



REDE FRANCISCANA PARA MIGRANTES - BRASIL

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**FINAL REPORT OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FRANCISCAN NETWORK FOR
MIGRANTS - BRAZIL**



Fra João Paulo Gabriel Mendes de Moraes, OFM
RFM Facilitator - Brazil

BELO HORIZONTE-MINAS GERAIS (MG) 2024

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FINAL REPORT OF THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FRANCISCAN NETWORK FOR MIGRANTS - BRAZIL

Date: April 11 to 14, 2024;

Location: Belo Horizonte - MG;

1. PARTICIPANTS

Fra João Paulo Gabriel Mendes de Moraes	RFM Facilitator - Brazil	Garça - São Paulo
Friar Wagner José da Rosa	Advocacy Committee Coordinator	Campo Grande - Mato Grosso do Sul.
Fray Jhonatan de Jesús Luiz	JPIC Animator of the Province Franciscan of Santa Cruz	Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais
Sister Lady Giovanna Ávila Arias	Missionary Sister Carmelita, creator of the migratory work in the neighborhood of Bandeirinhas	Betim - Minas Gerais
Fray Carlos Antonio Sartin Junior	Volunteer at the Migrant Virtual House and member of the Communication Committee	Anapolis - Goiás
Andréia Aparecida Oliveira	House of Assis - Sefras (Social Action Franciscan)	São Paulo - São Paulo
Fra Marx Rodrigues dos Reyes Sefras	member of the São Paulo Advocacy Committee - São Paulo	
Lilian Gabriella Castelo Branco Alves de Sousa	Sociologist involved with the cause of the Warao indigenous peoples in the state of Piauí - Coordinator of the Committee Communication	Teresina - Piauí
Jessica María de Lima Rocha	Popular advocacy in the cause of the Warao indigenous people in the state of Piauí - member of the Advocacy Committee	Teresina - Piauí
Fábio Fabrício Pereira da Silva	Representative RFM Pan-Amazon	Rio Branco - Acre
Italian Kant	Lawyer for the cause of the CPT (Land Pastoral Commission) and the cause of Haitian migrants in Uberlândia - MG - member of the Advocacy Committee	Uberlândia - Minas Gerais


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Pr. Andy Manes	Evangelical Pastor, Hatian migrant	Uberlândia - Minas Gerais
Pr. Léopold Éthienne	Evangelical Pastor, Hatian migrant Theology	Uberlandia - Mines Gerais
Evangelist works with the community of neighborhood.	student released for Fray Dildarlyson Venezuelan Silva migrants in the Bandeirinha neighborhood.	Betim - Minas Gerais
Fray André Luis dos Santos	Theology student released to work with the Venezuelan migrant community in the Bandeirinha neighborhood.	Betim - Minas Gerais
Ricardo Ferreira works with the Silva neighborhood.	Liberated Theology student for Fray Wálacy Venezuelan migrant community in the Bandeirinha neighborhood.	Betim - Minas Gerais
Duval Fernandes	Professor at the Pontifical University Catholic of Minas Gerais	Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais
Maria da Consolacao Castro	Professor at the Pontifical University Catholic of Minas Gerais	Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais
Amanda de Lima Sozua	Master's student at the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais	Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais
Amanda Nascimento Balestrini	Master's student at the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais	Belo Horizonte - Minas Gerais

2. INTRODUCTION

The RFM - Brazil (Franciscan Network for Migrants, Team Brazil) was officially established in December 2022, in the city of São Paulo, bringing together a group of nuns, members of the Secular Franciscan Order and Franciscan friars from different regions of the country to discuss and propose strategies aimed at safe migration, given the growing arrival of migrants to Brazilian territory, driven by economic factors, wars, poverty, among others, in search of a dignified life. Brazil, the latest country to join the Franciscan Network for Migrants of the Americas, adopts values such as active listening, collaboration, fraternity, peace, accompaniment, justice and freedom, as highlighted in the 2021 Annual Report .

One of the steps was to hold a face-to-face Assembly of the Brazil Team, with lay, religious and social leaders from the Brazilian territory. This was convened and took place from April 11 to 14, 2024. The objective was to promote a welcoming and supportive environment for those seeking opportunities in the country. Civil society organizations participated,



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religious institutions, members of the Franciscan family and society in general. The event was developed with the support of four axes:

- to. **Sharing Experiences:** Members of the RFM - Brazil shared stories and challenges, promoting empathy and understanding through presentation dynamics, as well as opportune moments to socialize the necessary realities.
- b. **Network articulation:** It was possible to establish connections between migrants, support organizations and the Franciscan family to generate a strengthening of the Network through these connections.
- c. **Information and resources:** The Assembly began with a presentation by Professor Dr. Duval Fernandes, from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais (PUC-Minas), with experience in the area of Demography, with emphasis on Mortality and International Migrations, covering the topic: ***Analysis of the national and international political and economic situation.*** Followed by another training presentation with the topic: ***Analysis of the political and social situation in the national territory,*** given by Professor Dr. Maria da Consolação Castro, member of the Sérgio Vieira de Melo/UNHCR Chair and works on migration issues, immigration and related policies.
- d. **Public policies:** It was possible, based on discussions, situation analysis and evaluation of the work carried out to date by the RFM - Brazil, to stipulate priorities for the quarterly agenda on the topics of inclusive public policies for migrants, addressing those in force and under discussion at the federal level to create a welcoming environment without ethnic-racial discrimination.

3. DISCUSSIONS AND TRAINING

The methodology adopted for the Assembly was planned to guarantee maximum participation and commitment of all those involved. This process was structured in several differentiated stages, which included sharing experiences, training with situation analysis, division of groups and construction of specific proposals.

We began the Assembly with a moment dedicated to sharing experiences, recognizing the importance of listening and learning from the experiences of each participant. This moment allowed us to build a diverse panorama of the challenges and achievements faced throughout the period.

to. **Bandeirinha Community - Betim - MG**

One of the highlighted realities was that of Betim, MG, where members of the Bandeirinha Community work with Venezuelan families. This initiative is configured as a contribution network with the participation of the Carmelite Missionary Sisters, with the support of several institutions, including the Center for the Defense of Rights (CEFAD) of the Province



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Franciscan of Santa Cruz, and has the support of the Franciscan friars who are in initial formation, as well as members of the local community. This group develops the integration service for Venezuelan families who arrive in the state of Minas Gerais, in the city of Betim.

The integration service is carried out through food assistance, Portuguese language courses, legal advice, general and oral health campaigns, with the support of the local municipality, the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas (PUC-Minas), the Jesuit Service to Migrants and Refugees (SJMR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), civil society, partner companies, among others. The achievements are found in the increase and consolidation of registered and autonomous work with food and crafts, guaranteeing the development of economic, social and cultural sustainability, as well as Portuguese courses guaranteeing not only mastery of the language, but human development resulting in a society of migrants aware of their rights and duties. The challenges encountered are in the execution of immigration laws, especially with the inclusion of this population in the labor market, which, even with a growing number, continues to be very precarious and difficult, as well as in the basic rights to health, education and housing.

Other projects developed with Venezuelan migrants are contact with Brazilian culture, the "Cake and Sweets" entrepreneurship course, medical care for women, social assistance through the "Solidarity Hands" Project, crafts course, regularization of documents, livelihoods, sales technique course, barbering course, integrative practices, psychological support at individual and group level and home visits to families.

Also, holidays are celebrated such as Children's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas, among other spaces for exchange and fraternity.

b. Waraos indigenous people - Cuiabá - Mato Grosso

Another shared reality was that of the city of Cuiabá, capital of the State of Mato Grosso, where Fray Wagner Rosa has been working alongside a multidisciplinary team that has provided support to indigenous Venezuelans of the Warao ethnic group in the areas of health, education, territory and spirituality. Together with the sisters of the Congregation of Divine Providence, she works within the team, more specifically with the religious demands of the Nuestra Señora de la Consolata Community.

Through Friar Wagner he became involved in the parish community of Nuestra Señora Guadalupe parish, which is administered by the Franciscan friars of the Custody of the Seven Joys of Our Lady. This contact occurred through the collection of donations to help indigenous families and also at a pastoral level with contact and interaction between communities.

A celebration was organized in Spanish, as part of the patron saint's triduum, and it also made it easier for the Warao women to sell their crafts at the end of the masses.

The difficulties encountered in this service are the high number of indigenous people who go to big cities and find themselves begging on public roads and at traffic lights in search of food, since they have difficulties with the Portuguese language, with their own lack of professionalization. and, furthermore, they made a living from collecting in their towns of origin. I do not know



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They take into account social rights, the result of a widespread xenophobic culture, especially in the border regions of the country. This has made access to health, education, food and work difficult.

However, thanks to the work of this large network of people, many situations have been resolved, but the challenges are enormous due to the scarcity of resources, the neglect and the slowness of public powers.

c. Haitian migrants - Uberlândia - Minas Gerais

The Haitians, Pr. Andy Manes and Pr. Leopold Ethienne, evangelical pastors, shared their journeys along the migratory corridor, from Haiti to the city of Uberlândia -MG, where they are today, highlighting the difficulties in finding food, refuge and, above all, work. On this occasion, Father Leopold witnessed the moment in which he worked all day for R\$ 7.00, a value that represents nothing in the local economy, thus configuring him as a victim of work analogous to slavery, a reality present in many migrants who are in the country. In his own way, he also shared the countless situations in which he suffered racism. Currently, their fight in the city of Uberlândia is mainly for the right to housing, as well as the right to basic health care, education and work.

d. Warao indigenous people - Teresina - Piauí

Jessica Maria Lima, popular lawyer and member of the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO), brought to the exchange circle the advocacy work carried out in the state of Piauí with the flow of indigenous Venezuelan migrants of the Waraos ethnic group who, for some time now, have made the state a destination point on Brazil's migration map.

The achievements in working with this reality lie in the prominence of the indigenous peoples themselves. The Warao community contributes directly to the understanding of interculturality, as it becomes a partner in projects against local xenophobia, participating in roundtables, symposiums and conferences exposing their worldviews, practices and narratives.

Piauí officially created the State Intersectoral Committee for Care and Assistance to Refugees, Migrants and Stateless Persons, after years of movement by the Warao Working Group with the presence of civil organizations, universities, access to justice organizations and secretariats of public entities. We understand that this is an important step, since the State of Piauí does not have state and municipal public policies that determine mechanisms for the regularization and integration of migrant communities. Currently, the refugee community is welcomed, for example, in unoccupied public spaces, without a specific action plan. Furthermore, there is no decentralization of basic health care with specific attention to migrant communities, respecting their particularities and cultures.



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In April, Piauí held its I COMIGRAR - State Conference on Migration, Refuge and Stateless Persons, with four migrants, two public servants and two representatives of civil society as elected delegates, one of them, Jéssica Lima Rocha, member of the RFM.

In addition, Teresina, capital of Piauí, entered the map of “welcoming cities”, with the support of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, through the Directorate of Migration, Refuge and Stateless Persons.

and. Migrant Virtual House

Regarding the services provided by the RFM, Frei Carlos Sartin, a volunteer at the Casa Virtual Migrante, responds, through a chat available on the official website of the RFM (redfranciscana.org), to messages about queries from migrants who are on the way to direct them to shelters, soup kitchens, legal assistance and the like. He shared achievements in carrying out the work, which has been carried out since February 2023, and has periodically participated in the meetings convened by the RFM Communication Committee, which has provided help to many migrants who requested assistance. Regarding the challenges, he said that the largest flow is in Central America, which requires more detailed knowledge of the geographic map of the region to work more assertively in indicating the places of assistance closest to the migrant's location. who requests it.

F. Amazon Region - Triple border of Brazil, Peru and Bolivia - Acre

Regarding the Amazon region, Fábio Fabrício, popular lawyer, member of the OFS and representative of RFM Panamazônica, spoke about the reality in the state of Acre, a triple border region between Peru, Bolivia and Brazil. In this region, the greatest challenge is the fight against xenophobic speeches coming from local politicians, as well as the low state response to the need to implement and articulate public services and policies. For many years, denial of the social problems of mass migration in the region meant that all humanitarian care was managed by civil society, mostly by groups linked to the Church.

In 2010, the opening of the Interoceanic Highway across the triple border between Brazil, Bolivia and Peru, in Acre, integrated the region into international migration routes. Initially, until 2014, the area saw the entry of Caribbean, African and Asian migrants, attracted by Brazil's economic growth and employment opportunities. However, starting in 2015, with the country's economic and political crisis, the region also became an exit route for these migrants, who, already familiar with the route, returned to Acre as it was a cheaper option to leave. from the country. Brazil works either to return to their countries of origin or to seek other migratory destinations. Currently, the Acre border registers both the entry and exit of migrants, depending on changes in the global socioeconomic context.

From 2010 to 2020, approximately 54 thousand migrants crossed the Acre border, of 31 different nationalities, establishing the Brazil – Peru interoceanic corridor as a consolidated route for the so-called south-south migration. This corridor is clearly Amazonian, and also



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of the vulnerabilities and risks inherent to migration, presents specific problems for local populations, such as exploitation and environmental degradation in an illegal mining area in the Peruvian jungle, intense drug and human trafficking in the region, land disputes between large landowners and a threat to the protection of indigenous peoples.

In the migratory context of Acre, starting in 2019, the presence of migration of the Waraos indigenous people, coming from the Amacuro delta of Venezuela, accentuated a scenario of destitution and double vulnerability: Venezuelan and indigenous migrants. The response, in terms of protection of these groups, which are even more susceptible to migrant trafficking, for example, was achieved through an articulated set of civil society initiatives within the state justice systems (state Public Ministry and State) and federal Public Defender. (Federal Public Ministry and Union Public Defender), which - later - resulted in the construction of intersectoral discussion spaces for the public policy necessary to protect migrants and refugees who arrive in Brazil through the triple border of Acre.

g. Sefras - São Paulo - SP

Franciscan Solidarity Service (SEFRAS), represented by Fray Marx dos Reis and Andréia de Oliveira, brought to light the reality of work locations in São Paulo, which has two services aimed at caring for migrants, refugees and stateless people, one reception, "Casa de Assis", and another reference, Center for Reference and Attention to Immigrants - "CRAI Oriana Jara". Both are located in the neighborhood of Bela Vista, SP.

Casa de Assis – It is a Migrant Reception Center that welcomes 110 people. The home serves men, women and children. This is a certified service. The Social Assistance Secretariat was born together with the Center for Reference and Attention to Immigrants (CRAI) in 2014, but as soon as it began, the need for distinction was seen. Today Casa de Assis has a reception that allows accommodation for mothers and children, luggage storage, typical food, psychological, social and legal assistance. Through a humanized welcome, the service offers access to the guarantee of basic rights and support for the process of getting out of the street situation, studying the Portuguese language, basic school education and insertion into the labor market, always seeking the path to the autonomy of the participants.

Today, Casa de Assis has more than 80% autonomy for migrants who pass through this service. To achieve this, there is a great effort to expand alliances within the world of work. The service offers jobs, preparation workshops, curriculum and interview, as well as partnerships with schools and medical services to assist with health care and basic training.

CRAI - Center for Reference and Attention to Immigrants - "CRAI Oriana Jara", in turn provides local and itinerant services, promoting the rights of migrants in Brazil through a human rights perspective in the social, productive, political and cultural spheres. of those who are cared for. In this sense, the service offers general guidance and specialized legal assistance to 900 people monthly. A theme that stands out in the work of the CRAI is the



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construction – together with communities, civil society in general and public authorities – of public policies to protect migrants.

CRAI is recognized nationally and internationally by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Through them, it is possible to mobilize a structure of public actions and state coordination to accommodate migratory flows derived from humanitarian crises.

This service is certified by the Ministry of Human Rights and has several areas of work, namely: Immigrant Assistance (active listening in more than 5 languages to address the specific needs of each immigrant); Pedagogical Center (Develops awareness-raising work and guidelines for the social protection network and prepares instruction and orientation materials for migrants and partners through folders and notebooks); Psychological Center (With two professionals, it develops work with 3 languages and specialized assistance in the area of migration, in addition to having alliances with students who intend to work in the area); Legal Center (With two professionals and in alliance with the Federal Public Defender's Office (DPU), guidance and representation is provided to migrants regarding their specific needs); Humanized Service (Taking into account the needs that appear in the space, cultural and interactive workshops are held for migrants during the week).

Sharing these experiences provided a broad and detailed view of the different approaches and solutions found to address similar challenges in varied contexts.

h. Situation analysis

From the analysis of the situation given by Professor Dr. Duval, it was possible to identify the advantages of the migratory flow, since the opposite is commonly discussed, however, based on numbers and graphs, the demographic and age change in Brazil is currently a challenge in national income, which demonstrates bias when it comes to the migration phenomenon, since analyzing the profiles of migrants who request refuge in Brazil, they are from a productive age group, which results in positive economic effects in the country.

The age pyramid reveals a balance in the countries receiving migrants, which provide a younger workforce, since population aging is a current reality in the countries receiving migrants. Population diversity, therefore, favors the growth of the country in this reality, allowing the growth of new perspectives and experiences, highlighted Professor Duval.

Another point to consider is the direct economic contribution that migrants have in the country, here we list the payment of taxes for the use and sale of subsistence, health, leisure and similar products, the contribution to local social security, and because they are constantly changing, they almost always return to their countries, or continue to their destination countries, without even using the benefits, which remain in local funds.

Duval made a sample based on numbers, graphs and realities of the developed countries that have been experiencing the migratory flow with greater intensity, and serving as an example for the



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reality of Brazil, which has become a destination and search country for many migrants along the way.

Regarding the rights and duties of migrants in destination countries, Professor Dr.

Consola presented articles 2, 6, 13 and 22 of the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights), which aim to establish standards in favor of human dignity.

Bringing to the reality of Brazil, the immigration policy law of 2017 (Law 13.445/2017), which is therefore the legislation that regulates the entry and stay of foreigners in the country, in addition to establishing the rights and duties of migrants, This Law replaced the 1980 Immigration Statute, and aims to promote a more humanitarian approach aligned with Human Rights in relation to immigration policies.

This Migration Policy Law of 2017 was drafted with the objective of modernizing and humanizing Brazilian immigration legislation, aligning with the principles of the 1988 Federal Constitution and the international human rights treaties to which Brazil is a signatory. The new law represents an important step forward in protecting the rights of migrants, promoting a more inclusive and rights-based approach.

On this occasion, the researcher spoke about the difficulties encountered in Brazil for the realization of these rights, namely: the language barrier, lack of knowledge of rights and the displacement process. Therefore, it is necessary to fight for immigration policies and their application, differentiating them from the lack of need for assistance, emphasizing that the latter is not political, due to its inability to generate inclusion without differentiation.

4. DELIBERATIONS

The Assembly was divided into three main areas of discussion: **Political Advocacy, Articulation and Strengthening and Communication.**

Some priorities were chosen to guide action in the current three-year work period, including: "monitoring the National Migration and Refugee Policy resulting from the National Conference (COMIGRAR);

Political advocacy

- Focus on the participation of the RFM-Brazil in the territories from: Committees/Commissions/Councils and Migration Policy Working Groups. And in places where these migration public policy governance structures do not exist, encourage the implementation of articulations;
- Present the RFM-Brazil to bodies of the justice system and other rights defense bodies, with the aim of influencing situations of complaints/violations of rights/technical notes and other articulations;
- Promote the training of members of the RFM-Brazil, with the aim of qualifying the political advocacy process, from the perspective of initial and qualified training -



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Initial Training (<https://www.escolavirtual.gov.br/curso/955>); – courses already available in place Web

- Promote the political-social training of migrants, guaranteeing protagonism and autonomy (self defense).

Articulation and strengthening

- Continuous training of network members;
- Ensure the presence of migrants in the discussions, management and committees of the Network;
- Strengthen the bases by expanding contacts with other institutions that carry out work with migrants (Churches, civil society, social organizations and groups, other expressions religious organizations, public organizations and institutions) - prioritizing articulation with the family Franciscan in its different branches;
- Continue the study of basic migratory work; creation of guide material for Services/Houses/Network and Partner References – Mapping; have incorporated at least two new leaders who work with migration (border region).

Communication

- Designation of a member of the RFM-Brazil for dialogue with the official communication of the Network (website updates, news, etc.) – RFM Platforms: website, social networks;
- Prepare standard RFM promotional material to present the network (virtual folder, ppt presentation (power point)), database (report/systematization of activities) by territory/region;
- Continue with the proposal of the annual newsletter of RFM Brazil;
- Preparation of the Network Communication Plan, based on the proposals raised as strategies.

Based on these lines of work and guiding principles, the assembled Assembly committed to the fight for human rights, strengthening itself as a Network of human rights defenders rights of migrants motivated by Pope Francis' speech in which he says

"It's not just about migrants, it's about humanity."

5. ATTACHMENT

- to. Assembly schedule
- b. Photos from the four days of the Assembly
- c. Annual Report 2023



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6. CONCLUSION

The Assembly achieved its main objectives, since through the methodology used it was possible to organize and structure the RFM - Brazil, with the consolidation of the Advocacy Committee and its due representative, Fray Wagner Rosa, for the Advocacy Committee of the RFM of the Americas, it was also possible to build the Communication Committee with its respective coordinator, Lilian Gabriela.

Through the participation of migrants, representatives of lay people, religious people and social leaders of the Brazilian territory, it was possible to generate interaction between the members, through the teaching of active listening, and based on the reality of the migrants. present, recognize and update the activities to be developed.

In addition, the Assembly promoted the integration and inclusion of migrants in Brazil, in order to make them protagonists of the work in search of immigration rights in the country.

For this, it was necessary to train the members of the RFM - Brazil, considering the current situation of the country and update them on the immigration laws in force in Brazilian territory.

It is concluded that it was possible to strengthen the ties of solidarity and cooperation between the members of the RFM - Brazil, thus consolidating a more solid basis for the promotion of the rights of migrants and the construction of a more inclusive society.

Also, concrete strategies were developed to expand the impact of the initiatives of the RFM - Brazil, with the aim of guaranteeing a more effective and dignified reception for migrants who arrive in the country in search of better living conditions.

Fra João Paulo Gabriel Mendes de Moraes, OFM

RFM Brazil Facilitator