

Roots of Love Program Restructuring

Introduction and Context

The Roots of Love - Nurturing and Including program was initially created to provide nutritional and food support for families with neurodivergent children through a balanced plant-based diet. After the initial phase of mapping and planning, we identified needs and realities that require a strategic adaptation at this moment to maximize the positive impact with the available resources.

Findings from the Mapping Phase

During the process of mapping and selecting beneficiary families, we identified three critical factors impacting the implementation of the project as originally conceived:

- Family composition: The mapped families have, on average, three or more children per household, different from the initial estimate, which considered smaller families. This means that adequate support would require a significantly higher volume of meals per family.
- Financial feasibility: The current available budget (\$67 per month, which after exchange rates and transfer fees results in approximately R\$131) is insufficient to cover the costs of producing and distributing ready-made meals for larger families, as well as the necessary transportation for delivery to each home. This financial reality severely compromises the sustainability of the original model.
- Long-term impact: We identified that, beyond immediate access to adequate food, families need knowledge and tools to maintain healthy eating practices continuously and autonomously.

Restructuring Proposal

Based on these findings and while maintaining the core objectives of the project, we propose a strategic restructuring focused on three pillars:

- Training and empowerment: Replacing, for now—until we have better financial and staffing structures—the delivery of ready-made meals with practical workshops on anti-inflammatory, allergen-free, plant-based cooking tailored to the specific nutritional needs of neurodivergent children. These workshops will equip mothers/caregivers with the necessary skills to prepare appropriate meals at home.
- Access to ingredients: Providing essential ingredients so families can immediately apply the knowledge acquired, ensuring access to necessary foods.
- Ongoing education: Developing and sharing educational materials through social media, expanding the project's reach and offering continuous support to participating families.

Justification for the Restructuring

This adaptation is justified by the following reasons:

- Financial infeasibility of the original model: With only R\$131 available monthly after all fees and conversions, it has become mathematically impossible to produce and deliver personalized meals within the program's proposal for families with multiple children while also covering transportation logistics for home delivery.

- Project sustainability: The proposed approach optimizes the use of limited resources, directing them toward activities with greater impact and reach.
- Expanded impact: By empowering mothers/caregivers, the project creates a multiplier effect, benefiting not only neurodivergent children but the entire family.
- Autonomy and empowerment: This approach promotes family independence by providing tools that enable them to maintain healthy eating practices even after the project's conclusion.
- Operational feasibility: The restructuring considers current logistical and time constraints, allowing for more efficient execution without compromising quality.

Revised Timeline

The project will follow the revised schedule below:

- March 2025: Completion of the mapping phase and selection of participating families.
- April 2025: First workshop cycle and distribution of essential ingredients.
- May-June 2025: Continuation of workshops, family follow-ups, and production of educational content.
- July 2025: Evaluation of results and necessary adjustments.

Updated Success Metrics

The project's success will be measured through the following metrics:

- Number of families trained.
- Number of workshops conducted.
- Variety of recipes and techniques taught.
- Family feedback on the application of knowledge.
- Engagement with educational content on social media.
- Reports of improvements in neurodivergent children's diets.

Conclusion

This restructuring remains true to the original purpose of the Roots of Love project, adapting its methodology to respond to the financial and logistical realities encountered. The proposed approach addresses the identified challenges and potentially expands the project's reach and sustainability at this time, maximizing the positive impact with available resources.

We believe this strategic adaptation will allow us to fulfill the core mission of supporting families with neurodivergent children through healthy eating, even if through different means than initially planned.