

Facilitating Child Participation in International Child Protection conference

*Democratic processes of construction and implementation of policies
for children*

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- *De que lugar falo* (where do I come from)
- Framework of child rights: opportunities and tensions
- Democratic processes of policy development: reflections based on a Brazilian experience to improve policies for 'street children'

From what place....

CIESPI – university based reference center...

Experience in Brazil, relevant internationally

Past: Training, dissemination (but weak policy impact)

Currently: Policy development, policy implementation and the accompanying **political activity**

The framework of rights: opportunities

- Important changes and new opportunities in child protection: Children's Rights Councils (CF; ECA)
- System of Guarantee of Children's rights (network of agents to ensure children's rights working 'intersectorialmente': municipal public departments, legal system, Ngos)

Rio: political context, opportunities

First municipal policy on street children passed (July 2009)

Policy laid specific responsibilities on eight municipal departments for acting towards street children

Goal: understand the political context; power relations; NGO-government conflict of interests) – then action – como chegar ‘à mesa de negociação’

Multiple role: CIESPI and other key actors facing tensions
→ providing research; documenting the process and decision making

Political tensions

Role of monitoring the policy - Children's Rights Council Committee. But: challenging political context (lack of political will; obstacles)

- Need to better understand political arena and power
- Need to set new strategies; engage new political actors (facing some 'historical' political tensions, for example: bring the Public Defender's office and the Public Prosecutor office into the group; Ngo and gov members)

Raising public awareness :Premier of the film **When Home is the Street (2012 Award in Human Rights)**

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The film portrays the stories of how several street children in Rio de Janeiro and Mexico City slowly emerged from life on the streets. A major purpose of making the film was to show the full humanity of these children who are often portrayed as less than human and threats to society.



Na Corda Bamba is a dramatic presentation by young people in a slum area of Rio about their perspectives on the situations of vulnerability they face in their community. These situations sometimes weaken the ties between the youth and their families and community. At worst, these weakening ties propel the young people to living on the streets.



Special Commission of street children of the City Council. We have never before succeeded in a strategy of getting so much regular attention paid to the issue.

Major achievements

- Research and policy activities feeding each other;
- Process includes a variety of participatory methods and street connected actors, but find it hard to include young people;
- Major achievements: public political sphere; key actors joining expertise and efforts → increased resistance power.

Overcoming challenges: envisioning ahead

Need for change → improve strategies for changing

- ❖ Child protection culture (to include democratic processes; avoid current wave of punitive approaches)
- ❖ Public opinion
- ❖ Political tensions
- ❖ How not to forget the child in the process...



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