AySA is the Buenos Aires centenary company of Water and Wastewater that provides service to more than 13 million inhabitants.' We have decided to work on asset management due to the evolution of the issue and the global consensus on its benefits', says Director Hector Vaccaro. Asset management in our business is critical for society. We were convinced to give a comprehensive approach to the issue:

- However, we knew that there were different interpretations about the meaning of Asset Management. Frequently we saw the same ancient theories shown in a more attractive way. When PAS 55 started, we assumed "finally it is been done seriously". Even more, when we saw that the legendary International Standardization Organization (ISO) was taking action on System of Assets Management, we immediately decided to implement this system before it was published in 2014.

- By November 2018, we proudly had a SGA implemented and the ISO 55001 certified.

The company AySA has a centennial history in engineering of a very good level. An example is that they already had a very similar document to SAMP (Strategic Assets Management Plan). Nevertheless, there were many other challenges to overcome and this was made successfully during the development of the project of implementation of SGA ISO 55001.

- To do so, we looked for support on experts of the National Technological University of Buenos Aires (UTN BA). They had experts on SGA in their Centre of Research and Assets Management, who were also delegates at the IRAM (Argentine Institute of rationalizacion and standardization). IRAM is the official link in Argentina with the ISO.

It was a mega implementation in which three organizations connected to the state participated: AySA (a limited company of the State), the National Technological University, the biggest engineering university in the region that got support in IRAM (Argentine Institute of Standardization and Certification), participating in the Argentine TC251. The TC (Technical Committee) was originally PC (Project Committee) and is distributed round the world and centralized by ISO, working on the continuous improvement of the ISO 55000.

By the participation of our Manager of Implementation Ing. Ricardo Pauro of the UTN BA in TC 251 we had the opportunity to quickly apply the documents that were generated. It was also possible to put into practice and confirm his great contribution. An example of this was the 2018 version of ISO 55002 (Guidelines for the application of ISO 55001).
Challenges
As we said above, there were important challenges to overcome:

- The asset management software was not working as well as expected, though it was world class. This caused countless inconveniences of the data and general management.

- Although the company had several certified norms in its different sites and also an integrated management system, at the site to be certified, we did not have any so far.

- The company had gone through different stages; first it had been privatized and then it had been nationalized again. This situation provided improvement opportunities to the organic structure and particularly to the definition of the collaborators' tasks.

- Though the leaders and collaborators had a very high professional level, the risk management had opportunities to improve.

- There was a good base of documentation, however, it did not follow a standard as elaborated as the one proposed by ISO. This entailed some lack of integrity in the documental structure. As it is a water and wastewater company, the importance of the investment is strategic for the Nation. A failure in the core of our operation could be seen reflected in inconvenience in the public health. Even neighbours' protests. The engineers did a very good job thanks to their experience and the company wanted to invest, but as they did not own a good software support, they lacked the right documental management and the appropriate records to establish processes of continuous improvement. There was not a good set of indicators KPI's.

On the way to overcoming
Following the guidelines of the Management System ISO 55000, we faced all these challenges, and in less than a couple of months, the problem with the management software, which had been believed an insurmountable barrier, started to be solved. While getting small but continuous achievements, the working teams got motivated and worked harder on the project: some were devoted to risk management, others to the sub-project of software production. One of the teams was in charge of the documentary part and another of training and promotion. Hard work was done to integrate life cycle of physical assets, especially relating integration management and implementation to operation and alignment of financial and non-financial functions. A team of internal auditors specialized in ISO 55000 was formed and the KPI's aligned with the objectives and indicators of the Top Management were selected.

The main source of new ideas and competence development was team work supported by the very important leadership of the Top Management. Halfway to the SGA ISO 55000, we had already started to enjoy its benefits. The software was working and it was introduced to the user forums as an example of an excellent network performance. The costs of consultancy were much lower than the immediate benefits. We were completely sure that ISO 55000 was the correct way.
Hard work was done to get the sub-system of performance improvement into operation. This was a very important step as we knew that through these findings, we could grow and improve. During a strategic movement of implementation, we decided to bring external auditors with the motto: No fear-Learn. This brought very good results, internal audits and the top management’s check were supported by everybody. Even the trade union, which is part of the company management since it was re-nationalized, supported it. Moreover, before certifying, we had a general audit done by an external certification organism. Later, after the certification without 'Non-conformities', we called for a second external audit, only six months after the certification. The result was the expected one: the system was working! the KPI’s could be seen on the dashboard of the renewed software. It was clearer now that the SGA was not only important in itself but also because we could show the top management that through our work, we added value to the company. Also we had to balance an equation with three components: cost, benefit, risk. Key to any business.

Suggestions and advice to other organizations on the same way
- Choose a good fellow traveller. A good implementing consulting agency makes the road easier.
- Do not waste time on preliminary stages. Start actively.
- Get Top Management support.
- Work to have small but fast achievements to keep the working team in movement and the stakeholders supporting you.
- Do not forget the alignment between the financial and non-financial functions.
- Do not start implementing usual initiatives. ISO 55000 is a great and innovative project, it does not use popular approaches at the beginning at least.
- Assess the external auditors' competences, one by one. It is not the same to audit ISO 9000 than ISO 55000.
- Remember that when the certification is obtained, the road has just started.

Case Data
Country: Argentina
Company: AySA, state-owned limited company
Manager: Lic Héctor Vaccaro
Certifier: Tuv Nord
implementer: UTN BA - ING Ricardo Pauro
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Stakeholders
Some of our most important stakeholders are responsible for operating the systems of water pumping and sanitation of the sewage. They see with great satisfaction how we have put on top of the value pyramid: offer reliability to water and sanitation departments. They also see how we have designed a sub-system to probe their level of satisfaction with our service, and how we are constantly improving, taking into account the risks.