

Lounge

BOXING FOR THE SOUL

In the autumn of 2014, Hamburg-based Lufthansa employee Raiko Morales visited his wife Daiane's hometown for the first time. Morales is a boxing coach and was an active boxer in his youth. He has seen a lot, but the misery that he encountered, floored him – as they say in boxing circles.



Raiko Morales, employee at Lufthansa Group Safety and help alliance project manager, with children and adolescents of the Instituto Juventude Criativa recreation centre

HELP ALLIANCE

help alliance is the aid organization run by the Lufthansa Group and its employees. It currently bundles around 40 projects worldwide, which primarily provide access to education for young people. Employees take on voluntarily responsibility for each project, always in cooperation with competent local partners. All project contents are oriented to the standards of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the sustainable goals of the UN for 2030.

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There is no running water, hardly any electricity and the people live in shacks. Although the school offers lessons, few of the boys and girls, that the Morales encountered on the tour through the district with Daiane's cousin Anderson Couthino, attend. Alcohol and drugs are a serious problem.

Morales is familiar with the integrative power of sport. During his stay, he co-founded the Instituto Juventude Criativa Youth Recreation Centre with the cousin. In addition to music and dance, the centre offers boxing training. He bought gloves and sandbags and engaged a coach. Every child, every young person is welcome, but only if they also attend school. Before training starts, the children complete their homework and are given English lessons. Around 400 children visit regularly.

The first successes were becoming apparent, but the economic crisis in Brazil intensified. The local school closed in 2017, because the state could no longer pay teachers' salaries. Local supporters of the project abandoned ship as they found themselves in financial difficulties. At the beginning of 2018, the centre was on its last legs, so Morales submitted his project proposal to help alliance and received approval.



"I'm just happy that we can continue to provide this support and even expand what we have to offer," says Morales. The funds will be used to renovate the centre and to hire trainers and English teachers. "And we want to create the necessary structures, so that the project can sustain itself from 2021," Morales explains.