

The Brazilian Communitarian Justice Program

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the Communitarian Justice Program, focusing on its emergence, and analysing in what measure it has attained its initial goals. Thus, documental research was performed, the main stakeholders were interviewed, and a Focus Group was held with Social Agents, who are volunteers from the community responsible for the mediations, among other activities. In October of 2000 in Brasília, The Communitarian Justice Program was created in order to empower society in solving its own conflicts. The differential point of the Program is in the fact that people from the community effectuate the mediations themselves. The Program's main goal is to transform the relations between conflictive individuals - attempting to reinstate dialog and acknowledgment between the different parties. We realized with the field research that one of the great merits of the program is in its ability to create a non-toxic environment to those directly involved with program. However, the program still faces difficulties with publicity, especially in reaching the portion of the community with lower income.

Key-words: Communitarian Justice Program; conflict; mediation

1. Introduction

Access to justice is one of the rights provided by the Brazilian Federal Constitution. However, it is well known that this access isn't homogeneously provided in Brazil, since, generally speaking, the portion of the populace with lower acquisitive power or in social vulnerability have difficulties in accessing the justice system.

Given this necessity to provide access to formal justice to the excluded population, the *Programa Justiça Comunitária* (PJC - Communitarian Justice Program) was created, based on the experience of the *Juizado Especial Itinerante* (Itinerant Special Court) from the *Tribunal de Justiça do Distrito Federal e Territórios* (TJDFT - the Federal District's and Related Territories' Court of Justice). The Communitarian Justice Program, created in October 2000, has as its primary goal: to empower the society in resolving its conflicts, so as to democratize the achievement of justice; and to reinstate to the community its capacity of managing its conflicts with autonomy. The initiative was implemented by the TJDFT in partnership with the *Ministério Público do Distrito Federal* (MPDFT - the Federal District's Public Ministry), the Federal District's Public Defenders Office, the Faculty of Law from the University of Brasilia (UnB) and the Commission of Human Rights from the *Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil do Distrito Federal* (OAB/DF - the Order of Brazilian Lawyers from the Federal District).

The PJC is based on being a program made for and fundamentally performed in and with the community. Its guiding principles are threefold: 1) education regarding rights; 2) conflict mediation; 3) the activation of societal

networks. The PJC strives to transform previously fragmented communities in spaces open for and conducive to the development of dialog, self-determination, solidarity and peace.

For the Program to function in accordance to its proposed goals, certain basic activities are developed, including: the establishment of a multidisciplinary team; the promotion of the processes of Community Agent selection and training; and the divulgement of the PJC to the community.

As noted by Freire (2006), alternative methods to the resolution of conflicts were first consolidated in the U.S. during the 1960's and 70's through a movement called Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). In Brazil, according to Freire (2006, 2012), various attempts that sought alternative methods of conflict resolution initially appear from the initiatives of different civil society organizations, despite the government itself almost always taking part, directly or indirectly, of such actions. Still, according to Freire, alternative practices for conflict resolution are launched in Brazil mainly from the second half of the 1990's, with broader dissemination from 2008 onwards.

The general purpose of the PJC is to contribute to the process of democratizing justice, with the possibility of creating greater social cohesion and participation in and emancipation of the community. This research has, thereby, attempted to observe how the Program is responding to its initial goals and how its creation and implementation were done, by means of a qualitative inquiry.

The importance of comprehending the PJC rests on the fact that it is a pioneering initiative in Brazil, for it utilizes conflict mediation, being so that is achieved with the participation of the community members in all its steps, including the mediation process.

Therefore, to comply with the objectives of this research, three semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and a focus group with the Community Agents were conducted, as well as some documental research.

The PJC can be considered to be a incipient program, despite having thirteen years of existence, for its basis is fundamented in the attempt to establish new patterns of thinking conflict resolution, and this demands time, patience and investment. Quantitative results were hence considered not to be adequate indicators of the merit or value for the PJC, inasmuch as it aims towards a shift in cultural standards, a factor that is not easily measured quantitatively.

Contrary to initial assumptions held in this research, the PJC does not hold the unburdening of the Justice Forums as one of its main objectives. That may even prove to be a resulting effect of the Program, but it is not one of its key elements. This commonly held assumption creates, at times, conflicts within certain segments of the TJDF itself, in that finds it difficult to understand, and therefore also to legitimize, the Program's purpose.

It's important to highlight that the conducted reviews reflect only the perspective of the Program's members and no inferences were made concerning the serviced population. However, it is important to note that the Community Agents interviewed in the focus group were, necessarily, members of the community where the Program acts, and therefore they represent the target-population.

Among the obstacles faced in implementing the Program, one may emphasize the local population's lack of knowledge concerning the Program

and the voluntary role of the Community Agents, who are essential members of Program.

In the first part of this paper, important theoretical points on conflict were delineated. In the second part, the Program is described with a focus on its characterization, background, institutional basis, organizational structure, the process of Agent selection and training, the service operation and its main stakeholders. In the third part, the methods and procedures used are evidenced, as well as the nature of the evaluation and the analysis model. In the fourth part, the results of the field inquiries are discussed. Finally, the fifth and final part presents the conclusions drawn from this research and new possible venues of inquiry are suggested for future researches.

2. Theories of Conflict

It is vital for this research to discuss the notion of a conflict. One of the key authors to understanding this concept is Georg Simmel. Conflict, in his view, is the constitutive element of social relations, and it can be understood to be a form of social interaction. According to Simmel, "in living in society, conflict is inherent to the multiple interactions of individuals-with-others, against-others and for-others" that by this process constitute that living (SIMMEL, 1983, p.125). Simmel, in this way, observes that conflict, as a sociological phenomenon, presents itself as a fact inherent to social life and, simultaneously, as an element imbued with the power of destroying that same social life. While conflict remains, at most, at a latent stage of open violence, there remains within it a socializing factor, for there is still the recognition of the other party as an individual. However, as soon as the objective of one of the parties becomes the annihilation of the other, these unifying elements cease to exist.

Much like Simmel, Hannah Arendt (ARENDR, 2004) points to the importance of alterity in the coexistence of the diverse pluralities that exist in a social scope. According to Arendt, if action as an initiation is the fulfillment of the birthing human condition, then discourse is the fulfillment of the plural human condition, that is, "of living as a distinct and singular being among equals" (ARENDR, 2004, p.191). Taking action is the human activity that relies most on discourse, in the sense that without it, the action would cease to exist, for there would be no actor. Both in action and in discourse human beings reveal their personal and singular identities.

The public sphere is the setting for the participation of the individuals in discourse, and Arendt refers to that as "political freedom". Jürgen Habermas' understanding differs from Arendt's vision, for the public sphere, in his view, is much more based on proceduralism, that is to say, fundamented more in the form of the discourse rather than in its content. According to him, the public sphere should reinforce the pressure exerted by the social problems, as based in the democratic theory. This sphere reproduces itself by means of *communicative action* and is also the space for the establishment of influences, and thereby also field of dispute for that very space. The social space generated is directly linked to the communicative structure of the action guided by understanding, and the public sphere is constituted primarily by these elements. By means of the institutionalized processes, the social power

and the political-publicity influence are transformed into political power (HABERMAS, 1997, p.98).

Authors like Azevedo (2001), however, make the argument that often, in common justice, alternative methods of conflict resolution are abandoned to a secondary position, both in regards to the decision as well to the authorship and materiality of the fact. These are hindered by a professional *habitus* of the magistrates, in which there is no space for dialog with the involved parties during the hearings.

According to Cardoso de Oliveira (2008), a symbolic dimension of conflicts, that is, how the rights of the actors involved in conflictuous relations are experienced by these actors, goes beyond any code of law. To Bourdieu (1989), symbolic violence is an invisible form of coercion that is frequently backed up by collective beliefs and prejudices. The possibility of dominating beliefs leading to the imposition of certain values, customs and behaviors, without the need for physical violence, can create situations in which the victim of this symbolic violence feels inferior, as is the case, for instance, with matters of race and gender discrimination.

Kant de Lima (2004) and Cardoso de Oliveira (2008) also go over the importance of understanding the meanings of justice, and point to the fact that these meanings are socially constructed, making it therefore vital to understand the way in which maintenance of order is done in each society.

The *Relato de uma Experiência: o Programa Justiça Comunitária do Distrito Federal* (Report on an Experiment: the Community Justice Program in the Federal District) documents of the Ministry of Justice, while discussing the initiatives for the renovation of the judiciary power and access to justice, highlights the need of checking what conditions are necessary for the population to have knowledge and appropriation of their rights (Ministério da Justiça, 2008, p.10).

3. Characteristics of the Program

Created in 2000, the Community Justice Program started as a pilot project implemented by the Federal District's and Related Territories' Court of Justice. The Program sought to democratize the effectuation of justice, returning to the citizen and the community the capacity of managing their own conflicts with autonomy and solidarity (FOLEY, 2010). The Program is a result of the objections made by judge Glaucia Foley during the time in which she personally worked in the Itinerant Court, which operated inside a bus, that could break with the forensic formalism as well as the symbolic universe of intimidation existing in the Forum, at least in aspects related to the spatial environment. It was also possible, with the use of the bus, to provide access to the justice system for a layer of the population that is often set aside from this civic process. The itinerant court contributed, in this way, for the formulation of the first aspects of the Community Justice Program.

After winning the 2nd Innovare Award, in 2005, the good practice of Community Justice was elevated by the Ministry of Justice to status of public policy with permanent grants, in the scope of the *Programa Nacional de Segurança Pública com Cidadania* (Pronasci - the National Program of Public Safety with Citizenship), and coordinated by the Secretaria de Reforma do Judiciário (SRJ - the Secretariat for the Renovation of the Judiciary).

Foley determined that there was a lack of information within the society, among a portion of its citizens, regarding their most fundamental rights. According to Foley (2010), this experiment led to a reflection on the necessity of the development of spaces, within the community, that would make it possible to democratize access to information, as well as allowing the establishment of communication channels through which parties involved in conflict can reach a fair consensus. For this democratization to be achieved, it was necessary to give the position of operators of the law” to those who shared the same code of values as the parties, which is to say that that position was given to residents within that same community.

The Community Justice Program has three fundamental characteristics: it is made **in** the community, **for** the community and **by** the community. Furthermore, it operates based in three fundamental practices: a) education regarding rights; b) conflict mediation; and c) activation of societal networks.

Until 2010, the Program had conflict mediation and resolution centres in Taguatinga and Samambaia. However, the Samambaia centre was closed, and, currently, only the Taguatinga centre operates as a Agent training facility. This decision was made on account of the need of expanding the Ceilândia Centre, situated in the biggest city of the Federal District in populational terms.

As was previously mentioned, the Program proposes to be made in, by and for the community - that means that one of its main stakeholders is the community itself, its partner institutions and the Community Agents, that are necessarily residents of the community. Because it is voluntary work, the Community Agents that are willing to participate in the Program do so for the sense of fulfillment and gratification they derive from being useful to their communities. Only a limited allowance is provided, when necessary, and it cannot exceed a value of R\$ 190,00 (approximately \$85) each month. Any member of the community that is at least 18 years old, has completed High School and that is not directly involved in political party activities can volunteer to be part of the Program.

The process of selecting the Community Agents is first carried out through an online enrollment. Various institutions divulge this selection process, such as schools, neighbourhood associations, community halls, event promotions, flyer handouts, posters and media advertisements.

Once they comply with the minimal requirements of the Program, potential Agents are invited to a meeting in which the Program will be introduced and clarified. After this meeting, individuals that are still interested are invited to fill an enrollment form. An analysis of these forms is thereafter carried out, taking note of whether or not the applicant possesses the necessary requirements to act as a Community Agent. In being accepted, the applicant is invited to participate in a group dynamic, during which his individual profile and his behavior in a team setting will be evaluated.

An applicant that is successful in this stage is called to an individual interview with the multidisciplinary team. The selection of Agents is conducted with the coordinators and, whenever possible, with representatives of partner institutions.

Selected applicants then go through a training period that lasts, on average, from 2 to 3 months. It is important to note, however, that the training is an ongoing process. This initial training includes classes on basic notions of

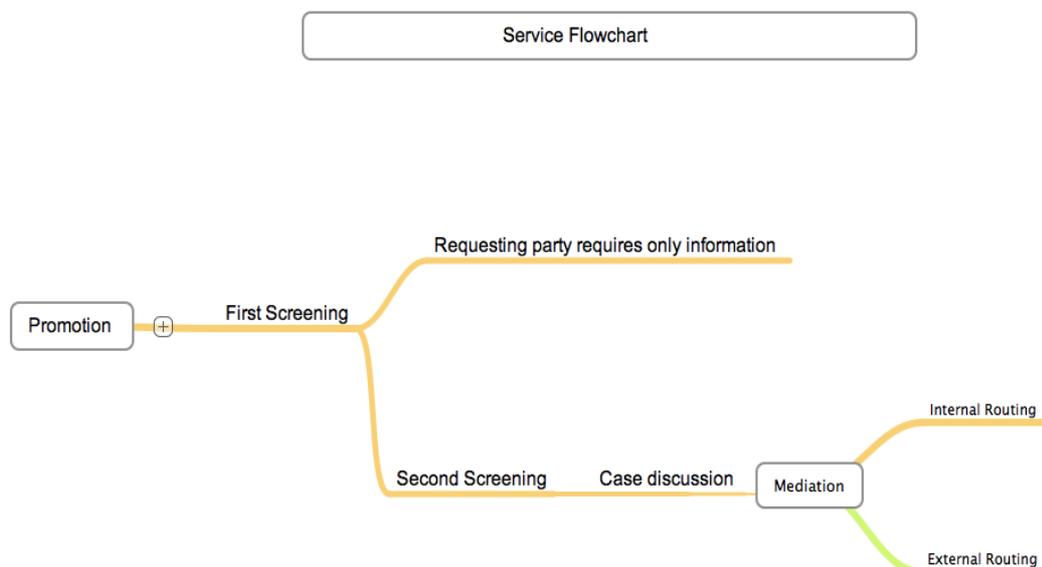
Law, debates on citizenship and human rights, courses and workshops on mediation techniques and societal network activation. Among the main responsibilities and commitments of the Agents are included: maintaining confidentiality regarding intervened cases; to have availability and disposition to have an active role in the communal spaces; and to have availability and disposition for qualification activities.

The Program’s service varies according to the needs of the requesting party: whenever there is the need, a requesting party seeks a Community Agent to schedule a meeting, during which the requesting party will relate its case. If the case is nothing more than a requisition of information, the Agent fills a Routing Record and aids the requesting party with its doubts.

If, however, the case involves a problem that requires mediation, a pre-mediation session is scheduled with the other parties involved in the conflict. During this initial contact, Agents are careful to make it clear to the requested parties that they are not being, in any way, coerced into attending the mediation; that the contact from the Agent is merely an invitation; and that this requisition is not tied to the formal justice system. In achieving acceptance from both parties, requesting and requested, in attending the mediation, the Community Agent brings the case to the Community Centre for a joint discussion with the Multidisciplinary Team and the other Agents. Finally, the mediation session is scheduled, in which the mediators, observers, requesting and requested parties will all attend.

The process is summarized below:

Figure 1: Service Flowchart



The Community Justice Program is overseen by the Federal District’s and Related Territories’ Court of Justice’s Presidency, Internal Affairs Department, and the First and Second Vice-Presidency. The direct link with the Community Justice Program is carried out by the Second Vice-Presidency. The *Núcleo Permanente de Métodos de Resolução de Conflitos* (NUPECOM - Permanent Centre for Conflict Resolution Methods) is the

operating site of the Community Justice Program, the Restorative Justice, the Elders' Centre and the Violence Against Women Centre. NUPECOM was instituted by the TJDFT according to Resolution nº 9, passed on the 6th of August 2012, in compliance with the dictum passed in 2010 in the National Council of Justice (nº125/2010). This resolution postulates on the new national judicial policy on the adequate treatment of conflicts in the scope of the Judicial Power and it directs the Justice Courts to set up Judicial Centres for Conflict Resolution and Citizenship.

Despite NUPECOM having been formally recognized only in 2012, the Programs that are now part of it have existed for longer. In 2005, in the Núcleo Bandeirante Forum, the Pilot Project for the Restorative Justice Program was initiated, that in accordance to the Joint Decree nº 52/2006 became a service linked to the Presidency of the TJDFT.

The Community Justice Program has two overseeing judges, Glaucia Falsarella Foley and Carla Patrícia, and has three main locations: the community centre in the Ceilândia Forum; the training centre in Taguatinga; and the administrative centre in Plano Piloto.

In addition to the overseeing team, the Program has a multidisciplinary team responsible for the technical and administrative support to the activities carried out by the Community Agents. This team is made up of public employees and interns of the TJDFT, coming from the fields of dramaturgy, law, political science, social services and psychology.

The team analyzes the requirements brought in by the Community Agents under an inter- and multidisciplinary purview, which allows for multiple alternatives for the routing of the requests received by the program. The permanent dialogic relation between the Agents and the multidisciplinary team is of singular importance for the constant qualification for the three founding pillars of the Program, which are (as previously mentioned), the education regarding rights, the mediation of conflict, and the activation of societal networks.

Since its inception, the Community Justice was expanded with the support of the Ministry of Justice to 14 Brazilian states. From 2008 to 2012, the investments from the Ministry of Justice to the Community Justice Program add up to 550 thousand reais (approximately 247 thousand dollars).

Among the partners of the societal networks in the community, one may reference the *Centro de Referência Especializada de Assistência Social* (CREAS - Centre for Specialized Reference to Social Services), *Jovens de Expressão/CUFA-DF*, and the *Grupo Atitude*.

4. The Logic Model

The logic model refers to a first attempt at tracing a basic scheme of the organizational format of the Community Justice Program. This model was primarily based on the document provided by the Ministry of Justice.

According to Bamberger, Rugh and Mabry (2006), every evaluation of a program is based on explicit or implicit theories on how the outputs and impacts will be achieved and what are the facilitating and disrupting factors to that goal. Thus, the logic model is a construct that should be used as a tool within the scope of the evaluative strategy, bearing in mind that it is not possible to evaluate all elements of a logic model.

This proposed logic model is fundamented in 8 primary factors: inputs; activities; byproducts (the data refers to the period from 2000 to 2008); influencing factors; initial results; intermediary results; long term results; and general objective.

The inputs were divided into: 1) institutional partners (the Federal District's and Related Territories' Court of Justice (TJDFT), the Secretariat for the Renovation of the Judiciary (SRJ-MJ), the National Secretariat for Public Safety (SENASP-MJ); the United Nations Development Programme; the Federal District's Public Defender's Office (DPDF); the Public Ministry for the Federal District and Related Territories (MPDFT); the University of Brasília (UnB); and the Societal Networks); 2) community; 3) Community Agents; and 4) multidisciplinary team.

From these inputs, that is, the human capital that represents the Program, certain activities were laid out, such as the process for selecting the Community Agents, the establishment of the multidisciplinary team, the qualification of the community agents and the divulgement of the Program. Originally, the evaluation of the community's profile was included as one the Program's activities. That activity was withdrawn, however, because the choice of the locale in which the Program would be instituted was made not according to the community profile, but rather on the location's history, which happened by a process of eradicating encroachments.

Among the activities factors the three guiding principles of the Program were included: conflict mediation, education regarding rights and activation of societal networks.

From the analysis of these activities a sketch of the byproducts is proposed, with data from the 2000-2008 period.

After establishing the inputs, activities and byproducts, one may discern the initial, intermediary and long-term results of the Program, as well as its general objective. The initial results expected of the Program would therefore be: an inducement of the creation of a network of individuals who share the same problem; a rupture with forensic liturgy; prioritization of mediation in conflict resolution. The expected intermediary results would be: an increase in the intellectual capital of the population regarding their rights; an approximation of the justice system to the citizens; the creation of an environment of favorable aid. The expected long-term results are: the strengthening of the democracy through the establishment of mechanisms of social inclusion. From these results, the general objective of contributing to the process of increasing social cohesion, pacification and social emancipation in the process of democratizing justice could be achieved.

Two other long-term results had been initially included in this research. However, these proved not to be true during the course of the inquiry. The first referred to the diminishment of poverty through social and economic equity. It was discarded due to it not being mentioned as an overarching goal of the Program during the interviews with some of its stakeholders. The second discarded long-term result was the reduction of the transnational costs to the formal justice system. Glaucia Foley's interview placed great emphasis on the fact that the Programs goal was not, in any way, the unburdening of the brazilian judicial system.

Figure 2: The Logic Model



5. Method

This research sought to evaluate how well the Community Justice Program has been performing, judging from its real objectives and the feasibility of its fulfillment by means of the activities adopted during the last 12 years. This evaluation considered a character of formative nature, for it was perceived that, despite the Program's existence exceeding a decade, it wouldn't be possible to make an evaluation of impact, since the expected results of the Program consist of various subjective elements.

The Program predicts a shift in how the community handles its conflicts. To that end, conflict mediation established in, for and by the community is the fundamental basis in which the Program is maintained. However, this involves a shift in the civil culture, altering the society's way of thinking conflict resolution, and that is a slow and difficult to analyze process.

This evaluation has thus had a descriptive focus, aiming to observe, through the interviews held with the stakeholders directly involved with the Program, how it is seen by its participants. It is therefore possible to ascertain if the activities conducted by the Program have aided in the fulfillment of the initially defined objectives.

The analysis made was fundamented in qualitative studies, collected in field work and bibliographical research. The qualitative disposition of the inquiry was chosen because the quantitative data available aren't representative of the main objectives of the Program, such as the empowerment of the community when faced with its conflicts, given that that involves a cultural change that would be difficult to measure. Besides, the quantitative data available refers to the entire population of Ceilândia, and doesn't include variables that could assist in comprehending the Program's impact in that community.

It should be noted that the analysis reflect the perspectives of the participants of the Program and inferences can't be made regarding the serviced population. Yet, the Community Agents interviewed in the focus group, despite being key members of the Program, are also representatives of the target-population, since they are necessarily residents of the community in which the Program is in effect.

During the research three interviews were conducted: two of them with the Program's supervisors, and one with one of the overseeing judges. Additionally, a focus group was held, comprised of four Community Agents. Two of the Agents had joined the Program little over a year before; the other two were part of the Program for even longer.

6. Results

Between the years of 2008 and 2012, 24,561 people were directly affected by the Program, and 49,122 people, indirectly, as evidenced by the table below. It is important to note that this number does not measure the Program's impact or the number of benefited people, only the number of people that had, in some way, come into contact with the Program.

The Programs elaboration comes from the perception of three social deficits, as pointed out in the interview with Judge Glauca Foley. The first

deficit is the lack of knowledge concerning rights from a portion of the populace; to solve it, the Program created its education regarding rights axis. The second deficit is the lack of dialog between the community's actors; in so being, the Program established the mediation of conflict axis. The third deficit observed was the stilted popular mobilization; thus, the Program created its third and final axis, the activation of societal networks, designed to develop a greater link of cooperation and solidarity among the members of the community. These three axes form the bases for the Community Justice Program.

During her interview, Foley highlighted the importance of democratizing justice to bring about social cohesion and emancipation, so as to undo the over reliance in public authority. This is a vital point to achieve the Program's goal. According to Simmel (1983), conflict could become the starting point to social cohesion, and it is in this sense that, according to Foley, mediation can be understood as a transformative process. The Program does not seek to lower the demand of the judiciary system, but rather to change the way people handle their conflicts in a daily basis. Foley notes that the mediations might perhaps lower the demand of the judiciary, but the axis of education regarding rights doesn't.

The Program's greatest differential, to Foley, is the fact that the community performs the mediations and, in that regard, this is a pioneering Program in Brazil. The mediation process tries to undo with a vertical structure of conceptualizing formal justice. It holds deeper meaning in the sense that it seeks to establish a dialogic relation between the concerned parties, for it is through this medium that feelings are expressed. The fact that people might occasionally seek out the formal justice system after the mediation process doesn't, therefore, mean that the mediation wasn't successful in some degree, for it creates an environment in which all parties are allowed to voice their concerns and, in this way, having their wishes heard and recognized by the other.

Among the obstacles faced by the Program, Foley highlights that the disruption of the Judges monopoly in proffering the Law isn't accepted by the judiciary in general. Members of the judiciary often find the Program interesting, but don't consider that it represents justice, for it can only be achieved through the traditional mediums in their view.

The second obstacle Foley makes note of is the fact that the mediation is conducted by the community, when it would normally be held by the administrators of Law. Even people who believe in conflict mediation might not view the aspect of its being conducted by the community, for they consider that it would be more fitting for a person with a higher degree of scholarship to have this job, rather than an individual of a community with low schooling rates.

However, in the focus group held with the Community Agents, they highlighted that what makes a good mediator isn't academic background, but rather their engagement with the Program, seen by the Agents as a *locus* for continual qualification. The Agents believe their role is to empower the community to solve their own conflicts, without the need for mediation in the future.

The third obstacle Foley pointed out is the difficulty in finding a viable format for the Program, that is to say, to ensure that it becomes self-

sustaining. Foley reports that, in its twelve years of existence, the Community Justice Program has never had problems with the Public Treasury Court, or difficulties with the Agents' performance. The fact that the Program results in a series of impacts that cannot be measured in concrete and trustworthy data, however, means that justifying the Program's existence can be complex. Attempting to achieve this emancipation and communitary autonomy is the Program's current challenge.

Seeking to overcome the previously mentioned challenges, the Program has undergone some changes in the years of 2011 and 2012, as pointed out by Gisele Ramos, one of the Program's supervisors. The first change was in the permanency time of the Program's Agents, that was previously undetermined, and is now restricted to, at most, three years. After that time, the Community Agent will either part with the Program or remain as a tutor for the next group of selected Agents. These would be invited to that role by standing out among their peers. Should the Agent part with the program, he would be expected to no longer act as a Community Agent with Community Justice, but rather in conjunction with some other project or on his own.

This change is based primarily on the Program's guiding principle of emancipation. As long as he remains in the Program, on account of it being a process of continuing qualification, the Community Agent shouldn't take action without the guidance from the Program and, consequently, from the TJDFT. Keeping the Agent for long under the guidance of the TJDFT fails to provide him with the autonomy necessary for him to emancipate himself and still be allowed to work in the community. The purpose of this guiding principle is to train people who can act within the community, even if they are no longer associated with the Program. The lack of autonomy of the Agents before the Program was also highlighted by the focus group with the Community Agents themselves.

Ramos relates that the year of 2012 had the highest number of applications to the Program, a total of 345 entries. According to her, the success was primarily due to the divulgement in social networks, through televised and radio communication medias, by the Community Justice week held in the Ceilândia Forum and the divulgement in the partner institutions. Vera Soares, the executive secretary of the Community Justice Program, highlights the role of the TJDFT's communication, that endorses the Program's divulgement and does important work in acquiring contacts and spaces for that divulgement. In addition to dedicated space in the TJDFT's website, the communication gets in touch with television and radio channels, as well as handling the printed media. Soares believes the most important way of divulgement are the television advertisements.

Despite all this effort, the Program is still only known by a small fraction of the population of Ceilândia and, according to the Agents, the layer of the population that is most unacquainted with it is the poorest. The Agents point out that the Program is fulfilling its objectives and are aware of a progressive expansion of it in the last three years. However, they also agree that it is not very well known among the community and that it need to be more divulged, which should occur through the television and the radio.

The Agents also pointed out the difficulty in explaining to the general populace what the Program is, for, normally, people don't know what is conflict resolution through mediation. As one of the Agents noted: "The

community still hasn't been able to accept that it owns that conflict, it just wants to toss everything to a Judge's hand". The Agents highlighted the difficulties they find in convincing the community to participate in the mediations, on account of their taking place, as a general rule, in the Forum. This is due to the fact that the Forum is seen, sometimes, as an intimidating environment. While there is no specific need for the mediations to take place in any particular location, it was observed that being in the Forum made the mediators feel safer. According to Foley, the Program is currently seeking a location outside the Forum to conduct the mediations without the participants feeling intimidated that is also safe for the Agents.

The Agents report that the strictly voluntary facet of the Program is a limitation. One of the Agents, for instance, pointed out that his involvement in the Program was only possible on account of him being in a financially stable situation. It was also, however, highlighted that because it is voluntary work, the ties with Program are closer, for there is a sentimental connection. The Agents believe that the Program provides personal benefits for themselves and for the participants. The possibility of helping others and being useful to their community was evidenced as positive factors in the Agents' speeches. However, they note that the volunteers often don't receive the proper recognition, even from their own families', who don't understand why they're "working for free".

Soares also points out the voluntary aspect of the work as a challenge for the Program. Ramos notes that that factor is a nuisance because, since the Agents have no employment ties to the TJDFT, they can quit the Program at any time, which hinders its efficacy.

The key aspect of a mediation is to ensure that the involved parties can hear what the other has to say. The Agents pointed out the difficulty in remaining neutral during this process, without making a decision for the parties, who need to come to an agreement on their own.

According to the Agents, the most commonly handled conflicts by the Program are cases that involve family, loans, debts and disputes between neighbours. They report that the relation of these with the mediators can become ongoing, creating strong ties, because the Agents start being seen as advocates or defenders.

The sorting process is considered vital by the Agents. The second sorting process is seen as a delicate process, for it often determines whether or not the mediation will take place. Agents report that people frequently become suspicious of or offended by an invitation to participate in the Program.

Among the difficulties pointed out by the Agents is the need for greater institutional support, larger investments and the strengthening of the legitimacy of the Program before the Judiciary. The Agents also hold that a greater number of partnerships would be beneficial, with, for instance, the Education Secretariat, so as to establish more contact with students of elementary education.

In the focus group all Agents commented that the Program had a positive impact on their personal lives, changing their posture before daily conflicts. A strong paradigmatic change was also observed in the daily lives of the female Agents, for they, who stated they previously lived their lives for the benefit of their husbands and children, now feel deserving of doing something

for themselves. Additionally, the Program has created a solidary and friendly network among the Agents, that makes them feel safe and aided by their colleagues, if they ever go through difficulties in their personal lives. Such statements show that the Community Justice Program has effectively created a “non-toxic” environment, in which its members garner personal benefits for their participation and don’t feel, in general, emotionally overloaded, despite handling cases of conflict on a regular basis.

7. Conclusions

The Community Justice Program is fundamented in three basic principles: a) mediation; b) activation of societal networks; and c) education regarding rights. The most important aspect for the Program is to change the relation of individuals in conflict, trying to reestablish dialog and recognition between the parties. Thus, an agreement isn’t its main goal, but the change in conception regarding conflict resolution within the community, to change the existing culture of justice handling, that is currently understood as a formal hierarchic model. The Program seeks to show the community that it is capable of taking charge and solving its own conflicts, consequently increasing its social cohesion.

There is a lack of knowledge from most individuals concerning what a mediation is and it is in that regard that the Program finds one of its greatest challenges, for this makes it difficult to explain and divulge the Program in the community. The individual actors directly involved with the Program, the administrative team and the Community Agents, are aware of this problem and are conscious to the fact that the work they’ve set out to do involves changing the paradigmatic cultural relation of conflict resolution and that, like any other cultural change, this requires time.

The Community Justice Program is pioneering in the sense that it tries to establish, in a “formal” manner, but in an informal setting, alternative methods of conflict resolution. Despite the Program being 13 years old, it is still incipient in many regards, since, given that it doesn’t have an effective means of judging its performance, it must constantly operate through a “trial and error” approach. The Community Justice Program can be considered young, for it is fundamented in trying to establish new patterns of thinking conflict resolution through peaceful means, and that demands time and investment. Therefore, quantitative results weren’t considered to be a good measure of the merit or worth of the Community Justice Program.

The conducted analysis was formed by three interviews and a focus group, as well as bibliographical research and documental analysis. This choice was made on account of the descriptive character of the proposed evaluation, with the goal of evaluating the Program through the speeches of some stakeholders directly involved with the Program.

Among the problems in implementing the Program, it is possible to emphasize its divulgement. This difficulty was pointed out in the interviews and in the focus group. The Program is still known only by a small fraction of the Ceilândia populace, and, according to the Agents, the segment that is least aware of the Program is the population with the lowest income. As suggested by the Agents themselves, it would be interesting for the Program to try to establish itself in public schools from the community and offer courses

expanding on alternative methods of conflict resolution to their pedagogic team. It is held that, since the Program's main objective is based in a cultural change, it's important to bring that proposition to the most elementary instances of education, making it possible that, from a young age, individuals from the community can embrace different techniques of conflict resolution, such as mediation.

The analysis conducted reflect only the perspectives of the Program's members, and no inference was made concerning the serviced population. However, the Community Agents interviewed in the focus group, despite being integral members of the Program, also represent its target-population, as noted in the evaluation, for they go through a process of qualification and change in their own relations. From their accounts, it's observed that the members garner personal benefits for partaking in the Program, and show that it was able to create a "non-toxic" environment where the members, even when dealing with cases of conflict and of violations of rights, don't feel emotionally burdened.

For future inquiries, it is suggested that a detailed profile of the community be made. It would also be profitable to interview individuals who had contact with the Community Justice Program, whether by answering a doubt with the Program, by partaking in a mediation or in a education regarding rights initiative. It would also be possible to conduct an analysis of the speech discourse of internal and external individuals on their perceptions of the Community Justice Program.

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