



BRAZIL

Hotspot report

April 2023



Front cover: Partners of the Freedom Fund organised a march from the annex of the State Parliament to the State Palace to deliver a letter to the the government advocating for an increase in efforts to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children.
Photo credit: Natália Corrêa/The Freedom Fund

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OPERATING CONTEXT

Economic context

In 2022, Brazil continued to experience low economic growth and high inflation, due in part to the rise in fuel prices following Russia's military invasion of Ukraine. The basic interest rate reached 13.75%, the highest level since January 2017. The inflation index, the IPCA consumer index, reached 5.79%, driven by increases in food and health costs. Although this was a decrease from the previous year's rate (10.06%), aided by an exemption from federal taxes on fuel and energy, it was above the target of 4.75% set by the monetary authority.

Hunger has returned to Brazil

In 2022 more than half of the Brazilian population (58.7%) lived with some type of food insecurity. The number of people going hungry jumped from 19 million to 33.1 million people in just over a year, meaning that during the year the country regressed to a level of food insecurity not seen since the 1990s. In 15.5% of households people are starving and full access to food has become an exception: only four out of 10 families have access to sufficient food to meet their needs. During the year the government expanded its program of cash transfers to provide basic support to 21.6 million families.

General elections

Elections in October 2022 were marked by tensions and acts of political violence. Disinformation was prevalent on social media with former president Bolsonaro openly questioning the integrity of the election process and spreading claims of fraud with electronic voting machines. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was elected president for the third time, with an agenda of reconstruction for the country. New federal deputies and senators were elected for the Congress, establishing a rightwing and conservative majority, which might hamper the approval of progressive social agendas. Among the 513 elected members, 18% are women and 26% are black. For the first time, two trans women were elected. The first female governor in Pernambuco, Raquel Lira, was elected.

Transition

The transition team set up by Lula faces significant challenges: deforestation in the Amazon increased by 59% between 2019 and 2022; the number of children hospitalised due to lack of food increased by 11%; child illiteracy increased by 20%; amongst many other problems. Lula faces a fragile fiscal outlook, with the country's debt-to-GDP ratio at almost 90%. The tax burden is high and public investment low. Lula's campaign promises included increasing public investment to drive growth, reintroducing mandatory funding for unions, raising the minimum wage, and increasing pay for 'gig economy' workers (estimated at 40% of the country's workforce).

Covid

Brazil continued to report a steady decrease in covid-19 cases. By December 2022, 85% of people had received at least one vaccination dose and 79% were fully vaccinated. However, Brazil ranked second globally in the monkeypox outbreak, with over 10,000 cases. Testing capacity was put in place, although there were challenges in securing vaccines and antiviral treatment.

Emergency

In May and June 2022, heavy rains caused landslides in the Northeast of the country. Over 120 people died, 9,000 families lost their homes, and over 60,000 people in Pernambuco were displaced. More than 37 municipalities declared a state of emergency, including Recife, the city in Brazil most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, where landslides devastated at-risk communities living in favelas. Many displaced people sought improvised shelters and anecdotal evidence suggests that vulnerability to the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) may have increased.

PROGRESS TOWARDS SYSTEMS CHANGE

Policy/legislative

National Plan for Addressing Sexual Violence against Children

During the year, several coalitions which include our partner NGOs strongly mobilised against the new plan developed by the federal government, due to its lack of transparency and democratic participation. The Freedom Fund delivered a briefing to the Brazilian Parliament, reaffirming the need for democratic participation. Research partner Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (UFPE) provided input for a technical analysis of the plan. The wide mobilisation of stakeholders ensured that the National Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents (CONANDA) did not approve the plan, which would have represented setbacks in policy and practice compared to the previous national plan.

Signed commitment to develop new state and municipal policies in Pernambuco to tackle CSEC

The Pernambuco State Government, Recife City Hall and the Freedom Fund signed an MOU to tackle CSEC. Government agencies committed to: develop and monitor new state and municipal plans for tackling sexual violence against children (SVAC) and support other municipalities to do so; support municipalities in implementing the protected listening law; strengthen the anti-trafficking office and policy; among others. A committee was set up to monitor progress.

Commission to review the Pernambuco State Plan to tackle SVAC

In 2021, the State Council created a commission to coordinate the reformulation of the plan. Several Freedom Fund partners are part of the commission. During 2022, the commission created working groups to evaluate the previous plan, and developed proposals for the new plan.

Anti-trafficking working group

The Freedom Fund mobilised key stakeholders and set up a multi-institutional working group to address trafficking in Pernambuco. The purpose of the group is to advocate for restructuring of anti-trafficking policy and organise anti-trafficking training. The group started to meet monthly and a collective agenda was developed.

Letter of Pernambuco

The Freedom Fund convened a seminar for survivors, policy-makers, and anti-trafficking leaders from Brazil and the US to develop proposals for improving anti-trafficking policies in Pernambuco. A letter addressed to the new state government advocating for the restructuring of the state anti-trafficking policy was developed.

State Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents

Freedom Fund partner CENDHEC submitted a petition to the Pernambuco State Governor, also signed by other Freedom Fund partners and local NGOs, and lobbied for the swearing-in of elected representatives to the State Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Pernambuco (CEDCA-PE). The swearing-in of representatives, who play an essential role in advancing policies for children in Pernambuco, had been significantly delayed. As a result, the Prosecutor's Office issued a recommendation to CEDCA-PE requesting legal compliance and swearing-in of the elected representatives, within a maximum of 10 days.

Protected listening law in Olinda

In the city of Olinda, Freedom Fund partner Childhood supported the successful reactivation of the management committee responsible for leading the implementation of the protected listening law, and supported the committee in drafting its internal byelaws.

Political will/public awareness/attitude change

Commitment from the new Pernambuco State Government

The Freedom Fund delivered the Letter of Pernambuco to the new vice-Governor, and a report with key proposals to tackle CSEC, and discussed continued collaboration. The new government committed publicly to continue collaboration and develop the State plan to tackle SVAC.

Norms study

The Freedom Fund commissioned Instituto Promundo, an NGO with a track record of engaging men in research on gender-based violence and CSEC in Brazil, to conduct a formative study on social norms and behaviours of CSEC perpetrators, specific to the local context. Interviews and focus groups were conducted with experts, sex workers, tourists, potential CSEC facilitators such as taxi drivers and bar and hotel staff, and convicted perpetrators.

Protection

Through Freedom Fund-supported initiatives, a total of 1,405 teenagers increased their knowledge about sexual abuse and exploitation, how to identify risks in real-life situations, and how to self-protect. Their families and communities were also engaged in a number of awareness-raising activities about how to protect children.

Government performance

Evidence to improve the performance of services

At-risk children, child survivors and frontline staff were interviewed for a research study carried out by UFPE/University of Nottingham on the effectiveness of child care policy and practice in Brazil. The research identified important gaps in care services, revealing that child care services are often also spaces where children's rights are violated. Another key finding was that the flows for comprehensive and integrated care for children, necessary for the implementation of a complete care cycle for children's full recovery, are not in place.

Improving the effectiveness of the child rights guarantee system

In Recife, new work flows which adequately incorporate the provisions of the protected listening law were created for protection services within the justice system. This adds to the new flows created last year for the education, social assistance and health services. The aim of the new flows is to avoid revictimisation of children while supporting better prosecution, thus improving the functioning of the whole system. In Olinda, the process has started with the reactivation of the committee to implement the law.

Strengthening the capacity of practitioners

A total of 302 health workers, educators, social workers, law enforcement and justice officers received training and capacity building support. It is believed that they are now more capable of identifying, assisting and reporting CSEC cases. This is expected to be confirmed by future evaluations.

Business performance

Inclusion of survivors. Freedom Fund partner Instituto Aliança met with over 20 businesses to sensitise them to include CSEC survivors as apprentices, through the special quota of the apprenticeship law. This initiative, in partnership with the Regional Labour Court, the Recife Secretariat of Culture and the Pernambuco State Government, has resulted in the hiring of 39 girl survivors of CSEC, who graduated from the life skills program, to work in cultural facilities in the city of Recife such as the Frevo Museum and the Modern Art Museum. The inclusion of adolescent victims of CSEC in decent jobs has proven to be an effective path out of CSEC.

Community organisation

Improving advocacy to tackle CSEC

The State Network to Confront Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children is a key coalition in the fight against CSEC in the state. The network brings together more than 30 government agencies and NGOs working on the frontline to prevent CSEC and protect child victims. The Freedom Fund has supported the network to improve its ability to influence the state government, by providing support for the network's executive secretariat, supporting the effective participation of Freedom Fund partners, and providing advocacy training for Freedom Fund partners. The network also leads local efforts of the May 18 campaign to mobilise for the end of CSEC.

HOTSPOT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Headline results

42 slavery victims/survivors provided with support for recovery

- Eight adolescents from Olinda municipality, who were victims/survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence and/or CSEC, received follow-up support and were referred to services to support them to overcome the violence they went through and develop self-protective attitudes.
- Twenty-four adolescents and young people living on the streets received outreach support from Grupo Ruas e Praças. The young people received street-based education and were referred to several activities at the Grupo Ruas e Praças centre. Three were referred back to school.
- Among a group of young people who received training on how to combat violence and became multipliers of information in their communities (see below), Grupo Adolescer identified five victims/survivors of violence who received assistance and were referred to social protection services.
- Five adolescent survivors of CSEC, who were identified through NGOs and government partners, took part in life skills training provided by Instituto Aliança, and were referred to other services, including to participation in apprenticeship programs.

1,511 individuals provided with social or legal services

- Over 120 young people at Grupo Adolescer and Coletivo Mulher Vida received training on how to combat CSEC and other types of violence, and became multipliers of information in their communities and online.
- Over 1,300 students from public schools received information and training on how to protect themselves from CSEC from the staff of Coletivo Mulher Vida and by the young educators of Grupo Adolescer. Children were also engaged in dialogue circles promoted by adolescents from Coletivo Mulher Vida's communications centre. At Casa Menina Mulher, girls participated in workshops of art, digital inclusion, drumming and citizenship, and received psychosocial care.
- Adolescents at risk, victims and/or survivors of CSEC were referred by NGO partners to social assistance services (family and community coexistence services, psychosocial counselling, support to receive government services, etc), guardianship councils and other services. Family members received training on how to prevent and combat sexual violence against children.
- Grupo Ruas e Praças offered art therapy, citizenship/human rights, and self-protection workshops, and trained and encouraged adolescents to develop creative entrepreneurship and new life projects.
- Eight children and their families were provided with legal assistance and psychosocial support by CENDHEC, and benefited from support with coordination with the justice and law enforcement systems and the protection network. Professionals from the protection network also received prevention and protection training.

The Freedom Fund receives the Medal Counselor João Alfredo Corrêa de Oliveira from the Labor Court in Pernambuco, Brazil, for its outstanding performance in combating human trafficking.
Photo credit: Rodrigo Garcia/The Freedom Fund



Four changes in public policies

- A commission to review the Pernambuco State Plan to tackle SVAC was set up with several Freedom Fund partners. The commission created working groups to evaluate the previous plan, and developed proposals for the new plan.
- Civil society organisations and coalitions, including Freedom Fund partners and their networks, advocated against the approval of a new national plan to tackle sexual violence against children that was not developed in a participatory way and would represent setbacks in policy and practice.
- In April 2022, the Pernambuco State Government, Recife City Hall and the Freedom Fund signed an MOU to develop joint actions to combat CSEC. A coordinating committee, which meets monthly, was set up to monitor implementation of initiatives.
- CENDHEC and other social organisations submitted a petition to the state governor and applied for a legal audience at the Prosecutor's Office, thus securing the swearing-in of the representatives chosen for the State Council for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Pernambuco (CEDCA-PE).

PROGRESS TOWARDS HOTSPOT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Improved policies to confront CSEC and greater coordination among stakeholders to hold the government accountable for their implementation

Outcome 1.1: Government and civil society are more coordinated in tackling CSEC, set guidelines and goals for their actions and monitor their results

- Pernambuco State Government, Recife City Hall and the Freedom Fund signed an MOU to tackle CSEC and started monthly coordination meetings.
- The State Network to Confront Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children increased its capacity to engage stakeholders.
- New working groups within the State Child Rights Council's commission were set up. The working groups evaluated the last plan to tackle SVAC, and developed proposals for a new plan.
- A working group to tackle trafficking in persons was set up, aiming to influence the restructuring of the policy to combat trafficking in the state.
- The Letter of Pernambuco with anti-trafficking proposals was developed and delivered to the new state government.

Output 1.1.1: Multi-institutional network strengthened for the development and implementation of coordinated responses and monitoring of public policies and plans to tackle CSEC

MOU to tackle CSEC

On 27 April 2022, the Pernambuco State Government, Recife City Hall and the Freedom Fund signed an MOU to tackle CSEC. Among the commitments made by the government agencies are to: develop and monitor the implementation of new state and municipal plans for addressing sexual violence against children, in a participatory way, as well as mobilise and support other municipalities to do so; support municipalities in implementing the protected listening law; and strengthen the state anti-trafficking office and policy. A committee was set up under the lead of the vice-mayor to implement the commitments. The committee meets monthly to monitor progress. Even before the new government plan is in place, several joint activities have started, including: training of health, education, and social assistance professionals to identify and assist victims and report cases of sexual exploitation; consolidation of data on CSEC; coordinated management of CSEC cases within the scope of the protection network; planning for the implementation of an integrated care centre for child victims of violence; and development of CSEC prevention campaigns.

Network to tackle CSEC

In Pernambuco, we supported the Executive Secretariat of the State Network to Confront Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children, which brings together more than 30 governmental and non-governmental organisations that work on the frontline in the prevention and protection of victims of CSEC. The network has been improving its advocacy actions and strongly advocating for the state government to develop the state plan to combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. This plan will set the guidelines for an anti-CSEC policy and will benefit thousands of girls and boys. The network also leads the May 18 campaign that seeks to mobilise governments and society in general to end CSEC.

Working groups on state plan to tackle CSEC

In 2022, the network mobilised the State Child Rights Council to create an inter-institutional commission to coordinate the reformulation of the plan. Several Freedom Fund partners are members of the commission. This year, the commission created working groups to evaluate the previous plan, and developed proposals for the new plan. Progress was also made in obtaining the commitment of authorities to develop a new state plan.

Working group to tackle trafficking in persons (TIP)

The Freedom Fund commissioned a consultant to assess the state anti-trafficking policy and practice. The consultant found that the state's Anti-TIP Inter-Institutional Committee – once widely recognised for its leading institutional role – had been demobilised for several years, and most government staff were unaware of the existence of the state anti-TIP laws (decrees) and of the committee. Institutions consulted for the research recognised the importance of rebuilding the committee and reinvigorating the state anti-trafficking policy. The consultant mobilised key stakeholders and set up a working group to address trafficking in persons in Pernambuco, with the participation of key institutions including the Prosecutor's Office, the Regional Labour Court, the State Network to Confront Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children, Recife City Hall, Pernambuco State Government, and NGOs, among others. The purpose of the group is to advocate for the restructuring of the anti-trafficking policy and organise training for policy-makers and decision-makers, professionals of frontline services, police and the justice system, and society in general. The group started to meet monthly and a collective agenda was developed. As part of the agenda of the new working group, in November 2022 the Freedom Fund, in partnership with the working group and the Regional Labour Court, and with co-funding from the US Department of State, convened an international anti-TIP seminar bringing together experts, researchers, survivors, policy-makers, NGOs and anti-TIP leaders from Brazil and the US.

Output 1.1.2: Civil society organisations implement an advocacy strategy to advance efforts to tackle CSEC

Strengthening advocacy capacities

An advocacy technical assistance provider – Pulso Público – was selected and contracted to strengthen the advocacy capacities of Freedom Fund partners and facilitate the development of an advocacy strategy to improve policies, legislation and budgetary investment in combating the sexual exploitation of children in Brazil, especially in Recife. As a first step, program partners participated in an advocacy workshop led by Pulso Público.

Supporting advocacy actions

Freedom Fund partners also participated in the international anti-TIP seminar convened by the Freedom Fund, which resulted in the Letter of Pernambuco calling for the restructuring of the state's anti-trafficking policy. The Freedom Fund met with the transition team of the new state government to deliver the letter and propose actions to combat the sexual exploitation of children. The state government welcomed the proposals and is continuing the dialogue.

Mobilising partners in national-level advocacy

Our partners also took part in national advocacy efforts for participatory development of the National Plan for Addressing Sexual Violence against Children. The previous national plan (2013-2020) was developed through wide consultations, participation of children and leadership of the national child rights council (CONANDA). However, in 2022 the federal government unilaterally developed a new national plan, with a different approach and framework. Several coalitions such as the National

Committee to Tackle Sexual Violence Against Children, ECPAT and the Brazilian Coalition to End Violence Against Children, which included several of our NGO partners, strongly mobilised against the plan due to its lack of transparency and public participation and technical shortfalls in its provisions. During a public hearing, the Freedom Fund also delivered a policy briefing to the Brazilian Parliament, developed with research partner UFPE, reaffirming the need to develop a participatory national plan. UFPE also provided input for a technical analysis of the plan which was carried out by the Brazilian Coalition to End Violence Against Children. The wide mobilisation of stakeholders was able to ensure that CONANDA did not approve the plan. The new elected government is expected to resume a participatory process for developing a new plan.

Objective 2: Scientific knowledge about CSEC and survivors' voices inform policies and programmatic responses

Outcome 2.1: Local decision-makers and frontline organisations use the latest available evidence to guide responses to tackle CSEC

- Four studies are underway to inform the development of policies and programs to tackle CSEC.

Output 2.1.1: Rigorous evidence and locally relevant recommendations are generated from research and shared with policy-makers and frontline organisations

The Freedom Fund is supporting four important studies that will inform plans, policies and programs to combat CSEC. In addition, an external evaluation of Freedom Fund pilot projects was carried out (see section 6).

The **CSEC prevalence study** in Recife and the Metropolitan Region, carried out by GESTOS/FIOCRUZ, is in the data analysis phase and will seek to provide robust estimates of the number of children in CSEC in the region, identify provision for survivors and map the territories in the region where there is higher incidence of sexual exploitation of children. This baseline data will be key to improving the strategy of the Com.Direitos program and will support decision-makers and civil society organisations in the development of an anti-CSEC state plan for the next 10 years.

Research into the **Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents in Brazil**, carried out by UFPE/University of Nottingham, interviewed adolescents at risk and survivors of CSEC who shared their experiences of care from protection services. Researchers also interviewed experts, and analysed data on services, policies and laws in Brazil. Preliminary results of the study were presented and validated in a seminar held in November 2022. The study pointed out important gaps in services and revealed that protection services are often also a space for the violation of rights. A key finding is that the flows for comprehensive and integrated care for children, necessary for the implementation of a complete care cycle for children's full recovery, are not in place.

Data collection from the study on **social norms and behaviour of perpetrators of CSEC in Recife/Pernambuco**, including the Metropolitan Region, carried out by Instituto Promundo, was completed and the study is now in the data analysis phase. The results of this study will be essential to guide more effective campaigns to reduce the demand for and social acceptance of CSEC.

The **evaluation of Crescer Sem Violência** (the 'Growing without violence' project), which was funded by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), was approved by two ethics committees, from the University of London and Universidade Católica de Pernambuco, and now the second phase of the research is starting, which is the collection of baseline data. This evaluation will identify the potential of the Crescer Sem Violência methodology as a prevention strategy since its focus is to expand the knowledge of children and adolescents so that they can protect themselves from situations of CSEC.

Objective 3: Vulnerable children and survivors have more support, information and skills to protect themselves from and safely exit from CSEC

Outcome 3.1: Vulnerable children and survivors have greater access to information, comprehensive care, education and productive inclusion opportunities

- 302 health workers, educators, social workers, law enforcement and justice officers received training and are now more capable of identifying, assisting and reporting CSEC cases.
- 1,405 teenagers increased their knowledge about sexual abuse and exploitation, how to identify these risks in real-life situations, and how to self-protect.
- Families and communities are more informed about how to protect children.
- 77 children at risk or survivors of CSEC received professional training services, psychosocial and socio-academic assistance.

Output 3.1.1: Frontline services and professionals - including social assistance, health, education, law enforcement, and judicial system - are better equipped to identify, support and advocate for vulnerable children and survivors of CSEC

Instituto Aliança started building the capacity of **100 frontline professionals** on comprehensive assistance to CSEC victims. This included topics such as the foundations for psychosocial and psychotherapeutic care, systemic thinking for social work with families, principles and premises for victim support, the functions of the guaranteed rights system, and specialised listening. Staff from specialised social assistance centres (CREAS), the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Rights, Guardianship Councils, socio-care services (Funase), and NGOs participated in the training.

Coletivo Mulher Vida trained **45 teachers and 75 health workers** on identification, assistance and notification of cases of violence against children. The main challenge identified during teacher training was the ability of professionals to recognise and intervene in cases of violence. The daily presence of violence in the family, in domestic spaces, in institutions and in public spaces means that situations of violence are perceived as natural, contributing to their invisibility. Health professionals, on the other hand, stated that they are unaware of and therefore do not use the tools for reporting cases of violence, which makes it difficult to register and properly take forward cases. Coletivo Mulher Vida entered into an agreement with the Municipal Health Department of Olinda to reinforce the reporting process so that health workers can comply with the appropriate protocols.

Fundação Roberto Marinho trained **82 teachers of 35 schools in Olinda** in the Crescer Sem Violência methodology, which has child-friendly audio-visual resources to teach self-protection for children.

Output 3.1.2: Vulnerable children have more resources to prevent CSEC and a more protective family and community environment

Coletivo Mulher Vida provided training to **774 students** (762 of them aged under 18) in six schools to empower them with information about sexual abuse and exploitation, how to identify these risks in real-life situations, and how to self-protect. They also informed adolescents about which protection network institutions they can approach for support. Coletivo Mulher Vida uses play-based, participatory methodologies and provides a box where teenagers can deposit their questions and make confidential reports, creating a safe communication channel. As a result, some reports have already been received and referrals were made.

Grupo Adolescer mobilised and selected teenagers to participate in the training of peer educators in three communities: Roda de Fogo, Caranguejo Tabaiaras and Santo Amaro. The training of peer educators began in September 2022 and involved **59 adolescents** (29 boys and 30 girls, five of whom were CSEC survivors). The peer educators carried out 10 peer-to-peer training sessions for **544 teenagers** (under 18 years of age). The training includes modules on the rights of children and adolescents, reduction of violence, culture of peace, and black consciousness. These training sessions

in schools have a great impact on communities because participants are able to share information with their families and the wider school environment.

17 young leaders from Coletivo Mulher Vida's communication centre received training in using social media to reach other teenagers online. The leaders posted 20 cards and 40 posts on social media reaching over 500 followers. Another **11 teenagers** from Grupo Ruas e Praças participated in training to conduct awareness-raising activities in the communities of Coque and Santo Amaro, in Recife.

Family members of the Grupo Adolescer young leaders also received training and information about how to protect children. In total, **57 family members** (50 women and 7 men) took part in nine training workshops (three in each territory). At the end of the training, an activity was developed to multiply the training in communities, reaching an additional **96 people**.

Output 3.1.3: Children at risk and survivors of CSEC have access to specialised services for their rehabilitation and reintegration

27 girls at risk or survivors of CSEC received training from Instituto Aliança on the development of life skills and social/emotional skills. The training covered topics such as: identity, life project, inclusion and diversity, health, gender and sexuality, solidarity, and work. All but one of the participants achieved the required standard and received a certificate. These 26 girls were referred to apprenticeship positions, in partnership with Dom Bosco School, and will be hired to work for two years as apprentices in various cultural spaces in the city of Recife. Other referrals made were: 24 children who were not receiving psychotherapeutic support were referred to a specialised centre for child victims (CERCCA); two teenagers were referred to health services for prenatal care; one adolescent was referred to the basic social assistance network; one adolescent was referred to the special protection service and to the Childhood Court of Jaboatão dos Guararapes/Pernambuco for sheltering; and all children were referred to schools for continuing their education.

Alongside its work with teenagers, Instituto Aliança also held meetings with **family members** to ensure the participation of girls in the training and to strengthen family and community ties. There was good participation from family members and Instituto Aliança talked with them about teenage behaviours, communicating with children, and reading children's unspoken signs, in addition to sharing the next steps of the project.

42 at-risk children from Grupo Ruas e Praças took part in street education activities, including artistic and citizenship workshops and restorative circles. Coletivo Mulher Vida offered therapeutic circles to 8 girl survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Centro das Mulheres do Cabo started outreach to girls in vulnerable communities, and next year, 90 girls are expected to join community therapy circles and arts and citizenship workshops, among other activities.

Objective 4: Social acceptance and demand for commercial sexual exploitation of children is decreased

Outcome 4.1: Businesses in sectors with high prevalence of CSEC improve their anti-CSEC practices and policies

- 23 companies were sensitised to hire CSEC survivors as apprentices.
- Nine government cultural institutions are hiring CSEC survivors to work as apprentices.

Output 4.1.1: Businesses engaged in the program make commitments and take action against CSEC

Instituto Aliança presented the apprenticeship program to 23 businesses and public institutions. The Recife Cultural Foundation has confirmed vacancies for 13 program beneficiaries to work as apprentices in nine cultural institutions and the Secretariat of Woman and other stakeholders are committed to finding additional vacancies for the rest of the group.

In partnership with the Regional Labour Superintendence, Instituto Aliança mobilised 19 businesses that are legally required to hire young apprentices but have been defaulters. MOUs with the businesses are being developed, but recent changes in regulation of the apprenticeship law have caused delays in signing the agreements.

Outcome 4.2: CSEC is seen as unacceptable violence and society is more vigilant and protective of children

- Freedom Fund partners participated in the May 18 campaign.

Output 4.2.1: Increased awareness of the reality and harms of sexual abuse and exploitation of girls

Our NGO partners engaged in the May 18 campaign in their communities (an annual campaign to combat sexual abuse and exploitation of children and adolescents). The campaign involved a range of awareness-raising and training activities led by NGO partners and young people in the Recife area and across Pernambuco. However, it was not possible to assess the reach or impact of the campaign.

Outcome 4.3: Law enforcement officials are better prepared to conduct investigations of CSEC-related cases and prosecute perpetrators

- Expert support on the implementation of the protected listening law was provided to the municipalities of Recife and Olinda.

Output 4.3.1: Municipalities are able to implement the protected listening law (Law 13.431/17) to increase child protection and accountability of perpetrators

The Freedom Fund's partner Childhood is supporting implementation of the protected listening law in the cities of Recife and Olinda, with the aim of increasing the capacity of relevant authorities to provide comprehensive care to child victims or witnesses of violence without revictimising them, while increasing the possibility of holding perpetrators to account. Support is provided through four initiatives: establishment of a management committee to lead implementation, with internal procedures; mapping the analysis and functioning of the local child protection network; participatory design of systematic operational processes according to the law; and development of a single protocol for integrated assistance to child victims.

In Recife, the operational process for the Justice and Public Security System was partially completed. There was agreement that care for children should be provided in a protective context. However, there was no consensus on the referrals that should be made by the police station and the process for the Special Police Testimony, and the operational process has not yet been finalised. Childhood recommended that the police should carry out the Special Police Testimony, with the aim of collecting evidence, but not the Specialised Listening, which is a responsibility of other services in the child protection network. In Olinda, Childhood supported the successful reactivation of the management committee responsible for leading the implementation of the protected listening law, supported the committee in drafting its internal byelaws and started the development of data collection tools to map and analyse the functioning of the child protection network.

Outcome 5.1: CSOs in the hotspot are strengthened in their financial and programmatic capacities

- Nine NGOs are improving their ability to lead the anti-CSEC movement in Recife, based on institutional development and network actions.

Output 5.1.1: Implementing partners attend training and receive technical and finance advice offered by the Freedom Fund and technical assistance partners

Financial and compliance training and support

All partners received financial and compliance training from the Freedom Fund, including advice on how to improve processes. Due diligence assessments were made and due diligence plans were developed to address key gaps found. The plans are being put into action with the support of the Freedom Fund team. This has allowed organisations to strengthen their administrative and financial management processes. A technical partner (Audisa) was hired to monitor the partners' financial reports. This process resulted in recommendations on how to improve compliance and management practices, according to the needs of each partner.

Improving safeguarding policy and practice

Humanus Consultoria continued to advise partners on the development of safeguarding policies. All partners finalised their safeguarding policy except for UNICAP, which, due to the specific nature of its activities, created a Code of Conduct. The organisations are now implementing their policy: they have a safeguarding focal point and reporting channels, they have defined procedures to take forward a case, the team is trained to follow protection procedures and they continue to inform children, families, employees, and the community about this policy. 92.3% of the partners were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the consultants' work.

Risk assessment

Partners received technical support from an expert in addressing security issues. A contingency plan was developed with the Instituto Aliança team, containing risk analysis and protection and self-protection measures for beneficiaries and the NGO staff.

Anti-trafficking

The Freedom Fund organised an international anti-trafficking seminar for partners, experts, researchers, parliamentarians, government and CSO representatives from Brazil and the US, survivors and activists.

Outcome 5.2: Voices of children and survivors are included at the centre of the anti-trafficking movement

Output 5.2.1: Children and survivors are supported to be leaders and advocate for their rights

During the week of the United Nations General Assembly, an anti-trafficking leader from our NGO partner Coletivo Mulher Vida took part in a Freedom Fund panel titled 'Unpacking Power with Frontline Leaders'. She shared information about her work and thoughts on what it means to build power at the community level and what this can contribute to ending modern slavery.

During the international anti-trafficking seminar convened by the Freedom Fund, the film *Pureza*, co-sponsored by the FF, was shown to participants. Ms Pureza was present at the screening, which was followed by a debate, during which she was able to share her challenging experience in freeing her son from a situation of modern slavery.

SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

From January to December 2022, four Community of Practice meetings took place, bringing together all the partners that make up the Com.Direitos program. Items covered at the meetings included: developing a collective advocacy strategy; building capacity on meaningful survivor inclusion; incorporating a CSEC case identification tool in programs; designing monitoring systems; implementation of the protected listening law; developing safeguarding policies.

Main learnings of the Community of Practice included:

- Initiatives achieve more impact when partners act together.
- Although all partners have thematic expertise and their own methodologies for the prevention and care of victims of CSEC, the exchange of experience and knowledge helps organisations to improve their practice.
- Collective reflection expands the possibility of finding solutions to problems that arise during the implementation of projects, such as the challenge of reaching out to girls in a CSEC situation to include them in the projects.
- Political advocacy gains strength with coordinated strategic action among partners.
- The Community of Practice is a valuable space for building the identity and direction of the Com. Direitos program and partners are committed to sustaining and supporting the Community of Practice in the years ahead.

CASE STUDY

(Story provided by Freedom Fund partner Instituto Aliança)

"Each second during the activities over these three months made a total difference in my life. I hope in the future that other girls have the same opportunities that I had in this project."

D.V., aged 14, is one of 27 teenage girls who took part in a Com.Direitos project in Recife. The teenagers received training in a range of life skills covering topics such as inclusion, diversity, health, sexuality, solidarity and work. D.V. says: "Over the course of these three months, several issues have surfaced and with that new knowledge, new questions that were answered, and new duties. At the end of this cycle of many discoveries and bonds made, we finally had our dreamed-of certificate."

Family members also shared the joy of seeing the teenagers complete such an important stage in their lives. K.P., mother of one of the graduates, says: "The course was fundamental in changing habits in the life of my daughter. Today, she has a new vision, as this period brought personal growth. Seeing her dedicate herself to learning something new every day by giving her best and striving to achieve her goals makes me happy!"

After receiving their certificates, the teenagers start two-year apprenticeships with one of 13 cultural facilities, such as a museum of modern art and a theatre. Akueline Padilha, local coordinator of Com. Direitos, says: "From the beginning, we understood that we needed to offer a concrete, relevant proposal. For girls, knowing they will have quality training and will be hired to work at the end is very important and motivating."

The program draws on legislation which promotes the practical training of apprentices hired by companies with the grant-making support of public bodies. Ana Alencastro of Com.Direitos says: "The teenagers will work as apprentices and this would not be possible without the partnership of the cultural facilities that hire them."

Rúbia Bezerra, representative of the Secretariat and Foundation for Culture of Recife, highlights another important aspect of the project: "We start from the principle of culture as a right. And by receiving these teenagers in our spaces, we are effectively promoting access to culture, not only as an experience of artistic enjoyment, but also as an economic development factor. For us, it is essential to awaken this awareness in youth as a way to encourage the maintenance of skilled labour in our area."

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Between April and August 2022, an external evaluation was carried out of the pilot projects of six partners: Casa Menina Mulher, Coletivo Mulher Vida, CENDHEC, Grupo Ruas e Praças, Grupo Adolescer and Instituto Aliança. The evaluation was carried out to measure the effectiveness of their methodologies and the possibilities for scale-up. Recommendations from the evaluation were incorporated into the projects. Key findings included:

- The methodologies for prevention and care for victims of CSEC are relevant and adequate and should continue to be implemented in order to gain scale.
- The adolescents and young people demonstrated that they would like to have a greater role and participation in projects. It is recommended that methodologies include more participation.
- Organisations need to focus on a rights-based approach.
- Advocacy is a key strategy to be addressed.

An external evaluation of the Crescer Sem Violência ('Growing without violence') project in a pilot municipality (outside of the hotspot area) indicated promising results:

- 83% of participants completed the training (17% dropped out).
- 89% said they had increased their understanding of the phenomenon of sexual violence against children
- 72% started using the educational kit right after the training.
- The methodology of this project will now be implemented in the municipalities of Olinda and Cabo de Santo Agostinho, combined with a randomised controlled trial to assess its impact and inform implementation at scale as a CSEC prevention program.



A beneficiary of Freedom Fund partner Casa Menina Mulher speaks at a public hearing on the National Day to Combat Abuse and Sexual Exploitation against Children and Adolescents at the Pernambuco State Parliament.
Photo credit: Manu Ferrão/The Freedom Fund

VISION

Our vision is a world
free of slavery.

MISSION

Our mission is to mobilise the
knowledge, capital and will
needed to end slavery.

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