

OBRA 
TRANSPARENTE

**POSITIVE
IMPACT STORIES**
for qualitative assessment

Apoio



Parceria



Positive impact stories for qualitative assessment

During project Obra Transparente, we monitored and gathered data on construction plans, resource allocation and transfers, public procurement processes and execution of works, as well as monitoring and accountability procedures carried out by government bodies to ensure works were completed and delivered in accordance with technical and legal guidelines and regulations. This endeavor provided means for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the federal program ProInfância, highlighting its issues, shortcomings, and limits, while also allowing for the proposition of a series of possible measures for the federal government to adopt in order to improve program implementation.

Additionally, the volunteer network trained by Transparência Brasil conducted qualified and frequent social monitoring activities of construction works, through which they identified legal and technical failures and irregularities in the implementation of the projects. These issues were promptly reported to the local administrations for follow-up. In most cases, municipal government bodies drew on these reports to demand corrections from contractors, and the problems identified were effectively addressed and fixed.

Equipped with technical support from the project's Technical Chamber, our local partners were also able to detect, in some cases, signs of potential fraud in contracting procedures, which were directed to audit and enforcement authorities for further investigation.

These activities indicate additional positive impacts of the monitoring work, firstly in terms of filling gaps in the contract supervision procedures conducted by the local governments, which are responsible for overseeing that contract conditions are fully complied with and quality standards upheld by the contracted companies. In many cases, there were quality and technical deficiencies that went undetected or were overlooked by the local administration's supervisors, and could only be identified and corrected due to the monitoring efforts of our local activists. Therefore, our monitoring practices have also contributed to improvements in the overall quality of those construction projects.

Secondly, the detection of evidence of procurement fraud cases also shows local administrations are not diligent enough in conducting procurement procedures, and our local partners contributed to addressing that gap as well. Moreover, as federal audit agencies lack the capacity to adequately oversee and analyze the immense volume of contracting procedures conducted at the local level, our social monitoring resulted in the identification of high-risk cases that otherwise might not have been assessed by the competent bodies.

Below we present some examples that illustrate this positive impact.

Araucária

In 2017, the Brazilian municipality of Araucária conducted bidding processes seeking to hire companies to build three nurseries. We sent technical experts to the 3 planned construction sites, together with volunteers from the local *Observatório*, to check whether plans were consistent with the physical conditions observed on site. The experts' assessment was that high-cost contention walls included in the construction plans were unnecessary or could be replaced by low-cost solutions through adjustments. Originally, the contentions walls would cost R\$ 1,577,338.57 (US\$ 419,504.9, at the current exchange rate).

The analysis was first directed to the local administration, suggesting changes to the construction plans, which were rejected. The bidding processes went on as initially planned. Subsequently, the experts' findings were submitted to the Brazilian Supreme Audit Institution, Tribunal de Contas da União (TCU). TCU recommended that the bidding process should be redone, and construction plans were to be redesigned, with more cost-effective solutions for the contention walls. In the new bidding process, their cost plummeted to R\$ 416,883.17 (US\$ 110,873.2), a reduction of US\$ 308,631.7 – 74% less. To give a sense of the impact on city budget, the amount saved on these three constructions alone represents about 3% of all capital investments of Araucária in 2018.

In short, in a single municipality, the project resulted in savings higher than the cost of the entire project for UNDEF (US\$ 220,000.00).

Taubaté

In Taubaté, volunteers monitored four ongoing construction works on a monthly basis. All of them were effectively finished and delivered, although overdue. One of them, a resumption of a then halted construction work, was delivered 2 months overdue. The remaining three were further delayed, but no amendments were made on prices, only deadlines.

The volunteers found defects and issues, promptly reported them to municipality administration, which then acted in order to fix them. Our partners ended up substituting government inspectors and making up for their shortcomings in ensuring contract compliance through supervision, which demonstrates our positive impact regarding ineffective local administration practices or insufficient personnel.

Foz do Iguaçu

Volunteers found problems with ongoing construction works and promptly reported them to construction inspectors and the local administration. This led the municipality of Foz do Iguaçu to demand corrections to the construction companies, which they effectively carried out.

Besides, these volunteers performed monitoring activities very frequently, on a weekly basis, for all three targeted ongoing construction works. This allowed for a thorough investigation, which then revealed a series of defects in projects for foundation structures. These were also reported to the municipal government for corrections.

Goioerê

In Goioerê, volunteers visited an already delivered school building and noticed improperly installed windows, rendering them non-functional. A series of finishes were also lacking, such as grab bars and handles in accessible restrooms for persons with disabilities or reduced mobility. These shortcomings compromised adequate use of the building and exposed its users - mainly children - to potentially dangerous situations. These flaws were mostly corrected by the contractor after being reported by the local Observatório.

Jequié and São Paulo

Aside from positive outcomes within the scope of the project, Obra Transparente has inspired organizations beyond those included in its initial design. The local Observatórios of São Paulo and Jequié, for instance, have manifested a strong interest in developing their own social monitoring projects based on our materials, guidelines, methodology and procedures. In Jequié, such a project is being implemented through partnerships with local universities.

Obra Transparente has, therefore, succeeded in developing a replicable paradigm for social monitoring of public procurements and construction works in Brazilian municipalities that will remain relevant long after the project is finished.

TransparênciaBrasil

2019

