to visit technical sites of special interest to the IW portfolio, as well as networking and social opportunities, through the evening events and the Gala dinner.

[Original article](#) 

CRew+ Implementing integrated water and wastewater solutions for a clean and healthy Caribbean Sea

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