

 Pillar 3.
INTEGRATION

ALANA INSTITUTE

The climate crisis as a children's rights crisis

- **Country:** Brazil
- **Number of staff:** 120
- **Year of incorporation:** 1994
- **Type:** Private foundation
- **Endowment:** Yes
- **More information:** alana.org.br

Alana Institute is dedicated to working towards developing full capacities and defending the rights of children and adolescents. Their work towards this goal is aligned with other entities of the same group – Alana Foundation and Alana Lab – with each one approaching the cause from a different perspective. All three entities work in the philanthropic space, investing in the fields of technology, innovation and research.

One example of Alana Foundation's contribution to tackling the climate emergency is its partnership with X-Prize – a global platform for impact that is leveraging the power of competition and incentivising radical breakthroughs for the benefit of humanity. The Lab focuses on entertainment-led strategies as tools to lead positive social impact. The Alana Institute focuses more on advocacy and awareness raising, litigation¹, publications, and campaigning. The three entities work independently but their activities are intertwined by three transversal strategic pillars: climate, digital development, and social justice.

The Institute's mission is to honour the rights of children. Their approach was initially inspired by the experiences of Alana's founders – siblings, Ana Lucia and Alfredo Villela – with vulnerable communities in Jardim

¹ "Pacote verde do STF: crianças e natureza nas mãos da Justiça", Alana, <https://alana.org.br/pacote-verde-do-stf/>

Pantanal, in São Paulo, Brazil. As heirs of one of the wealthiest families in Brazil, they inherited some land that was occupied by several homeless families. Instead of hiring lawyers to cease the occupation, they decided to address some of the key social challenges that contributed to the situation and, through social welfare work, developed the “Espaço Alana”.

From their initially more traditional social development work, they grew more aware of how consumerism affects vulnerable communities, especially children. To address this issue, Alana developed the Child and Consumerism Programme², which encourages people to reflect deeply on the unsustainability of consumption patterns in our society, and exposes its adverse effects, especially on children. Childhood obesity, for example, is a particularly harmful effect which Alana produced a documentary to unpack, entitled “Muito Além do Peso (Way Beyond Weight)”³. Producing the documentary helped Alana’s team learn about the importance of storytelling as a powerful tool for education and advocacy.

From children’s obesity to climate change

“

They (children) are always placed in the future, not in the present”.

– LAÍS FLEURY, ALANA FOUNDATION DIRECTOR

Alana’s team wanted to go beyond problematising the issue, to proposing solutions and part of the solution relates to nature. It is the mission of the [Children and Nature Programme](#)⁴ to defend the right of every child to live in a healthy environment, strengthening their bond with nature. Through the Programme, several activities are organised, such as conferences, policymaker missions and visits to cities that are leading public policy efforts to create more child-friendly environments. The more that the team talked about this, the clearer it became that climate change had to be included in the Institute’s overall strategy.

It became apparent that, while youth are considered a key stakeholder in the global climate debate, children are rarely included or considered as a specific segment of society. Furthermore, despite the urgency of preserving nature for future generations, today’s children are being harmed by not having access to an ecologically balanced environment, as established by the Brazilian Federal Constitution.

² “Criança e Consumo”, Alana, <https://alana.org.br/project/crianca-e-consumo/>

³ YouTube, Muito além do peso, Complete film, January 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8UGe5GiHCT4>

⁴ “Criança e Natureza”, Alana, <https://alana.org.br/en/project/crianca-e-natureza-2/>

From climate awareness to climate advocacy

As an organisation with experience in strategic litigation, and understanding the impact it could have, one of Alana's main strategies was to prioritise children's right to nature within the courts. Alana was one of several non-profit organisations and political parties that filed a package of seven lawsuits in the Brazilian Supreme Court, against the Brazilian government, for its anti-climate agenda. Alana's policy briefs about children's right to nature were used to inform the Court's decision.

As Alana's system expands, they are starting to work more with match-funding and innovating in the way they work by connecting with other foundations and the private sector. The Institute's goal is to establish multisectoral partnerships for climate advocacy and to centre children within climate conversations. They also drive climate advocacy through the production of fiction media. The Institute recently partnered with the most prominent TV company in Brazil to produce a TV series called *Aruanas*⁵, which fictionally explores the lives of activists in the Amazon region fighting illegal mining.

Realising the importance of expanding their national advocacy strategy for children's rights and climate change, in 2020, the Institute interviewed children from different regions of Brazil, aged between 6 and 12, to understand how their lives were being impacted by the climate emergency. The Institute shared the insights gained at COP26, in Glasgow, promoting discussions about this perspective in side events and roundtables, and distributing material about climate justice and their initiatives.

“COP is a picture of what is happening worldwide, the main discussions, and what must be done about these issues. And during our first time at the conference, we evaluated that the child's perspective was not being considered”.

– LAÍS FLEURY, ALANA FOUNDATION DIRECTOR

Alana has several plans with partners for future COP meetings. The Institute is creating the Children's First Coalition, which will strive to engage more philanthropies and other stakeholders interested in raising the children's rights agenda in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. This could present exciting new opportunities for other foundations working on this topic to engage further.

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of WINGS and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

⁵ *Aruanas*, IMDB, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9856336/>