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CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN PERU

KEY FACTS

Peru generates approximately **7.5** million tons of waste each year

Only **4%** of this is estimated to be recycled

Approximately **44%** is stored in substandard waste sites

THE CHALLENGE

Each day, Peru generates more than approximately 20,000 tons of waste, or ~1.3 pounds of waste per capita. Compared to other countries, these volumes are quite low, however, inadequate waste management and infrastructure have amplified the impacts of Peru's waste, with significant leakages of waste into the environment and improper and unsafe disposal of nearly half of the waste produced. With only 11 sanitary landfills throughout the country, inconsistent collection practices, and low recycling rates, urban, coastal, and in-land desert landscapes have become inundated with waste. The combined results are threatening citizens' health, the country's tourism sector—its third largest industry), and its rich biodiversity—including whales, sea birds, and other marine life. If not addressed immediately, the impacts of Peru's waste will continue to grow, fueled by the country's growing middle class, increasing urbanization, and consumer consumption.

Across Peru, infrastructure and support available for solid waste management varies widely. To establish more consistent practices and mitigate ongoing impacts from the country's waste, Peru has made great progress in developing national laws for solid waste management, including its General Law of Solid Waste passed in 2000. It has since expanded and passed additional laws to protect the environment and human health, prioritize circular economies and the recovery and recycling of waste, and promote shared producer responsibility—however, local governments are challenged to effectively implement the laws, often faced by shortfalls in tax revenue and municipal capacity. By **strengthening local capacity to implement regulations**, building a stronger enabling environment for **enhanced infrastructure and**

investment, and developing new and alternative markets for recycled and reusable products, Peru can make significant progress toward a more robust, sustainable waste system that will support healthier cities and seas.

OUR APPROACH

To address these challenges, USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean (CCBO) program offers **state-of-the-art international technical expertise and sustainable, locally-led solutions through its local grants program**. CCBO seeks to develop, test, and implement new models that promote reducing, reusing and recycling (3R) practices and enhance solid waste management (SWM); facilitate partnerships and investment around key needs, such as infrastructure; and strengthen local systems to build Peru's resiliency and self-reliance. CCBO seeks to learn from and expand on the success of proven initiatives by local government, non-governmental organizations, and other international donors and development agencies.

CCBO's four guiding objectives are to:

- **Promote 3R practices and strengthen local and regional markets** for recycled plastics;
- **Build social and behavior change** for 3R's and sustainable SWM;
- **Increase capacity and effective governance** for SWM and recycling systems; and
- **Facilitate public-private partnerships** and multi-stakeholder alliances to bolster the program's impact, scalability, and sustainability.

Informal waste collectors (IWCs), of which a large portion are women, play a significant role in SWM. Through waste collection and sorting, they divert waste away from landfills and contribute to communities' local economies, public health and safety, and environments. Despite their critical roles, they are commonly underrepresented, face poor working conditions and social stigmas, and women working in the sector earn far less than their male counterparts. Across its approach and activities, CCBO works to support and enhance the livelihoods of IWCs, as well as advance women's economic empowerment as

part of the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative by improving social and economic conditions that impede women's ability to work successfully in SWM and recycling jobs.

ENGAGEMENT SITES

In Peru, CCBO is piloting solutions to stop the flow of plastic pollution to the waters within and surrounding the country, including the Pacific Ocean and other inland bodies of water, such as the Piura River—which flows all the way from the Andes to the Pacific Ocean—through work in:

- **Piura** - Located in northwestern Peru, Piura is the most populous region after the country's capital city of Lima. Piura generates an estimated 411,880 tons of waste per year, of which only 16% is adequately disposed of. The region lacks access to environmentally-sound sanitary landfill where waste can be safely stored, and its municipal collection services do not cover all residents. During El Niño season, Piura's topography and desert climate leads to flooding that unleashes waste and plastics into the environment.
- **Ica** - Located south of Lima, Ica is Peru's agricultural center and home to famed Paracas National Reserve which protects both marine and desert ecosystems that are vital to biodiversity conservation and economic income for thousands of Peruvians. Although Ica does have one of the country's 37 sanitary landfills, significant improvements can be made to further reduce the impact of Ica's waste.

ACTIVITIES

CCBO will design, implement, and scale holistic, watershed-specific strategies that address each step in the waste value chain—from production to its end use—prioritizing the most inclusive, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable solutions in primary environmental leakage. In the first year of the project, CCBO will:

- Conduct critical **site-level research** to understand engagement sites' specific challenges in SWM and enforcement, behavior change, and barriers to private sector investment;
- **Award grants** to local partners to begin implementing effective, locally-led solutions to achieve program objectives; and
- Provide **additional technical assistance and capacity building** support using international and local program staff.



Women in Peru often work as informal waste collectors and play an important role in the country's SWM. Credit: Unsplash/Persnickity Prints

ABOUT CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

USAID's Clean Cities, Blue Ocean is a five-year global program (2019-2024) to combat ocean plastic pollution. CCBO is the Agency's flagship program on ocean plastic pollution, working at the global level and in specific, rapidly urbanizing focal countries to target ocean plastics directly at their source. The program is implemented by Tetra Tech, in partnership with a consortium of organizations that include the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), The Manoff Group, and Ocean Conservancy. Other partners include national and local government, members of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and local women's and youth organizations.

Sources:

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