



BERNARD VAN LEER FOUNDATION

BRAZIL STRATEGY SUMMARY

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Overview

The Brazil strategy of the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF) focuses on approximately half a million children in three specific geographic areas. The overall theme is to ensure that all children in Brazil have equal opportunities and are protected, including those growing up in favelas, cortiços and the Amazon. Our three goals in Brazil are:

1. Zero violence in the lives of young children growing up in favelas in Rio de Janeiro and Recife
2. Safe and affordable housing for young children growing up in cortiços in Sao Paulo
3. Quality home visiting programmes that integrate birth registration, health, nutritional support and parent education taken to scale for rural children under 3 living in the state of the Amazon

Our strategy will not necessarily address all three goals at the same time or level of intensity. Across all three goals, we aim to partner with both government agencies and Brazilian philanthropists and to make full use of the opportunities presented by Brazil hosting the World Cup 2014 and Olympic Games 2016 to increase both the attention to and funds available for improving the lives of the country's young children. This strategy aims to make positive changes permanent and ensure they count for all children in Brazil.

This summary gives an overview of the goal choice, key outcomes and strategies, and the assessment and evaluation metrics for each goal.

Goal 1: Zero violence in the lives of young children growing up in favelas in Rio de Janeiro and Recife

Rio de Janeiro is the city with the largest number of homicides per year in Brazil (2,333 last year), most of which occur in the approximately 1,000 favelas which are home to around 25% of the city population, including an estimated 227,000 children aged 0 to 8. Recife is the city with the highest per capita homicide rate in Brazil (90/100,000). These homicides also occur predominantly in the favelas, where half of the city population lives – of whom, approximately 97,000 are children aged 0 to 8. In both cities, gang violence drives the murder rates and those most directly involved in this violence are aged between 15 and 24ⁱ.

In addition to the constant fear and risks created by insecurity, children also experience high levels of violence within their homes. Based on existing studies of urban Brazil (in the absence of population-level research in these specific favelas), we estimate that at least 1/3 of these 324,000 children are likely to have witnessed violence in their familyⁱⁱ and 2/3 will have experienced violence as a disciplinary measure by their caregiversⁱⁱⁱ.

These two types of violence (in the community and in the home) compound each other in their effect on young children. Toxic stress created by public insecurity acts as a motor for domestic violence, and domestic violence teaches children to embrace violent social norms from an early age. The combination has extraordinary impacts on children's brain development, learning potential, safety and security, health and future adult behaviour.

Outcomes and strategies

In order to achieve sustainable change, we have identified five key inter-connected outcome domains: governance, infrastructure, social services, livelihoods and norms, beliefs and behaviours. Also critical to the strategy, we have had discussions with other private donors about co-funding on this goal. There is also an opportunity to partner with Morar Carioca – a government fund of EUR 350 million allocated to improve the conditions in the Rio favelas over the next four years. This program includes community policing and infrastructure investments. We have been invited to set up a young children's unit within this programme in an alliance with a group of city architects. We are investigating similar opportunities in Recife.

Governance outcomes for young children: Police and city officials take young children's needs into account in governance and policing; communities organize to minimize violence; kids are organized to express their needs. Improving governance arrangements in the favelas and ensuring child-related outcomes are part of a new state effort to normalize life within the favelas.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Set up internal 'think tanks' within city government that can help assess the impacts of the policing approach on young children and identify ways to ensure they take into account young children's welfare.** This provides policy advice from within the government, bringing together experts on child protection, violence prevention, early childhood and community policing.
2. **Fund training for police officers to improve the way they relate to young children and families in their work.** Police officers often do not have the knowledge, skills or psychological profile to operate in ways sensitive to young children's needs. With appropriate support, this can change.
3. **Support NGOs to promote community organizing for kids in favelas.** This helps favela dwellers to come to the table with a clear voice about what young children need.
4. **Improve local dispute resolution with a focus on the youngest children in the favelas.** People within the community who are seen as leadership figures are trained to act as arbitrators when disputes arise.

Infrastructure outcomes: Infrastructure improvements address children's basic needs for safe and healthy living conditions. With improved governance arrangements, the capacity of the state to improve infrastructure increases. Improved basic services reduce stress on families (a driver of domestic violence), but are also important because a general sense of chaos and neglect can incite criminal and anti-social behaviour (e.g. the “broken windows theory”). Similar to the above, we would not lead this process, but would provide inputs such that the interests of the youngest children are taken into account.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Fund demonstration projects to show how creative design can work to stop violence in young children's lives.** This could be done as a city competition along with additional funders, tapping the expertise of local architects.
2. **Ensure legislation that requires child impact statements as a pre-condition to major infrastructure development.** Such legislation would ensure that favela upgrading plans include an assessment of the impacts on young children, especially as they relate to the issue of violence. This strategy mirrors the approach of environmental and social impact statements championed by the World Bank.

Social services outcomes: Affordable healthcare and recreational activities are made available in the favelas for young children and young adults. The presence of social services helps to solidify the relationship of the state with favela communities, reduces stress on families and provides healthy alternatives for young people. As above, with a stronger presence of the state, service delivery is increasingly possible.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Document and communicate about exemplary existing services in the areas of childcare, recreation and child health in the favela context.** There are already so many small projects of this nature that we do not need to fund additional demonstrations; rather, our resources would be better used in highlighting the excellence that exists, as this knowledge is important to inform and inspire upgrading plans. This is also an area with scope to bring in co-funding partners who are inclined to use their funds for service delivery.

Livelihoods outcomes: Improved livelihood options in favelas, in particular for parents of families with young children. Poor employment opportunities along with the high cost of living is what makes joining gangs an attractive option for the one to five per cent of favela dwellers who do so. Perhaps more importantly, the money generated by criminal activity is a major propeller of the local economy, indirectly creating jobs and opportunities for small businesses to emerge. The precarious employment situation is also a major motor of stress in the family, driving domestic violence as described above.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Market research to look at options to increase employment and wages, as well as to cut the costs of living in favelas, with specific attention to livelihoods of families with young children.** Support local experts to look at viable economic options for favelas and integrate the perspective of young children and young people into their analysis. Key to this research is expanding the focus beyond business creation and analyzing areas of value chains for services or products in favelas which could be subsidized.
2. **Demonstration projects to show how new markets can be created and have a positive impact on violence reduction and young children's wellbeing.** Testing of the options found in the above research will play an important role in demonstrating this concept, which is relatively new compared to the issue of social service delivery.

Norms/beliefs/behaviors outcomes: Non-violent men are seen as role models; greater gender equality in domestic work; and inter-personal violence is seen as morally wrong, damaging and having negative ramifications for the aggressor. Stereotypes that privilege violent role models, and the belief that it is permissible to hit women and children, pass through generations. A multi-country study (including Brazil) partially funded by BvLF found that experiencing violence as children, both as a witness and as a target, was the best predictor of being involved in violence as an adult^{iv}.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Campaigns and discussion groups against violence in young children's lives.** Using media, public figures and community organizations, support campaigns to change people's minds about gender stereotypes and the permissibility of violence against children. Interesting ideas include campaigns targeting men and boys as partners in reducing violence, and supporting young people who are using hip-hop music and community theatre as tools for peace.

Goal 2: Safe and affordable housing for young children growing up in cortiços (tenements) in Sao Paulo

The families that live in cortiços (poor quality tenement housing close to the centre of Sao Paulo) are looking for housing solutions that cannot be easily found in favelas. They want to be close to services, escape from violence and fear, and reduce the costs and time of commuting to work. The tradeoff is that the rental costs in cortiços are often inflated, living conditions are often sub-standard and some owners or rental managers can be difficult to deal with.

Our research found that systematic analysis of the lives of young children in cortiços does not exist. What did come out clearly, though, was that somewhere between 50,000 and 150,000 young children are growing up in undignified housing conditions. Repeated findings

suggested a range of consequences: a young girl who doesn't sleep because she is busy covering holes in the wall with her finger afraid that her neighbour, a drug addict and a stranger, will watch her or come and take her away in the night; children who get tuberculosis from poor ventilation in homes with no windows, and respiratory illness from cooking in the same place where they sleep; and abuse and neglect, which are common due to the stress produced by living in small and overcrowded spaces and the constant threat of eviction.

Outcomes and strategies

Our theory of change is framed by a two-stage process. The first is to make this group of children visible, as the invisibility around how many children are affected and what their day to day lives are like is a major barrier to change. While we do have a concrete idea of what needs to be done regarding their housing situation, some more comprehensive research is needed with primary data collection to move forward. The rest of the strategy (which would occupy the second phase) is focused on four dimensions of change: governance, infrastructure, livelihoods and social services. Also critical to the strategy, we have already had discussions about the interest of local foundations in becoming involved. The largest source of funds, however, is the housing agencies of the Sao Paulo government.

Governance outcomes: Owner/tenant relationship is properly regulated; effective mechanisms where tenants can bring their complaints without fear of revenge are developed. The lack of legal contracts between the owner or managers and the tenants makes it difficult for tenants to complain. Abusive managers can demand arbitrary prices for rent or maintenance, leading to frequent insolvency and evictions. Families last an average of only 3 years in any one housing arrangement, and children are affected by this constant shifting and fear of eviction.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Population-level research to uncover the quantitative and qualitative reality of young children in cortiços through primary data collection.**
2. **Media advocacy for housing rights.** Getting the data into the public domain will be critical to raise the profile of the issue. NGOs that specialize in communications can be good partners for these activities.
3. **Civic education, legal advocacy and community organizing for housing rights.** Strategies will need to ensure the adaptation and enforcement of housing regulations in Sao Paulo so that owners do not abuse families living in cortiços.

Infrastructure outcomes: Children have access to better water, lighting, ventilation and recreational spaces. Improved legal status and governance arrangements could lead to

infrastructure improvement, since cortiço owners would be more effectively held to account by housing regulations and tenant associations. However, other strategies can be used to focus infrastructure improvements on young children's needs.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

- 1. Technical support regarding child-friendly design and municipal housing regulations.** Similar to the favela strategy, we can work with architects and child welfare specialists to study existing regulations from the young child's perspective and make recommendations to the Secretary of Housing.
- 2. Demonstrations of innovative design solutions for children.** Also similar to the favela strategy, we can fund some small demonstrations of design solutions that work for young children within the natural restrictions presented by cortiços.

Livelihoods outcomes: Rent is affordable or families own apartments. Resolving the governance issue will also help with affordability.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

- 1. Advocacy for housing subsidies for families with young children.** Housing subsidies to families with young children, or to cortiços which are regularized, could be explored as incentives for owners, starting with a study of the skills of these families and the demands of the city markets.
- 2. Referral and job training for parents of young children living in cortiços.** Since most cortiço dwellers have weak skills for the job market, such support could increase their chances of a decent job and better housing.

Social services outcomes: Affordable day-care is available nearby. Our information suggests that daycare is an immediate need for many children in cortiços. Access to daycare also facilitates greater workforce participation and thus income among poor parents.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

- 1. Costing study for a municipal network of daycare providers.** Legislation already exists that mandates the provision of day-care in Sao Paulo. What is missing is a costing study to look at how much demand there is and how much provision would cost to meet existing demand.
- 2. Support a daycare network in the city center with local philanthropy backing.** Based on our prior experience with pre-school, we have found that once we develop

a plan and bring local foundations together, they are able to set up and fund early childhood services without BvLF.

Goal 3: Quality home visiting programmes that integrate birth registration, health, nutritional support and parent education taken to scale for rural children under 3 living in the state of the Amazon

54% of children who live in the state of the Amazon are located outside of the capital, Manaus. This means that 74,000 children under three live in the rural Amazon^v. While not an extraordinary number of children, they are spread across a physical area larger than Peru or Colombia, making them the hardest to reach in the country.

This isolation is one reason they fare substantially worse than the national average on most social indicators. For example: 70% are in the bottom two wealth quintiles; 40% do not have access to piped water; 21% do not have access to treated water^{vi}; 72% of pregnant women have less than 6 pre-natal visits from healthcare professionals; 16% of children have a height for age deficit; one in four do not have birth registration^{vii}; as many as 37% do not pass year end exams in primary school in some municipalities^{viii}; 30% of 4 to 6 year olds do not go to pre-school; and 95% of 0 to 3 year olds do not go to nursery school^{ix}.

Outcomes and strategies

The reason we have focused on home visiting programmes is that the low population density makes a center-based modality for very young children an ineffective option. Home visiting integrated with health and welfare therefore provides an efficient vehicle to attend to the youngest and most remote children's needs in as holistic a manner as possible.

Our strategy is focused on the scaling up of existing models of service delivery developed in Brazil, adapted to the rural Amazonian context. The intention is to demonstrate the efficacy of this approach and then work to organize demand and support advocacy in order to generate greater political will for expansion. Following these actions, we provide supply side support for the implementation process in order to scale it up with existing but under-utilized federal resources, while supporting a process of joint civil society and government monitoring. Lastly, we work to create national and international prestige around the initiative, increasing the possibility that the approach will serve as inspiration in other parts of the country.

Demonstration outcomes: FAS integrates home visiting into its model for sustainable development; evaluation demonstrates cost-effectiveness of home visiting intervention. It is necessary to test the efficacy of the home visiting approach in this context, to make sure that the hypothesis around the impacts of a home visiting modality is correct.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Piggyback on existing infrastructure and include home visiting.**
2. **Run a quasi-experimental evaluation of the adapted home visiting programme.** To generate more attention, we would like to have a mixed Brazilian and international research team to conduct this quasi-experimental evaluation looking at the impact of existing models of community development on children.

Demand side outcomes: Community leadership in rural municipalities demand home visiting programmes for kids. Generate demand among parents and community presidents in the rural Amazon for the provision of home visiting programmes.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. **Communications campaigns and the opportunity for community presidents and parents to visit ongoing home visiting programmes.** Inform community presidents and parents about home visiting programmes and the benefits for children. Given how widely dispersed they are, creative ways to do this could include roving presentations, the use of radio and sponsoring visits to communities where home visiting programmes exist. Enable community presidents to communicate with each other so they are able to engage with government more systematically.

Advocacy outcomes: National civil society encourages implementation of services for children under 3; funding for home visiting in rural areas continues to be available at the federal level; the governor and rural mayors in the Amazon demonstrate interest in home visiting. The strategies above build the political will and funding to scale up, but additional methods are also necessary given the weak voice of this population of children.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

1. ***Rally support to commit Brazil to regional benchmarks set by the Organization of American States (OAS) for services for children under three in the Amazon.*** We are already funding an effort in the OAS to set regional benchmarks in the context of the Peru programmes. Extending this work to Brazil would add a strong constituency for an agreement at the Latin American Presidents' summit in 2012.
2. ***Support advocacy in Brasilia for mandatory services for under-threes in every municipality.*** Ongoing advocacy can ensure that there are legal requirements and funds for these kinds of programmes. Once a law is in place, it becomes necessary to consistently monitor the budget allocation from the national to the state and municipal levels.

Supply-side outcomes: Rural mayors in the Amazon have the capacity to access and manage federal funds for home visiting; home visiting programmes are taken to scale across the region. The capacity of local government to access and manage funds for these programmes is limited. Many mayors, and potentially also the governor’s office, could benefit from support.

Strategies to achieve this outcome:

- 1. Technical assistance to help state and local government access and manage funds for home visiting programmes.** Currently, there is significant under-spending of budgets that could be used for these programmes. Technical assistance is necessary to make sure the currently available budget is used for children, and not sent back to Brasilia or the governor’s office.
- 2. Support documentation and communications targeting other governors in Amazonian states, mayors, community presidents and federal policymakers.** We can support visual documentation and presentations of the impacts, and position the initiative in the media.
- 3. Provision of technical assistance and facilitation of delegations to visit the programmes in the Amazon.** The intention is to help other interested parties (private or public) go from interest to action.

Evaluation

Evaluations will be conducted on the goals of the country strategy, as well as on individual projects. The purpose of evaluation will be not only to measure our impact, but also to consistently learn from programming in order to make mid-course corrections where needed. Some of the key impact data that will be tracked (all of which will be disaggregated by socio-economic and ethnic groups) are included in the table below.

Violence in favelas	Housing in cortiços	Home visiting Amazon
- Child health, learning and perceptions/fears of violence	- Child health, learning and maltreatment	- Child health, registration, nutrition, learning
- Rates of child maltreatment and child witness to domestic violence	- Safety and affordability of housing for families	- Coverage of home visiting
- Homicides/robbery rates	- Availability of safe places to play and daycare	- Funding available for home visiting

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- i Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), 2007
- ii Cecon, Claudia; Beatriz Pérez & Mariana Pinheiro (2010). O impacto sobre a Primeira Infância e Políticas Públicas de Segurança Pública e iniciativas comunitárias em comunidades de baixa renda. CECIP –BvLF, page 60.
- iii Promundo (2007). Violência contra a criança quoting from <http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/Spanish-2-2.pdf>
- iv International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), 2010
- v Brazilian Ministry of Health, 2007
- vi Brazilian Ministry of Health, 2007
- vii UNICEF, 2007
- viii Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica (Basic education involvement index), Brazil (IDEB), 2009
- ix UNICEF, 2007