

BETWEEN WORK WITH DIVERSE FAMILIES

AND

DIVERSE WORK WITH FAMILIES

Final report

20th December 2004

Ivonne Martinez

Elena Munoz

Translated by Randall de Freitas

SUMMARY

First Part

1. Presentation
2. Introduction. Country Context.
3. Doctrinal Context: About the Irregular Situation of Integral Protection
4. Itinerary of construction of the response: “Do all the paths lead to the Family?”
5. Institutional contexts. Short review
 - 5.1 Life and education
 - 5.1.1 Cruz del Sur
 - 5.2 I.E.P. EL ABROJO
 - 5.2.1 Cachabache
 - 5.2.2 Omnibus
 - 5.2.3 Repique
6. Family Contexts: How the projects are put forward to families with children in street situations: A glimpse.

Second Part

WORK WITH FAMILIES

- 7.1 Fundamentals of working with families
- 7.2 On work with families. Points in common, and on the surface
 - 7.2.1 From where to intervene
 - 7.2.2 Contents of the work with families
- 7.3 Methodological drawings
- 7.4 Common Lessons Learned
- 8 To summarise: What has been done, What is to be done and Perspectives
- 9 Bibliography

FIRST PART

1. Presentation

The work presented here defines the “Systemisation Initiatives on “Diverse Families” that was done by the American non-profit foundation “Shine a Light”, the international network for street children.

The overall objective of this study is to systemise work with families in socio-educative practices, supported by projects for the awareness of the situations of street children and made possible by the NGOs *Vida y Educacion* and the *Instituto de Educacion Popular El Abrojo*. It also aims to identify lessons learnt, problems areas and resolutions.

The original plan was defined as a work/study object that was composed of two projects: *Organizacion Vida y Educacion* and one of three from the I.E.P. *EL ABROJO*. Subsequently, at the time of determining the terms of reference and before determining which one of these three projects will turn out to be representative of all, it was decided to include them in their totality (Cachabache, Omnibus Itinerante and Repique). Similarly, in doing the first interviews it was found that the Cachabache project was not fulfilling the work with families, and so it was decided to incorporate the accumulated data from the interviews techniques and secondary data from that project, not including it in the observation field (for obvious reasons).

The methodological strategy triangulated results of qualitative and quantitative techniques precisely for the effects of the synthesis of processes and results. Firstly, we proceeded to the literature review, analysis of secondary data and study of material produced by institutions involved both at the projects level and at the organisational level (reports, plans, evaluations, registration forms, etc.).

We managed to interview 16 qualified informants, distributed in the following manner: 13 teachers, 4 team coordinators and 4 adult participant users of projects. Of these, 6 were individual interviews and 10 collective. Similarly, 12 were in depth interviews and 4 semi-structured interviews.

We performed participant observation for 3 months, completing fieldwork with teachers in their practical work with families and created the field notes. We employed triangulation of observations as a “control” technique against the subjectivity of the systemisers.

An unforeseen outcome of the work was a presentation from the “Advance of systemization”, which will contribute to the reflection on the practices of all the “street” projects, at the Encuentro Nacional de Intercalle “Children in the street: What to do and perspectives on work with families”, done on the 17th of November.

List of Interviewees

Institution	Project	Role	Name
VIDA Y EDUCACIÓN	Cruz del Sur	Coordinadora	Marina Cal
		Educador	Alfredo Correa
		Educadora	Ana Dourur
		Educadora	Celia Lago
		Educador	Marcelo San Martín

		Educador	Pablo da Silva
		Educadora	Ana Laura Brugnoli
		Educadora	Andrea Bustelo
EI ABROJO	Cachabache	Coordinadora	Adriana Briozzo
		Educadora	Alfonsina
	<i>Ómnibus Itinerante</i>	Coordinadora	Marta Suanes
		Educadora	María Guillot
		Educador	Ruben Antúnez
		Educador	Fernando Iglesias
	EI ABROJO	Repique	Coordinadora
Educador			Fabián Ibañez
Educadora			Ma. Elena Rovira
<i>Participant Users from the Projects</i>		Cristina	
		Fabiana	
		María Ester	
		Rosa	

2. Introduction

The emergence of projects for the plight of street children must be viewed in the wider picture.

The concepts of Infancy and Adolescence are social constructions through which a response to a representation reality is created and adjusted to a determined spatial context and historical moment. As J. Qvortrup indicated well, infancy from this perspective “is constructed through a conjunction of social strengths, economic interests, technological determinants, cultural phenomena, etc., including, of course, as one of its parameters, the discourse that is made about it”. The author adds, without being ignorant of the relevant role and contribution that children and adolescents have had and are having as protagonists, that “the social changes are superficially produced by them or on their backs”, which allows us to infer how many of them, inclusively, have been against the needs, possibilities and wants of this group.

Paradoxically, at the instant that childhood and youth were considered as valuable phases in and for themselves, the field of infancy (in the full sense) had never before presented such converging features of regression as the ones observed in the epilogue of the past century and the beginning of the present one.

Likewise, in Uruguay, and in the remaining countries of the region, “the family” has not even been placed in the social public policy framework as an actor who really intervenes in this space. Nevertheless, in the propositions of fragmented, separated and compensatory public policies, the projects for the benefit of street children have opted to include them in accordance with an integral perspective of the Child as Subject of Right, and inevitably play the role of compensating absences from the state as well.

Country Context

Attempting to do a brief chronological outline, we can identify at the world level the end of the 70’s and the decade of the 80’s as years of growth and hardening of the

capitalist model at the same time as the creation of new groups and movements for Human Rights defence in general and thematic-sectors in particular. The same groups claimed to fight against the enlargement and expression of new forms of fragmentation of the social fabric, of the realities of economic discrimination and of social inequality (fundamentally in the societies called the Third World). One can place the trials of the pioneering street projects occurring in the middle of the 1980s in Latin America within the offer of responses to the new social emergencies that were taking place, and in particular appearing as the result of the ‘crisis of the 1980s’. This continent has been and continues to show the most unequal income distribution on the planet. It was for this reason that important sectors of the societies that they represent, and in particular the family units, felt obliged to try new forms of subsistence with the intention of preserving the quality of life or recovering, in some form, what was lost. In this way, they improved the quantity of available work hours, had a greater expansion in the number of women working, increased early incorporation in the labour market (which, most of the time, goes with the decline of the “formal” education), increased and diversified the precariousness of the work, among others. Nevertheless, those who lived in such an experience as a result now find themselves in a significantly fragile social situation, jobless persons in the realm of exclusion induced to go out to the street, visualising it as the only alternative to place themselves against that exposition. This progressive erosion of the family capital had – among other things – effects on the capacities of the parental duty of adults with respect to children or the like.

What is new, in this sense, and what in turn is the base of the existence of such projects, was, and is, that now the adults who travelled processes of social abandonment not only went out to the urban streets but so did the children and adolescents on seeing, in this way, their rights as easily vulnerable. At the same time, and as we will see further on, the street survival strategies exercised in these age groups is usually more “profitable” in relation to adults, and at the time, if indeed the first go out to the street in search of material satisfaction these are not the only motives. The reality of the street, and *exit to the street* of children and adolescents, is a multi-causal problem, because it is a situation also entailing significant complexity. Practically, the totality of this universe is met in extremely critical material conditions; but not all persons who are found in similar conditions go to the street. This idea, which at these levels results in a thesis, proves the multidimensionality of the phenomenon. This problem moreover, constitutes and introduces a frank *island of omission* on the part of the government, and in turn, the unquestionable shape of social desertion in this social age group as one of the more acute forms of infant and adolescent exclusion.

At the same time, for the purpose of the public policies of adjustment that are applied in the region, a group of countries, placed territorially in Geneva (historic symbolic home of defence of DDHH), was found reunited discussing and preparing since 1979 what was consecrated as the Convention on Child Rights (CCR) in 1989, as an emblematic and synthetic manifestation of the so-called Doctrine of Integral Protection.

In this sense, Uruguay, in less than a year, ratified formally this Convention (1990), adopting a “rapidly, extended ratification process”...; “in no other place of the world was so tense a social mobilisation produced around the CCR as in the case of Latin America”. And so before, and as the lawyer Emilio Garcia Mendez, who specialised in children’s rights very clearly has expressed it, the formal adhesion to law (normative marks, laws

and decrees) not only is not a sufficient condition to celebrate some changes, but inclusively, has the ability to be key to the perpetuation of some realities of clear injustice. Concretely, while the country quickly signed the CCR, it aided the process of a greater deepening of social inequality in the history of the country, concentrated fundamentally on children and adolescents.

It is proper to recall here that Uruguay has a population of 3,163,763 habitants, localised in approximately 93% of the urban centres. Further, nearly half of its total population is concentrated in the capital of the country. It represents a population that is structured like an inverted pyramid, characterised by processes of growing old together with a low birth rate and high hope of survival (on average); proper characteristics from more (so-called) developed societies.

In the last 20 years the country registered, in general terms, economic growth conforming to the traditional methods of measurement in that respect. Between the years 1985-1998, the said growth was identified as strongly associated with similar countries' behaviour of the region, to effects of the financial system, economic flux, etc., permitting this, in its turn, to spread about a decrease in poverty concentrated on the age group of 65 and over. From 1999 to 2003, one observed a decrease in the growth of the GNP, modifying the tendency and reaching an accumulated increase of 20% in the total period.

In spite of these figures of sure economic recovery in macro terms, Uruguay presented each time more difficulties for integrating all its members.

Concretely, for the total country we count: nearly 100,000 extremely poor, and more than one million poor, that is to say one third of the total population. And what is worse yet, it persists in concentrating its – nearly inexistent – biological and social growth in the more unfavourable sectors. Such a fact is not only a frank violation of the rights of these children and adolescents, but also it is an aberration in terms of a country plan.

A recent study done for Montevideo offered significant data to show the emblematic knots that traverse our society, and in particular the capital, in relation to how it was resolving (rather: not resolving) “the social question” in the last two decades. Concretely, in the last 20 years, poverty was concentrated especially in the capital of the country (with the consequent social isolation that it implied for the affected, in terms of Kartzman) and for the age groups.

Montevideo registers for the year 2003, 837,000 persons in poverty or vulnerable to poverty (559,000 and 278,000, respectively). Similarly, we count some 178,000 persons considered extremely poor and vulnerable to extreme poverty (68,500 and 109,500 respectively). In sum, Montevideo, in 2003 presented 837,000 habitants in very poor conditions or poor or vulnerable to some of these phenomena, which represents 62% of the total population of the state.

It is necessary to note also, that these realities of poverty, extreme poverty or vulnerability or all these are situations that were created several years ago, inclusively it is possible to talk of generations. Confirming prior studies considered here, the presence of stated realities are not distributed homogenously in the territory. In this sense, 75% of the very poor persons and nearly 60% of the poor are concentrated in the districts that contain 34% of the Montevideoans, zones that in turn, are generally the home of or contain populations that are the focus of street projects.

In relation to the differentiated distribution of poverty for age groups, if indeed between 1996-1998 general poverty was reduced by 35% in that period, in children and

adolescents less than 18 years old it was only 15%. This had different manifestations according to zone, manifesting itself inclusively in some which not only maintained the prior figures but instead grew.

While in the period 1986-1988 we see that the tendency already alerted by Juan Pablo Terra in 1986 had not been reversed in 1990 with respect to the risks of childhood poverty, the average percentage of poor children less than 5 years old reached 52.5% and for 2001-2003 this reality will impact strongly reaching 58% of that social age group. Nevertheless, it adds to the study that poverty creates a great problem in general terms not only for the first infant but for all those children and adolescents less than 18 years old, with at least 53% of the Montevideoans included in these ages.

Such a summary synthesises, among other things, with total clarity, who are the age groups that have effectively been heard and by extension, are able to pressure, and who, consequently, have been seen as definitively vulnerable in their rights, especially in the last decades.

3. Context: From the “Irregular Situation” to the Doctrine on Integral Protection

Since the 1990s there exists in matters of Infancy and Adolescence the claim of a paradigm change from the Irregular Situation Doctrine to the Integral Protection Doctrine, paradoxically reducing the quantity and quality of the basic, universal social public policies, and especially the goals of satisfying the necessities of Infancy and Adolescence.

The so-called Irregular Situation Doctrine reappeared in the first decades of the 20th century and was based on all the Latin American Minor Statutes, a result of the reform movement, which in a space of 20 years was consecrated as a hegemonic doctrine (in our country by the Child Statutes of 1934). Basically, it conjugated two bodies of ideas: the ideology state authority, and the focus of social defence. It presents strongly ethnocentric contents, and depends upon the assumption of a homogeneous society and a standard of universal departure. The criminal discourse for the ‘Juvenile Delinquents’ will be given with a focus on origins and the discourse of the re-integration of the children into society.

With the term “Integral Protection Doctrine”, reference was made to a grouping of judicial instruments of international character that express a fundamental change in the social consideration of infancy. Recognised as a direct antecedent of the “Universal Declaration on Child Rights”, this doctrine condenses four basic instruments:

- The Minimum Rules from the United Nations for the administration of juvenile justice (rules from Beijing);
- the Minimum Rules from the United Nations for youth deprived of liberty;
- Directives of Rhiad and,
- the International Convention on Child Rights, the most important instrument for measurement, which provides the general frame of interpretation for all these norms.

These relate to the infancy category and not only to those in particularly difficult circumstances; in the Integral Protection Doctrine reference is no longer made to minors as ‘a residual category of infancy marked by their deficiencies, incapacities and

conflicts’, but to children and adolescents. In general: the minor-object will shift to be considered as the child-adolescent-subject who is full of rights (keeping their contents, range, limits and guarantees fixed). They were introduced by the suppositions of ‘diversity’ and ‘heterogeneity’ of towns and societies, and the concept of co-responsibility of the State and the community. The criminal discourse for youth in conflict of the law will become the focus of critical criminology and the reductive discourse of violence.

To continue we present schematically the central characteristics of the both paradigms:

Doctrina de la Situación Irregular	Doctrina de la Protección Integral
1- Presupposes an inner division of the infant category: children adolescents, at one side, and minors on the other. The laws inspired in this doctrine are exclusively from and for the minors.	1- The new laws are proposed as an instrument for the grouping of the infancy category.
2- Judge of minors with omnipotent competency and discretion Judge = Good father of family	2- The judicial function becomes more hierarchical, sending back their specific mission of addressing legal conflicts
3- Pathologization of situations of structural origin. Legalisation of social problems related to infancy.	3- De-pathologization of situations of structural origin. It is no longer the child or adolescent, but rather now they will be basic social policies which are found in irregular situations.
4- Impunity (based on an arbitrarily recognised values) for the treatment of natural penal conflicts.	4- Assured juridically the main basics of equality before law; substitution of the impunity-arbitrarily opposition by the severity-justice opposition.
5- Criminalisation of poverty	5- Eliminate internationals not connected to the commission, verified as required, of crimes and contraventions.
6- Consideration of infancy as an object of protection (in the best of the hypothesis)	6- Consideration of infancy as a subject full of rights.
7- Explicit and systematic negation of the basic and elemental principles of Rights, including those considered in the proper National Constitution as right of all citizens.	7- Explicit Incorporation of the constitutional principles related to the person, as the basic principles of the Rights contained in the CDN.

Doctrina de la Situación Irregular	Doctrina de la Protección Integral
8- Systematic construction of a semantic euphemism that conditions the functioning of the system to the non-empirical verification of their real consequences.	8- Elimination of false paternalistic euphemisms

**4. Itinerary of the construction of the response:
“All paths lead to the family”?**

Street Projects emerge as innovative responses to the multiple problematic realities of children and adolescents living in the street, in the understanding that such situations are the cause of the break from social inclusion resulting from the processes of social fragmentation.

In Uruguay, the first test of this idea with what inaugurated this characteristic of open space work was implemented by INAME in 1986 within the confines of its own state.

The formulation of the initial street project was inspired by experiences of other countries, in particular in the Colombian experience, and with less impact in reflections on reliable experiences from Spain; relying on its implementation with the support of the corporation of the government of Canada.

Three years later, in 1989, *Gurises Unidos* implemented the second Project in this country in this way, which subsequently, was assimilated in other organisations of civil society.

In 1995, the group of street projects created a collective environment for reflection and search for common lines of work that was called “Intercalle”.

In these 18 years, the Street Projects have not stopped accumulating conceptually, methodologically and technically in a process that was anything but linear, with goings and comings, with much trial and error as primary methods of investigation-action, launching from there an important balance of significant accumulation.

We should emphasise that it all constitutes an accomplishment because these accumulations do not happen by the mere passage of time, and in fact in our national reality it is possible to give various examples of notable profiles that are found in worse conditions than 10 years ago. It can be affirmed then that they have escaped and overcome the risk of loss successfully; a risk that is shared with all social practicalities realising that processes are never linear.

It was possible, inclusively, to recognise a style of apprenticeship and graduation that the projects were (and are) making in the selection of its definitions, instruments and dispositions: from a diverse launch, a ‘long-lasting’ condition with distinct methodologies and dispositions they spend one stage of testing against-reality, proving and validating them in practice, in order to end, although in very distinct times ‘aligning themselves’, coming together and ‘closing themes’, that is, generating consensus around determined conviction and unifying the discourse.

The programs created an objective of Exiting the Street or in its failure, reduction of permanent time spent on the street by integration of the community of reference to community-ownership or bridging with the school to name some points. Where the

‘pulling out’ postures were dissimilar, objective debate themes were created that have today generated strong consensus. It is about a certain flexibility of these projects and of a higher awareness of the necessity to grow in order not to deactivate the response to the problem.

The path of the Street Projects manages to support an interesting, dialectic and complex explorative route, with permanent searches, uncertainty and trials, and where the levels of accumulation permit identification of some contrasting points, and to differentiate analytically three moments of this journey.

1. Child-Child moment

In the first stage, the central tenet of the proposition was related to the child, as an exclusive leader of the intervention and in the street as a privileged setting. This moment also coincides with the establishment of the ‘alternative’ (as defined by Antonio Carlos Gomes da Costa) for that time when the projects were at the creation and the opening of environments for alternative socialisation, almost in a competitive order with the family and the school. It coincides also with the compelling idea (even today it is presented in some other modalities of attention) that these institutions must satisfy the necessities that this population profile does not achieve in expected domains; practices which end the subsidising of the absences and incompetences of the services of the state with respect to its universal mandate.

The projects in the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s were established to develop interventions in the pure and exclusive function of the child, respecting his or her will and time to incorporate the propositions in the understanding that “the street is his or her main home, which replaced the family as an essential factor of growth and socialization...”

The Street Projects introduced a profound methodological innovation to prioritize the will of the children as a condition for participation in the projects, and with the fact that there was discrimination with prior propositions for infant attention, the fact that the teachers-operators were going to the child’s place to meet with him or her trying strategies of contact, gaining attention and first connection.

This methodology emerged in the heart of the state, setting up the traditional processes of institutionalisation that the state developed. But, it did not become ‘immune’ and if indeed it could surpass the model of the ‘interning’ (with all the benefits that it brings with it in terms of avoiding vulnerability of rights) it developed ‘another’ form of institutionalisation, whose reach is as far as the day from today.

2. Moment Child-Figure, with base dimensions: “family, school, community”

We can place this moment, perhaps, in the second half of the nineties; when the projects detected that “these children were not born from a cabbage, that they had mothers”, as was graphically related to us in an interview (with an image of “coin that falls into a machine”).

It is about purposefully constructing an integral appearance that incorporates the closest affected references in the intervention and the school and the community as leading actors.

It is in this instance, where the changes also accompany the discourse that happens, always following Gomes da Costa, from the “alternative to the alterative”. Instead of continuing to open alternative spaces, the experiences propose acting in the essential environments and in the basics of socialisation – the family, the school, the district – so that the children can participate and develop themselves in the domains that by right belong to them.

The projects constitute, then, propositions of support and promotion, recognising in the children their abilities and strengths to develop themselves in contexts of normality and not of exception. For its part, the focus on situations of poverty, which had already coincided in showing the complexity and multidimensionality of the phenomenon, was seen as being enriched through the introduction of the relational focus of social exclusion.

Here there is a change (and also a break) from the conceptual image of the street environment as it was conceived until this moment. It was understood as being a privileged place of socialisation, a place to be considered a valid domain only in the sense of being one of meeting and connection for the children at the time when its integration was promoted in the environments suited for a child, but in order to work on its “exit from the street” or the reduction of permanent time spent in the street. Simultaneously, other factors that operate as protectors of this “being in the street” were established to work on, with the logic of reducing the pain, and now, with the explicit recognition that the street by itself does not generate a developmental environment, but rather on the contrary exposes the children to diverse situations where their rights become vulnerable.

An integral focus is created where all projects with their flavours clearly establish articulated interventions for the child, the family and the school, centering the strategic focus of the intervention on this trilogy. What they add, and on the measurement of what is possible, is to work on the community function as a network of sustenance and support.

Instead of competing with the family, it now works in its empowerment, involving the adults in the processes of the children and strengthening the position of adults, but always in a work logic that complements the work with the child in projects that it is defined as a subject of intervention.

The focus from the integral perspective demands the coordination of a series of actions in all the dimensions mentioned more for the direct attention of the children. “In this perspective, integral protection is to guarantee all the rights for all the children... For that makes the complement necessary and the convergence of actions in basic social public policy, in social assistance, in special protection and in the public policy of guaranteed rights.”

The risk that presents itself to the projects was that this completeness, like a boomerang, was able to return against the proper practices (as a fact it occurred in some opportunities) since diversifying them in such dimensions and fronts was able to end mis-drawings when these had not obtained effective and balanced articulation.

3. The family as the foundation

Actually, in some practices the family takes Shape through moments, (in that interplay of Shape and Depth) keeping this definition as an open theme. All the street projects, without exception, adopted the integral focus; and defined the child-family-school trilogy as the strategic core of intervention. This constituted a ‘closed’ theme (and is what was established in what was defined as moment two.) It is worth saying that the work with family takes time, which is defined and included in the practices of the Street Projects.

So now, what is occurring in actuality is that some projects are moving from that notion in order to define the family as a subject of intervention or subject of duty, which in turn coincides with the emergence of this format in other instances of social public policy. Now one would not treat a dimension of work that complements the work carried forward with the boy or girl, instead the same family is constituted in the subject of intervention in the frame of a Street Project; but always with the objective of promoting significant changes in the children’s situation. With this it remains clear that the subject of duty changes but not the objective of intervention.

We stress this occurs through moments, now that it is an oscillating emergency (doubtfully if one wants, even): on the inside of the Intercalle group the definition of projects does not happen from a minority position, and in turn, internally in the same project one can distinguish distinct, temporary periods where they alternate in definition and move from a subject of intervention-child to a subject of intervention-family in order to return to the child as a subject of intervention, passing through what combines the two definitions (if it were possible).

This emergence of the family as a subject of duty in some Street Projects securely preserves some degree of relation with the development of the instruments of “agreement, subsidies and scholarships”, which have had a structural effect on work with families (through the component of demands and the last two, through the requirement of *quid pro quo*).

In the same way it is fitting to also note the demonstrated value that the projects that work with the same population have, but constructing its response from another place. Concretely, those practices construct the theme with the condition of working children and not by their presence in the street. These projects, containing groups of equal dimensions, work with a larger volume from the population (nearly four times more) and present good results that are measured in strategic dimensions that are fixed as priorities. The same projects have developed very structured operations for work with families, in which they define these as subjects of intervention.

This itinerary cannot hide its relation with the fact that what is processed from a response is constructed from a focalised platform. The projects are established to work for the construction of citizenship, but must confront the restrictions that are inherent in a focalised design.

Therefore, a basic contradiction remains established and is barely perceived by the operators in a focal project – a project that cannot, by pure format, transcend its

compensatory political character and the claim of constructing a citizenship, which is by definition universal.

5. Institutional Contexts. Brief Review

The present systemisation examines four projects for the attention of children and adolescents in street situations in the city of Montevideo, the capital of the country. They are: *Cruz del Sur*, pertaining to *Vida y Educacion*; and *Cachabache, Omnibus Itinerante* and *Repique*, pertaining to the *IEP El Abrojo*.

5.1 Vida y Educacion

5.1.1 Cruz del Sur

Vida y Educación was established in 1989, as a result of a community life experience that was developed in 'La Frontera', a small farm in the interior of the country that received more than 300 youth over a period of 18 years. The principal institutional objectives are: the development of educative activities that encourage the promotion and defence of the rights of children and the study of the situation of infancy and adolescence in Uruguay and the systemisation and proposition of alternative models of attention.

The multiple activities and existing propositions were emerging as a response to the real necessities of the infants and adolescents whose rights were most vulnerable: street children, the youth who leave the governmental and non-governmental houses and the adolescents deprived of freedom.

Today Vida y Educación presents an organisation spanning specific and specialised programs for the attention of diverse problems: *Alternativas* (alternative program for deprivation of liberty), *Autonomia y Protagonismo* (oriented to the promotion of autonomy for the participating youth, *Casa joven* (to support educationally the personal processes and group-based from the young participants, permitting their integral and autonomous development), *Cruz del Sur* (children in the street and their families), *Socaf* (consultation and orientation for families and community), *Caif* (integral modality of intervention for children from 0 to 4 years and their families), *Plan Invierno* (prompt refuge, training and continuation of adults in street situations).

Cruz del Sur began its journey in 1995 financed by a Belgian foundation (DISOP), fundamentally aiming at the addressing of the problem during night hours, exposure times of children in street situations who were barely being affected by projects of similar profiles in existence. In 1998, a contract with the Instituto Nacional del Menor permitted the program to continue, with some modifications, the development of the project.

In the same effort, the general objective is defined as: "To modify the street situations of children and adolescents who remain in the streets during the night in an area of Montevideo by means of educative personalised responses that support the development of their potentialities and permit them leading participation in personal projects of change, and familial and community actions of construction of fitting environments for the full exercise of citizenship and their rights."

As a consequence, Specific Objectives were established:

1. To support the children and adolescents actively in the transformation of their street situation towards scenarios and conditions of life suitable for their age and development.
2. To enable the capabilities of the nucleus of reference of the children and adolescents, in order to understand their characteristics and necessities and in order to assure their physical and affective integrity, promoting better and new instances of communal living and/or modalities of interfamily relationships.
3. To promote main openings and receptivity of the services and recourses in the context of the residential zone for families in major social risk.
4. To sensitise, mobilise and enable diverse actors present in the street environment where these children travel, for a new type of relation with them and for effective actions and responses in favour of the rights of children and adolescents in social abandonment.
5. To participate actively in the construction of networks that articulate and propose transforming, global, unitary and integrated actions and public policies that provide answers for the situations of these children.

For the achievement of the Objectives a series of activities was proposed that would be developed in different strongly articulated domains in the intervention: “the zone of survival” of the street children, the “zone of residence of the nuclear families”, the domain of coordination and institutional articulation, and the different support networks.

The development of the project foresaw impacts at that time about the child at risk, his/her family or nucleus of reference, the immediate environment in the street, the context of the neighbourhood from which the children came, the institutions and the networks.

Preliminary studies carried forward the very Organisation as secondary data permitted the definition in relation to the localisation of the project: the intervention was centred on one of the principal arteries of the capital city, as is Bv. Artigas, from a well known Terminal de Omnibus (national and international) until the area of the Parque Rodo (residential district). This area is fundamentally associated with “middle classes” that possess natural attractions and urban infrastructure and especially recreational facilities, which make it particularly an attractive area for all montevideoans regardless of age. Consequently and subsequently the elements contributed by permanent actualisation of the places where street children gather, on newly defined adjacent zones, is taken as the work spot of the Shopping Punta Carretas and surrounding areas. Finally, if indeed the intervention unfolds in these zones, the population with which one works is importantly that which one meets residing in the street or which is found in transit. Equally for all the Street Projects, entry to the proposition is totally voluntary on the part of the children and adolescents.

CRUZ DEL SUR – Work Team	
Coordinator	Marina Cal
Teacher	Alfredo Correa

Teacher	Ana Dutour
Teacher	Celia Lago
Teacher	Marcelo San Martín
Teacher	Pablo da Silva
Teacher	Ana Laura Brugnoli

5.2 Institute of Popular Education “El ABROJO”

“**EL ABROJO**” is a non-governmental organisation founded on the 8th of October 1988. Its organisational design was constructed to function as a dynamic articulation of diverse professional technical knowledges that promote concrete solutions for street outreach and education addressing the complex contemporary social reality. It’s mission statement insists: *We sustain an ethical stance of deep respect for cultural diversity and identities presented in our society. From that position, we elaborate a methodological position whose central idea is the recognition of potentialities of people as a foundation for social transformation in the perspective of being able to obtain a better quality of life.*

In order to enshrine these claims, the core of intervention predominant of the institution constitutes the local community contexts. For the year 2005, the staff of El Abrojo constituted a group of 130 paid professionals supported by the permanent contribution of 50 volunteers. The institution conducts its activities in 6 sites in the city of Montevideo and in open spaces in diverse communities of the metropolitan area and the interior of the country.

The Mission

Its mission is *“to develop an organisation that implements innovative ideas and actions that critically account for contemporary civilisation, developing initiatives, and educative, investigative, enabling, promotional projects and programs, which, from a permanent engagement with the transformation of the social reality, aim at improving the quality of life of the benefiting populations, through the strengthening of the citizen independence, development of civil society and the articulation of different social actors.”*

In order to progress this mission has developed a structure of Programs related to those that implement diverse projects.

These programs are:

- **Infancia, Adolescencia, y Juventud:** directed by Paula Baleato
- **“La Jarana” – Investigation, empowerment and leisure life, Recreation and free time:** Ernesto Izquierdo
- **Formacion y Capacitacion Socio – Laboral:** Sandra Ojeda.
- **“Alter-acciones”-Investigation, Empowerment and Prevention of the problematic use of drugs.** Soc. Julio Calzada

The major part of the programs providing direct attention to the children and youth has been executed by the Programa Infancia, Adolescencia y Juventud. The Programa

Infancia, Adolescencia y Juventud has as its mission: *“to optimise the possibilities of integration, inclusion and social circulation of children, adolescents and youth who find themselves in situations of social exclusion and vulnerability, and at the same time to generate significant alterations in the public policies directed at the sector.”*

This program articulates three complementary levels of street outreach:

- a) to **children and adolescents**, the proposal aims at SOCIAL INCLUSION and INTEGRATION, tending to break the cycle of poverty. Through group work, of the recreation and empowerment in social skills it aims to construct a social place distinct from exclusion and marginality.
- b) The **development of the community**, promoting a process of organisation and self-governance of the community in the perspective of improvement of their global quality of life, in the same way as the formation and activation of social networks.
- c) **Impact at the macrosocial level** by means of the sensitisation and denunciation of this problem, bringing to the picture of Integral and Inclusive Social Politics that account for this situation, and through the strengthening of Local Social Networks and Thematic Networks, generating spaces of interlocution with the State and other organisations.

The central ideas that create the spine for and articulate the social practices, pedagogies and political institutions of the program are:

- the respect and strengthening of the **Autonomy** of the subject (individual, groups, organisations) in its social insertion,
- the strengthening and enabling of the process of construction of its **Citizen Identity**, agreeing to the postulates of the Convention of Child Rights and the Paradigm of Integral Protection, and
- the **centrality of the cultural dimension** as a point of departure and substratum in what forms a large part of the possibilities of Social Transformation.

In order to carry this out, the Program implements **socio-educational propositions** focused on **territorial contexts** in which Vulnerability and Exclusion in children and youth acquire their singular expression.

Currently, they implement **10 Socio-Educative projects** that impact on distinct themes and geographic areas in the city of Montevideo and the metropolitan area, reaching a population of **800 children, adolescents and youth (from 4 to 24 years of age), their families and community environment**. To make these proposals concrete requires a permanent team of 45 technicians and professionals of distinct disciplines, conjointly with more that 30 volunteers that collaborate with the development.

El Abrojo’s work happens in the following spaces:

- **Proyecto CASA ABIERTA: Integral Socio-Educative Centre of community reference**, for children, adolescents and youth in Socially Vulnerable situations. Community Intervention. (Paso Molino zone).

- **Casa de Jovenes-PASO CARRASCO: Juvenile Centre** for adolescents between 14 and 18 years, with recreational activities, formations, support for entry into the job market (PASO CARRASCO)
- **Proyecto CACHABACHE: Socio educative proposition in open spaces** with a massively translated population in the frame of a State plan for urban renewal (Casavalle-Teniente Rinaldi and San Martin zones)
Supported by Terre des Homme-Geneva, Switzerland
- **Centro de Atención Integral a la Infancia y La Familia:** Community proposition of timely stimulation and initial education oriented to children from 0 to 3 years of age and their families and pregnant women.
- **Proyecto REPIQUE: Socio Educative Project** directed at **children and adolescents in street situations** with a focus centred on one neighborhood. Familial intervention. Support for the generation of Social Networks. Outreach from the desertion and scholastic repetition with the support from specialized teachers (Colon Zone).
- **Proyecto Omnibus Itinerante: Socio educative project** directed at **children and adolescents in street situations**, which rolls out survival strategies in commercial zones. It is implemented by a local mobile itinerary, especially conditioned for educative activities. Work in Social Networks in the area. Familial intervention. Implementation by Promocion del Aprendizaje and school certification by a special school teacher. (Pocitos zone).
- **Programa de Acreditacion Escolar de Adolescentes:** Directed at 250 adolescents between 13 and 17 years of age who have not finished school. The project is implemented in 18 peripheral zones of Montevideo, one zone in Progreso-Canelones, 4 zones in Las Piedras-Canelones and 2 zones in Rincon de la Bolsa-San Jose. The adolescents are prepared by teams of community teachers in order to obtain the proof of Acreditacion of Aprendizaje por Experiencia.
- **Proyector Tiralineas: School reinsertion of working children from Montevideo and new strategies for school inclusion:**
Program directed at 200 hardworking children and adolescents between 6 and 14 years of age, who have re-entered school through a program of literacy in homes, a program of labour empowerment for mothers of these children oriented to the progressive substitution of the infantile work, a program of improving access of the families to recourses and social services and strengthening of the local institutional abilities (schools and community actors) for the establishment of local protection networks in the theme of infantile work.
- **Servicio de Orientacion, Consulta y Atencion Familiar – SOCAF – Casavalle y Paso Carrasco zone:** Socio community service oriented at offering advice and attention in infant, adolescence and family matters, with emphasis in those sectors in Socially Vulnerable Situations. Likewise the service establishes the routes to derive the services and pertinent recourses.

The system moreover intervenes in the strengthening of the local network of institutions and actors working in infancy and adolescence, elaborates and diffuses a community recourses guide and administers a Fund for community Intervention.

- **Proyecto Rescatate:** Program of empowerment, sensitisation and diffusion of Children's Rights. Centred especially on the essentials of participation and No Discrimination from the Convention of the Child Rights. Directed at 80 children between 11 and 15 years of age in situations coming from 4 peripheral zones of Montevideo, 40 families, 4 schools and 1 lyceum

For the implementation of these projects, the Infancy, Adolescence and Youth Program of El Abrojo maintains agreements with the following organisations and institutions: INAU, CODICEN (Management of Special Programs), Ministry of the Interior (Program for Citizen Security), Ministry of Social Development, Primary Education Council, Terre des Hommes (Geneva, Switzerland).

Overall Coordination: Paula Baleato

CACHABACE – Work Team	
Coordinator	Adriana Briozzo
Teacher	Alfonsina Franco
Teacher	Belisa Martínez
Teacher	Fernando Iglesias
Intern	Fernando Ferreira

Omnibus Itinerante - Work Team	
Coordinator	Marta Suanes
Teacher	María Guillot
Teacher	Matilde Vaio
Teacher	Vivian D'Avenia
Teacher	Ruben Antúnez
Teacher	Fernando Iglesias
Intern	Cornelia Holdgener
Intern	Silvia Stephanía
Workshop leader	Diego Guijarro

REPIQUE - Work Team	
Coordinator	Bettina Salas
Teacher	Fabián Ibáñez
Teacher	Maria Elena Rovira
Teacher	Diego Olivera

6. Family Contexts. How projects are presented to families with children in street situations: A glimpse

The following paragraph will attempt to develop an approximation to family profiles according to the nature of the projects. It is gathered from work that was done by projects in the setting of a systematisation of the Contracts Division of the INAU. The particular data from each Project was extracted from the said document and combined arriving at the following characterisation, in general terms, of families of the children and adolescents in street situations with whom they work:

Core of prevailing community life and “the hardest cases”

- These families belong to sectors characterised by poverty and social exclusion in urban contexts of Montevideo. Some families aided by the projects that do not have a community environment actually live in suburban zones of the department of Canelones.
- The majority of residents in precarious establishments, de facto occupants in some highly dilapidated property, in basic evolving nuclei (precarious housing constructed by the MVOTMA) and on pensions. We highlight here that in relation to the establishments and also, to a lesser degree, the basic evolutionary family units are a clear expression of residential segregation, which connotes and reinforces processes of social estrangement experienced by those who inhabit them. These remain traps in the limited horizons of the ghetto, which constitutes these urban living collectives.
- The majority maintains an irregular situation with respect to the housing tenancy.
- In relation to the conditions which characterise the housing, one observes that the large numbers of people live together in small spaces, forcing children and adults to share sleeping spaces and often beds.

These conditions may contribute to the distortion of social roles and functions expected from the normative hegemony for the members of a nuclear family. This fact in turn frequently translates itself into a factor prone to the creation of the *exit to the street* on the part of the children and adolescents. Concretely, some team members perceived that in some family dynamics the idea that existed was that “there is not enough space for everyone”, which definitely becomes an influencing factor for exiting to the street, for some or several members. This aspect is probably what is found to be strongly related to the internalisation of an “absence of habitable spaces for all”, a characteristic of exclusion in the job market. It would seem that in the family unit this will repeat itself at the micro level, which affects them as excluded people at the level of the social network.

- Some groups of people living together are found living in areas with sanitation systems. Others are habitants of district contexts with an uncertain sanitation system or without one at all, similar to many living without a sewerage system, with all the health risks that this introduces. One sees even some cases where housing does not have any place designated to fulfil the functions of a toilet.

- One deals with families of many members, an average of six members per house. We recall that the average capacity of a house for the entire country is 3.2 persons.
- In accordance with its condition of poor and social excluded and the changes in the job market over the last decade in the world and in our country in particular, mainly the adults in these families do not enter into the formal job market and practically do not have any possibilities for entry. Something similar occurs with adolescents of such family units, but at least they are supported in this sense by the street projects through protected workforce insertions. This in turn is associated with the impossibility of acceding to the social benefits and generation of rights that formal work brings. Likewise, it prevents them from accessing personal social networks, which result from interaction in a working environment.
- In the cases in which they obtain some type of work, what prevails is “those tasks that are associated with domestic service, cleaning, selling products in the market, begging and informal work, found fundamentally in men”.
- A large part of this narrow structure of opportunities on which they rely is strongly related to the predominant education levels in this population profile (Primary Education, most times incomplete, and in many instances special school).
- The access to basic recourses and services for the construction of identity and citizenship, and similarly, for necessities directly associated to quality of life, is generally barely practical. Through ignorance, because the forms of life that they live do not require them as important requirements and because it is nothing simple for them to agree to. Concretely, frequently “they do not accede to the familial assignments now that some of the children are not educated or have not managed previous steps as they are to them at birth”.
- The same occurs with neighbourly relations, which do not end up being strong enough to enable them to collaborate in some manner with the needs of the family (affection, temporal care of children, etc.) or to give them some level of pertinence. It could influence in this sense the large spatial mobility of some of these families who all live on pensions.
- The institutions in the area with which they relate mainly are the school, the hospital, not being so with other types of institutions like community centres, sports, day care centers, etc. Of all forms the relation with the schools is extremely conflicting and intermittent.
- A chance of “a sort of nomadism” observed to a larger or lesser extent in an important number of these families generates significant eroding impacts. Be it in the search for more economical living solutions than before, be it because collectively are relocated in the frame of a plan of urban reform for determined sectors, be it because they need “to bleach” their situations in determined contexts, be it because at times the change appears as the only form of *performing the change*, the changed human necessity for what generally relies on very narrow margins. This generates a slew of problems such as:
 - Intensified deterioration of the social networks in general and of the neighbourhood networks.
 - The feeling of loss / deterioration of the construction of identity.

- Demands for processes of adaptation
- An over representation of the accommodation in as a key to “breaking” more than as accumulative processes.
- Deterioration in the abilities to protect themselves
- Redefining strategies of survival for the new environment
- Re-identifying forms and places for recreation.
- The connection with the family of origin both of the father and of the mother generally being extremely weak or non-existent, it would seem that breaks with their life history are customary.
- Adolescent pregnancy is generally frequent in this profile. If indeed a pregnancy is a response to a multiplicity of personal factors (physical and emotional) and of the environment, it would seem also to operate here in the expectation-fantasy of *initiating the change* from this situation. Although it is initially, and among other aspects, the arrival of a child permits them to reposition themselves in the assigned and assumed roles in their families.

New Profiles

From the middle of the year 2002, one of the projects with the community added the identification of families relating to what was denominated as “recent poverty” to this description of families with whom they work. In relation to the profile of the “hardest cases” are families that present a larger level of integration with *culture of work* (although this is now practically non-existent) and with a promise of three children per house. Fundamentally, on having lost work adults find themselves in a situation of accelerated poverty. Therefore, they must relocate from the district (not being able to pay the rent) and find themselves living in establishments that possess an important organisational dynamic or in houses that they have occupied or have permitted them to be.

In terms of educative capital, the Basic complete Cycle prevails. They possess a good relationship with the formal education system, clearly stating its importance, although a strong demand for assistance principally in the area of nourishment is seen. The strategies of survival have the appearance of tasks of low qualification, informal work, recurrence to services and assistance, and passing through the “in family” area in seeking principally food and informal work.

PART II:

WORK WITH FAMILIES

FOUNDATION FOR WORK WITH FAMILIES

It turns out that it is difficult to try to lay the foundations of the work with families without – at least – outlining synthetically what is referred to when one speaks about ‘family’. Nevertheless, for obvious reasons, in relation to the scope of the present study, we will mention some of the *nodes* that account for the profound familial transformations in the 20th century and on the Latin American continent.

To claim then to invoke ‘the family’ can suggest much, and at the same time, can fall on a vague impossibility, firstly because the idea of the family has not been, neither is it possible to be, a static concept, and secondly because the conceptions that have been realised about it vary substantially in time and space. The existence of a mutual dependency between the family and society is reflected throughout the centuries past. Changes produced since the permanent interplay of economic, social, cultural and demographic factors.

From a socio-historic perspective, it is analytically possible to identify a division between the ideas of family corresponding to the so-called “traditional societies”, “industrial societies” and the “post-industrials”. So too, the central position that the family occupies in the Latin countries is not equally overbearing in the northern countries or the anglo-saxon countries.

Up to a few years ago, beyond the alluded historical and territorial heterogeneity that governed in the imagery of latin culture, and in particular, in Uruguay, the idea of a “nuclear home”, with the presence of both spouses, with the man as the only or principal earner of income and the woman always identified with child care and handling domestic chores - the man in the public sphere, and the woman in the limits that assume the dimension of the private domain, intimate.

In the second half of the past century, the entry to the labour market on the part of the woman, as well as the development of the ability of techniques for the birth control, resulted in a central platform for a series of significant transformations that include some theoretical themes called “revolutionary changes”. In the present, the diversity of “familial arrangements”, the deepening of the spousal paths in men and women, the significant changes in the forms of relationship that were established between both sexes, have frankly changed and definitively left behind the “closed” model of division of instrumental roles for men and affectionate for the women in the family structure, which T. Parsons spoke of. The term ‘post-modern family’ does not have a known definition, but designates in general a distance or de-legitimisation of the traditional patriarchal hierarchy and a growing emphasis on individual autonomy of the members of the home. In the last 20 years, the changes that Uruguayan families have displayed are many. In this connection, the significant increase of one-person homes and the institutionalization of the single-parent nuclear homes in relation to the past is emphasised, and, if the nuclear home continues being the predominant one, the diversity of arrangements that are included within this category shows a considerable increase in the country’s capital.

Frequently heterogeneity is confused with “devaluation” of the family as such. The existence of this ample range of new and diverse familial forms is associated with a weakening of the role that the family fulfils as an organisation and as an institution for people and in our societies.

Clearly indicating the validity of the importance of the families as such are, for example, the mobilisation and organisation that occurs around the acceptance of homosexual couples in defence of not losing its right to possess a family status as any other couple. And further, the strong influence of the “nuclear family’s” imagery is as considerable as the analytical considerations used to name the new familial arrangements made as a result of this: they are families that are “incomplete”, “extended”, etc., in relation to the traditional nuclear model.

The ‘street’ projects in so many very near experiences for poor families rely on an accumulation of the knowledge of the diversity of familial arrangements on entering into contact with distinct cultural and symbolic realities. In this sense, they have enacted a change of “appearance”, “colonising the traditional categories” as resignified, and on occasion, innovating. When the familial arrangements of this population was examined on average, this reduction of the family to the nuclear family was implied (two parents and if possible two children) by comparison to which all “our” poor families appear as *disorganised, unstructured, with an absent paternal figure, etc.* The projects have contributed to gathering the “diversity” of familial arrangements, and beginning to speak not of unstructured families, but of families with a different structure.

It suggests, thus, the outstanding role of the family, the intense educative intentions that the street projects’ interventions have in relation to supporting the strengthening of the communal family units of the children and adolescents in street situations, going beyond the mandate that adhesion to the CCR implies. Considering that the projects are aware that firstly the problem responds to structural variables that cannot make an impact from the work that the projects fulfil, for some time they share the conviction that work alone with the child is to maintain the *extreme-manifestation-consequence point* of the same problem. Such an option reflects also the triumph of the vision of the problem as a multi-causal reality (diagnostic), sealing it in terms of a work proposition. With specific reference to the CCR, the position facing the theme is also unquestionable. From the preamble of the CCR up to the form in which it appears in diverse articles (especially, the articles 7,9 and 18 inc.2), the defence and the will of expressed guarantees is made clear so that all children and adolescents realise their Right to improve and develop themselves in their family environment.

That is, independently of the social collective to which it pertains and to the definition of class within the same collective, the family continues being inherited, hunted for, and recognised as the most primary and referential environment of an individual.

The familial commune has two central functions: the contribution to the construction of identity of a person (in the nearly hybrid format), and in the satisfaction of the necessity of gregariousness, as an inherent character of the human condition. The family, as a deliberated domain of socialisation of any individual, constitutes the main material and affective framework where the individual improves and develops itself. It is treated as an atmosphere of affective and communicational interaction that is converted in turn, in emotional metabolizing, digesting of feeling, thinking and doing.

Nevertheless, it is possible to determine:

- the role that the unit plays in family life is substantially distinct and the necessities that each person fulfils in the family, in the same way as,
- the changes in the composition of the families and in the behaviour of the homes vary significantly according to the socio-economic and cultural sector to which it reports.

In relation to the children, the family is the domain where primary socialisation takes place. In this the first world of the individual is constructed. “Its characteristic quality of firmness must attribute it to itself, at least in part, to the inevitability of the relation of the individual with its other significant relations from the beginning”. The family then is a primary network of socialisation, structuralisation and protection (the most common scenario, especially in the primary years of life) in order to internalise modes of interacting, customs and beliefs for developing multiple lessons learnt; definitively, the first trials in the eternal process of learning about life. In this sense, the capacities and opportunities of the children and adolescents in the same way as their personal insecurities, uncertainty and questioning are seen amplified or eroded, agreeing with the consistency of the familial and social environment.

In relation to social and structural inequality of opportunities, it is already noted that our country concentrates social and biological reproduction in the sectors of poverty and exclusion, which is a *red light* on the road of any society. While in the middle sectors a significant drop is observed in the rate of fertility in the last decades, there has been a correction in the ages in which one begins to have children as well as a near disappearance of economic transfers from children to parents in the most unfavourable sectors, and in particular the most affected by the full process of social polarisation. These new trends constitute an increase of the rates of fertility, an increase in the motherhood-fatherhood in earlier ages and in many cases the transfer of income from children to parents in ages of children and adolescents, as clearly occurs in the population that one meets in street situations.

What has happened then, how have all these changes been brought about, in materially more deprived sectors of our country? And, how have the propositions of the Street Projects integrated and synthesised these data from reality with what works with the socio-educative and legal analytical accumulations on the topic?

Resulting from a dialectic and collective process, the Street Projects in a determined “moment”, and of a more or less simultaneous form, redefined their strategy of intervention including in this the dimension of work with family. A family unit of which the child or adolescent is a part. The conception and methodology, created in the 80’s and based on the belief that work with the child would impact the family, was then practically reverted.

Some of the recollections that the members of these Project Teams bring about from the discourses account for where and how that redefining of the intervention was constructed illustrate this path of synthesis:

“In that moment, in reality what was seen, was that the work remained stuck, that it did not reach great proportions, and only remained within group work (with the children). Everything that you wanted to change with the kids, it was just so limited”

“...in this triangulation of the child-school-family, we needed to join with the family in order to sustain the process”

“What we saw is that when the kid was in the street, we met him and we started to do stuff in the street; they seemed like kids anywhere, who wanted to have an adult as a reference. The kids also wanted to introduce us to their parents, and we thought that would be important, so that’s how it happened. We thought it was important to work with the kids in relation to their families and to the networks that might be able to support them in their families and their communities. That way we also began to see what was it that made the kid want to look to the street as a way out...”

“When you don’t work with the family, there’s no foundation, no place to create anything at all. That fulcrum is absolutely necessary.”

“If you work with parents, they can reinforce certain behavior patterns that we try to instill in the kids, but that only become permanent when they see it in their families.”

“We started off looking at the way that the school reproduced violence and exclusion for poor kids, but then it was necessary to go beyond that, seeing what other things could help the kids transform themselves. That’s why we looked at the shock between the child, his family, and his community.”

Thus the support and promotion of the child’s return to its original communal living group constitutes part of the objectives of this study. Such a perspective comes from the notion of empowerment of these families and in particular the adults. So before, from the progressively weaker state that first constrains and then prohibits the *empowerment* of the families with respect to its obligations and responsibilities to its children, showing the demand, particularly in those places with “minors”. From here, the importance of introducing in the practices the realisation of the concept of state and families co-responsibility (adult references) particularly for its children also becomes definitively contrary to the “blame” perspective. It is necessary to place the social responsibility of the production and reproduction of the problem. Related to this, an interesting study done on our part 10 years ago constitutes a significant contribution to the this issue. Even though it clarifies that the reach is totally explorative and annotated to the entire study, offering elements to transform the frequent imagery of these families as “abandoned” or “victimized” in relation to their children, in order to position them as victims in the grouping of a more dualised society, as well as leaving some members established.

Finally, in relation to the fundamentals of this change in the frame of intervention, and perhaps the most important of all, the children and adolescents themselves have been the spokespersons for the need for this inclusion in the strategy. *“Honestly, it was in the dialogue with the children in which they were framing that route, so, it is not something that in reality, we introduced... the kids did it.”* It is illustrated in this sense, and especially in regard to the children and adolescents that have effectively remained

distanced from their homes for a considerable time: “*I would like to see how my mother is*”; “*I would like to reach home but I cannot do it alone*”...

In the present, and a decade afterwards, the Street Projects try to visualise the families from a less passive role (“victim”), and more pro-active, at the time of recognising and granting to the child and adolescent their place and a status as citizens.

7.1 Working with families. Points in common and on the surface

7.1.1 Where to intervene:

When considering where the projects establish practices and familial street outreach, one finds that there exist well-known coincidences in the points of departure. Among them:

- All the projects adhere to the International Convention on Child Rights, and more generally, to the Doctrine of Integral Protection.
- All the projects understand the family in a “disconnected” sense of biological criteria with definitions that lump together those who fulfil their roles in a full sense, independently from the biological and legal connection or exercise of the *pater potestas*; in this sense, they allude in a more practical manner to whom the children live with and their closest affective reference.
- All the projects problematise the responsibility of the families thereby taking them out of the dynamic of blaming. The manner in which these families are blamed for everything that is wrong is recognised and established in a move away from this traditional posture. Through it also emphasises an option of bringing them closer together as a key to “capabilities” and not of the problems and deficiencies.
- All postulate with the subject population the recognition of its voice, its dignity, its character as spokesperson of rights in the same way as working for promotion of autonomy and the construction of citizenship.

“The perspective, the things that matter: being able to see and do with a subject that conceives itself with potentiality; there is a much respected thing by the user; human rights, concretely, the right of a family that is made of human beings, at least while it is a child. After also, the point is not to stigmatise, not to blame.”

These components sum up the foundation of the considerations and perspectives which the educators use to deliver these practices. A strong sense of commitment and a vocation of social transformation are also important elements in all of them. Likewise, it is important to try to prevent (at least in the intention) not falling into the dependency syndrome, not even in teaching practices. This is in writing (and in the desire), though subsequently sealing it in agreed practices that support it results in a challenge that is fairly more complex than its literal sense. It is established as the guide, and that already is a value in itself.

In the participant observations (which created the methodological picture of the present systemisation), it was possible to show on the ground a major group of social educators that effectively interact with the participant users of the Integral Protection

project and with very professional practices in the establishment and management of the educative relations (intentional, planned, with direction).

Yet, as a risk, and through moments as a filtered reality paternalistic components belonging to the Doctrine of the Irregular Situation continue to be present.

7.1.2 Contents of the work with families

One of the most significant lines of work is that dealing with the strengthening of the adult's position, which has been undermined through years of deterioration, in understanding that in the same movement that classifies the adult's position as an adult (fundamentally, to assume the role of provider and to fulfil nourishment and normative functions) contributes to returning to the child his place of child.

“For me, this is the point of working with families: to strengthen the tie that binds children to the world of adults.”

“We have to see that this work parallels everything else we do, because if a mother can see that her problem is also her children's problem, well then by working with all of them, we do it better. When a child is at home, everything about him also has to do with the adults that are there, whether we are talking about counselling, about getting a birth certificate, legal help... all of this helps the parents too, right? It's parallel.”

Likewise the work with families attempts to get involved with the intrafamily dynamics. Primarily it is established to ensure that the group members can mutually “return to distinct appearances”.

“It works on potentialities and interests of the family, trying to give them a different image of its child”

Also, the notions of “I now do not know what to do with this child” and the “I now do not know what to do with my child, what about you, you're an educator”

Moves are made to empower the members of the family group:

“...to generate a space and a time to work with the mother on this issue that the mother is bringing up. Or of accompanying the little child, to generate an application between the child and its mother, when he has spent much time on the street and wants to return or the mother looks for him and hence we are there mediating in that question of meeting and returning from the little child to the house”.

This notion (family intradynamic) in reality has “different intensity levels” depending on the project and is related basically to the intervention styles of the social operators. There exist some with a large bias toward “Social Education” and others, with a large bias toward “psychology”.

It is from there that for some teachers, to speak of work with families suggests to them “to meddle in a serious arena” and they achieve their justification for a job with

families at the level of intrafamily dynamics that is put forward with an initial level of a dizzying depth.

In the work with families lines, of action are developed which contribute to these adult references being aware of their capacities and potential from the strengthening and promotion of these capabilities and potentialities.

Equally, a line of knowledge and knowledge about available rights was promoted as well as a search for the exercise of active citizenship.

“She pays attention to everything right? M. is concretely who has the dedication in that area, she has an impact in all these aspects, in removing all the stops, in accompanying the mothers to the Police Station for Minors, and all these questions.”

“Or when the child fell, and was interned in a shelter, then we accompanied the mother in order so that she can speak with the director of the house, and commit herself at a minimal level....”

The work with families spans “bridges” between the families and the spaces that by right correspond to them. Street outreach tries to help them in the knowledge of their rights, in the knowledge of the recourses and available services, and in an adequate utilisation of these.

“In our case there is a whole series of demands that are related to the formal question, documentation, regularisation of procedures, and all that is related to the social services, with the system of subsistence we were told of the family.”

“In some cases, as you see them, in some cases, one time the mother remains fascinated and the teacher remains fascinated, and follow each other seeing and communicating... It is to create the bridge; the same for the hospital, the same... to accompany, so that afterwards the woman can say, well, ‘I am going alone, I can manage alone, I speak alone...he lost the fear to communicate to me”

All the projects, without exception, work on street situation problem of the members of the familial group and the incorporation of the perspective of the children as subjects of rights.

This has been an historical moment of the work, the novelty is the questioning of some teachers, reviewing, with concerns, in what measure it is valid to contribute to the problem if this does not correlate with the accompanying material tools (and not only symbolic) in order to surpass them.

“And another thing also, a capable person would be more methodological or more equipped, so that at the beginning I worked much more in this of good, it is necessary to problematise, take it consciously, to work the symbolic world, and bla bla bla. And in a moment, we begin to be much more conducive. Then, I believe that there itself, it begins to become effective, like a battery of different tools that enter a game according to the moment.”

“We had to see all of this as a problem, which isn’t to say that it’s not about being aware, but that... well, we were utopians at the beginning, and though we’ve kept those ideas, we’re now much better at seeing that there can be real problems in the family. For a lot of these families, it seems like what they do is normal, but that doesn’t mean it’s acceptable, so sometimes we have to challenge them with more mainstream ideas about how people should relate to each other. What we saw is that some of these families are just off the map; they don’t have the skills to see that what they are doing isn’t right, so that they can change it.”

Two projects work on adult sociability, this being the fundamental idea. These adults, in the main, have crossed a process of social disaffiliation where they have significantly eroded their social networks. So, the key result was to break such transitions out of the box, working on the reconstruction or construction of new networks in the network of adult sociability and transforming situations of isolation.

On some occasions the perspective of gender surfaced as the core of the work, on the whole when they are implementing group skills/techniques of adults:

“Included in that group-like environment at one time had a certain perspective of gender because basically they were all women, and at one time we thought about it, more explicitly, as taking advantage of the characteristic and power a little more as deepening a little in this sense. And they were obtained, as cycles of good work, from levels of reflection where really the group was alive by which they participated as a support group, a meeting place, of reference, of being able to think of themselves together.”

7.3 Methodological Designs

The methodological definitions that the groups take on define itineraries and settings in the same way as they also act in the implemented skills and the developed strategies.

A. A primary key methodological question is related to existence or non-existence of territorial demands.

Of the four included projects in this systematisation, two of them rely on a community enclave while the other two present an itinerary form in the sense that they have to move through distinct districts in a measurement that is different from the communities of origin of the children and adolescents with which they work.

In that sense, the four projects resulted in a representative sample from the Intercalle collective, given that from an achieved evaluation by the Programa de Infancia and Familia in 2002 highlighted that practically half of the Street Projects have territorial enclaves. The presence or absence of community insertion constitutes a significant difference and frames the methodological “field”: it shows a course in the work with families that would take similar distinct operatives treating one or another.

If so, it is more difficult to achieve the work with the family where there is community insertion, the intervention increases its impact possibilities when it is inscribed in that frame. As a work practice it is more exact because it entails larger risks

than the itinerary designs, though what it lacks (or the decrease) of professionalism in the experiences pays a higher cost, going even to the extremes of aborting the skills. A valuable example is of one of the projects with community insertion where the work with families 'raised itself from the ground up; they left off making an initial encounter with the family.

The major risk that it entails is the relational density that is generated, which, if it is not framed or channelled in an adequate manner, can rapidly permeate the connections, and with it obstruct the interventions. When this occurs in an itinerary design (which is highly improbable by the restrictions of a good design), it simply 'picks itself up and goes'. A project with a community character cannot (and must not) do it.

In the projects of community insertion, one maximises the benefit of the discourses and not only those of the area (clearly) but also those of the very group. A major volume of work was recounted in them along with an 'intensive' modality of work organisation.

For example, a project might designate one day a week to work with families. On that day the doors of the locale are closed and the pairs of educators leave to do their visits. The visits, in which one works professionally and centrally, last around 45 minutes to an hour (no more), for this reason, we need to visit 10 families in a day, for 4 conversations, given that the families live near and can be visited in a single trip.

If the visits are marked each 15 days, at the next day a person can visit 10 more, though what we need with 4 recourses and a weekly exit, you work with 20 families. In the itinerary designs, a familial visit lasts the entire afternoon. It is a more 'extensive' system and of course more expensive, and because this differential performance now implies a cost, it is necessary to summarise the costs of displacement.

A project, chosen by a chance of 'reduction of the skill' that initially incorporated two teachers and is now reduced to a single teacher. This reduction is not advisable, though in the long term it incurs costs (and beyond the maturity and professionalism of the discourses). This solitude in the work in some moment of the journey is charged a toll. The type of task and the subject population defines the "work in group".

Ultimately, community insertion favours accumulation in the knowledge of the discourses and services of the area, and of references in the services (formation of a network of 'known people') that 'enable the tasks' and permit derivations, contributing quick exit routes for the demands.

B: The short methodologies for the generation of references.

In the projects we meet two criteria for the short reference-generating methodologies inside the group, which in turn demarcates the distribution of tasks:

1. In the function of the dimensions of work.
2. In the function of the participating children and adolescents.

So, in case 1, the so-called family references are generated which clearly are the charge of the work with families. In case 2, the children and adolescents are distributed in groups in accordance with determined criteria, always socio-educatively based (for

example in the project they had followed an age criteria) and the references of that group of children, work integrally with them and all the dimensions of defined work.

This second option empowers the integrality of street outreach. On the contrary, when the intervention is distinguished by dimensions of work (focusing one more time), besides breaking into pieces the practice it generates super-specialization, demands more, that is, it needs to generate a by-pass that bridges the dimensions of work (which in turn implies recourses and time, that is, costs).

C. The definition of the subject of intervention

Another key aspect that forms the methodological design is the definition of the subject of intervention. In this sense, the projects also present differences. There is a hinted discussion, but today, it only meets a project that explicitly defines the family as a task subject

In the function of this definition of the family as a subject of intervention, the project re-organised a distinct redistribution of its tasks, recourses and its times. A third of the recourses of the project remain participating in the street projects (teachers that work with the children in the street) while two thirds of the recourses are destined to the skills in Enlace, that is integrated with the educators and operators that are entrusted with the properly defined work with families.

The rest of the projects define the child as a subject of intervention and the work with families as a dimension of work, which creates an integrality of the street outreach. In those, the distribution of the recourses for the work with families is relatively marginal. It is limited to recourses in the reference cases based on the dimension of work with one day in the week for all the recourses, and in the case of groups with short references it is based on groups of children and adolescents.

D. The selection of families: Which families to work with?

Another relevant methodological difference is related to the criteria of selection of families to work with. Do the projects work with all the families or all the participating children? In the case of 'no': which are the criteria for defining which families to work with?

On one hand, **the projects with territorial enclave** respond with a focus within the focus. With all the families of the children and adolescents, the facilitators work in a manner that incorporates the view that this constitutes a defined dimension of work, as indicated in various opportunities.

But the work with families is focused on the function of criteria of necessity:

“For most of the kids, what interests them is being a part of the group, so working with the family is something to do in order to get somewhere else. But that means that sometimes new perspectives open up, and that can keep the kid interested. But there are other, more complex situations where people want to work with the family, and we want to be more profound, and that happens with families that if we didn't get to the bottom of things, then they would never change, their kids would never be less vulnerable.”

With all the children and adolescents that participate in the project, it is now likely that they will be in the stage of contact and creating primary connections or already in activities in the street or the locale or participating in groups, etc. They will be in a determined moment and when the process changes the individual, he or she contacts the family. In all cases, in order to present themselves (who they are, what they do) and to relate the activities in which the children are participating, one could almost say that project 'routines' are formed.

In the same motion, these contacts permit the teachers to agree to the relevant information that completes the boy's or girls' situational state, elements of context of his or her reality and the matters at the moment of work with him or her. Then, of all these contacts, "some" derive in familial outreaches, when the situation it is merited. In sum, the selection operates based on states of complex situations, or that entail vulnerability.

"The most difficult situation, the biggest risk, comes with the most vulnerable families."

"What's hard is the families that have deteriorated. They often demand the most from you, and it's hard to find the time to deal with it."

When the kid brings you to his family, it is so common to see violence – against the kid, inside the family – so you see the anguish, and you see what is so hard for the kid."

Elsewhere, we have the projects that are established to work with all the families, that coincide with **the projects of the itinerary design**, with a difference: One of them is established to work with all the families in familial street outreach - this is the same project that defines the family as a subject of intervention and relies on a specific skill of street outreach for these effects, with the dedication of the major part of its recourses. The other itinerary project establishes that one works with all the families in some manner, but with distinct 'grades', categorising: contacts and approximation to the Plan for Family Outreach:

"Then there is the case of families where things aren't as bad, so we invite the mothers to a workshop, or open a space where they can talk with each other. They don't really need those intense bi-weekly meetings, all that. You have to work with the family according to its needs."

"We're always thinking about the family, but the hard thing is when the government requires a formal Plan."

We always work with the families to come up with a series of goals, and then we work with them to get there together. You work with the mom when you need to, and you deal with what comes up. So it is very hard to plan all of this ahead of time, to go every week with a set idea of what is going to happen. So sometimes the Plan just doesn't work, because things get solved as we go along, in a

workshop, in a conversation; it might be spontaneous that we decide to go to the school to get the kids enrolled, or we run into a teacher on the street. Or it might be that the kids go to a workshop in their neighbourhoods, and then they decide that they want to go to school again. But the Plan does give a good set of benchmarks, goals that we agree on, and it is even more important when the families are living with despair, and for them, the Plan can be a kind of motivator, it pushes them a bit. Sometimes it opens the space that will allow a mother to think about what kind of life she wants.”

“We always start the plan by saying, ‘we’ll we’ve been thinking about this, but what do you think is important?’ It’s really important to exchange ideas, to ask them what they think matters, and then you come to an agreement.”

“When you work with the Plan, sometimes you can get in deeper; it makes you go to the school and talk with the teachers, for instance, ask them things, challenge them. And the teachers can talk to you, too, make suggestions about help with homework. It can open a path of communication.”

The PAF, which the properly defined street outreaches constitute, focus on the function of criteria of necessity in the projects with territorial summons and, in this sense, there is a directionality of the project that defines with whom one works.

Meanwhile, here the definition of the project is universal - one works with everyone. In the beginning there will not be exclusion on the part of the project, but self-selection on the part of the family (if it is that one can say that), that is to say, the family makes the decision about its own involvement.

7.4 Common Lessons Learnt

The manifestation of children and adolescents in street situations as a real problem has not been the same in the beginning, in the 80s, as was observed in the last years. A fundamentally qualitative, significant knowledge accumulation constitutes part of the capital on which the projects rely. Who is this population? Who are they made up of? Where do they live? What strategies do they use to improve? And in what urban environments do they make progression? How do they relate with the formal and informal networks? How do they connect with the formal educative system? What symbolic representations do they have of these actors? What combination of factors often causes the exit to the street on the part of many children and adolescents? What personal, familial or social motives largely contribute to facilitating processes of returning to their places of origin? Likewise, they rely on a vast store of knowledge about the existence and functioning of the offering of resources and services, be it state or private, destined to respond to the universal necessities of a society in the same way as those focused on Infancy and Adolescence, and including the thoughts strictly for the profile of the population with whom they work, as, for example, refugees are. This fact is closely tied to the theme of the use of the networks as satisfiers of necessity and as exercise of citizenship. Complementing this, they know that they need to know (although this is given with distinct degree of depth according to the Project) the network of resources

existing in the districts from where the children come as a form of supporting the re-insertion and permanence of these in local contexts. This knowledge and the use that is made of it is can be assimilated to the management of any artistic performance. On one hand, this is because a large part of the destruction produced in this population, a product of the accumulated processes of social disaffiliation (for generations, in some cases), is allowing the near incapacity to agree to such services as a characteristic of these groups. On the other, the level of deterioration and break-up of these services observed in the last years, with a clearly abundant demand in relation to the capacities (technical, material and financial) which such institutions rely on, have left them in a situation of near collapse, what results - in other cases - in multiple explosive effects for with the user population in question.

The portfolio of knowledge also includes knowledge about the families of the children and adolescents with whom they work, knowledge that has become deeper in terms of “profile” since the dimension of work with the family was introduced in the projects’ strategies.

We highlight here the relevance of relying on these accumulations in terms of necessary resources. In this way too, merit is important. Considering nearly 20 years of work with the problem to date, there exists no formal educative environment that includes in its formative offer this type of knowledge, not even in the academic programs of the Carrera del Educador Social. This has led to such knowledge being fundamentally transmitted by word, whether internally in an institution’s groups, whether from the Intercalle, whether in seminars, or whether they are incorporated from the study of some material, productions, reflections, which are very scarce in relation to the accumulated knowledge.

And so before, it would appear that the knowledge that they possess about families is inferior compared to what they have about the population of children and adults. If so, it is probable that this is linked to the distinct times that they have had for accumulating in one or another, at this level this would seem not to be a sufficient reason. The teachers-workers of these Street Projects know exhaustively the population of children and adolescents and have consequently analytical categories that in turn permit them to be characterised and then the distinct strategies to be ordered in the same way as measuring results. Moreover one can share that the level of heterogeneity is enlarged to include the familial units in the intervention, but from these groups it is not clear what the keys of intervention are - whether it is the importance that they grant it for profile construction or the criteria for achieving these groupings (in the case of considering it possible and relevant in operative terms). On one hand, distinct appearances are observed in the matter from the inside of the same Workgroup, and on the other hand, those that know aspects that can permit identification of profiles and consequently considering determined points for a strategy have a relative degree of elaboration: “very/little institutionalised families” (associated not to the participation in socially expected environments for this but in relation to the itineraries and circuits that realise much of these persons in services of public attention to definitive necessities of the private domain); “historically resident families of the district/relocated families”; “more demanding families/more proactive families” and “more problematic families/more passive families”, among others.

In the line also of multiple knowledge the teams have learnt that it proves indispensable to be **permanently updated** to the new problems that are appearing as such in the realities in the operation. Through examples, the itineraries about the consumption of drugs, which part of this population practise. It has not been nor is it the same, to address the consumption of glue, that of marijuana, nor of crack. This aspect in particular (and not being unique) has been complemented in the intervention with the focus of a **harm reduction**; a perspective that not being “patriotic” of the Street Projects has risen as an extremely valid lesson learnt. In the same way, the implementation of the New Code for Children and Adolescents as a normative operational frame for such sectors establishes questions for the teams and the introduction of changes. Similarly, it de-activates some traditions with which they were accustomed to carrying which strengthens inconsistency on the part of the financial organisation from these practices, at the time that it establishes new challenges to them, among other such examples. Without a doubt, these upgrades are essential for the task. What would be necessary to adjust (as will be seen further) is where the energy is concentrated in that profile and polyvalent role - a necessary competence in any teacher-worker.

Although it seems obvious, one of the emphasised lessons learnt from these projects has been the necessity of including the work with families.

In such a sense, the utilisation of agreement is stressed. The incorporation of this tool is visualised by the majority of the team members as the “moment” in which it begins to consider itself more central in the work with the families. Considering the intensity inherent to proper practice with this population, where the action and the response to the urgency is imposed daily, in the recent times it has been extending the relevance of materialising the terms of the educative relation through **written agreements**, which have become a strategic tool of work.

Among others, this is so good as to actively reposition the adult in the processes of its children, which results in turn, in returning to the child or adolescent his place.

The projects, in turn, begin realising multiple methodological trials and operations that have resulted in lessons learnt and including production of skills for the family intervention that **conjugates in a balanced way the collective street outreach and the individual street outreach, whether in the children’s own group or in the living unit**. In relation to this point, and concretely, with reference to the peers, it is possible to state precisely a difference between the Projects. Three of them articulate personalised work with the children and adolescents, with group activities in which recreational educative activities, formatives, strolls, sports, etc. are included. While in the other, the work with the children and adolescents is fundamentally personalised and the collective (familial) dimension with the peers is given between the groups of brothers. *“We believe that the district and the networks are going to contribute to what the child returns (to his home), we do not have many forms of work “with peers” ...the work is generally at a personal level; since there and related with the problem, we search for information, we are going to places, libraries, etc., group-wise is more for recreational questions.”*

This option, less traditional if one wants, is supported in the creation of a basis for not reinforcing the improved street circuits. The amplification of the intervention’s horizons has not only been strictly from the inclusion of the family, but further it has been a strategy that looks at – at least – **the dimension of the community** and work in social networks in the same way as the claim of impacting the public social policies framework.

Today, the teams become consensual in order to give the major guarantees which the child or adolescent needs to maintain the path of *returning home*. This is not only necessary to enable changes which modify certain elasticity to the conditions, possibilities and familial dynamics, but also in the community environment. Moreover, once the children and adolescents have experimented together with the risks and pains of the street, the knowledge and attraction that this environment also has, the perception of where they come from also achieves a new meaning. The “region” will now be understood in the light of the citizen or largely like this (a fact that is strengthened in those that redeem its practices in distinct zones in which they live). The district now will not only be “measured” in itself, but comparatively to the other opportunities, references and communes in the street.

Another lesson learnt constitutes the theme of confidence between the Teacher and the child-family as an essential foundation to attain, first to reach necessary openings and subsequently to impact the population. If indeed this theme is as old as the story of the educative relation in any domain of this nature, the challenge and the achievement in the Street Projects is given by the particular frame where it connects to the population. All the children and adolescents go to the street, in a distinct manner and more or less “voluntarily”. The entry of these to the proposals also requires this condition. In the map of distinct adult references to which these children relate in the “solitude” of the street, the street teacher not only converts its role into an attractive one but “wins it”. The capacity of an attractive offer and being connected to the needs of this population is what explains the entry and permanence in Street Projects. It is unquestionable that these projects have developed *the art* of empowering, and they promote the entry and voluntary permanence of the children and adolescents to these propositions.

This constitutes a truthful merit if it is also considered that generally this population goes into the street after crossing large and repeated paths of expulsion from other environments, and, therefore, are used to having a more developed cautionary view than their peers of other social sectors. In the same way, this sediment of necessary confidence is in some form transferred to the families, which, also speaks of a system of loyalty and confidence between these children and their communities.

“My baby was on the street, and he met one of the street educators, who then came up and wanted to meet me. I was afraid, because I thought that maybe this was one of those people who robbed children, so I said I didn’t want anything to do with it. But my boy stayed on the street, and started to have problems with the police, so when I went to try to help him, I saw that the street educator was already there, and was working to help him. He was even able to get him out of jail.”

The first time that the Project came to my house, I had always come very closemouthed about many things that had happened to me, trust in no one, knew that I had to fight it alone; I woke up at three in the morning, in order to go to the market, and returned at 5 in the afternoon for my house. What a joke>...The first day, I said “Ahhh, instead of sleeping during the siesta I need to expect these people!”

It is also proper to indicate that a very interesting accumulation is observed from those practices of work with families that intervene with **clearly delineated and defined frames. Where there is structure** (or in its defect, preoccupation by structure of processes) these are valued as positives in the sense, not only of profits and results, but also in ‘avoiding major problems’ from the demands (multiple and nearly unlimited) until the difficulties for graduating.

Finally, stated in general terms, a display of skills that is being tested (as a teacher said “*in this of trying-inventing-creating*”) to the point that one observes some that are taken on in fixed projects which have just been rejected by others (and vice versa). This illustrates or accounts for what is in an open process of betting of searching, experimentation and belief.

8. In Summary: What has been done, What is left to do and Perspectives

8.1 What has been done

Here, we wanted to group the ‘things done’ and the ‘what is left to do’ successfully, the good ‘to do’ that is reclaimed as lessons learnt in the accumulations. They are presented in two blocks: the strengths of the collective in the first group and are derived from **all** the projects and in the second group the strength of the good practices, which is present in **some** projects.

What has been done – Accumulations 1:

- In-depth knowledge of the profile of the population (children and adolescents and their families) in fundamentally qualitative terms.
- In-depth knowledge of the weaknesses and omissions (absences, deficits, errors and horrors) of the public policies. (Its other face: the tendency to fill these vacuums, ‘stretching’ the reach of the projects exponentially).
- They are familiar with, they know and they adequately use the recourses and services, and they practically address all the obstacles that are presented to them. Complementarily, we must emphasise the promotion and the development of the strategy of work in Networks carried forward by the Projects with community enclaves.
- The “arrival” of the users, rapidly generating a base of indispensable confidence for the establishment of the educative relation. Further from ‘how’, access to places and people that ‘no one can get to’ is emphasised therefore reaching agreement where the others do not.
- The utilisation of the street and the public environments as enabling frames of the work with families, on many occasions.
- The multiple faces that the practices are constructed from allow observation of a model that combines attributes such as: dynamism, creativity, flexibility as an emphasised opening to new trials and to change.

What has been done – Accumulation 2:

- Making the group and task professional.
- The integration of work pairs with mixed composition (man and woman).
- A conceptual development of the practices in socio-educative terms to the point that today one can speak of an ‘Social Educator’s’ bias, when one sees it.
- Knowledge of the territories, their recourses and their services in the projects with community demands, which accumulates synergistically and maximises the intervention.
- In accompanying these practices distinct degrees of structuralism in the frames and of the processes could be observed, indicating that the main structuralism acts as much in the results as in the timing of the processes. This in turn presents something positive: It avoids the shower of demands and with it and diminishes the probability of failing with the unpredictable. Also the frontal styles make and are made in the demarcated frames in retrospect, both being key components for the structuralisation of the processes.
- Generation of educative reference in the function of the children and adolescents with very good fundamental socio-educative breaks; a product of searching for and trying many hence creating a methodology that contributes to the construction of the integrality in the outreach.
- Articulation of skills that conjugate equally individual and group outreaches.
- The development of new instruments as **subsidies** and **agreements**, and, even better, ‘written agreements’.
- Relevant conceptual advances based on practical emergent elements of the practice about how to work on the social ‘integration’ of the children and adolescents. The projects that have increased its base of participation have obtained significant achievements while not reducing it to the exclusive profile of the ‘most vulnerable’.

8.2 What is left to be done

What is left to be done includes the work that remains established the labour that demands the overcoming of critical nodes in identifying open themes.

- Common goal
When there is not a shared goal within the teams, the possibility of performing an agreed educative intention is low, or very low.
- Barely structured Frames and Processes
The underdeveloped structure of the processes and the frames (and as opposing the advanced strength) impacts negatively on the expected achievements and results of the projects.
- The problem with boundaries
Coming from the preceding point, a counterpart of the strength of the ‘good relationships with the families’ and the establishment of firm connections on a base of confidence appears in some practices as the ‘problems’ of over-

- representation of the connection and the tendency to become too intimate with the families.
- Graduation
The configuration (and sealing) of the ‘graduation’ of what the projects have advanced substantively in theoretical terms follows setting up a difficult resolution node in the concrete practices.
 - Identification of profiles
If indeed all the projects have assigned energy and recourses to the identification of “family profiles”, it is counted as a sub-utilisation of it. This situation hinders the possibility of relying on the skills and strategy of correlating strategies.
 - Gender Perspective
The perspective of gender is present in the appearance, the discourses and the preoccupations of the projects but a clear strategy is not reached in relation to the theme that permeates the outreaches and it does not reduce the themes of “gender” to the feminine gender.
 - Taking advantage of social technology
A sub-utilisation of the offers actually available from social technology is observed (indicators, databases, information systems).

8.3 Perspectives

In recent times, the programs have begun to implement from the distinct domains of social public policy what some designate “third generation projects”, to be referred to those that integrate components of welfare with educative propositions (basically, the economic transfers with returns).

The projects have had some experiences and have been testimonials, which jointly with the development of the work with families, have permitted them to accumulate significant lessons learnt, visualising not only the advantages and potentialities, but also the difficulties and risks that this tool carries. The modality of economic transfers (rent, scholarships, subsidies) with returns require mature teams and teachers that integrate the components of welfare in clearly demarcated socio-educative frames.

Although it seems that the focus is directed on the design; the terminal operators are entrusted with effective focus bestowing an enormous power upon the teachers (which is good since it is necessary to be up to date to manage it with direction and professional criteria).

Largely, the projects expressed having constructed neither “profile associations” nor association for “types of demands” of the families’ problems, which, in turn, hinders them from having correlative “skills”, and re-defined for each intervention, and therefore, indicators to measure the expected results because “Each family is a different family”. The knowledge of the particularities of each family, the acceptance of its diversity does not become, absolutely, contradictory to a methodology of work that includes evaluation of results. Yet they have not achieved clarification of what elements and indicators are really necessary for an adequate diagnosis and what is the information that is not added to the effects of maximising the impact.

The projects are fully aware enabling their practices to have an educative and transforming intention. In such a sense, it becomes very clear in the words of a member from a team when he says:

“The lesson of all of this is that if you come to a family, it is to do something, not just to look at them from an academic viewpoint or “understand” them, but to make some small change, something concrete, palpable material... so that after a year, the mother can look back and say that something is different, that she sees her son on the street in a different light, that she wants something else for her own children.”

“And if you are not there to make some kind of a change, well, then, why are you there?”

Effectively, “the philosophers have dedicated themselves to understanding the world, now what they try to do is transform it.”

The systematisation wants to bring a “Stop- Look- Think- Rethink- Do it better” for whom they are working in a qualified and committed manager in first line with those of the last line by this desired social transformation.

“....this signifies that we, in this space and in any other, we have the right to expect a miracle. Not because we believe religiously in miracles, but because the men and women, inasmuch as they can perform, are capable of achieving the improbable and unpredictable, and achieving it continually, they know it or not”

In this sense, the present work tried to make a contribution to those who everyday achieve the improbable.