

# **Maré United Phase 2: An External Evaluation**

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**Note**

Where appropriate names and identities have been anonymised to protect the identities of those involved in this study.

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## Executive Summary & Recommendations

### *- Relevance*

The goals of Phase 2 of Maré United fully aligned with the needs of young people in Complexo da Maré and the project was suitably designed to address them. The project's underlying intervention logic remained coherent and realistic and Fight for Peace project-staff were proactive in identifying areas for future improvement. All stake-holders interviewed considered the project to be highly relevant to the needs of its target groups and beneficiaries. Fight for Peace is successfully addressing gender-equality participation concerns in its own programmes and it is recommended that it continues to provide further guidance to partner gyms on this issue.

### *- Effectiveness*

All of the evidence provided during this evaluation showed that the project has been effectively implemented, despite external constraints, and that Fight for Peace methodology was most effective for achieving this result. Fight for Peace consolidated and reinforced delivery of its Five Pillars at the main academy and through partner gyms, establishing important local partnerships across the community that have laid the foundations for a long-term, sustainable and effective programme. Partner gyms found the training and support provided by FFP to be relevant to their needs and those of their communities, and to have been effective in providing them with valuable new skills.

Fight for Peace has shown itself to be highly flexible in identifying and adapting to changing circumstances, continually listening to its own staff, partners and participants, as well as the wider community, as it reflected on how best to deliver the project. All partners believed in the project and wished to see it continue. To ensure this progress is built-upon, Fight for Peace is strongly encouraged to develop a successor 'Maré United 3.0' project, to extend and deepen training in line with needs identified by partners. Specifically, Fight for Peace should consider extending the training period and incorporating more dedicated resource management and project-writing modules. It is recommended that Fight for Peace continue to explore possible solutions to space constraints with partner gyms, since this does impede delivery of programmes at existing capacity and obstructs expansion.

### *- Efficiency*

Phase 2 of Maré United was efficient in terms of both financial and human resource allocation and no evidence was found which indicated that the project could have been delivered at a lower cost, or that any resources were wasted or used inappropriately.

### *- Impact*

Fight for Peace continued to play a key role in enabling young people to cross 'invisible boundaries.' All interviews and evidence collected by this evaluation showed that Phase 2 of Maré United has contributed to increasing social cohesion by

**overcoming divisions between young people typically divided by territorial differences within the community. During its second phase, Maré United continued to have a significant positive impact on young people's behaviour, self-esteem and way of thinking.**

*- Sustainability*

**The results of Maré United's Phase 2 are sustainable but require continued support and investment to consolidate progress and achieve lasting results. Partner gyms may become entirely self-sustaining, but they are currently at the earliest stages of their development and will need guidance towards this goal. Any future support should seek to ensure sustainability by addressing key issues for partner gyms raised in 'Effectiveness.' It is also recommended that Fight for Peace continue to assist partner gyms with the development of youth leadership as a means to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, and to consider other ways of transferring knowledge and skills beyond individual managers. It is recommended that Maré United expand services to other underserved parts of Maré where appropriate and resources allow. To this end Fight for Peace should continue to seek the support of international and national donors.**

## Introduction

Since 2000, Luta pela Paz (hereafter Fight for Peace) has used boxing and martial arts, combined with education and personal development, to realise the potential of young people living in communities affected by crime and violence. Founded in Complexo da Máre, the Fight for Peace (FFP) approach has developed into a comprehensive primary, secondary and tertiary violence prevention service offering young people access to a comprehensive and integrated programme of support. This programme has been codified by the organisation as constituting its 'Five Pillars' Methodology. The pillars are:

- boxing and martial arts;
- education;
- employability;
- support services<sup>1</sup>;
- youth leadership.

Complexo da Maré is an area home to 150,000 people in Rio de Janeiro's north zone. Composed of 17 distinct *favelas*, Maré has been marginalised politically, socially and economically throughout its history, leaving its residents with limited access to essential public services, including education, sanitation, health and leisure facilities. The area is expansive and its various *favelas* are controlled by rival drug trafficking factions, who effectively exercise rule and influence in the absence of the state. 'Fault-lines' exist between rival territories, where violent confrontations between enemy factions or with police are frequent and deadly. For local residents, these lines of division represent 'invisible boundaries.' Demarcating the territory of different factions, they are not only dangerous for residents to cross but have polarised identities: mutual enmity and distrust has grown between areas separated within the complex, perpetuated by the ideology of the drug trade. This has divided families and limited young people's opportunities for a better future.

The *Maré United* project began in 2011 to expand Fight for Peace's activities in Rio de Janeiro so as to reach more of the population of Complexo da Maré. Two new satellite academies were opened in the Maré favelas of Marcílio Dias and Baixa do Sapateiro – each controlled by different trafficking factions – in order to replicate and support the work of the main academy in Nova Holanda. Using FFP's Five Pillars Methodology, it sought not only to break down economic and educational barriers facing young residents, but to tackle the 'invisible barriers' between areas divided by rival drug factions, opening up the possibility of greater integration, social cohesion and movement of young people across the whole community.

Funded by Comic Relief, Phase 1 of Maré United ran from 2011-2014. A thorough independent external evaluation was conducted in 2014 and reported positive findings across five areas of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Noting that sustainability was a particular challenge given the high demand for FFP's

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<sup>1</sup> A multidisciplinary social-support team provides a wide range of services to young people and their families, including individual mentoring, social, medical and legal referrals, home visits and community outreach.

programmes and the finite nature of resources, it concluded that ‘the Maré United project has had a significant positive impact on young people’s behaviour, self-esteem and way of thinking.’<sup>2</sup> Subsequently FFP received further grant funding from Comic Relief to implement a second phase.

Phase 2 of Maré United was specifically designed to enhance the sustainability of the project by more firmly anchoring it in local communities and existing capacity. Running from 2015-2018, it focussed on forming partnerships with existing boxing and martial arts gyms across Maré. By training these partners in FFP methodology and supporting them to deliver high quality services based on the FFP approach, the aim was to further tackle invisible boundaries whilst increasing the long-term sustainability of the project, ensuring more young people could access services based on the FFP approach.

This report summarises the findings of an independent external evaluation of Phase 2 of Maré United, conducted in April-May 2018.

## Evaluation Aims & Key Questions

The purpose of this evaluation of Maré United is to assess if the outcomes described in the Phase 2 project design were achieved, and the extent to which the anticipated benefits to the young people, their families and their communities were realised. The project proposal specified four key intended outcomes:

**Outcome 1** - Young People have access to quality formal education and employment opportunities.

**Outcome 2** - Prevention of violent behaviour and improved quality of life of Young People through sports and personal development classes.

**Outcome 3** - Increased social cohesion by overcoming divisions between Young People typically divided by territorial differences within the community.

**Outcome 4** - Increased sustainability of Fight for Peace.<sup>3</sup>

The evaluation explores the effectiveness of the Phase 2 approach of partnering with existing community gyms to achieve the above. It compares this with the Phase 1 approach of operating satellite academies, providing a basis for recommendations for future programme design and development. Accordingly, it addresses the following key learning questions set-out in the Evaluation Terms of Reference:

1. To what extent does FFP’s Five Pillars Methodology remain relevant and efficient in responding to local needs within the Complexo da Maré?
2. To what extent does the strategy of training other local actors (i.e. partner gyms) prove to be an efficient (from a cost-effectiveness perspective) and sustainable way of multiplying FFP’s impacts across Complexo da Maré?
3. How can FFP better integrate learning and expertise arising from Maré United with local, national and international training programmes (GAP)?

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<sup>2</sup> Foley, Connor, *Maré United – an External Evaluation*, April 2014, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> This evaluation focusses on the sustainability of Maré United in particular, rather than on FFP as a whole.

To provide continuity with the 2014 external evaluation and compliance with the highest international standards of evaluation, this report addresses the above across the five standard DAC criteria as follows:

- *Relevance*: was the project suitably designed to address the problems identified? Was it relevant to the needs of its target group and beneficiaries?
- *Effectiveness*: how far did FFP deliver on the project's intended outputs and results? Could it achieve similar or better results with a different methodology? How could things be done better in the future?
- *Efficiency*: how did FFP perform on the allocation of human and financial resources in implementing the project? Did it achieve value for money? Could this be improved in any way?
- *Impact*: what contribution did the project make to the change FFP and Comic relief wants to see? What were the final results of the activities and how did they fit into FFP's overall strategy for the period?
- *Sustainability*: are the project's results sustainable? Is the support and involvement of FFP and Comic Relief still required in order to achieve lasting results and, if so, how and where?

## Methodology

This evaluation draws on two sets of data: that provided by FFP's own monitoring and evaluation activities and other evaluations and project reports, and that produced by interviews and focus group discussions conducted for this report. Both sets of data offer valuable insights yet naturally hold certain limits. These have been discussed in substantial depth in previous evaluations and do not require further examination at length, but are briefly discussed below.

### Existing Data

The findings build in part on the existing quantitative and qualitative datasets available from FFP's monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) team, as well as the project's Start-Up form, Annual Reports submitted to Comic Relief and various other evaluations. The latter includes three previous external evaluations conducted for FFP: in 2006 by the Latin American Centre for the Study of Violence and Health (CLAVES)<sup>4</sup>, in 2013 by FFP and the Centre for Social Justice and Change at the University of East London<sup>5</sup>, and in 2014 by independent consultant Conor Foley<sup>6</sup>. Each report provides a comprehensive examination of the broader context of FFP's work and challenges faced in Maré. This evaluation does not intend to duplicate this work but draws upon

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<sup>4</sup> Edinilsa Ramos de Souza and Patrícia, Constantino *Avaliação do projeto Luta pela Paz Maré – Rio de Janeiro*, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública, Centro Latino Americano de Estudos de Violência e Saúde Jorge Careli, November, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Sampson, Alice and Maria Rita Vilella, *Fight for Peace Academies in Rio and London - assessing their progress and impact*, Centre for Social Justice and Change, School of Law and Social Sciences, University of East London, July 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*.



it, particularly the most recent report of 2014, in order to pursue a more specific focus on Phase 2 of the project.

The datasets provided by FFP's MEL team in support of the evaluation include the following:

- Project registration and attendance records
- Datasets from questionnaires completed by young people on the project
- Datasets from interviews and focus groups carried out during the project
- Project documents including previous evaluation outputs, project plans and financial reports.

The data provided by FFP's various MEL activities provides a valuable resource to exploring overall questions of project effectiveness, relevance and so on, and it was apparent during this evaluation – as noted by previous external evaluations – that FFP upholds rigorous standards of self-evaluation and self-reflection in all aspects of its work. However, the task of measuring the ambitious target outcomes, such as prevention of violent behaviour, is complex and cannot be captured by these data and indicators alone. The 2013 evaluation highlights this issue and Foley's 2014 report goes into some depth exploring the challenges around establishing causal relationships where correlations arise, and where an 'infinite number of variables' shape outcomes in ways that are often discrete or equally difficult to measure.<sup>7</sup> He concludes that the data collected by FFP's MEL team is useful for internal purposes but 'does not provide an effective benchmark for a strategic external evaluation of the project's impact.'<sup>8</sup> Certainly, self-evaluation assessment questionnaires are vulnerable to a number of potential biases and may skew findings accordingly: for example, participants may provide answers they believe will please FFP, a valuable service provider. The questions themselves may not function as effective indicators: for example, self-reported feelings of safeness in the community may reflect other changes in circumstances that do not result from FFP's project, such as fluctuations in the political, economic, and criminal configuration at micro or macro levels.

These concerns return us to the problem of establishing causality, but they are ones of which FFP is well aware, and indeed are faced by all such ambitious programmes globally. It is precisely because this data cannot, as Foley notes, act as 'conclusive proof' that an independent external evaluation is sought to provide another perspective for gauging progress and impact of the project.

## New Empirical Data

This evaluation draws on primary data collected over two months through in-depth qualitative interviews. This approach was taken in recognition of some of the above limitations of survey-responses and quantitative data. It allows for a closer examination of participant and other perspectives that may not be apparent in this data, whilst allowing participants and others to shape the research engagement and raise questions of their own. As noted by the 2013 evaluation, other useful evaluation methods to assess certain aspects of impact – such as randomised control trials – are

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<sup>7</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

fraught with ethical and practical challenges in the context of Maré.<sup>9</sup> The 2013 evaluation thus chose to focus on evaluating the theoretical basis and likely impact of the FFP Five Pillars model in reducing violence. The 2014 evaluation also noted that ‘if a project is both relevant and effective then it is reasonable to *assume* that it has had a positive impact even if this cannot be measured with much precision.’<sup>10</sup> This evaluation uses interviews and focus groups to determine relevance and effectiveness of Phase 2 of Maré United, and accordingly, to improve understanding of the project’s impact.

Whilst violence prevention remains one of the most challenging outcomes to assess, other outcomes are more readily measured by existing MEL data and in-depth interviews. For instance, the breaking-down of invisible barriers can be examined through participant and community discussions about ease of travel between areas controlled by rival factions, and the effectiveness of FFP strategies in this regard may be observable in other ways. For example, FFP notes in its End of Grant Report to Comic Relief:

Through numerous participant and family testimonies and feedback, we have concluded that through Maré United, FFP is having a positive impact in terms of perceptions of safety. The t-shirt in particular has come to symbolise a form of “protection” for some young people, who say they are able to move across the community freely when wearing FFP branded clothing.<sup>11</sup>

The primary data collection for this evaluation was designed to maximise the inclusion of perspectives of young people. This includes those directly involved in the project, whether at partner gyms or FFP’s main Nova Holanda academy, and those living in the various communities in which the project operates across Complexo da Maré. In addition, the research sought the views of partner gym managers, trainers, other volunteers and participants; the views of young people and relatives in the community; and the views of FFP staff involved in design, implementation and evaluation of the project at every stage.

The above was achieved by a combination of one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. All interviews were semi-structured or unstructured in form, allowing as much flexibility as possible for interaction with interviewees and the opportunity for them to contribute input on the approach of the evaluation. All participants were asked a series of questions about their perspectives on the challenges facing Complexo da Maré, about their personal experiences in this regard, and about their experiences and views of Maré United Phase 2. LPP staff were present to provide translation and logistical assistance.

The evaluation was conducted between April and May 2018 with regular visits to Complexo da Maré. Although violence continued to define the context in which research was conducted (see ‘Research Context’ below for further discussion) and

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<sup>9</sup> Sampson & Vilella (2013), *Fight for Peace Academies*, p.5.

<sup>10</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Fight for Peace, *End of Grant Report*, April 2018, p.5

thus constrained certain logistical aspects – for example ease of travel of interviewees and interviewer between communities controlled by rival factions – there were no major sustained confrontations that prevented the collection of data during this time.

In an ideal situation, interviews would have been conducted in a neutral setting rather than at FFP offices, with translation undertaken by non-FFP affiliated staff, in order to provide greater distance between the evaluation and FFP in the eyes of participants. However, given the prevailing security situation and the primary importance of protecting the confidentiality and safety of interviewees, discussions and interviews necessarily took place primarily within FFP offices in Nova Holanda, with the exception of one Skype interview with a member of the FFP team. The independence and role of the external evaluation was carefully explained to all participants and in practice, all interviewees – though overwhelmingly positive – offered unprompted and lengthy constructive critical perspectives that suggested they were not inhibited by this proximity to FFP.

Between 24 April - 17 May 2018, a total of 43 stakeholders were interviewed and six focus group discussions were held, including discussion with 15 parents and guardians of FFP participants; 6 partner gym participants; all 3 partner gym managers; 4 Special Project participants; 3 FFP Maré United trainers and coordinators; 8 FFP youth participants (evenly split between female and male); and 4 key community leaders (including school principals and members of NGOs).

Interviews were audio recorded where appropriate and confidentiality protected by anonymisation at source where necessary. One-on-one interviews and focus group discussions typically lasted an average of two hours each to allow for in-depth exploration of the evaluation questions. Participants were also given space to ask their own questions of the interviewer, and to suggest further questions and avenues of enquiry that might be useful for future investigation.

## Research Context

Previous evaluations provide in-depth discussion of the history of violence in Complexo da Maré and note how evaluation periods were impeded by deteriorating security. This report does not seek to further examine the wider Brazilian social, political, economic and security context in substantial depth. However, it is important to briefly outline the (in)security landscape in Maré from 2015-2018 to account for the ways in which this shaped the research and its findings, both logistically and substantively.

The 2014 evaluation observed widespread hopes at the time that the *Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora* (UPP) programme – a strategy based on the permanent deployment of specially trained police pacification units to communities – might prove effective in tackling violence.<sup>12</sup> However, it also highlighted several serious concerns

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<sup>12</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 13.

with the programme that suggested it was failing, or worse, increasing abuses against residents in many communities. Following the evaluation, an extended military operation featuring 2,700 troops, aimed at improving security during the World Cup and Olympic Games, was deployed. It lasted until mid-2015 and subsequent police operations were not able to fully extend the UPP into Maré, in part due to the large size of the area. By early 2018, the UPP had effectively ended in most areas it had been active.

In the run-up to this evaluation, Maré had just emerged from a prolonged period of police operations that had defined 2017 as one of the most violent on record. Following the Olympics of 2016, violence in Maré increased. In 2017 a conflict erupted between factions controlling Nova Holanda – where the main FFP academy is located – and Baixa do Sapateiro, where a FFP satellite academy had been located. According to local NGO Redes da Maré, 2017 became one of the most violent years in the community of recent times. There were 41 police operations and 108 shootouts, resulting in 42 deaths, 57 injuries, 45 days of health clinic closures, and 35 days of school closures (17% of the school year).<sup>13</sup>

In February 2018, citing a rise in street crime and drug-related gang violence, Brazilian president Michel Temer issued a decree that placed the military in charge of security in Rio de Janeiro, the first time it had been in charge of the police force since 1988. International reporting of the move highlighted that the previous 15-month military occupation of Maré, which ended in June 2015, had failed to improve security<sup>14</sup>, and corroborated interview findings for this evaluation that residents believed it had actually made things worse.<sup>15</sup> On 14 March, Marielle Franco, a city councillor and outspoken critic of police brutality in Rio's favelas was assassinated. Franco was raised in Maré and was a well-known and popular figure of resistance for many local residents and NGOs. Research preparation for this evaluation began in mid-April, and these recent developments were at the forefront of discussions.

Conducting research in insecure or unstable environments raises a number of challenges to research. First and foremost, there is a need to carefully consider ethical dimensions to research questions, protect sources and follow a 'do no harm' approach in a community in which armed traffickers may be a real or perceived threat to research participants. In this regard the research was carefully designed in close collaboration with FFP staff and the participants themselves. FFP social workers and experienced staff provided guidance and oversight to ensure that research participants were fit and able to participate in the discussions, that doing so would not disadvantage or put them at risk in any way, and that conversation topics were appropriate and sensitively addressed. This is a form of work in which FFP excels, not only having worked in the community for almost two decades, but being staffed by many residents of the community. The evaluator's own experience in researching

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<sup>13</sup> Fight for Peace, *End of Grant Report*, April 2018, p.4

<sup>14</sup> See for example *The Guardian*, 'Brazilian army to take control of security in Rio as violence rises,' 16 February 2018.

<sup>15</sup> Interviews, 08-10 May 2018.

violence in conflict, post-conflict and so-called 'situations other than war' was combined with FFP to expertise to ensure ethical and responsible conduct (and use) of research.

A second issue relates to the practical challenges of conducting research. The 2014 evaluation notes that its interviews and focus groups took place during occasions of heightened violence or in close proximity to armed troops. In the period of research for this evaluation, in April-May 2018, these challenges were not present. However, travel between communities controlled by rival factions naturally remained difficult, not least for the interviewees. Ultimately no interviews had to be cancelled and it was still possible to conduct the research as designed, though an ideal situation would have allowed for more time in the communities of partner gyms and, for comparative value, research within communities not currently served by partner gyms or FFP.

Finally, the security environment shaped both what was practically achievable for FFP during the grant period, and shaped participant and community perceptions of safety, security and what might best work to address it. The challenges of security and how this affected the delivery of the programme are taken into account and discussed under 'Effectiveness.' Also taken into account is the extent to which the prevailing political and security environment likely shaped the views of interviewees on the impact and effectiveness of FFP methods in preventing violent behaviour or increasing social cohesion. Perspectives are always shaped by this context and as such are valuable indicators of the perceived continued relevance of the project across fluctuating conditions.

## Background

### Maré's Invisible Boundaries

Complexo da Maré comprises seventeen favelas in Rio de Janeiro's north zone. Home to over 150,000 people, these communities are divided by 'invisible' boundaries that demarcate territory controlled by rival factions. Maré has been historically marginalised by government, leaving thousands with limited access to basic public services, and to some extent, with limited participation in wider Brazilian society. This sense of being on the fringes of the state extends to the provision of basic security. Wracked by frequent violent clashes, day-to-day control of Maré is imposed by rival drug trafficking factions in different areas, each imposing their own rules and conditions of access and exit. As FFP's Terms of Reference for this evaluation explain:

This has prevented the inhabitants from crossing the "invisible boundaries" in the community that demarcate the territory of the different factions, and has created an artificial identity of rivalry between areas within the complex ... . This has had the effect of separating families, and limiting the opportunities of young people for better future prospects.

FFP's main academy is located in Nova Holanda, controlled by *Comando Vermelho* (Red Command), Rio's oldest drug trafficking gang.<sup>16</sup> To its north are the wealthier Rubens Vaz and Parque Uniao communities, followed by Praia de Ramos, controlled by militias, and then Conjunto Marcílio Dias, a remote and isolated community connected to the rest of Maré by a single road. To the immediate south are Nova Maré, Baixa do Sapateiro, Morro do Timbau, and Conjunto Bento Ribeiro Dantas, which have historically been controlled by *Terceira Comanda* (Third Command). The infamous dividing line between these territories is colloquially known as 'the Gaza Strip.' One of the more visible 'invisible boundaries,' the street of Rua Evanildo Alves is profound testament to the appropriateness of comparisons between favela violence and civil war – buildings marked by countless bullet-holes tell of deadly clashes between rival factions. Further south, and physically separated by *Linha Amaréla*, are Conjunto Pinheiros, Vila dos Pinheiro, Conjunto Novo Pinheiro (Salsa e Merengue), Vila do Joa and Conjunto Esperanca. These were previously controlled by Rio's third drug trafficking gang, *Amigos dos Amigos* (Friends of Friends). However, in 1998 *Terceira Comanda* mounted an invasion which drove them out and brought the entire south of Maré under their control.

The division of Maré's various communities under the control of rival factions has exacerbated challenges of poverty and inequality in various ways. One consequence has been the isolation of neighbouring communities from one another, and in some instances, the effective segregation of communities from the wider state and access to basic welfare services. For instance, in Conjunto Marcílio Dias, a community already on the geographical fringes of Maré and reachable by a single road, local residents have frequently been denied access to the city due to disputes over control of the territory, severely constraining employment prospects and general mobility of inhabitants. As Foley notes in his 2014 evaluation, militia in nearby Praia de Ramos

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<sup>16</sup> The following description of Maré's geography draws on the 2014 evaluation (pp. 10-11).

have in the past launched regular invasions of the area: *Comando Vermelho* gunmen responded by guarding and controlling access to the community on its only road.<sup>17</sup> On another occasion, militia prevented a bus service from accessing the favela. Relied upon by residents for travel to the city, the blocking of this service made it virtually impossible for them to travel to the city.

During research for this evaluation, the invisible barriers and sheer difficulty of traveling between communities was evident not only in direct discussion of the issue, but in making the logistical arrangements for interviews. One interviewee, a participant of Maré United Phase 2, had herself to navigate regular dangerous crossings from her community to those controlled by rival factions, yet she noted the economic impact was arguably even worse for young males, whose daily commute underlines the further divisive and damaging routines of daily survival forced by invisible boundaries:

Crossing into different communities is much harder for men and boys. They have to walk much further than me to go to work, to avoid the traffickers. When I am already home, my male neighbours are still on their way coming back. The men have to take a different route home – it's very far, many hours difference.<sup>18</sup>

The impact of invisible borders on livelihoods and mobility is compounded by the real and frequently fatal dangers presented by clashes between rival factions, or in many cases, by the attempt of factions to control the movement of the local population and (from their perspective) deter defections or spying. Residents across Maré are at risk of being caught in cross-fire and at risk of being targeted for violence or harassment whenever they attempt to cross into rival territory. As Foley's 2014 report observes, in the south in Bento Ribeiro Dantas the area dividing two factions is referred to locally as 'cross-fire'.<sup>19</sup> Another infamous dividing line between territories is colloquially known as 'the Gaza Strip.' One of the more visible of the 'invisible boundaries,' here the street of Rua Evanildo Alves is a profound testament to the appropriateness of comparisons between favela violence and civil war – buildings marked by countless bullet-holes tell of deadly clashes between rival factions, whilst local residents tell of the many young who have lost their lives.

During focus group discussions and interviews in 2018, participants continued to underline the physical dangers of traversing different communities in Maré. A dedicated FFP participant explained:

I live in Pinheiro, a community nearby here that is controlled by a different group of traffickers. I have to walk past the traffickers every day, usually at night, and it's very dangerous. ... When I was with my friend coming here today they [the traffickers] harassed us. It's very difficult to walk from Pinheiro to Nova Holanda.

... There are always rival factions dividing these two communities. Recently there were many people released from prison – these guys were very high up in the factions, so things are a little bit more violent right now. The traffickers are telling us community members not to cross the lines, not to go into rival

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<sup>17</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>18</sup> Interview, 25 April 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 10.

territory.<sup>20</sup>

Added to the ever-present threat of physical violence, crossing invisible boundaries in 2018 also held potentially serious social consequences for local residents: for instance it might raise suspicion among armed traffickers that they are spying for an enemy, and regular visits to a rival territory might be interpreted as disloyalty or collaboration. For those who have family-members involved with trafficking groups, fear of these physical and social navigations are heightened:

I have a relative who is involved with another faction and I worry they will think that I am spying for him. Everybody who comes to Nova Holanda from Pinheiro has this problem, and recently a lot of people from Nova Holanda have moved to Pinheiro, so it's a growing problem. ... It's very common for people to switch factions. The most common is for people of the faction in Pinheiro to switch and join the one in Nova Holanda. So that's why in Pinheiro they have told people we can't come to Nova Holanda. They don't want us to mix.<sup>21</sup>

I'm afraid of being beaten – I know of times when that has happened to people – and I have some family members who were in the trafficking group controlling my community who changed and joined their enemy. I'm afraid they will target me for this even though I'm not a part of any of it. I know they are very violent and beat people.<sup>22</sup>

The above divides in their various forms have resulted in invisible boundaries that have fragmented the social and psychological landscape of Maré. Yet despite these challenges, a marked characteristic of participants of FFP programmes and many of their family members, was their determination to overcome, rather than accept, the invisible boundaries. This was as much a consequence of practical need as it was a sign of conscious resilience or resistance:

Coming here every day, where I study and work [at FFP], is a problem. I have to work, I have to study. Despite my family and friends saying it's too dangerous to cross the boundary and that I shouldn't do it, I think it's worth the risk. I want to conclude my studies and to work.

The gangs have to understand that I have nothing to do with trafficking. It's their problem – the two groups have to solve it, it has nothing to do with me. They need to know that the community members shouldn't suffer because of their fight.<sup>23</sup>

## Maré United: Breaking Down Boundaries

It was in recognition of the invisible boundaries discussed above, and the determination of local residents to overcome them in order to improve their lives, that Fight for Peace first established the Maré United Project in 2011. The aim was to help break down these invisible barriers by expanding access to FFP's integrated

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<sup>20</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018

<sup>23</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.



programme of support under its 'Five Pillars': boxing and martial arts; education; employability; youth support services; and youth leadership. At first, it was intended that FFP would achieve this by building-up existing capacity in other communities within Complexo da Maré controlled by different factions. This required locating already established organisations led by suitable individuals and providing them with support and training in FFP's Five Pillars Methodology. However, FFP was unable to identify appropriate organisations sufficiently aligned with and supportive of its methods and Theory of Change framework.

The solution reached by FFP was to establish three satellite academies in several communities controlled by different factions. Initially two satellite gyms were opened in Bento Ribeiro Dantas and Marcílio Dias. Although these progressed well, the establishment of a third satellite academy planned for Vila do Pinheiro was complicated by a non-permissive security situation and the difficulty of sourcing adequate premises. These were two challenges that would continue to face the project in its second phase. In one potential site a local armed group sought to impose conditions on FFP for operating in its territory, which the 2014 evaluation notes essentially equated to a demand for 'protection money'.<sup>24</sup> This came at a time of intense clashes between rival groups and with unanticipated resistance to the expansion of FFP activities from factions.<sup>25</sup> The added difficulty of locating suitable facilities within Complexo da Maré ultimately prevented the opening of a third satellite. Of the two in operation, the Bento Ribeiro Dantas academy was relocated to Baixa do Sapateiro in 2013, also in part related to security reasons and concern to avoid any compromises with trafficking or affiliated groups in the area.<sup>26</sup>

Despite these changes, the two satellite FFP academies successfully operated in territory controlled by different factions and replicated the activities offered at the main academy to promote personal development of young people through the Five Pillars. The project used the main FFP academy in Nova Holanda as a hub to stimulate integration of young people enrolled in the satellites, running joint activities such as training sessions, citizenship classes, field trips, and boxing and martial arts competitions. Concluding in 2014, FFP's internal evaluations pointed to the positive impact Maré United had on young people in promoting personal and social changes (90% of young people reported perceiving themselves more committed/positive regarding their own future) and on their mobility between communities (59% of young people reported feeling safe enough to spontaneously visit other communities where FFP was present).<sup>27</sup> The independent external evaluation of Phase 1 of Maré United also offered positive findings across all five areas of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It concluded that the Project had 'met needs of the communities which it serves' and had a 'significant positive impact on young

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<sup>24</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 23.

<sup>25</sup> Fight for Peace, *First Annual Report to Comic Relief*, 30 April 2012

<sup>26</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p. 24.

<sup>27</sup> FFP, *Maré United International Stage Two Proposal*, 2015.

people's behaviour, self-esteem and way of thinking.'<sup>28</sup>

## Maré United 2.0

In 2014, FFP received further grant funding from Comic Relief to implement a second phase. Phase 2 (or Maré United 2.0) sought to return focus to forming partnerships with existing organisations in other communities across Maré. By training these partners in FFP methodology and supporting them to deliver high quality services based on the FFP approach, the aim was to increase the long-term sustainability of the project and to ensure more young people could access services throughout Maré.

Three partner gyms were carefully selected to participate in a year-long programme designed to develop their organisational capacity through training in key-areas, including: project writing skills, project management, communication, monitoring and evaluation, fundraising, community engagement, and youth leadership. The gyms selected were *O Recomeçar* in Nova Holanda; *Todos por Um* in Vila dos Pinheiro; and *Relma Combat* in Marcílio Dias. Initially it was planned that these partnerships would run alongside the two satellite academies. However, in 2016 core funding from Petrobras and the Swedish Postcode Lottery came to an end and FFP determined that it was no longer financially viable to rent and maintain the satellite spaces in Marcílio Dias and Baixa do Sapateiro. Activities at these two satellite academies ceased at the end of 2016 and their existing participants were given access to services at the main Nova Holanda academy. As FFP's Year 2 Annual Report to Comic Relief summarised:

This was a decision which was very difficult for FFP, as it was clear that the Satellites were very important spaces for the young people in these areas, which have fewer leisure and cultural options than Nova Holanda, where the Main Academy is located. However, FFP has spent the last four months planning ways in which the fundamental goals and outcomes of Maré United can be met in a more financially viable, long-lasting way.<sup>29</sup>

The solution was to adapt the programme and refocus it towards building the capacity of local organisations already using boxing and martial arts in the community – the long-term fundamental aim of Maré United. Drawing on FFP's training expertise to provide support for organisational development, a mobile FFP team was also established to help provide access to all of FFP's Five Pillars. Although the closure of the satellite academies was far from ideal in some respects, the resulting consolidation of focus upon existing organisations across Maré had the considerable advantage of increasing prospects for more comprehensive local buy-in and long-term sustainability, as FFP reasoned in its report:

FFP aims through this re-structuring to make outcomes of Mare United (principally increasing social cohesion) much more long-lasting, and also wider-

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<sup>28</sup> Foley (2014) *Maré United*, p.2.

<sup>29</sup> FFP, *Mare United Annual Report to Comic Relief: Year 2*, March 2017.

reaching, as there is the possibility of this network growing to encompass all 16 communities in Maré.<sup>30</sup>

For approximately 60% of the three year grant FFP directly delivered activities across Maré through its satellite academies and main academy, and for the remaining 40% it worked in partnership with existing gyms. Initially in 2016, partners were given a week-long immersive training followed by monthly meetings and workshops. In 2017, following the closure of the satellite academies, three local partners were again trained, but this time combining sessions in FFP methodology (one training week followed by monthly workshops) with fortnightly visits from FFP's staff. By the end of the project, FFP had trained its local partners in the Five Pillars Methodology and provided other training support, such as introducing MEL approaches, fundraising strategies, and rationalising internal administrative processes. A number of joint personal development sessions were also held at FFP's main academy in Nova Holanda, along with group training sessions from different sports and internal sports events bringing together participants enrolled both at FFP and partner organisations. Through the course of the grant, FFP held nine community events designed to encourage young people to visit other parts of the favela.

According to FFP's internal evaluations and End of Year reports to Comic Relief, the switch to partner-gyms from satellite academies represented a successful pilot of the Maré United 2.0 approach:

Although the existence of FFP's own satellite provided us greater visibility in the community, the pilot of this new approach (of local trained partners) was very positive – not only because we continued benefitting young people through our methodology, but also because we contributed to long-term development of the partners themselves (by introducing MEL approaches, fundraising strategies, changes in internal administrative processes, etc). This will enable us to, in the future, place FFP Academy as a 'hub' in Maré from which organisations/partners can be trained and supported, increasing our reach in the community (and, potentially, in other areas of the city as well).<sup>31</sup>

The remainder of this report will now turn to a closer analysis of these conclusions, drawing on FFP's own MEL activities and the qualitative data gathered during interviews and focus group discussions. The following sections breaks the assessment down into the standard five evaluation categories of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. The report concludes with a summary of key findings and recommendations.

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<sup>30</sup> FFP (2017) *Maré United Annual Report*, p.5.

<sup>31</sup> FFP, *End of Grant Report*, April 2018, p.5

## Relevance

*Was the project relevant to the needs of its target group and beneficiaries? Was it suitably designed to address the problems identified?*

A core aim of Maré United 2.0 was to break-down invisible boundaries between communities within Maré by drawing on the Fight for Peace Five Pillars methodology. It sought to extend access of young people to quality formal education and employment opportunities and to prevent violent behaviour and improve young people's quality of life through sports and personal development classes. Preventing violence and increasing social cohesion are particularly difficult goals to achieve or measure, but there is no doubt that the project fully aligned with the needs of young people in Maré and was suitably designed to address them.

The effects of violence upon communities within Maré, particularly upon young people, are devastating and well-documented in past evaluations. During the course of Maré United 2.0, the once lauded pacification programme was effectively ended. Levels of violence rose in 2017 and there were a high number of police operations within Maré. This activity did not lead to a reduction in the presence or activity of trafficking factions within Maré, but did increase the number of fatalities and the risks facing young people within the community. Whilst focus group discussions for the 2014 evaluation focussed on the role of traffickers or social attitudes as drivers of violence, discussions in 2018 were heavily centred on the role of police operations as core drivers of violence and insecurity in the community. In June 2018, immediately following the evaluation interviews, civil police and armed forces were implicated in the killing of seven Maré residents, including a 14-year old schoolboy, during an operation that involved gunfire from a circling police helicopter, footage of which was widely shared on social media. A subsequent UN statement on the killing observed that 31 children and young adolescents are killed every day in Brazil, representing the highest teen homicide rate in the world.<sup>32</sup>

In a context of chronic violence, poverty and lack of opportunities and support for young people, this evaluation found that the core aims of Fight for Peace as an organisation remained strongly relevant to the needs of the community in Maré, as confirmed by interviews with community members and participants. Phase 1 of Maré United also demonstrated the relevance of this specific project to addressing these needs. In seeking to prevent violence, both phases were based on Fight for Peace's Theory of Change, 'which holds that once a person changes the way they view themselves, their relationships with others, and their perspective about the future, they will make positive changes to their attitudes, behaviour, and situation.'<sup>33</sup> Phase 2 (or Maré United 2.0) likewise sought to deliver this through the Five Pillars methodology and to extend access to the model by training and supporting partners across the community.

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<sup>32</sup> United Nations in Brazil, 'É urgente preservar a vida de adolescentes no Brasil, afirma ONU', 26 June 2018: <https://nacoesunidas.org/e-urgente-preservar-a-vida-de-adolescentes-no-brasil-afirma-onu> (last accessed 31 July 2018).

<sup>33</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, p.13.

The overwhelming view from all stakeholders interviewed in 2018 was that FFP methodology remained relevant and effective in preventing violence by transforming young people's attitudes, offering opportunities that the state was not providing and helping to shape positive, peaceful norms of behaviour among young people. The transformation of behaviour was treated as particularly important by some, who believed that attitudes and norms, rather than socio-economic conditions, lay behind a perceived increase in violence over the years. A resident commented:

The community has changed a lot since the old days. Thirty years ago young people had more respect. ... Fight for Peace is the only place in the community that hasn't abandoned people. It will take anybody in and deal with their problems. There is a sense of respect between the community and the Fight for Peace social workers, and that's the most important thing about Fight for Peace.

<sup>34</sup>

This response accords with the findings of the 2014 evaluation, where the author notes:

Many people commented that levels of violence had been lower when they were younger although the community had been physically poorer. Similar views were expressed in all of the other focus groups, with many people saying that 'things were happier when we were children, even though we were poorer.' The groups unanimously and visibly asserted that the ethos and identity promoted by Luta pela Paz could play a major part in constructing a new community ethos.<sup>35</sup>

Other drivers of violence were identified by community members in focus groups (discussed further under 'Impact'), but it was commonly agreed that FFP methods were effective at transforming attitudes of youth who were especially vulnerable to recruitment to gangs, and the methods were therefore seen as relevant to reducing violence and improving lives of young people. Because of this perceived relevance and effectiveness, it was clear that FFP enjoyed strong support within the community, with its high local esteem a powerful resource of social capital that could benefit partner gyms.

A big difference these days is that people who are entering the drug trade are getting younger and younger. They have access to drugs at a much younger age than twenty, thirty years ago. It used to be more of an adult thing. One of the most important things about Fight for Peace is that it has a preventative kind of intervention, where they work with 10-11 year olds who might be getting drawn into the factions, but it can also work with people who are already involved in 'the game.'<sup>36</sup>

- *Local resident.*

I've seen a lot of problems with drugs in my family. I've had a son and a granddaughter in Fight for Peace. My son used to come many years ago. My grand-

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<sup>34</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

<sup>35</sup> Foley (2014) *Maré United*, p.21.

<sup>36</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

daughter comes here now. Fight for Peace is one of the only places in the community that I feel I can come for help.

- *Parent of FFP participants.*<sup>37</sup>

I've noticed the difference in myself since I started coming here. My mentality has changed. I want to back to school, to study again. I want to pass these same values and lessons to my kids.

- *FFP participant.*<sup>38</sup>

Fight for Peace gives opportunities. It takes young people off the streets and promotes education and studying. I only have good words to say about Fight for Peace.

- *Local resident.*<sup>39</sup>

I'm the biggest fan of Fight for Peace. My husband came here when his father was murdered. He had all the conditions that were pointing in the direction of a life of trouble. But Fight for Peace gave him structure in his life after he lost everything in a moment. With their help he managed to achieve all his dreams – he became an athlete and was able to join the army too. Now he has come back here to pass on all that knowledge.

- *Local resident.*<sup>40</sup>

Interviews and group discussions consistently corroborated a fundamental premise of Maré United: that other communities beyond Nova Holanda could greatly benefit from the extension of Fight for Peace's support and wished to do so, but were impeded by invisible boundaries. One Fight for Peace participant explained:

Pinheiro is a much bigger area but despite that there is nothing – no organisation like Fight for Peace. There is nothing like what is here in Nova Holanda. It would be great if people in Pinheiro had the opportunity to take the course Na Ativa, for example, because the majority of our youngsters are doing nothing for most of the time. They are very interested but they won't come to Nova Holanda.<sup>41</sup>

A manager of a partner gym observed the high demand across Maré: 'Fight for Peace is crowded, there is a waiting list to join, and at *O Recomeçar* we are crowded too, so it's very important to have other gyms in other parts of the community.'<sup>42</sup> The high-level of interest was a point made by all three partner gym staff and their participants, all reporting that they struggled to keep numbers at a reasonable level considering space and organisation size constraints. From their perspective, this interest stemmed from both the esteem with which the community held Fight for Peace, and more pertinently, from the relevance of the project to the needs of young people. A manager commented:

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<sup>37</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

<sup>38</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

<sup>40</sup> Interview, 08 May 2018.

<sup>41</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>42</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

It's very important to have partner gyms because of the number of people that need guidance, especially the youngsters. ... The more people that can attend, the better it is for the community.'<sup>43</sup>

In discussions with Fight for Peace staff, the need was particularly discerned in Marcílio Dias, which had formerly hosted a satellite academy. Marcílio Dias was noted to have a pronounced lack of basic infrastructure, to be more geographically and socio-economically isolated, and to lack as strong a sense of belonging to Maré as other communities.<sup>44</sup>

The project was not only relevant to the need of extending services in under-served communities, but in identifying and seeking to address the isolation and invisible boundaries that prevented – or at least discouraged – young people from visiting the main academy in Nova Holanda. A young female resident from Pinheiro observed the difficulties facing young males wishing to visit the academy:

Many, many youngsters were interested in going to take the courses at Fight for Peace, in sports and everything else. But there is an interview when you join, you have to go into Nova Holanda. Nobody went. It is much better to have something like the Fight for Peace Academy in Pinheiro, especially for the boys, because the boys can't cross the line.<sup>45</sup>

Another young male participant of a partner gym explained:

I started to train here in Fight for Peace a long time ago, but I live in Pinheiro. The violence made obstacles for training here. There is an invisible frontier, an invisible line. I almost got shot crossing into Nova Holanda. I used to face a lot of trouble and conflict when I trained in the Fight for Peace Academy.<sup>46</sup>

By expanding access to FFP methods and services, both phases of Maré United were designed to tackle the invisible boundaries dividing communities, addressing the problems facing those who wished to attend the Nova Holanda Academy but felt unable to do so. However, a key difference in design from the first phase was the move away from satellite academies. The decision to close the satellite academies during Maré United 2.0 led to a greater emphasis on the original aim of the project, which was to build-up existing capacity in other under-served areas of Maré. Although clearly and understandably a difficult decision for Fight for Peace at the time, it was an adaption of the project design that demonstrated flexibility in a fluid context, and one which ultimately strengthened the suitability of the project to addressing core aims. All participants, FFP staff, partner gym managers and members were asked to consider this change in approach and what the comparative advantages and disadvantages might be. These responses and the consequences of the change are discussed further under 'Effectiveness.'

The consistent viewpoint was that satellite academies had obvious short-term advantages: they were large spaces with greater physical and staffing-capacity, and they allowed FFP to directly manage the delivery of services in accordance with their

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<sup>43</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>44</sup> Interviews, 24, 25 April, 03 May 2018.

<sup>45</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>46</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

standards and methodology. However, partner gyms were judged to be preferable because they were seen as more viable long-term options, that more closely aligned with the original aims of the project. Partner gyms required less resources to sustain them, had an already existing presence in (and connection to) their communities, and with sufficient support could ultimately develop to sustain themselves indefinitely. Given the comparatively lower intensity of material investment required by partner gyms, it was also felt that this would allow FFP to reach more parts of Maré through such partnerships in future than would have been possible through satellite academies. In its second End of Year Report to Comic Relief FFP noted that the Maré United 2.0 approach was already 'reaching young people from other areas not engaged before.'<sup>47</sup> This evaluation finds this assessment to be correct and borne out in practice (as discussed in 'Effectiveness').

Although there were considerable advantages to operating satellite academies, building partnerships with existing smaller projects was a more suitable and sustainable approach for achieving the project's aims. The decision to close the two remaining satellite academies and focus exclusively on partner organisations was a sensible and flexible adaptation of the project design given the changing external environment and funding constraints. This change was carefully managed with extensive engagement and consultation with the local community to ensure the project remained relevant to the needs of its intended beneficiaries.

In designing its programmes, Fight for Peace was particularly keen to address gender imbalances and low female participation identified in the 2014 report. Its efforts in this regard during Phase 2 of Maré United were highly effective. In 2015, female participation ranged from between 25% and 30%; by 2017 it had risen to 45%.<sup>48</sup> According to interviews and focus group discussions, this reflected an institution-wide drive to address female participant rates and to promote more awareness of gender-related issues in general. A core group of FFP staff also formed a Gender and Sexuality Team to coordinate one-off events and workshops for young people and their families. Guidance related to gender and sexuality was incorporated into the training offered to partner gym managers, as well as sessions for partner gym participants. According to one FFP trainer, 'The partners were very open to ideas about gender and sexuality, about issues surrounding domestic violence, and really embraced discussion of it.'<sup>49</sup> However, limitations of time (discussed in 'Effectiveness') constrained the effectiveness of these sessions. The overall impact of FFP interactions with partner gyms to address gender imbalances is also difficult to judge given limited partner-specific data. However, it was clear from interviews that this area requires further attention in the long-term. In Marcílio Dias, a female participant pointed out that the gender imbalance created a negative reinforcing cycle:

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<sup>47</sup> FFP (2017) *Mare United Annual Report*, p.9.

<sup>48</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, p.2.

<sup>49</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.



There are only three women at our gym, in the adult classes. Since there are many more men than women, it is intimidating for women and girls to join the classes.

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For the *Todos por Um* gym, it was reported that there was currently one female participant (out of 45+):

I am the only girl at the gym right now. When the girls start high-school, which is also taught at night, they drop Muay Thai, so nowadays I am the only girl.<sup>51</sup>

One of the members in Pinheiro linked a possible solution back to issues over salary:

If the teacher has a salary and a proper space, we could split into three different classes during the day, so that everybody could join. It would be more reachable for the whole community. It would be helpful for those who have to work or study at night.<sup>52</sup>

Such a solution touches upon other important considerations of the effectiveness of partner gyms. These were discussed at great length in interviews and are discussed in 'Effectiveness.' Nevertheless, it is clear that making programmes relevant and accessible to female participants is an issue to be addressed for partner gyms going forward and this is an area where Fight for Peace can provide further useful guidance, drawing on its own experiences for any future Mare United 3.0 project.

Overall, this evaluation finds that the project's underlying intervention logic was coherent and realistic and Fight for Peace project-staff were proactive in identifying areas for future improvement. All stake-holders interviewed considered the project to be highly relevant to the needs of its target groups and beneficiaries.

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<sup>50</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>51</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>52</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

## Effectiveness

*How far did FFP deliver on the project's intended outputs and results? Could it achieve similar or better results with a different methodology? How could things be done better in the future?*

Fight for Peace proposed to consolidate delivery of the Five Pillars at its main academy and two satellite Academies. Activities would be designed to give young people access to quality primary and secondary formal education and to lead to personal changes that would help prevent violent behaviour and improve the quality of life of young people. The project would expand existing services under Maré United Phase 1 by establishing three new partner gyms, and further seek to increase social cohesion and break-down invisible boundaries through intercommunity events.

By the end of the project, and according to its own clearly defined quantitative and qualitative indicators, Fight for Peace had consolidated and reinforced delivery of its Five Pillars at the main academy and through partner gyms. Partner gyms had been trained in the FFP methodology and a range of inter-community events were held bringing together participants and staff from satellites, partners and the main academy. Nine community sports events were held. A total of 1158 young people attended sports activities at FFP satellite academies; 5417 young people attended personal development classes at the satellites and main academy; and 1693 attended integrated activities between the FFP main academy, the satellites and the partner gyms. Fight for Peace met most of its targets, though experienced some challenges related to the Education and Employability pillars. These are discussed briefly, with the remainder of this section dedicated to a more extensive examination of the effectiveness of working with partner gyms, which rests at the centre of Phase 2 objectives.

In consolidating and expanding the delivery of access for young people to quality formal education and employment opportunities, Fight for Peace proved effective. However, it was forced to restructure its education pillar early-on in the grant due to changes in Brazilian legislation concerning official certification of graduates. This led to a delay which contributed to a shortfall in meeting Start-Up targets for student enrolment. As with the switch from satellite academies, FFP considered a range of alternatives and after extensive internal discussions and legal consultation opted to establish a partnership with an existing school. This allowed the Academy to send its students to complete final exams at the partner school, ensuring all young people could be certified on completion of education courses.

Employability was a major challenge during the grant period due to a further decline in Brazil's economy. In 2015 and 2016, Brazil's GDP fell by 3.8% and 3.6% respectively, which FFP noted made it the worst recession on record.<sup>53</sup> The End of Grant report notes that:

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<sup>53</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, p.4.

In 2017, over 72,000 job positions were eliminated in Rio, almost three times more than the next city on the list, São Paulo. This has a natural impact on the chances of young people gaining employment. We were fairly satisfied with the 35% we achieved, and believe this is due to the hiring of a Project Analyst for job referrals, however, we hope that the coming year offers more, and improved opportunities for our young people as the Brazilian economy starts to recover.

Given these external economic factors, Fight for Peace proved to be successful in adapting its approach to manage the employability challenges. In addition to the hiring of a Project Analyst who dramatically increased the number of job referrals for FFP participants, FFP launched 'Na Ativa' in 2016. This is a popular programme that provides employment training at three different levels (Basic, Specific and Technical), allowing students to learn at an appropriate pace and depth. This programme was frequently mentioned in interviews with FFP young participants as an opportunity from which youth in other communities across Maré could greatly benefit. Associated community job fairs also attracted high numbers

### Partner Gyms: Challenges and Successes

In Year 2 of the project Fight for Peace made the difficult decision to close its two satellite academies due to the end of key funding streams, which made long-term rental and other costs unsustainable. This led to a greater focus upon supporting and training the three partner gyms in 2017-2018, under a revised approach dubbed 'Maré United 2.0.' Although this meant the intention to consolidate delivery of the Five Pillars at the satellite academies could not be fulfilled, careful and flexible planning by FFP allowed it to arrive at an effective and more sustainable alternative approach by delivery through partners. Nevertheless, in many respects this was also a far more challenging approach since working with smaller partner organisations required FFP staff to adapt training and expectations to the constraints of less-resourced gyms. One respondent explained:

I was a participant at the Marcílio Dias Fight for Peace satellite gym. If the satellite still existed, I would be there instead because I used to train Muay Thai – at the partner gym we don't have the proper equipment or space to do it.<sup>54</sup>

In interviews and focus group discussions, it was clear that the satellite gyms had been popular and effective in the immediate term due to their capacity and likeness to the main academy. By contrast, partner gyms were operating under substantial logistical limitations which naturally impeded their ability to match the capacity of an academy. A FFP staff member explained:

They [partner gyms] still don't have the kind of relationship our young people have with the academy, because our young people are used to staying here for more time because we have more activities. We have classes from 8am to 10pm, and we have education, employability classes, a range of things always going on in the building. But there [at the partner gyms] they open from 6pm to 10pm, they do the sport activities and then they close up. So it's a different relationship the young people have with the space.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>55</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

However, despite the initial start-up challenges, it was uniformly believed that partner gyms were ultimately a more effective, locally legitimate and long-term option (see 'Impact' for full discussion). This was a common view among FFP staff who had been involved in both phases of the project.

I think on the one hand the satellite was more effective because it was us, we had our own space with classrooms. We had our educators and more control. In that sense it was more effective. But the advantage of training a partner is that we are training someone from that space with their own initiative, and helping out the community instead of us being everywhere. It's encouraging other academies to grow in their own ways. It's more sustainable.<sup>56</sup>

The satellite academies were really positive because we had a physical presence and clear identity in those areas and that attracted a lot young people. But if we could work with these more grassroots organisations for a longer amount of time and help them to build up their presence, then that has much more legitimacy than us going into another area of the community and planting ourselves there. Working with the people that are already there and already have a link to the community is a longer-term plan that has more legitimacy and is more sustainable. Satellite academies would require a much bigger team and much more funding, so this is much more sustainable.<sup>57</sup>

There were initial delays in identifying appropriate local partners due to the scarcity of existing organisations that could satisfy a rigorous selection process designed to ensure successful candidates possessed the organisational structure and appropriate alignment with the FFP approach and ethos. This rigour was vital to the effective delivery of the project and lead to the selection of three partners with a natural fit to these requirements. All partners implemented changes in their programmes after nine months of training, including establishing youth councils or similar groups, introducing or expanding boxing and martial arts activities, introducing personal development workshops, fostering closer relationships with parents, meeting and learning about relevant social support services, and applying new MEL tools.

It is clear that the partner gyms found the training and support provided by FFP to be relevant to their needs and those of their local communities, and to have been effective in both providing them with new, valuable skills and in leading to the delivery of real change in their communities (see 'Impact' for more on the latter). The following quotes are from each of the partner gym managers:

I have learned how to deal with people. Before I just knew how to teach sports. With the help of the Fight for Peace team, I have learned ways to help our participants be more comfortable about talking in public, how to make participants feel comfortable and accepted in the class, how to ensure females are part of the group, how to inspire participants, how to talk with them, what is the best way to communicate values to them – inspiration, courage, and so on.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>57</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>58</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

I am very thankful to Fight For Peace because I have learned how to deal with people in a more sensitive, kind way – I’ve learned that it’s not just about instructing sport, it’s about how to deal with people. I have learned with the Maré United training how it’s important to separate children from adults in training. Before I trained them altogether, but actually children develop better if they are taught in their own age-group.<sup>59</sup>

I used to attend Fight for Peace as a participant. To be honest at that time I didn’t think the personal development classes were important. But now I know the importance: it’s not just about the sport, to just come here and train. With the support from Fight for Peace I have become more interested in these kinds of classes and the importance of inspirational lectures. It’s important to be able to explain to the parents. When you are teaching martial arts, some parents say: ‘You’re teaching my child violence.’ I have to explain that it’s not about that. The training from Fight for Peace has helped me to speak to the parents, how to explain and clarify the importance of this training.<sup>60</sup>

Each partner gym manager also offered constructive feedback on where delivery of training might be improved in future, and where they felt their most urgent needs remained. It is a sign of the close coordination of FFP staff with their partners and the effectiveness of internal MEL activities that these perspectives were closely echoed and understood by the FFP project trainers.

The duration and intensity of training was a key issue. A FFP project coordinator observed:

The first challenge was time. I would have liked to have more time with them. The time constraint was partly because the restructuring took a bit longer than planned and it took a while to get this structure of Maré United 2.0 in place after the satellites closed. I felt that there wasn’t sufficient time to have a real, deep impact.<sup>61</sup>

A number of classes were also suspended or postponed due to a deteriorating security situation. As one of the project trainers explained, effective delivery of training also depended on the security situation:

Almost every week I made one or two visits to partners, but one of our biggest challenges was police operations or drug faction fights. Last year [2017] the number of operations was huge. Sometimes we’d have to cancel a visit. To go to Marcílio Dias we would have to plan a route around the violence. Sometimes there would be shooting in one area but it was okay in another. We needed both communities [Nova Holanda and Marcílio Dias] to be in peace to do the visits. It was one of the biggest challenges of the project.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>61</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>62</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

Such obstacles are a natural and largely unavoidable challenge for projects operating in unstable security environments. FFP was quick to adapt and reschedule activities, but there were inevitably knock-on effects for the effectiveness of delivery. One partner gym manager commented: 'The training time was very short, so sometimes it was very dense and compacted. There was lots of information in a very short time. I think we need to have more time for this training.'<sup>63</sup>

All partners and training staff felt that the effectiveness of the project could be significantly improved with longer sessions and a longer training period in future which allowed them to go into more depth on all aspects. A manager explained:

There was a lot more information than there was time to practice what we learned. We had 9 months of training, but because of the war in Maré and the police operations, we often had to stop. The bad period was around August-September [2017]. The shooting only stopped two months ago, around March [2018]. It was very hard to compress all the content in the remaining time after that.<sup>64</sup>

A FFP trainer made the important point that the time required to 'change a culture' in partner gyms was necessarily longer-term than if FFP operated through satellite academies, and so effectiveness also depended on being able to pursue a long-term period of training and support. She found that 'because of the limited time we of course could only make so much progress. It was very positive, but it takes time.'<sup>65</sup>

As with most challenges identified by this evaluation, FFP staff had already considered how the problem of time might be addressed in future, and participants and partners likewise expressed hope that a successor project would tackle this. A partner gym manager concluded:

If there was a Maré 3.0, it would be good to improve the length of classes and make the training as a whole much longer. There could be more support with equipment. If there is a third phase I would definitely like to join it, but I would like to see a more improved version in terms of equipment support, the value of the scholarship, and more investment in the teachers. The training could help us more if it was longer.<sup>66</sup>

A FFP trainer similarly said:

If there were a Maré United 3.0 it would be much more effective if we had more time to work with these organisations, and a bigger team to work with them. The organisations we selected were very grass-roots and so one person doing everything – washing, cooking, cleaning, I mean everything. That's really good and we need to work with these organisations – these are the people who are

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<sup>63</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>64</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>65</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

making a difference on the ground. But if we are to do that then we need to invest more time and resources into helping them make a step-up.<sup>67</sup>

Maré United 2.0 has established important partnerships with local organisations across Maré and has laid the foundations for a long-term, sustainable and effective programme. To ensure this progress is built-upon, FFP is strongly encouraged to develop a successor 'Maré United 3.0' project, to extend and deepen training in line with needs identified by partners. Furthermore, contingency planning for security interruptions could include more pre-prepared content. It is acknowledged that resources and technical capacity may limit partner's access to online knowledge-sharing, but FFP might consider the provision of pre-recorded video and audio tutorial content, allowing trainees greater access to learning outside of in-person sessions. This could also help to address literacy accessibility barriers.

All interviewees unanimously agreed that training alone could not lead to the effective implementation of the knowledge and skills learned. As small organisations led by volunteers, the day-to-day operation of partner gyms is driven by the passion of committed individuals with severely limited resources. A Fight for Peace project coordinator highlighted this challenge:

Their training has helped with sustainability by providing skills training, but by itself it will not be enough. One change that could help improve things would be to provide more resources to the partners, particularly money to pay the gym managers. The gym partners lack the resources to put into practice what has been learned. They have the knowledge now but they struggle to implement it.<sup>68</sup>

Another FFP trainer agreed:

The managers were very committed to learning but they had a lot of barriers to overcome. I think the training was successful because they are now thinking about their projects in a different way. They realised there were a lot of things they could do. We presented them with lots of tools and things they could do to develop their projects and to engage more young people. But they still don't have all the tools because you need money and you need staff, and to get the money you need to write project proposals.<sup>69</sup>

The need for money to hire staff or pay existing volunteers, to rent more appropriate space and to purchase equipment, was the point stressed most emphatically by the gym managers themselves, as well as by the youths who participate in their programmes. It is clear that the partners feel overloaded by the demands of performing multiple tasks whilst simultaneously needing to secure funds for basic overheads. One partner gym manager explained:

The programme is totally free, I don't charge for it, but I've started to ask for food for the participants. I do this with the support of my family. I am hoping to become a teacher and I'm working towards that, but I don't want to ask the children for anything. For the maintenance of the building I have to clean. I have

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<sup>67</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>68</sup> Interview 24 April, 2018.

<sup>69</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

to buy the cleaning products. How do I do that? I have to pay or I have to ask for the adults to divide it between them.<sup>70</sup>

Another partner gym manager commented:

People have to pay their bills, so I have difficulty recruiting people to help me with administrative work because I cannot pay them. It's very hard to keep track of which participants are coming to classes and which aren't, to monitor their attendance, to monitor the maintenance of equipment. It's a lot of work just for one person.<sup>71</sup>

This issue was at the forefront of FFP project staff, who were keenly aware of the need to provide greater support to the partners in future:

In contrast to the satellites which had a lot of investment, this time with this new format we were working with small, young organisations. The coaches had so many different things going on, so many duties, their own jobs or studies, and they needed to write projects to get funding and they were lacking a lot of materials within their organisations. If there had been a bit more funding there would have been more space and time to do a lot more, working with people who are extremely under-resourced and very busy.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, within the time and resource constraints of the project, FFP trainers had provided a range of training and guidance to partners on various ways to address operating costs. Whilst most partners agreed that their understanding had improved, they did not feel that they had a sufficient grasp of how to secure funding through project-writing and consistently identified a need for further training in this area. One said:

I love what I do but it's a lot of work. It's important to learn how to do branding and get more financial support. Because the main challenge is that we rely on people helping us because of the love of the work. I do it for the love of the work. I don't have money to pay people to work. I want to apply for financial aid but I wasn't taught how to get this kind of support.<sup>73</sup>

The other two managers agreed, with one commenting that 'It would be good to include training in other things, like how to get financial support, because the main challenge for us right now is finding financial support.'<sup>74</sup> Whilst he welcomed training that had been provided in this area, he noted that 'The time we had on financial training was too short and we didn't have time to put into practice what we'd learned in theory.'<sup>75</sup> For achieving the goal of sustainability in particular, the partner gym managers and FFP staff stressed the need for more work in this area. As one manager explained:

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<sup>70</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>71</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>72</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>73</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

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<sup>75</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.



For the sustainability of the project it's very important to have more guidance about how to get financial support. The professional way to go about it – we want to learn that. It's the reason why many projects end, because they don't have this kind of learning, so they can't go on. It's not sustainable.<sup>76</sup>

The FFP project coordinator succinctly summed up the need for further training support in this regard, and how a dedicated course might achieve this in future:

To improve sustainability, the first thing is for partner gyms to learn how to sell their organisation and present what they're doing in a way that attracts funding or help and support. That could have been worked on more. The second thing, which is related, is for them to be taught about what is needed in the immediate short term and what the requirements are in the longer term. So it's about being trained on how to manage the resources, and if they are going to present their project, to have a clearer idea about what they need funding for now and what they might need funding for in coming years. There were little bits of information here and there on this, but it would need a whole dedicated course for it to be more efficient.<sup>77</sup>

Following the above, it is recommended that Fight for Peace incorporate an extended dedicated component for resource management and project-writing in any future training of partners.

A related issue of limited resources that similarly touches upon the concern for sustainability is the centralisation of training and day-to-day responsibilities in managers. As busy individuals performing multiple functions, they not only find deploying new knowledge an onerous task but struggle to accommodate learning in the first place. One commented:

I have a lot of work with many functions to perform, I am overloaded. I know how to do everything a little bit, but not in a deep way. If I had financial support to build a team that would solve the problem. If even I could have someone to help me just for a small amount of time, it would be very helpful. Eighty percent depends on me, but I need help. I need help so that the project can move forward.<sup>78</sup>

The burden of work carried by managers was evident to young participants of their gyms. Although they volunteered to assist managers where possible, they felt it was insufficient and any future project should provide more support. A member of a partner gym youth council explained:

The most difficult challenge for us is the infrastructure. We have a water leak in the building. We have to do all the cleaning ourselves. Mostly it is just the manager doing everything. There are many issues, financial issues, practical issues to deal with, and he is only one person. He needs more support.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

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<sup>79</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

A related concern of managers was that their lack of capacity meant they were unable to implement all Five Pillars in the ways they had been trained and were eager to do:

We are already starting a kind of education pillar, to help people go to school. There are many children with problems at school and their parents say 'I have to stop them doing sport because my child is doing badly in school.' I already have a volunteer teacher who is going to help these children in their school-life. But for employment, we haven't set-up this pillar yet. Because I don't have the support for that yet it's better to focus on what I have already because it's a lot of work and I cannot do everything.<sup>80</sup>

I learned how to give the appropriate direction to children with social problems, and how to guide parents towards the proper institutions. But I wish I could work on the other pillars, but since I am a volunteer it's very hard to provide other services beyond sports and youth leadership. I talked with a Fight for Peace trainer about employability, because sometimes our youngsters don't identify with Fight for Peace but they do identify with our gym, so I could help with this.<sup>81</sup>

Fight for Peace trainers were well aware of the burden carried by managers and had identified this as an issue to address. One noted:

We were paying a scholarship for them, but most of them would work for free and have another job. For them to also deal with everything in their lives is very hard. They have a lot of problems themselves. To be a mentor, to be a social educator, to deal with the young people and their problems and also be a manager – it's asking a lot.<sup>82</sup>

This challenge is not a reflection of any shortcomings in the Maré United 2.0 project. Rather, it underlines the need for further sustained support, not least to help managers put into practice training that was specifically designed to lighten their workload and rationalise work-functions. For example, the FFP trainer for youth-leadership explained:

There's just one manager at the partner gyms, and he's the coach, he's the teacher, he's everything. So it's about talking to the young people, helping them think and write plans for the project about how they can help their teacher. Even small things like cleaning up the room, setting-up the equipment, recording the attendance.<sup>83</sup>

It was clear that to a significant extent, partner gyms had already begun to implement these changes, establishing youth councils or similar youth-led groups that helped to assist managers with running the gym. However, this is a change still in its infancy and will take time before it provides effective relief to managers:

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<sup>80</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>81</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>82</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>83</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

The challenge was to make the youth support more formalised, but in the end I realised that this wasn't a challenge for the immediate moment – it's something for the future. For now if the youth groups take-up tasks and responsibility, if they start looking at the project in a different way, this is already a good beginning and they will be able to create a more formal group in future.<sup>84</sup>

Likewise, training in social support was designed to encourage partner gym managers to take advantage of existing welfare services in the community, rather than take on responsibility themselves:

We worked with partners who were small organisations run by one person who was doing it out of personal passion. We had to help them to think about how they could provide support for young people who were having their rights violated, showing them how they could provide support and introducing the idea that they could open up access to other existing services.

... We gave focus to professional ethics, showing how to draw a line of where someone is a sports coach of an NGO or a small organisation and can't take on the responsibilities of a parent or a caregiver. From what we heard in our discussions there were lots of instances where coaches were doing this, picking up kids from school or doing things that would usually be the responsibility of parents or guardians. They were doing it out of love for the work and would feel guilty not doing it, so it was a difficult thing to address, but we helped them to see that there are limitations of what even a coach can do. Some situations need to be the responsibility of a family, it can't be assumed as a responsibility of the coach.<sup>85</sup>

A linked issue was that some of the challenges surrounding workload could be traced to an understandable reluctance of managers to hand-over some responsibilities to others, particularly when they were unsure if this would be a lasting arrangement. This observation was made by FFP staff and agreed with by the managers themselves, with all concluding that changes will require further time and support to take root. It was also clear that the ambition and passion of the managers had led them to take on a greater workload than was practically advisable or necessary. In this regard FFP trainers proved adept at recognising and navigating a delicate process of encouraging partners to be more realistic in their plans, without dampening their ambition or imposing unwanted changes. A trainer explained:

One of the managers used to be one of our own young people. Because he has a great passion and wants to do everything he has classes of 80 people, kids and adults and old people, and he wants to do everything at the same time. That's brilliant but you have to have limits on how many people you let in, and the age ranges. Because it's based on the love for doing the work it's a delicate issue – we don't want to pour cold water on that passion, but we need to help them with the practical realities.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

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<sup>86</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

It will take more time for managers to fully adapt their practices and redistribute responsibilities for day-to-day running of their gyms. Nevertheless, this challenge highlights a fundamental challenge for the design of any successor project. Whilst the training of managers has been effective, there is a sustainability issue where knowledge and expertise is built-up in individuals rather than institutions, to the extent that were a manager unable to continue in their role, their training and any impact would also be lost. To some extent FFP addresses this issue through its youth leadership component, and it is recommended that Fight for Peace continue to assist partner gyms with the development of youth leadership as a means to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, and to consider other ways of transferring knowledge and skills beyond individual partner managers. Further consideration should also be given to the possibility of providing partner gym managers with paid assistants, and to explore whether this could be linked to youth employability goals, for example through a dedicated apprenticeship programme staffed by FFP or partner gym youth.

Finally, a major challenge that stems from limited resources of partner gyms is the physical space in which they operate, and to a lesser extent, the need for equipment. As noted, an advantage of the satellite academies was the capacity to host large numbers of students and to run various classes simultaneously. From the outset, the limitations of space for partner gyms were clear, even in the delivery of training itself. A FFP project staff member explained:

To teach the young people I would go to their spaces. That was the most challenging aspect of the project for me. Because there, in their space, the light is poor and there is a lot of noise. It was very difficult to have a proper conversation, so we would adapt our activities to the context.<sup>87</sup>

Another FFP project member described the space issue as an impediment to implementation of lessons learned by partner gym managers:

Some of the gyms haven't got their own spaces, so they might implement these new things and get all the structures in place and have all their ideas ready, but then the owner of the space says they need it back. It actually just happened with the Nova Holanda gym – the coach had all these ideas and received all our support, and then suddenly he's found himself without space to give classes. Obviously, this is a massive obstacle.<sup>88</sup>

The partner gym managers also emphasised their struggle with space.

The space is very important. We don't have a proper place to train these days, and we have lost a bit of space since last year. We need financial support, for me and for the team, because as volunteers it's very hard to keep going with it.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>88</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

<sup>89</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

We are selling used cooking oil to try to sustain us, but today it's three months since we've been able to train because we don't have space and we can't afford to rent a place.<sup>90</sup>

A youth participant at the Marcílio Dias partner observed:

We don't have a fixed venue. At first the manager used to rent a garage from his own pocket, and then he found a space used for parties and events. But we lost that space because the owners wanted to profit more from using it. After that we moved to a car-washing place we could use for free, but now we have no space. The problem is not that there are no spaces, but that they cost money.

A fellow Marcílio Dias youth participant concurred, underlining how this reflected the broader issue of limited resources and how this affects the ability of the project to retain members:

A lot of people have joined the project, but a lot of people have dropped out, because it's very difficult with the space issue. ... We were allowed to use a carwash space for our gym but every day we had to take time to prepare the space, and not all participants want to help with that, so it was very difficult to use that space. We buy our own equipment – like mouth protectors – but not all participants can afford this, and it's not something you can borrow.<sup>91</sup>

At the *O Recomeçar* partner gym, the youth participants made similar observations:

We are trying very hard to keep the project going. ... But it's all very hard because we don't have even the basic equipment. Most importantly, we don't have the space.<sup>92</sup>

At *Todos por Um* in Pinheiro, the manager likewise explained:

The gym doesn't have a proper space, and we don't have anywhere to store the equipment. I live 500 meters from the gym and have to carry the equipment there every day. There is some equipment I can't use because it's too much to carry. Sometimes a student helps me but not all the time. This is the main challenge right now: we need a proper space for the gym.

A youth participant who was assisting the manager in Pinheiro added: 'I bought some equipment with my own money, but it's important to have a salary – a minimum wage salary for me and for the teacher, and have a proper space for the gym too.'<sup>93</sup> Two youth participants of the same gym noted that whenever it rains or it's cold they can't train, because the venue has no roof and is an open space.<sup>94</sup>

The issue of space is a factor of the environment in which Maré United Phase 2 operated, and as with questions of security, the challenge was of how best to respond and adapt to it. In this respect FFP trainers provided managers with advice on how to

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<sup>90</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>91</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>92</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>93</sup> Interviews, 03 May 2018.

<sup>94</sup> Interviews, 03 May 2018.

utilise space more effectively, also seeking to ensure their ambition to host classes and activities – and to include as many participants as possible – did not overwhelm the practical constraints of space. As already noted, such change is likely to take time as managers learn how to adapt their practice and implement more efficient forms of space-management. As one partner manager noted, further training in this area would prove helpful, as would the provision of administrative staff to help with logistical organisation:

Even with our new place, it's very small – smaller than before – so it's a bit tight for all the participants. It would be good to have better administration to deal with different kinds of classes, to better organise the space, the schedule of classes and the number of participants.<sup>95</sup>

It is recommended that Fight for Peace continue to explore possible solutions to the space issue of partner gyms, since this does impede delivery of programmes at existing capacity, and obstructs ambitions to increase capacity and delivery of programmes. Should satellite gyms become more financial viable at some point in future, this may provide some relief. To a large extent FFP and partner gyms are limited by available physical space, and it is recognised that FFP has conducted extensive research throughout Maré to locate and secure venues. To help mitigate the issue until such time as appropriate space and associated costs are available, Fight for Peace should consider providing further instruction to partner gyms on space management and administrative management of class-sizes, schedules and planning of programmes.

All of the evidence provided during this evaluation shows that the project has been effectively implemented despite external constraints, and that FFP methodology was most effective for achieving this result. Fight for Peace has shown itself to be highly flexible in identifying and adapting to changing circumstances and challenges, continually listening to its own staff, partners and participants, as well as the wider community, as it reflects on how best to deliver the project. All partners believed in the project and wished to see it continue: their wish for more training time and resources could be effectively addressed by the extension of the existing programme into a 'Maré United 3.0.'

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<sup>95</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

## Efficiency

*How did FFP perform on the allocation of human and financial resources in implementing the project? Did it achieve value for money? Could this be improved in any way?*

Phase 2 of Maré United was efficient in terms of financial and human resource allocation and no evidence was found which indicated that the project could have been delivered at a lower cost, or that any resources were wasted or used inappropriately.

In comparison to Phase 1, Maré United 2.0 was more efficient due to the decision to close the two satellite academies and focus on building capacity in three existing partner gyms. This came about in part due to the cessation of core funding streams that had supported the satellite academies, combined with a declining economic situation. In 2015 and 2016, Brazil's GDP fell by 3.8% and 3.6% respectively, making it the worst recession on record.<sup>96</sup> It is a considerable achievement that Fight for Peace ensured this did not derail Maré United as a project, but instead used it as an opportunity to strengthen its long-term financial sustainability and cost-effectiveness.

Maré United project members interviewed for this evaluation emphasised that although the satellite academies offered many advantages, they were more expensive to run and staff than partner gyms. Partners were staffed by volunteers and were much smaller in scale. This presented its own logistical challenges, but helped the project more closely pursue its goals of building-up existing capacity across Maré, whilst doing so in a more cost-effective manner that places the project in a strong position to expand its activities in future. A partner gym manager explained:

Satellite gyms have very high costs but for smaller gyms like mine, the cost is low. There are social projects that are totally free as at Fight for Peace. We can do the same work and teach the same values of discipline and respect.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*.

<sup>97</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

## Impact

*What contribution did the project make to the change FFP and Comic relief wants to see? What were the final results of the activities and how did they fit into FFP's overall strategy for the period?*

Through Maré United, Fight for Peace aims to actively prevent violence in Maré and break-down invisible barriers that separate young people in communities controlled by rival factions. As the 2014 evaluation observed, these are ambitious aims that are difficult to measure precisely. A background of extensive police operations in Maré in 2017 and declining economic situation further complicates matters. Definitively identifying causal relationships and attempting to control for innumerable variables in such a context is impracticable. However, as discussed in the methodology section of this report, in-depth qualitative interviews and focus group-discussions were conducted to increase the accuracy of evaluations, providing a closer examination of staff, participant and partner-gym perspectives on the basis that they provide valuable indications of the relevance, effectiveness and impact of Maré United 2.0.

### Increased social cohesion by overcoming divisions between young people typically divided by territorial differences within the community.

According to FFP's own quantitative indicators for this outcome, during Phase 2 of Maré United 1,795 people attended FFP community sports events; 1,400 people acknowledged the relevance of these events for their own communities; and there was a 50% increase of new young people registering for FFP activities within one week after community sports events (in comparison with regular weeks). Throughout the course of the grant, FFP held 9 community events designed to encourage young people to visit other parts of the favela.<sup>98</sup>

According to FFP's qualitative indicators drawn from anonymous self-reporting personal development questionnaires and focus group discussions (including satellite academies), in 2015 a total of 57% of young people sampled reported an increase in feeling safe in their own community. In 2016 this total was 64%, and in 2017 it was 62%. The percentage of those young people self-reporting increased likelihood of visiting other communities for each year was 59% (2015) and 66% (2016, 2017). Finally, in 2015 a total of 63% of young people reported feeling safe when visiting other communities; a figure that fell slightly to 60% in 2016 and returned to 63% in 2017.

These findings provide an interesting snap-shot of perceptions of young participants of Maré United and FFP programmes, but as noted in discussion of methodology (and well-understood by FFP staff), they are vulnerable to reporting-bias. They are also impossible to separate from other variables, such as the increase in police-security operations during 2017. Consulting the views of participants and community members in more depth is therefore crucial, and FFP has proved adept at this. In its End of Grant Report it noted:

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<sup>98</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, p. 5.



Through numerous participant and family testimonies and feedback, we have concluded that through Maré United, FFP is having a positive impact in terms of perceptions of safety. The t-shirt in particular has come to symbolise a form of “protection” for some young people, who say they are able to move across the community freely when wearing FFP branded clothing. Young people coming either from satellites and partner gyms (after the beginning of phase 2.0) all reported positive levels of cohesion and respect towards each other.<sup>99</sup>

Interviews and focus group discussions for this evaluation in April-May 2018 confirmed that FFP and Maré United continued to play a key role in enabling young residents of communities separated by rival factions to cross ‘invisible boundaries.’ As observed by previous external evaluations, this role was facilitated by the high-esteem in which FFP is held by residents across Maré, which Maré United 2.0 effectively drew-upon to bolster the visibility and legitimacy of partners. According to an FFP coordinator of the project:

The project definitely had an impact ... Their work was given extra credibility by doing Fight for Peace methodology, which is well respected in the community. And the young people were very engaged with it all. We did exchanges, bringing the people from other organisations to train here and taking our young people there – this was the main objective, to break down the divisions. The young people normally wouldn’t cross those boundaries. They’d heard of Fight for Peace but would never come here, but they ended up training with the young people here. It gave them a new freedom of movement.<sup>100</sup>

A long-visible marker of FFP’s popularity and impact in Maré has been the way in which wearing a FFP-branded t-shirt helps young people to cross between territory held by rival groups. Acting almost as an internal passport for Maré, the power of the t-shirt has been observed and reported in previous evaluations, expressing as it does the role that FFP plays in breaking down boundaries or at least, providing ways around them. For example, in 2013, evaluation authors wrote:

Interviewees emphasized the importance of LPP’s ability to bridge the gap between the communities within Maré itself, which, for the local population, sometimes represent worlds apart due to different drug faction’s control. Wearing a LPP t-shirt allows young people to move back and forth between favelas within the Complexo, and participating in training sessions and competitions enables them to visit other communities without running the risk of being punished. Wearing the project’s t-shirt, is described as a ‘free-pass’ and ‘holy shirt’ which, according to one young person, ‘serves as bullet-proof vest.’<sup>101</sup>

The 2014 evaluation encountered the same, with one focus group member explaining that ‘when the kids put on a Luta T-shirt they can travel freely. Even BOPE respect the

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<sup>99</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*.

<sup>100</sup> Interview, 24 April 2018.

<sup>101</sup> Sampson & Vilella (2013), *Fight for Peace Academies*.

shirt and leave them alone.<sup>102</sup> Significantly, the 2013 evaluation found that this increased mobility was having the effect of stimulating reflection on invisible barriers, and so not only was the work of FFP allowing participants to 'pass' boundaries, it was by the same act helping them to break them down:

Crossing the drug faction 'lines' wearing a LPP t-shirt results in young people reconsidering some deeply entrenched community taboos that contribute to the violence; for example, making friends with people who live in different factions. One young people [*sic*] comments on the significance of LPP in the context of Maré: 'You begin to realize that only because he lives in a place that has a different drug faction does not mean that you can't become friends.'<sup>103</sup>

This kind of interaction had led to positive social transformation, the evaluators found, by demonstrating 'how divided communities can unite and how they have shared interests in their children's achievements.'<sup>104</sup>

In 2018, FFP continued to play this role in Maré, likewise exemplified in interviews and focus groups through frequent references to the power of the t-shirt to offer safe (or at least safer)-passage:

I wear the t-shirt of Luta pela Paz [Fight for Peace] every day. If I forget they [traffickers] will harm me or cause me problems. ... When they see the t-shirt, they see that I have a reason to come here, to study, to work. They see I'm not just walking around. Otherwise they might think I am involved with the other faction.<sup>105</sup>

It is clear that, as found in 2013, Maré United 2.0 has also worked to stimulate reflection on invisible barriers within Maré, not least by regularly bringing together youths and volunteers from Pinheiro, Marcila Dias and Nova Holanda in each location. In this way the project has contributed to increasing social cohesion by overcoming divisions between young people typically divided by territorial differences within the community. It is also notable that Maré United 2.0 has helped to increase social cohesion between different service providers and organisations working to benefit the community's young people, including the partner gyms. The manager of the Marcílio Dias gym described how he had previously worked in isolation but had now formed a close bond with the other partners, even teaching some classes at the Pinheiro gym. All three gym managers emphasised the value of being connected by FFP trainers to social support services within Maré, including through physical visits. These were services that exist in the community with which they had never had contact.

Young participants and community members also cautioned that the project should not be expected to fundamentally break-down all barriers dividing the community, such as those enforced by armed traffickers for territorial control. Interviewees and focus group participants felt that the project allowed participants to *pass through* but ultimately could not *break down* these barriers.

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<sup>102</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*. Batalhão de Operações Policiais Especiais (BOPE) is a specialist police unit of Rio's Military Police.

<sup>103</sup> Sampson & Vilella (2013), *Fight for Peace Academies*.

<sup>104</sup> Sampson & Vilella (2013), *Fight for Peace Academies*.

<sup>105</sup> Interview, 26 April 2018.

Beyond increasing social cohesion between young people of *different* territories within Maré, the evaluation found evidence of increased social cohesion *within* the communities in which partner gyms operated. This happened through parents and children getting to know the gym, and through participants and trainers becoming close-knit families, pitching-in together to make the project work and taking pride in the venture. An older participant at the Pinheiro gym explained: 'I enjoy being part of the gym. It was the first time I had anything to do with the younger people in the area.'<sup>106</sup> The manager of the Marcílio Dias gym also noted this impact: 'I was able to teach the participants more respect and discipline, and to set-up a youth council. My training with FFP has helped the team to become more united, closer together.'<sup>107</sup>

## Prevention of violent behaviour and improved quality of life of young people through sports and personal development classes.

Fight for Peace bases its violence prevention efforts on its theory of change, which holds that 'when a person changes the way they view themselves, their relationships with others and the way they see their future, they will begin to make positive changes to their attitudes, behaviour and situation.'<sup>108</sup> One of the ways it gauges these changes are through the self-reporting anonymous questionnaires. At the time of its 2015 report, the violence and crime-specific indicators proposed in the Start-Up form had not been included in the FFP personal development questionnaire. Internal discussion and consultation with FFP staff, participants and partner organisations led to close scrutiny of the indicators for this outcome, and in the end new indicators could not be defined before the end of the project reporting period. The 2017 survey included the indicators that had previously been used, and these were included in the End of Grant Report as follows: 76% of young people reported a decreased likelihood of getting involved in gangs; 72% reported decreased likelihood of committing a crime; and 70% reported decreased likelihood of carrying a gun.<sup>109</sup>

Interviews and focus group discussions strongly supported the case that Fight for Peace has had a positive overall impact in preventing violent behaviour and improving the quality of life of young people. Countless testimonies from young people and their relatives affirmed that sports and personal development classes delivered through Maré United (through both satellites and partner gyms) had led to the positive changes in attitude, behaviour and situation sought by FFP. According to a member of *O Recomeçar* partner gym:

The partnerships are a very good idea because it is a chance to get children off the streets, to make them feel accepted. I don't say this just because I'm part of the gym. If you ask anyone in the street near *O Recomeçar*, a neighbour, a mother – not even a mother of a participant – they will tell you they can see the

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<sup>106</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>107</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>108</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, p.13.

<sup>109</sup> FFP (2018), *End of Grant Report*, pp.13-14.

difference in the participants. Their attitude has changed from before. They are more positive.<sup>110</sup>

A participant at partner gym *Todos por Um* described the impact of the project on their own life:

The programme has changed me a lot, the way I treat other people. I am much more peaceful, polite, and respectful with people, and I have learned many important values from the personal development classes. Not just that, I gained the respect of the community.<sup>111</sup>

The recognition by the community of the work achieved by the partner gyms was a common theme of interviews with partner managers and participants. A young member who had become an assistant to the manager explained how this has led the gym to play a central role in providing assistance to local young people:

I am very respected by the community for my role at *Todos por Um*. And in my normal work my colleagues respect me because of this. They call me 'teacher' and are always asking me about the classes and if I need anything. They try to help where they can. Every time a child has a problem they come to *Todos Por Um*. They say 'go to the project', not 'go to the school principal.'<sup>112</sup>

The partner gym managers spoke about the visible indicators of impact that the teaching of FFP values had made on their participants. One gave the following example: 'At the beginning we had a problem at our events. Some of our participants were making gang signs with their hands. But now there has been a huge change. They don't do it anymore.'<sup>113</sup> Others commented on the extent to which changes had been felt by parents and relatives. In Vila do Pinheiro, a manager recounted:

One mother asked me 'what have you done with my child?' She explained that her son used to hurt other kids and steal from neighbours, but then one day he came home crying because now he's not supposed to fight, he didn't fight back when a kid attacked him. From the perception of her and other parents, we are doing a good thing for the community. It's the greatest payment that we could get for this work. It's the real reward. If out of 45 participants, 10 can absorb the lessons like this, then I am very happy.<sup>114</sup>

Partners believe in FFP's methodology and its relevance to addressing the problems they encounter day-in, day-out. One manager explained:

Maré United is not just about receiving equipment, for example receiving a ball and playing soccer. It's about training people to give these other opportunities, like personal development. That's why Fight for Peace is so important. I use their

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<sup>110</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>111</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>112</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>113</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>114</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

methodology. The participants know about the purpose – this is very important. It is not just about sport. It's much more than that.<sup>115</sup>

Another observed:

Fight for Peace and Maré United have given legitimacy and credibility to the project [the work of the partner gym], and that's why the Fight for Peace methodology is very important. I can even talk about myself – I used to respect no one. I didn't think about the many things in the community that were important. Fight for Peace helped me to come into contact with different cultures, with different kinds of reality besides what I knew in my world, growing up here in Maré.<sup>116</sup>

In focus group discussions with community members and relatives and guardians of FFP participants, it was widely agreed that during its second phase Maré United continued to have a significant positive impact on young people's behaviour, self-esteem and way of thinking. However, the extent to which discussants believed FFP and Maré United could prevent violence was mixed. Widely differing perspectives on how to tackle violence were offered. The following exchange was typical:

*Q. What could be done to reduce violence in Maré?*

*Community member 1:* Change the laws and make sure that politicians are also equal under the law. They should know that they can't just do whatever they want. And in our community in Maré, the punishments need to be harsher to deter these young kids from joining the gangs – they are getting younger and younger.

*Community member 2:* I disagree. It's young black people who fill the prisons, so the answer isn't more punishment. It should be the other way around – we should be finding ways to avoid heavily punishing someone who just steals.

*Community member 3:* If we're talking about violence, we must talk about the police operations, when they come in and they're sent from outside by the top levels of government and security. They don't know our community. They're sent in here and nobody is safe. I spend seven days a week in my house because I'm scared. We suffer the most from that violence, so what would improve the situation is to stop those kinds of police operations.

In this respect the evaluation outcome was similar to that of 2014, where the author notes that some respondents stressed the role of police or structural political and socio-economic inequalities. However, a marked difference to the 2014 evaluation was that very few respondents advocated for political engagement as a means to address this situation. According to Foley, suggestions about improvements to FFP's overall violence-prevention strategy included pursuing 'outreach to the Brazilian state authorities including policy-makers and opinion-formers, the judiciary, public prosecutors and the public defenders office, as well as developing contacts with the

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<sup>115</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

<sup>116</sup> Interview, 03 May 2018.

police and deepening the existing contacts state education and social services departments.<sup>117</sup>

In 2018, with few exceptions, most discussants believed that police and the political elites were a central part of the problem. This difference may be linked to the differing circumstances between the evaluations. In 2014 the pacification programme was still in operation and the government had yet to be rocked by a series of high-level corruption indictments. By April 2018, pacification was widely regarded as a failure and Maré's experience of police operations throughout 2017 had further damaged relations between the community and authorities.

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<sup>117</sup> Foley (2014), *Maré United*, p.37

## Sustainability

*Are the project's results sustainable? Is the support and involvement of FFP and Comic Relief still required in order to achieve lasting results and, if so, how and where?*

The results of Maré United's Phase 2 are sustainable but require continued support and investment from Fight for Peace and Comic Relief to consolidate progress and achieve lasting results. Ultimately, partner gyms may become entirely self-sustaining, but they are currently at the earliest stages of development and will need guidance towards this goal.

The satellite academies had many advantages and could be pursued in future, but on all available evidence for this evaluation, it is a more sustainable for FFP to support and help further develop the capacity of existing local partners to deliver the Five Pillars. Partner gyms require less resources to sustain them, have an already existing presence in (and connection to) their communities, and with sufficient support could develop to sustain themselves indefinitely. Progress towards this end would work towards more sustainable outcomes for central goals of the project, helping to increase social cohesion and tackle the invisible barriers that divide Maré.

Two of the three partner gym managers are former FFP participants and a many of the partner gym members have also been involved with the FFP academy. This is not only contributing to community cohesion, but it is creating long-term sustainable partnerships in which FFP is helping to develop the next generation of community leaders. These are potential leaders who believe in and have directly benefited from the Five Pillars Methodology. As Fight for Peace notes: 'The fundamental sustainability of FFP lies with local people continuing to share the methodology and values within the Five Pillars.'<sup>118</sup>

Any future support should seek to ensure sustainability by addressing key issues for partner gyms raised in 'Effectiveness.' These include providing financial and/or staff support to partner managers to allow them to more effectively perform their duties and enact changes; provide support and guidance on locating more practical and permanent premises; provide more support and guidance on resource management and securing new and sustainable sources of revenue. Expansion of the project to new areas of Maré would be ideal, but this should only be undertaken provided sufficient resources are available to address problems already identified and to expand FFP staff numbers on the mobile training team.

It is recommended that Fight for Peace continue to assist partner gyms with the development of youth leadership as a means to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, and to consider other ways of transferring knowledge and skills beyond individual partner managers. Further consideration should also be given to the possibility of providing partner gym managers with paid assistants, and to explore whether this could be linked to youth employability goals, for example through a dedicated apprenticeship programme staffed by FFP or partner gym youth.

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<sup>118</sup> FFP (2017) *Mare United Annual Report*, p.16.

Fight for Peace may wish to consider – or may have already considered - contingency planning for security interruptions that includes digital and interactive content. Resources and technical capacity are a serious limit on partner’s access to online content, but pre-recorded video and audio tutorial content may be more practical and allow trainees greater access to knowledge. This could also help to address accessibility barriers concerning literacy. If workable, such learning packages could be effectively scaled-up and shared across FFP national and international networks, included for example in the packages offered by the Global Alumni Programme (GAP) and Rede Brazil.

It is strongly recommended that Maré United is continued to consolidate gains and expand where appropriate. To this end Fight for Peace should continue to invest heavily in securing the support of international and national donors.



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