



Regional Shelter Center for Women in Situation of  
Risk and Violence (CRAM)

Reception to women in situatuion of violence



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Pope Francis has been insitently asking us to be an outgoing church, which, inspired in Christ and by Christ, places itself beside the ones who suffer the most. Being in the borders, outskirts and deserts is the concrete way to be with the forgotten and the marginalized of our society, or of the ones who suffer all types of violence.

The 21st century demands us an open eye mystic which makes us see with the eyes of Faith, and act in the face of every situation where the human dignity is either attacked or threatened. When the spirit of Faith unfolds in zeal, great things are possible.

The 'Centro Regional de Abrigamento' for women victim of violence is an institutional initiative which is born from a sensibility in relation to the harsh reality experienced in our society. Inspired by the Lasallian pedagogical and spiritual heritage, we firmly believe that new stories begin with oportunities, therefore, we implemented this project which aims to provide, in the foreground, a humanized welcome space for women and the children who accompany them.

We are glad to celebrate this first year of CRAM and even happier to realize that, in the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the charisma which is moved by The Holy Spirit takes new shapes and new faces, embodying itself in the history of children, adolescents and adults, who were or are found apart from a dignified and fair life conditions. We are convinced that since St. John Baptist de La Salle 'this Institute is of a great need'(R.152).

Domestic violence is constituted as one of the main forms of violation of the human rights, striking women in their rights to life and health, their physical, emotional and spiritual integrity. With regards to tackling violence against women in Brazil, it is possible to point out important governmental initiatives. In the legal and legislative fields, the promulgation of Maria da Penha Law (Law No. 11,340) in 2006, is considered the main milestone in the prevention and punishment of domestic violence.

However, in order to accomplish the provided goals in the referred legislation, it is necessary for its device to be regulated and materialized into concrete actions. Thus, in 2019 the La Salle Foundation developed a proposal to implement a host unit for women in situation of violence in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, providing an alternative to the municipalities, adding quality and economy.

This way, in August 2019, the 'Centro Regional de Abrigamento para Mulheres em Situação de Risco e Violência' (CRAM) started, with a institutional host service to women, who can be accompanied by their children, in situation of death risk or threat due to domestic violence. CRAM constitutes the Social Support Network to Women in Situation of Violence and it is characterized as a service from the Special Social Protection of High Complexity of the Unified System for Social Assistance (SUAS).

This project is characterized as shelter and it follows the technical orientations from the National Guidelines to Shelter Women in Situation of Risk and Violence, providing a safe place of protected home and integral assistance to women. It is a confidential and long term service in which women can remain for up to 180 days, during which they should gather the necessary conditions to retake the course of their lives.

CRAM aims to ensure the physical, psychological and spiritual integrity of women in risk of death and their underage children, supporting the exercise of their citizenship, as well as recovering and strengthening their self-esteem, making possible for them to become the protagonist of their own rights.

For this to happen, the shelter provides a specialized assistance and accompaniment, besides maintenance, food and a 24 hour monitoring and surveillance services, which guarantees them a shelter, regardless of day and time. The building is equiped with a kitchen, a dining hall, a library, workshop and attendance rooms, a laundry room and dormitories (all furnished with beds, wardrobes, private bathrooms and windows), ensuring comfort and a humanized and differentiated reception for women and their children.

The CRAM's proposal of assistance takes place regionally and the Municipalities adherence occurs through the provision of services, or in the best legal form that the public administration deems appropriate, guaranteeing service for the agreed period.

CRAM's operation was organized from the contact with the Intersectoral Network, where the realities of assistance from several municipalities and the main demands of specialized services could be collected. CRAM's construction is based on the National Guidelines of Shelter which guide the importance of interdisciplinarity, team training, critical approach to gender issues, group approach, self-management and networking, among other guidelines.

The technical instrument was also elaborated and the service takes into account the admission and evaluation criteria, the service record model, the shelter's internal procedures, the disconnection criteria and the Individual Service Plan guidelines.

At CRAM, besides the reception and accommodation of women and their children, and Individual Service Plan (PIA) is elaborated along with the user and the reference network of the same. During the institutional reception, women have access to psychosocial and legal assistance, workshops and group activities and a social reintegration plan is designed according to the needs of each family.

The Individual Service Plan (PIA) is an instrument which guides the actions to be accomplished to facilitate the integral protection, the family and community reintegration and the autonomy of women in situation of risk and domestic violence, who are under the host services protection. It is a planning strategy from a deep study of each case, which understands the particularity of each woman and organizes the actions and activities to be developed with the woman during the reception period.

This Plan aims to systematize the intervention project to be developed with each woman and her children by the host service, along with other reference services, during the reception period and after the disconnection of the woman in the service. The adoption of PIA in the work process, therefore, facilitates the performance of the service team, the articulation with the network (services, rights defense bodies and other players), which may lead to better results in the accomplishment of women's rights.

In addition to the individual assistance, there are some ludic pedagogical practices with the children, such as games, cultural and arts activities at the 'Sala da Convivência e Artes Nise da Silveira' room. Workshops with women about gender issues are also held in order to reflect on breaking the cycles of violence and promoting feminine empowerment.

Lastly, it is worth saying that, although the shelter is provided by Maria da Penha Law as a guarantee of security to the woman who is a victim of domestic violence, in practice it is a resource that is difficult to implement, in which municipalities face many administrative, financial and legal issues, and the work of Civil Society Organizations, such as La Salle Foundation, makes possible to carry out this extremely important and socially relevant work.

Inspired in the Gospel and spirited by Pope Francis and by the Institute, we keep our Faith and the certainty that 'great things are possible' when we are willing to take on the pedagogy of exodus, to leave ourselves and meet the other, in a path of hospitality and overcoming indifference. God wants us to actively participate and cooperate with Him in the construction of a more fair and human universal brotherhood, where everyone can live a fully happy and fulfilled life.



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