

SOCIAL STORE AND THE SOCIAL INCLUSION

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From São Paulo City Assistance and Social Development Secretary

1- Presentation and Justification of the Program's Deployment

The Social Store integrates the Productive Social Inclusion Program, which is supervised by the Municipal Secretary for Social Assistance and Development. The Store aims at promoting actions that are focused on productive inclusion and on income generation for people who face a situation of vulnerability due to economic, gender, ethnical and other factors stemming from the lifecycle of the individuals (the children and the elderly).

The most serious social issues in a city marked by a demographic and economic gigantism and whose wealth distribution was always skewed are particularly manifest in the areas that display many kinds of deficits of their modern urbanization patterns and concentrate many dwellers who are historically excluded by both the market forces and the State. Hence, and in a doubtless manner, the city of São Paulo is marked by social inequalities. Population estimates indicate more than eleven million inhabitants.

In Brazil, the low income of individuals and families plays a key role in selecting the people to be targeted by public policies, and even more so in the Social Assistance field and, although the income itself is a very significant factor, it cannot explain – alone - all individual deprivation possibilities in society. Gender and racial matters, as well as situations of abandon and domestic violence all contribute to worsen the economic situation of already vulnerable individuals. It is a goal of the Social Store to provide an inclusion possibility for these vulnerable groups, through the commercialization of goods manufactured by them in craft workshops.

2 – Subjects of the Program

According to the Social Assistance Plan 2010 - PLAS, it is essential to aggregate other indicators beyond those purely economic in nature, in order to deploy programs directed at the social inclusion of vulnerable individuals.

In order to fight poverty, the city of São Paulo has adopted an indicator that associates socio-economic and demographic factors - which were previously treated on an independent and unarticulated basis – in order to detect the main poverty pockets. This indicator, known as IPVS – São Paulo State's Vulnerability Index, employs methodologies that combine a set of variables and generate a value expressing an extremely significant correlation between the socio-economic and demographic factors. This study classifies each city district according to the several socio-economic deprivation degrees and also according to the different degrees of access to public goods and services. These groupings display an extremely exclusionary map for the city of São Paulo, in which the brown and red colours indicate high deprivation degrees and the blue color indicates low degrees of deprivation.

In parallel, the central regions, with higher exclusion indices, display a significant concentration of homeless people and families.

As in many other big urban centers, the colors indicating higher vulnerability indicators predominate in those districts located at the borders of the São Paulo city map, and in these locations the Social Assistance Secretary will find – with reasonable degree of certainty – people enduring risky situations, both in the personal and in the social spheres. Naturally, it is in those locations that the Social Assistance Secretary should create

programs, projects and services suited to the needs of their vulnerable dwellers.

Upon observing the map below, one may notice the presence – to a higher degree – of “hot” colours (dark orange and dark brown) in the outskirts of the city and – to a lesser degree – in central areas. These areas have very bad socio-economic and environmental conditions and do not have readily available basic public services. In quantitative terms, they sum up to 12.9% of the city’s population, or - in absolute numbers – 1,345,577 people in a situation of “High Vulnerability” (group 5) or in a situation of “Very High Vulnerability” (group 6). PLAS 2009/2011.

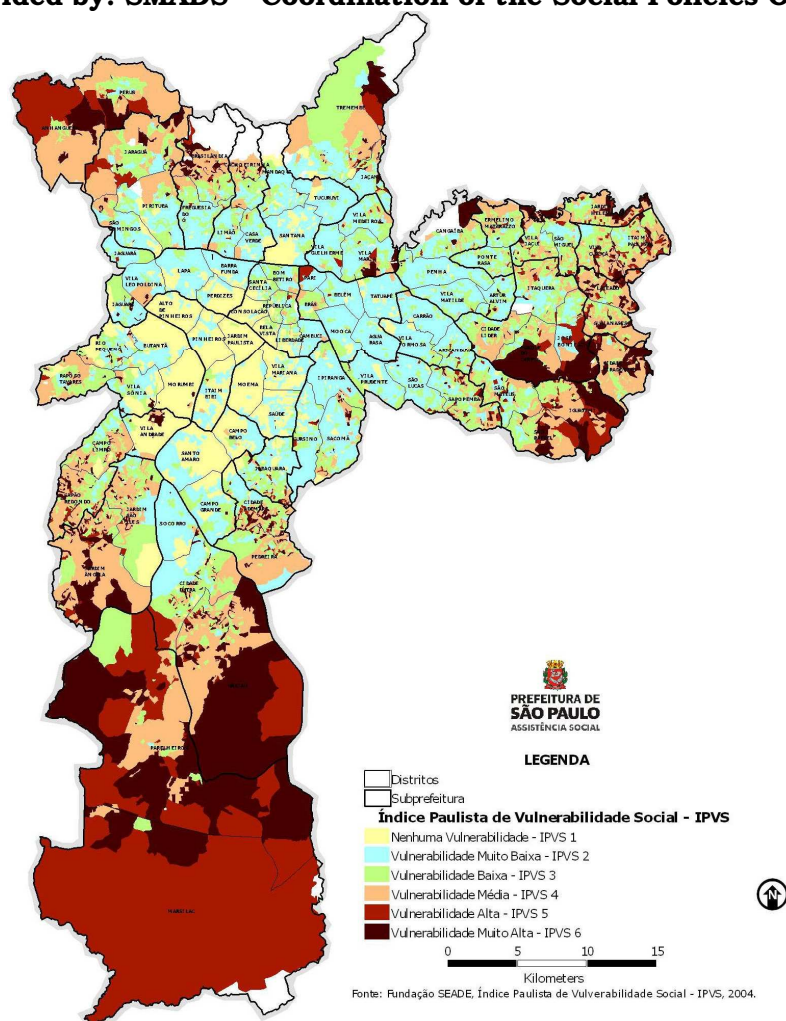
The target of this program are physically and/or mentally handicapped people, the elderly, women who are victims of domestic violence, homeless people, teenagers in conflict with the Law, mothers of children and teenagers enduring a child labor condition, teenagers under social and legal protection services and families who make use of the 46 Reference Centers of the Social Assistance - CRAS.

The Social Store aggregates, in a single central space accessible to all, the most diverse artisanal works of the whole city.

MAP- Map 1 - São Paulo State's Social Vulnerability Index - IPVS

Source: SEADE Foundation, IPVS, 2004.

Provided by: SMADS – Coordination of the Social Policies Observatory.



3- The Social Store as a Social Inclusion Proposal

The National Social Assistance Policy establishes the need to guarantee the “survival, income or autonomy security”, by making use of the significant opportunities that appear

in the areas more subject to vulnerability, where several social organizations have developed craft workshop programs that promote the artisanal manufacture of sustainable products.

It is understood, in the context of inclusive production, that these actions, when articulated with the government – represented by the Social Store, in our case – can gather momentum and improve their quality through the promotion of courses, the leveraging of product commercialization and the subsequent strengthening of the social network.

The fighting of the cruel social exclusion and deprivation system - which affects the most vulnerable sectors of the population - should be regarded as a top priority. Hence, all economic agents (civil society, government and the private sector) should be versatile, looking for intelligent, creative and simple solutions, which can be easily reproduced in order to guarantee their sustainability.

In the craft workshops spread across the city, citizens can learn crafting techniques, developing the possibilities of social inclusion before they develop their crafting abilities. In these craft workshops, they can integrate with other citizens facing similar challenges and problems and, by doing so, they can develop – as a group - a new form of social action, manufacturing useful products that generate income and that are a mark of their social group, aggregating social, ethic and fair value to these products.

The Social Store trusts and invests in this practice, because we believe that the fostering of craft workshops may promote economic inclusion and both direct and indirect job creation, aiming at the acquisition of habits and attitudes, articulating knowledge and amplifying practices in the process of creating, qualifying and fairly commercializing products. This practice is a way to address the difficulty in inserting individuals in the supply chain - frequently cruel and impersonal – and thus generating income and autonomy.

In the Social Store, the craft workshop production is not limited to meeting the consumers' demands, being also focused on “the value of the people, of their culture and of the local environment”, which make up the pillars of the fair trade, that is, it is a form of commercialization in which the manufactured object is only one of the dimensions of the act of buying. All the money resulting from the trade goes directly to the producer.

The Social Store is, nowadays, the most significant form of productive inclusion promoted by the Social Assistance Secretary, since it articulates, in a measurable way, the social organizations having craft workshop programs. This allows their beneficiaries to be trained in craft workshops, in their quest for income generation. We consider that this inclusion process generates a significant approximation between the artisan and the customer. The latter not only acquires the product, but also becomes an inclusion generator.

4-Management and partnership System

In accordance with the democratic principles regulating the Social Store, it is important that its management system be well explained. This inclusive space is managed by a collegiate of organizations who, being articulated in distinct work fronts, promote the fair trade in a governmental space endowed with all the infra-structure needed to render the program visible and successful.

The collegiate is made up of coordinators, artisans and vulnerable citizens, designated by each participating organization, and has, among its functions, to analyze, discuss, improve and systematize the dynamics of the activities of the Social Store agents.

The government and these organizations are searching for partners who are willing to establish fair and sustainable trade spaces in other city areas, thus creating new inclusion and autonomy possibilities.

In order to strengthen the productive inclusion, the city invests in training programs for those who take part in the Social Store, so that they can recycle their abilities, come into contact with the latest market trends, learn more about pricing, marketing and other strategies who can help promote the practice of fair trade and the subsequent

strengthening of the urban social network, constantly fostering the local participation, articulation and development.

5. Social Store as a center of learning and acquaintanceship

The School Store is the space where the practical application of the principles and concepts relative to the personal development of the user and to the product commercialization. The representatives of the organizations in charge of the Social Store should develop a range of abilities that includes dealing with the general public, warehouse and stock control, sales management, notions of computing as a control tool, physical space management, window dressing, among others. They are also expected to share what they have learned, spreading the acquired knowledge and abilities to their own organizations and to new subjects who find themselves in a vulnerability condition.

It should be noticed that, at the same time that those participating in the School Store get ready for participation, independence, autonomy and emancipation of the institutional life, they also make it possible for other users to do the same.

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