



ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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The Dara Institute and Social Inequality



Vera Cordeiro
Founder and Chairwoman

Oxfam's latest Inequality Inc. report, published on January 15, 2024, during the 54th World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, estimates that, at current rates, it will take the world nearly 230 years to eradicate poverty completely.

The report notes that the 2020s have been particularly hard on the most underprivileged populations, where the purchasing power of hundreds of millions of people has been steadily declining. Besides increased cost of living, the paper points to the Covid-19 pandemic, the surge in conflicts across the globe and the worsening climate crisis as reasons for why these ten years are becoming a “decade of division”.

While the World Bank considers Brazil a middle-income country, because of its production capacity and economic

potential, it is profoundly unequal – ranking as the world's eighth most unequal country, according to Brazil's official bureau of statistics.

According to the New Hunger Map published by the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, over 65 million Brazilians survive on incomes of less than US\$ 5.50 a day or household incomes of US\$ 100 a month. This means that nearly 30% of Brazil's population is living in poverty, has little income and/or limited access to quality education and essential services

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(health, sanitation, water, housing and food security). The causes of poverty are multiple and include a fiscal framework in need of overhaul, the government's inadequate investment capacity and the legacy of slavery and patriarchy, which means that racial and gender inequality have to be integral to measures to reduce poverty. Black Brazilians and those of colour are disproportionately present in poverty statistics. Added to which, 63% of the country's poorest families are headed by black women or women of colour.

Despite all these hardships facing both the world and Brazil, we believe that the more that governments and organisations engage with methodologies to fight poverty and promote human development, such as the Dara Institute's Family Action Plan, the less inequality there will be in Brazil and the world.

At the Dara Institute, we are often witness to "planned miracles." When families complete the Family Action Plan journey – after two years of intensive activities working with professionals as diverse as doctors, lawyers, architects, social assistants, nutritionists, psychologists, volunteers and others – they ring a bell and receive a certificate marking completion of the programme. As they do so, it is common to see Dara staff members and volunteers heading to the balcony, deeply moved, realising how much these families have changed. Whenever we hear their testimonies describing their situation when they

first came to the Institute and now that they are leaving, it really can seem like a miracle. That it is a "planned miracle" alludes to the fact that our robust methodology – recognised in over 50 Brazilian and international awards – creates a safe space for attentive listening, where families are enabled to plan their own destinies.

Poverty is multidimensional and Dara's multidisciplinary approach, an endeavour that combines programmes in health, education, income generation, housing and citizenship, goes to the very heart of social inclusion, all with invaluable assistance from volunteers.

It is very common, early in the programme, for representatives of the families we serve to use expressions like "I'm devastated" and "I see no reason to go on living". These families are so debilitated they truly do feel there is no way out. From the moment our work starts though, during the conversation circles with participants who have already made progress, they begin to realise that their lives can be transformed.

There are a number of signposts along the way to being self-sustaining and autonomous. One is body language: the typical head of household – usually a single black mother – who comes heavily depressed, begins to show signs of change, for instance, in the way she speaks and introduces herself. These are signs that an inner change is underway and that, very

soon, this woman will be ready to "take the leap"

The Dara Institute also made substantial progress in 2023 by bolstering its Direct Services, Expansion and Knowledge and Information Sharing programmes and social mobilisation activities.

The Direct Services programme, for instance, concluded the Family Action Plan Handbook, which systematises the knowledge we have gained over many years of day-to-day practical experience and promises to be invaluable as a tool for us to continue extending the reach of our methodology in Brazil and around the world.

Our Children's Mental Health project, which targets children up to 12 years old and is sponsored by the Swedish HM Queen Silvia's Foundation – Care About the Children, has been highly successful in showcasing the efficacy of psychological and educational

care for children often traumatised by the conditions of their lives.

The challenges of providing care for families referred to us by the Rio de Janeiro State Family Court seemed so daunting in 2022, but results improved over the course of 2023.

This year's main achievement by Dara's Expansion programme, besides continuing to advise the National Department of Social Assistance, was to establish a new partnership with the Vale corporation. That partnership has enabled us to launch a project that will foster human development and autonomy for the Vila Geny community, in Itaguaí (Rio de Janeiro). Starting in January 2024, the project is expected to run for 30 months.

Our Knowledge and Information Sharing programme is growing and becoming more firmly established day by day,



sharing a diversity of content acquired thanks to our hands-on approach, as well as highly interesting papers on health and poverty eradication and other subjects. Two discussion panels – *Poverty: Its Dimensions and How to Eradicate It* and *Women in Movement: Strategies for Tackling and Ending Poverty* – held in the Dr Luis Carlos Vieira Teixeira Knowledge Sharing Auditorium, featured participations by prominent beneficiaries of the Citizenship programme.

Also in 2023, we launched the Hub for the Eradication of Poverty (HubEP), a platform that brings together important Brazilian social organisations: Ação da Cidadania, Cieds, Empresa B, Gastromotiva, Ipê – Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas, Rede Astra, and UNlperiferias, plus the Dara Institute. We continue working to increase the number of partner organisations with proven impact, so as to foster advocacy with a view to improving public policies and reducing Brazil’s enormous structural poverty.

We also believe that a number of renowned organisations working together will help to push for large-scale social mobilisation.

We all know that no institution alone will be able to end poverty.

We are confident that the Dara Institute, over the course of its history, has sounded a call to action and has successfully influenced municipal public policies, businesses, social organisations and academia.

It is precisely these unrelenting efforts that will build a new relationship between ourselves and a new society.

Vera Cordeiro
Founder and Chairwoman

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In 2023, at the Dara Institute, we celebrated 32 years of transforming the lives of the most vulnerable families!

The year was one of new partnerships with SC Johnson and Vale.

A year of invaluable support from White Martins, Droga Raia/Editora Mol/RD, Instituto Phi, TechnipFMC, Fundação TIM, GS1, the Rio de Janeiro State Family Court, Santander, Icatu, Prudential, Gávea Investimentos, HM Queen Silvia's Foundation, Criança Esperança, H. Stern and many other sponsors.

A year enjoying the wonderful voluntary work of Veirano Advogados, Pedro Genescá, Turim Investimentos, Instituto Profarma, Dentistas do Bem, Instituto Vedacit, EB Studio, Leroy Merlin and Recode, to name just a few partners.

Another year

Another year blessed with contributions from so many private donors – including Mrs. Gretchen Sarmiento and her husband Carlos Sarmiento, Dr. Luiz Guilherme Migliora and others –, who very generously provide the support essential for our organisation to continue operating.



José Land Neto
Executive Director

of hard work

Another year of contributions from dozens of volunteers on the Family Monitoring programme, as well as numerous other volunteers who support our Institution's various other programmes. Another year of partnerships with the School of Architecture and Urbanism of Rio de Janeiro Federal University, Fluminense Federal University, University of Rio de Janeiro State and Rio de Janeiro Catholic University.



It is increasingly our responsibility to show you and Brazilian society our successful results in promoting health, fighting poverty and fostering human development for all the families served here at the Dara Institute.

Our *Aconchego Família* project holds safe family conversation groups for experience and knowledge sharing among the families we serve and a variety of experts.

This year, I heard heart-breaking testimonies telling of the situations, suffering and vulnerable situations of families that come to us to take part in our social methodology, the Family Action Plan:

“I was a mess when I arrived here. I was a wreck.”

“I’d hit rock bottom.”

“Destroyed. Alone. Devastated. Shattered.”

“Abandoned.”

“Discouraged. Depressed.”

“Lost. At a dead end.”

“Devastated. Hopeless.”

“With no will to live.”

“Violated. Why go on living?”

“I wanted to die.”

“I cried all day.”

Thanks to a lot of hard work, active listening, patience, affection, dedication and professionalism, some 60 staff members and over 100 volunteers fought to change that scenario and enable families to muster strength and be equipped and in a position to shape their own destinies and become self-sustaining and find hope of better, more dignified lives.

Dara brings together doctors, social assistants, nutritionists, psychologists, educationalists, architects, lawyers and other professions. We know there is a solution to poverty. We are increasingly driven by the need to press for public policies in this struggle to reduce inequality and offer a better future to those who need it most.

Our doors are always open, and we are full of energy and hope that our message and our work will reach other organisations, companies and entrepreneurs, as well as more philanthropists and volunteers eager to change this country that is so utterly unequal and so lacking in solutions to the problem.

Thank you very much, everyone! We are enormously grateful!

Will you join us in 2024?

José Land Neto
Executive Director



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This report presents the Dara Institute's results from January 1 to December 31, 2023. That time frame enables us to show this social organisation's ability to produce impact, in the short, medium and long-term, with a pioneering, innovative methodology devised to restructure families living in vulnerable socioeconomic conditions, referred to us by public healthcare facilities, public schools and Social Assistance Reference Centers, and help them become self-sustaining.

Introduction



The results of the work done jointly by the families and the Dara Institute are recorded through a robust IT system that, for several years now, has provided quantitative and qualitative data that enables us to monitor and assess the outcomes of these effort.

To learn more about the system, see page 48.

Indicators

Health

- Children 0 to 18 years old whose vaccination cards are up to date, according to the Ministry of Health's National Immunisation Programme
- All family members registered with facilities for Primary, Specialised and High-Complexity Healthcare
- Women 25 to 64 years old up to date with their preventive cervical cancer exams, in line with Brazil's Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines
- Eligible women with access to reproductive and sexual planning through the National Health System, as well as birth control methods
- All family members with eutrophic nutrition diagnosis
- Food security for the whole family
- Reduced levels of emotional stress for the head of household

Human Development

- All children and teenagers from 4 to 17 are attending school
- Income above the poverty line for all family members over 18
- All family members have essential documents, including Live Birth Declaration, Birth Certificate, ID Card, Individual Taxpayer Registration (CPF), Voter's Card, Work and Social Security Card and Military Service Status Certificate
- Access to social and social security benefits granted by the federal, state and municipal governments
- Access free of charge to high-cost medicines through the Brazilian National Health System.

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Over the course of the whole process, the material presented here enables us to:

- compare and map out patterns of impact;
- identify points of information relating to Dara's guidelines;
- report to our partners;
- produce and share knowledge;
- show how the Dara Institute generates or intends to generate short-, medium- and long-term impacts for its various target publics – but, above all, to transform the lives of all the many families in vulnerable situations.

The team inputs all information on each family unit into the system during their monthly sessions and home visits. By regularly assessing information and cross-referencing data from the different Family Action Plan programmes, Dara can track the progress, need for intervention and action to be taken to tackle each family's difficulties.

The Dara Institute's activities are multidimensional, transdisciplinary and inter-sector – and entail physical, biological, financial, social and psychological changes to beneficiaries' lives. Accordingly, this report lays out not only data and indicators, but also the value of every Dara staff member's expertise and commitment in pursuing solutions to meet each family's challenges and needs.

Accordingly, it describes the main activities and results of the programmes that make up our operating methodology, the Family Action Plan, as well as those of Dara's Expansion, Knowledge and Information Sharing, Project Management Office, Communication and Institutional Relations programmes. Each piece of information is key to strengthening and giving transparency to our work to build new pillars of personal, family and social existence.



Founded by Dr Vera Cordeiro in 1991, the Dara Institute is a Brazilian civil society organisation that seeks to promote health and human development by implementing and spreading an integrated approach to combating poverty.

Only by an integrated, multidisciplinary endeavour, engaging the different areas of human development, is it possible to bring about the social transformation of families living in situations of vulnerability.

On that assumption, we devised a multidisciplinary social methodology, the Family Action Plan, an innovative approach to understanding, conceptualising and caring for people's health. Dara's work entails an awareness that the biology of health is intrinsically connected with social, economic, cultural, ethnic/racial, psychological and behavioral factors. Each person's and each family's health hinges on the conditions in which they live and work, as well as their access to housing, food, education, income and employment.

The Dara Institute's work, pioneer at the world level, operated a paradigm shift in health by proving the importance of the social determinants of health. In its 32 years of existence, the Dara Institute has assisted more than 100,000 people in Brazil by services provided directly at its headquarters and or licensed organisations and public policies. Its social methodology, the Family Action Plan, has already benefited hundreds of thousands indirectly across four continents.

The data presented here help to tell part of the process that is tirelessly transforming lives – adapting to new realities and needs, listening actively to families, workers, partners and volunteers and constantly demonstrating its resilience by merging knowledge with lessons from life in order, jointly, inclusively and collectively, to build new ways of seeing and living in the world with dignity and justice.



Mission

To promote health and human development by implementing and spreading an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to combating poverty.

Vision

A healthy and sustainable world in which everyone has equal opportunities and rights and plays the leading role in their own development.

Values

Social justice, autonomy, integrity and transparency.



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The Dara Institute and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly, 193 Member States, set out global goals – the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – for reducing inequality worldwide, ending poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring that all people achieve peace and prosperity. This 2030 Agenda comprises 17 interconnected objectives and 169 global goals in four dimensions – social, environmental, economic and institutional – to be met by 2030.

These objectives and goals are intended to generate social impact across the

fields of poverty eradication, food security, health, education, gender equality and others. To that end, social programmes, projects and investments by governments and businesses, locally and globally, should endeavor to produce and introduce measures that bring about changes across the globe and/or in communities with specific needs.

The work of the Dara Institute and the Family Action Plan methodology

go hand in hand with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, to improve thousands of people’s daily lives, in all ways and dimensions possible. This relationship was acknowledged by the UN as well in 2018, when the Institute received an honorable mention at the SDG Brazil Award.


The illustrations below show Dara’s programmes and their close relationship with the SDGs.

1. No Poverty



- Citizenship
- Income Generation
- Housing
- Health

2. Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture



- Citizenship
- Income Generation
- Health

5. Gender Equality




- Citizenship
- Education
- Health

6. Clean Water and Sanitation



- Housing
- Health

12. Responsible Consumption and Production



- Health

16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



- Citizenship
- Health

3. Good Health and Well-Being




- Citizenship
- Education
- Income Generation
- Housing
- Health

4. Quality Education



- Education
- Income Generation
- Health

8. Decent Work and Economic Growth



- Citizenship
- Education
- Income Generation

10. Reduced Inequalities



- Education
- Income Generation
- Health

17. Partnerships for the Goals



- Citizenship
- Housing
- Health

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Recognition

In the course of its 32 years of existence, the Dara Institute has earned more than 50 Brazilian and international awards and honors. Its transparency, credibility and impact have been recognised by organisations, foundations, publications and so on, both in Brazil and abroad.

In 2023, Dara joined the United Nations Ecosoc Council, a group of civil society organisations that meet to contribute to social, economic, environmental and cultural development. Established in 1945, it is the only UN body open to direct participation by civil society organisations, enabling them to engage with and influence world powers with a view to building socially, economically, environmentally and culturally more developed societies. [To learn more, click here.](#)

Dara thus now the opportunity to join this network of organisations, with special consultative status, to seek solutions for economic and social problems on a global scale. These organisations are also free to make recommendations and influence global policymaking.

In order to obtain special consultative status, Dara underwent a process of documentary appraisal, events and meetings involving the whole organisation and lasting nearly a year. The favourable recommendation was made by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organisations, which monitors the evolving relationship between civil society organisations and the United Nations and examines accreditation applications and the four-yearly reports of NGOs already accredited.

The Dara Institute's work was also covered by prominent Brazilian and international publications, including an interview granted by Dr Vera Cordeiro, Dara's founder and chairwoman, to the Brazil Journal and a news report by the German TV station Deutsche Welle.

Dara's work has been acknowledged by the four main organisations of social entrepreneurs, Ashoka, Avina, Skoll and Schwab and, in 2021, Dara received further acknowledgement in the form of a generous donation from philanthropist MacKinsey Scott.



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2023 in numbers

- 476** families assisted
- 1,733** people assisted over the year
- 3.6** individuals per family, on average
- 1.5** children per family, on average
- 733** children assisted
- 992** individuals under 18 assisted
- 51%** average increase in per capita income in families that completed the Family Action Plan in 2023

Families

- 34** is the mothers' average age
- 77%** of participants identify as black or coloured
- 37%** of participants completed lower secondary school
- 23%** of participants completed upper secondary school
- 8%** of heads of household entered higher education, but dropped out
- 45%** of the mothers are single
- 125** adults are currently pursuing their education
- 67%** of the children and teenagers are of school age
- 58%** of the families receive the federal family allowance
- 93%** of the families are on the federal Unified Registry of low-income families
- 8%** of participants receive the federal minimum income benefit
- 7%** of participants receive the free travel pass
- 36%** of the families rent their homes
- 22%** of the families live on loan
- 20%** of the families receive the federal cooking gas allowance

* Important: many of these figures relate to families who joined Dara in 2022 (and continued receiving assistance the following year) and in 2023 – and, in exceptional cases, families who joined in 2021.

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PLANO DE AÇÃO FAMILIAR

Metodologia Social Instituto Dara

THE FAMILY ACTION PLAN

Dara's social methodology

Programmes:



To get a better idea of the importance of the work of the Dara Institute and the recognition it has gained, one must first understand the Family Action Plan and its innovative design.

Drawing on her professional experience at the federal Lagoa Hospital in Rio de Janeiro, Dr Vera Cordeiro realised that medical practice was missing something: children living in conditions of extreme poverty never got over infectious diseases and were caught up in a routine of relapses and readmissions.

It was from that context – over the course of 32 years and always with the support of numerous volunteers and staff – that the Dara Institute created and refined the Family Action Plan, an innovative social methodology to combat poverty and promote health and human development. Now recognised nationally and internationally for its highly efficient, inter-sector approach, the Family Action Plan is a customisable, multidimensional tool resting on five core programmes: **Health, Education, Income Generation, Housing and Citizenship.**

The Family Action Plan understands that families in situations of vulnerability will only become self-sustaining and autonomous if their children are in school, if they have decent housing, if someone in the household is generating income, if everyone is healthy and any chronic diseases are under control and, lastly, if they know their rights and duties.

Although the families share a common structural social, economic, and cultural context, plus difficulties in accessing opportunities to improve and change their lives, the Family Action Plan centres on each family individually, because each person or group experiences vulnerability in their own unique way. This approach is fundamental, because it merges the accumulated knowledge and experience of Dara's staff and partners with the specific needs, demands and possibilities of each family group.

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What family means to Dara

When thinking about the concept of family, the Dara Institute considers the multiplicity of family formats, their contradictions and day-to-day dynamics, on the understanding that there is no single model or specific defined arrangement, but rather a multiplicity of relationships.

To be eligible for the Family Action Plan programme, families must be referred by one of six partner organisations – three public hospitals, two public schools and the Padre Veloso Social Assistance Referral Centre in Rio de Janeiro’s Botafogo district – and meet a key precondition, income of up to R\$ 218 per person.

In order to participate, all members of the family must be enrolled and engaged with the Family Action Plan’s goals and proposals. One member, designated

as the person responsible and family representative, undertakes to express the family’s needs, share information and lessons learned in the family and ensure that they complete their Family Action Plan journey, which lasts an average of two years.

Given that the main goal is to transform lives, Dara’s social methodology is efficient because it works in partnership with the thousands of families served by the organisation in the past thirty-plus years.



Services provided in numbers

Total service instances in 2023: 12,574

Programme	Number	%
Health	6,505	51.73%
Education	1,858	14.77%
Housing	769	6.11%
Income Generation	1,146	9.11%
Citizenship	2,296	18.25%
Health	Number	%
Medicine	2,335	35.89%
Nutrition	2,332	35.84%
Psychology/Psychiatry	1,838	28.25%
Total	6,505	100%

Next, the work of each programme and the main activities in 2023.



Dara's story all started with its Health programme



Dara's Health programme provides guidance to beneficiary families on three different fronts – Medicine, Nutrition and Psychology. The main goal is to promote comprehensive health, to foster well-being and quality of life. That proposal underlies and drives the Dara Institute's multi- and inter-sector work, signalling that health is intrinsically bound up with education, housing, income generation and citizenship.

The integrated work of the Health programme focuses on preventing diseases and encouraging preventive exams, physical activity and healthy eating habits, as well as making families fully aware of Brazil's National Health System and teaching them how to use and preserve it.



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Medicine

Dara's Medicine programme is designed to help provide access to preventive and therapeutic measures. Each family referred to us undergoes an initial medical history interview (or anamnesis) to discover their problems, map their needs and plan courses of action.

After this sharing of information and explanations about their clinical conditions, participants are then referred to facilities of the National Health System or our partner institutions, so they can access medicines, products and procedures. If children have chronic illnesses, the Medicine team will ask the person responsible to request that their doctor complete a Dara form, every six months, with information on the disease's progression. These reports are key for us to guide the family properly on how to monitor and treat the condition.

We thus operate right at the point where each family member's purposes, goals and needs intersect. In parallel with this, vaccination targets for children, teenagers, pregnant women and adults are monitored every month, with reference to Brazil's Immunisation Programme, as well as family planning and cervical cancer prevention exams. The team also works to identify care needs for referral to the National Health System, so as to seek out partnerships to ensure access to dental care, specialised medical care and other services. Dara's Health staff makes home visits to families living in the most vulnerable conditions, so as to understand their housing conditions and surroundings better, as well as to help plan interventions and guidelines for a healthy home environment.

Beneficiaries' main health issues in 2023:

140 cases of sickle cell anaemia (10.56%)	39 cases of premature births (2.94%)
93 cases of obesity (7.01%)	35 cases of bronchiolitis (2.64%)
68 cases of systemic arterial hypertension (5.13%)	25 cases of bacterial pneumonia (1.89%)
52 cases of asthma (3.92%)	22 cases of autism (1.66%)
40 cases of diabetes (3.02%)	22 cases of seizures (1.66%)

Health programme action – Medicine:

Direct care (instances): 2,335

- Initial Health Assessments: **160** – undergone by all families that come to Dara and enrol in the Family Action Plan. Knowing the right diagnosis and monitoring patients with chronic diseases is critical to providing proper guidance and successfully planning courses of action for each family.
- Antenatal: all eight currently pregnant women at Dara had their prenatal exams (six have now given birth). The Medicine programme encourages and raises awareness on how important antenatal care at Primary Healthcare facilities is to the health of mother and child.
- Preventive Exams (Pap Smear Tests) were requested for 116 women:
 - 59** had them
 - 34** are scheduled
 - 22** did not test (for lack of time, difficulty in access or suspension of service)
- Dispensing medicines and medical products – those that are essential to the patient's health and prescribed by a doctor of the public health service or a partner institution. Dara purchases and receives donations of medicines and medical equipment either lacking or not available in the national health system, as well as special milk.
- Medicines: **2,933**
- Medical products **4,696**
- Family planning: guidance on birth control methods to help women of childbearing age make decisions and to ensure their freedom of choice regarding their reproductive rights. Of 107 women fitting this profile, 84 (78%) were given access to birth control methods:
 - Intrauterine Devices: **35**
 - Tubal ligations: **20**
 - Anovulation: **30**
 - Used no method and/or failed to show for scheduled procedure: **21**

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Health programme projects and partnerships

PROJECTS

Reproductive rights

Fruit of the partnership between Dara, Nosso Instituto (a non-profit social organisation whose educational, cultural and health projects focus mostly on individual sexual and reproductive rights) and Clínica Alvo Precisão Diagnóstica, a medical imaging clinic, the project held two joint efforts, on April 1 and June 24, in which 29 women (64% of the 45 eligible and invited) were educated on their reproductive rights, inserted intrauterine devices and had control transvaginal ultrasounds.

Success story

Elisabete was referred to Dara in June 2021. Today, she is a living example of how health should be treated, in all its numerous facets and from different perspectives. This mother of four came to us with diagnoses of obesity, systemic arterial hypertension, bronchial asthma, anxiety/depression and facial melasma. With two young children, she was not taking care of herself or regularly treating her conditions. Thanks to monthly sessions at Dara, however, she began to realise the importance of self-care. She started using sunscreen and creams to lighten her blemishes and began dieting and exercising. She attended income generation courses, including costume jewellery workshops, courses in cooking for



children, entrepreneurship and classic cooking and confectionary making.

As she regained her self-esteem, Elisabete started taking her medications regularly and attended the Primary Healthcare Unit to follow-up on her treatment. Now in late 2023 and 20 kilos lighter, she goes on walks with her family at weekends, takes part in craft fairs, where she sells costume jewellery, and tells of her newfound joy in living.



PROJECT

Dental treatment

Because of occasional limitations in the public healthcare system, Dara is looking for partners who can cater to the families assisted by our Institute. When they need dental care, dentists and partner organisations, such as the Leopoldo Mandic School of Dentistry, offer participants referred to them free or low-cost services to improve their oral health and help undo the physical and emotional distress of tooth loss.

In 2023, ten women (about 20% of all women waiting for treatment) were chosen by the severity of each case. Our partners and volunteers performed extraction, dental prosthesis, restoration and endodontic procedures, which yielded improvements in patients' chewing abilities, self-esteem and quality of life. The main reasons limiting the numbers contemplated by these services are that treatment is expensive and lengthy.

The NGO Dentistas do Bem, which treats only 11 to 17 year olds, has now partnered with Dara for the third year running. It provides assessment and hands-on teaching of how to brush teeth properly. On August 25, in an intensive all-day event at Dara's headquarters (with 55% attendance), 40 children received dental care. After an initial assessment, any treatment required is then organised by the NGO's administration directly with the children's parents or guardians.

PROJECT

Ophthalmology

Since October 2023, a partnership with Ótica Vejja opticians has offered prescription spectacles to three Dara participants each month. By December, 10 pairs of glasses had been ordered and delivered to beneficiary families.

In partnership with Ótica Lunetterie opticians, a one-day intensive clinic was held at Dara headquarters on May 19. Of 33 patients with recent prescriptions, 30 attended the event to have glasses made. In all, 34 pairs were donated: 19 for adults and seven for children of assisted families, plus eight pairs for Dara staff members.

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Nutrition

The activities of Dara’s Nutrition programme focus on ensuring that all families have access to information on healthy eating, so as to combat hunger and improve dietary habits in practice, and thus foster food and nutrition security for all.

The care provided by nutritionists at Dara take account of each patient’s unique traits relating to food and quality of life, including their disease history, water intake, consumption of fruits and vegetables, diagnosis and diet specific to their treatment.

The Nutrition team provides daily guidance to help families prioritise their food purchases using the R\$ 200 Dara Institute food card. The idea is to prevent them buying ultra-processed foods, to advise them on compiling shopping lists and how often they should shop for groceries and educate them on food harvests, so as to optimise what they buy, at the same time ensuring they take home healthy foods.

The work also involves checking receipts of purchases made with the food card, so as to identify what kinds of food items the families are consuming from day to day, the better to advise them. The Nutrition programme holds lectures, workshops and discussion groups, as well as food education and pro-breastfeeding activities.

The Nutrition programme is responsible for recognising special formula milk requirements and/or assessing prescriptions submitted by partner hospitals for children with this specific need. Where needed, Dara provides special formula milks each month, as well as guidance on how to use them.

The Nutrition programme generally begins with an assessment of the patient’s nutritional status, by estimating their Body Mass Index (BMI), interviewing them on their health history (anamnesis) and developing a diagnosis. From these criteria, the team applies the Brazilian Food Insecurity Scale to determine the family’s level of food insecurity (mild, moderate or severe). Assessment by the scale allows the staff to specify what action to take to combat hunger for the family as a whole.



In 2023, an assessment of Food Insecurity (FI) levels of 128 individuals, using the Brazilian scale, highlighted the importance of the Nutrition programme’s efforts:

FI Level	Initial	Final	Variation
Secure	7	43	514% increase
Mild	39	46	18% increase
Moderate	50	29	42% reduction
Serious	32	10	69% reduction

PROJECT Dara Food

From April to December 2023, a partnership with the Instituto Phi enabled food cards to be fully reloaded for a group of 50 participating families with the most severe food and nutrition insecurity when they first enrolled at Dara.

Over the course of the year, the Dara Food project held seven workshops and discussion groups to promote healthy eating and produced an educational leaflet on food and nutrition.

Other activities underlined the

importance of food education for children and of a joint family endeavour in this regard, highlighting how caring is also a key form of affection. Early in December, during care sessions at Dara, the children made a cone-shaped Christmas tree out of fruits – the purpose being to convey beauty, health and fun using healthy edible decorations.

On December 15, the Dara Food project ended with a picnic at the Quinta da Boa Vista park in Rio de Janeiro. Each family brought a dish that recalled their childhood and the relationship between food and how memories are made.

In all, 230 people participated in the project activities.

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Psychology

Many people, when they come to Dara, are terribly frail from all kinds of diseases and their situation of social and economic vulnerability. Accordingly, from its inter-sector perspective on healthcare, the Dara Institute offers all those interested a team of experts, volunteers and partners to care for the mental health of families assisted under the Family Action Plan. This is absolutely critical for families to be able to regroup emotionally, regain their strength and self-esteem, and meet and surmount the difficulties often caused by the very conditions of their lives.

The Psychology programme provides monthly psychological support for the person responsible for the family at Dara. Should that person or other family members be found to need weekly psychological follow-up or therapy, they are referred to a facility that is free of charge and preferably close to the beneficiary's home. One of the Dara team's jobs is thus, each year, to map psychosocial support networks able to assist our families. The programme also offers psychiatric assessment and follow-up, if need be.



Health programme – Nutrition activities included:

- Direct care (instances): **2,466**
- Formula milk donated: **4,172** cans
- Special formulas donated: **749** cans
- Food supplements donated: **583** cans

Success story

Carla, is responsible for seven children. She arrived at Dara in July 2022, after referral from the Maria Amélia Buarque de Hollanda Maternity Hospital, following the birth of her youngest son, Rafael. At her initial nutritional appointment, when the team applied the Brazilian Food Insecurity Scale, the assessment showed that the family was living in a state of severe food insecurity; in other words, mother and children had nothing to eat. The Nutrition programme then drew up a plan that included donation of a monthly R\$ 200 food card, along with guidance on healthy eating and how to buy low-cost foods.

Nevertheless, some time later, the family was showing signs that hunger was still



a problem. Every month, Carla applied to Dara for a donated basic food basket. So, the team proposed a new plan. They helped Carla identify how much money the family had available and spent on food every month. Their budget of R\$ 600 came from the federal family allowance programme and the food gift card from Dara. Efforts were then redirected to the following strategy: Carla would go to market once a week, taking advantage of special offers and spending R\$ 150 each time. Shortly afterwards, the Nutrition team, working together with this head of household, drew up a grocery shopping list of food staples: rice, beans, meat and cooking oil, plus fruits and vegetables – and always with an eye out for special discounts. In her in-person session right after the plan was put in place, Carla reported that the family was no longer going hungry and that the grocery list and food guidance were key to ensuring that everyone was properly nourished.



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This work is supported by eight volunteer psychologists and one volunteer psychiatrist, always under the supervision of the programme’s coordinators. The family member responsible who agrees to receive psychological care will always be treated by the same psychologist.

also hosts and/or joins assisted families in conversation circles addressing subjects such as Yellow September (suicide prevention) and Lilac August (awareness-building to end violence against women).

In addition to psychological and psychiatric care, the programme is also responsible for coordinating and following up on activities directed to early childhood, most prominently, in 2023, the Educational Psychology and Recreation Project (see below) directed to child mental health. It

Over the course of monitoring, the main demands raised by the family members responsible related to difficulties in dealing with their children’s illnesses and the implications for their lives, emotional overload and overwork, low self-esteem, financial issues, anxiety and/or factors such as low income, poor health and others.

Accordingly, the Psychology programme closely monitors and encourages integrated endeavours to develop physical, mental and emotional health for all. By working to build self-confidence, for instance, we foster better adhesion and engagement in the Institute’s courses designed to increase household income.

PROJECT

Educational Psychology and Recreation for child mental health

Child psychological support first came to mind after the Covid-19 pandemic and the possible harm done to children’s mental health. Sponsored by HM Queen Silvia’s Foundation – Care About the Children, chaired by the Queen of Sweden, this project was developed with a view to monitoring the mental health of children up to 12 years old in families assisted by the Dara Institute.

Psychologists greet the children at the Institute’s recreation area, where they conduct play activities that allow the youngsters to talk naturally about the conditions of their lives and their emotional state. In this way the psychologists are able to recognise signs of vulnerabilities that call for treatment. The children’s progress is then accompanied by a multidisciplinary team of educationalists, physicians and nutritionists and, if need be, they are referred to psychological treatment close to their homes. The project is structured in three stages: identification, diagnosis and treatment or referral.

The needs that have arisen most during the project, which started in 2022, were sleep issues (8%), diagnosed or suspected Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (8%), speech delays (8%), diagnosed or suspected Autism Spectrum Disorder (12%), severe anxiety (12%) and aggression (16%).

Given Dara’s overall approach, it is important to identify problems early on – the sooner specific needs can be addressed, the better the chances of healthier development. Accordingly, in addition to providing the child with psychological support, the psychologist responsible will also, for example, advise its parents and talk to the child’s school.

Action by the Health programme – Psychology:

- Direct care (instances) : **1,838**, of which **1,815** were psychological care sessions for children and family representatives; and **23** were psychiatric sessions with family representatives.
- **42** initial assessments and **31** initial psychological sessions for children.
- **26** external referrals for children and adults.

Inter-sector psychological care

Culture and context make it hard for families to understand the need for psychological support to attain mental and emotional well-being. Often, as they make headway in other services provided at Dara, participants begin to feel they are ready to handle the complex issues in their lives. The multi-profession and inter-sector work of the Family Action Plan always contributes to overcoming the day-to-day challenges encountered by the Psychology programme, just as our direct psychological services and support help participants progress in other Dara programmes.

In 2023, the project also standardised the methodology and process of child psychological support, from the family's arrival at Dara and considering the roles of all personnel. The purpose is to record best practices and guidelines that can serve as a basis for other organisations, while allowing for specificities of public and region, and contribute to spreading knowledge, which is intrinsic to Dara's work. [Click here to read about the project and methodology.](#)

The results confirm the fundamental importance of an attentive eye to children's mental health and educational challenges in the post-pandemic context. Recreation is now a firmly established therapeutic setting: it allows us to observe the children and solve the issues they face, anxiety,

sleep problems, eating disorders and learning difficulties, before they progress to situations of psychological distress.

Project outcomes included:

- 557** children monitored during recreation
- 66** psychological support processes initiated
- 80** initial psychological assessments
- 15** referrals to dedicated treatment facilities



Success story

When Ana Laura, 10, arrived at Dara's child psychology project, she was suffering severely: bullied at school and with serious learning difficulties and speech inhibition. With psychological support, though, her academic performance improved and she started talking about what she wanted and what she did not like. Her group of friends expanded as she began to show more interest in making new friends, as well as pursuing recreational activities, including music lessons.

She is stronger now and enjoys playing and doing the things she likes. She has learned how to care for and organise her space and interests. Today, she says that she is very pleased with her life. This is confirmed by her mother, Carolina: "Ana Laura has come on enormously; she knows how to assert herself and win her own battles. Now she smiles and is more proactive, thanks to the Psychology programme, which helped her discover that she is capable, that she has a voice of her own and needs to use it".

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PROJECT

Maria Amélia Safe Family Conversation Circle

The Maria Amélia Safe Family Conversation Circle (Aconchego Maria Amélia) is designed primarily for pregnant women and new mothers in vulnerable situations who seek treatment at the Maria Amélia Buarque de Hollanda Maternity Hospital, in central Rio de Janeiro. It uses art and culture as tools for education, citizenship, transformation and social inclusion.

Every week, in morning and afternoon shifts, it holds talks, conversation groups and culture workshops on baby care, self-care, self-esteem and a range of other subjects. The idea is to enable patients to express their feelings and to build a support network to minimise stress, anxiety and the worries of expectant mothers or those with babies in neonatal intermediate and intensive care units at this very special time of their lives.

In 2023, guest experts, volunteers and Dara staff conducted various activities, including:

- 47 discussion groups on subjects such as the mother-baby bonding; parenting and siblings; mother and baby vaccinations; mother and baby nutrition; pregnant women's rights and reproductive rights; sexually transmitted infections; self-esteem/self-care; women in the job market; mental health; and the importance of resuming their studies.
- 67 workshops on make-up, manicure, turban, hair braiding, hairdressing, belly painting, handicraft, storytelling and others.

Project was funded through the Service Tax (ISS) Law, sponsored by the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Culture Secretariat and Amil and provided care for 406 women from July 2022 to June 2023. Socioeconomic surveys applied at each meeting of the participants revealed that 43% of the women were pregnant, 32% were postpartum and 35% had household income of one minimum wage or less.

In 2023, in addition to the initial target public, the project was extended to women using Kangaroo care, as well as the companions and maternity staff who attended the activities. That shift made for even more sharing of knowledge and experience, besides offering physical and mental support for the caregivers.



Success story

Débora, 28, was assessed by the Psychology programme in May 2022. She showed signs of emotional stress from family problems, as well as poor listening skills and low self-esteem. She made ends meet using the federal family allowance and help from her foster parents, was unemployed and unable to find work. In early sessions at Dara, the Psychology programme focused on her difficult relationship with her biological parents, who had not raised her, and her lack of self-esteem developed over a troubled life.

With time, Débora began to look at herself and focus increasingly on her own needs. She enrolled in beauty care courses at Dara and, little by little, started generating income from what she learned. Today, she has more self-confidence, believes in herself and takes every opportunity that comes her way. She has become a very proactive woman. In July 2023, she decided to end her psychological treatment. Her psychologist agreed: Débora felt good and was making progress in both her professional and personal life, and no longer needed support from the Psychology programme.

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EDUCATION EDUCAÇÃO

The essential role of education in social transformation.

The Education programme at Dara is designed make family members' conscious of how central education is to developing autonomy and building critical awareness and citizenship.

The main goal is to ensure that all the participating families' children and teenagers from 4 to 17 attend school regularly (except those prevented by health problems).

The programme thus works every day to advise and assure school-aged children and teenagers of their right to education, as well as enabling them to attend school and benefit properly; to encourage families to engage directly in their children's school life and monitor their academic



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progress; to identify child and teenage behaviour calling for special attention; and to encourage adults to participate and interest themselves in educational spaces and cultural activities, as well as fostering dialogue with educational institutions with a view to cooperation.

In order for the family as a whole to progress and for it to be part of family relationships to encourage education and culture, many family members who failed to complete primary or secondary education are persuaded, encouraged and advised during care sessions on going back to school in order to build new prospects for the future and be better

equipped to keep up with their children's school life. In that respect, the Dara Institute also works to train people to, in turn, replicate their knowledge: central to the Education programme is the concept of an educating family.

In 2023 to encourage knowledge spread and joint activities, the Education programme focused on promoting reading activities, encouraging families to explore bookshelves stocked by age group at Dara's headquarters. In addition to reading, the programme also includes guided play activities at the toy centre and encourages the family to take part in cultural and leisure activities.



Education programme activities included:

Direct care (instances): **1,858**

- All families in the Family Action Plan were advised on how to enrol their children or teenagers in school.
- School attendance was monitored with a view to encouraging children and teenagers to stay in school and take an interest.
- Securing **628** declarations from schools to ascertain possible age/school year discrepancies and align school enrolment particulars.
- Of **193** adults who failed to complete secondary education, **142** were persuaded of its importance and encouraged go back to school; **72** were given support and guidance to register for the National Adult and Youth Skills Certification Examination; **50** applied.
- Of **467** children and teenagers up to 14 years old receiving care at Dara, **357** took part in guided play activities at the educational play centre.
- **484** people were given opportunities to access cultural and leisure activities, with around 65% of invitees taking advantage.
- Individual Development Plans were produced for **60** youngsters, to help them develop their skill sets and build professional careers.
- **52** hours of Information Technology educational and guidance activities were conducted.
- **16** field trips to cultural spaces were organised and promoted, with a view to awakening different manners of engaging with the city of Rio de Janeiro. The venues visited included the Casa Firjan, Municipal Theatre, Nilton Santos Stadium, Riachuelo Theatre, Rihappy Ecovila, Claro Rio Theatre and Multiplan Theatre.



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PROJECT Connected

From 2021 to August 2023, the Connected Project, sponsored by Criança Esperança and Unesco, used technology as a tool for social change, working for digital inclusion alongside 60 youngsters from 14 to 29 years old from underserved areas. In addition to building digital literacy, the project forms part of efforts to democratise access to technology and digital tools so that these young people can become protagonists in their own context. They also received social and educational psychology support so that, with the help of vocational testing, they could plan for their lives.

Workshops were held to address subjects bearing on personal and professional development. In 2023, the youngsters took part in 22 in-person meetings totalling 52 hours, which included discussing new technologies, the job market and citizenship, as well as conversations with information technology professionals and the municipal secretariats for Youth and for Rio without LGBTIphobia. Three field trips also visited key cultural icons in Rio de Janeiro: João Havelange Olympic Stadium, Casa Firjan and the Municipal Theatre.

At the project's closing event, four prizes – two notebooks and two smartphones – were awarded to project participants.

The Connected project helped strengthen bonding between the youngsters and the Dara Institute and to build recognition for Dara as go-to institution for multidisciplinary support and guidance.

At first, participants would ask family representatives to voice

their questions and needs during the monthly sessions, but were soon approaching the project's multidisciplinary team directly for assistance and guidance. By building this trusting relationship, Dara was able to play a key role in the youngsters' development and wellbeing and to afford them access to resources, opportunities, social support and guidance, which may help them build a stable, prosperous future

Information literacy

The Information Literacy course forms part of the Daras Project (*see more on page 30*), which aims to leverage careers and autonomy for black women and women of colour by means of entrepreneurship.

The 64-hour course taught by Natalia Lopes, an IT professional with a teaching certificate in Computer Science, was attended by 200 women, who learned how to use digital tools that may be useful in organising and planning their businesses. The course taught students how to use the Excel and Canvas programmes, set-up email accounts and other important tools.

Natalia is a Dara Institute beneficiary, who generously shared her knowledge with other women assisted by the Institution, thus contributing to the group's collective growth.

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Success story

Mayara and Rafael arrived at Dara after being referred by the Maria Amélia Buarque de Hollanda Maternity Hospital. For different reasons, the couple, who had recently had a child, were struggling to complete their studies and find work.

Mayara, the head of the household, described how she was admitted to the maternity hospital the same week she was scheduled to defend her thesis. After the child was born, she explained the situation to the university, but was told that she would have to re-sit the whole semester, which would entail paying six more monthly tuition fees. Dara's Education programme then stepped in to mediate between Mayara and the university, to assure her right to maternity leave. As a result, she was able to present and defend her thesis. Mayara has now graduated and is waiting for the university to issue her diploma.

Rafael was having a hard time finding a job without a secondary school certificate. His school record, required for securing the certificate, was stuck in a private school that closed down. After repeated attempts by the Education programme to contact the school, he was advised to take the National Adult and Youth Skills Certification Exam and get his diploma faster that way. The Education programme provided him with study material, and he applied and took the exam. Rafael passed and has put in for his diploma.



Recode Platform

Working in tandem with Recode, a social impact organisation that provides technical capacity building to enable low-income communities to assert their citizenship, families assisted by Dara were granted free access to online training programmes in computer science and technology, for which certificates are issued.

In 2023, young people attended 445 hours of training on the Recode Platform, in courses including Basic and Intermediate System Development, Basic and Intermediate Game Development, Creating Infrastructure in the Cloud, Data Analysis, Digital Tools for the Job Market, Management and Employability, Digital Marketing and Programmemeing and Technology for the Future.

In all, students completed 66 courses on the Recode Platform.





**GERAÇÃO
DE RENDA**

**INCOME
GENERATION**

Dara's Income Generation programme aims to recognise skills and enable members of families to develop new skills, competencies and attitudes.

In this way, participants are equipped to generate and/ or improve their income by new job opportunities, enhanced employability or investing in creative-economy entrepreneurship.

The work is gradual, challenging and participatory. Families arrive at Dara marked by the hardships and privations of the conditions of socioeconomic vulnerability they live in. Accordingly, including families and their members as active agents in taking action is key to the process of transforming lives.



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In practice, in order to build and suggest possible formative action with a view to short- and long-term income generation, the Income Generation programme makes diagnoses that include:

- An initial assessment to identify the family's current skill sets and devise an Income Generation action plan, which is reviewed each month.
- Gathering information on family members' prior vocational training and formal and informal jobs.
- Suggesting any vocational training offered by the Dara Institute suited to the skill sets identified, the local area and job market requirements.
- Seeking partners that offer courses, recruitment and hiring when, for reasons of duration or subject area, the skill sets identified are not a fit with courses offered by Dara.
- Presenting participants with possible new areas of activity, after they complete courses.
- Suggesting income generation options to suit family members' ages and the family's skill sets and interests.
- Explaining the differences between income and social benefits and encouraging entrepreneurship as a way to generate income.
- Providing guidance on costs and spending, focusing on financial planning, whether to avoid debt or to purchase goods.
- Providing guidance on how to save and how to balance revenues and expenditures periodically.

At its headquarters, the Dara Institute offers courses in entrepreneurship for the creative economy, focusing mainly on gastronomy, beauty care and crafts. Activities are structured into modules to allow participants to develop their skills according to the time they have available and their abilities. If they discover new interests or callings in any module, they can then also expand their knowledge in related fields.



Some Income Generation programme activities:

Direct care (instances): 1,146

- **374** participants in 38 courses offered in beauty care, gastronomy and entrepreneurship.
- **760** hours of hands-on training in beauty care and gastronomy.
- **100** hours of training in entrepreneurship for participants on various courses offered by Dara.
- **4** external courses in crafts, beauty care and refrigeration.
- **1** external beauty care activity, Inca Solidarity, offering hair braiding, eyebrow design and turbans for women in treatment at the National Cancer Institute, as part of Pink October.
- **5** cultural field trips/visits with **78** women enrolled in Income Generation projects participating.
- Lived experience at Joaquinas Restaurant. Each month, students go on guided visits to learn the routine of opening up the restaurant's kitchen and seeing close up how it runs during working hours. Ten women took part in these visits and one got a job at the restaurant.
- **3** external hair braiding, make-up and manicure for pregnant and postpartum female inpatients at the Maria Amélia Buarque de Hollanda Maternity Hospital, to refine what participants had learned during modules at Dara. Run jointly with the Health programme.



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PROJECT

Daras

The first edition of Project Daras was launched, in collaboration with the company, TechnipFMC, in November 2022 (Black Consciousness Month).

The main purpose was to bolster the cultural identities of black girls and women and those of colour from peripheral urban areas, through action to re-signify their relationships, life stories and future prospects and strengthen their identity awareness and their leading role in building future change.

Forty women enrolled in the project and twenty completed it. Many were unable to fit the project in with their vocational training schedules, others found jobs during the course of the

project and many dropped out because of health problems or to take care of a family member.

All of them, however, at some point along the way, came into contact with poems, music and visual art appreciation, were encouraged to express their feelings and organise their thinking and thus develop a more critical view of society. Daras enabled them to connect with their territories, families, manifestations, expressions and traditions of black culture.

Whether participating in the project in part or in full, they were encouraged to be leading players in their own stories and agents of change.

In all, 20 life plans were completed, 23 meetings held, 24 hours committed to devising individual development plans and 7 hours to mentorships by the company, TechnipFMC. At the end, five women entrepreneurs were granted seed capital of R\$ 500 to start or build their beauty care and gastronomy businesses.

Project Daras ended on July 23, 2023, with an Entrepreneurship Fair crowning a nine-month journey. At strategic meetings, the participating women entrepreneurs were grouped by segment and product classes in the three fields: gastronomy, beauty care and crafts. The women put together a product exhibition with support from TechnipFMC volunteers, who also availed themselves of the services on offer and evaluated performances. They then assigned scores that were critical to the day when the participants defended their products and services to a panel of judges, demonstrating how they had matured with regard to their business plans.

Both the fair and the review panel asserted the project's purpose: to help the women involved in the project become familiar with producing, exhibiting and selling their products, bolstering their trust and ability to make their own choices and ways.

Four cultural field trips also formed part of the project:

Visit to the TechnipFMC Industrial Park

During the company's Gender Equality Week, this field trip allowed participants to experience a corporate environment and gain an active insight into the world of work. The most noticeable impact of the visit was women's realisation that they are fully entitled to occupy any roles and positions they choose.

The MUHCAB Museum

This trip was intended to enable participants to discover a treasure of Afro-Brazilian history and culture, as well as to understand Brazil's cultural roots.

The trip thus enabled participants to broaden their understanding and appreciation of black culture and identity.



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The Josefinas Collective

The Josefinas collaborative setup helps train women and mother entrepreneurs and assure appreciation for their true worth.

The visit was important for the participants to explore a setting venue where the main focus is the creativity and empowerment of women from peripheral

urban areas. Participants' interactions with black women and others of colour who are artists and entrepreneurs and who lead and contribute to local cultural efforts revealed the key role of self-expression in a successful enterprise, as well as the possibilities of actively shaping and enhancing their communities.



The Sacopã Quilombo Cultural Association

The Sacopã Quilombo Association was established and registered in 1992 with the mission of ensuring the continuance of a *quilombola* community (founded by runaway slaves) on its traditional territory. The purpose of visiting the association was to afford participants an immersive quest for their ancestral heritage, resilience and cultural connection.

NEW EDITION IN PROGRESS

The second edition of Project Daras kicked off on September 12, this time with backing from SC Johnson, a global homecare products manufacturer. The launch event packed the Knowledge Sharing auditorium at Dara headquarters for a morning of motivational speeches.

The project expects to assist 200 women over 18 years old for eight months. They will follow the education pathway of training programmes, cultural activities, field trips and talks designed to help them sharpen their perceptions of possibilities and opportunities, spaces, businesses and personal and collective identities. Since it started, this edition has already held two motivational lectures, which were attended by 100 women.



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PROJECT Futuring

The Futuring project, sponsored by Santander Bank, began its activities in March 2023 to provide opportunities for income generation, employment and/or entrepreneurship, with business prospects, by offering vocational guidance, training and qualification aligned with the mapped skill sets of individuals assisted by Dara.

The project ended on November 22, 2023, with 126 individuals successfully completing the proposed pathway. The date was marked by a graduation ceremony and celebration attended by participants and their families.

Project outcomes included::

- 61 people trained and qualified after 120 hours of hands-on capacity-building in various areas of gastronomy: cakes and pies, savouries, chocolate making, sustainable gastronomy, bread and snacks and gourmet confectionary.
- 63 people trained and qualified after 180 hours of hands-on capacity-building in various areas of beauty care: hair braiding, hair extensions and weaving, barbering, make-up, manicure and eyebrow design.
- 20 people trained and qualified after 60 hours of entrepreneurship capacity-building sessions.
- 119 participants in ten talks/workshops totalling 48 hours.
- 53 participants enrolled in courses, surpassing the original project goal of 120 people.



Success story

Referred by the Padre Velloso Social Assistance Referral Centre, Jacira was living in conditions of social and economic vulnerability. Post-Covid 19 health issues made it impossible for her to work. At 58, she subsisted by working as a cleaner, was receiving no social security benefits and relied on the federal family allowance programme to make ends meet. She lived with her 17 year-old daughter in rented premises in northern Rio de Janeiro City.

At Dara, Jacira received medical care, guidance to plan her social security pension and enrolled in gastronomy capacity-building courses. She completed courses in chocolate making, sustainable gastronomy and savouries. Stronger now, she resumed her activities as a day cleaner and started selling her own food products at her places of work. As her products sold well, she started cooking for her neighbourhood and for her daughter to sell at school.

To help with her work, Dara then referred Jacira to the Manoamano network, a social change and development fund that aims to bolster nano and micro businesses in favelas and peripheral areas of the Rio de Janeiro Metropolitan Region, as a means of mitigating the economic impacts of Covid-19 and devising income generation tools for vulnerable families. The project is the result of a partnership among a number of institutions, of which Dara is one.

Jacira, a black woman from a peripheral urban area, saw her life change thanks to her newfound ability to generate income by selling confectionery, savouries and meals. Her daughter, her greatest admirer, set up a social media account, "Cidoca's Delicacies", for her to advertise her products.

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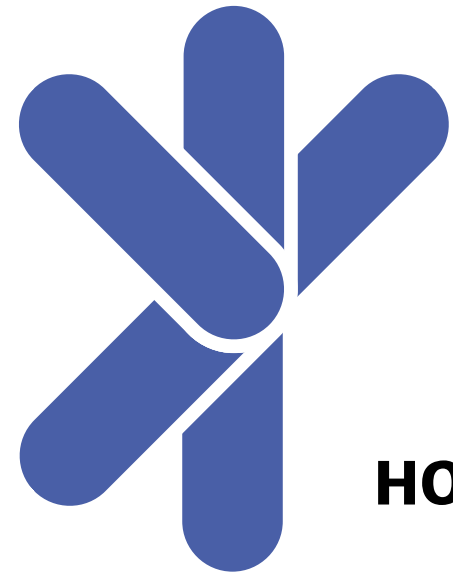
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PROJECT Sebrae Connection

This partnership between the Dara Institute and Sebrae RJ was designed, through talks and workshops, to strengthen the entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills of families assisted by Dara.

Running from July to November 2023, the project offered four talks lasting a total of 16 hours and attended by 58 participants





HOUSING

MORADIA

The main focus of the Housing programme is to provide guidance for all to have decent, healthy homes.




Families coming to Dara may live in places that represent privation, instability and strained relationships.

The Housing programme addresses this issue, as part of Dara's inter-sector endeavours, by taking especial care of the families' homes and everything relating to them, by working on two fronts, consulting and interventions. To transform domestic environments and keep families healthy, while ensuring indispensable sanitary conditions, the work begins with an initial diagnosis in their first few sessions at Dara. At that time, any doubts are cleared up and families are given guidance to find the best possible solutions for household problems and, as far as possible, to solve those issues using their own means and capabilities.



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During this technical consulting, the families are made aware of the best domestic health and hygiene practices, technical support is given on all building matters, such as corrective work on the home, palliative measures are recommended for problems with no immediate solution and advice is given on any building work that the family is doing and so on. The guidance ranges, for instance, from explaining what a gutter is and how to put one in, how to install a water tap, what the possible solutions are if the home is too hot, advice on pest control, through lastly to how to calculate the materials necessary to lay flooring.

The advisory services also comprise inter-sector input from the Family Action Plan, including support from, and/or referral by, the legal department (*more at page 38*) – if necessary, we give information on the basic rights and duties of tenants, inheritance relationships and estate inventory, adverse

possession and problems with water and electricity utilities. We also give guidance on federal government housing programmes, such as “My House, My Life”.

Interventions, on the other hand, are decided and conducted after the team visits the family home to confirm the initial diagnosis and, jointly with the family whose home will be subject to intervention, plan how to create a safe, healthy home environment. To that end, the Housing programme requires one of the following minimum baseline conditions: cement flooring (burnished cement), roughcast outside walls, plastered inside walls (not crumbling), fully-equipped bathroom (shower, sink and flush toilet), kitchen with plumbing, covered water storage, closable outside doors and windows and no seepage in walls or slab floors/ceilings.

The interventions require that families meet three criteria. They must:

- provide documentation proving they own the home;
- have been enrolled at Dara for at least a year; and;
- be doing well in the other Family Action Plan programmes.



Note that Dara provides both technical and financial support (as well as arranging and delivering donations of building materials, household appliances, furnishings and so on), but the work itself is done in line with the purpose of the Family Action Plan: to engage the family in all matters, so that

they take responsibility, are empowered and acknowledge that their home is their task. Accordingly, they have to inspect and supervise building work, deliveries of materials and render accounts by way of photographs and invoices that show how the renovation is progressing.



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Housing programme activities included:

Direct care (instances): 769

- Initial assessments: 204
- Technical visits: 52, of which 24 were initial visits and 28 were follow-up.
- Renovation work: 12, involving:
 - 83% restoring walls
 - 75% rebuilding kitchens with plumbing
 - 58% complete overhaul*
 - 67% inspecting and/or replacing roofing
 - 58% rebuilding bathrooms with running water and sanitary plumbing
 - 58% restoring flooring
 - 58% electrical inspection and installation
 - 50% installing water tanks
 - 8% drilling an artesian well
- Items donated: 571 to 247 families.
 - 31 furnishings
 - 99 household appliances
 - 288 bedclothes and table linen
 - 137 baby clothes sets
 - 16 utensils.
- Water filters: 133, which benefited 532 people (1 filter per family)
- 8 slab roofs waterproofed, of which 63% also entailed waterproofing walls.

* Complete overhaul includes plastering and finishing indoor/outdoor walls, installing flooring, installing water tanks, completely renovating kitchen and bathroom with running water and sanitary plumbing, inspecting and installing electrical systems, inspecting and/or replacing roofing, replacing and/or installing windows and doors; painting and finishing. Renovation work can also include changes to ground plans to improve the circulation or distribution of residents, including disabled people.

These activities occurred in the following areas of Rio de Janeiro:

- 38% na Baixada Fluminense;
- 12% na Zona Oeste;
- 31% na Zona Norte; e
- 19% na Zona Sul.

Support from partners

Here, once again, it must be stressed how important partners are in helping the Dara Institute to carry out interventions that produce social impact.

PROJECT

Waterproofing

The purpose of the project is to waterproof homes, thereby solving seepage problems, such as mould and leaks, so as to make these environments healthier for their residents.

In this partnership, Vedacit donates waterproofing material and trains the team technically. The Dara Institute contributes the remaining building materials and labour to do the work.

In 2023, eight families benefited from building work and over 400 items of waterproofing material were donated. In all, 17 interventions were carried out, including:

- 35.2% corrective building work (waterproofing of walls, floor/ceiling slabs and so on, in houses already with seepage problems);
- 11.8% preventive maintenance (waterproofing of walls, floor/ceiling slabs in “new” homes);
- 52.9% assisted donations (of material after the team’s diagnosis, plus technical assistance and guidance on applying the products).

Two workshops were held to train the technical team. The first, in May, was to prepare the team that would carry out the interventions in the families’ homes. The second, in December, provided hands-on training for recipient families of Vedacit product donations, service providers (bricklayers), Dara maintenance personnel and students from Rio de Janeiro Federal University. The event was held at the experimental building site of the university’s School of Architecture and Urbanism.

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The university students participated under the partnership between Dara and the Building Technology Department of the School of Architecture and Urbanism. Selected extension students work as volunteers to oversee and monitor interventions, as well as joining visits to the families'

homes, thereby helping arrive at an in-depth diagnosis by inventorying and controlling beneficiaries' needs in relation to their homes. From these mappings, one key unsanitary condition, with direct impacts on families' health, was seepage. That finding led Dara to partner with Vedacit.



Success stories

Two interventions illustrate the significance of joint efforts and how factors intersect to improve families' environments and health.

In a two-story house shared by several families, Maria and her granddaughter, Laila, live on the first floor, and Maria's son and his wife live on the second floor. The house suffered from severe seepage, which caused the facing and plaster to peel off the walls. The result was a damp, mould-infested home. The problem further worsened the family relationships and aggravated conflicts between Maria and her son, who barely spoke to each other. The diagnosis for the intervention forced them to come together to plan the work to be done on both floors; this, in turn, led them to treat each other more constructively. In addition to the damp treatment and repairs to finishes, the bathroom was completely renovated and a balcony was converted into a room for Laila, who now had a place of her own. The environment became healthier in a number of different ways.



The second success story concerns Daniele and her two sons, of 11 and 14, who lived in a three-storey house where each floor measured less than 7 square metres. The lack of space meant the boys were constantly bickering – Daniele sometimes had to ask someone to look after one of them to end the quarrelling. After a technical visit and assessment of the rooms and possibilities, the solution recommended was for them to purchase the area adjacent to the house. Daniele successfully proved title to the lot and the team built a new room, bathroom, kitchen and a staircase to the second floor. With more space and a complete home, the dynamics of family relations changed towards more dignified and harmonious coexistence.



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CITIZENSHIP

CIDADANIA

When people referred to the Dara Institute first arrive, they are welcomed by the Citizenship programme.



The Citizenship programme listens to their problems and difficulties, maps the possibilities for intervention so that families can strengthen the bonds among their members and with the community, helps to make them aware of the importance of citizenship and fosters their autonomy and ability to be proactive in the setting where they live.

The Social Service, in turn, facilitates access to the justice system, advises families on their civil, social and political rights and duties, and interacts with the other Family Action Plan programmes to design the best possible plan for each individual.

In that context, the Citizenship programme's day-to-day work consists in assessing and advising beneficiaries on how to regularise all family members'



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civil documents (identity card, taxpayer registration, voter's card, employment record card, federal unified register, national health service card and birth certificate); identifying beneficiaries' eligibility for legal social benefits and advising them on how to apply for benefits or have them reviewed; arranging for, and referring individuals to, a social assistance network suited to their needs; visiting the homes of families assisted to identify their living conditions on-site and to plan actions and targets appropriate to their realities; giving social and educational talks to families in discussion groups; and forwarding information to other the Family Action Plan programmes.

With a view to mapping, the Citizenship programme plots specific courses in order to design the best possible pathways to be taken by participants in the plan.

To foster autonomy and protagonism, for instance, the programme offers monthly legal counselling to guide and refer beneficiaries so as to solve their legal problems. In 2023, Dara conducted 74 legal advice drives, mostly for legal appeals to obtain the federal minimum income benefit, as well as requests for high-cost medicines through the Public Defender's Office and maintenance payment lawsuits.



Another key activity is home visits, which are critical in many different dimensions. In the Family Action Plan methodology, family home visits allow Social Service personnel to perceive nuances of everyday life bound up with the family's living space, which often go unnoticed during sessions at Dara. These include house and territory/district, neighbourhood, nearby public social welfare service, housing conditions and difficulties in access and communication and so on. Visits also help to strengthen bonding between Dara staff and beneficiaries. This interpersonal trust enables the work to proceed with greater commitment and better chances of success, and upon the end of the journey, it certifies compliance with the project, in other words, changes resulting from the Family Action Plan strategies for the family's development..

Citizenship programme activities included:

Direct care (instances): 2,296

566 activities to assert citizenship, including:

- 335** to regularise documents, including taxpayer registration, identity card, employment record card and voter's card for all members of the family;
- 231** relating to social benefits, including the federal minimum income benefit, federal unified register and family allowance programme and Rio de Janeiro State's *Vale Social* travel pass;
- 104** home visits to afford in-depth immersion in the families' social conditions;
- 15** institutional visits to map, contact and refer assisted families to the social welfare service closest to their home.

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PROJECT

Safe Family Conversation Circle

Safe Family Conversation Circle (*Aconchego Família*) project uses discussion groups to expand knowledge and develop practices that increase the possibility of dialogue by enhancing listening skills and the exchange and sharing of information. On these occasions, thoughtfulness and dialogue help strengthen family bonds, expand human development by addressing different perspectives and develop a better grasp on the various aspects of health education.

To achieve these goals, discussion groups in 2023 addressed a wide

range of subjects suggested by the Family Action Plan programmes, as well as by families themselves. These included mental health, preventing sexually transmitted infections, combating sexual abuse and exploitation of children and teenagers, raising awareness on sickle cell anaemia, alcohol and other drugs, income generation, domestic violence and others. The programme also organised recreational activities, which included fashioning masks for Carnival and offering services like manicure, hair braiding and massages during International Women's Month.

In 2023, 184 discussion groups were held for a total of 1,427 attendees.

Integration with the public social assistance system

Brazil's social assistance system, an expression of social policy, consists of a set of services, programmes, projects and benefits that make up the Unified Social Assistance System. These are provided, directly or through agreements with non-profit organisations, to individuals or families facing privation, victimisation, exploitation, vulnerability, poverty-related exclusion or situations of personal or social risk.

Part of the work of the social assistants on the Citizenship programme is to forge even stronger liaison with the territory's social assistance system, as well as helping make the system more robust in the territories where the families live, by contacting and visiting the institutions so as to work together. Institutions visited in 2023 included the Casa da Mulher Carioca Dinah Coutinho women's social assistance centre, Nova Iguaçu Municipal Secretariat for Sports, Leisure and Culture, Guararapes Cândido Municipal School, Santa Marta Pacification Police Unit, Rubens Corrêa Psychosocial Care Centre, Caio Fernando Abreu Social Assistance Referral Centre and the Nurse Edma Valadão Family Clinic.

CineDara

In collaboration with the Knowledge and Information Sharing programme, this project is designed to provide another setting for producing and exchanging knowledge, expanding social and cultural awareness and strengthening dialogue and critical thinking on social and life contexts.

This is how it works: a film is screened and then discussed, with outside guests, to relate it to life situations that permeate the beneficiary families' daily lives.

In 2023, starting in April, monthly sessions were attended by an average of 12 families per showing – particularly by families newly arrived at Dara. The discussion sessions focused mainly on racial issues, based on the following topics: modern slavery, religious intolerance, black identity and the job market, single motherhood and childhood in peripheral urban areas



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Success story



Leopoldina first came to Dara In February 2022, after referral by Ismart, a “social institute to motivate, support and recognise”. Mother of a teenage girl and head of the household, she was extremely shy, apathetic and barely spoke at all. In the course of sessions at Dara, she gradually became more confident and put the guidance she received into practice. Leopoldina took the opportunities she was offered and enrolled in the hairdressing course. Slowly but surely, she overcame her apathy and began to interact with the team and the other families.

Happier with herself, she entered the Entrepreneurship programme, which opened doors for her. She was selected for the Manoamano Project, a partnership between Rio de Janeiro Federal University and Ashoka, an organisation that provides small-scale women entrepreneurs with financial aid, training and consultancy. Leopoldina did well and was given

R\$ 2,500 seed capital to kick start her life project – a cosmetics shop where she would offer hairdressing services to her customers.

By the end of her journey at Dara, the smile on Leopoldina’s face was as bright as day. She had achieved all the goals set by the Family Action Plan: boosted her income, organised her household finances and fulfilled her life-long dream of starting her own business to provide a service for other women and improve their self-esteem with a substantial range of products ready for delivery and hair care for whoever comes her way.



Volunteers

By definition, a volunteer is any young, adult or older person who, moved by personal interest or fellow feeling, decides to devote part of their time, unpaid, to various types of activities directed to social wellbeing and other kinds of assistance.

In practice, they are the eyes, ears, mouth, arms, legs, mind and soul of a social and political body that works collectively, every day, to build a fairer, more cohesive and equal society.

This is how it is done at The Dara Institute: our social methodology was thought out and developed to embrace the understanding of health as going beyond conventional clinical diagnosis, an approach informed by social, economic, ethnic/racial, psychological and behavioural factors – the social determinants of health. Dara’s work endeavours to develop human beings comprehensively and find means to combat inequities and reduce social inequalities.

This enormous task starts anew and is carried out with each family that arrives – and, over the past 32 years, has been made feasible thanks in part to the

untiring efforts of more than 1,600 volunteers, who work alongside Dara staff to help transform the lives of thousands of people.

These dentists, educationalists, psychologists, psychiatrists, recreational facilitators, social assistants, story tellers, physicians, nutritionists and a whole slew of other volunteers of different professions and skill sets are all fully aware of the work to be done and the opportunities available to help people achieve health, wellbeing, balance and autonomy. In 2023, we were supported by the volunteer work of 68 individuals, particularly women volunteers who work in Family Monitoring, whose efforts are indispensable to the work of the **Family Action Plan** with families served by Dara.

In order to express all our respect and gratitude and to honour all those who have chosen to volunteer at Dara as a way of exercising their citizenship in pursuit of social justice in Brazil, the Institute launched a communication campaign on National Volunteers Day (August 28). The stars of the campaign were volunteers who, for years now, have been contributing to Dara’s work to transform lives



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Other Dara Institute programmes

The Dara Institute's main purpose is to help bring about a paradigm change in health, combat hunger and promote human development in society. To those ends, it applies an integrated, multi-sector approach known as the Family Action Plan.

In addition to direct services offered at its headquarters, the plan is embodied in activities designed to influence public policymaking, spread knowledge and prompt social mobilisation.

The work of the programmes described below is framed by that outlook. They enable the Family Action Plan to be used, shared, strengthened and serve as influence and model in building fairer and more equitable societies.

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Expansion

In the division of work at Dara, the Expansion programme is responsible for spreading and deploying the Institute’s social methodology – the Family Action Plan – in new territories, organisations and communities at the national and international levels.

Our agenda for social justice and less inequality rests on our developing strategies to expand the organisation by actions that make it possible to discuss, spread and build knowledge to influence public policies and engage society in applying the Family Action Plan methodology, given Dara’s inter-sector work for inclusion, health and human development.

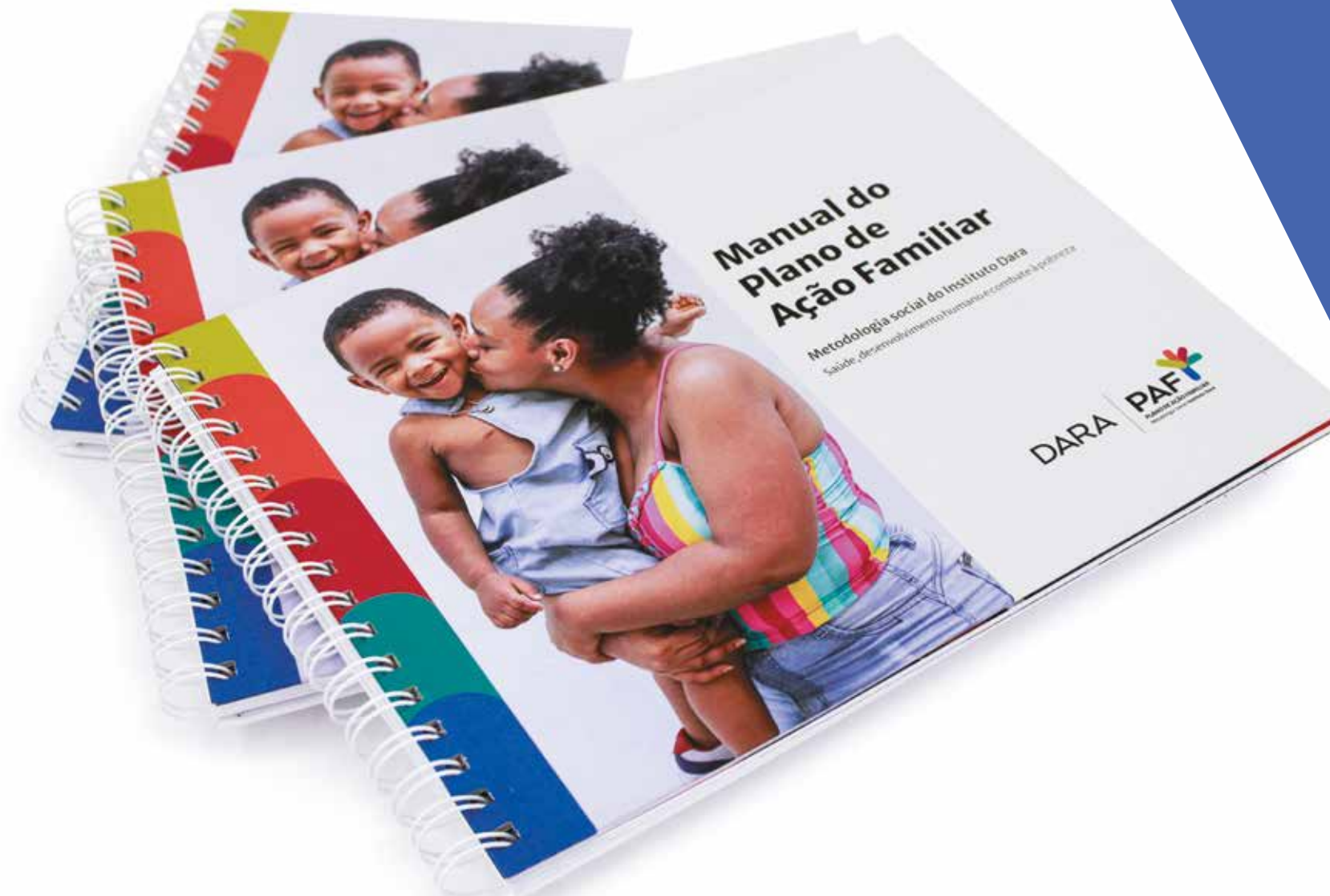
In that context, a networked arrangement is necessary in order to benefit more people and maximise the impact of Dara’s work and its capacity for influence. The Expansion programme thus offers consultancy to the public sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), so as to build their personnel’s capacity in the methodology and consequently to replicate it. It also follows the work of organisations licensed to apply the methodology in their territories. Note that this entails helping to adapt the Family Action Plan methodology to the specifics and realities of each territory and social group.

Replication of the Family Action Plan methodology – partners actions in numbers

5 organisations licensed

- Instituto C (São Paulo)
- Instituto Refazer (Rio de Janeiro)
- Saúde Criança Ilha do Governador (Rio de Janeiro)
- Saúde Criança Responder (Rio de Janeiro)
- Centro Educacional Pequena Cruzada (Rio de Janeiro)

5,259 individuals impacted
6,564 direct services (instances)
1,340 families assisted



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Technical cooperation

Dara serves as a consultant in the technical cooperation agreement signed with the National Social Assistance Secretariat of the Ministry of Social Development and Assistance, the Family and the Fight against Hunger. The work is to assist, drawing on the Family Action Plan’s social methodology, in refining the methodology of the Comprehensive Family Protection and Care Service methodology offered at Social Assistance Referral Centres, which are facilities of the Unified Social Assistance System reporting to the social assistance secretariats of Brazil’s municipalities and the Federal District. The Social Assistance Referral Centres are the main gateways for families living in situations of vulnerability to access



the benefits of social assistance policies. There are more than 8,000 such facilities, covering 99.5% of Brazil’s municipalities and benefiting nearly 25 million families.

In 2023, the Expansion team produced two technical reports based on research studies conducted with policymakers of the states of São Paulo and Paraná and the Federal District. One of the reports focused on state-level policy management and the other on municipal management.

Partnerships

Itu city government (São Paulo State) and Instituto Tecendo Infâncias

In January 2023, we partnered with the NGO, Instituto Tecendo Infâncias, and the city government of Itu, a municipality in São Paulo State, to conduct capacity-building in the Family Action Plan’s multi-sector approach for public administration personnel, as well as applying it in services to families in situations of vulnerability there.

In 53 hours of training sessions, 20 civil servants working in seven different secretariats (Education, Government, Employment and Income, Communication, Health, Social Promotion and Public Works) were duly trained. Throughout the process, an inter-sector committee of municipal administrators, representatives of Instituto Tecendo



During the same period, a bill was enacted to institute the programme A Better Place to Live, influenced by Dara’s Housing programme. The programme authorises the municipal government to carry out renovation and expansion work to improve housing of families living in Itu that participated in the Care for Itu programme.

Infâncias and technical staff from Dara worked together to adapt the Family Action Plan methodology to realities in the municipality. One important outcome of the partnership was the unanimous approval, in August 2023, of Bill No. 77/2023, which established the Care for Itu Programme, which is based on the Dara Institute’s multidimensional view of poverty and inter-sector approach.

With Dara’s influence materialised in public policies and the now mature partnership facilitating access to public services and promoting protagonism, citizenship and inclusion, direct services began to be provided to individuals living in situations of vulnerability in September and currently benefit 32 families.

This work in numbers

- 6** hours of meetings
- 30** hours systematising the material collected
- 51** professionals participated

Vale

In partnership with the company Vale, the Dara Institute is going to bring the Family Action Plan methodology to the Vila Geny community in Itaguaí, according to the Rio de Janeiro State government's Public Safety Institute, is the most violent town in the state.

The purpose of the project is to combat poverty and permit human development and autonomy for the community, by drawing on the experience of the Family

Action Plan programmes in Health, Education, Income Generation, Housing and Citizenship. Starting in January 2024, the project will be integrated into municipal public policy and, including diagnosis, training, service provision and monitoring, will run for 30 months, during which time it will benefit nearly 200 families.



In 2023, the programme drew up the Family Action Plan Expansion Handbook with a view to systematising Dara's 32 years of technical expertise in inter-sector collaboration and the Family Action Plan methodology. The handbook is an extremely important tool in spreading the methodology to other territories and organisations.

The Rio de Janeiro State Family Court

On the same format, an agreement with the Rio de Janeiro State Family Court enabled the Family Action Plan methodology to be incorporated into assistance for 50 families living in conditions of socially vulnerability and involved in family litigation. The aim is to help these families grow stronger and improve their material, social, psychological and emotional condition, and to ensure a safe, respectful family environment for their children. The comprehensive, multidisciplinary support given to the families further serves to optimise public policies offered by the State of Rio de Janeiro.

The programme started in March 2023 by training 40 civil servants in the Family Action Plan methodology. In this partnership, the Dara team provides the services, which began in June, while the court's technical staff follow the activities. By December, 1,144 families had received direct assistance in in-person sessions.

Family profiles (Family Court)

- 88% of participants are women
- 78% of the women are heads of the household
- 78% self-identify as non-white
- 30% generate no income of any kind

In a very short time, the Project Dara-Family Court project has helped bring about substantial changes in the lives of the families assisted.

Although several faced highly complex situations, to the extent that they committed to Family Action Plan activities, significant breakthroughs were possible, including reintegrating children to their families of origin; leaving situations of housing vulnerability to start renting a home; scheduling gastric bypass surgeries in Brazil's national health service to start over with a healthier lifestyle; and being admitted to university, even after having lived on the streets or in institutional shelters, to name just a few landmark successes.

People who experience material and emotional deprivation, violence and the severing of family and social bonds show that small changes in their lives can bring positive change to their context and family environment.

The Family Action Plan abroad

For the third year in a row now, Dara has successfully shared the Family Action Plan methodology with the Girl Move Academy, an organisation in Nampula, Mozambique. This year, efforts were directed to participants in the Changemaker Lab, set up by Girl Move for the purpose of testing and validating new ideas and turning them into effective solutions with positive impacts on the planet and humankind, and the focus and challenge was combating period poverty.

Girlmovers are professional in the fields of Medicine, Psychology, Education, Law and others, who use capacity-building programmes to leverage their talent in order to bring more sustainable development to Mozambique.

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Knowledge and Information Sharing

Established in 2023 as a development from the Expansion programme, the Knowledge and Information Sharing programme seeks to position Dara more robustly as an agent coordinating networks and ecosystems working for social impact, to promote citizenship and the value of life. The programme works to engage civil society and influence public policies by spreading the knowledge accumulated over the Institute's long history, as well as reasserting the organisation's authority, reputation and mission in promoting health and human development and combating poverty.

In practice, the programme systematises knowledge that is produced in an interdisciplinary and inter-sector fashion, converts it into usable form, promotes and publicises it, thereby ensuring that the Family Action Plan methodology is multiplied internally and externally to drive social change.

In order to systematise experience and how knowledge is constructed by conducting processes, case studies, communities of practice and reports, the Knowledge and Information Sharing programme divides onto three different fronts.

HubEP – Poverty Eradication Hub

The first multi-sector, fully collaborative poverty eradication undertaking, the Hub para Erradicação da Pobreza – HubEP (Poverty Eradication Hub) digital platform resulted from an unprecedented collaboration among eight major Brazilian social organisations: Ação da Cidadania, Cieds, Gastromotiva, Ipê – Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas, Rede Asta, Sistema B, and UNIPeriferias, plus the Dara Institute.



With the mission of sharing the knowledge they have acquired through their respective activities on different fronts of the Citizen Sector, these organisations, which have impacted the lives of more than 42 million Brazilians, came together to:

- set up an arrangement for sharing information on innovative solutions to the severe, deep-rooted problems of poverty and social inequality in Brazil and the world;
- become an innovative platform for collaborative inter-sector knowledge production and spread;
- connect and coordinate players of the social impact ecosystem so as collectively to construct knowledge for problem solving;
- strengthen the movement to combat poverty;
- heighten social impact by spreading knowledge and partnering, and spreading and sharing technical and inspirational content.

Launched in March 2023, HubEP is a platform through which individuals, universities, civil society organisations, social entrepreneurs, citizen sector professionals, public policy makers and businesspeople are able to share content (lessons, tools, stories, methodologies,

articles, research studies, pathways, successes and failures) on combating poverty, to enable each professional, institution and civil society increasingly to enlarge the real impacts of their projects and strengthen the poverty eradication ecosystem.

Results in 2023

3,000 users
1,180 users by organic web search
136 visits resulting from Google organic searches
23 infographic downloads
18 eBook downloads
192 content items published – **117** in Portuguese and **75** in English

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HubEP-sponsored photography contest

In October HubEP partnered with *Imagens do Povo/Observatório das Favelas* – a photographic documentation centre and favela observatory – to call for entries to the photography contest “Women in Movement: Experiences in Tackling Poverty”, directed to 18- to 29-year old women, either black or from peripheral urban areas nationwide.

The idea was to select three photographs, whose authors were awarded R\$ 1,000 each. The winning entries came from women from the States of Bahia, Ceará and Pernambuco. The photographs had to convey the artists’ identities and everyday lives, exploring themes such as gender, race, personal experiences, the challenges of urban violence, particular aspects of poverty and takes on their realities as an aesthetic experience. The contest, besides highlighting and acknowledging peripheral communities and their residents, aimed to kindle discussion by producing images that elicit thinking on the subject in all its many dimensions. [Click here to discover more.](#)

Institute for Social and Economic Analysis, Fluminense Federal University, Rio de Janeiro Federal University, Rio de Janeiro Municipal Social Assistance Secretariat, the Rio de Janeiro State General Socio-educational Action Department and the Integrated Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Programmes, as well as special guests from the São Martinho Foundation, Municipal Social Assistance Council and Municipal Council for Child and Adolescent Rights. The three-day event was attended by 101 participants.

International Poverty Eradication Day: Women and Social Change (October 17).

Partners in this event, designed to allow women social entrepreneurs to share their views on different ways to tackle poverty, included Ação da Cidadania, Cieds, Gastromotiva, the Dara Institute, Ipê – Instituto de Pesquisas Ecológicas, Rede Asta, Sistema B and UNIPeriferias, as well as participations from Criola, Gênero e Número, Ibase and Elas+Doar para Transformar. The event was attended by 50 people on-site and 221 online. [Read more.](#)

Knowledge Sharing Auditorium

Besides the digital environment, there is the Knowledge Sharing Auditorium, named after Dr Luis Carlos Vieira Teixeira. This space at Dara’s main centre hosts educational and knowledge-sharing activities, discussion sessions, seminars, conferences, workshops and classes, as well as events to launch publications of all sorts and spread the knowledge we produce.

the multiple fields of the fight against poverty: anthropologists, architects and urban planners, social assistants, scientists, political scientists, economists, statisticians, geographers, healthcare personnel, sociologists and others.

Social Assistant Week
(May 15, 16 and 19)

The event to inaugurate the auditorium and launch the HubEP took place in May and was attended by 170 people. Over the year, other meetings were held to engage social organisations, businesses, public administrators, researchers, the press and professionals working in

Organised to celebrate Social Service workers and to discuss the importance of their activities for the population to access essential rights and the challenges facing social assistants today. Talks and panel presentations were given by Dara staff and the sponsors of the event: the Brazilian

Knowledge Sharing for the Dara team, too

Established in 2023, the Knowledge Sharing Moment is a bimonthly event that bring the whole Dara team together to share their experiences, opportunities and knowledge through presentations and accounts of their participation in conferences, workshops and seminars, thus improving integration among peers and socialising information.

Two meetings were held during the year, on October 6 and December 1, at which participants shared their knowledge of food and nutrition security, institutional memory, recognition and reparations, the United Nations Economic and Social Council and public policies.



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Academic Lab

Dara's Knowledge and Information Sharing programme includes an Academic Research and Innovation Laboratory set up to allow our proactive dialogue with the academic world to develop continuously and organically, as well as giving consistency and visibility to our work. The lab supports the production of knowledge and research, creation of new products/instruments and participation in the training of newly-arrived professionals, thus establishing the Dara Institute as a destination for internships and extension programmes in various different fields of expertise.



To achieve its goals, the Lab works to improve Dara's activity evaluation systems by deploying a methodology by which poverty eradication indicators are developed collectively. In partnership with the Human Resources programme, it encourages corporate education by acquiring, maintaining and sharing knowledge within Dara, while acting to support the growth of its collaborators and the Institute itself. Lastly, the lab produces and conducts research, comparing objective and subjective criteria, examining phenomena and developing theories based on the literature and accumulated experience.

It also hosts extension activities, thus reinforcing relations between universities and civil society. In 2023, the lab established or maintained partnerships with the following universities in Brazil and abroad:

- Rio de Janeiro State Federal University (UniRio)/Social Service School – capacity-building and advisory input by Dara's Citizenship programme's direct services team.
- Rio de Janeiro Federal University (UFRJ)/ Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism – support for technical visits arranged by Dara's Housing programme and assistance in developing new work instruments. [Read more on page 36.](#)
- Fluminense Federal University (UFF)/ Collective Health Institute – mapping families' vaccination record cards and running a vaccination campaign at the Dara Institute to spread immunisation coverage among families assisted.
- Fluminense Federal University (UFF)/ Department of Entrepreneurship and Management – impact research studies/ Social Return on Investment (SROI) appraisals for the Rio de Janeiro State Family Court project, in partnership with Dara's Expansion programme..

There are currently four UFRJ architecture and five UniRio social service extension students at Dara, in addition to one Euroqol intern/research assistant.

Information Systems

The Information Systems group at Dara works to bring together creative efforts and propose the use of technological solutions, whether Dara's own or outsourced, to systematise and optimise work processes, particularly in the direct services provided to families assisted at the Institute.

The group also stores, monitors, manages and evaluates data and information input

to a dedicated system by the family care teams. This information is then used to produce indicators and reports that underpin decision making at all levels of the organisation, thus helping make the Institute's work increasingly important in inter-sector efforts to combat poverty.



Upgrading the Family Action Plan System

So that the monitoring and direct services provided to families by the Family Action Plan methodology can improve continuously, store reliable data and produce indicators to help give more visibility to Dara's impact on the lives of individuals and society, it is of the utmost importance to upgrade the Family Action Plan System.

In 2023, a survey was made of current system user needs, work to draft the Family Action Plan Handbook was closely monitored and the methodology process was drawn up. This enabled the personnel involved in the project to map data and questions to be included in service scripts and develop ongoing risk assessment.

The project will continue in 2024. When complete, Dara expects it to offer a technological solution to facilitate service provision with precise indicators, as well as a tool to permit better informed follow-up of action agreed on with, and the progress of, families assisted under the Family Action Plan. This solution may be used by Dara's various partner organisations applying the Family Action Plan methodology and will allow fine tuning to suit each institution's local context.

Knowledge and Information Sharing programme actions and participations

In the course of 2023, the Knowledge and Information Sharing programme engaged on several fronts strategic to broadening the scope of the Institute's activities and exchanging expertise relating to the Citizenship programme. Particularly notable were:

- Joining the National Pact to Combat Inequalities.
- Participating in the Social Development Panel of the Knowledge Management Conference, attended by 179 people.
- Participating in the "Glocal Experience" event, a platform for ideas and action to achieve the 2030 Agenda, based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- Participating in preparing the "Transformative Scenarios for the State of Rio de Janeiro" report and sitting on editorial committee of the final report.

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Institutional Relations

Over the course of its history, the Dara Institute has forged valuable relationships with individuals, businesses and organisations. These partnerships have generated enormous impacts on the lives of thousands of families, not only those assisted by the institution.

The Institutional Relations programme attracts and maintains strategic partnerships, in addition to fundraising, so as to contribute to the Institute's economic sustainability. To that end, it

procures donations and sponsorships from individuals and organisations by strengthening its attraction strategies via donation platforms, business sponsors, individual donors and so on.

That is, the Institutional Relations programme serves as a bridge between the organisation and its sources of support, all the while working tirelessly to ensure that the Institute's pursuit of its mission is constantly strengthened and its influence on society, intensified

Institutional Relations programme activities included:

- 5** new projects approved (under the municipal culture incentive law, state value added tax law and federal income tax law)
- 1** project approved under the federal culture incentive (Rouanet) law
- 4** projects approved under the municipal culture incentive law

Main activities conducted with sponsors, supporters and partners – in addition to those of the Dara programmes already mentioned – included:

- **International Volunteer Day**
On January 23, Prudential made a financial contribution and sent 19 volunteers to help run an activity to celebrate International Volunteer Day (celebrated on December 5). The one hundred participants included expectant and recent mothers, companions and staff from the Maria Amélia Buarque de Hollanda Maternity Hospital.
- **Food donations**
On August 12, a collaboration with the Pão de Açúcar Group enabled Dara volunteers and staff members to approach customers one of the group's supermarkets in the Botafogo district of Rio de Janeiro. The outcome was food donations totalling 44 kg of rice, 32 kg of beans, 22 kg of pasta, 7 bottles of cooking oil, 4 cartons of milk and other products including items of personal hygiene (54 bars of soap, 21 tubes of toothpaste and five packages of sanitary towels).
- **MegaAção Global**
Through this partnership with the company Megamatte, on 20 July, 50 young, female and black Dara beneficiaries seeking work and entrepreneurship opportunities engaged in activities offering capacity building, development, connection and inspiration at the Institute's main centre. Seven volunteers participated in the event.
- **GS1 Healthcare Conference**
The IR team attended this event in São Paulo on October 3, 4 and 5, with a view to promoting the Institute and raising funding from businesses and organisations from Brazil and abroad.
- **TechnipFMC International Volunteering**
On the last Saturday of January, this event engaged volunteers from the company TechnipFMC, which sponsored the event, for a day of teaching and collaboration with Dara, which culminated in the donation of 100 tins of Ninho+1 powdered milk. The activity involved 30 TechnipFMC volunteers and 26 Dara beneficiaries.
- **Sebrae Call for Proposals**
Partnering with civil society organisations, five gatherings were held to spread knowledge among Dara beneficiaries. In all, the activity comprised 14 hours of talks on entrepreneurship, which were attended by 58 people. Sebrae, Brazil's micro and small business support service, became a Dara partner through a public call for proposals.

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Activities abroad

The Dara Institute has a remote office in New York City to permit fundraising in the United States. As Brazil Child Health, it is eligible to accept donations under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code; these are then tax-deductible at both the state and federal level. Accordingly, Dara conducts activities in the US to educate Brazilians living there and/or US citizens to support Dara's work in Brazil.

On November 6, Dara held its first-ever event outside of Brazil: "Overcoming Poverty: Making Change Happen" took place at the Miami Dade College Idea Center in Miami, USA. The discussions, addressing issues of social change, combating poverty and promoting inclusion, were mediated by Sandra Coutinho, international correspondent for GloboNews in New York City, and brought together Adriana Machado, founder of the Briyah Institute, Hans Hickler, CEO and founder of Ellipsis Advisors, and Robert H. Hacker, director of StartUP at Florida International University. Vera Cordeiro, Dara's founder and chairwoman, participated remotely. [Read more.](#)

In May 2023, Dara joined a round table of the Clinton Global Initiative in Medellin, Colombia. The event brought together Latin American and Caribbean leaders and organisations to address issues of climate change and health. Dara was represented by Isabella Bablumian, the Institute's international fundraising lead at the time. Among the many inspiring solutions shared at the event, the Family Action Plan methodology figured prominently for its inter-sector work with vulnerable populations. Established in 2005 by former US President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative convenes actors across sectors to inspire action on today's most challenging problems. Since its launch, over 3,400 Commitments to Action have helped to improve the lives of over 430 million people in more than 180 countries.

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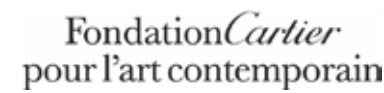
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Sponsors



Institutional Supporters



Project Supporters



Supporters



Partners



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Project Management Office

The Project Management Office (PMO) was set up in January 2023 to help build up project management culture across the Dara Institute's various programmes.

Since then, the PMO's work has been mainly to:

- introduce and deploy the best project management tools and practices, as recommended by the Agile Methodology and PMBOK Guide, as well as process management, according to the Business Process Modelling and Notation (BPMN) methodology;
- provide support and capacity-building for Dara's other programmes in structuring and conducting their projects and activities;
- track projects/activities to circulate results;
- map processes and identify improvements.

Over its first year in operation, the PMO programme played an active part in the running of several important projects and provided support to the programmes responsible.

In 2023 the PMO supported the review of one of the Dara Institute's core activities, the Family Action Plan methodology, which began in 2023 in collaboration with the consultancy firm, Atrela. Seeking to take an innovative and impactful look at the results of the Institute's work with its beneficiaries, this project entailed an in-depth review of the Family Action Plan, to re-examine its purpose, key concepts, stages, performance indicators for processes and results, areas impacted and, above all, the experience of the families assisted. Throughout the process, the PMO managed, monitored and followed-up on the takeaways, so as to ensure the consistency and quality of the information collected. The outcome of this intensive task – which is still ongoing – will be an updated Family Action Plan Handbook.



Cutting across all Dara programmes, review of the Family Action Plan System also involved the PMO, along with the IT programme and external consultancy from Visagio. This undertaking will make it possible to put together Family Action Plans that are even more objective and easily trackable, leading to improved and more agile direct services, in addition to facilitating the information gathering and the production of more precise and

intelligible data and indicators. [See page 48 to learn more.](#)

Projects led by the Expansion programme to draft Family Action Plan Expansion Handbook and introduce the Family Action Plan methodology at Itu, the Rio de Janeiro Family Court and Vale, had the PMO's backing to help monitor and oversee the measures taken, as well as in other activities.

Strategic Planning 2023–2024

All Dara Institute programmes (Administrative & Financial, Direct Services, Communication, Knowledge and Information Sharing, Expansion and Institutional Relations), together with the Steering Committee and Project Management Office, helped develop the institution's two-year Strategic Planning for 2023–2024. The external consulting firm, Proengys, led the endeavour.

Twenty-eight priority projects will be led by different Dara programmes during the period. The planning also set out four strategic goals:

- provide direct services, to the highest levels of excellence, for 300 families, 80% of them meeting the discharge criteria over the two-year assistance journey;
- increase fundraising and sponsor capillarity, to secure a 15% increase in 2023 and 25% in 2024 (2022 base year);
- apply and replicate the Family Action Plan methodology by expanding three replication partnerships: 150 new families in 2023 and 300 in 2024 (2022 base year); and
- engage society and influence public policies by spreading the knowledge accumulated over Dara's 30 years of existence, by strengthening partnerships with institutions, academia and other social organisations.

The PMO supported the Steering Committee in specifying the portfolio of projects, aligning the strategic goals and allocating strategic funding. Over the course of the year, it supported decision-making to prioritise project activities, assessing impacts and yields from a strategic and risk management viewpoint. It also led the process of detailing and reviewing the priority projects, working together with the Dara programme managers, so as to help them achieve consistency in their projects, as well as safeguarding the Institute's strategic direction.

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Communication

To strengthen the Dara Institute’s image as a benchmark organisation in the Citizen Sector both in Brazil and abroad – that is the main purpose of the Communication programme, which engages with internal as well as external audiences.

In order to nurture the relationship with staff members and volunteers and keep these target audiences current with, and engaged in, Dara’ work, the programme circulates news and reports through Dara’s official internal channels, as well as holding internal marketing events and running awareness, mobilisation and information campaigns. It also meets communication needs voiced by the other programmes.



For external audiences, the work includes maintaining Institute’s website up-to-date, along with all its official social media accounts (on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn), and designing institutional, fundraising or event promotion campaigns

Communication programme activities included:

f facebook.com/InstitutoDara
67,817 followers, **82%** women
185 posts in 2023
3,660 interactions (likes, comments, shares)

i instagram.com/instituto.dara/
15.031 followers **72.5%** women
468,916 profile impressions
175 posts in 2023, with **17,284** interactions (likes, comments, shares)
352 stories in 2023, with **71,508** interactions (likes, comments, shares)
43 reels in 2023, with **74,284** views

in linkedin.com/company/institutodara/
4.350 followers
52 posts in 2023
1,434 interactions (likes, comments, shares)

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Communication campaigns

Dara runs regular communication campaigns for its external audience, mainly to intensify donor relations and thus boost contributions. The most important, involving email marketing and investment in paid social media traffic, include:

- Mother's Day Campaign: in May, this reached 25,700 Instagram accounts.
- Children's Day Campaign: in October, this reached 26,500 Instagram accounts.
- Christmas Campaign: in December, this reached 24,800 Instagram accounts.

In 2023 three campaigns to publicise initiatives led by the Poverty Eradication Hub (HubEP) promoted:

- "Poverty: Its Dimensions and How to Eradicate It", announced organically across social media platforms in May, inviting viewers to watch the online panel debate.
- "Women and Social Change", an event in October, announced via organic posts and investments in paid traffic (reaching a total of 18,500 Instagram accounts).
- "Women in Movement", a photography contest that HubEP held in September/October. This campaign featured organic posts and investments in paid traffic (and, overall, reached 21,600 Instagram accounts).

Project Daras on Globo Comunidade



On November 12, during Black Consciousness Month, the "Community Globo" show on Globo TV ran a story about the entrepreneurial drive of women of colour in Project Daras – this specific edition of which the Dara Institute conducted with the support of SC Johnson. [See page 30 for more on the project.](#)

At the Institute's main centre, reporter Luana Dias followed some of the project's gastronomy and beauty care activities. Meanwhile, in the studio, Daras participant, Agatha Cristina, was able to show off her culinary creations, demonstrating the project's positive impact on the lives of the women assisted.

News and press office

The work of the Dara Institute's Communication programme also involves producing weekly information to publicise events and internal actions. This is posted in the News section on the Institute's website (dara.org.br). In 2023, the programme published 33 posts.

Memos and newsletters are also sent out regularly to both internal and external audiences. Under the title "Weekly News", this provides staff and volunteers with the week's main social media posts. Thirty-three editions were published in 2023.

Another product of the Communication programme is an informative newsletter devised specifically for Dara's external audience. Six editions (three ordinary and three special) were published this year, all in Portuguese and English.



Thanks to support from the Ludus press office, Dara was featured – and in some instances, the main subject – in stories and reports put out by major Brazilian and international media outlets. The twenty or so highlights in 2023 included:

Brazil Journal

“Dr Vera has created an exit door for poverty. Her work makes Brazil proud.”

Report on Deutsche Welle German TV

Watch here in English

Terra

“Contest offers awards for photographs by women who are young, black and from peripheral urban areas.”

Neomondo/Estadão

“Citizen sector organisations gather to discuss gender and combating poverty.”

Jornal Tribuna newspaper

“Women leaders of social organisations discuss gender and poverty.”

Observatório do Terceiro Setor

“Women in focus: photography and tackling poverty.”

Revista AfirmAtiva magazine

“Call for entries for photography contest ‘Women in movement: experiences in tackling poverty’.”

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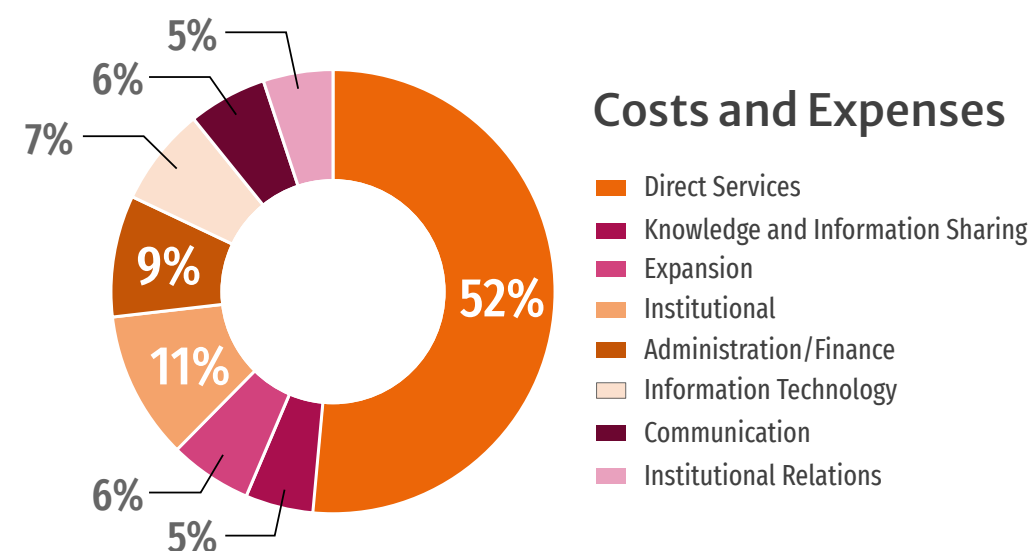
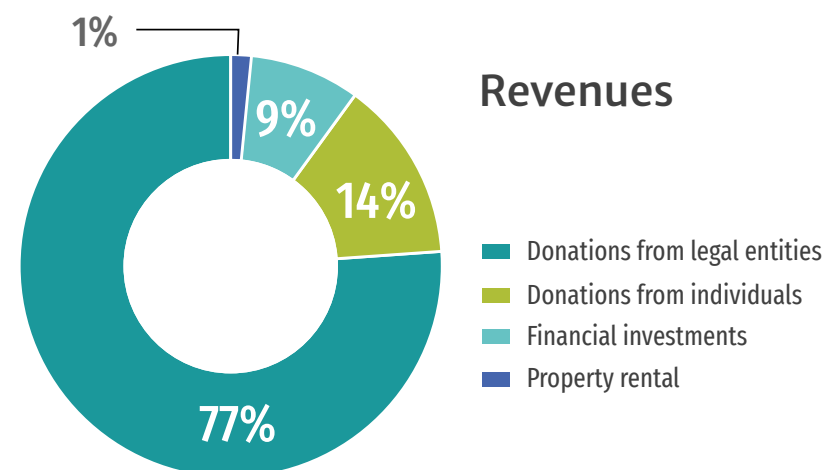
Administration & Finance and Human Resources

In 2023, the post-Covid-19 economic context posed challenges for the Dara Institute's financial management.

Nevertheless, the political and social scenarios for Brazil predicted political stability after the elections, signalling economic recovery, growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and with inflation rates close to the target set by the Central Bank of Brazil.

These positive signs gave grounds for the institution's financial planning, which foresaw a growing organisational structure. Despite the recovering economy, however, we experienced a downturn in fundraising, from both individuals and legal entities, which left the Institute with a financial deficit.

The Dara Institute	2023	%
Revenues		
Donations from individuals	767,908	14%
Donations from legal entities	4,358,838	77%
Property rental	59,984	1%
Financial investments	494,758	9%
Total revenue	5,681,488	100%
Costs and Expenses		
Direct services	4,499,451	52%
Knowledge and Information Sharing	421,160	5%
Expansion	484,524	6%
Institutional	971,434	11%
Total costs	6,376,568	73%
Administration/Finance	812,907	9%
Information Technology	585,493	7%
Communication	526,511	6%
Fundraising	399,572	5%
Total expenses	2,324,482	27%
Total costs and expenses	8,701,051	100%
Result (R-E)	(3,019,562)	
Investment in	918,843	
Investment out	(918,843)	
Total Investments		
Balance (RO-/+I)	(3,019,562)	



Nevertheless, thanks to funds from positive results in prior years, the Dara Institute's activities have continued in line with the expansion plan: the number of collaborators has increased, bringing in new staff with key skill sets and experience. As a result, we ended the year with a staff of 61, which is 19.60% growth over the prior year.

The endowment fund performed well, with yield above inflation rates: net gain of 8.52% in a challenging year for financial assets.

Cash equivalent investments in Banco Itaú's deposit certificates, earning 100% of the Inter-Bank Deposit Certificate rate, also produced sound returns, because of base interest rates in place in Brazil at the time.

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Financial tracking

We believe the Dara Institute ought to grow sustainably. This conviction rests on sound foundations that can be seen in the financial report – transparency is a core principle for the Institute. Accordingly, the financial statements undergo annual external audits, which in 2023 were the responsibility of Ernst & Young.

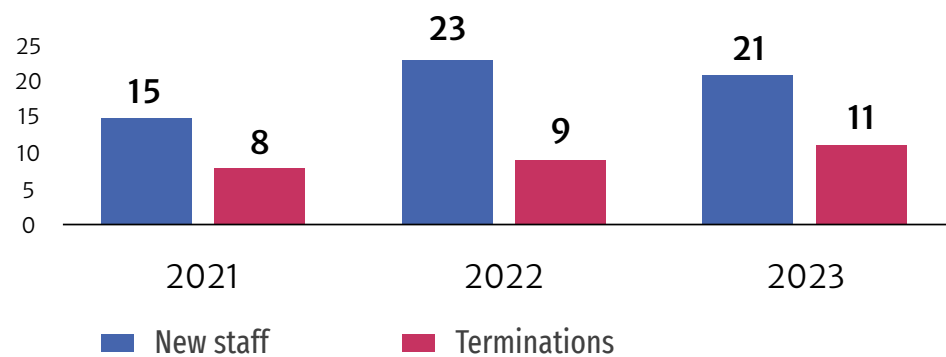
Human Resources

One of the Dara Institute’s initiatives in 2023 was to develop Human Resource policies, which describe the attributions and responsibilities of each position within the organisation. After completing that document, we were able to introduce a number of staff development processes, prominent among which were early efforts, working together with the Communication programme, to set up a corporate university. The first knowledge pathway is expected to be laid down by early 2024.

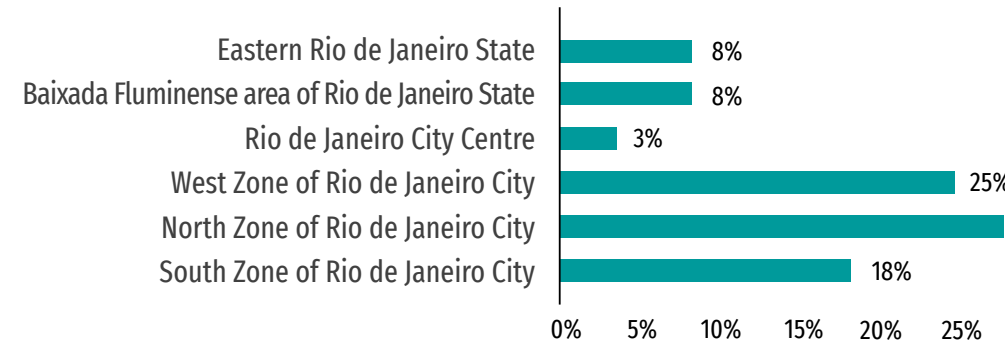
The Human Resources programme in numbers:



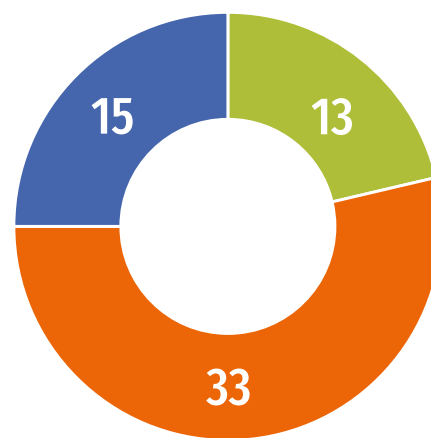
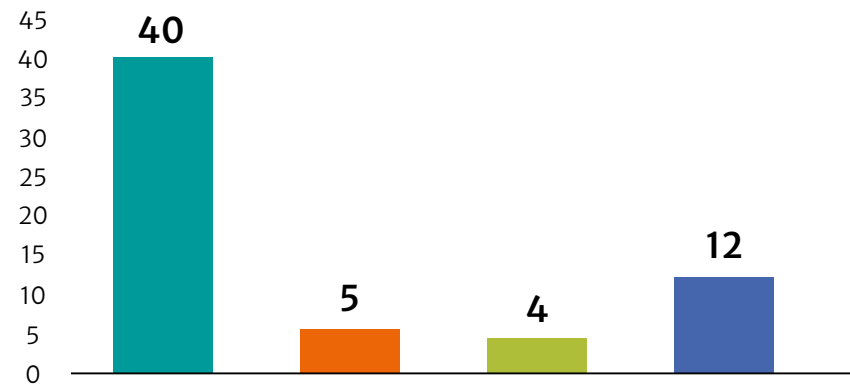
Engagements and terminations by year



Staff distribution by place of residence

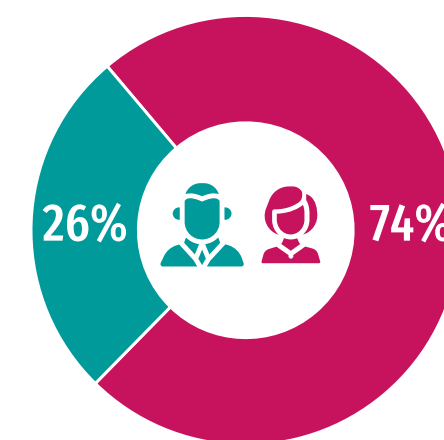


Staff numbers by years in the organisation



Staff numbers by ethnicity

- Black
- White
- Of colour
- Not informed (0)



Staff numbers by gender

- Female
- Male

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Collaborators

Board

Vera Regina Gaensly Cordeiro
Founder and Chairwoman

Candace Maria Albertal Lessa
Vice Chairwoman

Flavio Siniscalchi

Laura Gaensly Cordeiro

Paulo Roberto Ayala Cordeiro

Sylvia Maria Lordello da Silva

Sylvio Leite Monteiro Filho

Advisory Board

Alvaro Alberto Estima

Ana Paula Ferreira Antonio

Armínio Fraga Neto

Claire Marie Fallender

Cristiane de Oliveira dos Santos

Cristina Chagas Gouvêa Vieira

Eduardo Eugênio Gouvêa Vieira

Gloria Marques da Silva Costa

Hans Hickler

Lucyna Maria Felix da Nobrega Fraga

Maria Luisa Marquez

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