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## Baoba – Fund for Racial Equity

Brazil is in many headlines all over the world today, due to the coronavirus outbreak and the constant political crises. But some key information never reaches the headlines.

Brazil is one of the most inequitable countries in the world, when we look at it through the racial lens. Afro Brazilians are 55,8% of the population and still being considered a 'minority'. Like second-class citizens, we carried the burden of centuries of structural racism that resulted in huge social gaps:

- Limited emphasis on improving education and employment outcomes of low-income women and youth;
- Lack of quality access of healthcare system;
- Lack of black leadership in the private and public sectors to understand the issues in labor skilling and mobility;
- Lack of gender and race perspective on informal workers formalization strategies, harming a prioritizing logic;
- Lack of social security solutions for low-income retirement age workers;
- Limited initiatives to improve labor skilling and market access for low-income populations in rural areas;
- Focus on improving labor incomes and conditions in the informal sector for those who will have no choice but to work informal jobs;
- Fair policies and incentives for informal businesses to become formal, and the social sector (e.g. tax incentives);
- Lack of public solutions to bankarize and connect population, increasing the reach of emergency public policies;
- Lack of access to internet and digital solutions in very low income communities;
- Lack of trainings for entrepreneurs to help black entrepreneurs start and grow businesses ;
- Lack of effective initiatives to improve employment facilitation of prisoners, addicted, and homeless people.

This of course, includes a lack of investment in social movements, especially those investments to promote rights and racial justice through social justice funds / initiatives and a lack of financial resources to build sustainable solutions like an endowment.

This is the scenario where Baoba Fund was created in 2011 , to promote a philanthropic and social justice agenda in Brazil ,mobilizing people and resources to be our allies in the racial equity agenda.

Our Mission is to promote racial equity to black population in Brazil.

Our Vision is to be a reference, among social justice funds, of facing the racism in Brazil.

Our history started as an initiative from Kellogg Foundation within their strategy to leave Brazil. They were compromised to donate up to \$ 25 million as a match fund to build our endowment fund. Until 2019, we already integrated \$ 10,3 million and are compromised to support projects with more \$ 4,5 million in contracts for the next 5 years, needing to raise \$ 10,2 million.

Our work focuses on four programmatic areas of investment as crucial to overcome the obstacles that prevent racial equity in Brazil: life with dignity (which includes health promotion, violence prevention, marrons community rights among others), education, economic development , communication and memory. From 2014 to 2019, Baobá invested approximately 10.2 million reais, not counting resources invested in emergency actions to combat the coronavirus and impacted more than 100 thousand lives across the country.

Funds for Social Justice have strong commitment with social movements and make social investment to promote their strategies.

As an example I would like to mention our program to accelerate afrobrasilian women's leadership skills. This initiative is one of the answers to highlight that, the tragedy happened with the councilwoman Marielle Franco, will not block black population and mainly black women on their disruptive movements. The event showed the urgency to mobilize players of national and international philanthropy to embody racial inequities into their investments. So, aligned with our strategy, we mobilized the Open Society Foudations, Ibirabitanga Institute, Ford Foundation and Kellogg Foundation. On this occasion we mobilized US \$3 million to invest in black women leadership.

This year, as part of our strategy to respond to the Covid19 pandemic, we had a call for proposal to protect vulnerable populations. In that moment small grants were given to non-profit organizations and afro Brazilian community leaders, *compromised* with racial equity. Initiatives supported by Baoba were implemented in vulnerable territories focused on homeless people, migrant and refugees, indigenou, marrons communities, elderly people beyond afro Brazilians and others who live in favelas. Baobá donated R\$ 905 thousand in actions and initiatives that benefited, directly or indirectly, 1,200 people and 18,000 families.

But the pandemic is showing more than the socioeconomical and socioracial inequalities. It is showing that all society loses with the inequality. It loses lives, it loses talents, it loses the diversity that can drive the social and economic development process lacking in the country.

We can see a long list of inequalities and the strategy to change this scenario is being intentional and make our investments to promote an inclusive, diverse and equitable society. We need more resources, we need to support community and economic resilience. It is crucial to reduce covid19 pandemic impacts.

Maybe this tragedy can help change the perspective of donors. Because the huge challenge in Brazil is to have more organizations investing to active systemic and structural changes in our society. The invite is to see how impactful their

resources could be to change positively the scenario, like the structural racism in our society. We need to find ways to uplift the black population with opportunity to live with dignity, having access to high quality education, inclusion in the economic development and having the black history told and communicated appropriated to every citizen.

Baobá Fund was created to raise funds and invest to build capacity among black organizations and individuals, focusing on the promotion of racial equity. As other funds for Social Justice, we have strong relations and commitment with social movements and grassroots initiatives, making social investment to promote their social and programmatic strategy such as making investment in capacity building for institutional development.

We welcomed the visit of Kellogg Foundation executive delegation (March and April-2018) when we had the chance to negotiate a new agreement for leverage of donations received by institution and renew the agreement of sustainability. In the new format for each R\$ 1,00 received in national country, Kellogg Foundation will match more R\$ 3,00 and for each R\$ 1,00 in international donations, the match will be other R\$ 2,00. This new format will allow more bold actions in the next years. As we had more income received, we could make strong investments in some actions for strengthen our institutional and programmatic areas.

But we need more support.

Black lives matter for everybody and if social justice and equity are in the heart of the philanthropic, we need more allies working with funders and social movement to build another world and to build justice in societies which preserve lives and dignity, which preserve and highlight black lives matter.

What about start now? Let's make investment to promote racial equity. Let's join us in order to promote a better world.

Selma Moreira

Executive Director

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