

RURAL WOMEN WORKERS AND FISHERWOMEN'S MOVEMENT (MMTRP-AL)
State of Alagoas in northeastern Brazil

CONSTRUCTING SOLIDARITY AND CITIZENSHIP PROJECT

Maceio-AL, Brazil 2009 - 2012

Partner: Rural Workers and Fisher Women's Movement

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WHAT IS THE MMTR-AL (Herein MMTRP-AL with inclusion of fisherwomen):

The MMTRP-AL is an autonomous movement non-for profit or religion. It is a rural feminist movement that struggles for social justice as a mean to achieve gender, racial and ethnical equality. This movement was founded in 2004, although its organization started in the year 1997, with the effort of women rural workers participating then in coed organizations. However, the women were intimidated to participate in discussions about the liberation of women.

Today thanks to Rainbow of Hope for Children (NGO) and the Wild Rose Foundation of Alberta (now Community Initiatives program), Canada, the MMTRP-AL has its own headquarters, has organized 5 regions in Alagoas, i.e. Sertao, Agreste, Litoral, Mata, and Lower Sao Francisco. There are 34 women's groups in total with about 680 women members.

The mission of MMTRP-AL is to articulate, to organize, and to empower the Rural and Fisher Women to participate decisively in Public and Government debates.

The MMTRP-AL is organized in the following way:

1. Women Based (Local) Groups
2. State Coordination
3. Fiscal Council
4. Marketing team
5. Representation in the directorship of the MMTRP-NE (Rural and Fisher Women Workers of the Northeast).

The main themes discussed in the meetings were gender relations, race, ethnic, environment, agro-ecology, human rights, job and income generation, self-esteem, public politics, food and nutrition security, leadership, and educators development.

Currently there exists a concern regarding relations between generations within the organization. There has been progress towards more tolerance with respect to issues such as sexual orientation and religious diversity.

The most important objective of the MMTRP-AL is to be an instrument to improve the public policies in order to create jobs and generate income for the rural workers and fisher, consequently providing benefits to their families and communities. These rural women in Brazil understand that it is through struggling for improved of public policies that we can reach the goal of social inclusion, and consequently improvement in the lifestyle of all citizens in the communities the project reaches. The movement knows that when one woman succeeds the winner is the family and the society.

Another issue that is discussed frequently is the relationship between women and the environment. Within the organization there is a concern for the future of our planet, so we have introduced incentives to practice agro-ecology and nature preservation, which will also improve the health of families and communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT:

In the majority of schools in the rural area of Alagoas the children in grade four still cannot read, even though they are older than 10 years of age.

In spite of a major concern by the federal government to increase social inclusion in Brazil, what we see in our country, mainly in Alagoas, is the increase in violence caused by the lack of improvement in public policies mainly, education.

The violence is always a consequence of the poor quality of education, lack of capacity in the public schools, mainly at the elementary level, and increase in the number of drug users. Also the number of youth homicides is alarming.

The politicians in the Alagoas municipalities are still very much influenced by the powerful economic elites contributing to corruption. This is the initial point for the poor quality of decision-making and public policies.

The major victims of violence are the male youth in the range of 13 to 25 years of age, mainly those who are black and poor. And the children of today are predestined to follow the same path of today's youth if nothing is done for them.

As if the violence is not enough it also comes accompanied by lack of food and nutrition. The basic food program provided by the federal government is not enough to put quality food on the tables of the poor population of Brazil. Alagoas is the state with the second lowest IDH (Human Development Index) in Brazil.

In response to this social situation the Project for Solidarity and Citizenship has the objective to work with both the women members of the MMTRP-AL and with their children to benefit the whole family.

The overall project is to develop two mini-projects: Sunflower of Knowledge Project, and Family Farming and Animal Husbandry Project described below.

Sunflower of Knowledge Project:

For the Sunflower of Knowledge Project our plan is to establish libraries to develop reading habits of the children and teaching about themes of interest to improve the lives of children and adolescents. Also the library space may have multipurpose, such as workshops for children and youth within the MMTRP-AL communities, to teach about environmental preservation, and to combat the use of drugs. To obtain this we will form partnerships with associations, churches, pastorals or other institutions that already exist in the community.

The Family Farming and Animal Husbandry Project:

The Family Farming and Animal Husbandry Project is intended to guaranty a regular and more nourishing food supply for families, as well as to promote job and income generation for women. With the production of grains and medicinal plants, and raising small animals, this project will help not only the women and their families but also the environment and the society in general.

Beyond the Project of Solidarity and Citizenship we will work to improve public policies (health, education, housing, basic sewage, drinking water supply, electrical energy, roads, leisure etc.) by debating with the communities and forming municipal commissions, within the movement, to fight for improvement of these public policies. These commissions will dialogue with the city representatives and/or departments responsible for each one of these policies.

OBJECTIVES:

General:

To improve the quality of life of families, mainly the women, and children that are living in the communities of MMTRP-AL.

Specifics:

1. Improve and strengthen nutritional of families of the members of MMTRP-AL;
2. To motivate the practice of reading among the children and youth, in order to improve their performance in the classroom and in their lives in the community;
3. To offer more knowledge to the children and youth, empowering them to become active agents for better quality of life within their communities;
4. To encourage the creation of production networks to assist women to develop and market products, thereby creating jobs and revenue for the MMTRP-AL;
5. To stimulate the financial autonomy of the women to promote their self-esteem and of their children;

6. To motivate the production of organic food in order to promote a healthier food supply;
7. To promote activities sensitive to the conservation/preservation of the environment, as well as of the workspace;
8. To involve the youth in voluntary work in the libraries.

TARGET (for 3 years):

1. To reach about 680 women, helping 680 families about 3,400 people;
2. To reach about 1,500 children;
3. To involve 700 youth male and female;
4. To plant a minimum of 3,000 trees;
5. To create 34 libraries;
6. To implement a minimum of 100 organic gardens.

BUDGET FOR 3 YEARS

ITEM	QUANTITY	UNIT VALUE (\$R)	SUB-TOTAL (\$R)
Women capacitation workshops	3	1,000	3,000
Children capacitation workshops	3	1,000	3,000
Youth capacitation workshops	5	1,000	5,000
Book acquisition	150	10	15,000
Organic garden implementation	40	250	10,000
Goats purchases	40	100	4,000
Sheep purchases	60	100	6,000
Chicks acquisition	400	4	1,600
Building the headquarters for the Cajueiro women's group	1	4,800	4,800
Finishing the MMTRP-AL headquarters	1	5,000	5,000
Stipends	36 mo.	400	14,400
T O T A L (3 years)			71,800

The Brazilian Real varies daily in relation to the US and Canadian currency. The estimated average value of the Budget in US and Canadian exchange rate is:

Over 3 years \$R 71,800 = \$36,000USD = **\$40,200 CAD**

Per Year \$R23,933 = \$12,000USD = **\$13,400 CAD**