



AMERICA/BRAZIL – On the eve of the World Cup: illiteracy and hunger, but also hopes for a better future

Belo Horizonte (Agenzia Fides) - The neighborhood of Jardim Terezopolis, in Betim, Brazil, 35 000 inhabitants, about 8,700 families in an area of 260 hectares, was a large pocket of poverty, low human development and education level, lack of professional qualification, and rates of violence among the highest in the Country. Thanks to the project of social responsibility "Arvore da Vida", in 10 years, 20,367 young people and women in the neighborhood, who lived in a situation of vulnerability, have been involved; 1,300 young people have been integrated into the working world; 9,227 adolescents between 8 and 17 years of age have participated in social and educational activities; 1,524 young people aged 16 to 24 and 973 young trainees have been trained in order to integrate them into the labor market through professional qualification; 528 young people aged 15 and above have learned to read and write thanks to the literacy program; in 6 schools and 2 kindergartens in the neighborhood, work has been made to improve the facilities and 1,286 teachers have been trained.

The aim of the project is to invest and enhance the educational resources of the communities in Minas Gerais, in the hope of contributing to the reduction of violence and the improvement of professional qualification. During these ten years, the presence of the program has improved the reality of many families. Courses regarding choral activities, percussion, sports laboratories, theater and dance, in addition to the work of human formation have been held. Other activities, such as the qualification and training of young people, sewing classes, educational circuits in public schools and strengthening of the public and private sectors of the community have allowed to begin work on strengthening the role of the family that has led to a significant improvement in the social indicators in the neighborhood. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 06/06/2014)