

CIRCLE in action

ISSUE 4

LATIN AMERICA

March 2007

Introduction

CIRCLE (Community-based Innovations to Reduce Child Labor through Education) is a global project that identifies and promotes, through sub-contracts, innovative community-based pilot projects that address the reduction of child labor through education. In three major rounds of funding, the CIRCLE project has awarded 17 sub-contracts to NGOs in seven countries in Latin America. Please see the CIRCLE web site <http://circle.winrock.org> for NGO Project Summaries, Spotlight Stories and Newsletters that provide information on CIRCLE activities and the global movement to stop child labor.

INSIDE THIS EDITION:

Introduction

Young people demand increased monitoring and implementation of public policies

Urgent Actions in Peru

Network for children and adolescents discusses child labor

Fighting sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in Natal

Young people demand increased monitoring and implementation of public policies



II Municipal Meeting of Children and Adolescent Domestic Laborers
Photo: Centro Dom Helder Câmara de Estudos e Ações Sociais

The 2005 National Household Research (Pnad), by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) reveals the sad reality of child labor has increased in Brazil. Between 2004 and 2005, the number of child and adolescent laborers went from 5.3 to 5.45 million.

The IBGE research also indicates the growth of domestic child labor: from 403 thousand in 2004 to 404 thousand in 2005. Because children and adolescents engaged in domestic labor are subject to excessive work hours, small or no remuneration, humiliations and even moral and sexual violations, it is considered one of the worst forms of child labor.

CIRCLE's partner Centro Dom Helder Câmara de Estudos e Ação Social (CENDHEC), has been fighting child labor in the State of Pernambuco, Brazil, through the participation in the State Fórum to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor. CENDHEC carries out studies and programs that help address the domestic child labor phenomena in the city of Recife.

With the support of CIRCLE, CENDHEC has mobilized civil society Recife to develop the Municipal Plan to Eradicate Child Labor. The plan was approved within the Municipal Council of Childrens' Rights, and has become policy.

In December 2006, the Plan was presented to 120 children, adolescents and youths, in the city of Recife, Pernambuco, during the *II Municipal Meeting of Children and Adolescent Domestic*

Urgent Actions in Peru

Aiming to contribute to the increased retention of child laborers in the educational system, the Peruvian NGO AMF (Asociación Mujer Familia), has obtained the support of CIRCLE to implement an urgent actions project from March to May 2007.

For the implementation of the project, AMF will build the capacity of 20 teachers of two night schools in the city of Cajamarca, on learning methodologies appropriate to child laborers. The schools selected have presented high incidence of child laborers, especially of domestic child laborers. In total, eight capacity building workshops will be carried out, on methodologies aimed at motivating children and youths to continue their education.

In addition to the training of teachers, 100 students of the schools will participate in weekly workshops for developing emotional intelligence. The project will also implement awareness campaigns to prevent child labor in Cajamarca.

AMF implements programs in the areas of gender, family and defense of rights in Cajamarca and previously implemented a two-year CIRCLE project.

Laborers. The participants discussed how to demand from the government the implementation of the actions stated by the Plan. In addition, they participated in thematic workshops on Communication, Violence, Reproductive Health, Sexual Rights, Youth and Labor, Gender, Family and Community.

As a result of the Meeting, a Commission of youth wrote an **open letter to society** (see full text below), demanding that authorities implement the Municipal Plan and use it to defend the rights of children and adolescents in Recife.

Some of the statements in the letter include, the condemnation of all forms of child labor, the demand for greater monitoring of social programs such as the Program for Child Labor Eradication (PETI) in order to identify families that are receiving the social benefits inappropriately, and improvements to the infrastructure and diversification of activities developed during the extra curriculum activities.

For more information, please visit <http://www.cendhec.org.br/> or talk to CENDHEC through the email cendhec@terra.com.br

Open letter to society

We, children, adolescents and young people, gathered at the 11 Municipal Meeting for Domestic Child and Adolescent Workers, would like to say that all children and adolescents have rights and duties, as well as adults, and also some special rights, as the right to a decent housing, to study, to leisure, to attend technical trainings and to go to university. We want these rights to be assured for all.

We believe all families have the right not to expose their children to any sort of child labor, as this is harmful for their studies, psychological development and potential for a better future.

We understand the importance of social programs, but we want greater monitoring to avoid that families who do not need the benefits have access to them, instead of other families who need this assistance.

We want a better structure for PETI's activities, playful and varied activities, so that children and adolescents beneficiaries are not discouraged to attend.

We urge the right to participate and follow up the actions we are recommending and we want all of them to be fulfilled for our rights to be guaranteed.

We understand that the Municipal Plan to Prevent and Eradicate Child Labor and Protect the Adolescent Worker in the City of Recife contributes to improve the life of child laborers and we demand that it is fulfilled.

We would like to say that we will always be aware that these rights are fulfilled. Thus, we demand that competent authorities take the actions off the paper and apply them to improve our lives.

Recife, December 16th, 2006.

From landfills to schools

The nongovernmental organization Obispo Anaya, CIRCLE partner in Bolivia, uses the strategy “Fun, Education, Nutrition (REN)” to eradicate one of the worst forms of child labor: garbage scavengers.

For many of these children, working in the garbage is a matter of survival and the only way they can find money to buy food. This is why, in order to retain children at school, it is so important to supply them with school meals that aim to mitigate the effects of inadequate nutrition in the learning process.

The *Fun* strategy component seeks to sensitize child laborers about the risks to which they are exposed in the landfills, and to use games and activities through which they can learn ways to purify their lungs and reduce the level of contamination to which they are exposed.

To know more contact Danitza Valdez, from Obispo Anaya, through the email poanaya@yahoo.com.

Network for children and adolescents discusses child labor



Meeting of Inter-institutional Childhood and Adolescence Network
Photo: Winrock International

The non-governmental organization CEBIAE estimates that in the Municipality of Potosí in Bolivia, there are around 5.000 children and adolescents working in the street as sellers, shoe shiners, car washers, and in sectors such as mining, transportation and domestic labor. To prevent and eradicate child labor in the region, CEBIAE is implementing the program Potosí Education City, with the support of CIRCLE.

The program’s specific objective is to strengthen the work and coordinate institutions and organizations in the Municipality of Potosi, aiming to generate policies and programs in the field of education and focus on the participatory prevention and eradication of child labor. The program is composed of three processes: empowerment of the civil society, empowerment of local organizations and government, and empowerment of public schools.

CEBIAE promotes the coordination of joint actions to improve the livelihoods of children and adolescents, building on the experience of *Red Pró Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores* (PRONAT). In order to expand the network to other social actors and address child labor within a greater context, CEBIAE is helping to create of the Interinstitutional Network for Childhood and Adolescence, currently in the process of formulation of a Municipal Agenda on childhood and adolescence.

For more information, please contact Mr. Wilfredo Gonzáles Paco, at cebiaepotosi@yahoo.es.

Fighting sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in Natal

In the city of Natal, like many other cities in the Northeast of Brazil, is famous for its beautiful beaches and its tropical weather. Unfortunately, another tourist attraction that has concerned NGOs like as Casa Renascer is the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. The issue is not anything new, and indeed there are some public policies to fight and prevent it, but implementation is weak -- as it is the case of the law that establishes the creation of Internal Commissions to Prevent Accidents and Violence (CIPAVes) at schools.

With experience in the fight against sexual violence against children and adolescents, Casa Renascer, in coordination with the Municipal Secretariat of Education, is developing actions in two public schools in low income communities that aim to reduce the vulnerability of children and adolescents to violence and sexual exploitation. The project identifies that one of the risk factors is ignorance, lack of information by the children, adolescents and their families about the causes and consequences of commercial sexual exploitation. Children and adolescents with access to information are more aware and have an increased capacity to defend themselves and seek protection. However, according to Casa Renascer, the fact that the focus is on sexual exploitation also adds several elements of economic and cultural nature that bring new challenges to the fight.

Through the CIRCLE supported project, Casa Renascer carried out 24 workshops with groups of adolescents at these schools, addressing themes such as citizenship, youth participation, and violence. At the beginning of each meeting the NGO created "therapeutic groups", which include therapeutic techniques geared at the integration of the group, socialization, respect, team work, motivation, care and life projects. This allows the adolescents to express their fears and concerns and to reflect about their future. Work with adolescents also includes family visits.

Another goal of the project is the sensitization and motivation of school teachers to address the child labor as a crosscutting subject in the activities carried out in class. The project is also carrying out discussions aiming to reinforce the roles of family and school in the socialization of children and adolescents and the prevention of several forms of violence and social exclusion.



For more information please visit www.casarenascer.org.br or write to casarenascer@digizap.com.br.

CIRCLE LATIN AMERICA in action

is a quarterly publication of
CIRCLE
Community-based Innovations to
Reduce Child Labor through Education

Editor: Adriana Alvarez
Design and Lay-out: Débora Aranha
Circulation: Adriana Alvarez
Text: Débora Aranha
Translation into English: Débora Aranha
Translation into Spanish: Rocio Córdova

WINROCK INTERNATIONAL - BRAZIL
Av. Manoel Dias da Silva, nº 1002 sala 301
Pituba, Salvador – Bahia - Brazil
CEP 41830-001
Phone/Fax: +55 71 3339 6900
Site: www.winrock.org.br
E-mail: mail@winrock.org.br