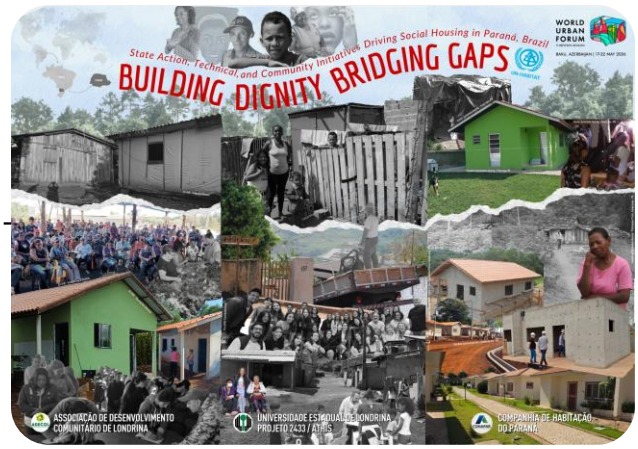
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Building Dignity, Bridging Gaps: Driving Social Housing in Paraná, Brazil

Submitted By: Paraná HUB - Building our future together, from the UN initiative Local2030 Coalition



Organization Profile

Organization Name: Paraná Housing Company - Cohapar / Londrina State University / Fight for Housing National Movement / Community Development Association of Londrina (Adecol)

Organization Type: Subnational government

Website: https://www.cohapar.pr.gov.br

Practice Details

Country(ies): Brazil

City(ies): Different municipalities in Paraná State

Start Year: 2007 **Ongoing:** Yes **End Year:** N/A

Main Adequate Housing Components:



Housing Thematic Areas:

- Housing Affordability & Financing
- Social Housing
- Communal & Self-Build Housing
- Housing Rights & Social Inclusion

Relevant SDGs:



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Problem & Context

Paraná State faces a major housing challenge as most low-income families live in precarious dwellings, rentals, or informal settlements, often lacking infrastructure, tenure security or adequate conditions. The average 7% housing deficit reflects structural barriers that weaken Social Housing policies. While the federal government built a strong program, institutional weaknesses persist at the state and especially municipal levels. Municipalities struggle with absent housing policies, legal barriers to land regularization, real estate market pressure and limited knowledge of funding sources. At the state level, problems include a shortage of professionals to assist municipalities, weak dialogue with housing movements, and the lack of a long-term coordinated policy. Social movements and community organizations face scarce technical support, limited resources and difficulties mobilizing families. These obstacles reduce implementation, demanding new and stronger institutional integration.

Solution Developed

The housing solution in Paraná advances on multiple fronts, targeting homeless families, with priority for women heads of households, victims of violence, the elderly, people with disabilities, and families in informal settlements. At the state level, COHAPAR has delivered new housing units, regularized settlements, and resettled families in risk-prone or fragile areas. Social movements and community organizations secure dignified housing through self-management, ensuring beneficiaries act as protagonists of their own transformation. This is reinforced by participation in municipal councils, strengthening democratic governance and social control. Innovative practices include ecological bricks, bamboo structures, rainwater harvesting, solar energy, biodigesters, and organic gardens with composting. To overcome scarce technical support, limited knowledge of funding sources and to bridge gaps, universities, through the NAPI Agenda 2030, are in the process of aiding high-deficit Paraná municipalities to implement the ATHIS Law, providing free technical assistance for families earning up to three minimum wages, fostering safer, more inclusive, and resilient housing.

Implementation

In Paraná, the implementation of social housing combines three main fronts of action: the state, through COHAPAR and the Housing System (SEHIS/COEHIS/FEHRIS), leads with down payment subsidies, the urbanization and regularization of informal settlements, and the resettlement of families in risk-prone or environmentally fragile areas; social movements and community initiatives organize and register priority demand within their reach, elaborate projects and social work, build new houses, participate in municipal councils mobilize communities, and ensure democratic oversight through municipal councils, advocating for inclusive integration and self-management; and the academia, through the ATHIS initiative, is starting the process of drafting municipal bills and mobilizing local governments and associations. The timeline includes the creation of the legal framework in 2007-2008, successive needs surveys (2010, 2019, 2023), the

approval of PEHIS-PR in 2012, creation of SISPEHIS in 2015 and the review in 2020. Financial resources come predominantly from federal programs (85-90% via FAR/FDS/FGTS and MCMV), complemented by state funds (Casa Fácil), municipal contributions (land, licensing, infrastructure), credit lines from Caixa Econômica Federal, and partnerships with NGOs, professional associations, and universities, ensuring a collaborative and participatory implementation.

Enablers & Obstacles

Key enablers include legal frameworks (City Statute, Federal Law 11.888/2008), political commitment, creation of Minha Casa Minha Vida Program, creation of SEHIS/COEHIS/FEHRIS and SISPEHIS with georeferenced data, coordinated federal-state-municipal action, community mobilization, non-profit and academic engagement. Obstacles such as limited local capacity, data inconsistencies, funding delays, land costs, speculation, weak municipal laws, weak integration between differente sakeholders and uneven regional conditions are addressed through limited participatory planning, phased regularization, public land use, legal support, capacity building, regional cooperation, and partnerships between states, municipalities, and academia.

Results & Impact

Since 2019, the Casa Fácil Program (strongly supported by the federal government's MCMV Program) has benefited 82,267 households through down payment subsidies, primarily addressing the demands of income ranges 2 and 3, while also regularizing 18,477 homes. In parallel, social movements and community-led initiatives, although with a much-limited scope, have focused on income range 1, reaching the most vulnerable populations of the state. These groups include single mothers, the elderly, people with disabilities, as well as rural, indigenous, quilombola, and homeless families, who gain safer housing, improved infrastructure, and strengthened legal security. Beyond the quantitative achievements, their action is rooted in the recognition that housing is not merely a commodity, but a fundamental right tied to dignity and quality of life. By treating housing as a right rather than a profit-driven product, community-based entities can deliver homes of higher construction standards within the same budgetary constraints. Qualitatively, the initiatives reinforce governance, social oversight, and community empowerment, while also expanding access to essential services. Their broader impacts extend to enhanced urban integration, increased resilience and social inclusion, stimulation of local economies, and improved management of environmental risks. Nonetheless, challenges persist, particularly the risk of land speculation when urban integration is not adequately planned and managed.

Replication & Scale Up

Critical factors include mechanisms for acquiring public land at fair value; the coordination of federal, state, and municipal actors, ensuring that financing, technical support, and documentation proceed in parallel; and the presence of organized community entities capable of mobilizing vulnerable groups and carrying out social work. Equally important are stable federal funding lines, technical capacity at the municipal level, and strong legal and regulatory frameworks that guarantee housing as a right and facilitate partnerships with utilities for infrastructure provision.

Scaling up requires stronger integration among federal, state, municipal, and community stakeholders, ensuring coordinated financing, land provision, technical support, and social participation. To expand its reach, the practice must be prioritized as a long-term public policy, with stable funding lines, articulation with urban planning, and institutionalized support for vulnerable groups.

Policy Uptake

This housing practice has informed or been partially integrated into policy discussions, strategies, or pilot-level policy instruments.

For over a decade, federal housing policy has functioned effectively, ensuring large-scale delivery and social inclusion. However, at state and municipal levels implementation remains fragile, with limited technical, funding and institutional capacity. Furthermore, although the federal ATHIS Law was approved in 2008, fewer than 40 municipalities nationwide have managed to implement it, revealing major gaps in local policy integration.

Lessons & Takeaways

In hindsight, the practice would benefit from greater stability of state housing policies, programs and funding flows, reducing delays and uncertainties in contracting. At the municipal levels, stronger technical assistance and institutional capacity are needed to assure implementation. Land policy should be made more proactive, with public land banks to prevent speculation and legal disputes. Finally, embedding monitoring and evaluation systems and expanding spaces for community co-management would improve long-term sustainability, social inclusion, and policy integration.