

**Express Yourself**  
**Afro Reggae Script March 2003**

<i>Text on screen w/Xpression logo</i>	While Unicef does not fund AfroReggae it is an excellent example of integrated adolescent programming. This documentary project is part of Xpression--an initiative for reaching the most vulnerable adolescents through innovative programming approaches.
<i>Text on screen:</i>	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
<i>Opening montage Vigario Geral</i> <i>Afro Lata rehearsal in street</i>	<b>Junior:</b> “ I remember the first percussion class with 80 kids in Vigário Geral. They played until their hands bled.  The more they played, the more kids came. It was something uncontrollable. It seemed like that was their cry of freedom. I’m fed up, so I’m going to let off some steam: boom, boom, boom.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “I was at my house, when I was young, and I kept hearing this sound. I went out to the street, and I met up with some little kids who were banging on old tin cans from the garbage.  I followed them. I stayed there and played music with them. It was all dirty there, and we were sweating. Then the instructor invited us to be part of AfroReggae, and since then, we’ve been part of AfroReggae”
<i>Opening title</i>	AfroReggae: The Beat of Change
<i>Introduce Junior</i>	<b>Jose Junior:</b> “ For favela youth, we have daily classes in music, dance, circus and community leadership. Being part of AfroReggae is a style. It means not taking drugs, not drinking, not smoking, not dealing. It’s the clothes you use. It’s the way you talk. It’s helping people who are like you.”
<i>Introduce Reiko</i>	<b>Reiko:</b> “It’s about trust. It’s about role models. Positive role models. It’s about offering alternative ways of looking at things and to help youth to get involved themselves.”
<i>younger kids in the clubhouse space drumming</i>	<b>Junior:</b> “ We taught them some rhythms and you could see some very skinny kids, who seemed to grow as they banged the drums. It wasn’t just about playing drums. They were saying: I’m here, I’m alive, I’m present. Can you see me?”
	<b>Junior:</b> “All the boys in whom we invested in the beginning, in

	1994, became leaders and idols.”
<i>Introduce Wallace</i>	<b>Wallace:</b> “You can’t understand this reality because you can’t film the drug dealers or the police.”
	<b>Junior:</b> “The majority of these kids know that their future is prison or death. They’re not fooled when they join. It’s just that the lack of hope or perspectives is so great, that they only see this path.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “ There’s violence with gangsters, mostly during shootouts they have with police. They start to shoot and we stay in the houses, all scared.”
<i>Introduce Dada</i>	<b>Dada:</b> “it’s complicated, because you see a trafficker who earns more in a week than a father with a family earns working for a whole month. There’s no health care, there’s no way to decently survive. So, what’s a young person going to think? “I’m going into trafficking, I’ll earn more than my dad, I’ll make my mother’s life more comfortable, my parents won’t need to work anymore.”  Is it risky? Sure, it’s risky. But as many people here say, “We were born to die. Before I die, I should live.”
<i>Wallace getting ready for school</i>	<b>Wallace:</b> “I live with, well, mostly with my grandmother, because my mom goes out to work. I stay with her, she makes breakfast and lunch.”
<i>Wallace walking to school and in class</i>	<b>Wallace:</b> “ I wake up at 6, wash my face, take a bath, have breakfast, give my mother and grandmother a kiss, say goodbye to my brothers and go walk to the school.”
<i>Wallace i/v at school</i>	<b>Wallace:</b> “ To be in AfroReggae you’ve got to stay in school until you finish high school, when you’re 16 or 17.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “ Then I come to AfroReggae, go to workshops, rehearse. I’m always here at AfroReggae.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “My grandmother likes it that I’m here, and my mom does too, because they don’t want to see me on the streets mixing with those trafficking gangsters. 05:08:30
<i>Afro Lata rehearsal outside</i>	
	<b>Wallace:</b> “In Afro-Lata I play “marcação,” which is an instrument made from an acid can that we buy and then spray

	paint.”
	<b>Dada:</b> “Like all the kids in Afro Lata, Wallace has a brilliant future ahead of him. They’re there to make things happen.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “My dream is to be a drummer, a real professional.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “I’ve changed a lot. When I was younger, I hung out on the streets a lot for the heck of it, all dirty. I threw rocks at people’s houses. I was dirty and barefoot. When I came into AfroReggae, I changed, and I learned things.”
	<b>Junior:</b> “In the next few years I see him occupying a leadership position inside Afro Reggae, because he’s serious.”
	<b>Reiko:</b> “ Why are kids joining gangs? Because it gives them some meaning to their life. It helps give them status. It helps them feel part of a crowd, that they belong. I think that’s universal.”
	<b>Junior:</b> We use the same magnetic energy that attracts young people to drug trafficking to make them leave it.”
	<b>Dada:</b> “If they hadn’t come into Vigario Geral to do the social work that they are doing, I think that many kids here would not be alive today, including myself.”
	<b>Junior:</b> “Afro Reggae’s basic work is to create leaders. We use culture as our principle instrument, but our goal is to create social entrepreneurs who can change the social aspects of their community -- and society. We have a newspaper, an internet site, six bands, a chorus and a circus.”
<i>Text on Screen</i>	CIRCUS VIDEO
<i>Text on Screen</i>	<b>Roberta:</b> “You ask people really quick questions like: Do you use condoms? Are you familiar with contraceptive methods? What do you think about teenage pregnancy? We’re making this video to educate, to help people.”
	COMPUTER DANCE HEALTH TROUPE HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

	BANDS!
	<b>Roberta:</b> “That’s why its important to use protection, even for those diseases that have a cure because those facilitate the transmission of HIV, which causes AIDS.”
<i>Girls band rehearsing</i>	<p><b>Junior:</b> “Duda’s creating an all-girl band in Vigário Geral. Right now, AfroReggae’s thinking a lot about gender.</p> <p>The project was conceived to remove kids from drug trafficking. Those kids used to be boys, now they’re girls too , although in smaller numbers. It’s part of our evolution to create more projects for women.”</p>
<i>Girl from circus i/v</i>	<b>Lucilene:</b> “I learned about circus through Afro Reggae. For me it was fantastic because I want to be a professional, I want to be a circus performer.”
<i>Cidade de Deus sequence</i>	<b>Dada:</b> “In Cidade de Deus; there’s a choir of young people with seniors, an Afro-Reggae group that integrates youth with senior citizens.”
<i>Rehearsal footage in home</i>	<b>Wallace:</b> “We go there every Tuesday, and we rehearse with the seniors there. It’s great, it’s really cool!”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “ I asked her what she thought of Afro Reggae’s work with the seniors’ chorus. And she said that she really liked it... She said that it was good to rehearse with us, take part, because when young people are with the old people it seems like someone cares about them and they won’t give it up.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> They like us, and they like to sing.”
	<p><b>Junior:</b> “How many people does AfroReggae directly and indirectly affect? Honestly, I don’t know.</p> <p>Sunday in Vigário Geral at 10:30 p.m., there were four 7 to 11-year-old boys who I’d never seen, who said they belong to Afro Reggae and don’t.</p> <p>And not even I, the general coordinator, have the right to tell them that they don’t belong to Afro Reggae, even if they don’t. Feeling part of Afro Reggae they become part.”</p>
	<b>Dada:</b> Everybody takes care of everybody else. We’ll continue

	doing this, the new generations will continue taking care of each other so as not to lose this sense of family.”
	<b>Reiko:</b> “Afro-Reggae shows that it’s possible to do this in more than Rio. It’s based on giving value to local culture. It’s based on recognizing what kids want.”
	<b>Junior:</b> “We have this talent of making people believe more in themselves. That’s why I always say that the work has to be individual.”
	<b>Wallace:</b> “I have to be a good example, too, for the younger kids, learning more myself, inviting them to be part of AfroReggae, practicing with them, so that they grow up learning how to play music.”
<i>End screen 1</i>	Heartfelt thanks to Grupo Cultural AfroReggae, Reiko Niimi, Representative, UNICEF Brazil and Isabel Vasconcellos.  Thanks also to the United Nations Foundation for their financial support.
<i>End screen 2 w/2 logos</i>	Produced by UNICEF in association with Off Ramp Films