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Gender & Citizenship in the Integrated Program for Social Inclusion, Santo Andre Brazil

Award Winning

New for 2002

Categories:

Gender Equity and Equality:

- access to resources
- gender roles and responsibilities
- gender specific needs
- removing barriers to equity
- social integration

Poverty Eradication:

- access to credit
- income generation
- job creation
- vocational training

Urban Governance:

- human resources and leadership development
- openness and transparency
- partnership development
- public administration and management
- public policy
- resource mobilization

Level of Activity: City/Town

Ecosystem: High Plateau

Summary

The Integrated Program for Social Inclusion (PIIS) aims to develop various joint and simultaneous actions, in the same urban territory, focusing on social inclusion and managed with a participatory approach. The Program is based on the concept that social exclusion is multidimensional, involving economic, social, urban, cultural, and political factors that articulate and reinforce each other. To deal with social exclusion thus demands an interventionary strategy that is both multidimensional, through a set of intervention programs, a matrix-based management and implementation of activities, creating possibilities for the sustainable social inclusion of families. The set of programs highlights the urban, economic and social dimensions and moves beyond the material level to promote self-esteem, feelings of belonging to the community, gender and citizens' awareness, etc.

Gebder exclusion led to conflicts and violence in social and affective relations. Given the manner in which men and women interact at both the household and social levels, the Gender and Citizenship Program, which is part of the Integrated Program for Social Inclusion (PIIS), proposed to foster male/female awareness by reconciling the physiological, psychological, cultural, and social

differences. This would be through encouraging development of, and collective experimentation with new experiences, behaviors and institutional arrangements that help reduce conflicts, working simultaneously with the community and program teams to introduce these issues.

The Gender and Citizenship Program resulted primarily in the strengthening of women's roles in decision-making processes and family relations in the community and the city. The Integrated Program for Social Inclusion has directly benefited 3,600 families, improving their quality of life and access to social policies, work, and income, especially in achieving their rights as citizens. At the management level, the Program's greatest triumph has been its intra- and inter-institutional integration, contributing to the operational consolidation and collaboration of the respective work teams, thereby expanding each program's efficacy

Narrative

SITUATION BEFORE THE INITIATIVE BEGAN

- Resident population: 16,042 inhabitants, 50.72% being male and 49.28% female
- Heads of families: 51.4% are unemployed and/or underemployed, 13% illiterate, 25% had not advanced beyond primary school while 25% earn minimum wage.
- Families: women head 57.6% of the households. Single-parent families headed by women constitute 32.7% of those families with earning less than half the recommended minimum wage.
- High-risk occupations, poor infrastructure.
- Children and adolescents exposed to crime.
- Lack of basic services.
- Low self esteem among the residents.

ESTABLISHMENTS OF PRIORITIES

In 1997 the local government defined social inclusion as a top municipal policy priority. Taking a new management approach to social policies, joint action was established between different programs in four areas of the city with severe indicators of social exclusion. Work began in November 1998 with a view to provide: infrastructure, housing improvements, healthcare, and create employment and income generation activities. Comprehensive urbanization and income supplementation became the main linkages in the set of activities. All the team members were involved in Gender and Citizenship workshops: the perspective was to include this dimension in the supply of various public services.

FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objectives:

Integrated Program for Social Inclusion (PIIS): To develop a sustainable strategy for social inclusion in urban territories characterized by processes of exclusion, thereby expanding the possibilities for families to achieve self-sufficiency.

Gender and Citizenship: to increase awareness concerning gender issues, domestic and sexual violence, and reproductive health by holding "serialized workshops" with community residents and program team members, both women and men.

Strategy: to combine public activities and resources in the same geographic area, thereby enhancing the potential of social assets to allow for the transition from social exclusion to social inclusion, with community participation in the decision-making and implementation processes.

The crosscutting action of the Gender and Citizenship Program enhances social inclusion by expanding participation by men and women in the programs focusing on urban, economic, and social dimensions.

MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES

The financial resources for implementing the PIIS come from the Municipal budget (51%), European Commission (23.8%), Inter-American Development Bank through the Central Government and the Caixa Economica Federal or Federal Savings and Loan Bank (23.7%), and other sources (1.5%). Funding for the Gender and Citizenship Program comes from the European Commission.

The technical resources (staff from the Santo Andre Municipality and partner institutions) have been expanded through an on-going dialogue with universities, international agencies, and local non-governmental organizations.

Human resources have been reinforced both by linking the various teams under the Santo Andre Municipality and by developing the Program's methodology. In addition to supporting decisions by the top echelon, the matrix structure of the PIIS is reflected in the operationalization involving NGOs, social movements, and philanthropist organizations in implementing activities. Community participation occurs both in the decision-making forums and in the implementation of some programs by hiring local residents to provide services. The Gender and Citizenship Program is the result of a partnership between the Santo Andre Municipality and the Center for Health Studies (CES) where experts in gender and health issues work under the supervision of the Municipality.

PROCESS

Having defined the objectives, overall strategy, and initial design of the PIIS, the greatest challenges were the limited correlation in public policies and the low degree of community mobilization. Implementation of the Gender and Citizenship Program showed that the majority of the specific programs had not taken gender issues into account when developing their activities. This highlighted the need to raise gender awareness among managers and team members concerning such issues and to ultimately reorient their activities. To deal with these issues, efforts focused on the definition of a matrix design for implementing the programs; involvement of other governmental and non-governmental stakeholders and promoting community participation.

The main challenge has been to deal with an organizational culture that has traditionally taken a compartmentalized approach to the citizens' needs. The strategies adopted include the search to overcome barriers to integration as they are identified; utilization of collectively built strategic planning, and systematic program evaluation.

Within the sphere of the Gender and Citizenship Program, the strategy was a partnership with the Municipal Minimum Income Program, allowing for direct intervention with the needy families. Over time and as the activities developed within the community, the Program was expanded, taking a crosscutting perspective with other programs under the PIIS, especially with housing, health, popular entrepreneurship, micro-credit, organization of cooperatives, etc.

The programs are carried out either directly by the Municipality or through partnerships with local non-governmental and philanthropist organizations. In addition, the community itself participates directly in both the management and implementation, since the community agents working in healthcare provision, urban waste collection, adult literacy training, and children's recreation are selected by the residents themselves. The number of community-based agents is nearly 50% of all the individuals involved in implementing the Program. This is a positive strategy, since in addition to generating employment and income for local residents, especially women, it provides a close link between the programs and the communities' real needs.

Partner organizations and the community agents participate directly in the PIIS management tiers. In the case of urbanization, for example, the entire process is decided jointly, step by step, with the residents of these low-income neighborhoods, collectively determining issues ranging from timetables to naming of streets.

The Program has been evaluated through both qualitative and quantitative surveys conducted by the

respective departments, organizations, and agencies, frequently in collaboration with universities and other institutions, with a special focus on the Participatory Survey, a methodology in which the community participates in the entire process. Evaluation is an issue that needs to be implemented more systematically, and a system of indicators is now being set up to measure quality of life and results.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

Among the 16,000 residents participating in the PIIS, surveys indicated that 66% of the families involved in the Minimum Income Program are now living better, while 89% reported that their family relations have improved.

A significant portion of the population report that their self-esteem has improved, and that they have taken increasing pride in their place of residence, progressively assuming roles in building their own future and that of the city as a whole.

A total of 112 discussion groups, gender awareness courses, and campaigns to stop violence against women were held, involving approximately six thousand people. These activities infuse reflection on gender issues into the PIIS, fostering interaction between team members and the community with a new perspective towards relations between men and women.

Progress has also been made in other areas, like guaranteed property rights on the lots and housing units, with titles registered in the women's names, an increase in prenatal care to 95% coverage and in maternal breastfeeding to 93% of children from up to 3 months of age. Based on the work and income generation activities, a tailoring cooperative was set up, consisting exclusively of women. A social inclusion micro-credit line was set by the Banco do Povo (People's Bank) which granted 60 loans in the first six months to micro-entrepreneurs in the PIIS areas, of whom 46% were women.

The emergence and strengthening of community leaders has been demonstrated by greater participation by these communities in the city's debate and decision-making forums, highlighting that the choices made by the community representatives have taken the gender perspective into account.

SUSTAINABILITY

From the financial point of view, the results achieved by the Program beginning with the pilot project guaranteed political feasibility and continuous growth in investments since implementation. It has not been possible to measure the resources saved by changing from a corrective or emergency-response focus to an integrated and preventive approach. But this is certainly the area in which the impact from feeding back to the community and the Municipality itself is the most effective, not only because it allows for lower-cost interventions, but also by fostering greater efficacy in policy action. Tackling social exclusion, from a perspective that includes the search for greater equity through increasing social mobility of the most vulnerable segments of society, empowers and creates new social assets capable of generating socioeconomic transformations based on greater initiative, community organization, and enhanced autonomy of families and individuals, decreasing the levels of violence and discrimination against minorities. The effects on patterns of consumption and production access to information and technology, and circulation of material and symbolic goods suggest lasting arrangements due to both the expanded range of opportunities and access to a living standard with greater dignity.

The focus of the Gender and Citizenship Program is the cultural sphere, since the actions have an impact on daily relations by fostering new standards of behavior between men and women, transforming the conservative cultural values that are still deeply rooted in Brazilian society. Predominantly female participation in management and implementation itself has allowed for the community's steady appropriation of the contents and methodologies of mobilization and control over various urban, social, and economic policies. A key element has been the shaping of a new territoriality, built and rebuilt by the formerly excluded population. Urbanization with community participation allows for the integration of the residential territory into the dynamics of the city as a whole, while environmental education fosters new forms of relations with urban space.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Multi-dimensionality, matrix-based management and participation.

The integration of various programs through the matrix-based management and implementation of activities made possible by linking the stakeholders, allowed for the formation of a collective coordinating body as a space for dialogue, cooperation, and exchange of experiences that generated an institutional learning process on the importance of building negotiated solutions as the way to empower the use of public and social assets, generate economies of scale, leverage results, and guarantee greater efficacy.

- Technical training, reflection, systematic organization, and monitoring the experience.

The exchange with universities has spawned the development of a conceptual and methodological framework, resulting in technical training, the use of tools for monitoring, evaluation, and reorientation of the activities, thereby guaranteeing on-going feedback to the Program. Training in gender issues has helped raise the awareness of team members and community residents concerning the subjective dimensions of social inclusion.

- The gender strategy in the struggle against social exclusion.

The strengthening of women's roles in decision-making processes and family and community relations and women's integration into productive activities demonstrate that inclusion of the gender strategy in the struggle against social exclusion was correct.

- Work with discussion groups involving women and men.

Discussion groups consisting of men and women are spaces for including body issues, subjectivity, and relationships in a system for exchange and reflection through solidarity, approaching daily themes, which are generally not brought up or talked about. The reflexive process encompasses attitudes, behaviors, and discourses that act as reciprocal stimuli among the participants, promoting different forms of resonance and contributing to gender equity. In order for these groups to be successful it is necessary to establish a context of trust in which individuals can participate as subjects and emotions can emerge. The campaigns have been important in providing visibility to the problem of violence against women, and the presence and commitment of men in these activities has encouraged more men to participate.

TRANSFERABILITY

An example of the replication of this integrated participatory methodology in other programs is the GEPAM project (Participatory River Basin Management), which covers 53% of the Municipality's territory. In partnership with IEE/PUC-SP, the Program is developing software for monitoring income supplementation policies, to be made available to all interested Municipalities in Brazil. With regard to data collection, special attention is focused on women's issues, seeking to consolidate indicators that allow to evaluate the actual results in terms of women's roles in their various relational spheres.

The innovative nature that has sparked interest in the Gender and Citizenship Program is the fact that it also works from a male awareness perspective. This aspect should be taken into account in any effort at transferring this Program since its approaches take on special meaning if one considers the cultural legacy according to which man plays the role of family provider, a legacy that has generated identity conflicts in a context of high unemployment and male underemployment.

The UN-HABITAT's Urban Management Program has conducted an on-going monitoring of the PIIS and has helped disseminate the experience. The Program's concept and operational design have been widely disseminated through invitations to participate in various Brazilian and international forums.

The Program has also received the following awards:

- The Public Management and Citizenship Award organized by the Getulio Vargas Foundation and the Ford Foundation (selecting it as one of the highlights in 2000);

- The Caixa Economica Federal (Federal Savings and Loan Bank) Award for Best Practices in Local Management (selected in 2001 as one of the ten best practices, with a special focus on the Sacadura Cabral Urbanisation project);
During the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements/Istanbul + 5 that took place in New York in June 2001, the Program was one of the 16 experiences in the world chosen to be reported on and discussed by the participants (the only experience from Brazil and one of only three from Latin America region). Through the Best Practices Program of the Caixa Economica Federal (Federal Savings and Loan Bank), the Santo Andre experience will benefit from the preparation of a Guidebook to facilitate its replication in other interested Brazilian Municipalities, thus fostering the practice of transferability.

Key Dates

July 1998: conceptual, methodological, guideline, and operational definition; strategic planning.

Oct. 2000: sequential workshops with local residents (both women and men) participating in the Minimum Income Program and Course on Gender Relations and Male Awareness with team members, community-based agents, and PIIS educators.

Jan.- Apr. 2001: Methodology for implementation in new areas; expansion and transferability.

Nov. 25, 2001: Launching of the so-called White Ribbon Campaign entitled "Men for a Stop to Violence Against Women".

Dec. 8, 2001: 1st Men's Meeting in Santo Andre

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Type of Organization: Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
Type of Partner Support: Technical & Administrative Support

Financial Profile

Year	Total Budget	Santo Andre Municipality % of budget	European Commission % of budget	CAIXA % of budget	State Government % of budget	UN / UMP % of budget
1998	1,490,077	29.1	0.0	64.8	4.2	1.9
1999	792,248	43.5	0.0	51.9	4.6	0.0
2000	1,563,960	69.1	18.5	10.2	2.2	0.0
2001	6,959,861	53.8	28.1	17.6	0.5	0.0
Total	10,806,145	53.8	22.6	22.5	13	0.1

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