National Household Water Insecurity in Mexico

Household Water InSecurity Experiences

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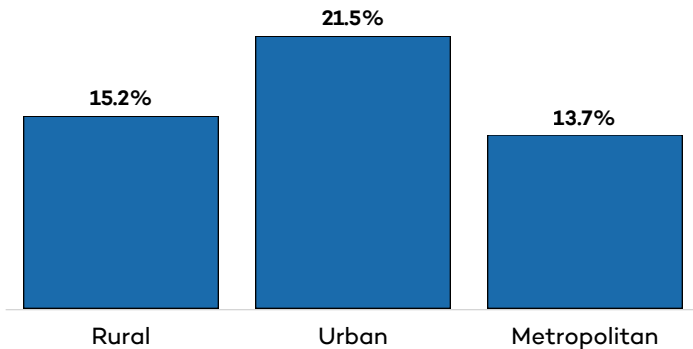**The National Institute of Public Health of Mexico (INSP), Northwestern University, & others** collected data on water insecurity as part of the National Survey on Health and Nutrition (ENSANUT). Respondents were selected using probability-based sampling with post-stratification weights to ensure the 12.619 households were representative of the Mexican population ≥15 years of age in 2021.

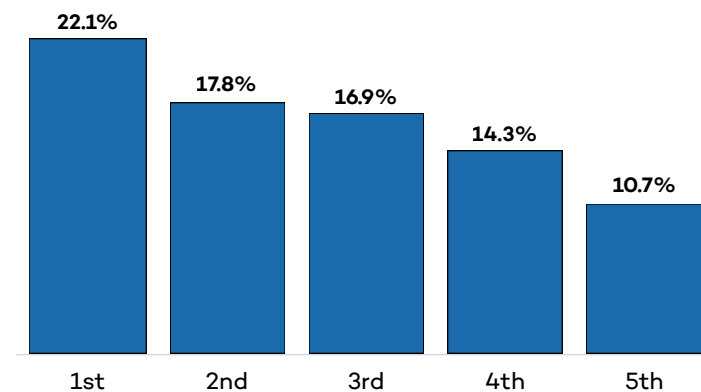**16.3%** of Mexican households experienced moderate-to-high water insecurity in 2021[2]

- 3.6%
- 12.7%
- 25.0%
- 58.7%

No-to-marginal ● Low ● Moderate ● High
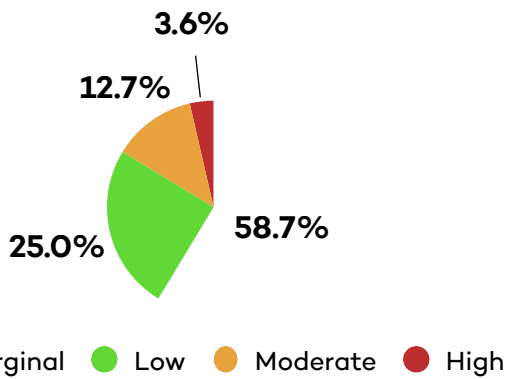
Which households are water insecure in Mexico?

By urbanicity

Rural	Urban	Metropolitan
15.2%	21.5%	13.7%

Within household socioeconomic quintiles[1]

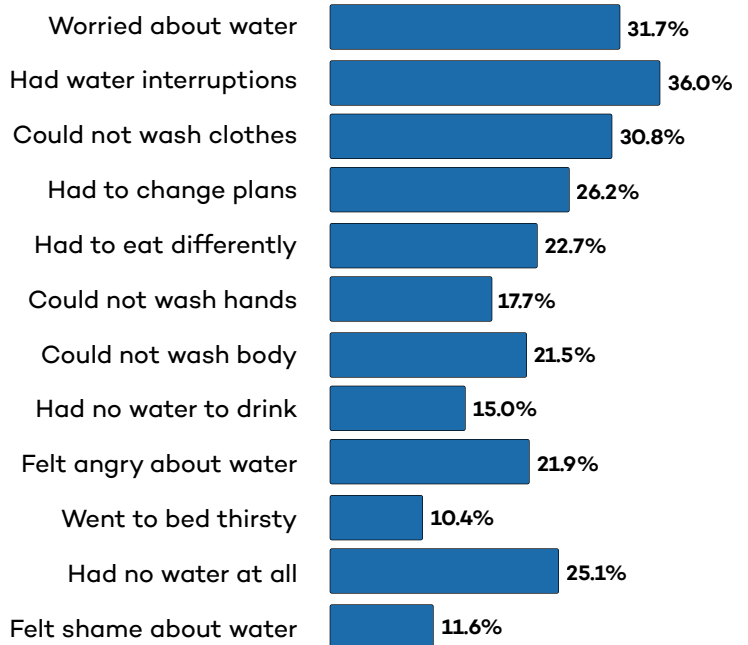| 1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
22.1%	17.8%	16.9%	14.3%	10.7%

How did we measure water insecurity?

Most indicators measure water availability or infrastructure. These don't tell us about people's ability to reliably access or use water or how water insecurity varies by gender, age, etc. Which means we haven't known exactly **who** is left behind… until now.

How does water insecurity manifest in Mexican households?

We used the Household Water InSecurity Experiences (HWISE) Scale[2,3] to measure individual experiences with water access and use. Respondents had the following negative experiences **due to water problems in the last year**.

Experience	%
Worried about water	31.7%
Had water interruptions	36.0%
Could not wash clothes	30.8%
Had to change plans	26.2%
Had to eat differently	22.7%
Could not wash hands	17.7%
Could not wash body	21.5%
Had no water to drink	15.0%
Felt angry about water	21.9%
Went to bed thirsty	10.4%
Had no water at all	25.1%
Felt shame about water	11.6%

These data provide insights on **prevalence and severity** of water insecurity that can guide **policymaking**, including resource allocation. The HWISE Scale can also be used to measure the **impact** of interventions, and monitor **progress** and **accountability**. We are seeking resources to generate these vital, actionable water insecurity data again in all countries.

[1] Based on a principal component analysis of household characteristics, appliances, and services

[2] Each of the 12 HWISE items are scored 0 (never), 1 (1-2 months), 2 (some but not all months), or 3 (almost every month) in the last year, for a total score range of 0-36. The scores 0-2, 3-11, 12-23, and 24-36 represent no-to-marginal, low, moderate, and high water insecurity, respectively.

[3] Young et al BMJ Global Health 2019. More at www.WISEscales.org.
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