

# Overview of human and physical resources of Social Assistance Services in Bahia

Karen Codazzi Pereira and Marília Rocha, International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)

**Bahia's Unified Social Assistance System** (*Sistema Unificado de Assistência Social—SUAS*) is currently undergoing a planning process. The International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) and the Bahia Social Assistance Secretariat (SAS) prepared a study to explore the quality and supply of social assistance services in the state, supporting the formulation of the new State Social Assistance Plan (PEAS) and the SUAS Improvement Pact. The quality of services was analysed using infrastructure indicators and the profile of workers in basic and special social protection facilities. The study seeks to improve the monitoring and evaluation of the social protection system.

The indicators were based on the 2019 SUAS Census, which collects information on the standards of social assistance services. The physical structure and human resources indicators were determined according to the parameters described in official documents with the technical guidelines for the provision of services (such as IDCRAS/IDCREAS, NOB-RH/SUAS).

According to the Technical Guidance documentation, the physical structure of the Social Assistance Reference Centres (CRAS)—the main facilities for basic social protection services—should be sufficient to supply Protection and Comprehensive Family Care services (*Proteção e Atenção Integral à Família—PAIF*). The Specialised Reference Centres for Social Assistance (CREAS), one of the main facilities of special social protection, must provide a welcoming physical space and ensure spaces for family, individual and group care. Therefore, both CRAS and CREAS units must be located in their own property and include a reception, individual and collective service rooms, kitchen and bathrooms. The CREAS must also have at least two bathrooms adapted for people with reduced mobility.

The census data show that around 70 per cent of CRAS and CREAS units meet most of the infrastructure requirements suggested by the Technical Guidance. When considering accessible bathrooms, this percentage drops to about 40 per cent of CREAS. Thus, in general terms, these facilities possess the necessary physical structure to offer their services, lacking only accessibility adjustments. More than 40 per cent of CRAS and CREAS units have accessible facilities, but not in accordance with the ABNT standard, and approximately 50 per cent only meet some accessibility criteria.

Another aspect that reflects the quality of social assistance services is the profile of social workers. From information gleaned from the employees' positions and professions, one of the main bottlenecks of social work is the lack of complete reference teams, as stipulated by NOB-RH SUAS.<sup>1</sup> Around 70 per cent of CRAS and CREAS units,

and 90 per cent of POP Centres, Day Centres and similar facilities do not have a complete reference team, which can affect the quality of social protection services provided. In the case of Accommodation Facilities, the reference team depends on the presence of users with specific needs, which is not captured by the SUAS Census. However, it is possible to infer that a significant percentage of these units do not have social workers and/or psychologists, who are foreseen in the reference teams (about 30 per cent of the facilities do not have a social worker and 50 per cent do not have psychologists).

Regarding the profile of these social workers, we have observed that most employees of CRAS, CREAS, POP Centres and Day Centres have completed high school or tertiary education—between 65 and 80 per cent of workers. Approximately half of these workers have completed higher education. As for the employment relationship, most workers have temporary contracts; about 50 per cent are outsourced or have temporary employment relationships (except for Day Centres and similar facilities, which have a large percentage of formal workers in the private sector). This percentage of temporary contracts might influence turnover. Only 10 per cent of workers at CRAS, CREAS and POP Centres, have been working there for over five years. For Day Centres and similar facilities, this percentage is 45 per cent. Accommodation facility workers, in turn, are generally less educated, with more permanent ties (formal workers from the private sector) and with longer stays at the facilities.

Based on the human resources indicators, it is possible to conclude that the low adequacy of teams in the social protection system is one of the main issues regarding the quality of services. In addition, high worker turnover can lead to weaker community bonds, in addition to requiring repeated basic training. Increasing the number of permanent contracts could mitigate these effects.

Finally, it is important to note that the analysis of IDCRAS and IDCREAS indicate that, in general, the state of Bahia's CRAS and CREAS units have higher average indicators when compared to the Brazilian average; therefore, it is necessary to take into consideration specific state and country contexts when analysing results.

#### Reference:

Bloch, C. K. C. Pereira, and M. Rocha. 2021. "Produtos 6 e 7: Relatório Final sobre a análise da oferta e qualidade dos serviços proteção social básica e especial na Bahia." In: "Projeto BRA/16/006 Fortalecimento das Políticas de Proteção Social na Bahia". Brasília: International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth.

#### Note:

1. See: <[www.mds.gov.br/webarquivos/publicacao/assistencia\\_social/Normativas/NOB-RH\\_SUAS\\_Anotada\\_Comentada.pdf](http://www.mds.gov.br/webarquivos/publicacao/assistencia_social/Normativas/NOB-RH_SUAS_Anotada_Comentada.pdf)>.