

CIESPI

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND POLICY ON CHILDHOOD

In association with the
Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro



concerned about children throughout the world

Annual Report, 2016

**The International Center for Research and Policy on Childhood at the Pontifical
Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (CIESPI at PUC-Rio)**

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The International Center for Research and Policy on Childhood (CIESPI) is a center for research and policy studies and a reference center on issues affecting children and youth, their families and their communities. Its goal is to assist the elaboration and implementation of effective policies and practices to assist the full development of young people and the protection of their rights.

Principal activities:

- Developing interdisciplinary studies and social projects to contribute to the policy and practice debates and decisions in the areas of childhood, youth, families and communities.
- Organizing debates, courses and seminars to discuss and disseminate the results of its own and others' research and policy practices in Brazil and abroad.
- Convening working groups of public, university, community and non-profit actors to debate and advance improved policy priorities and agendas for children and youth.
- Disseminating research, data and methodologies from national and international studies
- Providing courses and training to students and professionals in a wide array of fields with interests in children and youth.
- Active participation in forums, councils, meetings and events to contribute to the improvement of public policy and the implementation of children's rights.

Projects in 2016

1. Improving opportunities for children and youth in the streets and in other contexts of vulnerability

The issue of the children and youth living on the streets is a permanent research theme in CIESPI's thirty-three years of activity. In recent years, we have developed several research and action initiatives focused on the processes of construction, deliberation and implementation of public policies for this group of young people. The current project is to help key actors focus on and advocate in the bodies responsible for the implementation of the public policy adopted by the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in 2009 (CMDCA /RJ), as well as developing and disseminating new knowledge about children and youth growing up in contexts of vulnerability.

The following objectives guide the project:

1. Support the work of local actors in the process of implementation of the Municipal Policy for Serving Children and Adolescents in a Street Situation in Rio de Janeiro (Resolution 763: 2009 - CMDCA / Rio).
2. Support the mobilization and actions of national actors in the work of constructing a national policy for providing services to street children and adolescent population. Currently, while there is a national policy on street children, there is no policy specifically aimed at children and youth.
3. Continue to participate in the international debate, especially through partnership with the London-based Consortium for Street Children and collaboration with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child with the objectives of strengthening our work in Brazil and sharpening policy priorities at the international level.
4. Search, document and disseminate policy recommendations focusing on the young female population living on the streets especially young mothers and pregnant youth.
5. Continue the study and dissemination of qualitative and quantitative data on the young population living in the street to deepen knowledge about the issue and contribute to improving policies and practices priorities.
6. Contribute to the humanization of the image of these children and youth, who are subject

to gross stigmatization.

7. Seek alternatives to compulsory detention and institutionalization for these young people and end the constant violation of their rights.

Major Activities

- **Revocation of SMAS Resolution 20/2011 and publication of SMDS Resolution No. 64/2016**

In 2016, the main space for actors engaged in advocacy for the implementation of the Municipal Policy for Assistance to Street Children and Adolescents in Rio de Janeiro continued to be in the sphere of municipal legislative power. In particular, the city council established a Working Group within the Special Commission on Street Populations. The immediate challenge was to deal with the so-called Resolution 20 (SMAS no. 20/2011) a regulation out of the Secretariat for Social Services, which robbed young street populations of their basic rights including habeas corpus rights.

Immediately after the promulgation of Resolution 20, CIESPI and its colleague organizations began to organize to undo the damage. The group included non-profits traditionally involved with street children especially the Rio Children's Network (Rede Rio Criança) but also three key public bodies, the Rio offices of the Public Defenders' Office, the Public Prosecutor's Office, and the Rio de Janeiro Children's Rights Council. Getting such a diverse group to agree on revisions was no easy task but eventually agreement was reached.

The revisions were first made public in November 2015 at a presentation in the city council auditorium. The Working Group followed up on this process with joint meetings with the Municipal Department of Social Development and the effective [revocation of SMAS Resolution 20/2011 occurred on April 13, 2016 in the form of a new Resolution, SMDS Resolution 64/2016](#). The key provisions of this resolution are a mirror image of the problems of the original Resolution 20.

The new resolution:

1. Deletes the compulsory placement of street children in shelter.
2. Instead of street children only receiving health care in institutions, street children must receive care in the regular health networks.
3. Deletes the prohibition of street children being on the streets at night.

4. Resolution 64 states that the social support system must not be confused with the public safety system and the social support system is not required to take the initiative in the detainment of street children.



- **Debate on the regulation of the profession of social educators**

During this period, the same Working Group, of which CIESPI is a part, also took up the question of the people who work most closely with street children, street educators. The debate about the regulation of the profession of street educators (sometimes known as social educators) arose from a demand of the educators themselves. For them, the lack of definition about the role exposes them to a variety of different expectations but without any kind of professional and social recognition.

The Working Group decided to support the interests and concerns of the street educators themselves particularly since there was a live bill in the state Chamber of Deputies about the regulation of the profession. That bill is currently inactive. One difficulty facing the street educators as a whole is that institutionally the profession is divided between the public and the nonprofit sector, which creates different practical interests.

- **Implementation of the Municipal Policy for Assistance to Street Children and Adolescents in Rio de Janeiro**

Since 2015, there has been an effort in the City Council to draft an ordinance on people in the situation of the streets, similar to the federal law. As with the federal law, the municipal ordinance, as opposed to the Children's Rights Council policy does not make specific provisions for children and youth. For this reason, the Child and Adolescent Working Group has become involved and is pressing for a substitute which has specific provisions for young people on the streets.

- **Pregnancy and maternity of adolescents and youth in street situation**

A major new initiative in 2016 was the start of the project "Pregnancy and Maternity of Adolescents and Young People in Situation of Street". The objective is to first to listen to the needs and demands of young pregnant women and mothers living on the streets in contexts of high vulnerability. The goal is to stimulate their participation and activism, and to lay out and press for improvements in the help they receive. Among the activities completed in 2016 were:

- The publication of the research and public policy bulletin "[Adolescent Pregnancy and 'Maternity in the Context of Streets'](#)":
- The production of the video "[I'm pregnant, so now what?](#)" in partnership with the São Martinho Beneficent Association. The video won first place in the audiovisual contest "May I Speak?" promoted by the Rio Children's Network (Rede Rio Criança).

- **Child safeguarding policy**

CIESPI's team starts the research and meetings with your team for developing a child safeguarding policy.

CIESPI's Child Safeguarding Policy will be applied in the development of several actions, which correspond to the institution's aims, such as: research, production and publishing of information focused on children and young people; research and projects that consider the participation of children; recruitment of professionals; and management and networking in the public policy field.

In the case of the identification of a human rights violation, CIESPI's Child Safeguarding Policy will be a guide for professionals on how to refer the situation to the responsible organs for each incident, through the adequate use of the National Child Protection System.

- **Systematic literature review on street-connected children and adolescents**

In the beginning of 2016, we started a literature search of international articles published between 2010 and 2015 on street-connected children and adolescents. Our objective is to organize and catalog this material, facilitating the access to their whole content and their synthesis, and to analyze the trends of the international academic literature on the proposed subject.

**CIESPI's work on street children is supported by the
Oak Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland.**



2. Childhood without violence: a goal for Rio

This project, in partnership with the Bernard van Leer Foundation, aims to research and put into action strategies to reduce violence and improve conditions for small children (0 to 8 years old) living in low income neighborhoods, to improve their chances for reaching their full potential.

The project includes the following:

1. Pressing for the Implementation of the Municipal Plan for Early Childhood in Rio de Janeiro, (PMPI).
2. Researching and promoting ways to provide more and better quality places for young children to be outside of their own homes.
3. Providing and disseminating improved indicators on early childhood.
4. Researching and promoting ways to ameliorate the major problems families face raising their children.
5. Researching and promoting ways to improve young families access to the world of work.

While the project aims to influence policies and practices throughout urban Brazil, it is grounded in two low-income communities in Rio, Rocinha in the southern zone of the city, and Parada de Lucas in the northern zone.

Major activities:

- **Implementation of the Municipal Plan for Early Childhood in Rio de Janeiro - public policy focused on early childhood**

The CIESPI team continued its efforts to press for the implementation of the Municipal Plan for Children adopted by the Rio Children's Rights Council, and is part of the official Working Group for the implementation of that plan. That Working Group includes representatives of nonprofit organizations and municipal secretariats. The challenge is pressing for reforms at a time when all levels of government in Brazil suffer from severe financial crises and political crises. It is something of an achievement that the Working Group continues to meet in such challenging times.

- **Participation in the National Early Childhood Network - RNPI**

CIESPI concluded its second three-year term as part of the management committee of the (Brazilian) National Early Childhood Network (RNPI). The network has a variety of working

groups and CIESPI participated in the working groups on culture and child participation. Both choices reflect long-time CIESPI concerns.

In a first for Rio in September 2016, CIESPI along with its Rio RNPI colleagues organized in City Hall a [mayoral candidates' forum](#). Eight of the ten candidates for mayor attended and signed a Letter of Commitment to Early Childhood Rights. Among the signatories was the successful candidate.

- **Safe environments - safe places outside the home for young children to attend in their living locations**

The goal of this project is to discover ways to improve existing safe places for children in Rocinha and test the feasibility of expanding those places and/or adding new ones. A survey was conducted in Rocinha and Parada de Lucas to identify the locations currently considered reasonably safe for young children, and from this population of places staff selected a representative sample for further investigation.

This study focuses on the precarious situation of young children who live in low-income communities in Brazil. The target communities chosen were Rocinha, considered the largest favela in Brazil, in the southern zone of Rio de Janeiro and Parada de Lucas, a much smaller community in the northern zone chosen in contrast to Rocinha. The sample survey, involving extensive interviews with organizational directors, included childcare centers, creches, preschools and nonprofit cultural organizations. Many of these places were warm and inviting where in general children felt safe and well cared for. However, staff struggled with poor physical conditions, fragile finances, the difficulties of hiring and retaining adequately trained staff and the too frequent assault of 'stray bullets' as police and drug traffickers fought it out.

The first publication from this work is [Safe spaces for early childhood in Rocinha: search results](#) followed by the [CIESPI Bulletin # 3: Safe spaces for children in first childhood](#).

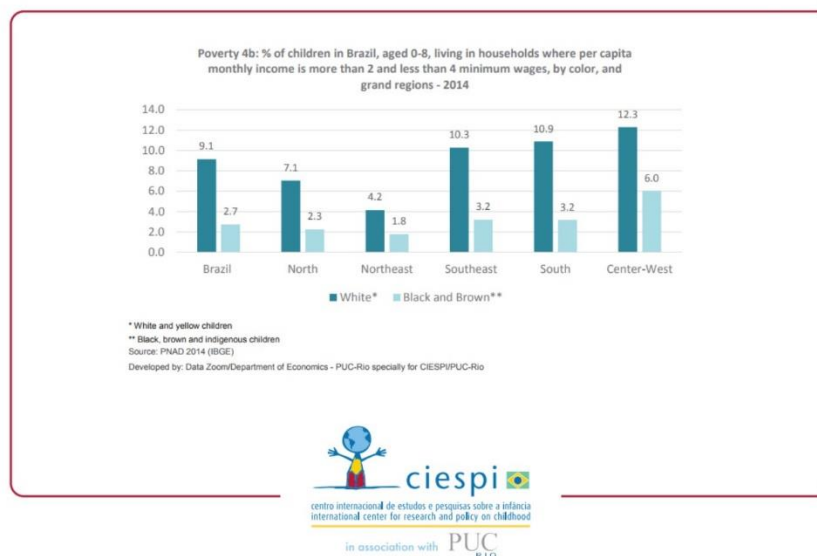
- **Childhood in numbers: improving the production and dissemination of relevant indicators**

Childhood in numbers is a database of key children's indicators providing ten-year comparisons on the condition of children and youth in urban Brazil. The purpose of providing this resource is to provide empirical data for debates and discussions in Brazil about the condition of children and to improve the quality of decisions and actions taken to improve the condition of children,

youth and their families. The target audiences include public officials, staff of government agencies, non-governmental organizations, journalists, business leaders, researchers, students, teachers and other interested professionals.

The tables and graphs that make up the childhood indicators database on the CIESPI website were produced in partnership with the staff of the Data Zoom portal of the Department of Economics of PUC-Rio and are based on Demographic Censuses (2000 and 2010) and In National Household Sample Surveys (2004 and 2014), both produced by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

The following is one of the graphs generated and available on the site.



The following research and public policy bulletins were prepared from this database.

[Bulletin 1: Early childhood, sanitation and zika virus](#)

**This multi-year project is supported by the
Bernard van Leer Foundation of the Netherlands.**



3. The Rocinha Center for culture and leisure education

The Rocinha Center for Culture and Leisure Education, a partnership between CIESPI / PUC-Rio, professionals and young people in Rocinha, was created in 2004 under a Brazilian Ministry of Culture Program. The Center provides activities for children and youth at the intersection of the areas of education, health and culture.

Major activities:

- **Traveling exhibition**

The collection of toys and recreational objects, created over years of teamwork, was organized as a traveling exhibition to allow discussions about methods of reaching young people with partner spaces including Rocinha CAPS, André Urani Municipal School, Camilo Castelo Branco Municipal School and the library of Cerro Corá.

- **Audiovisual touring**

The Center's digitized audio-visual materials were reworked to permit the easy production of videos with scripts. In a partnership with the Uni-Rio School of Social Service, the Center engaged in the project "Creation and artistic-cultural manifestations as praxis and resistance". The project invited the young Brazilian filmmaker Marcos Braz, who was born and raised in Rocinha, to be part of this group, and to engage in the selection of images and speeches representative of Rocinha's memory including the life histories of longtime residents.

These activities were funded by: the Rio de Janeiro Secretariat of Culture, the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, the Carioca Network of Points of Culture, Cultura Viva, the Rio Secretariat of Citizenship and Cultural Diversity, and the Brazilian Institute of Museums.



4. Monitoring child participation processes in childhood policies and programs in Canada and in the international field

This project involves a collaboration among researchers from four countries - Canada, Brazil, China and South Africa – to analyze current conceptions of child and adolescent participation particularly as that participation relates to those young people’s rights.

The three-year study has the following objectives:

1. Identify concepts of monitoring child participation in the field of international protection for children, through document analysis and interviews.
2. Analyze and describe specific contexts of processes for monitoring child participation from case studies in Canada, Brazil, China and South Africa.
3. Analyze the relationships between child participation and the impacts of child protection programs.

The project includes the creation of a youth advisory committee to guide the research at every step.

**These three years activities are supported
by the Ryerson University, Canada.**



5. Providing key data to inform practices and policies on children, youth and families: CIESPI databases

From its beginning, CIESPI has also been a reference center for diverse audiences interested in data and information that assist the task of improving conditions for children, their families, and their communities.

Major activities:

- **Childhood in numbers** is described above

This activity is made possible in part by grants from the Oak Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland, and the Bernard van Leer Foundation, The Hague, the Netherlands.

- **The Legal Database** (Base Legis) is an ongoing, virtual, historical archive on Brazilian constitutions, laws, bills, and decrees on children and adolescents. It also contains international treaties, declarations, accords, and agreements on children and adolescents. Its 300 documents stretch from the beginning of the 19th Century to the present. This database is updated on a continuing basis, is open to the public, and has search capacities.

CIESPI is most grateful to the group of skilled professionals in the legal and social work areas who volunteer their time to maintain this database. They are listed in the CIESPI website.

International research agreements

CIESPI is an international research center with strong links to children´ researchers and policy makers in several countries. Its founder and director was for many years president of Childwatch International, a network of university based research centers in over 40 countries. CIESPI, through the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and its Department of Social Work, has formal research and intellectual exchange agreements with the following:

- The Department of Social Sciences at the University of Guadalajara, Mexico. The Mexican coordinator is Professor Ricardo Fletes.
- The Department of Health and Social Services at University College, Ostfold, Norway. The Norwegian coordinator is Professor Trond Heitmann.
- The National University of San Martin, Buenos Aries, Argentina. The Argentinian coordinator is

Professor Valeria Llobet.

- The Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada. The Canadian coordinator is Professor Tara Collins.

Membership of key national and international organizations

Learning from and sharing with others is key to CIESPI's work. The following is a short list of active memberships:

- The Rio Network for Street children, Rede Rio Criança
- Advisory board, Casa da Árvore, Rio de Janeiro
- Advisory board, Instituto Alana, São Paulo
- Advisory board, the Brazilian Association of Terre des Hommes
- The Brazilian National Network on Early Childhood
- The Brazilian National Network on Street Children, Criança não é de rua
- Childwatch International and its Latin American Network
- The Research Council of the International Consortium for Street Children, London, United Kingdom.
- The Being Heard Advisory Board of the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) and Gender and Health Research, South African Medical Research Council, South Africa, and the International Center, Switzerland.
- The Equity for Children, Latin America, and Equity for Children of the New School University, USA.

Participation in research and other seminars

Throughout the year, CIESPI staff participate in research and policy seminars and forums across Brazil and internationally. The details of these are listed in the 2016 report in Portuguese.

Participants and partners

CIESPI is blessed with an active and creative board of directors, staff, consultants, and advisors and these are listed on the website.

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