

Rehabilitation International
Global Disability Development Fund / Africa Fund
Final Report

1. Executive Summary: the template below is only a guideline; however, please do not go over 5 pages.
2. Appendix with photos, links to materials made and other supporting materials.
3. Financial Report, signed by your finance manager, all Project Holders and Representative of your Board of Governors

Project: Women's Voices (Vozes Femininas)	Report No.: 01/2020
Organization: Brazil Health and Action - BRASA Association	Name of Project-in-charge: Stefano Simoni (BRASA General Manager)
Approved Funding: (USD) 145,125	Actual amount spent: (USD) 120,588
Reporting Period: the whole project (26 January 2019 – 25 January 2020)	

Executive Summary (not more than 5 pages):

1. Brief overview of your project and objectives

Vozes Femininas is a project born from these considerations:

1. The absence, in Brazil, of effective public policies in the field of disability, with cutting-edge but poorly implemented laws;
 2. Third sector organisations of/for people with disabilities generally act in accordance with their own internal decisions and not in accordance with the real needs of the people who turn to them;
 3. Woman is the centre of family life, especially in big cities like São Paulo, but her role is not recognised, as women are still victims of prejudice, have more difficulty in finding work and almost always receive a lower salary than men;
 4. The wide presence of many women with disabilities, or caregivers of family members with disabilities, who have developed brilliant solutions to solve everyday problems, involving their communities, especially in contexts of scarce economic resources.
- Knowing these stories is important for our society, as well as facilitating the replicability of new and innovative solutions to the everyday problems of people living with disabilities.

With these premises, the general objective of the project was to contribute to the promotion of human rights of women with disabilities or who are caregivers of family members with disabilities, through the dissemination of knowledge of individual and collective rights and awareness of the importance of personal and social mobilization, with the ultimate aim of promoting social inclusion.

Specifically, the project aimed to increase the knowledge of women with disabilities or caregivers of family members with disabilities of the municipality of São Paulo, preferably with high social vulnerability, on human rights, disability and social inclusion, through the creation of training courses, with in-presence and online meetings (in the distance education mode - EAD), based on the extension of the example provided by important women in the area of the rights of women with disabilities. Thus, the project has enabled female leaders with disabilities or caring for family members with disabilities to be agents of inclusion and social mobilization, active in the territories where they live and that they attend.

Specific objective 1. To increase the knowledge of disabled women, and / or caregivers of family members with disabilities, about human rights, disability and social inclusion through the creation of an online information and training service based on amplifying the example of important women in this area.

Specific objective 2. To train disabled female leaders and / or caregivers of persons with disabilities, so that they act as inclusion and social mobilization agents.

2. Key output, outcomes and how you have measured them (as in the original proposal: if these were achieved or not and your comments)

Output 1.1 foreseen (linked to the specific objective 1): 150 disabled women and / or caregivers of disabled family members involved in capacity building and training processes.

Output 1.1 realized: a total of 213 women with disabilities and/or women with family members with disabilities were involved in the 7 information and training meetings held, 160 of whom participated in 4 or more meetings, according to the attendance records of the meetings. We can therefore say that we have achieved the planned objective of involving the people originally planned in a continuous and meaningful way.

Outcome 1.1 foreseen (longer term, December 2020): 50 women with disabilities and / or caregivers of family members with disabilities permanently involved in social organizations and social mobilization actions for the rights of women and people with disabilities.

Concerning Outcome 1.1: there are excellent possibilities to reach this outcome, also thanks to the project of continuation of Women's Voices for 2020, focused on the consolidation of training and the constant accompaniment and evaluation of women acting as agents of social inclusion and mobilization.

Output 2.1 foreseen (linked to the specific objective 2): 100 women with disabilities and / or caregivers of families with disabilities trained as agents of inclusion and social mobilization.

Output 2.1 realized: of the 160 women who participated in 4 or more meetings, 60 expressed interest in continuing the training course, specializing in contact and dialogue with women with disabilities and/or family members with disabilities, especially those on low incomes and with high social vulnerability. In this sense we cannot say that we have reached the expected output, for two reasons: 1. The training carried out during the first year was intense and enriching, but not sufficient to fully train participants as agents of social inclusion and mobilisation. In fact, this training, in order to be completed, requires the attendance of additional distance learning modules that were produced in video format during the project and made available online only in the last days of the project execution; 2. The number of women who have fully followed the training path of the workshops for social inclusion and mobilisation agents is lower than budgeted (60 out of the 100 planned).

In this sense, we believe it is essential to complete the training and to accompany and

monitor women in the subsequent initial phase of their action as agents, especially in contact with other women with disabilities or caregivers in families with difficult situations in terms of social, family or economic vulnerability.

Outcome 2.1 foreseen (longer term, December 2020): 40 disabled women and / or caregivers of disabled family members acting as agents of inclusion and social mobilization in neighborhoods, communities, NGOs.

With regard to Outcome 2.1 we can say that the project path of 2019 has provided a solid basis for obtaining Outcome 2.1 at the end of 2020, and the continuation of the project aims to strengthen the role of women agents in the dialogue with the territory of their action, and with the existing social and health services, to consolidate the presence and action of these agents of social inclusion and mobilization, reaching at least the minimum number initially planned.

3. Challenges and Issues arising and solutions

The biggest challenge was the presence of women with disabilities at the first 2 meetings. On the contrary, we initially had a greater presence of caregivers than we imagined. In the following meetings the presence of women with disabilities has increased numerically, and we can say that we have solved the difficulties of involving the expected audience. In order to solve this imbalance we have given a very great impulse to contacts with institutions and structures that welcome and/or care for women with disabilities (Rehabilitation Centres, Inclusive Residences, Business Institutes dealing with the condition of women, third sector organisations active in the disability and women), and we have progressively increased the number of meetings with public and private organisations, obtaining visibility and partnerships that have facilitated the recognition of the project and made it possible to approach other people.

In addition, the presence on the web (website and social networks), with a constantly growing number of people following Vozes Femininas, on Facebook (400 in May 2019, 635 at the end of January 2020) and Instagram (450 in May 2019, 770 at the end of January 2020), in addition to about 8,500 visits to the project website, has allowed us to get in touch with women with disabilities and organizations of people with disabilities throughout Brazil, creating links and proposals for further development of Women's Voices.

The project, which had social vulnerability at its center, along with the plight of women with disabilities, had difficulties in meeting women with disabilities in the poorest neighborhoods of São Paulo. We perceived that one of the obstacles to reach this audience was the places chosen to hold the meetings, located in the city centre, with the necessary accessibility requirements, functional but, at the same time, physically far from the areas of residence of people with high social vulnerability. Not to mention that the strong social separation in fact existing in the country generates fears, in many people, in the face of the prospect of frequenting city spaces normally inhabited only by the most affluent population. For these reasons, during the project we developed the idea of also physically meeting women from the suburbs of the metropolis, and the additional workshop carried out with great success (over 50 women with disabilities or caregivers of family members with disabilities were present) at the end of November 2019 in the suburb of Brasilândia, one of the poorest neighbourhoods in the city, was the practical signal of this new priority orientation of Women's Voices.

4. Self-evaluation and Lessons Learned

The project team had initial difficulties to move from theory, with the elaboration of priorities and themes of the meetings, to the practice of project execution, with its timing and the need to constantly monitor its progress, respecting the expected results and the chronogram.

The adjustments put in place have made it possible to resolve much of the problems that have arisen, making it possible to complete what was planned, albeit with some delay in making the distance learning course available online. From this point of view, we must also remember that the video recordings took longer than expected also because of the difficulties of the agenda of the professors and witnesses called to contribute.

However, the development of the project showed that not all members of the team were able to contribute with full respect for the internal rules, the chronogram, the different responsibilities of each and the relationship with the rest of the BRASA association, which built the Women's Voices project and remains its legitimate executor. Therefore, some adjustments and changes in the constitution of the project team will be necessary in order to ensure a better performance of future activities.

Another aspect to consider is the fundamental role of public communication in all phases of the project, which lived up to the expectations we had given ourselves for the overall management of social networks, but there were delays in publishing information and news on the project website. Also here, the timely and clear communication of the events of the project, as well as news related to it, in full respect of the project framework represented by BRASA, will be an aspect to be improved in the continuation of the experience.

5. Suggestions for dissemination

The project has made it possible to build a set of tools (chosen themes, development of meetings, videos of testimonies of women with disabilities, training videos) that can be used in different geographical contexts, in thesis throughout Brazil, and that can therefore allow the development of other instances of Women's Voices. Possibly with additional or replacement materials based on local, cultural, social, geographical, and local specificities. These materials could also form the basis for thinking about a model of female empowerment, centred on the condition of women with disabilities and/or caregivers, which can also be adapted internationally.

At the same time, we believe that the model consisting of meetings, extensive use of videos and photos of testimony and teaching, and the fact of making available online and free of charge (after registration) all the material produced, constitutes in itself a potential, and promising, means of dissemination and multiplication of the experience.

6. Recommendations (both for your own organization and other organizations working in the same thematic areas)

We believe that a team capable of having a high operational capacity, without this being at the expense of the necessary reflection on what is being planned and implemented, is a fundamental condition for working on innovation represented by projects such as Women's Voices.

It is very important that the team is able to analyse itself and evaluate itself constantly, to reduce the risk of losing sight of the objectives we have set ourselves,

and to quickly implement any adjustments that may be necessary.

In addition to this, the team must have and strengthen the full capacity to learn from both internal and external monitoring / evaluation in BRASA, with the necessary flexibility and adaptability that comes from the stimuli received from RI, from BRASA, from the public and private partners we have in the territory, and from private citizens, without losing sight, once again, of what we have set out from the project proposal.

Realizing Women's Voices has taught us that we need to know and attend more the territories of vulnerability and social risk because, despite the intense work we have been doing for years on the human rights front and, especially, of men and women with disabilities, the additional conditions of social exclusion represented by ethnic, economic, cultural and geographical factors have not always been properly considered by the 2019 project management team.

Prepared by: Stefano Simoni (BRASA General Manager)

Reviewed and Endorsed by: Giovanni Gazzoli (Project Manager AIFO, NGO partner of BRASA and Women's Voices project) and Franco Demetrio Caserta (BRASA Chairman)

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