



Gender, agroecology, and local entities: participation and actions in territory of sisal

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Article History: Published in the VI Latin American Congress of Agroecology and indicated to the journal.

ABSTRACT

During the historical process, the social relations of gender have been (re) constructed from a perspective that involves women in different social spaces. In this respect, it is important to highlight the importance of the actions of local institutions in fostering these practices. This work aimed to identify and how entities located in the Territory of Sisal, state of Bahia, act in the perspective of social relations of gender using an agroecological approach. There was a process of mobilization of local entities and implementation of a semi-structured interview. We highlight the number of entities that develop actions with this perspective, the topics addressed and the use of participatory methodologies. In this way, it was realized that the entities that work in the territory of sisal foment the empowerment of women from the stimulus to social participation and effectiveness of the principles that guide agroecology.

Keywords: Local practices; Woman; Mobilization

Participação e ações no território do sisal (Bahia): considerações sobre gênero, agroecologia e entidades locais

RESUMO

No decorrer do processo histórico, as relações sociais de gênero vêm sendo (re)construídas sob uma perspectiva que envolve as mulheres em diferentes espaços sociais. Neste aspecto vale destacar a importância da atuação das instituições locais no fomento para a efetivação destas práticas. Este trabalho buscou identificar quais e como as entidades situadas no Território do Sisal, estado da Bahia, atuam na perspectiva das relações sociais de gênero utilizando uma abordagem agroecológica. Houve um processo de mobilização das entidades locais e aplicação de uma entrevista semiestruturada. Destacam-se a quantidade de entidades que desenvolvem ações com esta perspectiva, os temas abordados e a utilização de metodologias participativas. Percebeu-se, desta forma, que as entidades que atuam no território do sisal fomentam o empoderamento das mulheres a partir do estímulo à participação social e efetivação dos princípios que norteiam a agroecologia.

Palavras-Chaves: Práticas locais; Mulher; Mobilização.

Anunciação, J.S., Santos, M.A.F., Pinheiro, M.S., Santos, G.P., Souza, E.B., Teixeira, E.S. (2020). Gender, agroecology, and local entities: participation and actions in territory of sisal. **Environmental Education (Brazil)**, v.1, n.1, p.33-37.



1. Introduction

Gender relations have constituted during the historical process patterns imposed on men and women. For men, public spaces were assigned based on sexist, classist, and racist criteria, while for women, private spaces were established, i.e., jobs assigned only to the care of the home and offspring. Thus, historically, social construction was created composed of unequal hierarchies with female subordination to males (Silva, 2015). These structures are being deconstructed and built under a perspective that involves women in different social spaces during the historical process. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the importance of local institutions in promoting these practices to insert agroecology under various perspectives, including gender.

Social entities and movements play a crucial role in the discussion of issues and execution of actions oriented to social and gender relations and agroecology, especially in rural communities, which evidences their performance in problematizing social risks faced by people based on actions that provide and consolidate the empowerment of the individuals involved.

Based on these issues, it perceives that the association between gender, local entities and agroecology enables the (re)construction of local development, which depends, according to Buarque (2008) on the capacity of actors and local society to structure and mobilize themselves, based on their potential and cultural matrixes, which can identify and explore their potential and specificities.

In this context, this work aims to identify which and how entities located in the territory of Sisal, State of Bahia, act in gender social relations using an agroecological approach.

2. Material & Methods

This work to realize in the territory of Sisal, located in the State of Bahia, located in the semi-arid region of Bahia, has 20 municipalities extending 21,256.50 km² (SIT,2016).

The methodological steps for the construction of the diagnosis, as mentioned earlier, were based on:

- A) Reading of material on the subject,
- B) Mobilization of Local Entities (Figure 01),
- C) Application of Semi-structured Interview to representatives of local entities,
- D) Systematization and Analysis of Data.

Figure 01. Representatives of the entities that operate in the Territory of Sisal.



3. Results and Discussion

The mobilization of entities that operate in Sisal's territory about gender and agroecology demonstrates how these institutions operate in the region studied. Eighteen entities that operate with gender social relations in Sisal territory have been identified (Figure 2):

Figure 02. Entities that act with gender social relations and agroecology in the Territory of Sisal

Associação Comunitária de Alto Alegre	Levantamento Popular da Juventude
Associação Comunitária de Malhada do Alto	Movimento de mulheres Dandara do Sisal
Associação de Cooperativas de Apoio à Economia Familiar (ASCOOB)	Movimento de Mulheres Rurais
Associação dos Pequenos Agricultores do Estado da Bahia (APAEB-Serrinha)	Movimento de mulheres trabalhadores rurais
Conselho da Mulher	Movimento de Organização Comunitária
Conselho Municipal de Desenvolvimento Sustentável (CMDMS) Biringa-Ba	Núcleo de Apoio à Saúde da Saúde (NASF)
Consórcio Público de Desenvolvimento Sustentável do Território do Sisal(CONSISAL)	Rede de Mulheres Negras da Bahia
Fundação de Apoio a Agricultura Familiar do Semiárido da Bahia (FATRES)	Secretaria Municipal da Educação de Serrinha
Instituto Casa da Cidadania de Serrinha (ICCS)	Sindicato dos trabalhadores rurais e agricultores familiares de Serrinha (SINTRAFS)

These entities play an essential role in discussing current issues in Sisal's territory, promoting constructive debates sensitizing society to gender, agroecology, and encouraging women's participation in different social spaces. These entities began their activities in this area in the following years: 1980, 1991, 1992, 1993, 2003, 2007, 2010, two in 2011 and 1968. They all reported that they still develop actions in 2017, with coverage in rural communities and studies that guide social and environmental impacts at regional, state, and national levels.

The activities developed by the mapped entities on the following themes:

- street interventions, agroecology, combating violence against women, gender and race prevention mechanisms, empowerment, income generation, public policies, social participation.
- formation and qualification of legal councils.
- training with families, especially those contemplated with social technologies, aimed to capture rainwater for human consumption, agricultural production, credit lines, technical assistance, and rural extension.

It is essential to work on these issues because unequal relationships become an obstacle to the advance of agroecology since they eliminate the contribution of a large part of the peasant population; and because male domination restricts the advance of agroecology since it hinders the free expression of women, the development of their creativity, and restricts their contribution in the production unit to mere labor (Ferreira, 2009).

As for the methodological strategies used to sensitize the themes as mentioned earlier, the entities reported:

- round tables of talks, lectures, meetings, seminars, and feminist vigils.
- assistance to women's organizations under the principles of agroecology.
- workshops on gender issues, meetings with women's groups, organizational actions.
- lectures, courses, and national and international projects use and reflect images involving science, art, and actions in a participatory manner, inserting unions and partner institutions.

According to Verdejo (2007), the use of participatory methodologies constitutes a set of techniques and tools that allow diagnoses and activities in communities, promoting a dialogue of knowledge and exchanging experiences to improve their action and planning skills. Thus, these approaches provide awareness and reflection to promote environmental rationality among the different social actors involved in this process, acquiring elements that guide gender, agroecology, and social participation in a real and concrete way.

The public of these entities and movements that develop these actions are:

- universities and rural and urban public schools.
- rural and peripheral youth.
- family farmers.
- women seeking empowerment and in social vulnerability.
- black people, gypsies, albinos, children, and adolescents.
- unionists.
- young apprentices and rural families headed by women.

After the implementation of activities in social movements and entities, some changes occurred in the regional scenario, which was: expansion in the quantity and diversity of training; women participating in greater quantity and quality of proposed activities; perception of empowerment from its expansion and qualification in spaces of socio-political incidence of power and decision; formation of solidarity groups and enterprises working in agroecology; organization in networks, thus implementing agroecological principles; exit from the cycle of violence, implementation of their identity, productivity and use of rainwater for human consumption and agricultural production.

These changes were of almost importance in the discussions that permeate women and their insertion in agroecological fields since that besides the political issue, and they have also reached other levels that aim at subjective and objective aspects for (re)construction of identity and the realization of food, nutritional, and water security in the sisal territory. The aspects have generated restructuring of the social fabric and continue to promote local development consistently and solidly.

Another aspect observed was the difficulties encountered, which were: integration or partnership with entities; financial resources; participation of men and young people; formation of new leaderships; lack and discontinuity of projects and publicity material; absence of specific public policies on women's health in the region and lack of environmental awareness. The obstacles highlighted by the institutions express the advances that this issue needs to achieve to enable and expand a new vision of agriculture as opposed to the principles

of the Green Revolution and intensification of the use of chemical products, thus involving a self-management context of social transformation (Caporal, 2009).

4. Conclusion

The excellent performance of social entities and movements and discussion about social and gender in the territory of Sisal and the importance and benefits, especially in rural areas, aims to contribute positively to the relationships between subjects. These social changes comprehend a vision that enables agroecology, solidarity, and gender issues. However, a process of continuous and permanent education is necessary for the different social sectors involved.

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