



Ceifar (Centro de Integração Familiar) is a ngo and non-profit organization. It was founded in 1994 in the district Tancredo Neves of Salvador-Bahia. It was founded with the objective of supporting the children and young people of the district through socio-educational, cultural and sports activities as well as strengthening family bonds.

The founder of Ceifar, Simonne Debouck (° Koekelare 1941 - + Namur 2009), moved with her family to Mont-sur-Marchienne in Wallonia to improve their living conditions. An event that left a deep impression on Simonne and and her later future, especially her work in Brazil. Simonne entered the Soeurs de la Charité in Namur and studied to be a nurse there. In 1992, when she was 50 years old, she left the monastery but continued as a woman of God to work somewhere in the world with the poorest of the poor.

A meeting with priest Maurice Abel, who worked in Salvador da Bahia, gave her the courage and desire to move to Brazil. She initially worked in the parish of Priest Maurice, where the Black Sisters also work, but in 1994 she made her own dream come true. Her dream of improving the situation of the poorest, and therefore started the Ceifar project. It was (and still is) a struggle to improve the living circumstances of the residents of the district Tancredo Neves. Simonne was not able to experience Ceifar's 15th anniversary in 2009. She died, much too soon, in Namur, in the hospital where she had worked as a nurse for years. However, her dream lives on with the help of many.

Tancredo Neves has about 200,000 inhabitants, and, like the many suburbs of Salvador and the major cities of Brazil, it was created by an uncontrolled population growth and built without planning, resulting in a great lack of infrastructure. The lack of future prospects and low self-esteem of children and young people lowers the chance and access to schools. In combination with the lack of leisure facilities and sports, they become easy prey in the recruitment of young people for drug trafficking and violent gangs. The families, in the struggle for survival, are sometimes forced to leave their children on the street or alone in the house because the combination of raising their children and working a fulltime job is difficult to reconcile. Most of the children and adolescents enrolled in Ceifar's various education programs come from very poor families.

Today, Ceifar's main purpose is to contribute in the education of the children and young people of the community through various educational, cultural and sport events. This as a tool for the development of the bio-psycho-social, based on the

preservation of the family unit. Currently Ceifar offers a place for 350 children. Children with an age of 3 to 5 years old are enrolled in the kinder garden, while children with an age between 6 and 12 years get supplementary training for the first to third grade. Furthermore, there are cultural and sports activities. Also young adolescents (+12 years) are able participate in this. There is pedagogical and social guidance for the children and the families.

2019 was the festive year for Ceifar, the 25th anniversary was celebrated with the opening of the new theater / culture hall and a richly illustrated booklet about the past, present and future of Ceifar. Unfortunately, in 2020 that future was put at risk by the pandemic and Ceifar's operations had to be revised. The year 2020 was marked by homeschooling and food aid to the 250 most affected families. The existing medical center was handed over. Work continues with the educational sector (including sports and culture). From 2021, a dance / ballet and computer science course will also be offered in which young people and parents can also participate.

We would love if you would become our partner in realizing a better world for our children and young people. Would you want to support us in one of our projects? There is always a need for educational materials and food products, but also realizations such as the renewal of the electrical wiring, collecting and filtering of rainwater, creating a washing area for the families, building a playground, renewing the kitchen,... These are just a few examples of the needs.

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