

## LETTER OF REFERENCE

CONTAS ABERTAS is an independent, non-government organization dedicated to support transparency, citizens' participation and social monitoring of public budget. Founded in 2005, it has received many awards for relevant services in favour of democracy and ethics in government.

The launch of SIGA BRASIL gave us a precious basis for the pursuit of our mission, since it made incredibly easier for us to access budget data, as compared to what we had before. The size of the impact for our work can be measured by the amount of time we started to save by using SIGA functionalities: what would take days, even months, to be accomplished became easily accessible in minutes, literally speaking. Another indicator was our freeing from restrictive working conditions. Before the initiative, we had to “borrow”, from a member of parliament, the password and client-server station for accessing the government financial information system (SIAFI). We had to occupy part of his small office and use very few people for doing the job. With SIGA, we could organize our work in a dedicated office off the National Congress and expand our services.

Besides doing and publishing investigations on our own, we also teach media professionals to access and interpret budget data. The SIGA BRASIL – EASY BUDGET initiative has also been a precious allied in such training programs, helping to multiply the number of people enrolled in budget social monitoring and participation. We think other organizations are also using the initiative for educational purposes countrywide.

We are strongly convinced that SIGA BRASIL – EASY BUDGET represents one of the most valuable public services in Brazil nowadays.



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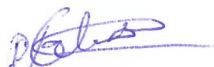
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Women's movement in Brazil has experienced important advancements in the last 10 years. CFEMEA is one of the main actors in fostering more government measures for combating domestic violence and protecting women's rights. SIGA BRAZIL initiative has been an important partner in the frontline.

Early in our organizational history, we realized that effective public policy depended strongly in securing financial resources in the annual budget bills. We started to study such hard, technical matter, but we faced a major hindrance: government officials used to say that government was taking actions on behalf of women, but the related expenditures were scattered throughout many federal programs, in health, education, social assistance and others. We simply could not see such women-specific expenditures or present evidence to confirm or disprove official rhetoric. That was when we met the SIGA BRASIL initiative and acquired valuable resources for qualifying our actions and conversations with government.

SIGA BRASIL enabled us to track down the entire annual budget bills to see what was there in favour of women's policy and to share data reports with dozens of NGOs partners throughout the country. Before such figures were available, actions coordination at national level was difficult and ineffective. With SIGA BRASIL's help, we strengthened our dialogue with government officials and became respected as qualified actors for discussing the structuring of budget information with the Federal Budget Secretary authorities.

For such reasons, we do support the nomination of SIGA for the 2019 UNPSA.



**Gilda Cabral**

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