

Civil Society for Health for All (CS4HFA) – Phase 2 Report

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A) Planning of Phase 2

1. What are the plans for Phase 2?

Following the workshop developed in São Luís/Maranhão in July 2016, which gathered participants from several states of Brazil, the plan of the group from Porto Alegre was to share the outcomes of the first phase of the research with all the participants (users, workers and managers) in a workshop. Next, from this participatory event, it was planned to analyze the outcomes, adding the contribution of the participants, and to create an intervention aimed to the strengthening of social participation.

In September 10, 2016 it was conducted a workshop in the auditorium of the Porto Alegre Municipal Health Council (MHC) (MHC/POA). Ten researchers, including PHM members, State University of Rio Grande do Sul (UERGS) staff, four users, two workers (including the coordinator of the MHC/POA) participated in this meeting. The dynamic of this meeting, based on theater and body expression techniques, was facilitated by a professional actress who planned and prepared the full workshop with the PHM activists/researchers. The participants were distributed in small groups according to affinities, trying to keep the balance between the research team and the invited participants. Vignettes extracted from interviewees' sayings in the 1st phase of the research were discussed, as they were related to aspects involving potentialities, difficulties or strategies of social participation in the National Unified Health System (SUS). Following the debate, each group prepared a short theatrical play to perform in front of the large group. The debate was focused on the issues in common addressed by the three groups and was aimed at the relationship between health and education.

At the end of the three-hour long collective exercise, we listed some considerations that could guide the continuation of our research, such as:

- We need to work more with children and youth, since it is from an early age that awareness concerning citizenship rights and social participation is promoted.
- There is a need of renovation and participation of new actors in social control in health, mainly in the users' segment.

Thus, as an alternative to foster this renovation and considering the importance of adding other/new actors into the debate on social control in health, it was drafted a proposal of project-intervention with the community's youth within the scope of the Health in School Program (HSP, see description next) and focusing on citizenship.

2. How were they chosen and how are they related with Phase 1?

In the Phase 1 of the research, one of the great concerns identified was the scarce participation of the youth in the health issues, placing in front of us the challenge of creating a closer relationship between social movements, participation spaces and the youth. From the analysis of the research outcomes (detailed in Phase 1 Report), when socialized with the participants who had been interviewed in Phase 1, the idea to share knowledge and experiences on rights and citizenship emerged, raising awareness and interest for the social participation since youth.

In phase 1, amongst the strategies to strengthen social participation it was highlighted:

- To attract the young population and to use more the digital communication tools, like e-mail, Facebook and WhatsApp.
- To invest in the education since the basis, to work in the schools, in the training of children for citizenship.

B) Description of the activities in Phase 2

1. Description of the activities, involved groups and alliances built:

- Preparatory meetings, with the participation of PHM activists/researchers, primary care workers and users who are members of Local Health Councils (LHC). In these meetings, it was defined that the Santo Alfredo Family Health Service (FHS), belonging to Partenon - Lomba do Pinheiro District Management, would be our partner in Phase 2.
- In a meeting with the whole Santo Alfredo FHS team, PHM activists/researchers shared the proposals built until then, having been defined that the most appropriate school for our intervention would be K-12 Luiz de Azambuja Soares Public School (which all affectionately call Azambuja). This definition originated from the previous experiences of the health team with the school, in which there was a good responsiveness and an active participation of the school community. This way, in this collective, we received authorization to act, within the context of the research, in the interconnection school-community-health service in the Municipal Health in School Program (HSP). The HSP, established in 2007, is an intersectoral public policy of the health and education sectors whose actions, developed by primary care teams, comprise the awareness of the school community and the health teams in relation to topics comprising social participation and citizenship, promotion of peace and human rights culture, prevention of the use of alcohol, tobacco, crack and other drugs, promotion of food and nutritional security and healthy feeding, opening space to work aspects pertinent to the local context, respecting each school's needs.
- Closeness to and creation of bonds with the school and the health service. Gradually, we knew the teachers, the staff and the students, as well as some of their families. The school has a forest in the internal area of the backyard and, along the several meetings, it was manifested the interest for the revitalization of this space for teaching/learning. We believe that the cooperative work around nature can be a powerful tool of learning for more social participation.



Photo 1: Meeting of the researchers with the Santo Alfredo Family Health Service.

- This way, through the HSP “open door”, we planned a research-action project, where at each step we found our partners and their spaces and, jointly, we built the actions that would lead to the final goal: fortifying the sense of participation in health in this school community, fostering health and stimulating citizenship when agglutinating active and collective forces of the region. The accomplishment of the work has involved distinct actors of the school community (parents, teachers, staff and students), Santo Alfredo FHS staff, Local Health Council members, besides others who were found and added along the process.
- Conversation circles with Azambuja school teachers and students and with Santo Alfredo FHS staff were developed.
- Participation in the Solidarity Day, an annual event conducted by Azambuja school. It happened on May 20, 2017, when we had the opportunity of getting closer to the students, parents and staff and where the concern with the physical space and the interest in making a community garden was pointed by all. On this day, it was made a filming that, after being edited by the researchers, have been disseminated to the professors and students with

the purpose of documenting the activities that have been accomplished by the school community itself and that are associated with the research goals.



Photo 2: Capoeira circle in the Solidarity Day in Azambuja School.

- Since the initial conversations in the school, the interest for revitalizing the green area was clearly expressed. Thus, we organized two collective visits to the Lomba do Pinheiro community garden, one of most traditional and recognized of Porto Alegre. This garden was initiated in October 2011 by community, religious and cultural leaderships. Besides seasonings and healthy and fresh foods, medicinal plants for phytotherapeutic treatments are cultivated. The area was donated by the Porto Alegre Municipal Government, following a claim presented to and approved by the Participatory Budget (OP) Assemblies. Presently, the community project establishes partnerships with volunteers, city departments and universities. The aim of the visit was to awake the motivation to develop activities in the school area, developing the experience of cultivation and sustainability, creating a space for health promotion and improvements in the quality of life of the population. Students, teachers and PHM activists/researchers, comprising one hundred people, participated in the visits.



Photo 3: Visit to Lomba do Pinheiro Community Garden.



Photo 4: Children visiting Lomba do Pinheiro Community Garden.

- From the interest expressed by the school community in revitalizing its forest space, we searched for the partnership with the permaculturist Mateus Raymundo Silva, who has vast experience in the city public schools. Together with Mateus, we organized a series of meetings and workshops with teachers, students, parents and PHM activists/researchers on topics related with health care: environment, permaculture¹ (agroforestry), composting and preparation of the soil for the cultivation of roots, herbs and seasonings, physical exercises, art and culture.
- In the process of development of the activities, we filmed the actions for the preparation of videos that can be used as learning material and memory.
- Drawing on the involvement of university professors and students in the work in the school, we developed university outreach projects in the State University of Rio Grande do Sul (UERGS) and the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). By means of the UERGS outreach project, titled “Social Participation and Citizenship in the School”, coordinated by professor Vânia Mello, the project was presented in two scientific events: the III Brazilian Congress of Health Policy, Planning and Management in May 2017 in Natal/RN and the 7º Integrated Teaching, Research and Outreach Exhibition (SIEPEX), developed in October 2017 in Tapes/RS.

¹The concept of permaculture was created in the 1970's by the Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. It is a collection of the knowledge from traditional societies gathered with innovative techniques, aiming to create a permanent, sustainable culture, based on the cooperation between men and nature. One of the basic principles of permaculture is the respect for the wisdom of nature, which developed a perfect system for each place. From the *principle* emerges the *strategy* (to observe and copy the nature), from which several *techniques* will emerge, which can be copied from situations that are similar or created in the place, to plan the sustainability of yards, small farms, farms or communities (new or already existing), like ecovillages, neighborhoods and settlements.



Photo 5: Workshop with permaculturist Mateus in Azambuja School.



Photo 6: Students and teacher participating of the workshop with permaculturist Mateus in Azambuja School.

- Within the activities of the outreach project, the group of UERGS students and professors, together with PHM activists/researchers, organized a series of meetings for studying and talking with major actors in the scope of social participation and the HSP. For this, meetings were accomplished between PHM activists/researchers with the teams and the technical coordination of HSP in the City Health Department of Porto Alegre (SMS) and in the State Health Secretary of the Health of RS (SES/RS), where we could learn on the HSP and its current scene.
- Also, as an unfolding of the outreach project, we invited the Coordinator of the Lomba do Pinheiro Grassroots Council, Francisco Giovane de Souza, to share his experience concerning social participation with the youth. From this, it emerged the proposal to establish an alliance between the Grassroots Council and UERGS for the organization of training courses for leaderships, research and thematic seminaries with the Grassroots Council, aiming to strengthen the bonds of the University with social movements (including PHM), schools and other institutions, strengthening the protagonism of the participatory democracy and the exchange of knowledge between the academy and the community where it is inserted.
- UERGS outreach project, in partnership with the Lomba do Pinheiro Grassroots Council and other organizations of the region, organized and held in June 2017 the seminary “The Social Impacts of the Population Growth of Lomba do Pinheiro and the Metamorphosis and Paths of the Participatory Budget in Porto Alegre”. This seminary had 78 participants, providing to them the knowledge of Lomba do Pinheiro social reality and the current context of Participatory Budget, with the purpose of qualifying the intervention of the region's leaderships, fostering the critical sense and the proposal of alternatives for the presented questions.
- The Alliance for the Appropriate and Healthy Food, another “arm” of the research in Brazil, has been an important partnership. Since the second semester of 2016, PHM Brazil integrates the Alliance and participates of its training meetings, which mainly work with capacity building in *advocacy*. Besides, the partnership with the Alliance provided the PHM participation in street markets and other spaces of great circulation in the city, promoting healthy feeding, with

emphasis on the tackling ultra-processed foods, highly associated with the obesity epidemics in the world.



Photo 7: Participation of PHM in the Organic Street Market of Porto Alegre, an event in partnership with the Alliance for Appropriate and Healthy Feeding.

- Previously more focused in academic partnerships between UFRGS and the Public Health School of Rio Grande do Sul (ESP/RS), in the 2nd Phase of the research the PHM developed new partnerships and alliances: with other public universities (UERGS), organizations of the civil society (Association for Control of Tobacco and Alliance for the Appropriate and Healthy Food), Health Councils, primary health care services (Santo Alfredo FHS), segments of the municipal management (City Health Department and Health in School Program), Lomba do Pinheiro Grassroots Council and community organizations (Lomba do Pinheiro Community Garden), besides the whole community of teachers, staff, students and parents of Luiz de Azambuja Soares school. This way, in relation to Phase 1, the research extended and intensified its network of alliances in the process of development of Phase 2.
- We have limited our actions to one health district (Partenon/Lomba do Pinheiro), differently of what occurred in the first phase of the research, when we worked with two sanitary districts. While phase 1 was more exploratory, phase 2 is being more of intervention in the community, what demands a deeper work of training and connection of networks, with the elaboration of goals in common and mutual trust among the actors.

2. To which groups/audiences were the activities directed? Which reach did they have?

As already described, our activities are, at this moment, mainly directed to the Azambuja School community. This group includes teachers, staff, students and their families. The whole school is involved; we are working with fifteen teachers who work in the morning and in the afternoon. So far, around one hundred students visited and participated of the workshops in Lomba do Pinheiro Garden.

The workshops developed in the school with permaculturist Mateus involve, for now, fifteen students in a closer way. Moreover, we have gathered in the school the health care service team, who develop actions programmed by HSP.

Besides the school community, the Local Health Council, PHM activists/researchers and universities also participate. All together, they are the builders of this project and they benefit from its actions.

In comparison with Phase 1, in Phase 2 we are achieving a much deeper reach in the community and, over all, developing the work together with the people who participate. We are experiencing an actual and participatory research-action work. We are exiting from the “walls” of the academy, building new partnerships and alliances, working together with health providers and the school community, knowing their daily difficulties and challenges, thus building actions that make sense in their distinct realities.

3. Which practices were used in the development of the activities?

- Transdisciplinary teaching practices for the incentive to the training of multipliers on the topics that we are developing, so that they can be shared in other spaces, in a permanent exercise of collaboration and cooperation;
- Appreciation of the active participation of the involved people;
- Conversation circles, visits to the community garden, workshops in the school, drawing competition for the choice of the project’s mascot, among others.;
- Popular health education as a dialogic and problematizing teaching method.



Photo 8: Choice of the project's mascot, created by a student from Azambuja school.

Aspects related to the 5 topics of Phase 1:

- **Movement development:** the activities that we are developing allow us to find new spaces of activism, as well as new forms to act collectively concerning the project's goal. This facilitates the expansion of PHM field of action locally and the aggregation of new activists, allies and partnerships. This is the dynamic process that is happening, triggered by the research. The strengthening of PHM locally is a visible outcome of the research activities, and is permanently maintained in process.
- **Knowledge production:** along the activities, the PHM activists/researchers, together with other involved people, are producing and spreading knowledge on the topics that base the actions (described below, topic 5), like permaculture, a topic that has been the basis of the workshops developed in the school. We are all learning together on this topic, as well as we are acquiring new knowledge on environmental health, water, healthy feeding, Health in School Program, social participation and citizenship. In the future activities

(see below, topic C), we intend to prepare audiovisual material (videos) to document the project actions, regarding the guiding concepts with which we are working. This material can be widely disseminated.

- Training and development of skills: with the knowledge production, we are all building our capacity in the topics that are being worked, besides learning new ways to make things happen, as an outcome of the aggregation of distinct people, with distinct experiences, where everything serves as input to build a joint action. The meetings of UERGS Outreach Project fostered a deeper study of some topics, like the Health in School Program. No formal training or capacity building was carried through. In this project, we understand that the training/capacity building of the people is happening in the process of development of the research actions.
- Campaigns: We did not carry through any specific campaign, but some specific actions happened, like the participation in the municipal organic market, in partnership with the Alliance for the Appropriate and Healthy Food, and in the World Food Week.
- Global governance: Our activities are focused on the local scope, we are not working with the topic of global governance. However, one of the PHM activists/researchers developed, along the research, her MSc thesis on this subject. The work is titled “Stories of Global Health: The World Health Organization and the Cooperation with Non-State Actors”. The author foresees the publication of an article and its availability to those interested.

4. Description of the logic/ideas founding the activities.

The activities developed are based on a participatory logic, where all the involved people - PHM activists/researchers, school community, health team - participate in their development. Therefore, the project was not conceived *a priori*, but rather happening as the involved people were appropriating more of the proposal and discovering their space of performance in it. Our logic is that the actions make true sense for all the involved ones, so that the goal of awareness on social participation is fully reached.

Some topics, with which the PHM group is already working, can be mentioned as strong references for the project being developed by us:

- ***Buen Vivir/Sumak Kawsay***: It is an experience of citizenship with nature. But it is also a civilizing project or a utopia in permanent recreation, being able to be considered a new option of life for humanity. Capitalism is not supported anymore! In this conception, the relationship between human beings and nature is of respect and care, contradicting the current hegemonic practice, marked by utilitarianism and greed.
- **Native and medicinal foods and plants**: A garden reestablishes the connection of children with the foundations of feeding - actually, with the foundations of life itself – and, at the same time, it integrates and makes more interesting practically all the activities that happen in the school. We value the right of the people to feed in a healthy way, knowing the plants cultivated by our ancestors, with their properties and importance in the health of the people. Some topics will be addressed: advocacy of native seeds, the current reality of pesticides and transgenic foods, the obesity epidemics, among other related topics.
- **Water**: Public safe and good quality water is an essential right of the human being. Plants, animals and people need water to live. Therefore, taking care of and protecting the water sources are a responsibility of all. In Porto Alegre, the municipal management wants to privatize the water of the municipal public network. We need to show to the youth the importance of the care with the water, strongly threatened by the privatization. Water is not a commodity.
- **Agroforestry**: it is an ancestral system of land use that has been practiced for thousands of years by agriculturists and nature lovers. It is characterized for having the ground always covered by the vegetation, having several plants, of varied sizes, together, one helping the others. A balanced system, without problems with “illnesses”, dismissing the use of pesticides. The school where we are acting has a forest, what facilitates the teaching-learning experience of the proposed topics.
- **Social participation**: It can be conceived as a form of acting of the civil society organized for the follow up and the implementation of public policies, for the exercise of dialogue and of a close relationship between governments and civil society. The social participation allows to advocate

the collective interests of the population. In the research perspective, social participation is a mode of action that one learns/experiences in distinct scopes of life and that, like the permaculture and agroforestry proposal, requires a time to be cultivated. Thus, it is not on a moment's notice that somebody becomes an acting citizen in the society. Social participation can and must be fomented as a learning process in which the school space is essential.

- **Ecological literacy:** It is a learning experience with the goal of overcoming our alienation in relation to the nature and to rekindle the sense of participation. The students acquire the capacity to read, describe and interpret the environment that surrounds them, overcoming one of the great current challenges of teaching, that is, to make the articulation between school contents and their applicability in the quotidian. Natural environments offer contexts that help to create meanings, to develop behaviors and values that will lead to the respect for nature and the principles of collaboration and cooperation.

5. How do the activities lead to the reach of the goal of the work? How do the expected outcomes of the activities take us closer to the major goal of PHM - to reach health for all (theory of change)?

Resuming our goal: to strengthen the sense of participation in health in the chosen school community, promoting health and stimulating the citizenship when agglutinating active and collective forces of the region. In this research-action, the activities are themselves outcomes, in the sense that they already are the development of social participation and citizen awareness. When developing them, the involved people apprehend new knowledge and deepen their senses, discovering new spaces to undertake their potentials and to practice their skills in a collective action. This is Movement and strengthens the Movement that already exists (PHM). Thus, the goal of the work is being reached to each stage of its concretion, at each development of a new activity, together with the empowerment of the involved parties. Reaching health for all is an ambitious goal when thought on global level. Therefore, we are working with it in the local scope and by means of topics that

make sense for the people and communities. By means of permaculture, we are working the skills and the sense of participation of the school community, health and environment, the *Buen Vivir*. This brings health to people's life in an extended conception, that quite often is not brought to the light in a more traditional context. Mainly, participating of the actions, being a protagonist brings the feeling of belonging, that we are capable of acting and participating for our own health, and that we have a place to demand our rights. The theory of change is actualized in the action, in the effective participation, in the awareness of what we are capable of and that we are much more capable when we think and make together. This is what our project is about, and it is this way that we see its contribution for PHM in the local, regional and global levels.

C. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Our first year of research-action is serving as planting of the project. We allow the soil to be fertile to continue carrying through and dreaming with the participation of all in the harvest of the outcomes.

a. Proposals of action to be carried through until the end of the year/July 2018:

- To make Santo Alfredo FHS closer with the school in educational and participatory projects;
- To involve the community associations of the neighborhood, by means of conversation circles with the presence of the Local Health Council and the school families to share the project's proposals;
- To promote workshops with the school students, by means of creative and cultural devices on the following topics: environment and health; right to health and citizenship; phytotherapy; *Buen Vivir*;
- To train of monitors/multipliers able to preserve, support and convey the learning to the whole school community, even when the group of PHM activists/researchers will not be acting directly in the school anymore;
- To promote a seminary with the educators and the community on permaculture and agroforestry, finishing with the practice of the herb spiral, developed collectively;

- To transform the forest into a classroom. Besides the recovery of the green area, that was moved away from the students due to abandonment, to develop the ecological literacy in theory and practice with the cultivation, use of medicinal plants, contemplative and interaction space, extending the contact with the forest, in a perspective of culture of peace, by means of practical experiences;
 - To elaborate audiovisual material (videos) to document the activities carried through, what will function as a way of disseminating the project and the worked topics.
- b. Major challenges and learnings of Phase 2, in relation to the development of a social movement for health for all.

This report intends to describe an action process of collective learning that began in March 2017. We are only at the beginning of a process of promotion of social participation and production of collective subjects in the fight for the right to health.

“In recent years, SUS has been attacked by distinct strikes proceeding from powerful economic and social groups. We have witnessed the retrocession of collective health actions in Brazil. The last one directly involved primary health care” (Motion against the predatory corporativism against SUS/X Brazilian Congress of Epidemiology, 2017).²

Learnings

- The project meetings in the school are intensifying the collective and participatory actions. The interaction between workers, teachers, researchers and students has provided the exchange of knowledge by the dialogic experience in the teaching/learning process.
- The phase 2/research-action is a powerful stage of the project, as it allows us to be exercising the production and/or the transformation of new realities in the quotidian of the school, as an experience of constant development.
- Re-encounters with the cultural memories present in the life stories of students, educators and the territory;

²<https://www.abrasco.org.br/site/eventos/congresso-brasileiro-de-epidemiologia/mocoos-aprovadas-no-x-congresso-brasileiro-de-epidemiologia/31375/>

- The introduction of new practices and the knowledge around the concept of *Buen Vivir* (cooperation, permaculture, agroforestry, citizenship, social participation and health promotion) allows to recover traditional cultures and can be triggers of a new positioning in front of the medicalizing, consuming-centered capitalist society.
- To awake the sensitivity and the interest of children for the natural world that surrounds them, promoting the curiosity as a propeller of knowledge. The activities, experiences related to the forest, like the visit to the community garden, bring a vast learning associated with the topic: healthy feeding, therapeutic uses of medicinal plants, techniques of natural cultivation and identification and knowledge of non-conventional nourishing plants.
- To raise awareness to re-signify nature is a learning, because, at the same time that we respect and we dignify it, we reflect on the right to life and the right to health.
- The constitution of groups, at a moment of strong individualism of the society, is an experience of joy and tension that demands time/space and dedication. A discovery of the (in)visible and the diversity in the constitution of the collectives.
- Besides all, in a project that involves so many and so diverse people, we need to respect the times of the distinct groups. The time foreseen by the group of PHM activists/researchers was different of that real, contextualized time, considering the adversities in the quotidian of the school and the health service. But we understand that it is essential to follow up this apparent mismatch between the distinct rhythms of all the involved ones in this process of collective planning and development. It is, also, a great challenge, for being intrinsically a long-term work. Moreover, the time of nature also must be respected, so that we can take advantage of the best moments of the seasons for the preparation of the land, cultivation and harvest.

Challenges

- The national political conjuncture of democratic retrocession and economic crisis reflected and intervened immensely with the practice of the health and education workers. The situation aggravated more in this past year in Porto

Alegre, particularly, where the municipal and state govern, from the conservative right, have affected the quality and the access to the public policies of health and education. Although the restrictive actions of funding of the public policies, the efforts are great for the maintenance of care to the users, on the part of SUS health teams.

- In the field of education public policy, the teachers' strike, due to delays and installment in the payment of wages, resulted in interruption of the project in distinct periods of the year. The activities of PHM activists/researchers in the school were interrupted in respect and support to the teachers' fight for better wages and more quality in education.
- Involving the community is our great challenge at this moment. In the school environment, in the meetings related to the project, we observed a new dynamic of interaction between employees, teachers, management and students.
- Involving the Family Health Strategy team in the development of educative actions within the school and in the community. It is difficult for the FHS team to participate of school's actions due to the lack of flexibility of its working hours and in the accomplishment of the demands and taken over tasks.
- To keep the motivation of teachers, management and students for the continuation of the project.
- To extend the project's team of facilitators and to build planning strategies for the next educational actions, to promote greater sustainability of the project.
- To participate of the intersectoral network between health and education in the territory, searching for the building of co-responsibility networks that extend and qualify the relations between both.
- Our intervention requires expansion and greater knowledge of the community and its neighborhood associations. In the future, based on this experience, we imagine expanding it to other schools, as the conditions allow.

c. How these challenges and learnings are related with the future of PHM in Brazil?

- We believe that the alliances and partnerships that have been developed in the process of the research-action, as well as the closer work with children and youth, are great powers for PHM in Porto Alegre and Brazil.

- The research is being a source of strengthening of the bonds between the group of Porto Alegre, the ACT-BR organization and the group of Maranhão and north of Brazil. Each group is developing the research according to its context, and the connection between the actions is more actual with the research. We believe that these bonds will help to strengthen the national PHM group and to face the problems of communication and articulation that we have.



Photo 9: Small flower pot planted in the Azambuja School during the project, announcing hope for the next steps...