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Panel IMPLEMENTATION-10:

Brazilian University Network on the 2030 Agenda:
challenges and opportunities on territorializing the SDG in Brazil

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INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a challenge for institutions and governments around the world. In the specific case of Brazilian universities, we see great potential for its realization and at the same time, enormous challenges that can be represented in three basic dimensions: teaching, research, and outreach activities. The central argument of this text is that universities, especially public ones, are relevant and extremely strategic actors in the face of the actions required by 2030 Agenda, in view of their inclusive and defensive role in guaranteeing access to higher education for quality, of high social, critical and creative relevance for all.

The central hypothesis is that the multiple challenges to territorialise the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be faced as opportunities such as building a logic of networking between High Education Institutions (IES) and other agents, particularly social movements. The path through outreach activities seams to be very promising for Brazilian universities to acquire protagonism in implementing 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the same time answering to the main demands of our society.

A context of adversities creates the background to the problem to be addressed. The serious social problems of our time expose a need for IES to align their institutional policies both to global emanations and local actions. Especially at a time when our societies are looking for ways to tackle global issues that go beyond isolated

solutions within national borders, responses from a scientific stand are recognized as more necessary than ever. The climate emergency, humanitarian crises resulting from migratory flows, and the response to Covid-19 pandemic demonstrate that possible solutions requires coordinated actions, collectively articulated in the form of broad and complex international cooperation.

The purpose of this article is to understand and critically evaluate the possibilities for the implementation of 2030 Agenda and the SDG 4 in Brazil through a *territorialisation design* connected to a network of Brazilian universities dedicated to think the SDG as a compass to formulate strategy of actions and aligning research, teaching and outreach activities . The text is divided into four parts. The first part discusses Brazil's engagement in the 2030 Agenda. The second part presents some challenges for the implementation of SDG 4 in Brazil. In the third part we provided some empirical data to acknowledge the social role of the University in its alignment with the 2030 Agenda. In the fourth we try to organize some ideas on the construction of the network of Brazilian universities to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The engagement of Brazil in 2030 Agenda trough SDG 4

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are part of the 2030 Agenda that was adopted, since September 2015, as the main political and diplomatic referent for countries in the joint search to rebuild a sustainable global order capable of meeting the needs of future generations (UNGA 2015). But what would be the relevance of doing a cross-reading on the implementation of 2030 Agenda and SDG 4 from a Brazilian perspective? We could highlight three main aspects:

1. SDG 4 has a unique synergistic capacity powerful enough to dialogue with all other SDGs, which makes it central to the transformation of international society.
2. Education is key in accelerating, catalysing and facilitating all other objectives to be achieved, given its intrinsic power to transform societies.
3. Brazil makes a particularly interesting case – due to its history of pedagogical reflections and the implementation of public policies in a continental dimension – which can provide some elements for reflection on global education, education for the globe and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

SDG 4 - "ensuring inclusive and equitable and quality education, and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all" evolved from Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2, which was restricted to primary education, to include other levels of training school and a sense of continuity in education, child to university, as well as a concern for infrastructure, training of professionals, gender equality and inclusion (Kamau et al, 2018).

The acceptance of SDG 4 as a global referent continues to face multiple challenges that we could summarize as following: a) global governance of the theme - to a certain point restricted to UNESCO's institutional role, when being an issue-area determined by transversality and synergy it would require a complex governance framework (ORSINI 2019); b) measurement of progress in different territorial contexts around the world, when existing world indexes and markers do not dialogue with the goals stipulated in SDG 4 (FUKUDA-PARR MCNEILL 2019); c) data production in a top-down model that disregards or would not reaches local realities; and d) permanence of gaps in international debates on education (KANIE & BIERMANN, 2017).

In the case of Brazil, we focus on three elements that connect to the obstacles faced globally: the themes of quality, meritocracy, and inequality. One of the issues that most bother Brazilian researchers when it is necessary to discuss global education and to confront all indexes and ranks is the notion of what is "quality" in the label of SDG 4 "education of quality".

Brazilian governments historically try to emulate the so-called developed countries on the concept of education of quality. They tend to formulate public policies following a liberal notion of ranking, meritocracy, and equity-based educational policies. Indeed, there is no doubt in the international community that are powerful in reducing income disparities and generating long-term prosperity is a way to good education. For this reason, it is understood that developing country governments should increase investments in infrastructure and education to support growth in the long term, measuring their progress and comparing them with those of the main countries (or economies in the world) (OECD, 2018) .

Otherwise, a grassroot perspective from scholars and social agents is more preoccupied with opportunities and inclusion. In Brazil, the fight for quality in education is related to combative stance against silences and invisible on issues such as gender, race and sexualities; as much as it is rooted in a tradition of thought that thinks of another

conception of "quality", a pedagogical commitment to pave the way of formation, transformation and hope (FREIRE, 1997).

Meritocracy[1] - or the predominance of those who have more merits – is another question that triggers a "system of reward or punishment" in the realm of Education. It manifests itself in different categorization such as "Educational and Research Institutions of Excellence", "most influential or highly cited researchers" and "outstanding students". But meritocracy can also be a modus of *kicking way the ladder* – in Ha-Joon Chang's concept – of promotion and social relevance for teachers and students to be framed in an unequal system of recognition of your social relevance other than grades and papers. The acceptance of meritocracy as an unquestionable causal belief makes more difficult to question our place in society. That is true because meritocracy works as "ideologies and criteria for the social hierarchy of societies" that reach "different dimensions of our life" and which is used to justify a larger scale system (social system) of (un)employment. By endorsing meritocracy some group of interests have a powerful tool to control people's perceptions over their future (VIEIRA et al 2013; VIRGINIE et al, 2015; BONNOT et al., 2015).

Quality education based on the principle of meritocracy requires access to an education system in good infrastructural conditions; with education professionals well prepared and payed; and with enough resources (human and technological) to carry out educational activities. However, the reality of most educators and students in the Global South is that of educational inequality, of schools without infrastructure, located in peripheral and disadvantaged areas, surrounded by poverty and violence, when in urban areas, and in much more critical situation when in rural areas and traditional (river-based, indigenous, forest-based).

Since indicators on education of quality tend to assess the performance of students, teachers and management based on tests (some with global repercussions such as PISA) or performance on research and papers impact factors, it creates a fallacy that would frame any attempt to levelling learning and teaching through these mechanisms. From this global conception of development based on education of quality arose a pervasive or even perverse logic derived from the idea of meritocracy that eclipse the blazing inequalities that exist in different parts of the world.

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[1] *Meritocracy* is etymologically linked to the word *merit* (punishment or reward), quality linked to moral, intellectual, labour skills that generate appreciation and recognition from others (HOUAISS 2000, 1276-1277)

Finally, remains the challenge of translating a global objective into local landscapes/environments/places. The SDG 4 was subdivided into ten goals involving "educates children from primary, secondary, vocational and higher education; literacy; dissemination of content related to sustainability"; as well as addressing "school infrastructure, the provision of resources to support less developed countries and the creation of guarantees for teachers to have good working conditions and social recognition" (CADERNOS, 2019).

It was due to IPEA, a governmental institute of research associated to the Ministry of Economy, to adapt UN global targets into a kind of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) for the 2030 Agenda implementation. It is noteworthy to verify how the dimension of Education gains specificities regarding Brazil. For example, goals 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5 and 4.a was specified on the following bases:

a) "at the appropriate age"
b) "ensuring the offer on free public [institutions]"
c) "to education of quality, free or at affordable prices"
d) "leading to satisfactory and relevant learning outcomes"
e) "access to care"
f) "so that they are prepared for the elementary school"
g) "ensure equity of (gender, race, income, land and other kinds)"
h) "especially people with disability, rural area populations, gipsy populations, indigenous and traditional communities, adolescents and young people in compliance socio-educational measures and people living on the streets or deprived of liberty.

Those specifications are important to a reality where children do not go to the school at the right age or the family has not money to pay both for the school and for the food, which the Brazilian system of public education provides for children and youth.. Moreover, it is hard to measure education of quality if one does not recognize gender and race as structuring features on the task for an equitable education. An identity recognition together with some measures of historical compensations for black, indigenous, and poor people is part of a Brazilian strategy to provide better education in general.

And in goal 4.b (Brazil), change the term "substantially" to a palpable goal, which is "expand by 50% the number of vacancies effectively filled by students from developing countries"; clarifying as a focus the scope for educational cooperation in Brazil "in particular, the countries of lesser relative development, such as Portuguese-speaking African countries and Latin American countries".

In short, the engagement of Brazil in 2030 Agenda for the implementation of SDG 4 has required a coordinated effort between federal government and local authorities, civil

society agents and universities as a *sine qua non* condition for territorialisation on a context of conflicting approaches and concepts. Unfortunately, when one piece of this engine is not working properly – as the federal government nowadays – it becomes incredibly challenging to implement the 2030 Agenda**.** Let us try to focus on some of those challenges on the next part.

Challenges to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDG 4 in Brazil

The implementation of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Brazil maintains a link with dynamic and structural forces. Political changes in recent years and the persistence of structural inequalities (conservatism, racism, and patriarchy) (SCHWARCZ 2019) have made Brazil irrelevant in international politics with a subservient foreign policy (LESSA; BECARD; GEHRE, 2019). Brazil swing from a very engaged position in the negotiation process and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs to socially indifferent mood. Particularly concerning the SDG 4, Brazilian policy-oriented worldview re-enacted the country destiny with some mouldy educational project anchored in international ranking, militarization of schools, *homeschooling* and dismantling of universities as a science-producing centre.[2]

The context for implementing the 2030 Agenda in Brazil has gone through three quite different phases, captured by some emotions from the personalities that was actively working inside and outside government since 2015. First a phase of enthusiasm (2015-2017) with joint actions between the federal government, subnational governments, IO (in particular UNDP Brazil) and organized civil society and which would culminate in the creation of the National Committee on the Sustainable Development Goals (CNODS) as a space - albeit imperfect – of decision and participation. A second phase of apathy (2017-2019), with the instrumentalization of CNODS for political purposes and development of cosmetic ethics actions without practical results and the dismantling of social policies that had kept the country on the path of SDG implementation. A third phase of perplexity (2019 onwards), consequence of federal government adoption of denialism as its main ideational foundation, what brought about the extinction of sectorial

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councils and specifically of CNODS, the reduction of popular participation, the criminalization of social movements, and the rejection of 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

In the recent history of Brazil, several neoliberal adjustment policies have been implemented and anchored in recommendations from International Organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank, such as trade openness and external financial capital, privatizations, deregulation of the financial sector, social security reform and more recently labour rules flexibilization. The liberal-conservative political waves converged to the proposition of the so-called Constitutional Amendment nº 95/2016 (EC95) that instituted a New Tax Regime of restriction of resources to fundamental areas such as health and education lasting until 2036 in a clear perspective of extreme austerity (AMARAL 2017).[3]

EC95 prevents the main Brazilian public policy instrument that is aligned with the achievement of the goals of the SDG, namely the National Education Plan (PNE).[4] The financing of the PNE is foreseen in target 20, which determines, until 2024, the application of public resources equivalent to 10% of GDP in Brazilian education, which means that the volume of financial resources will almost double. However, EC95 imposes a limitation strongly compromising the execution of any proposal that is made for future national education plans and that will be in force during the period of validity of EC 95.

In addition to resource contingency made up by ultraliberal reforms, the absence of an institutional alignment – sometimes the result of complete unfamiliarity on the part of decision-makers – amid national/subnational education portfolio of actions and the one advocated by international commitments – such as the Incheon Declaration[5] and the 2030 Agenda – create almost insurmountable obstacles.

Challenges are also found inside governmental politics, at the bureaucratic level, according to Allison models of decision-making process explanation[6]. Changes of command of the Ministry of Education; clear-cut differences amongst Family and Educational Ministries on topics such as sexual and reproductive health education; and a

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[3] Para maiores informações sobre a EC95 e Educação ver: https://media.campanha.org.br/semanadeacaomundial/2018/materiais/_SAM2018_DossieRetrocesso_v1.pdf

[4] the National Education Plan (PNE) was approved by Law 13.005/2014 presents goals to be achieved in the period 2014-2024. For more info: http://pne.mec.gov.br/

[5] For more info: https://iite.unesco.org/publications/education-2030-incheon-declaration-framework-action-towards-inclusive-equitable-quality-education-lifelong-learning/

[6] ALLISON, G. T. **Essence of Decision**: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1st Ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1971.

obvious preference for a neoliberal approach to educational model, clashed with the model that was up to in Brazilian education policies since 2003. Moreover, an adjustment from "education for all" to " technical qualification for the labour market" is producing abandon a broader approach than education, replacing the training of a professional-citizen equipped with a critical sense for the creation of a mass of workers doomed to alienation and manipulation.

That challenge connects to another one, related to this conservative idea (almost fascist one) of strengthening national identity trough education. In that regard, an imprecise idea of "green and yellow patriotism" is instrumentalize as a motto for the nation's unity. That fascist attitude raises great criticism that Brazilian teachers try to "impose on society a scientific indoctrination and embedded in the Marxist ideology", being necessary "to change the educational guidelines implemented over decades" as a goal "to prevent the advance of the factory of political activists to form citizens " (@Jair Bolsonaro, Twitter, 2019).

Furthermore, the attempt to promote the initiative 'school without party' ("Escola sem Partido") determine the prohibition of certain activities such as student associations and the restriction in addressing issues of gender and sexuality. An immediate impact was on students and parents behavioural in a more vigilant stile using its camera's phones to film teachers in class as a way of monitoring and perhaps punishing their conduct.

Likewise, President Bolsonaro has been defending, since his presidential media campaign, a decentralization with greater autonomy of the municipalities in the establishment of their own educational policies. In addition to creating incompatibilities with the PNE and reducing its tangibility, it can set dangerous precedents, particularly that of the militarization of teaching in public schools. In a political alliance between Federal Government and Brasilia Government (GDF) it was stablished a shared model of school management between the Departments of Education and Public Security waving to a militarization trend of education in Brazil.

The pilot project with five schools was expanded to 36 schools. The logic of functioning demanded the physical presence of some Military Police of the DF (PMDF) inside the public schools, with responsibilities of disciplinary and pedagogical

management.[7] The rhetorical justification for society is based on some global indicators such as the HDI and OECD studies.[8]

Another major challenge in implementing SDG 4 in Brazil came from a correlation between population and territorial dimensions. A continental-sized country in the Global South faces difficulties in relation to regional differences and inequalities, reflecting the concentration of wealth and the lack of income distribution, which will impact the quality of education. In a general view, social relations are permeated by issues of race, gender that are capable of perpetuating inequalities that would reduce the opportunities (IPEA, 2020).

Gender and race inequalities in education are significant, but they have a unique configuration in Brazil. In relation to goal 4.5, women are more educated than men. The most prominent inequalities appear in the differences between whites and blacks. Measuring the vulnerable population is very difficult because, even though we have programs to make education more inclusive and diverse, sometimes we could not access a necessarily disaggregated data to reach the scope of these programs (Cadernos ODS 4, 2019).

It is clear that pursuing the achievement of the SDGs and their targets are totally related to the promotion of "factors that are fundamental to a decent and satisfactory standard of living, such as a balanced diet, adequate clothing, access to health and education services, a healthy environment, among others "(IBGE, 2019).

Of course, there are some resistance against all those challenges. For instance, the project 'school without party' was postponed indefinitely because it was considered unconstitutional for hurting basic principles such as pluralism of ideas and the secularity of the State, changed the daily life of schools in Brazil by sterilizing the creativity and freedom of educators for fear of retaliation and even of dismissal s (NT 01/2016).

Regarding the Constitutional Amendment nº 95/2016 (EC95) it's worth to record a movement from several social organizations – some of them related to Education – to

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[7] The objective would be "to provide education of quality, as well as to build strategies aimed at community policing and to tackle violence in the school environment, to promote a culture of peace and the full exercise of citizenship", seeking to follow "criteria of social vulnerabilities, crime rates, human development and basic education "(METRÓPOLES, 2019).

[8] A recent report OECD (2018) pointed out how the education model adopted in Brazil would be unsatisfactory, particularly among underprivileged students, with only 2.1% of underprivileged students in Brazil reaching the level of good knowledge in Science, Mathematics and Reading. The OECD report was interpreted by the MPDFT to justify support for the militarization project of schools in the DF, would emphasize that persistent problems in education would have a direct reflection on the "permanence of perverse social inequality" (NT, 2019).

access the Supreme Federal Court of Brazil (STF) by presenting to the Minister Rosa Weber a "document with information and analyses (…) on the impact of EC95 in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic". The document sought to highlight the harmful effects of austerity policies, condemned by the IMF itself, and to advocate that social investments reduce inequalities and are engines of economic development with social justice.[9]

There is a kind of inner "bureaucratic" resistance against the authoritarian orientation of the Brazilian government. Some national institutions related to data production and research are trying to vocalize some dissatisfaction with current Bolsonaro's decisions as well as warning the society as much as possible about, for example, deforestation and environmental depletion. IPEA warned that "the main challenge for Brazil reaches SDG 4 is comply with PNE" and that national and local indicators should be better designed to encompass regional specificities of Brazil. In sum, "It is necessary to redouble efforts to be able to cope with the existing goals in SDG 4 and, thus, help to promote development" (Cadernos ODS 4, 2019).

Recognizing Brazilian Public University's social role

> A variety of actors and stakeholders now engage in development processes. Indeed, there has been a strong expectation in the process leading toward the Sustainable Development Goals that nonstate actors — whether businesses, nongovernmental organizations, religious groups, **educational institutions, or social movements** — would adopt the goals and contribute to implementing them within their own realms of action. (KANIE & BIERMANN, 2017, 277)

A blurred scenario imposes itself to Brazilian Public Universities (BPU): a combination of challenges and opportunities that are connected to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by SDG 4 and their targets.

First, a country with high levels of social inequality demands that public university be "closer to society" fulfilling a constitutional role in guaranteeing access and gratuity in higher education. Besides, BPU are dimensioned in the inseparability of teaching, research, and outreach activities. Although suffering with systematic attacks, public universities are still resisting to maintain the three central pillars which gives it an identity and a vocation.

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[9] EC 95 has been considered by the United Nations (UN) the most drastic economic measure in the world against social rights. See: https://nacoesunidas.org/brasil-teto-de-20-anos-para-o-gasto-publico-violara-direitos-humanos-alerta-relator-da-onu/

Second, BPU has achieved high levels of scientific productivity, innovation and quality in education and professional training. Scientific production led by public universities in Brazil has elevated Brazilian higher education to international rankings of academic productivity, in addition to generating innovation for strategic areas of the market (CAPES, 2018).[10] More recently, Brazilian Public Universities responded proactively on the context of COVID-19 pandemics, bridging the gap between societies needs and governmental incapacity to react to this health crisis.

Third, there is a juridical competence division between municipalities (early childhood education and primary education), states (primary education and secondary education) and Union (higher education). That implies that BPU – assuming that the Constitution defines education as strategic for the country – should be able to respond in teaching, researching and outreach activities to deliver a portfolio of educational products to society, from capacity building and training to advanced scientific research (LDB, BRASIL, 2013)

Forth, BPU has a social mission of generating inclusiveness. From gratuity[11] to access (and care) to students from different social classes and ethnic-racial, cultural identities and sexual orientation, in addition to including more women in university courses that was possible to correct some deviations from the traditional meritocratic selection system, called "vestibular", that picked the better prepared, that is, those who had better training in elementary and high school. The Law No 12.711 of August 29, 2012, also called the Quota Law, tried to correct those inequalities connected with income and opportunities with a national system of reserving places for access to IFES (and other public jobs) for historically segregated populational groups such as poor, black and indigenous students as well as those coming from public schools.

As Almeida (2019) warns, in recent years there has been an intensified discourse on the need for a mixed public model, that is, that it is necessary to pay for public higher education in the face of what they call the elitism of the Brazilian public university. This

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[10] The last research published on the Census of Higher Education in Brazil carried out by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep), with data for the year 2017, the country had 199 universities, 106 of which public; 189 university centers, 8 of which are public; 2,020 colleges, 142 of which are public; and 40 Federal Institutes and CEFETs, all of which are public (BRASIL, 2019). In 2018, it is estimated that more than 2 million students enrolled in public universities in Brazil (INEP, 2019).

[11] Regarding the gratuity of official education in the Brazilian educational system, it should be noted that it only occurred from 1947, initiated by the State of São Paulo (CUNHA, 1996, p. 143) and gradually became what we know today for public and free higher education in Brazil (ALMEIDA, 2019) through the decrease in the collection of fees and school fees. In fact, this condition has been a differential in the international context since it has enabled access to higher education for many Brazilian students.

discourse is motivated by the economic interests of a large part of the business groups of private educational institutions in the country, which pressure the legislative and executive to create policies that limit the performance of public universities under the pretext that they only serve the richest and prepared.[12]

Faced with this scenario, the strengthening of democracy in Brazil appears conditioned to a strengthening of the role and vocation of the public, free and inclusive BPU. This democratization in access to education is a fundamental condition for the territorialisation of the SDGs and the discussions produced by Agenda 2030, among them, about gender, reduction of inequalities, fair and decent work, effective institutions, health and well-being, in sum, on education of quality. In fact, it is on the trivet of teaching, research, and outreach activities that Brazilian universities, especially public ones, are basing their protagonism. In particular, due to the very characteristic of the 2030 Agenda that demands actions at the local level, university outreach activities has gained so much relevance in the implementation of the SDGs through actions guided by dialogism between academia and society in an hybrid experiment of knowledge production.

The historical process of recognize outreach activities into universities' life is part of IFES reaffirmation of its social relevance. It took new force with resolution 7, of December 18, 2018, of the National Council of Education that established the "Guidelines for Outreach activities in Brazilian Higher Education". In particular, Art. 4, which states that "outreach activities must comprise, at least, 10% (ten percent) of the total student curricular workload of undergraduate courses, which must be part of the curricular matrix of the courses" , became one of the main drivers of the debate about how academic units should start to redesign their courses within three years, that is, until 2021.

To enhance this discussion, we should present some empirical data from concrete experiences of three Brazilian Public Universities that helps to shade some light on the social role of Universities in territorialising the SDGs in a particular Global South context: Federal University of Pampa (UNIPAMPA), in the extreme south of Brazil; University of Brasília (UnB) in the Midwest of the country; and Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp) in the southeast of Brazil.

UNIPAMPA has 10 campuses distributed in 10 cities in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, some of them bordering Argentina or Uruguay, what allow citizens of the

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[12] In fact, as shown by data from the V National Survey of Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of IFES undergraduate students - 2018, more than 70% of students entering public universities in Brazil have a per capita income of less than 1,500 monthly reais (ANDIFES, 2018).

neighbouring country to enter the courses offered for free. UNIPAMPA started the debate to insert the outreach activities in the curricular matrix in undergraduate courses in 2016, following Goal 12.7 of the National Education Plan (PNE). A working group was created between the Dean of Outreach Activities and Culture (PROEXT) and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies (PROGRAD) with the mission of supporting course coordinators to adapt Pedagogical Course Projects (PPC). That triggered a process of reflection, learning and revision of historical features related to the concept of university outreach activities. After this process of construction and dialogue with the entire academic community, the draft resolution to guide the courses is ready and about to be approved by the institution's Superior Council.

The main achievement was to conceive outreach activities projects and actions from a more interdisciplinary point of departure and based on interinstitutional practices, aiming to enhance integrated, shared, and collective work actions in higher education.

The Universidade Estadual Paulista (Unesp) was born in the 1970s as an autarchy submitted to the government of the State of São Paulo. Unesp's expansion process throughout the state has given it its own identity, being present in 24 cities, which characterizes it as a large multicampi university, and producing a broad social, scientific, economic and technological impact in the interior of the state of São Paulo.[13]

The insertion of outreach activities into the curriculum of undergraduate courses of Unesp started in 2016 with the creation of a working group (formed by teaching representatives and technical team of the Dean of Outreach Activities and Culture and Dean of Undergraduate Studies) to think strategies for its implementation. A normative instruction on that matter was formulated in collaboration with the university community and are currently under evaluation of the boards of the undergraduate courses. The draft proposal is called PAEX (Articulated Project for University Outreach Activities), which will have a synthesizing and organizing format of the outreach activities that will be recognized and validated for insertion in the curricula of undergraduate courses at Unesp. Among the proposed guidelines, following national criteria and principles the need for

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[13] In accordance with Law 952 of January 30, 1976, Unesp was created and the result of a long process of taking over pre-existing schools, institutes, and colleges in the interior cities of São Paulo, in south-eastern Brazil. Referring to the 2019 data available in the Statistical Yearbook of 2019 (UNESP, 2019a), Unesp has 3,305 teachers, 5,592 technical-administrative employees and 54,665 students in its 68 undergraduate and graduate courses, forming a large part of the professionals who will work in the region. At the same time, it has a significant presence in the training of professionals and researchers who work in universities and research institutes throughout Brazil and abroad, standing out as one of the main Brazilian universities in scientific production.

actions committed to social issues, highlighting the relationship between university and communities in order to promote the production of collective knowledge and plural knowledge, social justice and confronting forms of violence.

It is also understood that the starting point of PAEX is based on the principle of interdisciplinarity – actions yielded by a multidisciplinary team of teachers involving different areas of knowledge, which will lead to a necessary interlocution and dialogue between teachers of the courses. And as a central prerogative, it is emphasized the need for the PAEX to be linked to the 2030 Agenda through the indication of at least one sustainable development objective (SDG).

At the University of Brasilia (UnB) the debate followed two paths. One involved the Chamber of Outreach Activities, which is the institutional space for representation and deliberation on issues related to the outreach activities of UnB. There, a first edition of the regulation was drafted, which was considered by a committee that issued an opinion, being scrutinized by that collegiate body. Once approved, this regulation allowed the construction of a draft resolution to be presented to the Higher Education Council (CEPE), specifically on the "accreditation of outreach activities as a curricular component in the undergraduate courses at the University of Brasília through participation of university outreach activities students". The resolution also highlights the role of outreach activities in "generating new knowledge, contributing to overcoming inequality and social exclusion, for innovation, and for building a more just, ethical, democratic and environmentally sustainable society" and "training in humanist and citizen outreach activities, in the educational process of students, providing holistic professional development in line with the needs of democratic society".

Acknowledging the social role of the university and in particular of the universities' outreach activities in promoting social transformation, it is possible to understand how much the Agenda 2030 creates a very promising horizon of expectation, a kind of utopia in an almost dystopian context of the appearance of COVID-19.

The constitution of the of Brazilian Universities Network for 2030 Agenda

The paths for the construction of the Brazilian Universities Network for Agenda 2030 and the SDGs (RedeUni2030) are multiple and certainly tortuous. Our trajectory encountered in this crossroad between 2030 Agenda implementation and fighting to prove university social relevance. This adverse context of challenges gives us some impulse to work together and helped to formulated our joint task in some questions: *why* can Agenda

2030 be this guiding compass – for teaching, research, and outreach activities? *how* are universities moving towards following the 2030 Agenda in a context of limited political will and limited resources? *when* will Brazilian universities be prepared to internalize globally accepted and committed standards?

Some of those questions are not necessarily to be answer now or in the following decade but serves as part of our territorialising design of 2030 Agenda and SDGs in Brazil. It would serve as a frame do calibrate our narrative on the building of the RedeUni2030.

The first attempt to build a network of Brazilian Universities was done precisely between 2015 and 2016, in an action induced by UNDP and that brought together some private and public educational institutions, with the leadership of a fellow professor at the State University of Goias. "Rede ODS Universidades" would perish in the face of changes in the national political framework and the redirection of UNDP-Brazil's focus to other dimensions, such as the investment of specific actions in states (Northeast), municipalities (Southeast) and sub-regions (West of Paraná)[14].

The absence of an inductor such as UNDP or any governmental authority push more responsibilities to BPU. The most discussed proposal has been to incorporate textual, ideational elements of Agenda 2030 into the so-called Institutional Development Plans (PDI)[15], which embody IFES in Brazil. This is because once in a university's PDI it is possible to orient the three axes (research, teaching and outreach activities) according to what is presented in Agenda 2030 as an opportunity to be relevant to that institutional design. It is worth remembering that a country of continental dimensions like Brazil has IFES spread across the Amazon region, on the border with Venezuela, in the centre of the country like Brasília, in the interior of the richest state like SP and in the extreme south on the borders with Argentina and Uruguay. be a path (what the PDI is and how relevant it is) – Institutionalizes policies. At UNIPAMPA, the PDI (2019-2023) mention Agenda 2030 in a way to address economic sustainability of the university, but not yet as how to use the SDGs for teaching, research, and outreach activities. An interesting find of our work based on UNIPAMPA's case is that some strategic planning – that defines the functioning of all array of educational and no educational institutions in Brazil – was

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[14] For more info: https://www.br.undp.org/content/brazil/pt/home/presscenter/articles/2017/06/07/rede-ods-universidade-lan-ada-em-bras-lia.html

[15] O Plano de Desenvolvimento Institucional (PDI) is a document in which the mission of the higher education institution, the institutional pedagogical policy, and the strategies to achieve its goals and objectives are defined, covering a period of 5 years.

formulated previously from 2015, so not allowing to connecting directly to 2030 Agenda that happens to start in 2015.

Second, work towards changing/transforming the modus vivendi of our institutions that host teachers, students, employees and who live most of their lives in those spaces. The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs can be guides for adaptations or innovations that make the day-to-day life in university campuses safer, more sustainable, with a better quality of life and well-being. In this sense, it is relevant to observe the actions and initiatives that are already being carried out at several universities, especially at UNIPAMPA, UnB and Unesp, and that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Third, the connection between outreach activities and social demands for mapping ongoing actions. At UNIPAMPA, projects were mapped that have been meeting SDGs 3, 4, 5, 16 and 17. In the period from 2016 to 2019, 1,897 outreach activities projects addressing these SDGs were registered. In the Teaching modality, of the 1,517 projects registered in the same period, only 597 were in accordance with the SDG 4. In the Research modality, of the 3,877 projects, 959 were in accordance with the SDG 4. In Unesp in a survey carried out in May 2020 to the bank of data from the Unesp Dean of Outreach activities and Culture (PROEX), we identified 345 outreach activities projects that were developed at Unesp in 2018, and in 2019 there were 284 projects. Since 2018, for the submission of outreach activities projects to Unesp's PROEX, the system requires that the coordinator link the project to at least one SDG. All 17 SDGs were worked on, however, among the SDGs most linked to the 2018 and 2019 projects, we identified that 278 of them indicated SDG 4 - Quality education for all, 194 projects indicated SDG 3 - Health and Well-being , and 101 of them linked to SDG 10 - Reducing inequalities.

Another important find of our work is that a 'mapping methodology' is a fundamental keystone of Brazilian *territorialisation design* that supports the very logic of functioning of the RedeUni2030. The mapping methodology highlights singularities that reveals vocational character of each BPU in carrying out actions and projects aimed at quite different areas, from humanities to hard sciences. At the same time could both unveil a consistent path of actions already connected to 2030 Agenda (even though institutions and agents do not necessarily knows about it) and pave the way to interinstitutional partnerships, acknowledge by SDG 17 as pivotal to the success of this enterprise.

Fourthly, RedeUni2030 has its *raison d'être* being linked to two structural dimensions of the Agenda 2030 itself and the SDGs: 1. Sustainability; 2. Inclusion.

In the sustainability dimension, the institutional program "Urban Arborization: an exercise of citizenship and socio-environmental sustainability" from UNIPAMPA started with an arboreal survey of the municipality of Bagé-RS, headquarters of the Rectory, and now develops activities for the protection, maintenance and replanting of trees in the city. city, as well as environmental education activities for city schools. Plaques with QR codes were placed on all trees and for reading, just bring the smartphone closer to have access to all biological characteristics, being presented with a dialogue between a tree and a person, bringing the relationship of respect and affection between beings closer. Simple language was used, avoiding the use of technical terms, to make it easier for people of different age groups to understand reading. In addition, regional terms are used, so that readers in the region can internalize the information and for the text to serve as an instrument for disseminating regional culture, since forms of communication are also expressions of popular culture.

At UnB, there was a confluence between teaching, research, outreach activities and university management actions. In addition to the work of the Centre for Sustainable Development (CDS), which stands out for its training in areas such as agroecology and traditional communities and sustainable management, we can highlight the institutional work of the Secretariat for the Environment (SeMA) that acts as a monitoring body for UnB's actions with a view to incorporating sustainability and institutionalizing actions related to the environment with participation from the academic community; and Sustainable Logistics Plan of the University of Brasília (2018/2021) which aims to present "strategic sustainability actions and relate them to the development of sustainable projects by the related academic and administrative units, as well as addressing the investment and benefits relationship of these actions for the 2018 to 2021 interstice ".

In the inclusion dimension, one should recognize the impact of the Quota Law, as discussed before on this paper, being nationally applied and for a significant increase in access to public universities by a significant portion of Brazilian society, marginalized by the historical processes of exclusion and segregation.[16]

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[16] Law No. 12,711 / 2012, called Quota Law, guarantees the reservation of 50% of enrolments per course and shift at 59 federal universities and 38 federal institutes of education, science and technology to students coming entirely from public high school, in regular courses or youth and adult education. The remaining 50% of vacancies remain for wide competition. For more info: http://portal.mec.gov.br/cotas/perguntas-frequentes.html

Other relevant action adopted at Unesp refers to the Institutional Policy to Combat Violence and the Culture of Peace, supported by the Unesp/Santander Agreement, and which seeks to develop actions related to the promotion of gender, ethnic-racial diversity, class, cultural, among others. Since 2018, TV Unesp has been developing the production of the television program 'Educating for Diversity' ("Educando para Diversidade")[17] as a concrete action with a series of episodes discussing questions related to the 2030 Agenda. 'Educating for Diversity' invites university and community researchers to debate about themes such as: gender equality, ethnic-racial equality, racism, violence against women, inclusion of people with disabilities, distribution of privileges, sexual diversity, feminisms, education, intolerance religious, environmental racism, among others.

At UnB, the work carried out by Dean for Community Affairs on specific actions related to gender and race inclusiveness and the Dean for Outreach activities, with actions also aiming promotion of human rights and sustainability. In addition, the Accessibility Policy of the University of Brasilia stands out with the objectives of "ensuring the application of legislation on the rights of people with disabilities", in the actions, activities and projects promoted and implemented as well as the necessary technical standards adaptations at UnB.[18]

The Federal University of Pampa did an import step on that dimension of inclusiveness by the adhesion of the UN world program #HeForShe[19], which culminated in eleven Local Committees ElesPorElas. The Committees promoted actions on their respective campuses related to the theme of HeForShe. In addition, events related to the theme were promoted by the Dean of Extension and Culture. Still regarding the theme, a mapping of the proportion between Women x Men in the institution was carried out with regard to students and servants. The action resulted in the creation of a Web series entitled "Women who inspire" and the annual realization of the "Regional Forum in Defense of Gender Equality: University Articulation, Public Management and Social Movements against Violence against Women and Girls".[20]

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[17]   TV   Unesp.   Programa   Educando   para   Diversidade.   Disponível   em: https://tv.unesp.br/educandoparadiversidade/programas. Acesso em 20 maio 2020.
[18] Resolution of the board of directors. UnB. No. 0050/2019. Art. 2 Accessibility is considered to be any and all possibilities and conditions for the use, with security and autonomy, of spaces, furniture, urban equipment, buildings, transport, information and communication, including their systems and technologies, as well as others. services and facilities available to the university community.
[19] Created in 2014 by United Nations Women the He for She (ElesPorElas) Movement to promote gender equality and female empowerment. For more info: https://nacoesunidas.org/campanha/heforshe/; https://elesporelas.org/
[20] For more info: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCR_KQS8CJhd4l_ZZEp-sHdQ

Finally, the need for a specific design for monitoring and implementing the Agenda 2030 in higher education institutions reinforces the path towards the construction of a RedeUni2030. In this case, we highlight the Strategic Program UnB 2030: Sustainability and Inclusive Development is an "interdisciplinary platform that intends to link outreach activities with research and teaching experiences", designed to deal with "multiple dimensions such as institutional strengthening, domestic and international cooperation, knowledge production and communication".

Unesp has been carrying out some actions aimed at implementing the 2030 Agenda preparing the terrain for the insertion of outreach activities into undergraduate courses curriculum. Particularly, with the Project "Unesp 2030: integrating science, diversity and non-violence culture on the campus of Bauru-SP"[21], which seeks to promote actions to combat violence, and promote well-being for all by developing activities for welcome of new students and on the mental health of the university community, a topic that particularly affects students in situations of social vulnerability. As part of the activities foreseen in the Unesp 2030 Project, the 2030 Agenda Roundtable is being held, which aims to hold debates between students and researchers on topics related to the SDGs and their relationship with science.

In 2019, UNIPAMPA began talks to create a network of public institutions of higher education in the state of Rio Grande do Sul carry on joint efforts on the SDG and 2030 Agenda. Two movements are underway. On the one hand, UNIPAMPA's engagement in the national movement of the RedeUni2030. On the other hand, the interconnection of the ten campuses by localized actions and initiatives. It is worth to point that – as part of our design of territorialise the 2030 Agenda – the conduction of qualitative research in our educational institutions to select some fundamental data and draw an institutional policy of alignment with the SDGs.

We can recognize that there are relevant initiatives on the part of Brazilian universities that contribute to the articulation with the 2030 Agenda in order to converge actions on teaching, researching and extension aligned with the SDGs. In this context, the training initiative of the Universities Network 2030 stands out, an initiative to converge these efforts on the part of Brazilian universities that seek to align their actions with the

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[21] Such an initiative was proposed by the Faculty of Architecture Arts and Communication (FAAC) of the Unesp campus in Bauru-SP, and was selected in Public Notice 04 and 05 of the Unesp / Santander Agreement, and is linked to the "Educating for Diversity" Programs.

SDGs. This path would converge towards the relaunch of the Rede Universidades 2030 initiative, which had occurred in that initial phase of engagement, but which succumbed in the face of political and institutional setbacks.[22]

CONCLUSIONS

The main assumption of our text is that all the challenges related to University social role, public education and education of quality as well as the territorialisation of the 2030 Agenda are real and concrete opportunities for an articulating project that can create possibilities for dialogue and a common ground for action guided by the SDG.

Inequality is a predominant variable over meritocracy and quality to define which kind of education one is going to reach by following the 2030 Agenda and the SDG 4. Surmounting inequality and achieving education of quality depends on democracy and democratic institutions that allows us to truly participate and decide on our educational policies based on principles such as sustainability and inclusiveness. Is democracy that made possible to bring into elite-like institutions, such as BPU, students from populational groups historically made vulnerable for social practices related to racism, authoritarianism, and the patriarchy

Geocultural specificities, from population dimensions to territorial configurations, existing a continental country with such diversity creates distinct audiences and realities, and so, multiples objectives and guidelines for each region. The 2030 Agenda made possible to unify at least an aspirational dimension of profound transformation by trying to accomplish their goals and targets. To deal with singularities and specificities we need data to measure the quality of education. And to check if the data are being accessing based on transparency and hold authorities accountable, we need society. For data measurement and checks and balances we need public institutions of higher education.

In this sense, we could emphasize that the leading role of public universities is related to its capabilities in reach a wide territorial range with quite an effective social impact using both scientific data driven research and other epistemological backgrounds and cosmologies (indigenous, river and forest communities') by designing innovative and creative actions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

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[22] It is important to say that in face of COVID-19 outbreak all IFES and/or BPU had to react rapidly both to deal with the daily life of schooling as well as to develop a set of actions of research and outreach activities to confront Covid-19 and the period of social isolation, adapting itself to use social medias and online tools through communication and information technologies that allow participation through videoconferences (webinars, lives etc), for example.

We try to critically evaluate the possibilities of implementing Agenda 2030 and the SDGs in Brazil by taking the experiences developed at three universities which have the potential to connect teaching, research and outreach activities for the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Brazil. In fact, a network of Brazilian universities is one of many possibilities to stablish a platform of actions that would bridge the gap between government policies and society demands. But it sounds like a good one. First, as a manner to strengthen the democratic foundations of our society by emphasizing actions oriented by principles such as inclusiveness, sustainability, decency, diversity and so on. Second, by raising awareness of the engagement need from our communities if we aim to promote social transformation. Third, by stimulating an interinstitutional project articulated between universities in different parts of the country to territorialise SDGs. Fourth, by developing a methodology that could be applied in other cases.

It is evident that instead of thinking about nationalist, patriotic and restrictive solutions, the SDGs encourages the pursuit of researching, teaching and outreach actioning based on a collectively collaboration on the global-national-local levels. An education based on values and ideas contained in the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs is totally connected to the promotion of peaceful, more just, and inclusive societies, founded in democracy, which means to reject any authoritarian adventure.

The 2030 Agenda made flourish a "daily life political orientation" that requires changes trough education. In order to transform educational plans to reflect the promotion of peace, justice and security (meaning real development) on should form (educate) sensitive generations (young people and children) capable of promoting changes in the present aiming for the future. A problem that should be faced inside universities walls and beyond. When one creates a pedagogical practices and connects the debate on decency and dignity at work (SDG 8) or resilience and sustainable cities (SDG 11) or food and nutritional security (SDG 2) or well-being and quality of life (SDG 3) as part of the content taught in schools/, we are creating a multiplier effect in the fulfilment of the objectives and goals proposed by Agenda 2030.

Brazilian Public Universities (BPU) are one of the pillars of the Brazilian social fabric. If we experience crises and instabilities, but we maintain order and peace, it is because the public university is playing its social role. Therefore, the challenge facing universities is immense, especially because it is known of the essential role of science in the search for possible, sustainable and fair solutions, considering that as well as the exact, health or biological sciences will develop responses to these demands, the humanities will

create political, educational, social and cultural possibilities for these advances to occur. In this perspective, all areas of knowledge, as well as all its dimensions (teaching, research, and outreach activities) are fundamental for the territorialisation of Agenda 2030, highlighting the strategic role of universities in this context.

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