# HOUSE OF RIGHTS "CIDADE DE DEUS"

## Bringing over rights and enabling citizenship

JUSTICE

DISSEMINATION OF RIGHTS, GUIDANCE AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

BRAZIL

EUROsociAL has supported the pacification process of this Rio de Janeiro district, aiding the design and the launching of a House of Rights that provides the community with basic services for the access to justice and rule of law.

### CIDADE DE DEUS

Since its establishment in the 1960s, Cidade de Deus has grown gradually, gaining at the same time the features of a favela. In light of the absence of the State, organised crime has ended up controlling the area and establishing its own assistance and dispute resolution system.

In order to confront this problem and retaking the territorial control, the Government of the State of Rio de Janeiro has started a programme ,with the deployment of Pacification Police units within its framework in the most conflictive neighborhoods. In 2009, Cidade de Deus was the second "pacified" Carioca favela as a result of this process.

EURosociAL has supported and accompanied the pacification process, enabling the State to establish close ties with the community. In order to do this, the Programme has collaborated with the Secretariat for the Reform of the Judiciary from the Ministry of Justice of Brazil, to establish a House of Rights at Cidade de Deus providing basic services for the access to justice and rule of law, and has accompanied the design of the service provision and legal guidance.

### INTERVENTION MODEL

The House of Rights of Cidade de Deus was inaugurated in November 2013, taking the Argentinean experience as a model. It is a model focused on people, mainly characterised based in its flexibility, bringing in several services, aiming for community real needs, identified through constant mapping. Services are provided thanks to the involvement of several institutions under a centralised coordination. The process is leaded by the State of Rio de Janeiro and the Secretariat for the Reform of the Judiciary at federal level, that helps in ensuring harmony for the model, as well as among all the institutions involved.

Since its start in January 2014, and until September that same year, the House of Rights had served more than 10,000 people, mostly in cases related with the processing of basic documentation (birth certificates, cards, etc.), without which the access to the rights and the pursue for justice is impossible.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE INITIATIVE

This first experience falls within the definition of a national policy for the establishment of houses of rights in Brazil. Subsequently, in 2014, a second house was opened at Alagoas State, in an area that also suffers of violence problems, and at the beginning of 2015 at Sergipe State. There are plans for opening some more houses during 2015.

### HOUSES OF RIGHTS IN BRAZIL

The idea of a House of Rights in Brazil is not new. During the 1990s, the Minas Gerais State had similar experiences, mainly focused in promoting human rights. From the considerations regarding this and some other experiences, the model evolved to include the government institutions into communities, in order to overcome the physical and bureaucratic obstacles that hinder the full exercise of rights.

## EXPORTING THE MODEL ITINERARY OF TO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

EUROsociAL is working at the regional level in order to strengthen this intervention model so vulnerable groups can access to rights assisting the establishment of houses of rights in different countries:

In Argentina and Chile there are structures like these already working (Access Centres for Justice and Corporations for Legal Assistance, respectively) that enjoy the occasional support of the programme for particular projects.

For its part, Costa Rica is working on a House of Rights for Migrant Women in Upala, and in Honduras and Paraguay processes for the establishment of similar institutions are being supported.

## EUROSOCIAL'S SUPPORT ITINERARY

Preliminary analysis
- Diagnosis, institution and state capacity to meet the requirements of the inhabitants of Cidade de Deus.
- Map - House of Rights.

Design and implementation of the model
- Legal guidance model.
- Technical document for the model.

Training module
- Dissemination strategy
- Dissemination Plan.
- Materials: posters, flyers.

## SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

This intervention illustrates the South-South Cooperation encouraged by the EUROsociAL programme through which different public administrations from many Latin American countries explore ways for mutual learning, promoting the creation of networks and stable relations between Latin American Institutions.

In this case, Brazil has taken the Argentinian model of the Centres for Access to Justice. EUROsociAL has facilitated that, during 2013, officials from the Secretariat for the Judicial Reform from the Brazilian Ministry of Justice and the Social Welfare and Human Rights Secretariat of the State of Rio de Janeiro, participated in a internship to get to know the Argentinian model. This visit has given the attendees a chance to have a direct experience regarding how the Argentinian Centres for Acces to Justice work and how they adapt to the particular realities of each neighborhood.

## VIDEOS

Interview with Dona Terezinha, first president of the Neigbourhood association from Cidade de Deus

House of Rights in Cidade de Deus

Coordinating Partner

EXPERTISE FRANCE

Operating Partners

IDLO

PROGRAMME FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

## FIRST-HAND

### Flávio Crocce Caetano

Secretary for the Judicial Reform
from the Ministry of Justice from Brazil

"We have conceived the House of Rights as a public tool that would be able to bring justice to the population from the community itself. The idea is mediating in the conflicts from inside the community in order to aid social concord."

### Márcia dos Anjos

Community worker from the House
of Rights of Cidade de Deus

"It is a great contribution. You can make your documents, report a loss, there is a service of public notaries. You can ask for your employment book, and it means that although you don't have money you can come here and get everything for free."

### Denise Gonçalves

'Moradora' (inhabitant) from Cidade de Deus

"I could say that things are 100% better now. The House of Rights provides us with many benefits in the area. We used to have problems to make our documentation, solve legal problems or even to get married. Now everything has changed. We all feel more like citizens with the House of Rights."