

## Contributions of Family Farming to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

 Diego Neves de Sousa<sup>1</sup>,  Maria Eduarda Ribeiro de Jesus<sup>2</sup>,  Márcia Mascarenhas Grise<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Embrapa Pesca e Aquicultura. Prolongamento da Avenida NS 10, cruzamento com a Av. LO 18 Sentido Norte Loteamento - Água Fria. Palmas - TO. Brasil. <sup>2</sup> Federação das Indústrias do Estado do Tocantins - FIETO. <sup>3</sup> Embrapa Pesca e Aquicultura.

Author for correspondence: [diego.sousa@embrapa.br](mailto:diego.sousa@embrapa.br)

**ABSTRACT.** In order to meet the goals demanded by the 2030 agenda, it is essential to strengthen the different groups in family farming, which represents a viable opportunity for sustainable rural development. In this sense, this study aims to analyze bibliographic productions from 2014 to 2021 on the contributions of family farming to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The methodology adopted was the bibliometric review technique. The results indicate that from the officialization in 2018 of the Decade of Family Agriculture (2019-2028), with the aim of executing an action plan to combat hunger and poverty through family farmers, the number of publications increased, highlighted even more within the scope of SDG metrics.

**Keywords:** Public policies, rural development, education, poverty, sustainability.

## Contribuições da Agricultura Familiar para a Consecução dos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (ODS)

**RESUMO.** Para o cumprimento das metas demandadas pela agenda 2030 indispensável está o fortalecimento dos diferentes grupos da agricultura familiar o qual representa uma oportunidade viável para o desenvolvimento rural sustentável. Neste sentido, este estudo tem como objetivo analisar produções bibliográficas do período de 2014 a 2021 sobre as contribuições da agricultura familiar para a consecução dos Objetivos de Desenvolvimento Sustentável. A metodologia adotada foi a técnica de revisão bibliométrica. Os resultados apontam que a partir da oficialização em 2018 da Década da Agricultura Familiar (2019-2028), com o intuito de executar um plano de ação de combate à fome e à pobreza por meio dos agricultores familiares, é que o número de publicações se destacou ainda mais no âmbito das métricas dos ODS.

**Palavras-chave:** Políticas públicas, desenvolvimento rural, educação, pobreza, sustentabilidade.

## **Aportes de la Agricultura Familiar al Logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS)**

**RESUMEN.** Para cumplir con las metas que demanda la agenda 2030, es fundamental fortalecer a los diferentes grupos en la agricultura familiar, que representa una oportunidad viable para el desarrollo rural sostenible. En ese sentido, este estudio tiene como objetivo analizar las producciones bibliográficas de 2014 a 2021 sobre las contribuciones de la agricultura familiar para el logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible. La metodología adoptada fue la técnica de revisión bibliométrica. Los resultados indican que a partir de la oficialización en 2018 de la Década de la Agricultura Familiar (2019-2028), con el objetivo de ejecutar un plan de acción para combatir el hambre y la pobreza a través de la agricultura familiar, se incrementó el número de publicaciones, destacando aún más dentro del alcance de las métricas de los ODS.

**Palabras clave:** Políticas públicas, desarrollo rural, educación, pobreza, sostenibilidad.

## Introduction

Nowadays, many nations have shown sensibility in having the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as reference in their government practices, which are characterized as an agenda of sustainable actions that aim, in summary, to promote society well-being and quality of life, in a univocal conception that humanity is not separate from the environment it lives in (Gregolin *et al.*, 2017). The SDG (or we can also refer to them as Agenda 2030) are a collection of global objective and goals, established in 2015 by the United Nations (UN) when recognizing the need to consider and balance, at the same time, the: social, economical and environmental dimensions of development (Cardoso; Rodrigues Junior & Gaspar, 2019; Souza; Viana & Fonseca Filho, 2019).

Among the many aspects inherent to Agenda 2030, we highlight the 17 SDGs that are aimed to eradicating hunger (SDG 1); combating hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2); promoting health and social well-being (SDG 3); promoting inclusive, equitable and quality education (SDG 4); gender equality and women empowerment (SDG 5); access to potable water and basic sanitations (SDG 6); guaranteeing clean and accessible energy (SDG 7); promoting full employment, decent work and economic growth (SDG 8); promoting industry, innovation and infrastructure (SDG 9); reducing inequalities (SDG 10); promoting sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11); sustainable production and consumption standards (SDG 12); combating climate change and its impacts (SDG 13); sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources (SDG 14); recovering and promoting the conscious use of the ecosystems (SDG 15); promoting peace, justice and efficient institutions (SDG 16) and articulating partnerships and means of implementation (SDG 17) (United Nations, 2021).

The concept and premises of what is understood as sustainable development are in vogue, and that is due, in part, to the complexity of the theme and also to the new realities that society imposes (and their challenges), which offers countless practical subsidies to scholars of the field. In light of this, when reviewing treaties on sustainable development, Gregoling *et al.* (2017) note the expressive role of agriculture in promoting environmental sustainability. In agreement with this, Coletto *et al.* (2021) consider that the public of family agriculture are strategical actors in the rural sphere that provide sustainable development, from social and economic aspects, productive inclusion and respect for the environment.

Thus, the objective of this study is to analyze bibliographic productions from 2014 to 2021 on the contributions of family farming to the achievement of the SDG.

## Methodology

Aiming to understand the contribution of family farming to the achievement of the SDG, this study used bibliometric review to map works on the subject in Brazil.

Bibliometric review is a technique from social sciences that focuses on metrics to analyze indicators of production and dissemination of scientific knowledge. It is a methodological resource that allows the researcher to analyze the scientific production of a specific field of knowledge or theme being investigated in search platforms for academic studies. Its application contributes to delve into a certain theme and can also aid in the identification of prospective scenarios (Araújo, 2006; Sousa, 2019).

The research was conducted in May 2021, with the help of Google Scholar, search platform for academic literature. The keywords were: “family farming” and “SDG” to search for studies in Portuguese published from 2014 to 2021. After applying these filters, the exercise was reading the articles, to have a better visualization of the studies and the listing of the following categories: title, year of publication, research location, journal or congress in which it was published, objective, theme, researched public, adopted methodology and the results found in the study regarding the SDGs. At the end of the analysis, a summary of the main results regarding the SDGs was conducted.

From a total of 32 mapped studies, we used 21 that presented contextualized evidence of the contributions of the different segments of family farming to achieve the goals proposed by Agenda 2030, the empirical object in question (Table 1). That is, we opted for scientific documents that articulate explicitly in their content some aspect that refers to the SDG thematic.

Table 1 - Mapped studies.

Title	Year of publication	Type of study	Theme
Family farming and institutional markets: development as freedom.	2014	Article	Public policies
The state of food and nutritional security in Brazil: a multidimensional portrait.	2014	Report	Food security
The actors of the construction of the Family farming category in Brazil.	2014	Article	Social and productive inclusion
The presence and potentialities of family farming in Latin America and Caribe.	2016	Article	Social and productive inclusion; Sustainable Development.
The growing recognition of the contribution of family farming to sustainable development.	2016	Article	Food security; Sustainable development.
Family farming and solidary economy: contextualization and initial notes on a relation with the 17 objectives to transform our world.	2017	Article	Cooperativism.

Contribution to improve production with family farming, indigenous peoples and traditional populations.	2018	Book chapter	Social and productive inclusion.
Research agenda aimed at reducing inequalities and at social inclusion.	2018	Book chapter	Social and productive inclusion.
Zero Hunger and sustainable farming: Embrapa contributions.	2018	E-book	Social and productive inclusion; Food security; Sustainable development.
The human right to a dignified nutrition: how family farming and home gardens help with this right.	2018	Article	Food security.
The institutional market of buying food from Family farming: PAA and PNAE in the territory of Vale do Rio Pardo/RS.	2018	Article	Public policies.
Sustainable farming – a study.	2019	Article	Food security; Sustainable development.
Family agroindustry, SDGs and alternative development: a study on the “Fonte do Sabor” of the Sami-Arid Paraibano/Brazil.	2019	Article	Social and productive inclusion.
Agroecological transition as a strategy for sustainable development and food and nutritional security.	2019	Book chapter	Food security; Agroecology.
School food, Family farming and Sustainable Development Goals: relations from a study in the city of Catuípe/RS.	2020	Article	Public policies; Food security.
Public purchases and the Sustainable Development Goals: development of family farming and democratization of organic food in the DF.	2020	Article	Public policies.
Public policy for sustainable regional development strengthened by family farming in the city of Rio Branco.	2020	Article	Public policies; Sustainable development.
Scanning essential concepts: public policies, sustainable development, family farming and food security.	2021	Book chapter	Public policies; Sustainable development; Food security.
Public policies, family farming and sustainability.	2021	Book chapter	Public policies; Sustainable development.
About our work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Brazil.	2021	Report	Sustainable development.
Farming technologies appropriate for the agroecological transition in family farming.	2021	Article	Sustainable development; Agroecology.

Source: elaborated by the authors.

After reading the mapped studies, the texts that discussed the central theme of the study – the contribution of family farming to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals – were selected and, as a result, we obtained 21 studies, divided in 13 articles, 5 book chapters, 1 e-book and 2 scientific reports that presented contextualized evidence of the empirical objective in question (Table 2).

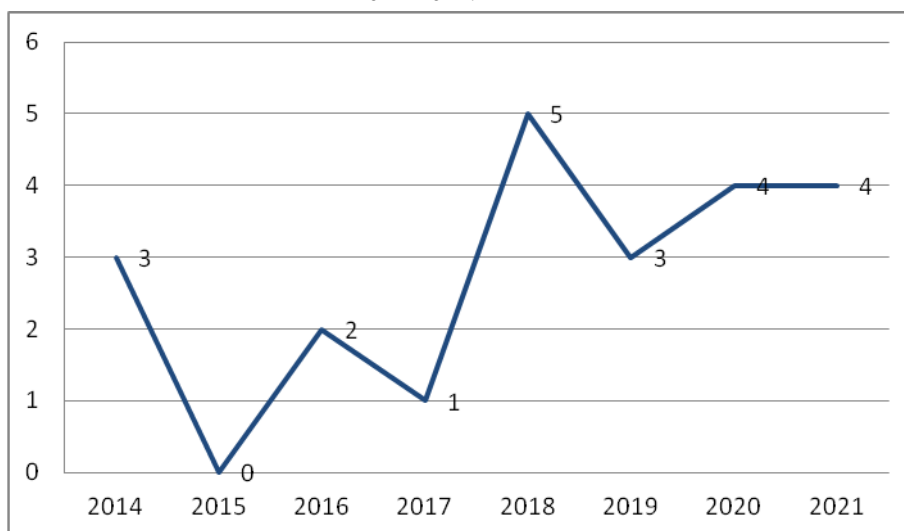
Table 2 - Studies mapped for the bibliometric analysis.

Type of study	Number
Article	13
Book chapter	5
E-book	1
Report	2

Source: elaborated by the authors.

In 2014, 3 publications were identified with the theme of sustainability influenced by the millennium goals that were established by the UN in 2000 and that preceded the actions of Agenda 2030. With the exception of 2015, when there was no publication on the theme, from 2016 onward began, with no temporal interruption, the publication of studies on the SDGs and family farming, highlighting the year of 2018, when there was the highest number of publications (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Evolution of the number of publications on the theme of family farming the SDGs in the period of 2014-2021.



Source: elaborated by the authors.

When identifying that the studies with this theme started to be published with more emphasis from 2018 on, this increase was verified to be correlated to the period in which the UN approved the A/RES/72/239 resolution, by which the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028) was proclaimed, an important step for the promotion of better public policies for family farming and institutional recognition of this category to contribute to the end of hunger and poverty, and, at the same time, to achieve the SDGs (FAO, 2019).

In this sense, regarding the articles from scientific journals, the concentration of articles in national journals and primarily in the fields of Urban and Regional Planning, Interdisciplinarity and Applied Social Sciences was verified, as shown in Table 3.

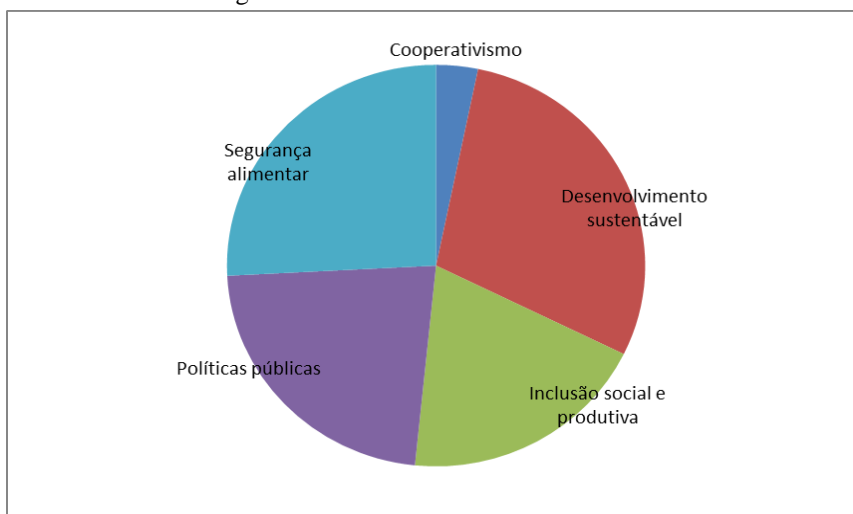
Table 3 - Final selection of the articles in journals for analysis.

Journals	Number	Field
Agroecology Journal	1	Interdisciplinarity
Dignity Re-vista	1	Philosophy
DRd – Regional Development in Debate	1	Urban and Regional Planning
Redes – Journal of Regional Development	2	Urban and Regional Planning
Journal of Rural Economy and Sociology	1	Applied Social Sciences
Northeast Economy Journal	1	Applied Social Sciences
Latin Orbis Journal	1	Interdisciplinarity

Source: elaborated by the authors.

After the analysis of the theoretical/conceptual frameworks, the themes discussed in the selected studies were diverse, with family farmers being the main empirical object studied by the authors. The themes were fundamentally questions about cooperativism, sustainable development, social and productive inclusion, public policies and food security, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Themes of the selected studies.



Source: elaborated by the authors.

For Brito, Ferreira and Pereira (2020), as well as for other author such as Sacco dos Anjos and Becker (2014) and Schneider (2016), family farmers are an important part of achieving the SDGs, regarding the promotion of rural and sustainable development and food and nutritional security.



After applying the thematic filters of the selected studies, the exercise was reading the studies, in order to elucidate which SDGs were directly connected to family farming and the recurring way that these were discussed in the studies in question (Table 4).

Table 4 - SDGs identified in the mapped studies.

<b>SDG</b>	<b>Authors</b>
1. Eradicating poverty	SACCO DOS ANJOS & BECKER (2014); PATRIOTA & PIERRI (2016); BRITO; FERREIRA & PEREIRA (2020); LEITE; CHACON & CUNHA (2021).
2. Zero hunger and sustainable farming	FAO (2014); SACCO DOS ANJOS & BECKER (2014); PATRIOTA & PIERRI (2016); SCHNEIDER (2016); ALMEIDA; SÁ & ANNA (2018); DEPONTI. et al. (2018); GOMES & MEDEIROS (2018); SALES et al. (2019); SOUZA; VIANA & FONSECA FILHO (2019); BRITO; FERREIRA & PEREIRA (2020); KAWAKAMI; SOUZA & QUIRINO (2020); KRÜGER, N. R.; BASSO, D; VIEIRA, E. L. (2020); CHACON (2021); CARDOSO; RODRIGUES JUNIOR & GASPAR (2021); LEITE; CHACON & CUNHA (2021).
3. Health and well-being	SCHNEIDER (2016); BRITO; FERREIRA & PEREIRA, (2020).
7. Clean and accessible energy	SALES et al. (2019).
10. Reduction of inequalities	PICOLOTTO (2014); UDRY & DIAS (2018); SALES et al. (2019); LEITE; CHACON & CUNHA (2021).
11. Sustainable cities and communities	SALES et al. (2019).
12. Responsible consumption and production	SACCO DOS ANJOS & BECKER (2014); PATRIOTA & PIERRI (2016); SCHNEIDER (2016); SALES et al. (2019); BRITO; FERREIRA & PEREIRA (2020); LEITE; CHACON & CUNHA (2021); NICODEMO et al. (2021).
13. Action against climate change	LEITE; CHACON & CUNHA (2021); NICODEMO et al. (2021).
15. Life on land	SCHNEIDER (2016); BRITO; FERREIRA & PEREIRA (2020); NICODEMO et al. (2021).
SDGs in general	GREGOLIN et al. (2017); NAÇÕES UNIDAS (2021).

Source: elaborated by the authors.

In light of this analysis, it was identified that SDG 2 “zero hunger and sustainable farming” was mentioned in 15 out of the 21 selected studies and has been object of debate for

most of the authors regarding the relation between family farming and the SDGs. Among the goals established for eradicating hunger, achieving food and nutritional security and promoting sustainable farming, some are directly connected to strengthening family farming and promoting sustainable system for food production.

For Deponi *et al.* (2018) and Kawakami, Souza and Quirino (2020), SAN's perspective became essential to associate family farming as a fundamental part of a public strategy to combat hunger and to develop the country. Thus, according to FAO (2014), public policy is an effective path to contribute to achieving this objective through income transference programs, and also through the formulation of structuring public policies, such as the strengthening of family farming.

Following objective 2, the SDGs "responsible consumption and production" appeared in a third of the mapped studies and pervades the discussions on development allied with sustainability, which gives family farming an essential characteristic to production diversity, which makes up one of its main potentialities when introducing sustainable rural development strategies (Bauinain, 2006). Considering what has been exposed, when guaranteeing sustainable production and consumption standards, as pointed out in objective 12, Gregolin *et al.* (2017) explain the importance of family farming having a relationship with the environment, be it in its daily practice (organic especially) or in the little pressure it exerts in the expansion of agricultural frontiers, to achieve and promote social, equitable, economic and environmental development with a sustainable base and, consequently, the achievement of the SDGs.

### **Contextualizing family farming and its relation with the SDGs**

International organizations like the UN, through the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), have encouraged the strengthening of sustainable farming for the promotion of a nutritiously adequate and healthy food (Souza, Viana & Fonseca Filho, 2019). However, the farming that is referenced is not that of extensive monoculture, of production prioritizing exportation and that generates degradation of the environment, but that of farming reclaimed to sustainable development called family farming, which, according to Gregolin *et al.* (2017), needs public policies, programs and actions of all kinds to stay alive and active to contribute with the food supply of the population through sustainable handling practices.

For Brito, Ferreira and Pereira (2020), family farmers are an important part in achieving the SDGs, regarding rural development and promoting nutritional and food security actions. Other authors, such as Sacco dos Anjos and Becker (2014) and Schneider (2016), corroborate this idea by point out family farming as the most convenient and ideal possibility for the construction of sustainable rural development. Even with the agrobusiness competition and its short commerce chains, for Chacon (2021), family farming is still being responsible for most of the production of *in natura* food in the world, corroborating the food sector, which can guarantee food security for a considerable part of the population, specially those in vulnerable situations. Furthermore, it is from the productive choices and socio-productive organization that we can find answers to some of the current crisis that society is facing, as the case of the inflation of basic food items and fuel. In this sense, Patriota and Pierri (2016) state that small and medium scale farming has been showing, gradually, its capacity of contributing with a good part of the solution to many current global challenges having the adequate means. For example, challenges such as loss of biodiversity and soil degradation, and even situations of food insecurity and poverty.

To contribute to this debate, Sachs (1993) presented five dimensions to achieving sustainability. According to the author, any planning that aims to promote development must take them into consideration: 1. Social sustainability, 2. Economic sustainability, 3. Ecological sustainability, 4. Spatial sustainability and 5. Cultural sustainability (Sachs, 1993). In this scope, the materialization of sustainable development necessarily goes through the rediscovery and reinvention of the rural environment, and it is suggested that it must happen with the support of family farming policies (and its collective organizations), consolidating and modernizing the segment following its specificities and ways of life (Gregolin *et al.*, 2017).

For Schneider (2016) and Sales *et al.* (2019), in the case of collective organizations, especially traditional family agrobusiness, these are considered an important link for the (re)connection between production and consumption of healthy and sustainable foods, besides being an entry point for insertion in formal and viable markets, contributing for a proper productive inclusion of the farmers.

With the creation of the National Policy for Family Farming and Rural Family Businesses (Law nº 11.326/2006), the idea of sustainability was associated with agricultural production in a more solid way, through government actions with proposal of public policies, such as the integration of the theme in the judicial norms for regulating family-based

agricultural activities (Brito; Ferreira & Pereira, 2020, *apud* Medeiros, 2019). For these authors, family farmers exercise a significant function in achieving the SDGs, especially objectives 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 13 and 15. The start of the UN Decade of Family Farming in 2019, with the aim of executing an action plan to combat hunger and poverty, comes to corroborate what Brito, Ferreira and Pereira (2020) emphasize when pointing out that the solution to rural poverty and inequality was in remaking and providing the State's support to the agricultural sector and, especially, when meeting the yearnings of family farming given its fragilities and difficulties in inserting itself in markets.

Regarding SDG 1 “ending poverty in all forms and everywhere”, Gregolin *et al.* (2017) emphasize that considering the occupation potential of people in family farming production, as well as the insertion of family farmers in formal markets through cooperatives and associations, one can already see actions that can mitigate rural poverty, once organized, the farmer tends to have better economic results than when isolated. According to Leite, Chacon and Cunha (2021), the report on Global Development from 2008m titled “Agriculture for Development” pointed out that the increase in farming productivity, profitability and sustainability of small owners is the main path to leave poverty. Furthermore, the productive and diversified potential of family farming food, as well as the vocation for fair, solidary and local/regional commerce of cooperativism is directly tied to SDG 2.

Among the goals established for achieving the second SDG: “ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promoting sustainable farming” is directly tied to strengthening the family farming category and promoting sustainable systems for food production. For example, goal 2.3 is mentioned, which refers directly to the strengthening and productive inclusion of family farmers, with emphasis in gender equality and inclusion of more vulnerable groups, such as indigenous peoples and other traditional peoples, and the access to productive resources, knowledge and markets. In the case of goal 2.4, it refers to the promotion of sustainable systems for food production and the adoption of resilient farming practices, aimed at maintaining the ecosystems, adapting to climate changes and improving soil quality (Souza, Viana & Fonseca Filho, 2019).

In the perspective of Nutritional and Food Security (SAN), it became essential to associate it with family farming as a fundamental part of a public strategy to combat hunger and to promote rural development in the country. Therefore, public policies can contribute to potentialize the achievement of this objective. In 2014, FAO highlighted that Brazil significantly reduced hunger, malnutrition and underfeeding (FAO, 2014). The explanation

for this reduction in the indexes was attributed to the expansion of income transference programs and also the formulation of structuring public policies, such as the one for strengthening family farming and institutional markets (Deponi *et al.*, 2018; Kawakami, Souza & Quirino, 2020).

Contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, the Food Acquisition Program (FAP) is worth mentioning in the field of public policies supporting family farming, by facing a chronic problem for family farmers: the lack of forma markets for selling small-scale production. The School Food National Program (SFNP) is also highlighted, which, at the same time as it contributes to reduce malnutrition in children in schools, brings positive impacts for collective enterprises of family farming (Gomes & Medeiros, 2018). Both also contribute to dynamize the local economy, especially of small and medium cities (Coletto *et al.*, 2021). For Krüger, Basso and Vieira (2020), the relation between family farming and school nutrition is an evident example of the State's efforts to promote sustainable development. The growing increase in the registration of new family agro-industries, apt to provide food to the SFNP, is an opportunity that represents multiple impacts regarding local and sustainable development, by providing SAN connection and reach by the schools and reduction of poverty and hunger in local communities and populations in vulnerable socioeconomic situation.

Knowing that food and farming are directly or indirectly related to all SDGs, according to Almeida, Sá and Anna (2018), food production aligned with sustainable innovations and practices contributes to improve quality of life, to reduce the price of basic foods and, to a higher food exportation, contributing to the dynamization of the local/regional economy. The public acquisition programs have, with that, great potential to contribute to the achievement of the UN Agenda 2030. Emphasis on SDG 2 “Zero hunger and sustainable farming” and SDG 3 “Promoting health and well-being”, by the increase of farmers’ family income and also by providing healthier food to the low-income population, as instituted in the guidelines of the governmental acquisition programs. Thus, it is about the democratization of access to organic and/or agroecological food for the general population and promoting sustainable rural development, at the same time (Kawakami, Souza & Quirino, 2020).

In the case of Brazil, the multiplicity of family farming conditions could seem as a threat to productivity and competitiveness. However, in practice, it is a segment that is responsible for achieving food security and can represent an opportunity to establish new models focused on the conservationist handling of natural resources. In other words, family

farming contributes significantly to the conservation and sustainable use of waters and can collaborate in achieving the goals of SDG 6: “Potable water and sanitation” (Urdy & Dias, 2018). In the study by Gregolin *et al.* (2017), they consider family farming as a promoter of sustainable development, as its unfolding considers several aspects that are seen as primordial by sustainability scholars, such as: respect for the environment, economic freedom and participation, work aiming to not compromise future generations and strengthening the local economy.

In addition to public policies to strengthen family farming, policies aimed at the productive inclusion in the rural environment has had a fundamental role in achieving the SDGs, above all SDG 10: “Reduction of inequalities”. Urdy and Dias (2018) highlight the contribution of agricultural research in the search for sustainable technological solutions to guide the process of productive inclusion and reduction of socioeconomic inequalities, especially of rural production in poverty and extreme poverty situation. Therefore, the relevance of the development of farming and cattle raising to reduce inequalities in the rural environment is fundamental, being indispensable for technological updating and innovation of the population that lives in the countryside and professionals that work with this public.

Through the implementation of public policies aimed at family farming, Science & Technology institutions, directly or by consultancy, can contribute using studies on job and income generation in the countryside, installation of processing industries, fomentation of agricultural cooperatives, increase in tax collection indexes and, consequently, the improvement in education, health, transport, among other essential aspects to sustainable rural development. The increase in farming production and productivity allows for food price reduction and, in turn, contributes to increase the acquisition power of populations in poverty situation and to reduce social inequalities (Urdy & Dias, 2018). In the scope of family farming, the change in status from a old, inefficient and inadequate segment to adjectives such as modern, efficient, sustainable, solidary and food producer was sought (Picolotto, 2014), in which scientific and technological development and innovation have contributed significantly to reduce inequalities in the countryside and the socio-productive inclusion of this segment (Urdy & Dias, 2018).

Corroborating the discussions about development allied with sustainability, Bauinain (2006) highlighted the fundamental role of family farming, due to its essential characteristic: production diversity, which is one of its main potentialities to introduce agroecology as a rural development strategy. When guaranteeing sustainable production and consumption standards,

as pointed out in SDG 12, the study by Gregolin *et al.* (2017) reinforces the importance of how family farming relates with the environment, be it in its daily practice or in the little pressure it exerts in the expansion of agricultural borders. In this sense, SDG 13: “Take urgent measures to combat climate change and its impacts” and 15: “Protect, recover and promote the sustainable use of the land ecosystems, sustainably manage the forests, combating desertification, stop and reverse land degradation and stop loss of biodiversity” are also contemplated by the theme in question.

The multifunctionality of family farming, which, besides producing food and raw matter, generates more than 80% of the rural sector occupation and favors the use of productive practices that are more ecologically balanced, such as crop diversification, less use of industrial input and preservation of the genetic patrimony (Leite; Chacon & Cunha, 2021). Thus, the sustainability of the productive systems has also been a target of public policies propositions, such as the National Agroecology and Organic Production Plan (Planapo), which has produced positive impact by fomenting not only production in sustainable bases, but also the use and conservation of natural resources, as well as stimulating teaching and research aimed at an ecologically based agriculture (Gomes & Medeiros, 2018).

Despite the huge challenges to the formulation and implementation of policies in developing countries, Patriota and Pierri (2016) highlight that this “new” perspective lead by family farming is contributing to get more attention to its specificities and concrete implications during the formulation of rural development policies. Investing in this type of farming is relevant to the country, and even it already being a reference, this opportunity to gain value is achieved due to the advances that were promoted by public policies, created since the decade of 1990, specifically for the sector (Almeida, Sá & Anna, 2018).

Regardless, the promotion of family farming contributes to reduce poverty and inequalities in the countryside, higher diversification and higher stability in food production, strengthening the food supply, sustainable development in a local level, reducing rural exodus, even with the return of generations that had left for the city. Issues such as access to land and natural resources, lines of credit and insurance, technical assistance and rural extension service, access to viable markets and rural infrastructure are part of a repertoire of policies that must be adapted, specifically, to the needs of small-scale rural activities with intensive work use and higher environmental sustainability (Patriota & Pierri, 2016; Nicodemo *et al.*, 2021).

In general, it is understood that family farming contributes not only to increase production and access to healthy foods, but also to income distribution (by dynamizing the local commerce) and to the sustainable development of the country (Almeida, Sá & Anna, 2018). Therefore, Sales *et al.* (2019) observe that the farmers and their respective family agro-industries need public policies that strengthen their organizations. It is verified that family farmers' collective productive enterprises achieve full development from the objective of reducing poverty and of income generation, as well as reducing rural exodus, to the point of changing people's reality and promoting quality of life in balance with nature. These are some of the primordial elements for the achievement of the global accords, enacted by Agenda 2030 and the SDGs to achieve and promote sustainable social, equitable, economic and environment development, in addition to generating jobs and income and improving the quality of life of family farmers.

Generally speaking, family and the countryside represent a unit that evolves continuously and performs economic, environmental, social and cultural function in the wider rural economy and in the territorial networks in which they are integrated. Several aspects that are seen as primordial to achieve the SDGs are a part of family farming, promoter of sustainable development, such as: respect for the environment, economic freedom and participation, work aiming to not compromise future generations, gender equality and strengthening of the local economy. Thus, the importance of empowering them, in the sense of guiding them in practices that promote sustainable local development and, thus, the effective internalization of the SDGs.

Family farmers and their collective organizations have potential to promote sustainability of farming and of the agro-food systems, for which a favorable and essential regulatory environment is necessary to support them. And for this public to achieve full development from the objective of reducing poverty and of income generation, to the point of changing people's reality and promoting quality of life in balance with nature, it is concluded that family farmers need actions and public policies that strengthen their organizations, besides society's contribution as a whole, through partnerships between different social actors, aiming to support the cause and the practice of conscious actions of respect for life and the environment as a way to transform the local reality. These are primordial elements to establish the accords made globally, enacted by Agenda 2030 and the SDGs to achieve and promote sustainable social, equitable, economic and environmental development. This



becomes *sine qua non* condition for family farmers to amplify their contribution to the sustainability of where they are inserted.

## Conclusion

The SDGs represent a global action plan to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger, in additions to offering quality education throughout life for all, protecting the planet and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies by 2030, and currently, several nations have been driven to action with them as reference.

When reviewing treaties on sustainable rural development, we note the expressive role of farming (especially family farming) in promoting environmental sustainability and that the farmers, given their peculiar cultural identity, are an important part in achieving the SDGs, regarding the promotion of sustainable rural development and food and nutritional security of the general population. Another result is that family farming has been showing, gradually, its capacity to be part of the solution of many current global challenges, as long as it has the adequate means to do so.

From the officialization of the Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028), with the objective of executing an action plan to combat hunger and poverty, family farming started to stand out even more in the scope of the Sustainable Development Goals, from the increase in the number of publications on this theme in 2018, as stated in this research. With that, the need of the State's participation for the formulation and improvement of public policies for social and productive inclusion to strengthen this sociopolitical category became evident.

Therefore, for the construction and implementation of public policies that aim to guide humanity to 2030, the strengthening of different family farming groups is one of the main goals to achieve a sustainable agenda.

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