



Educating Cities: A Proposal for Developing Sustainable Societies

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate how the concept of Educating Cities can be consolidated as an effective strategy to promote the development of sustainable societies, integrating education, sustainability, and active citizenship to build more inclusive urban models. The research was conducted through a comprehensive literature review, focusing on the implications of this concept in the Brazilian context, analyzing projects related to education, sustainability, culture, urban planning, and citizen participation in Brazilian cities involved in the initiative. Data collection included institutional documents, official reports, and municipal materials, evaluating the social, environmental, and educational impacts of these initiatives. This study fills a theoretical gap by integrating the concept of Educating Cities with Sustainable Societies, highlighting how successful practices in several Brazilian cities, despite challenges, have the potential to improve public policies and contribute to urban sustainability. The results reveal how these cities promote sustainable practices such as the use of green spaces, efficient waste management, and the adoption of social technologies, enhancing quality of life, encouraging active citizenship, and creating more sustainable urban environments.

KEYWORDS: Urban Planning. Sustainability. Education.

1 INTRODUCTION

In a world characterized by constant change, the need arises to rethink development models, incorporating a critical perspective on urban planning and its relationship with sustainability and education. Cities are both the stage and the agents of social, economic, and environmental transformations. Within this context, the concept of "educating cities" gains prominence by promoting an integrated vision of sustainable development that values coexistence, inclusion, and environmental preservation.

Historically, urban growth has been driven by the logic of accelerated urbanization, often guided by economic interests. This has led to challenges such as spatial segregation, increased social inequalities, and environmental degradation. However, cities also represent spaces of transformation, where public policies focused on education and sustainability can foster a fairer and more resilient society.

Sustainable urban planning, aligned with the principles of educating cities, proposes the creation of urban environments that encourage continuous learning, active citizenship, and respect for the environment. This model advocates that education is not confined to classrooms but occurs in parks, squares, libraries, museums, and other public spaces, promoting interaction among different generations and cultures.

In this sense, educating cities play a crucial role in developing sustainable societies. They encourage practices that integrate economic, social, and environmental dimensions, standing as a counterpoint to the traditional urbanization model that prioritizes economic growth at the expense of collective well-being. As Borges (2011) states, "a city is full of educating spaces," capable of transforming reality through policies that promote social inclusion, citizen participation, and sustainable development.

In 1990, the First International Congress of Educating Cities took place in Barcelona. This event led to the formation of the Educating Cities movement, where representatives of participating cities agreed on the importance of collaborating on projects and activities to improve the quality of life for their inhabitants. By 1994, the movement had been organized and structured into an international association, the International Association of Educating Cities

(IAEC), officially established during the Third Congress of Educating Cities in Bologna, Italy (Oliveira & Tonso, 2012, p. 6).

The concept of sustainable societies goes beyond environmental preservation and social equality, encompassing the formation of conscious individuals who recognize the importance of their role in the global context. For this, urban planning must address both local and global challenges, valuing the uniqueness of each territory as well as the connections that unite them in a globalized world.

This new paradigm demands an integrated approach, considering cities as dynamic spaces for learning and social transformation. By fostering the interplay between urban planning, education, and sustainability, educating cities provide an inspiring model for addressing contemporary challenges and building a more balanced and inclusive future.

Amid this challenging scenario, it becomes essential to reflect on how cities can become not only spaces for coexistence but also for learning and transformation. Within this context, the concept of Educating Cities stands out, proposing the integration of urban planning, sustainability, and education as pillars for developing more equitable and balanced societies.

2 THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES: THE INTERSECTION OF URBAN PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY, AND EDUCATION

Building sustainable societies is a complex and urgent challenge in the current context, marked by environmental crises, social inequalities, and growing urban challenges. Sustainability cannot be understood as an isolated concept but as a continuous process involving interconnected factors.

Cities, shaped by the logic of capital and its spatial reproduction, often turn public policies into tools that, while originating from social contexts, materialize as investments or administrative regulations when processed through the state. These policies, therefore, reflect power relations, shaped by struggles between political and economic groups, social classes, and organized civil society (GALLO, 2023).

In this scenario, urban planning, sustainability, and education play fundamental roles and must be seen as interdependent elements in constructing a more equitable and balanced society that addresses the needs of present and future generations.

Education is undoubtedly the primary tool for social and environmental transformation. It has the power to shape how individuals perceive the world and their responsibilities toward it (Xavier et al., 2021). Environmental education and education for sustainability are crucial for forming conscious citizens committed to preserving natural resources and adopting responsible consumption practices.

In the context of sustainable societies, education extends beyond formal teaching to foster a collective awareness involving all sectors of society. Forming individuals who understand the complexity of socio-environmental challenges and know how to act to mitigate them is a significant step toward building a sustainable future. Education in schools, universities, and public spaces must promote dialogue on topics such as resource conservation, biodiversity preservation, social justice, and responsible waste management.

Environmental issues are increasingly evident in urban areas. Air and water pollution, rising waste production, soil degradation, and climate change are just some of the problems cities face. To achieve sustainable societies, it is essential to rethink how cities consume and distribute natural resources.

Thus, sustainable urban planning is a cornerstone of building sustainable societies. Future cities must be planned with a balanced approach to environmental impact, social needs, and economic development. However, large urban areas face significant challenges related to pollution, resource scarcity, and social inequality. Sustainable urban planning aims to address these issues by creating cities that meet population needs while respecting planetary limits.

Sustainable urbanism involves practices such as preserving green spaces, promoting public and non-polluting transportation, constructing eco-efficient buildings, intelligent waste management, and creating accessible and inclusive public spaces. This planning must also consider the social and cultural diversity of the population, creating urban environments that enhance everyone's well-being, particularly focusing on vulnerable communities. The importance of empathy in urban planning is emphasized, as Szaboova et al. (2024) explain, with cognitive empathy involving understanding others' circumstances and emotions, while emotional empathy entails deeper identification with their states or reactions.

Cheshmehzangi and Butters (2022) highlight the impact of accelerated urban growth driven by economic interests, leading to environmental degradation and reduced quality of life. This urbanization model often prioritizes local resources and industries while neglecting sustainability and social equity, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities.

To address this issue, urban sustainability requires implementing public policies that integrate environmental practices into all aspects of urban life. Cities must adopt green technologies, such as renewable energy use, intelligent waste management systems, and green infrastructure solutions like green roofs and urban gardens. Additionally, cities need to adapt to climate change through resilience policies and disaster mitigation strategies, which primarily benefit the most vulnerable populations.

Some cities worldwide are already integrating education, urbanism, and environmental initiatives effectively. Cities like Curitiba, Brazil, are recognized for their efficient public transport and waste management systems, alongside sustainability-focused educational actions. In Europe, cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam have adopted sustainable urban policies emphasizing environmental education and green city planning.

Educating Cities is an innovative proposal that seeks to transform urban areas into continuous learning spaces, fostering civic participation, social inclusion, and sustainability. This global initiative recognizes that education transcends school boundaries, involving all aspects of urban life to build more equitable and balanced societies.

The concept of Educating Cities emerged in the 1990s following the First International Congress of Educating Cities held in Barcelona. Since then, the movement has expanded, consolidated by the creation of the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) and the implementation of public policies positioning education as a cornerstone of urban planning.

Thus, an Educating City transforms all its spaces, public and private, into environments for learning and development, offering opportunities for academic growth, environmental awareness, and political participation.

In Brazil, 2024 marked a significant milestone with the XVII International Congress of Educating Cities held in Curitiba, Paraná. This event brought together representatives from governments, educators, urban planners, researchers, and civil society organizations worldwide.

With the central theme "Education and Sustainability: Pathways to the Future," the congress fostered discussions on innovative public policies, community projects, and the role of technologies in strengthening Educating Cities. Panel discussions addressed topics such as:

- **Inclusion and Diversity in Cities:** Strategies to reduce inequalities and ensure equitable access to education and urban services.
- **Sustainability as an Educating Principle:** Practices and initiatives that combine environmental preservation with civic education.
- **Culture and Continuous Learning:** Valuing local cultural expressions as a tool for fostering active citizenship.

In addition to theoretical discussions, the event highlighted practical examples of cities implementing the concept of Educating Cities, such as São Paulo and Medellín, demonstrating how integrated policies can transform urban and social realities.

Hosting the congress in Brazil underscores the country's importance in the global context of social and educational innovation. It emphasized the need to integrate education, culture, environment, and technology into urban policies, envisioning a future where every citizen is recognized as an agent of social transformation.

The Educating Cities model has also proven to be an effective alternative for integrating education and urbanism. These cities not only provide formal learning spaces but also transform the city itself into a vast educational space. Educating Cities are designed to promote civic participation, environmental preservation, and social inclusion, fostering an atmosphere of continuous learning and collaboration across different sectors of society.

Educating Cities emerge as a model that integrates education, urban planning, and sustainability. They offer an environment where knowledge and practice intertwine, promoting learning beyond the classroom walls. The central idea is that the city itself acts as an educational agent, with public policies, urban spaces, and communities working together to shape conscious and active citizens.

These cities promote environmental education and sustainability by involving schools, universities, civil society organizations, and the population in projects that aim to transform urban areas into more equitable and sustainable spaces. By integrating education with urban planning, Educating Cities contribute to building a more balanced, resilient society capable of addressing future challenges.

Building sustainable societies is a complex, multifaceted process that requires collaboration across all societal sectors. Education, urban planning, and sustainability are fundamental pillars of this process, and their intersection offers creative and effective solutions to contemporary urban and environmental challenges.

Only through integrated planning that considers social, environmental, cultural, educational, and economic dimensions can cities meet the needs of present generations while ensuring a sustainable future for those to come.

According to Godoy and Benini (2024), a critical analysis of the relationship between urban morphology—understood as the shape and organization of urban spaces—and urban

planning is essential to address challenges and leverage potentialities for constructing more sustainable cities. By directing urban practices that integrate these concepts, it is possible to promote social justice, democratic participation, and sustainability, transforming urban spaces into more balanced and inclusive environments.

Education plays a transformative role, creating conscious citizens ready to act and contribute to a fairer and more sustainable world. As Gadotti (2012) emphasizes, the transformation of the world depends on transforming people, a process intertwined with overcoming individualistic logic and unrestrained profit-seeking.

Education, in the context of Educating Cities, represents an opportunity for sustainable development and the formation of citizens committed to improving their city and the planet. Through education, city dwellers learn the importance of preserving natural resources, adopting sustainable practices in their daily lives, and participating in decisions that directly impact their lives and surroundings.

Integrating education into sustainable urban planning involves actions and policies aimed not only at improving living conditions but also fostering a new consciousness about the environment and society. This can include environmental education programs in schools and public spaces, as well as encouraging public participation in decisions about land use, transportation, housing, and other aspects of urban planning.

The goal is to create a virtuous cycle where education, urbanism, and sustainability continuously intersect, cultivating citizens who are socially and environmentally responsible while contributing to the development of more inclusive and efficient cities.

Brazilian cities have already begun adopting the concept of Educating Cities, implementing public policies that promote education and sustainable planning. São Paulo's Unified Educational Centers (CEUs) are a noteworthy example, offering integrated public spaces for education, culture, and community participation. Located in peripheral areas, CEUs provide access to education, culture, health, sports, and leisure, fostering active engagement in neighborhood management and inclusive urban development (CABEZUDO, 2004).

Similarly, Curitiba stands out for its urban management and environmental policies. Known for its sustainable architecture and efficient public transportation systems, the city also emphasizes environmental education, raising awareness about responsible resource use and environmental preservation.

These examples show how integrating education into urban planning can significantly improve people's quality of life and reduce cities' environmental impact. Promoting education in various aspects of urban life—such as waste management, renewable energy use, and green space preservation—directly contributes to sustainability and population well-being.

In an Educating City, urban planning must integrate urban spaces with education and the environment, creating opportunities for active citizen involvement in shaping the city and society. The city becomes a dynamic, continuous learning space that includes children in schools and adults in community activities and public spaces.

Education in Educating Cities should target all age groups and social contexts. From formal education in schools to public sensitization and training activities, the city must become a space for lifelong learning. Urban planning should incorporate educational spaces that encourage interaction among residents and address sustainability topics, such as environmental

stewardship, citizenship promotion, and active participation in political and community decisions.

Public policies should aim to create educational systems that connect urban needs to socio-environmental demands, promoting knowledge and practices that ensure sustainability. Encouraging community involvement in decision-making processes, such as urban master plan development, and fostering citizenship networks, helps ensure that sustainable actions become collective rather than individual endeavors.

Educating Cities provide a concrete proposal for aligning contemporary socio-environmental demands with sustainable development. They encourage reflection on the relationship between education, sustainability, and social transformation, paving the way for a more just and harmonious future.

By ensuring that education and sustainable urban planning work together seamlessly, cities can develop in a balanced manner, respecting both human needs and natural resource preservation. Urban planning must transcend technical considerations and adopt a pedagogical approach, incorporating education as a cornerstone of sustainable development.

Thus, Educating Cities invite us to rethink the intersection of education, sustainability, and social transformation, offering a promising pathway toward more sustainable, equitable, and conscious societies.

3 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this article is to investigate how the concept of Educating Cities can be established as an effective approach to driving the development of sustainable societies. Central to this is the role of education in transforming urban spaces and fostering a culture of sustainability, which is essential for building a more just and balanced future.

The specific objectives of the study include: (i) Exploring the concept of Educating Cities and its application within the context of sustainable development, assessing how education can positively influence the transformation of urban spaces; (ii) Analyzing practices and experiences of Educating Cities in Brazil and worldwide, highlighting examples that demonstrate the integration of education into urban planning and management; (iii) Investigating the interaction between education, urbanism, and sustainability to understand how these fields can complement each other in achieving sustainable goals; (IV) Proposing pedagogical strategies and public management approaches to facilitate the implementation of sustainable Educating Cities, promoting environmental education and cultivating active citizens in the urban transformation process.

These objectives guide the research, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the transformative role of education in creating more inclusive, sustainable, and socially responsible cities, while addressing practical challenges and suggesting innovative solutions.

4 METHODOLOGY / ANALYSIS METHOD

This article was developed through a bibliographic review aimed at understanding the concept of Educating Cities and its implications for the development of sustainable societies. The

approach encompassed both theoretical aspects and practical experiences on a national level.

The methodology included identifying Brazilian cities that have declared themselves Educating Cities and analyzing the specific proposals and projects developed by these cities. The goal was to identify initiatives targeting the development of sustainable societies, focusing on the intersection of education, urbanism, and the environment.

The research process involved two main stages:

1. **Identification of Brazilian Educating Cities:** This stage utilized databases from the International Association of Educating Cities (IAEC) and other official sources promoting this movement in Brazil to determine which cities had joined the initiative.
2. **Analysis of Proposals and Projects:** The second stage focused on examining the proposals and implemented projects of these cities, particularly those promoting education, sustainability, and citizen participation.

Data Collection: Data were collected through document analysis and consulting materials provided by municipal governments and organizations managing these initiatives. Sources included IAEC reports, publications from governmental and non-governmental organizations, and institutional materials from participating cities.

Analysis Objectives: The analysis sought to investigate how Educating Cities integrated the principles of sustainable education, active citizenship, and urban sustainability into their actions and to evaluate the impacts of these practices on quality of life and urban development. The following criteria guided the analysis:

- **Projects with Educational Actions:** Identifying educational programs and analyzing the interaction between schools, educational institutions, and urban spaces.
- **Projects with Sustainability Actions:** Assessing implemented sustainable practices, including the use of social technologies, waste management, and the creation of educational public spaces.
- **Projects with Cultural Actions:** Promoting local identity, cultural heritage preservation, and democratizing access to culture.
- **Projects with Urban Planning and Infrastructure Actions:** Aiming to improve urban quality of life through organized, sustainable, and accessible urban spaces.
- **Projects with Community Engagement and Participation Actions:** Investigating initiatives to involve local communities and promote citizen participation in urban and educational decision-making.
- **Projects with Perceived Impact Actions:** Analyzing the social, environmental, and educational impacts of the projects, using indicators such as quality of life and environmental outcomes.

The results identified patterns and trends in specific types of initiatives, providing insights into the different strategies adopted by Educating Cities in Brazil. This analysis also allowed for the identification of replicable best practices and supported the formulation of more effective public policies.

By mapping and analyzing concrete experiences of Brazilian cities involved in the Educating Cities movement, this process identified good practices, challenges, and lessons

learned, contributing to the development of sustainable models that integrate education, urban planning, and active citizenship in the Brazilian urban context.

5 RESULTS: CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES IN BUILDING SUSTAINABLE EDUCATING CITIES

Currently, in Brazil, several municipalities are associated with the Educating Cities initiative and, based on this declaration, have developed various proposals aligned with the program's objectives. Representatives of Brazilian cities present significant projects and actions to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants.

The 41 municipalities are presented below according to their regions:

- **Southern Region** - Apucarana (PR), Camargo (RS), Carazinho (RS), Concórdia (SC), Curitiba (PR), Fagundes Varela (RS), Florianópolis (SC), Guaporé (RS), Marau (RS), Mata (RS), Morretes (PR), Nova Petrópolis (RS), Palmeira (PR), Passo Fundo (RS), Piên (PR), Porto Alegre (RS), Quitandinha (PR), São Vicente do Sul (RS), Sarandi (RS), Soledade (RS), Tijucas do Sul (PR), Três Palmeiras (RS).
- **Southeastern Region** - Araraquara (SP), Guarulhos (SP), Mauá (SP), Raul Soares (MG), Santiago (RS), Santo André (SP), Santos (SP), São Bernardo do Campo (SP), São Caetano do Sul (SP), São Gabriel (RS), São José dos Campos (SP), São Paulo (SP).
- **Central-Western Region** - Pontalina (GO), Rio Brillhante (MS).
- **Northeastern Region** - Horizonte (CE), Ipecaetá (BA), Monte Horebe (PB), Olinda (PE), Vitória de Santo Antão (PE).

The results were organized based on the defined analysis categories. However, in some municipalities, no projects or actions were available for evaluation. The municipalities with no identifiable initiatives are: Fagundes Varela (RS); Florianópolis (SC); Guaporé (RS); Ipecaetá (BA); Marau (RS); Mata (RS); Monte Horebe (PB); Morretes (PR); Olinda (PE); Piên (PR); Pontalina (GO); Porto Alegre (RS); Quitandinha (PR); São Caetano do Sul (SP); São Gabriel (RS); São José dos Campos (SP); São Vicente do Sul (RS); Sarandi (RS); Soledade (RS); Tijucas do Sul (PR); Três Palmeiras (RS); and Vitória de Santo Antão (PE).

The Educating City is constantly evolving and may have diverse expressions but will always prioritize cultural investment and the continuous training of its population. Thus, in addition to its traditional functions (economic, social, political, and service provision), it assumes intentionality and responsibility for the training, promotion, and development of all its inhabitants: children, youth, adolescents, adults, and the elderly (Cabezudo, 2004, p. 12).

Some municipalities have more than one project or action developed within their territories. As a result, the projects and actions analyzed exhibit characteristics from more than one category but were classified based on their essential feature.

Next, we present the results of the analysis related to the category **“Projects with Educational Actions.”** This category includes initiatives aimed at promoting education in various contexts, highlighting the municipalities' commitment to fostering educational practices that integrate innovation, inclusion, and social development. The survey in Table 01 considered projects aimed at improving education quality, promoting citizenship education, and integrating the school community with cultural, environmental, and social issues.

Table 01 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Educational Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Concórdia (SC)	School Games	The event is aimed at students from both public and private schools in Concórdia, covering urban and rural areas. Its goal is to promote integration through sports, fostering sporting values and offering moments of leisure.
Guarulhos (SP)	World Play Week	During this week, play activities were held in squares, parks, and streets, encouraging interaction with nature and reinforcing the municipality’s commitment to children’s rights and the construction of an Educating City.
Guarulhos (SP)	Literary April... literally that	The initiative included webinars, lectures, cultural programming in schools, distribution of literary books to students, and the launch of the contest “Thoughts Fly and Words Connect.”
Guarulhos (SP)	Right to Learn Project	This project aims to provide students facing learning difficulties with additional time to engage in educational practices, fostering progress in skills such as reading, text production, and mathematics.
Nova Petrópolis (RS)	Reader City: Comprehensive Reading Promotion Program in the Municipality	Reading expands knowledge, develops skills, and critical thinking, helping to identify reliable information in a world of misinformation, promoting personal well-being and a more conscious society.
Palmeira (PR)	It’s in Our Nature to Care for Palmeira’s Future	This project promotes playful and practical environmental education, encouraging preservation and sustainability. In 2024, it became law to ensure permanent actions and lasting impacts.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Ki_da_hort@	This project is a biological learning laboratory promoting school gardens as a pedagogical strategy for students from Early Childhood Education to 9th Grade of Elementary School.
Passo Fundo (RS)	FABLAB	The FabLab at the University of Passo Fundo is a space offering tools and materials for prototyping, fostering innovation and experimentation. Its goal is to integrate technology into the daily lives of the community and academics.
Santiago (RS)	The Smequinho Program	Santiago’s reading and theater program adapts a school bus into a mobile children’s library, bringing stories and cultural activities to local schools and surrounding areas.
Santos (SP)	Santos in the Light of Reading: Environmental Studies and Oceanic Culture	This project aims to broaden access to reading in schools and cultivate competent readers, engaging students, schools, and the municipality. Each year, a theme is chosen, aligned with public policies and official documents.
São Paulo (SP)	Board Games Program	The Board Games Program, established by SME Ordinance No. 7,240/2016, aims to promote the teaching and practice of Chess, Mancala Awelé, Jaguar Game, and Go in São Paulo’s schools, with teacher training included.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

Below, we present in Table 02 the results of the analysis related to the category **"Projects with Sustainability Actions."** This category encompasses initiatives committed to practices that promote environmental preservation, the conscious use of natural resources, environmental education, and the development of more resilient and sustainable communities.

Table 02 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Sustainability Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Curitiba (PR)	Sustainable Entrepreneurship Education Project	In partnership with SEBRAE, this project promotes sustainable entrepreneurial education for students, encouraging innovation, socio-emotional skills, and alignment with BNCC and SDGs.
Curitiba (PR)	Knowledge Lines Program	This project provides Curitiba students access to cultural and social spaces, promoting educational, cultural, and environmental activities, strengthening connections with the city and the school curriculum.
Curitiba (PR)	Municipal School of Sustainability	The Municipal School of Sustainability in Curitiba promotes environmental education through intersectoral activities for diverse audiences. It offers workshops on topics like biodiversity, climate change, and water resources.
Horizonte (CE)	Sustainable Horizon Project	This project promotes environmental education in Horizonte, addressing sustainability, agroecology, and socio-environmental topics, integrating pedagogical practices to form conscious citizens and drive cultural and behavioral changes in society.
Santo André (SP)	Water, Camera, Action - Socio-environmental Educommunication	This project fosters debates to build an environmentally responsible society, uniting youth in socio-environmental learning and audiovisual production, addressing water issues, and promoting critical awareness of the environment.
Santo André (SP)	Municipal Environmental Education School - Tangará Park	This project aims to equip citizens for sustainable urban living, promoting educational practices, environmental ethics, and social transformation through workshops, community mobilization, and participation, creating a positive environmental impact.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

The analyzed projects demonstrate the efforts of municipalities to incorporate sustainability as a transversal axis in public policies, engaging the community in actions that integrate technological innovation, circular economy, biodiversity preservation, and the promotion of ecological citizenship. Additionally, noteworthy strategies include those aimed at mitigating environmental impacts, such as selective waste collection, water resource utilization, green space revitalization, and environmental awareness campaigns. This analysis provides insight into the challenges faced during the implementation of these initiatives, as well as examples that can serve as models for other localities.

Below, we present in Table 03 the results of the analysis related to the category **"Projects with Cultural Actions."** This category encompasses initiatives focused on valuing, preserving, and promoting local, regional, and national cultural manifestations, integrating artistic, historical, and social elements that enrich community identities.

Table 03 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Educational Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Horizonte (CE)	Expanding Horizons: An Encounter with Quilombola Culture	This project aims to expand knowledge of Education for Ethnic-Racial Relations, promoting an understanding of the history and culture of the Alto Alegre Quilombola community and teaching Afro-Brazilian History and Culture.
Mauá (SP)	Pedagogical and Industrial Tourism as an Opportunity	This initiative integrates theory and practice in an innovative, interdisciplinary approach. Beyond promoting education and leisure, it contributes to a more efficient society, impacting health, safety, and the economy positively.
Raul Soares (MG)	Performing Arts Program: Memory Through Theater	The goal is to revive theatrical activities in the municipality, linked or not to schools. In 2022, the first "Introduction to Theater Workshop" was held, training new facilitators.
Rio Brilhante (MS)	A Multifaceted Event with Entrepreneurship, Art, and Culture	The event showcased entrepreneurship, creativity, robotics, and science with fairs, art exhibitions, experiments, and cultural presentations, promoting student talents, intergenerational inclusion, and community partnerships.
Santiago (RS)	Knowledge Station	The Knowledge Station, a multifunctional cultural space, emerged from the revitalization of Santiago's old railway station. It features railway history on the ground floor and tributes to poets on the upper level.
Santo André (SP)	Music in Schools Project	This project by the Santo André City Council offers free music education to municipal school students, promoting inclusion, motor coordination, and instrumental practice, with a focus on forming a Youth Orchestra and Choir.
São Paulo (SP)	Municipal Circula Project	This project provides free classical music performances in São Paulo's Unified Educational Centers (CEUs), featuring the Experimental Repertoire Orchestra, String Quartet, and Lyric Choir.
São Paulo (SP)	Guided Visits Program	This program, exclusive to RMESP students, offers free guided tours to museums, theaters, and cultural centers via an online platform, targeting students and educators from municipal schools.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

The analyzed projects reveal a commitment to democratizing access to culture through activities such as artistic workshops, cultural festivals, exhibitions, the preservation of historical heritage, and initiatives focused on literature, music, theater, and other cultural expressions. Many of these projects are also aligned with educational strategies, using culture as a tool for social inclusion and the promotion of diversity and citizenship.

Additionally, there is a noticeable emphasis on encouraging active community participation in creative processes, fostering both the production and consumption of cultural

activities. These actions strengthen social bonds and promote the recognition and appreciation of cultural roots, contributing to the human and social development of localities.

Below, we present in Table 04 the results of the analysis related to the category **"Projects with Urban Planning and Infrastructure Actions."** This category encompasses initiatives aimed at the sustainable development of cities, improving the population's quality of life through urban planning strategies, territorial organization, and the strengthening of local infrastructure.

Table 04 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Educational Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Concórdia (SC)	Educating City Multiuse Space	The Multiuse Space will offer integrated activities in education, health, social assistance, sports, and culture, catering to people of various age groups and promoting inclusive and comprehensive education.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Post-COVID Center for Combating Educational Inequality	The project aims to promote equity and human rights through qualified pedagogical actions, multidisciplinary support, and integration with projects from the Municipal Department of Education.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Linear Park on Avenida Brasil and Revitalization of Presidente Vargas Avenue	The Linear Park project seeks to enhance green medians by offering new functionalities and improvements, such as bike paths, walking tracks, equipment, lighting, free Wi-Fi, and video monitoring for increased safety and accessibility.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Viva a Praça Programs	The project aims to attract partners for revitalizing and conserving green areas and public squares through cooperation agreements, promoting environmental preservation and citizenship through informational signage.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Prisma Geek Space	The Prisma Geek Space is an innovative public area offering creative learning experiences, promoting reading and authorship practices from print to digital, focusing on geek culture for all age groups.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

The analyzed projects demonstrate a commitment to integrating practices that promote urban mobility, accessibility, dignified housing, basic sanitation, and the creation of inclusive and functional public spaces. Some initiatives stand out for incorporating sustainability principles, such as the use of clean technologies, nature-based solutions, and projects that minimize environmental impacts.

Additionally, actions were identified that focus on revitalizing degraded urban areas, strengthening city resilience to natural disasters, and encouraging the use of renewable energy sources in public facilities. These projects often involve community participation, fostering open dialogue among public authorities, technical experts, and society to address local needs while respecting the cultural and social identity of each territory. Through these actions, municipalities progress in building more inclusive, connected cities prepared to face contemporary urban challenges.

Below, we present in Table 05 the results of the analysis for the category "**Projects with Community Engagement and Participation Actions.**" This category highlights initiatives that promote active interaction between citizens and public authorities, strengthening the sense of belonging, citizenship, and collective construction of solutions to local challenges.

Table 05 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Community Engagement and Participation Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Apucarana (PR)	United Against Dengue	This project promotes environmental awareness, dengue prevention, and public health, emphasizing social responsibility and collective commitment to combat dengue and form responsible citizens.
Camargo (RS)	Educating City is a Clean City	The initiative involves a city-wide cleanup drive to collect recyclable waste, raising awareness about environmental preservation, improving the quality of life for Camargo residents, and keeping the city cleaner.
Concórdia (SC)	Elderly: Masters of Life	This project aims to strengthen intergenerational bonds by promoting dialogue between children and the elderly, reviving old stories and games, addressing social equality, and combating age-related prejudices and violence.
Guarulhos (SP)	Combating Arboviruses in Jardim Presidente Dutra	The proposal aims to raise community awareness about eliminating mosquito breeding grounds in response to high larval indices in Jardim Presidente Dutra, involving various departments and schools.
Santiago (RS)	Green Currency: Organic Waste for Cash	The municipality implemented selective waste collection across all neighborhoods, promoting environmental education. The Green Currency initiative honors local environmentalists, educating on sustainability, solidarity economy, and fauna preservation.
Santo André (SP)	Foot in the Park Program	This program offers free guidance on physical activities in Santo André's parks, with trained physical education teachers and interns serving walkers and runners during morning hours.
Santo André (SP)	Popular Legal Promoters Course	This project trains "Popular Legal Promoters" to act as citizen multiplier agents, addressing topics such as gender, health, children's rights, and violence prevention, strengthening female community leadership.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

The projects analyzed in this category highlight the municipalities' efforts to create spaces for dialogue and participation, such as community forums, municipal councils, and public hearings. These initiatives aim to listen to the population's needs, identify priorities, and ensure that decisions are made collaboratively and inclusively.

Some projects stand out for investing in the development of community leadership, equipping citizens to act as agents of transformation in their neighborhoods and communities. Other initiatives focus on encouraging volunteerism, creating community support networks, and

strengthening partnerships between civil society, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

These actions reflect the municipalities' commitment to consolidating democratic practices, promoting shared responsibility in local development, and fostering more engaged, cohesive, and resilient communities.

The analysis of the category **"Projects with Perceived Impacts"** brings together initiatives that stand out for promoting significant and measurable transformations in the communities they serve (Table 06). These projects demonstrate tangible results—whether physical, social, educational, or cultural—providing direct benefits to the territories and citizens involved.

Table 06 – Experiences of Brazilian Educating Cities in the Category “Projects with Educational Actions”

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Araraquara (SP)	Municipal Program: Territories in Network	Established by Municipal Law No. 9,344/2018, this program coordinates intersectoral actions in six priority territories, promoting social protection, equity in rights, and anti-discrimination efforts while strengthening public facilities and integrating services to local needs.
Carazinho (RS)	Slow Down: For Safer Traffic	The Carazinho committee created educational mechanisms to raise community awareness about traffic laws, promoting citizenship, safety, and mutual respect among drivers and pedestrians, transforming practices into daily habits.
Guarulhos (SP)	Girl of the Eyes Program	This project promotes eye health in public schools, detecting vision problems early, referring students for treatment, and improving learning and quality of life.
Guarulhos (SP)	Guarulhos: A City That Protects	This initiative fosters intersectoral actions to uphold the rights of children and adolescents facing violence, providing training and practical-theoretical resources to actors in the Rights Assurance System.
Horizonte (CE)	Intimate Dignity Program	This project addresses poverty and intimate health for women in Horizonte, ensuring access to hygiene products, promoting health and citizenship, and preventing educational exclusion for vulnerable girls and trans men.
Horizonte (CE)	Beija-Flor Project	The project coordinates and implements intersectoral public policies through the Beija-Flor Committee, strengthening strategic management with integrated actions, training programs, and collective planning among municipal departments.
Palmeira (PR)	CEAD – Specialized Support Center for Diversity	This initiative provides mental health, socio-emotional support, and physical care to children and adolescents with learning or behavioral difficulties in public schools.
Passo Fundo (RS)	Accelerate Passo Fundo	The Accelerate Passo Fundo program aims to foster economic development by promoting entrepreneurship, job creation, and income generation while expediting licensing processes to overcome the economic impacts of the pandemic.

BRAZILIAN EDUCATING CITIES	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
Passo Fundo (RS)	Coffee with Employment	"Coffee with Employment" connects companies with job seekers, facilitating workforce integration and promoting employment opportunities in Passo Fundo.
São Bernardo do Campo (SP)	Participatory Multiyear Plan (PPA)	The Participatory Multiyear Plan (PPA) promotes inclusive governance by engaging citizens to set goals and programs. It integrates tools like the Participatory Budget and sectoral plans, strengthening democracy and prioritizing vulnerable groups.

Sources: Rebrace, 2023; 2024; International Association of Educating Cities, 2024.

There has been an improvement in the quality of public services, with positive impacts in areas such as education, health, mobility, safety, and recreation, raising the standard of living and well-being of the population. Additionally, the analyzed initiatives reveal increased community engagement, with greater social participation in councils, forums, and public events, strengthening the bond between residents and public administration.

In the fields of education and social inclusion, programs have stood out for contributing to the reduction of inequalities, improving school performance, and including vulnerable groups such as at-risk youth and individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the analyzed projects have led to cultural and behavioral transformations, fostering the appreciation of local identity, strengthening community ties, and enhancing civic awareness, promoting lasting changes in the social fabric. This analysis demonstrates how well-planned and participatory municipal actions can transform realities and address local needs, reinforcing the role of well-structured projects in sustainable and social development within communities.

All these experiences of Educating Cities highlight the challenge of creating a new perspective for engaging with the world—respecting and interacting in relationships among individuals, humanity, nature, and other living beings. We believe it is necessary to think and act toward building a civilizational process that ensures a new way of producing, distributing, and circulating goods generated by cities and a new way of acting, being, thinking, and interacting within humanity’s place in the world.

Thus, the city becomes a cultural space where educational actions occur. It contains numerous locations where schools can engage with the city for educational purposes, serving as an open-air stage for the exchange of knowledge. Consequently, the city needs to structure, organize, and intentionally position itself to be both educational and sustainable. It must go beyond its usual functions and focus on fostering citizenship.

CONCLUSION

We are all responsible for fostering a more just and conscious society, and to this end, it is essential to create communication and participation channels that encourage everyone’s involvement. However, society must be prepared and educated for truly active and responsible participation. This involves valuing local resources—natural, human, cultural, economic, and institutional—to enable sustainable development that considers local circumstances and their influence on regional and global contexts.

In this perspective, Sustainable Societies adopt an educational approach aimed at transforming individuals into multipliers/educators of socio-environmental knowledge, who, in turn, can train other multipliers/educators. This educational action promotes dialogue among various organized sectors. These multipliers/educators could engage in projects and actions within municipalities, river basins, or administrative regions, guiding municipalities toward an education focused on sustainability.

Thus, Sustainable Societies value the initiatives of Educating Cities, reflecting on the various spaces within municipalities with the aim of stimulating and supporting collective spaces as educational environments. To achieve this, the following objectives are considered: (i) Transform collective spaces within municipalities into educational environments, fostering the development of citizens committed to daily sustainability practices and active participation in public management; (ii) Encourage continuous transformative education actions, promoting proactive engagement in self-education and knowledge-sharing, contributing to the collective construction of sustainable societies; (iii) Support and strengthen local institutions and partnerships within municipalities, enabling innovative educational projects that prioritize sustainability as a guiding principle; (iv) Develop regional indicators and specific evaluation systems, enabling the monitoring of municipal progress and granting the Certificate of Participation and the Educating Cities and Sustainable Societies Seal.

Educating Cities represent an innovative approach to urban planning, integrating education as a central axis in the construction of sustainable and inclusive cities. The concept of an Educating City goes beyond the traditional functions of providing infrastructure and basic services; it emphasizes the importance of an environment that fosters continuous learning, citizen participation, and the promotion of sustainable practices. In this model, the city is not merely a physical space but an educational agent that contributes to the human and social development of its inhabitants.

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