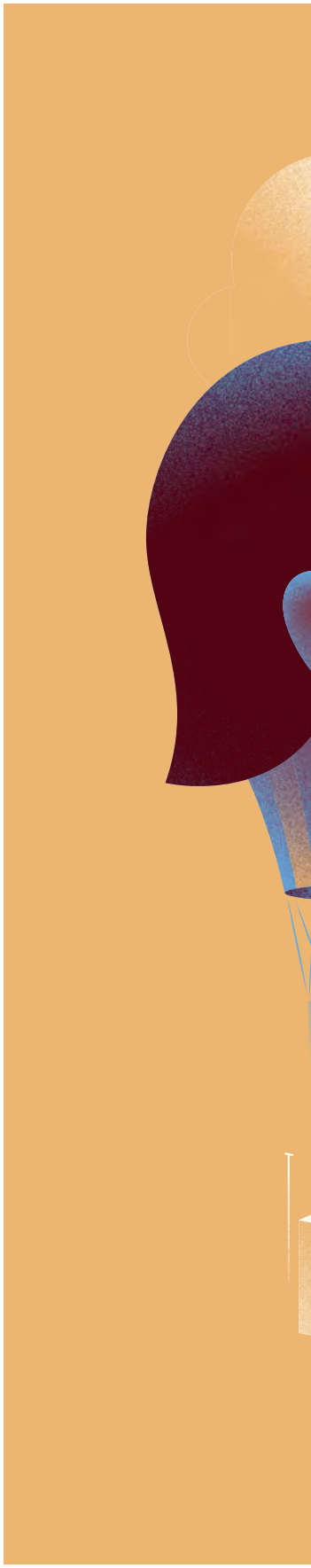
Social education becomes more relevant at Fundação Dom Cabral

Throughout its 45 years of existence, Fundação Dom Cabral (FDC) has evolved as one of the most relevant business, leadership and executive training schools in the world. In 2022, it held on to, once again, the 9th place in the Executive Education ranking of the British newspaper the Financial Times. **Nádia Rampi** looks at its focus on social education



In recent years, FDC has been reshaping its institutional positioning and has defined three major strategic moves for the 2021-2025 period. Aiming to expand its contribution to the sustainable development of society, FDC now also offers educational solutions to the less favoured strata of the population.

In this way, it becomes a market reference through training programs for various audiences, increasingly evolving as an institution for developing ideas, in addition to an executive education centre.

This new strategy is based on the following pillars: Integrated Education (Executive, Academic and Social), Social Inclusion (from the top to the bottom of the pyramid) and Knowledge (Think Action Tank, with development and mobilization of ideas).

I would like to highlight, in this article, within the context of the first pillar, how the proposals and actions for Social Education are becoming more relevant in the institution every day, reinforcing, and expanding its mission to contribute to the development of society. This includes the training of people in socially and economically vulnerable situations. These proposals and actions are turning into a movement that has also become permanent, especially as of 2020 with the creation of FDC – Centro Social Cardeal Dom Serafim, which brings together the Foundation's initiatives and social projects.

Our actions branch out and generate impacts in the following areas: Youth in Vulnerable Situations, Social Organisations, and Low-income Entrepreneurs. All initiatives are focused on the search for autonomy, dignity, and the prosperity of citizens, and for the well-being, especially of young people, through our main tool for action – education. The Centre also counts on the Social Inclusion Hub which has been developing research relevant to the institution, and developing methodologies with partners, focused on reducing labour poverty.

Chronologically, we can consider 2021 as the year that the Centre was firmly established, and 2022 as the beginning of our period of expansion. To date, more than 500,000 people have been, directly or indirectly, impacted by our actions. We intend to reach about one million beneficiaries by 2026.

Currently, the Centre develops five programs with several partners throughout the country. Check out the main initiatives and some of the results obtained in the three segments since its creation:

The area that focuses on young people in vulnerable situations brings together initiatives aimed at education, professionalisation and the granting of scholarships for different stages of education:

- Scholarships for up to 100% of FDC's Graduate, MBA, Master's and Open Programs, benefitting more than 90 participants
- Scholarships for up to 50% of undergraduate studies in partner institutions, benefitting four thousand students
- Scholarships for Professional and Technological Education (PTE), benefitting around 100 students
- Raízes Project: offers content from the Humanities and from different areas of knowledge to young people in vulnerable situations, using FDC methodology. The initiative has already benefitted more than 500 young people

The Social Organisations area, on the other hand, brings together initiatives aimed at training managers as a way to impact entire communities positively, through those who are closest to them and know the challenges and opportunities of each ecosystem.

PILARIS - Management Program for Social Organizations: developed to help organisations in civil society incorporate management tools into their day-to-day activities, making them self-sustaining and more attractive to investors, thus favouring the development of the entire community.

- BASIS – Training Trail for Social Impact Initiatives: aimed at training managers of small social actions to assimilate the fundamentals of governance and management. 184 managers from 76 social organisations have already participated in the initiative.

Furthermore, the area dedicated to low-income entrepreneurs is focused on the initiative of the Pra>Frente Movement. This is aimed at training nano- and micro-entrepreneurs, using their own methodology and involving volunteers engaged by FDC. The objective is to foster sustainable economic and social development through education in low-income entrepreneurship. Currently, the project has 6,544 entrepreneurs in training, in 25 states.

2021

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To foster this action, we have created the Favela Business School, in partnership with CUFA - Central Única de Favelas, to boost the power that exists in the communities of Brazil through the training of low-income entrepreneurs in the development of their enterprises. Business schools are not isolated from society – they need to face the challenges posed by the territory in which they operate. We are recognised throughout the world, and we have an ethical commitment to Brazil. Therefore, we cannot remain indifferent to the persistent cycle of poverty and the gigantic social inequality in our country. For this reason, we partnered with CUFA and Favela Fundos, and with their leaders, to set up the first business school for entrepreneurs from the Brazilian periphery. FDC is honoured to build, along with the players from the periphery, a school that can change the lives of many people.

We have no doubt that FDC, via its Centro Social Cardeal Dom Serafim, has made a significant contribution toward expanding initiatives aimed at themes and challenges related to environmental, social and governance issues synthesized by the acronym ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance). In this context, the ESG agenda is set to generate values for companies, governments, institutions and organisations from the three sectors, around the world.

We believe that social issues are part of the growing list of the most important solutions to ensure the economic development and well-being of society; and, that this is an important role that our school has been playing in our country.

After all, we are fully aware that FDC, as well as other business schools, belongs to an ecosystem that is increasingly complex and synergistic, that walks in synchrony with society, receiving, translating, and reflecting the signs of the new times.

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About the Author

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