

QUILOMBOX: A TOOL OF RESISTANCE

YOUTH CASE STUDY: AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BRAZIL



SUMMARY

Amnesty International Brazil is working with young black people as they respond to systemic racism and violence affecting their communities delivering self-organised workshops. The QuilomBOX collection supports networking, provides innovative campaign tools such as mobilization and human rights education materials and a box that transforms into a projector to deliver presentations and screenings.



DESCRIPTION

In response to a rise in police brutality, failures in the prison system, and killings of young black men in favelas, Amnesty Brazil kicked off the Black Youth Alive campaign in 2014 to better understand the reality of young black people with regards to these systemic problems. During the “Violence has no place in this game” campaign around the Olympics Rio 2016, Amnesty Brazil conducted workshops in Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador targeting 30 existing youth networks that ranged from black queer and feminist groups to street art collectives. The workshops facilitated important discussions through interactive approaches such as dancing, graffiti and rapping, to explore the issues that black young people face and the ways in which they address them within their communities. In August 2017, Amnesty Brazil brought together 20 representatives from the groups that had participated in the workshops to plan and design the QuilomBOX. In November, the final product was launched: a wooden box with a magnifier lens that becomes a film projector, filled with interactive human rights education materials, a USB stick with reference texts to inspire debates, and speakers. QuilomBOX provided youth groups with the tools to produce human rights workshops such as screenings, presentations and other forms of local mobilization. QuilomBOX promotes human rights education as well as connections between youth groups.

“For me, youth means power, strength, courage. Prejudice means ignorance. Music is a tool for me to fight for a better future. We need to make the difference in our community, and be an example for those younger than us” – Milena (youth activist)

OBJECTIVES

- Understand the impact of gun violence on public security and the justice system in black youth communities.
- Support young people to find ways to resist and address the problem.
- Strengthen young black activist networks.
- Facilitate a space where black youth can share their concerns, strengthen their voice and skills to mobilise against the issues they face.
- Diversify Amnesty Brazil’s supporters network, bringing in more young people and reflecting the diversity present in Brazilian population.

IMPACT

- 41 black youth groups participated at various levels of QuilomBOX, from the creation of the strategy, to the implementation of the project and the monitoring of the campaign.
- 40 QuilomBOX boxes were distributed to main partner groups across the country.
- Main partner groups have been mapping other local groups and building a strategy to distribute 330 basic human rights education kits.
- Strengthened black youth networks that were not previously working together, and expand their local work to a national level.
- An interactive map was created by a youth collective to monitor the distribution of the boxes and the development of activities.

TIPS AND TRICKS

- *Give youth a voice!* Let youth express their concerns and think of ways to solve the issues they face.
- *Participatory methodologies are key!* Fun and engaging workshops often work well with young people.
- *Bring in young staff and advisors who experience the issues themselves!* The section hired a young black woman with a youth brief as the Campaign Coordinator. The activists advising the campaign should also belong to the communities you are working with.



STAKEHOLDERS

- Open Society Foundations as funder.
- Amnesty International Brazil as project lead.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Alan Costa is a young activist from the collective Afrobapho from Salvador, Alan shared: “QuilomBOX is a product that has great value for us. It was created by Amnesty Brazil in collaboration with various youth collectives, and the results of such initiative have gone beyond our expectations. The partnership with Amnesty International has added a lot to the Afrobapho collective because we have gained institutional recognition and the QuilomBOX has given us the opportunity to insert human rights discussions in our activities. Now we are in the process of spreading Quilombox throughout Brazil, to bring it to other groups and collectives. We are taking a big step as a collective, as we are independently spreading this information, and we have to do our own planning and strategy to make a change”.

“ It hasn't been long since I started to recognize myself as a black woman. It's quite recent, because we are imposed an idea that being black is something bad. But we need to be certain that being black is our power; we need to take this power back to us” – Beatriz (youth activist)

KEY INFORMATION

- Read more about the QuilomBOX here: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/education/2018/03/black-youth-alive-quilombox-at-amnesty-brazil/>
- Contact Amnesty International Brazil for more information: jandira.queiroz@anistia.org.br
- To see the QuilomBOX interactive map: <https://anistia.org.br/campanhas/quilom-box/>

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