Title of the Story: Improvement of basic sanitation facilities

Destination Name: São Miguel do Gostoso

Country: Brazil

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Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)

☐ Localizing the destination supply chain
☐ Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
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Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

**Issues faced**

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? Click to add your text

São Miguel do Gostoso is a city that belongs to the state of Rio Grande do Norte whose territory is composed of the caatinga biome (an exclusively Brazilian biome). In the past, the city was characterized by being a small fishing village. Over the years and with the economic and social changes, tourism has become one of the most important activities for the city. Currently, the city is one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Brazil. Until 2017, even though it was already a tourist destination, the sanitary and environmental aspects in the city were different before the sanitation work was carried out. Before the work, there was the presence of septic tanks, which did not have the proper structure that caused the release of debris and contaminated the water and the subsoil and this also reflected in the water quality of artesian wells, which were unsuitable for consumption and this meant that the citizens had the need to pay to clean their cesspits. In addition, the city had only 2.8% of its territory sanitized. Once the problem was identified, in 2017, the government of the state of Rio Grande do Norte, through the state’s tourism secretariat with resources from the World Bank (25.3 million reais), began the work of Basic Sanitation in the city. to leave the urban area completely sanitized, connecting 1,700 properties in the municipality, which enabled the sanitation of 100% of the city.

**Methods, steps and tools applied**

How was the good practice implemented? Click to add your text

The previous manager of the city of São Miguel do Gostoso, Fátima Dantas, handed over the CAERN-Rio Grande do Norte water and sewage company, the ownership documents referring to the land where the training pond and transfer stations for the city’s basic sanitation would be built. With this, CAERN completed the basic sanitation project in São Miguel do Gostoso, together with the technical parts and a Term of Reference, and forwarded the documentation to the engineering sector of the Sustainable RN Project (currently the citizen government). Once that was done, the bidding process began. The bidding process took place in the second half of 2016, through the citizen government, in which the company, A. Gaspar, won the bid. For the implementation of the work, the governor of the state of Rio Grande do Norte, at the time, Robson Faria, signed the service order for the total sanitation of the city in the city council of São Miguel do Gostoso.

After the service order was signed, the works began. Measurements took place for payments to be made. Funding for the cost of the work came from the world bank. At the end of sanitation, there was an amendment to carry out connections to the sanitation system for low-income residents.

The work includes four catchment ponds for sewage treatment and four pumping stations. The system consists of a treatment station that receives an AEROBIC and ANAEROBIC procedure, composed of bacteria, which, as it is organic matter, has a tank that performs oxygenation and disinfection, and which subsequently has as final destination the four infiltration ponds. The system with four sewage pumping stations is distributed as follows: two in Santo Cristo, one in Xepa and the other close to the treatment plant. The complete system is 32 km long. Each lifting station is composed of a generator, two pumps, all operating 24 hours a day.

Each domicile in the city – including residences, commerce and the hotel network – has a small box that must, from now on, interconnect its sewage with the collection network, which runs through all the city’s streets. The sanitation network of São Miguel do Gostoso is managed by Caern, the state-owned company that handles the RN's water supply.
The needy families in the city of São Miguel do Gostoso, around 437 families, had their connection to the sewage network free of charge.

For the execution of the work, an educational social project was carried out, which made the population aware of the importance of sanitation, through the following activities: social duty: Space for serving the population that operated from Monday to Friday from 8 am to 2 pm for the survey of occurrences, making available complaints and suggestions boxes; use of social media (Facebook and Instagram) to bring a dialogue with the community closer; distribution of cactus and succulent seedlings; support the graduation of 9th grade students at Ana Ribeiro school; elaboration of environmental booklets, consolidated initiatives for education, a theme that was also addressed in the cultural presentation “Tempo de Mudar” held during the delivery of the work.

Key success factors
What helped you tackle the issues? Click to add your text

The basic sanitation of São Miguel do Gostoso was a construction that for a while remained only on paper, as it had not been given due attention in relation to its importance, as well as the results that this would entail for the entire community.

However, there was a change in perception in which the importance of union was emphasized so that the work could be operationalized. With this, there was a joint effort between the state government and the municipal government to remove all obstacles and with that the project was revised so that the work could be started. In addition to these points, one of the essential factors was the availability of money earmarked for the execution of the construction, which allowed it to be carried out in the proper time.

After the work started, there was a union between local actors, municipal management, the tourist trade, and the community so that together they could readjust the logistics of the activity according to the work. Another facilitating point was the characteristics of the municipality’s soil. The basic sanitation work is part of a government program.

Another important point was the appreciation of local labor. 70% of the project’s employees were residents of São Miguel do Gostoso, which made it possible to complete the work on time, without delay. Furthermore, with the inclusion of local workers, the municipality’s economy was also boosted.

The sum of these factors made it possible for the sanitation work to be completed and, due to its relevance, it is considered one of the great achievements of the municipality, characterizing the success of the initiative in the destination.

Lessons learned
While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome? Click to add your text

One of the first challenges was the search for the release of funds to start the work, as the project existed, coming from the previous administration, but it had no budget attached and it was not approved. With the change in management, the current mayor (José Renato) managed to get the project approved and the funds released by the world bank to start the work.

In relation to tourist activity, at the time the project was implemented, tourism was in full swing and one of the main challenges during the construction process was to reconcile its progress with the events taking place in the city, and this led to the change of these events to facilitate the progress of the work, in addition to the changes that had to be made in traffic for the continuation of the work. Some places with gastronomic potential in the city, such as the Xepa beach, had their access made unfeasible for a few months, which made it difficult for the day-to-day progress of tourist activity in the city. However, the execution of the work was planned in such a way as to cause the least possible damage to tourist developments.
The beginning of the work took place on Santo Cristo beach and the fact that the streets were made of slates and not cobblestone facilitated the opening of the streets. Thus, an opening was made in the street to deploy the network, after deployment, the site was closed and compacted. On paved roads, there was a more careful removal to open the street, due to the risk of finding other facilities when opening the street so as not to be damaged using mechanical battens.

Problems also occurred at Xepa, as the pumping station that was designed was located at the lowest part of the street and as it is the lowest part, the effluents are all directed to this location. This was one of the biggest difficulties of the work, as there were points of very superficial water table, as I was excavating there was a lot of water and therefore the delay in carrying out the work at that point.

The entire implementation of the pipe made at this point of the Xepa, took place by the non-destructive method, a much more expensive method, as it avoids excavation. There was a need to lower the sheet to reduce the water load during the process to carry out the work. This stretch required a longer time. The other stretches occurred within the normal range.

Another difficulty faced by the municipality was to integrate and benefit needy families with the sanitation connection works. However, the municipality made it possible with the executing company, covering 437 families, the direct connection of their homes to the sanitation work.

Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice? Has it received any rewards? Click to add your text

- One of the main results of the work was the increase in the percentage of sanitized area in the city, which was previously 2.8% of the territory and now has 100% of the city sanitized.
- One of the positive consequences of sanitation is in the cleanest environments, which result in more adequate human conditions, significantly reducing the spread of diseases or the presence of transmitting agents, such as mosquitoes and rats.
- Feeling of satisfaction and improvement in the lives of residents with the work: Residents Lucineide Araújo, 43, and Maria Anunciada, 65, celebrated the completion of the work. "This came to give our city a lot more value, not to mention that we will have cleaner water and that is a sign of health, well-being," said Lucineide. “Now I won’t have to pay more to clean my cesspool, I’m going to save money”, added Maria.
- Tourism activity benefited in terms of its infrastructure with the sanitation work, since the contamination of the environment by depletion compromises, or even nullifies, the tourist potential of a region.
- Improvement from the environmental point of view of the municipality, since the waste will have an adequate destination, with no further contamination of the soil, causing the protection of the environment and, consequently, increasing and valuing economic activities that depend on adequate environmental conditions for its exercise, as is the case with tourism.

Additional references

Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from Youtube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/One Drive) download URL.

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