



POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS DE ALIMENTAÇÃO: A CONTRIBUIÇÃO DAS COMPRAS GOVERNAMENTAIS PARA A INCLUSÃO PRODUTIVA DE AGRICULTORES FAMILIARES NO ESTADO DO TOCANTINS

PUBLIC FOOD POLICIES: THE CONTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT TO THE PRODUCTIVE INCLUSION OF FAMILY FARMERS IN THE STATE OF TOCANTINS

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Resumo

O objetivo deste estudo foi analisar a contribuição das Compras Governamentais para a inclusão produtiva de agricultores familiares no contexto do estado do Tocantins. Com uma abordagem de pesquisa quantitativa e qualitativa, entrevistou-se 80 mediadores que atuam com os públicos da agricultura familiar. Os resultados apontam o potencial das Compras Governamentais para a inclusão produtiva dos agricultores familiares. A explicação é que estão atreladas aos efeitos positivos proveniente do incentivo à organização coletiva e formal dos agricultores familiares, aumento da renda familiar, dinamização da economia local, valorização dos produtos regionais, garantia de inserção em novos mercados e contribuições com a segurança alimentar dos beneficiários diretos e indiretos. Por outro lado, a burocracia e a baixa organização dos agricultores são as variáveis principais responsáveis pelas dificuldades de execução das políticas públicas de alimentação.

Palavras chave: Alimentação Escolar. Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional. Mediadores. Extensão Rural.

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to analyze the contribution of Government Procurement to the productive inclusion of family farmers in the context of the state of Tocantins. With a quantitative and qualitative research approach, 80 mediators, who work with family farming audiences, were interviewed. The results point to the potential of Government Procurement for the productive inclusion of family farmers. The explanation is that they are linked to the positive effects of encouraging collective and formal organization of family farmers, increasing family income, boosting the local economy, valuing regional products, ensuring insertion in new markets and contributing to food security for direct and indirect beneficiaries. On the other hand, the bureaucracy and low organization of farmers are the main variables responsible for the difficulties in implementing public food policies.

Keywords: School feeding. Food and nutrition security. Mediators. Rural extension.

INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian public food policies focused on fighting hunger and poverty are considered a global reference by the United Nations for Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), even being replicated as a successful experience for other countries. The visibility of the policies is explained not only regarding the amplification of guarantees of access to food by the population, specially more vulnerable groups, but also due to the construction of production protection systems due to this universalization of access. Without these advances, both in food consumption and production incentive, it would not be possible to present such powerful results in the scope of Nutrition and Food Security (NFS) (JANNUZZI, 2019).

Regardless, it is verified an advancement of this theme by being inserted in the national political agenda in different ways, due to the creation, in 1999, of the National Policy of Food and Nutrition (NPFN), of the Food Guide for the Brazilian Population (1st version in 2006 and 2nd version in 2014), in addition to the Benchmark of actions in Nutrition and Food Education for the Public Policies, in 2012. With the State's backing, the food and nutrition policies and programs were potentialized through NFE actions.

Government Procurement, also called institutional markets, represented mainly by the Food Acquisition Program (FAP) and the National School Feeding Program (NSFP), are considered an institutional innovation, because they articulate agricultural and nutrition and food security aspects in one policy (MÜLLER; FIALHO; SCHNEIDER, 2007; GRISA; PORTO, 2015), in addition to encouraging commercialization in a proposal of connecting the farmer and the consumer in the distribution of food in the context of the agroalimentary system, in which the State is the only buyer and defines the

rules in this unique type of market. Thus, the Government Procurement are considered a “[...] specific market configuration in which the exchange networks assume a particular structure, previously determined by norms and conventions negotiated by a set of actors and organizations, where the State usually takes a central role” (GRISA, 2010, p. 103).

These initiatives became vectors of rural development, by allowing strategies to fight rural poverty and productive inclusion, when compared to the trajectory of public policies to support family agriculture since the implementation of the first generation in the 1990s, with an agricultural and agrarian focus (GRISA, SCHNEIDER, 2014, SOUSA, 2019).

The social policies, considered of second generation, were less successful in the promotion of the farmers’ productive inclusion. More evident results in this regard are associated with the third generation of family agriculture policies, which highlights the construction of markets to promote food security and environmental sustainability (GRISA; SCHNEIDER, 2014). In this case, the policy with more visibility was the FAP, created in 2003 to articulate the purchase of products from family agriculture with NFS actions for populations in situation of social vulnerability. Given the visibility of the Program and its capillarity, its effect of dynamizing local economies and strengthening collective organizations of family agriculture gained relevance, which promoted a debate about the social creation of “new” agroalimentary markets (ABRAMOVAY, 2009). Indeed, in 2009, with some similarities to the FAP, the NSFP was redesigned and started to require that at least 30% of government resources for school feeding were used to acquire products from family farmers and their collective enterprises (BRASIL, 2009)

These initiatives to insert family farmers in institutional markets also stimulated state governments to create their own public procurement mechanisms, in addition to having stimulated civil society organizations to demand and create “new” markets. The adaptation of productive inclusion strategies to the creation of viable markets for different groups of farmers is an important challenge for social mediators. These mediators are knowledge carriers that can contribute in the translation of information and, thus, articulate the public policies to the reality of each beneficiary public.

From a dialogue with the cognitive³ approach of public policies analysis (MULLER, 2005), which highlights the importance of ideas and narratives in the elaboration of “references” of public action, the objective of this study was to analyze the contribution of Governmental Procurement to the productive inclusion of family farmers in the context of the state of Tocantins in the perception of mediators who work along this public.

Methodology

The methodological strategy used in this research for data collection was mixed methods, whose objective is to combine elements from the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, with the purpose of magnifying and deepening the understanding of a study.

The research started by identifying the social actors (non-sample population) inserted in social-technical networks that work along the family farmers and their organizations in the state of Tocantins. After mapping, we adopted the semi-structured interview technique as a way to analyze the perception of these actors regarding the influence of Government Procurement on the productive inclusion of family farmers. In total, there were 80 interviews with mediators that work in public management sectors, universities, social movements, research and rural extension centers.

It was also performed a wide analysis of secondary data provided by institutions that work with the family agriculture theme. With these techniques, it was viable to capture the essential aspects related to the objective proposed in this investigation.

Results and discussion

The Government Procurement were highlighted according to the mediators’ observations that associated the issues relevant to productive inclusion, aimed at the opportunity of family farmers using the production and commercialization instruments promoted by the government. It is also

3 Incorporated by Brazilian social sciences in the last years, the cognitive approach emphasizes the role of ideas and argumentation in the formulation of public policies and the protagonism of the social actors in the production of representations about social issues and responses to these issues. This approach understands public action not as a mere decision-making process, but as a process through which a certain society elaborates their relation with the world from their ideas and argumentations (MULLER, 2005).

notable how much the mediators express and reproduce the feelings of the farmers that had the opportunity of accessing the institutional market, as shown in the narrative below.

We see the farmers' joy when they note that the middlemen are out of the scene. So, they produce and commercialize the product to the government, which buys this product to improve, for example, the quality of food for children in daycare and schools, and all that (Extensionist, 33).

As detailed by a manager linked to the National Council of Nutrition and Food Security (NCNFS-TO), the institutional markets policy significantly helped farmers to have an adequate planning of the production, which did not occur before. However, with the incentive to increase the scale of production, not all farmers were able to commercialize part of the surplus, because they did not concomitantly articulate supply and demand with other commercialization circuits. The explanation accrues from the fact that, in the case of institutional market, it was an outstanding fact that gave visibility to the products of family farmers and that, in a certain way, inserted them productively. As a consequence, the insertion in this new commercialization channel also propelled the insertion in other types of alternative markets, such as free fairs. Similarly, this vision is shared by one manager, as seen below.

So, they end up having market security, let's say, their production can increase because they know that someone will buy, understand? Sometimes, they would be stuck in X amount or did not want to grow, or wasn't able to grow, because of that, they have at least one sure market. They can increase productivity or think about working with other products that, sometimes, it is necessary, they seen the list of products and says – Hey, I can work with other products – so the farmers' possibilities widens because of that, see? They have a fixed market, and then they can work the surplus to other markets, especially fairs (Manager, 16).

The food policies are relevant because they contribute considerably to the insertion of animal and vegetable protein of better quality in school food (NSFP) and to non-profit institutions (FAP) that benefit the public in social vulnerability. Sousa and Kato (2017) recognize that, in Brazil, there is a tendency to provide the consumption of protein with better nutritional quality to the population and that the Government Procurement policies are contributing substantially to achieving this fact.

In this regard, the mediators also correlated that the FAP and NSFP foment Nutritional and Food Security (NFS) for the farmers' families and priority groups benefited by these policies, since the analyzed discourses are about the Government Procurement policies associated with the principles relevant to NFS. In other words, it is postulated that the mediators' narratives are connected to the

framework unique to the institutional markets, which is from 3rd generation guided by issues that pervade NFS (GRISA; SCHNEIDER, 2014).

Thus, this idea can be observed in the a manager's narrative, when describing that it is not only the farmer that accesses the institutional market that is contemplated with NFS actions, but also other beneficiary actors, such as non-profit institutions that serve groups in situation of social vulnerability. Therefore,

[...] there is a range of products that they can sell and so they end up producing and consuming other types of products, improving their nutrition, the nutrition in the region, because these products reach non-profit organizations. If we have a wider range of products, even for a school meal, we will be improving nutrition, for a hospital, daycare, elderly homes, among others. So, it also encompasses other people, not only the nutritional and food security of the producer, but also of those who receive the final product, understand? (Manager, 16).

The role of Government Procurement is highlighted because it is a guaranteed market to propagate the flow of the family farmers' production, in addition to having a representative social function by providing food donations to groups in situation of vulnerability and, thus, contributing to the food security of these individuals. In the opinion of a mediator, the central idea of Government Procurement is that the State

[...] donates to the city itself to be commercialized, to be used in schools, daycares and institutions. So, you create a virtuous cycle, that is, the producer produces, provides food for the community and this food will be used in schools and institutions. So, they not only have an economic aspect but also a very strong social aspect (Extensionist, 22)

On the other hand, a public manager declares that the FAP is a "double-edged sword", because the value that the farmer can access individualized is small, which cannot be more than R\$ 8,000.00 (eight thousand reais)⁴ per beneficiary family in the current years. The discourse is supported by the justification that

4 The mediators discuss that the values that are passed along by these Governmental Procurement Programs are not being updated, despite being fundamental in complementing the family income. "They help in the income, but even the total annual values, they do not solve it yet, but it is improving" (Researcher, 3).

[...] this value could be a little higher, so that they can organize themselves within a cash flow for payment and amortization of this credit. But I already see this as a great advantage, and what I think is really valid are the values inserted for organized civil society, which are much higher, where those who have organized groups, those that are able to work collectively, already have this possibility of selling higher values, I think this is a nice point to encourage this type of social organization (Manager, 8).

In this regard, one manager considers it necessary to increase the value to be commercialized by each farmer, something around R\$ 12,000.00 (twelve thousand reais), per year, which would already be enough to provide for the family. This is because of the difficulty of the farmer receiving the resource on time, also recurrent in other narratives from the mediators. The assessment presented by the mediators is that

[...] you deliver to receive the money with one month and you receive with three, four month and even with the resource not arriving. It's not something you deliver here today and tomorrow you receive the money, you are fighting, calling to receive the resource, but even with all the difficulty, it's the only action, through the government, that still manages it (Social movement, 4).

From the FAP implementation, it was verified that the technicians were more present with the farmers that accessed this policy, since more interaction was needed between them. That is, *“a little more information from the technical assistance in favor of increasing production, improve these producers' productivity and allocate these products to meet the FAP policies”* (EX29, extensionnist, 2018).

In this field research, as outlined previously in section 3.1 of this dissertation, among the public policies that most promote productive inclusion of family farmers, the FAP was considered the second most important policy by extensionist, managers and researchers, while the social movements representatives considered it in third place and professors put it in fourth.

For one of the interviewed managers, the FAP is seen as the most complete inclusion policy, seen as, according to him, such policy is also a way to finance the farmers' own production, since their insertion in the market is already guaranteed by the State. In addition, there is the probability of increasing production with the prerogatives presented in this policy.

The mediators' discourse signals that the FAP was a catalyst for farmers to increase production. The presupposition is that all surplus is sold given the guarantees of the institutional market. Therefore, *“it provides more confidence for the farmers to continue investing, because they are sure that they will be able to commercialize, one way or another”* (Extensionist, 32).

As a consequence of this result, the mediators' discourse is that the FAP is noticeably well regarded by family farmers. They report that, in the past, the farmer would take a loan and would not be able to pay it. But now, with the resources from FAP (and in many cases, also from NSFP, which has a similar commercialization logic), there were improvements in family income, since it was possible to diversify the production and provide other guarantee condition to the bank, as observed in the narrative below.

So, in the past, people, at least here in the North, dealt a lot with livestock. So, only those who had cows would get financing, because you would go there and they would ask for a calf, it was the guarantee for them. We knew that that didn't lead to financial development, but if they needed one thousand reais to invest in chickens, they weren't able to make that kind of thing. And today, with the FAP, they raise chickens, get milk, sell to the Program and are able to gather this money, right? There are producers that, when this Program started, started to drive a car, they sold X kilograms of flour, poultry, chicken, they sold 100 chickens at 20 reais, it was 2,000 reais, the price of a cow. So, in a small space like the family agriculture propriety, they usually have to focus more on these activities that are faster to provide for the family and also have resources, but they had this difficulty, they weren't able to raise a considerable amount if some emergency happened, but the FAP incentives contributed to the inclusion of farmers in the public policies (Extensionist, 25).

The statement of a MST representative says that the FAP was the “*flagship*” among the most inclusive policies from the point of view of production planning. The logic presented is that he farmer, with the aid of this policy, makes up “[...] *the complete chain, produces, organizes and commercializes. So, it was a very important Program from the perspective of inclusion, not counting the connection to other agrarian and agricultural policies*” (Social movements, 7).

However, as evidenced by some mediators, the farmers still have difficulties accessing these Government Procurement policies due to State's bureaucracy, insufficient sanitary inspection service, reduced quantitative of emitted DAPs, farmer's low information level and lack of continuous technical assistance, as stated in a narrative exemplified below. Therefore, the problems are linked to

[...] the issue of State bureaucracy, besides, there is a large bottleneck that is the issue of sanitary vigilance, the farmers also don't have access to DAP, right? When they are in the field, there is also the issue of information, the need for continuous technical assistance to give support, right? Although this Program is important, if there was cutting edge work, of execution, of continuity, I believe that the development would be much better for family farmers (Extensionist, 4).

This was also the explanation of a researcher for not indicating FAP as the main productive inclusion policy for family agriculture, exactly *“for countless factors, the farmers have little access to this Program”* (Researcher, 5), although she considers that there are significant productive inclusion indexes for those who are able to have access. Considering this scenario, Wagner (2015) understands that the rights acquired by the family farmers are not directly related to their insertion opportunities in Government Procurement policies, since the way the State administers them does not guarantee access to the priority public due to the universal aspect, highly normative and bureaucratic of public policies.

Aligned to these ideas, one extensionist states that the FAP could be less bureaucratic for the farmer, because she notes that, in field work, that the farmer has to *“be very up to date with the documentation. They need this DAP, that often times is an obstacle to access the Program and to commercialize”* (Extensionist, 33). Despite this suggestion, it is verified that the FAP follows an opposite trajectory in the last years, in which the family farmers’ access is hindered by bureaucracy (TURPIN, 2008; TRICHES; SCHNEIDER, 2012; AGOSTINI; BOURSCHEIDT, 2018). This is a reflex of the need to adequately comply with the normatives that manage the mentioned Program regarding the possibility of selling and contract compliance, especially through the organization of delivery and standardization of products (CORADIN; SOUZA, 2015; WAGNER; GEHLEN, 2015).

In turn, with a different perspective, one mediator emphasizes that the FAP fomented the family farmers collective organizations’ access and that this allowed for the strengthening of their associations and cooperatives. However, in a FAP study in Tocantins, Carvalho e Pedroso Neto (2016) observed that, in the last years, this policy has contributed more to strengthen associations at the expense of cooperatives. This argument is justified by the fact that, between 2010 and 2015, 80 projects were executed by CONAB, only 2% of cooperatives being contemplated. The 98% contemplated associations, for the most part, are from projects of rural settlements that are required by law for agrarian reform beneficiaries to receive governmental policies that are a right. Another mediator considers that the creation of FAP motivated farmers to organize collectively, even if informally, and thus, to seek objectives of productive nature. But, even so, it was verified that the minority of family farmers had access to food acquisition programs collectively. In addition to the issue related to the low production organization level, other bottlenecks that make the FAP access

difficult, in the state of Tocantins, are the lack of minimal structures for product processing and lacking technical assistance (SOUSA *et al.*, 2019).

In this sense, despite these limitations and as shown by the mediators' ideas and arguments, it can be inferred that the FAP is a policy that expressly contributes to reaching productive inclusion actions, as can be verified in the normative (decree nº 7.775, from July 4th, 2012), which conducts the referred Program in one of its goals: "1 – encourage family agriculture, *promoting its social and economic inclusion*, as incentive for production with sustainability, processing, food industrialization and generation of income" (BRASIL, 2012, p.1, our emphasis). Here, the FAP framework is in accordance with the ideas and practices of the interviewed mediators.

While regarding the NSFP, with the changes in Law nº 11.947/2009, it allowed for, at least, 30% of the resources for school feeding to be from family farmers and their collective enterprises, by prioritizing agrarian reform settlements, traditional, native and quilombola communities. From this opportunity to insert themselves in one more type of alternative market,

[...] it created a great possibility for draining the farmers' production, that is, you now have a guaranteed market, because school feeding works daily, you have two moments that you stop during the year. But the schools ask for meals for the children all the time, and that is the market there and it is consolidated (Extensionist, 4).

In general terms, this advance in legislation allowed for new possibilities for introducing products in the school menu, according to the regional food habits, and strengthening family agriculture. Although to stay in this market, it is fundamental that the farmers fit into the current normatives, as recommended by one mediator. That is,

[...] you have to adapt to sell products, right? So, the farmer tries, if he wants to continue benefiting from this public policy. They also have to try to fit into the requirements that these policies demand, moreover, that these public policies are put as requirements for them to commercialize their product (Extensionist, 37).

From one mediator's perspective, the farmer can more easily access the NSFP than the FAP. The interpretation is that if there is a problem in some stage of the resource reception process, they can solve their issues in the city itself by going to the Town Hall. In addition, with price-taking being carried out in the location, the price that the farmers receive is probably much better and superior if they were to sell at a fair. On the other hand, to solve any bottleneck related to FAP, the issues must

be solved directly with the executing organ in Brasília, because

[...] the documentation did not go to Town Hall, it went directly to Brasília, which took three months to analyze the whole process, if there was a problem in one line, the whole process returned, it was accepted to solve only the problem of this one line, so it was always postponing it (Professor, 4).

The same mediator reports her experience with the NSFP in Araguaína, in which she noticed that the ones responsible for inserting the family agriculture food in the school meals did not follow what was determined by law, because they did not consider it important. With the recent manager change and the pressure to reach the minimal index of 30%, it was necessary to articulate the demand with the supply of products from the regional farmers. In order to do that, she reveals that meetings were carried out in the format of Organization of the Social Picture (OSP).⁵ However, some farmers still do not participate, because they are not NSFP suppliers in the city due to the fear that they have because of the loss they had with the Town Hall some years ago, although the managers are seeking strategies to meet the indicator proposed by the current legislation.

In turn, the mediators also warn that here are commercialization difficulties of the NSFP in the state in light of the reduced number of suppliers from family agriculture collective organization. The explanation is that

[...] in a commercialization level, even today the NSFP has difficulty, the directors buying food from family agriculture, all of them say that here are suppliers, but there's not, why? First, their organization, that is fundamental in terms of cooperative, has to have a structure that they coordinate and are able to sell the product organized, which there's not here, only a few places to sell to the NSFP (Manager, 9).

The justification mentioned by the mediators regarding the farmers' limitation in organizing to deliver the planned production in a certain time comes from the fact that Tocantins has adverse weather condition and many do not have access to irrigation. Such obstacles hinder the harvest period and, as a consequence, the delivery of production on time. Another detailed question is

5 The OSP is a systematic process of cooperativist education that answers the cooperative's and/or association's need for communicating and integrating with their associates directly and efficiently through periodical events, such as meetings, among their public of interest. About this subject, see the studies by Amodeo *et al.* (2011), Macedo, Sousa and Amodeo (2014) and Macedo *et al.* (2017).

that the farmers are not able to interact with the other in time to substitute a lacking product, in order to avoid the lack of supply for the school. Thus, it is not rare to notice how much the farmers are not able to fulfill their contracts with the state public schools due to unfeasibility of regular and constant supply of food and also due to inadequate hygiene-sanitary conditions.

Another observation is that the schools, almost always, want to buy 30% of family agriculture products for the school meals, however, the obstacle is in the price of these food products, which are more expensive than from other suppliers. This is harmful because the resource from the National Fund for Education Development (NFED) destined to public schools is already considered low, having to be complemented with other sources of resources. Therefore, the school principals' solution falls in the necessity of buying from bigger suppliers and middlemen that are able to have a more competitive price.⁶

Corroborating with the explanations mentioned above, one professor understands that, sometimes, the school does not comply with the minimal established by the NSFP legislation due to a series of problems, in which they mention the fact that the school units “[...] *don't find the products, the farmers also have difficulty making a contract, a commitment and guarantee that they are going to offer products as required in the Public Call*” (Professor, 5). In addition to these points extracted from the field research, Cruz (2017) explains that it is necessary to adjust other issues in order to facilitate the family farmer's participation in the NSFP, one of which refers to the planning activities of the executing entities that need

[...] to be adjusted to the specificity of family agriculture, to respect the seasonality of the products, to release new notices before the due date of the previous one, to pay according to what was established in contract, to make a fair pricing of the products, to make several call per year, to ask for the agreement in contract, to establish a dialogue between those involved in the process, to create projects to encourage the production of the items that are still not produced, to strengthen partnerships with several organs that can aid the family farmers, to amplify the municipal inspection service and to value the technical assistance services, which is one the main organs involved in the productive arrangement and in the mobilization of the farmers since the implementation of the policy in the researched cities (CRUZ, 2017, p. 116).

6 To better understand this situation, we can look to the literature, which clarifies that there are certain obstacles of item pricing if Public Calls, because they are compared with retail and bulk markets in general, which have higher chances of being competitive and lowering the final price, even if they provide products with lower quality than those from family agriculture (TRICHES; SCHNEIDER, 2010).

Thus, the NSFP proposes to contribute satisfactorily to the biopsychosocial growth and development, learning, school performance and the creation of healthy food habits of the students, through Nutrition and Food Education (NFE).⁷ In order to do that, the family farmers became protagonist actors by producing diversified food (and their influence on rural development) to be distributed in the contemplated schools, as pointed out in item V, article 2, Law nº 11.947/2009. Despite this incentive to farmer productivity, there is no mention of the term productive inclusion in the mentioned legislation (BRASIL, 2009).

Despite the advances mentioned above, for Grisa and Porto (2015), the biggest challenge of institutional markets is to seize the possibility to be more than an agricultural policy of commercialization, seen as it has had important effects on productive inclusion, social organization, food security and strengthening the social identities of the family farmers regarding the territories in which they are inserted, since these are the elements that attribute novelty to the institutional markets.

Thus, Caldas and Anjos (2015) have the premise that the process of consolidation of institutional markets produced at least three branches. The first is related to the recognition that logic of Government Procurement allowed to break with the polarized idea between market and social exclusion, understanding that the market is a social construct and not an abstract mechanism that operates only in the exchange of merchandise, services and capital. The second branch breaks with the imaginary that the fight and reduction of poverty should occur in the same parameter as income transference policies. Lastly, in the third branch, it is verified that the working dynamic of institutional markets causes positive effects by which it should be seen as a strategic tool for rural development.

Currently, with the restrictions caused by the global crisis due to the Covid-19 outbreak – due to the necessary compliment with social isolation, in hopes to slow the virus contamination speed – it has imposed difficulties in promoting food supplies in to Brazilian territory. Although there have been diagnosed countless efforts aiming to minimize the impact caused by the pandemic,

7 Studies carried out about Nutrition and Food Education in the state of Tocantins can be verified in Santos *et al.* (2018), Santos and Pires (2018) and Silva *et al.* (2017). It is also mentioned the study by Kato e Sousa (2018) on the theme of health and well-being, which discusses the technological contributions developed by Embrapa to achieve the Sustainable Development Objectives through NFE actions.

the economic impacts for family farmers was high, especially for those who had less production diversification and few commercialization channels.

In Tocantins, the situation is not different. The youngest federation state also felt the negative effects of the pandemic and the fear of food shortage restarted the discussion about the primordial importance of family agriculture and about measures of priority support and protection so that farmers are able to continue producing and distributing food during the pandemic. In the current situation, family agriculture is one of the groups that was most affected by the crisis and the State's efforts are of vital importance to minimize the social vulnerability situation, which, in rural region of Tocantins, eminently affects resettlers, natives and quilombolas (SOUSA, 2020).

The sanitary and social distancing requirements, the interruption in the supply of institutional markets (especially NSFP), the closing of free fairs and the decrease in demand by the population are hindering the flow of the family agriculture food production and decreasing income. Thus, the family production system and its respective food distribution needs to be restructured and the most common ways to make productive inclusion feasible is through access to public policies and alternative ways to sell. The pandemic caused by Covid-19 brought new challenges, which must be discussed and overcome, through intersectoral actions and governmental measures.

Considerations

Therefore, it is concluded that the potential of Government Procurement for productive inclusion of family farmers, according to the interviewees, is linked to the positive effects from the incentive to collective and formal organization of the family farmers, the increase in family income, dynamization of the local economy, valuing regional products, the guarantee of insertion in new markets and contributions with the food security of direct (family farmers) and indirect (those who receive the food donations and who are in situation of social vulnerability) beneficiaries. On the other hand, the mediators point out that the bureaucracy and the low organization of the farmers are the main variables responsible for the difficulties in executing the policies immersed in the institutional markets. The challenges are magnified with the global crisis caused by the Covid-19 outbreak.

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