FIGHTING FOOD INSECURITY IN BRAZIL: THE 2030 AGENDA AMIDTS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

O COMBATE À INSEGURANÇA ALIMENTAR NO BRASIL: A AGENDA 2030 EM MEIO À PANDEMIA DE COVID-19

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Abstract: Brazil, since the middle of the 21st century, has been standing out in the fight against food insecurity. Efficient public policies, such as Zero Hunger, anchored in the precepts of the Millennium Goals (MDGs), helped the country to leave the Hunger Map. However, this is no longer the reality of the nation, which has recently returned to the aforementioned Map due to poor public management, aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic, putting into question the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), scheduled for 2030. It is precisely on this topic that the present study, of an applied nature, seeks to discuss. To this end, a descriptive study of the MDGs and SDGs is carried out, as well as an analytical debate on the degradation of Brazilian food policy, including pandemic impacts. In addition, the use of bibliographic and documentary techniques regarding the research procedure is emphasized, which made it possible to demonstrate, in the end, that hunger is a currently endemic situation in Brazil, which will only be reversed by combating the invisibility of those who are directly affected by it.
Keywords: Food Insecurity; Brazil; Hunger Map; Covid-19; Sustainable Development Goals.

Resumo: O Brasil, desde meados do século XXI, vinha se destacando no combate à insegurança alimentar. Políticas públicas eficientes, como o Fome Zero, ancoradas nos preceitos dos Objetivos do Milênio (ODM), colaboraram para que o país saísse do Mapa da Fome. Contudo, essa não é mais a realidade da nação, a qual retornou recentemente ao citado Mapa em função da má gestão pública, agravada pela pandemia de Covid-19, colocando em cheque o alcance dos Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS), previstos para 2030. E justamente sobre esse tema que o presente estudo, de natureza aplicada, busca debater. Para tanto, realiza-se um estudo descritivo dos ODM e ODS, assim como um debate analítico da

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degradação da política alimentar brasileira, considerando, inclusive, os impactos pandêmicos. Ademais, frisa-se a utilização das técnicas bibliográficas e documentais no tocante ao procedimento de pesquisa, as quais possibilitaram demonstrar, ao cabo, que a fome é uma situação atualmente endêmica no Brasil, a qual só será revertida ao combater-se a invisibilização da parcela da população que é diretamente afetada.

Palavras-chave: Insegurança Alimentar; Brasil; Mapa da Fome; Covid19; Objetivos do Desenvolvimento Sustentável.

INTRODUCTION

Food is considered an indispensable element for the physical and cognitive development of the individual, whose energy and nutrients in sufficient quantity are essential for the functioning of the organism. Therefore, without the proper and continuous intake of these foods, development does not occur correctly, which can bring, in addition to physical and psychological difficulties, death itself (SQUEFF, 2021, p. 554). However, access to nutritious food in sufficient quantities is sometimes limited for various reasons, such as political, environmental, social or even economic factors (FAO, 2008, p. 75). This means that access to these goods can be limited even in large producing countries with great economic power, since their wide availability does not necessarily convert into food for all, strong in factors that surround the person, their family nucleus and the your community.

Until mid-2018 the trend in the number of hungry (here understood as people suffering from food insecurity[4]) was in decline, remaining "virtually unchanged at a level below 11% [of the world population]" (ONUBR, 2019). Despite this, in the two subsequent years, there was an increase in this number of around 10 million people, reaching the mark of 820 million (WHO, 2019), largely due to the drop in production caused by climate change (WFP, 2018; 2019). Of these, in 2019, 47.7 million were in Latin America - an increase of 5.2 million when compared to the previous year (ONUBR, 2019).

The Covid-19 pandemic did not assist on the matter. On the contrary, it led 118 million people to the condition of food insecurity in 2020, greatly contributing to the worsening of hunger in the world (NASCIMENTO, 2021). In Latin America alone, 14 million new hungry people were accounted for in 2020 (NASCIMENTO, 2021) – a number whose tendency is to more than double, according to the projections of the *Food and Agriculture Organization* (FAO, 2020), strong in the economic crises generated by the pandemic and the growth of inequality in the States (FAO, 2021[a]).

[4] Food security, according to the concept architected at the 1996 World Food Summit, promoted by FAO, means "*[having], at all times, physical and economic access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food to satisfy dietary needs and food preferences [of people], so that [they lead] an active and healthy life*" (FAO, 1999), so that, if one of these characteristics is not present, the person is in a situation of food insecurity/vulnerability.

Thus, the search for equitable distribution and access to quality food comes to the fore. This is because this is a topic that has drawn the attention of international society, especially since the 1990s, with emphasis on the 1996 Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 (ONU, s/d). Regarding these objectives, even if they are to be considered a *soft law*, they refer to ambitious goals to be achieved by international society, including the fight against hunger, with which countries were largely encouraged to promote internal actions that seek social development in favor of food security, with emphasis on Brazil, which, in the first decade of the 20th century, figured as an example in the fight against food insecurity (SQUEFF, 2021, p. 563).

Transformed in 2015 into Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the architecture of the 2030 Agenda within the United Nations (UN), largely due to the previously mentioned numbers of people who were still in a situation of food insecurity, the fight against hunger in its Objective no. 2 (ONU, 2016), thus, denoting its importance for the fight against this condition to subsist - which, in the face of the pandemic context, such as the one through which the globe passes through today, of an increase in the number of people in a situation of food vulnerability, is extremely relevant.

Thus, this qualitative and applied study aims, initially, to understand the relevance of adopting the MDGs and their transformation into SDGs for the fight against hunger, so that it can be discussed, in a second moment, how it would be possible to use of this tool to guarantee food security, in addition to glimpsing how Covid-19 has impacted its protection from a Brazilian perspective. To this end, an analytical-descriptive study of the objectives is carried out, and bibliographic and documentary techniques are used regarding the research procedure.

1. CONFRONTING THE FOOD ISSUE AT A GLOBAL LEVEL: FROM THE MDGS TO THE SDGS

The fight against food insecurity is not an issue faced singularly by an international organization, being, therefore, the object of several institutions. However, without a doubt, at the global level, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations stand out for their actions since their respective buildings at the end of the Second World War, whether for the creation of programs and campaigns aimed at alleviating the lack of food suitable for a certain location[5], or by creating normative instruments that established the vision of food as a human right demanding a more positive action on the part of States for its enjoyment[6].

[5] Examples are the World Food Board program and the Freedom from Hunger campaign. For more, *cf.* SQUEFF, 2018, p. 162 e 178.

[6] Examples are the direct provision for food as a human right, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 25, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, art. 11; indirectly, however, the right to food can also be glimpsed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 6, when providing for the right to life – to name a few.

And among the most important measures, we can mention the adoption of the 'Millennium Development Goals' in 2000, at the end of the *'Millennium Summit'* - a meeting that brought together the then 191 UN Member States, aimed at pointing out the improvements needed to achieve development, given that levels of poverty, inequality and social exclusion were still very present, especially in the global South (SZEKERES, 2012, p. 199).

Also known as the "*Eight Ways to Change the World*", the MDGs are a soft law considered very important for the fight against food insecurity, since it established the end of hunger and misery as the first of the eight global goals[7] to be achieved, individually and collectively, by the UN Member States until the year 2015 (SHAW, 2007, p. 355-357), and which was intended to provide a starting point, from which it would be possible to measure the progress of each nation for the purposes of accountability and sharing of Good habits (KURUVILLA et al, 2012, p.148).

This date is even identical to that marked by the 'Declaration of Rome' – a document signed at the end of the 'World Food Summit', a meeting organized by FAO in 1996 (SHAW, 2009, p. 98) aimed at reaffirming the importance of combating food insecurity, above all, due to the implications that poverty could bring to the realization of the right to food, through the establishment of a specific action plan, aiming to direct the actions of international society to this conjuncture, in a true global mobilization aimed at combating it (SHAW, 2007, p. 349-350).

The reason why, by the way, is that it can be inferred that the work of FAO motivated the UN to include the eradication of hunger and poverty in the MDGs, naming it the most important goal to be achieved, demanding that States, regardless of the strategy adopted, (1) halving the number of people earning less than US$1 PPP by 2015, ensuring full employment for all, including youth and women; and (2) the halving of the number of hungry by 2015 (KÖRBES, 2001, p. 16). After all, at the time of its adoption, "about 1 billion people lived in extreme poverty, lacking clean water and adequate food, as well as basic health care and social services necessary for survival" (ONUBR, 2015a).

In fact, this goal is so important that other MDGs also dealt indirectly with food-related problems, such as the promotion of gender equality (MDG n. 4), environmental sustainability (MDG n. 7) and collaboration in favor of development. (MDG n. 8), thus promoting, through rhetorical, specific and comprehensive commitments, a multifaceted global mobilization for the implementation of traceable practices aimed at reducing the numbers of hungry (and, therefore, the realization of the right to food) (SALOMON, 2008, p. 57). And its results were considered positive, making it one of the most successful movements in the sector in history, as pointed out by the UN itself:

[7] Arranged in order, the eight 'Millennium Goals' are: (1) to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty; (2) promote universal access to quality basic education; (3) promote gender equity and women's empowerment; (4) reduce infant mortality; (5) improve the health of pregnant women; (6) combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases; (7) seek quality of life and environmental sustainability; and (8) establish a global partnership for development (ONU, s/d).

> The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015 reveals that the 15 years of efforts to achieve the eight goals set out in the Millennium Declaration in 2000 have been successful around the world, although there are shortcomings. The data and analysis presented in the report show that, with specific interventions, sound strategies, adequate resources and political will, even the poorest countries have made progress. [...] The MDG report confirms that setting targets lifted millions of people out of poverty [...]. Just two decades ago, nearly half of the developing world lived in extreme poverty. The number of people now living in extreme poverty has more than halved, from 1.9 billion in 1990 to 836 million in 2015 (ONUBR, 2015b).

However, the report also highlighted that "progress has been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps" (ONUBR, 2015b). In the specific case of food and poverty, the document stated that "[despite] the enormous progress driven by the MDGs, around 800 million people still lived in extreme poverty and suffered from hunger [at the end of the stipulated period]". In more detail, this is what Ved P. Nanda explains (2016, p. 396-397):

> To illustrate, in Goal [Millennium Development] n. 1, curbing extreme poverty, the proportion of the population in the developing world living on less than $1.25 a day has dropped from 47% in 1990 to 14% in 2015, as has the proportion of undernourished people in the developing region dropped from 23.3% in 1990-1992 to 12.9% in 2014-2016. It should be noted that in the global reduction of poverty, China and India played a central role. In contrast to the progress in these two countries, more than 40% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa still suffers from extreme poverty in 2015 and the extreme poverty rate is still expected to increase in West Asia between 2011 and 2015. (...) However, (...) despite these successes, the poorest and most vulnerable people have been left behind. (...) While significant achievements have been made on many of the MDG targets around the world, progress has been uneven across regions and countries, leaving significant gaps. Millions of people are being left behind, especially the poorest and most disadvantaged because of their sex, age, disability, ethnicity or geographic location.

Strong in this, in an attempt to continue evolving, therefore, seeking to cover all those who remained outside the progress achieved, in 2015, world leaders decided to adopt a new agenda that could succeed the MDGs, with new deadlines and more detailed goals. This is the 2030 Agenda, which includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), fruits of the 'Sustainable Development Summit', held at the UN General Assembly between 25 and 27 September 2015 to debate/stipulate the which would become a post-2015 agenda in conclusion to the debates started at the 'United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development', Rio+ 20, held in 2012, in the city of Rio de Janeiro (BRASIL, s/d[a]; Mendonça, 2015, p. 328; ONUBR, 2015c).

Despite being guided by the MDGs, the 17 SDGs[8] approved denoted a major distinction from the precursor agenda: in addition to being much more ambitious than the previous one in bringing issues such as responsible consumption, peace and justice, the SDGs were structurally distant from the MDGs, due to the existence of a common thread that runs through the entire document, namely, sustainable development (UNRIC, 2016, p. 1). This is because, it was understood that nothing would really impact in terms of improving the condition of human life in general if the economic, social and environmental dimensions were not considered together.

This relationship had already been considered very important to combat food insecurity, so this topic remained on the agenda. The second objective indicated in the SDGs is 'zero hunger', which aims to achieve food security through the provision of specific foods, of quality and in sufficient quantities, seeking to improve the nutrition levels of individuals located both in countries of the global North and in the South, and the promotion of sustainable agriculture for an increase in productivity, in addition to attracting (inter)national investments aiming at the correct functioning of food markets and their derivatives (ONUBR, 2016, p. 4).

And punctually in relation to the economic bias, it should be noted that the fight against poverty also remained on the Agenda. Unlike the MDGs, the SDGs separate the same from the fight against hunger in two different objectives, which, however, makes no difference with regard to their achievement, since the SDGs are considered integrated (due to the transversal sustainability that permeates them) and indivisible (because the full implementation of one objective depends on the realization of the others). (ONUBR, 2015b, p. 5). In fact, due to these two characteristics, it can be said that all the other SDGs are also relevant to the fight against hunger, as happened in the MDGs, since the construction of human capacities encompasses a series of constant vectors in the other 16 direct objectives. or indirectly (ONU, 2016, p. 3-11).

Therefore, in order to be satisfactorily carried out, the 2030 Agenda suggested the structuring of national strategies that respect the contexts and priorities of each State (ONUBR, 2015b, p. 4). Furthermore, in order to measure the results, it was also pointed out the need to train countries, particularly those located in the South, to have reliable data, which allow for more accurate monitoring, enhancing the sharing of good practices, with a view to achieving of the goals by the year 2030 be considered a global/shared

[8] Arranged in order, the 17 'Sustainable Development Goals' are: (1) zero poverty, (2) zero hunger, (3) promotion of health and well-being, (4) promotion of quality education, (5) equality (6) provision of clean water and basic sanitation, (7) guarantee of affordable clean energy, (8) promotion of good working conditions and economic growth, (9) promotion of industry, innovation and infrastructure, (10)) reducing inequalities, (11) promoting sustainable cities and communities, (12) sustainable consumption and production, (13) combating climate change, (14) preserving life below water, (15) preserving life on land, (16) promoting peace, justice and strong institutions, and (17) collaborating to achieve the goals (ONUBR. s/d[a]).

responsibility (ONUBR, s/d, p. 57-58; BERNSTEIN, 2017, p. 228-230).

It is within this scope that national strategies emerge. Such plans deserve to be highlighted precisely because of the need for the adoption of clear goals by the States to reach each of the stipulated objectives, whether within the scope of the old MDGs or even the current SDGs. In this step, it is up to us to explore a little more what has been developed by Brazil and the impact of Covid-19 in this sense.

2. THE BRAZILIAN ACTIONS TOWARDS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SDG2 AND THE RETURN TO THE HUNGER MAP: REFLECTIONS ONLY OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

One of the most objective ways to verify whether a given country is meeting the goals related to SDG2 stipulated under the 2030 Agenda is to note its position on the 'Hunger Map' – a survey developed by the UN on global food insecurity[9]. After all, if a certain State has 5% or more of its population undernourished (LIMA, 2021), it is inserted there, thus receiving a "feedback" regarding the actions underway in its territory.

In 2014, after implementing several public policies[10], still within the scope of the MDGs, Brazil managed to leave the Hunger Map (BRASIL, 2014; PAJOLLA, 2021). This is because the country managed to reduce the number of people in a situation of food insecurity by half, entering the list of "the 10 countries with the greatest achievements in reducing the total number of people who suffer from hunger in proportion to the national population"(FAO, 2014, p. 2).

This achievement was due to a number of measures, among which the 10% increase in the supply of quality food to populations at risk, the nutritional level of individuals in vulnerable situations and the promotion of family farming (e) sustainable, aiming at increasing the productivity of adequate food and the quality of life in the countryside (ONU, 2016; ONU, s/d; BRASIL, 2014b)[11].

In addition, according to FAO, this progress was mainly due to the implementation of three actions by the Brazilian government at the time, namely: increasing the

[9] The Hunger Map is prepared based on the Indicator of Malnutrition Prevalence, a newsletter used by FAO for 50 years, which helps to measure and control the levels of hunger worldwide (FAO, s/d.).

[10] Public policies are government goals and plans that seek social well-being. They seek, in short, to put the government into action, analyze this action and propose political and social changes in the course of these actions. There are "four categories of public policies (SOUZA, 2006), namely: a) distributive public policies; b) redistributive public policies; c) regulatory public policies; and d) constitutive public policies". While the former affect a specific group of people, an example of which could be the exemptions; the second contemplates a defined social group, whose example would be racial quotas. The third, in turn, refers to activities that promote the normalization of standards and conduct; the fourth is empowerment actions, which include civil society in government activities (MOURA, 2018, p. 168).

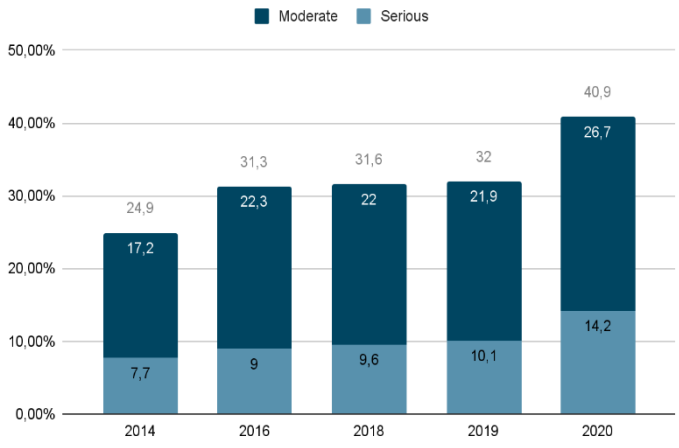
[11] A study by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) showed that, in 15 years, poverty was reduced by 15% and extreme poverty by 25%, thus underlining the importance of connecting SDGs2 and SDGs1 (poverty eradication) (IPEA, 2019).

income of the population considered poor[12-13], offering school lunches to students enrolled in the public network of education[14] and the applied policy of valorization of the minimum wage (AÉCIO..., 2014). All these measures derive a lot from the implementation of the *Fome Zero* Program[15], in 2003, as a result of the "obligations" assumed within the scope of the MDGs and the World Food Program, which put into practice a comprehensive strategy to promote food security and social protection at all stages of life (FAO, 2014, p. 6) and served as a model for other nations to be inspired by, such as the launch of the Hunger-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative in 2005, and its subsequent appropriation by other countries in the region (FAO, 2014, p. 3)[16].

The programs mentioned were implemented during the Lula da Silva administration (2003-2010), which were maintained during the Rousseff administration (2011-2016). However, since 2016, during the Temer administration (2016-2018), food insecurity has become an issue again, especially since in the first UN Global Assessment Report on Food Security and Nutrition after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, hunger has largely increased in Latin America[17] (FAO, 2018). This is shown in the graph below:

[12] These are people who live on the poverty line, that is, with up to R$233.00 per month per capita, according to 2018 data released by *Fundação Getúlio Vargas* (NERI, 2018).
[13] The increase in the income of the poorest population derives mainly from the construction of the *Bolsa Família* Program, which reached more than 14 million families in the country. Established by Law No. 10,836, of January 9, 2004, the Program aimed to unify projects whose core was focused on fighting poverty (such as the National Minimum Income Program linked to Education - *Bolsa Escola*, and the National Program for Access to Food – PNAA), in addition to centralizing processes within the Federal Government, such as the selection of beneficiaries, standardization, integration with policies in the educational and health spheres, among others (SECRETARIA ESPECIAL DO DESENVOLVIMENTO SOCIAL, 2014; BRASIL, 2004; FRAGOSO, NERIS, VALENTE, 2021).
[14] Within schools, Brazil promoted the provision of school lunches with the 'National School Feeding Program', which reached about 43 million children in the country. This Program was implemented as part of the II National Food and Nutrition Program (PRONAN), being, from 1976, financed by the Ministry of Education and managed by the National School Feeding Campaign (previously called School Meal Campaign at the time of its establishment 37,106, of March 31, 1955), and only in 1979 it became known as the National School Feeding Program (AÉCIO..., 2014; BRASIL, s/d[b]).
[15] A program created by the United Nations, which for over 60 years has supported school feeding initiatives, works with several nations to establish national school feeding, health and sustainability programs, whose main objective "is to ensure that all school-age children have access to school meals and are healthy and ready to learn" (WFP, 2020).
[16] On how *Fome Zero* can be considered an effective public policy for Brazil, even exportable to other States, notably those located in the Global South, *see* SQUEFF, 2018.
[17] In Central and South America, less than 40% of the population faces moderate or severe food insecurity, and levels of severe food insecurity are 11% and 13%, respectively (FAO, 2021[b]).

Graphic 1 - Food insecurity in Latin America (2014-2020)



FAO, 2021[b].

And that includes Brazil. According to the 2017-2018 Household Budget Survey, released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, in the Portuguese acronym), in this period, more than 10 million Brazilians were in a situation of severe food insecurity, eating fewer calories than recommended (SARAIVA; VILLAS BOAS, 2020), which represented about 5% of the population (thus, leading Brazil to the Map again) (BRASIL, 2020). Facing this picture, Francisco Menezes, researcher at the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE, in the Portuguese acronym) and former president of the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA, in the Portuguese acronym), points out that this setback in the fight against hunger revives levels recorded in 2004, a time when approximately 15 million people were in a situation of food insecurity in the state (FOME..., 2010).

Despite this, it should be noted that the difficulties brought by hunger and its again precarious fight are not only due to political problems that Brazil is going through, being closely related also to the setback in achieving SDG1 in the country. For Menezes (SARAIVA; VILLAS BOAS, 2020), in summary, two factors can be pointed out as drivers of the current panorama: the advance of extreme poverty - with an increase from 4.5% to 6.5% of the portion of Brazilians living in these conditions; and the cuts in public policies related to food security that have occurred since 2014, strong in state budget reductions.

Furthermore, compared to the 2004 level, when hunger reached 9.5% of the Brazilian population, in 2020 alone, around 19 million Brazilians will not have enough to eat - a number that has worsened due to the Covid-19 pandemic, reaching 9% (ALMEIDA, 2021) and, unfortunately, is on the rise (SE..., 2021). This is because with the pandemic, in addition to the impact on the health of millions of people, numerous difficulties have plagued the lives of Brazilians who, due to high inflation, rising unemployment rates, and the inability to access emergency aid (since many have had their applications denied) (IMENES, 2021), have seen access to sufficient nutritious food fade.

For example, the survey conducted by the platform *Poder360* (2021), with interviews conducted between March 29 and 31, 2021, with more than 3500 people in 541 cities in the 27 states of the federation, 36% of respondents said they ate less or went hungry during the pandemic, of which 29% said they ate less than usual and 7% skipped a meal or went hungry. And it is not just a question of access to food (in quantity), but also of food of nutritional quality. Take the case of people who today feed on cattle bones discarded in butcher shops, in which there are mere remnants of meat and serve as a precarious source of protein for several families, or even the so-called "rice fragments", which is a cheaper option of rice, offered in supermarkets by some brands, sometimes used as animal feed, and the "bean *bandinha*", a more accessible substitute (half the price of the whole product) composed of broken beans (BETIM; MARCEL, 2021).

Among the various causes for such a situation, one can mention the increase in the value of the basic food basket, which, following the example of the city of São Paulo, in July 2021, its cost became R$1,064.79, therefore, almost equaling the current minimum wage (R$1.1 thousand), given that the difference remains at R$35.21. In this sense, it is observed that the residual amount is not enough to cover other important expenses, such as housing, medicines and transportation (A CESTA..., 2021), which also affect people's capacity (of production) - essential component to ensure food security[18], as it is an important factor to ensure means of access to food (through the realization of the triad service - money - food) (SQUEFF, 2021, p. 554).

For those who gained access to the R$ 600.00 (approximately US$ 400.00) per month passed on by the Federal Government, there was a slight improvement in the quality of life, considering that, for many, the amount received was higher than their own average income in the middle of the pandemic, helping to prevent more people from being pushed below the poverty line (LIMA, 2021). Despite this, it cannot be said that such a measure stabilized the numbers of food insecurity in the state, since temporary[19] and of "costly" implementation[20]. As Daniel Balaban, Director of

[18] For Salay (2020), food inaccessibility originating from the lack of a minimum budget for food and family sustenance (including housing, clothing, etc.) is called 'structural hunger'. This is because hunger, in this context, "is a process, not a fact" (SALAY, 2020); it is generated from the reduction of meals, followed by the reduction of variety and quantity (nutritional/cultural), which is fostered by the impossibility of strong acquisition in unemployment, inflation, the absence of social government actions (whether for the feeding of schoolchildren in this environment, for the acquisition of food for the family, or even for the support of the home itself).

[19] This benefit ended in 2020 due to the country's fiscal accounts not allowing for its continuity. Thus, once again, Brazil found itself in the midst of a scenario of increased extreme poverty, further aggravated by the second lethal wave of the pandemic, which led the government to sign the Provisional Measure No. 1.039, March 18, 2021, which would bring back the aid, but in substantially smaller installments, which, however, did not cause the numbers of hungry to decrease in the country, which, according to data from April 2021, still exceed 19 million (NGO BANK OF FOOD, 2021).

[20] It is stressed that "the absence of a previous social protection mechanism to support the 41% of informal workers [who were eligible for the R$600.00 benefit], the federal government's delay in structuring such mechanisms, and the difficulty in getting the resources to the most vulnerable workers and people aggravate the challenges [imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic in the country]" (GUATO, 2020).

the Center of Excellence against Hunger and the representative in Brazil of the World Food Program of the United Nations (WFP), states, precisely because of the lack of long-term forecasting, the risk of food insecurity becomes perennial (LIMA, 2021).

Moreover, another aggravating factor for the worsening of food insecurity in the midst of the pandemic is the closing of schools, a necessity in the pandemic context. This is because this measure, considered by the WFP as an essential way to combat food insecurity[21], school meals for students are no longer provided, and in many cases, the snack provided was the only nutritious meal that children and adolescents received that day (UNICEF, 2021). Brazil has the second[22] largest school meals program in the world – the National School Meals Program (PNAE, in the Portuguese acronym), reaching around 40 million children and adolescents (UNUBR 2021).

It is worth noting that PNAE is linked to family farming, under Federal Law 11947/2009, which determines that "the minimum percentage of 30% of the financial resources to be transferred by the Union is for the purchase of food from this productive category" (DO CANTO; PORTAL; VIEIRA, 2020). However, with the budget cuts that caused a substantial reduction in the budget for the Food Purchase Program (PAA, in the Portuguese acronym)[23], such transfers no longer leave the family production, causing, on the one hand, another circumstance that causes food insecurity for those who depend on school meals, and, on the other, the inability to dispose of these products (and the corresponding income production) (SUDRÉ, 2020). Thus, if we add this fact to the extinction of CONSEA[24], the body responsible for controlling public policies related to the acquisition and distribution of food[25], and, of course, to the pandemic, we have a total emptying of policies directed to

[21] The WFP aims to serve over 73 million children in more than 60 countries through school meals. In this sense, one can see the importance of school feeding programs like the WFP in terms of encouraging families to enroll and keep their children in school, since, with school meals, the budget that would be directed to feeding everyone in the family sphere decreases, thus increasing income and alleviating poverty - about 10% of the income of poor families is derived, consequently, from the existence of school meals (LIMA, 2021; WFP, s/d).

[22] Brazil is second only to India, while remaining ahead of, for example, other "giants" such as China.

[23] Created by Article 19 of Law No. 10.696 of July 2, 2003, the PAA aims to promote access to food and encourage family farming, establishing itself as one of the main policies to support and encourage this productive category in Brazil, since it is through this initiative that it is possible to sell products grown by farmers, cooperatives and associations for public agencies (BRASIL, s/d[c]; BRASIL, s/d[d]).

[24] Created in the Franco government and deactivated in 1995, the National Food Security Council (CONSEA) began operating again with the inauguration of then President-elect Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2003, through Decree No. 4,582. However, with the inauguration of Jair Bolsonaro and the adoption of Provisional Measure No. 870 of 2019, which aimed to reorganize the Presidency and Ministries, CONSEA was extinguished. The text that brought such action was suspended at first; however, after the approval of the Council's recreation, the item was vetoed by Bolsonaro under the justification that there was an "invasion of prerogatives" of the Executive (IPEA, s/d; IDEC, 2019).

[25] The CONSEA was created during the French government of 1992-1995, with the objective of proposing and giving opinions about actions to combat hunger and to reach full conditions of food security in Brazil; of measures that encourage partnerships and integration between public and private, domestic and international agencies; of campaigns whose purpose is to make public opinion aware of the need to combat hunger and poverty; and, finally, of initiatives which encourage and support the creation of committees to combat hunger and poverty, both at the municipal and state levels (BRASIL, 1993).

family farming, considered another way to provide the production of much of the healthy and high quality food (SUDRÉ, 2020).

Nevertheless, in 2021, in a note released by the Ministry of Citizenship, it pointed out both the distribution of food in places where there is a situation of emergency or public calamity and the PAA of family farming as initiatives to combat hunger in Brazil (LIMA, 2021), thus highlighting the relevance of the Program at the time of school reopening during the post-pandemic period (ONUBR, 2021), being this a measure that could make Brazil, if effective, return to the international scene as a highlight, now, within the 2030 Agenda. Until then, however, the effectiveness of SDG2 in Brazil depends, to a large extent, on civil society.

This is said due to the existence of several social projects that seek to support thousands of families in vulnerable situations, such as the NGO *Banco de Alimentos* ('Food Bank') and several dioceses in the country that collaborate in the collection and daily distribution of food, FIESP (Federation of Industries of the State of São Paulo) and SESI (Social Service for Industry), through collection campaigns, in addition to the movement "*Tem gente com fome*" ('there are hungry people'), supported by Amnesty International, which strategically uses the social networks of artists to mobilize forces and raise funds in favor of fighting hunger and poverty in the country (LIMA, 2021).

These measures are important for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole, especially in light of SDG17, which includes in its goal 17.17 the "encourag[ing] and promo[ing] [of] partnerships (....) with civil society" in order to use the "experience of [their] resource mobilization strategies" (UN, 2016), but if they are not a priority for the State, especially in a post-pandemic context, it will be difficult to see Brazil again out of the 'Map of Hunger', which proudly did not figure for almost a decade and, strong in this, stood out positively in the external plan.

Even, because of that, it is feared the "normalization" of the hunger situation in Brazil in the post-pandemic scenario, so that, if it is not understood as a structural problem of society, whose existence precedes the pandemic (although its acceleration has, in fact, occurred, due to it), it tends to its invisibilization (BLANCO; SACRAMENTO, 2021) and, therefore, the ineffectiveness of the few existing measures to combat it.

FINAL REMARKS

If in 2019 the predictions about achieving 'Zero Hunger' in the world in 2030, as was planned when the SDGs were built to replace the MDGs, were already a bit distant due to the various challenges faced by states (ONUBR, 2019), with the Covid-19 pandemic, these plans have already been discarded.

Previously, it was thought that the elimination of food vulnerabilities hinged on combating climate change, on a larger scale, and situations of political and economic instability in certain countries. However, the picture produced by the pandemic is even worse, since it has not only

affected food intake itself, but has also undermined the improvement of other SDGs such as combating poverty and gender equality (FAO, 2021[a]), which are equally fundamental to ensuring food security as they enable the creation of human capabilities.

It is for no other reason that by 2020, "more than 2.3 billion people (or 30% of the global population) will not have access to adequate food throughout the year" (FAO, 2021[a]) and that, according to the UN, hunger is projected to increase by 7.9 million people in Central America by 2030; in South America, the projection is 36 million people; and in the Caribbean, 6.6 million people are projected to be food insecure (ONUBR, 2021).

In Brazil, however, the Covid-19 pandemic, although it has also affected the diet of Brazilians, cannot be pointed out as the only cause for the reintroduction of Brazil to the Hunger Map, given the existence of 19 million people in a situation of food insecurity. This situation stems from a sum of factors that stem from the decline experienced by the country since 2016 in terms of public policies aimed at removing people from such a condition by stimulating the capabilities generated through welfare programs, which, years before, made Brazil an example worldwide.

Thus, the pandemic did not bring structural hunger back to Brazil. In this case, it already existed, and covid-19 exacerbated/accelerated social inequalities, poverty, and the lack of conditions for a decent life, whose combat is also in the scope of SDG1, but whose reflexes are not limited to it. Although emergency aid has indeed helped countless people get back on their feet, this was not a long-term policy, but rather a temporary relief. Therefore, we realize the need to reflect on and adopt effective and lasting public policies, as pointed out by the SDG2 itself, so that Brazil may return, perhaps, to the levels of 2014.

One of the paths to be pursued was significant, which is the resumption of feeding in schools through PNAE, which not only contributes to nutritious, safe and quantitative food for thousands of children and adolescents, but also allows the family income to be allocated to the purchase of food for other family members, to the rent and other goods of primary necessity.

Moreover, it is certain that this is not the only path to follow, and it is the government's duty to think of other alternatives, especially so that human capacities can be fostered, in addition to other actions that allow the implementation of other SDGs, given the interconnection between them. And in this scope is precisely the role of the various goals listed in each SDG, which can guide the States to think of relevant measures to what is proposed in each of the goals, without forgetting the whole, whose importance to fully achieve the Agenda is equal.

Furthermore, at this point is also the important participation of civil society, which, according to SDG 17, can collaborate to achieve SDG2, among other goals, especially when the State is inoperative. Furthermore, it should be noted that the central role for its achievement is not the third sector, but the State, so it is up to it to "de-normalize" the idea of hunger and take measures that

effectively prioritize the human being, especially the population in a situation of social vulnerability.

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