

Technical support for updating the Municipal Basic Sanitation Plans in small municipalities in the State of Santa Catarina, Brazil

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Highlights:

- The methodology involved pre-formatted tools, sector meetings, and technical guidance to define viable and realistic goals.
- Challenges and solutions: Municipalities faced financial and technical difficulties; ARIS developed a simplified methodology for updating sanitation plans.
- Financial results: 63 reports produced; 33 publicly discussed; 22 revisions approved, generating significant savings for municipalities.

Keywords: Sanitation regulation; Public policies; Municipal planning.

INTRODUCTION

The Municipal Basic Sanitation Plans (PMSB) in Santa Catarina were developed in accordance with the principles established by the National Law 11.445/2007 (BRAZIL, 2007). The State Secretariat for Sustainable Development of Santa Catarina (SDE/SC) invested resources to develop these plans in municipalities with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants, resulting in studies for about 170 municipalities, mainly completed in 2010 and 2011.

However, many municipalities faced difficulties in implementing the proposed planning in the PMSBs, either due to financial and technical limitations or because they did not consider sanitation a priority within the scope of municipal actions (ROSSONI, 2020; BORMA, 2022). Given this reality, the Intermunicipal Sanitation Regulatory Agency (ARIS) developed a simplified methodology to update the plans in many municipalities.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology developed for the project involved the creation of pre-formatted tools and the guidance of municipal technicians in applying these tools during the goal update process. They were instructed to hold meetings with various sectors related to the municipality's sanitation, both urban and rural, to define goals aligned with local realities and feasible within the municipal budget and capacity. This facilitated the identification of common problems and the search for joint solutions. Below is a summary of the steps proposed by ARIS for the development of the project:

- Project awareness and dissemination;

- Hiring of technicians;
- Signing the Technical Cooperation Agreement;
- Training and orientation of technical teams;
- Guidance to technical teams;
- Updating goals and including targets for alternative systems;
- Review of the Execution Plan;
- Consolidation of the final document;
- Holding public hearings;
- Approval in the form of law.

After defining the goals, ARIS technicians compiled the information to prepare a Consolidated Report, which was submitted for final approval by the municipality. Subsequently, a public hearing was held with community participation, followed by the approval of the new municipal legislation for the updated planning.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

To date, a total of 65 reports have been produced. Of these, 38 have undergone public hearings and 27 are in development. Notably, 34 municipalities have already approved the revision of their PMSBs through municipal legislation.

The active participation of municipal technicians was a central aspect, enabling collaborative goal-setting and involving various sanitation-related sectors, providing significant technical enrichment for the participants. The regionalized approach to technical guidance facilitated a rich exchange of experiences among municipalities, with over 130 professionals participating throughout the process.

Although the main focus of the project is the technical impact and improvement of municipal plans, the financial aspect is also noteworthy. The cost savings for the municipalities were significant, considering the estimated average consultancy cost for updating PMSBs for municipalities with up to 20,000 inhabitants was approximately R\$ 70,000. Participation in the project allowed these resources to be redirected to other priority areas, thus benefiting municipal financial management. This aspect demonstrates not only the technical effectiveness of the project but also its positive financial impact on the participating municipalities, further strengthening its relevance and benefits for the community.

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