

**MST VISIBILIZATION STRATEGIES: EDUCATION AND COLLECTIVE  
IDENTITY**

***ESTRATÉGIAS DE VISIBILIZAÇÃO DO MST: EDUCAÇÃO E IDENTIDADE  
COLETIVA***

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COLECTIVA***



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**ABSTRACT:** This article discusses the organization, conception of education, and pedagogical and philosophical principles of the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST). Moreover, it engages with social movement strategies to publicize the work of schools in settlements and camps in the formation of collective identities. In addition to the bibliographical research with primary and secondary sources, an analysis was conducted on the material published on the website (MST, 2022; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c) and social media of the Movement (MST, 2022d), as well as interviews. The final considerations indicate reviewing the scope of disclosure to favor the expansion of the population's understanding beyond what is reported in the traditional media about the educational objectives and training of the *Sem Terra*. Expanding the scope of MST publications can make the Movement's pedagogy more visible and help to re-elaborate the Movement's social representations in Brazilian society.

**KEYWORDS:** Formation. Collective identity. Social movements. MST.

**RESUMO:** O artigo discute a organização, a concepção de educação, os princípios pedagógicos e filosóficos do Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST). Além disso, dialoga com as estratégias do movimento social para divulgar o trabalho de escolas em assentamentos e acampamentos na formação de identidades coletivas. Além da pesquisa bibliográfica com fontes primárias e secundárias, foi realizada análise do material publicado no site (MST, 2022; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c) e redes sociais do Movimento (MST, 2022d), bem como entrevistas. As considerações finais indicam rever o alcance da divulgação para favorecer a ampliação do entendimento da população, para além do que noticia a mídia tradicional sobre os objetivos educacionais e formação dos Sem Terra. A ampliação do escopo das publicações do MST pode contribuir para visibilizar a pedagogia do Movimento, além de favorecer a reelaboração das representações sociais do Movimento diante da sociedade brasileira.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Formação. Identidade coletiva. Movimentos Sociais. MST.

**RESUMEN:** Este artículo analiza la organización, concepción de la educación, principios pedagógicos y filosóficos del Movimiento de Trabajadores Rurales Sin Tierra (MST). Dialoga con estrategias de movimientos sociales para dar a conocer el trabajo de las escuelas en asentamientos y campamentos en la formación de identidades colectivas. Además de la investigación bibliográfica con fuentes primarias y secundarias, se realizó un análisis del material publicado en el sitio web (MST, 2022; 2022a; 2022b; 2022c) y redes sociales del Movimiento (MST, 2022d), así como entrevistas. Las consideraciones finales indican revisar el alcance de la divulgación para favorecer la ampliación del conocimiento de la población, más allá de lo que se informa en los medios tradicionales sobre los objetivos educativos y de formación de Sem Terra. Ampliar el alcance de las publicaciones del MST puede contribuir a visibilizar la pedagogía del Movimiento, además de favorecer la reelaboración de las representaciones sociales del Movimiento en la sociedad brasileña.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Formación. Identidad colectiva. Movimientos Sociales. MST.

## Introduction

This article results from a broader study commissioned by the Lula Institute in 2022, entitled “The importance of forming collective identities in MST high schools to combat social inequalities”. By explaining the pedagogical organization of a *social movement*, the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra* (Landless Rural Workers Movement - MST) in Portuguese, in addition to the conception of education and its pedagogical and philosophical principles (Moraes, 2022), the aim is to take stock of the strategies it uses to disseminate educational work in schools in settlements and camps to form collective identities and dialog with society.

Social movements are understood as conflicts that result from the actions of representatives of social classes who understand the struggle as a form of control of the system and, therefore, of history (Touraine, 1973). They are based on three principles: Identity, Opposition, and Totality. In this sense, the MST invests in the identity formation of its subjects in the struggle against big landownership and agribusiness to achieve agrarian reform, the production of agroecological food, and the improvement of living conditions in the countryside.

The study is based on bibliographic research and uses primary sources – MST sectors produced documents – and secondary sources – research on the importance of schools in the history of the MST. Furthermore, the material published on the Movement’s website and its main social networks was analyzed. Facebook and WhatsApp were chosen because these are the most popular networks accessed by the public. Conducting interviews with two members of the education sector was also a vital resource to obtain more detailed information about the organizational structure and internal dynamics of the MST.

In this way, after the bibliographical review, many elements related to the articulation of the central objective of the Movement - the struggle for land – were clarified with the centrality that the school and the educational mission have in this process, as they are responsible for the formation of *collective identities*. We understood that the MST invests in the production of intellectual leaders since its main educational dimensions are anchored in the rescue of the dignity of the families that belong to it, as well as in the construction of an identity that goes beyond the individual and their family, transforming it into a collective subject, *Sem Terra* (Landless), which sees schooling about a broader project that includes *formation* as a means of enabling human emancipation (Caldart, 2000; Rosseto, 2021).

We noted that the MST publicizes the actions of its schools, focusing on state and municipal initiatives and highlighting some of its principles in publications on its website and social networks. Final thoughts suggest that the format and scope of such dissemination need

to be reviewed to broaden the general population's understanding of the educational goals and training of individuals who identify as *Sem Terra*. Expanding the scope of MST publications through publicity campaigns can help make visible the Movement's pedagogy, the educational work carried out in its 2000 schools, from preschool education to high school, and favor the revision of the Movement's social representations in Brazilian society, which is profoundly shaped by the discourse of the traditional media in its hegemonic channels, which pushes the construction of negative images of the Movement and its individuals.

Against this background, the text is divided into three parts: The first part presents the main elements of the Movement's education and pedagogy. The second analysis is based on the public relations work of the MST in social media. Finally, in the final considerations, some reflections were articulated to expand the debate on the topic.

### **The MST and the Movement's pedagogy**

Since the first shacks with black tarpaulins were erected in the areas occupied by a group of rural workers who demanded access to land, still in the 1980s<sup>2</sup>, the formation of individuals through schooling already appeared as a fundamental aspect to organize the struggle for agrarian reform together with the guarantee of the right to education. We agree with Ravenna (2020, p. 128), when she explains that the MST thus built its own education project:

When we say MST education project, we are referring to the combination of the struggle for access to schooling and the process of building a pedagogy in line with the challenges of the specific reality of the field. This project seeks to reflect on a public school, as are all the schools that exist in settlements and camps, which assumes the link with the Movement's struggle, organization, and pedagogy (Ravenna, 2020, p. 128, our translation).

However, this project was not born from an initial ambition but from an objective necessity that arose from the daily struggle. Thus, the first question was what to do with the children in the *Encruzilhada Natalino* camp at the beginning of the Movement's history in 1982. When the 165 families who were there moved to the “*Nova Ronda Alta Rumo à Terra Prometida*” camp with 180 children, mobilization began for the creation of a school, which was approved that year but not fully legalized until 1984 (MST, 2022a). A different school was proposed that would consider the “[...] history of the struggle of these families and teach reading

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<sup>2</sup> To access the complete history of the MST, we suggest accessing the Movement's website. Available at: <https://mst.org.br/nossa-historia/inicio/>

and writing through experiences that also develop a love of the land and work” (MST, 2005, p. 13). Paulo Freire's perspective of valuing reading the world before reading the word was a reference and inspiration for this ongoing popular education project.

According to the MST website (MST, 2022a), the five Brazilian regions and 24 of the 26 federation states have schools in their camps and settlements, contemplating approximately 450 thousand families. Camped and settled families have self-organizing processes in which all decisions taken are widely debated and decided collectively:

[...] families are organized into groups that discuss the needs of each area. In these groups, the coordinators of the settlement or camp are chosen. The same structure is repeated at regional, state, and national levels. An important aspect is that decision-making instances are oriented to guarantee the participation of women, always with two coordinators, one man and one woman. In camp and settlement assemblies, everyone has the right to vote: adults, young people, men, and women. Likewise, this happens in national instances. The MST's most significant decision-making space is the National Congresses, which take place, on average, every five years. In addition to the Congresses, the MST holds its national meeting every two years, where the definitions deliberated in Congress are evaluated and updated. To carry out specific tasks, families are also organized into sectors, which are organized from local to national levels according to the needs and demands of each settlement, camp, or state (MST, 2022a, our translation).

At the national level, the MST is organized into sectors – mass front, training, education, production, communications, projects, gender, health, finance, international relations, culture, youth, and LGBT *Sem Terra* – and presents reform as its main banners popular agrarian policies, the fight against sexist violence, the democratization of communications, the promotion of public health, development, ethnic diversity, the political system, and national and popular sovereignty. Their main instruments of struggle are land occupations, camps, marches, fasts, hunger strikes, occupations of public buildings, centers and demonstrations in cities, camps in front of banks, vigils, the struggle for reforms, popular agrarian, and social transformation (MST, 2022a).

It is impossible to understand *Sem Terra's* motivations within the framework of bourgeois liberal ideals. The very reason why the expression *Sem Terra* is spelled as a proper noun break with the individualistic perspective of capitalist society. Understood as a collective identity, as an attempt to form subjectivities, and no longer as a social designation of people who lack something, in this case, land: “*Sem Terra* is a historically constructed identity, first as an affirmation of a social condition: without-land, and little by little no longer as a life

circumstance to be overcome, but rather as an identity of cultivation” (MST, 2005, p. 200, our translation).

Therefore, studying a social movement like the MST and understanding why and what this collective fights for require reflection that another way of organizing the world is possible, based on a solidary structure, which seeks to break with the logic of private property, which does not believe that many need to have little so that few have much, with a view to a socialist society, in which everyone has land, food, housing, education, health, and dignified life.

By understanding education as a form of struggle for land, the MST does not think of school *for* the *Sem Terra* people but does school *with* them. Once again, we can see the connection with the thought of Paulo Freire (1996, p. 68), as he believes that “[...] no one educates anyone; no one educates themselves alone; people educate each other, mediated by the world”. In this way, the main objectives of schools in settlements and camps revolve around training militants and leaders of the Movement, showing the reality of working people and the possibility of building a new reality. In this sense, teach how to read, write, and calculate reality; teach by doing, through practice; create the new; prepare equally for manual and intellectual work; teach local and general reality; generate individuals of history; and worrying about the whole person would be school tasks (MST, 2005).

The pedagogical principles of the Movement are planned from the same perspective, in which everyone must work, organize, and participate in different decision-making instances. Therefore, the premise that the entire settlement must be concerned with and occupy the school is fundamental, just as the whole school must be in the settlement, corroborating the perspective of praxis, in which all teaching starts from practice and returns to it. Faced with such prerogatives, teachers, and students would also be activists, and everyone must educate themselves for the new (MST, 2005).

In another document in the MST’s Dossier, the school intended to be built was presented, based on the discussion of a differentiated curriculum, which contemplated the reality of the *Sem Terra*, and the organization experienced daily by the workers. In this sense, the perspective of “[...] RESISTING and PRODUCING on the land, which we had conquered, was emphasized. We should build a NEW LIFE. And the school must help in this process” (MST, 2005, p. 51, our translation). Therefore, this “new” curriculum would only be viable based on a permanent dialogue with reality, with the dimension of practice, from a praxiological perspective.

Still, based on the analysis of the documents above, which record the fundamental ideas of the Movement, it was suggested to remove the focus from lists of content – commonly established in previously designed course plans – to move towards a more organic division of human knowledge. The generating themes, which stem from everyday problems experienced in the settlements and camps, constituted more interesting methodological strategies to achieve the desired training.

Therefore, some themes were suggested to initiate debates in schools, always starting from the closest to the most complex relationships: our settlement, our struggle for land; our culture and our history of struggle; our work in the settlement; us, our work and nature; our health; and us and politics. To suggest the themes transcribed above, some basic principles of the Movement were revisited and considered, such as the formation of identity, recovery of memory, the importance of popular culture, the centrality of militant training, and the respectful relationship between human beings and nature.

Based mainly on Pistrak (2013; 2018), as well as on some principles of Soviet pedagogy, when thinking about school, work, and cooperation, the MST presented the relationship between education and the educational dimension of work, mediated by collaboration, thought of from the working class (MST, 2005). In the same vein, he perceives work, in its broadest sense, as a foundation for social life. This conception rescues work as an educational principle, with the school responsible for providing real experiences of socially divided productive work (MST, 2005). It is necessary to dialogue with different spaces: the school area; the production units – garden, vegetable garden, nursery, medicinal garden, small animal breeding, farming, demonstration area, carpentry, metalwork or blacksmithing, printing, handicrafts; the family; volunteer work; and school administration.

Based on the experience rescued by Pistrak (2018) in *Fundamentos da escola do trabalho* (Fundamentals of the School of Work), the MST (2005) specifies which types of work should be carried out by students at school: domestic work, inspired by that author's self-service perspective (Pistrak, 2018) and which refer to activities involving the reproduction of life; work linked to school administration, which is connected to the perception of the school as a cultural center (Pistrak, 2018); work linked to agricultural production, “[...] such as a vegetable garden, crops or animal husbandry” (MST, 2005, p. 96, our translation), or, as highlighted by Pistrak (2018, p. 98, our translation):

At the Peasant Youth School, agricultural work has a central place; the entire school organization is built on it uniquely; all the content of school work is

concentrated around it. The Peasant Youth School is inconceivable without agricultural work and beyond (Pistrak, 2018, p. 98, our translation).

By demanding a work school, the Movement is keen to demarcate the social meaning of the school in a camp or settlement; to educate for agricultural cooperation; to prepare for work, in its most diverse types, both manual and intellectual; to develop a love for work and work in rural areas; to provoke the need to learn and create; and, finally, to prepare new generations for social changes (MST, 2005). The document studied also brought two more types of work to be carried out: those linked to other production areas and those related to culture and art, called *workshops* in Soviet pedagogy (MST, 2005).

It is worth noting that the entire organization of productive work was designed without minimizing the time allocated to systematized studies by students. For this reason, there was a need to also think about increasing the time spent at school or the possibility of monitoring part of the time by the community in which the student is inserted, as well as questions pertinent to what is appropriate for each age group, teaching work and leisure. All these aspects should converge to “[...] socialize knowledge in general and expand the worldview of each student and the community as a whole. Issues linked to politics, culture, art, history, and the world must also integrate our teaching programs” (MST, 2005, p. 97, our translation).

Thinking about the school of work involves not neglecting cooperation and democracy as basic themes and practices of relationships in this space since the collective participation, democratic management, and self-organization of teachers and students are seen as instruments of reorganization of the traditional hierarchy, structured in vertical relationships in this institution, in more horizontal arrangements of school experience.

Five philosophical principles were listed in the analyzed document, involving training/education for social transformation – explained as a class education, massive, organically linked to the social Movement, open to the world, to action, and to the new; education for work and cooperation; education aimed at the various dimensions of the human person – or in an omnilateral perspective, in a Marxist perspective; education for/with humanist and socialist values; and education as a permanent process of human formation (MST, 2005).

In coherence with the philosophical principles, pedagogical principles are arranged, which reaffirm the relationship between practice and theory, in a Marxist perspective of praxis; the methodological combination between teaching and training processes – which results in both theoretical and practical knowledge, far beyond what the current perspective of skills and abilities brings; reality as the basis of knowledge production; socially useful training content –

which breaks with the logic of neutral curriculum choice; education for work and through work – education linked to the world of work and work as a pedagogical method; the organic link between educational and political processes, between academic and economic processes and between education and culture; democratic management; student self-organization; the creation of pedagogical collectives; the ongoing training of male and female educators; research attitude and skills; and the combination of collective and individual pedagogical processes.

The document that records the 15th anniversary of the MST defined pedagogy as “[...] a way of leading the formation of a human being” (MST, 2005, p. 201, our translation). In this sense, it also (re)defined its pedagogy, rescuing the centrality of the formation of subjectivities in this process, as presented at the beginning of this study: “The pedagogy of the MST is how the Movement has historically formed the social subject of name *Sem Terra*, and which daily educates the people who are part of it. And the main educational principle of this pedagogy is the *Movement* itself” (MST, 2005, p. 200, our translation). Thus, every time it is stated that its *Pedagogy* is that of *Movement*, it brings the perspective that it is up to reality, its dialogical and dialectical process, to make use to a greater or lesser extent of each of the forms of conducting training of the *Sem Terra*, which involves, in turn, several pedagogies: social struggle, collective organization, land, work and production, culture, choice, history, and alternation (school time and community time).

When highlighting the organic structure, or the organicity of the Movement, it referred to the modes of organization and relationships established between the different instances of the MST and pedagogical planning, based on collective direction and the division of tasks and functions, both among students – whether in activity groups, classrooms or brigades/work centers –; between male and female educators, through pedagogical collectives; and among the community itself, made up of settlers or campers, volunteers and the education team. The school also has different participation instances, namely, assembly, school council, plenary sessions, and coordination or direction (MST, 2005).

Other aspects dear to the Movement’s schools are: the educational environment – the mystique and values, which concern the formation of social coexistence, the socialist “soul of the collective subject”, which distances itself from capitalist values, especially neoliberalism (MST, 2005); educational times: class, work, workshop, sport/leisure, study, collective effort, and pedagogical group; the physical space; relationships involving the community: culture, communication, ecology, Youth and Adult Education and schooling, struggle, work, training, internal and external services; students with particular tasks and assessment.

Finally, the part dedicated to study stands out in this document. It is described as a more complete understanding of reality, which, as already mentioned, cannot be reduced to a minimum because of the other demands in the camps and settlements. It has been presented in its social meaning, to be developed through classes, in spaces organized based on subdivisions that can occur in different ways: in training cycles, stages, or in series, to be operationalized through disciplines grouped in a general part of the curriculum, in which human sciences cannot be dispensed with, and in a diverse part that would include, for example, agriculture, rural management, well-being, and popular memory.

As we have already mentioned, the use of generation themes and the diversification of the periods allocated for teaching (mysticism, news, memory, research, reading, education, culture) give an impression of proximity to the reality of MST. In addition to classes, workshops are presented as educational spaces, which can take place at school or in community spaces, favoring the development of cultural expressions, production, and administration. Other possibilities for pedagogical activities to be carried out were also presented, such as seminars, educational visits, pedagogical days, MST activities, celebrations, internships, and school agendas.

One of the set of texts analyzed was published in July 2001, with a proposal for monitoring the Movement's schools. It highlights the main ideas and challenges for the work of forming collective identities in the MST, based on nine items:

1. The landless people in struggle built the MST. As a fighting collective in Movement, the MST produced its name and identity, *Sem Terra* [...]
2. The MST is the great educator of the *Sem Terra*. And the MST educates the *Sem Terra* by inserting them into the Movement of history. This Movement has turned the landless worker into a fighter for the people [...]
3. The MST's relationship with education is, therefore, a relationship of origin: the history of the MST is the history of a significant educational work [...]
4. In the MST's educational task, there are at least three major challenges that we can see with today's eyes: \*Helping landless families to break with the process of dehumanization or human degradation to which they have been subjected in their life history [...]
- \*Ensure that these families' make a comeback' by assuming the *Sem Terra* identity, and not the essence of their former oppressor [...]
- \*Work so that other social categories take the values and way of being of the fighters of the people [...]
5. Seeing itself as an educational subject and understanding more deeply the pedagogy produced in its history is one of the conditions for the MST to meet these challenges [...]
6. Some basic educational processes that form the landless people of the MST bring us important pedagogical lessons from this perspective [...]
7. The Pedagogy of the Movement does not fit in the school, but the school provides the Pedagogy of the Movement. And it fits even more when it allows itself to be occupied by it [...]
8. The school that fits into the MST pedagogy does not fit into itself precisely because it assumes the link with the educational Movement of life

in Movement [...] 9. The effort to understand and implement MST pedagogy takes us back to the questions at the origin of pedagogical reflection: how is a human being formed? What pedagogical strategies help educate people to grow in their humanity? And what values sustain our practice and move us as educators? (MST, 2005, p. 235-240, our translation).

Finally, five lessons from pedagogy stand out, which summarize how this collective think about education in its Movement of (re)elaborating itself: people educate themselves by learning to be, producing and reproducing culture, knowing to solve, in collectives and through the conception of the school as a human training workshop (MST, 2005). By proposing the monitoring of MST schools, the collective invites us to walk together with the Movement that constitutes them, abandoning the perspective of bureaucratic supervision or the common inspection of state action. The observation of the elements of the mystique, the memory of the community, the gardens, the children and young people *Sem Terrinhas* who think and speak, with the right to a turn and voice, as well as their teachers, who have time for dialogue and planning their educational actions, integrated into the community; the presence of books, dialogue, respect for differences; and, above all, the perception that you are in a school in constant Movement is fundamental. All this is not only written in the political-pedagogical project but lived and experienced in everyday life.

### **The Movement's communication work: publicizing MST's actions**

The first source accessed was the MST website<sup>3</sup> (2022a), through which several reports and videos were observed. Among the materials analyzed, we searched for more recent ones – from March 2022 – in which there was some report, activity, or other theme close to education in general or some specific action carried out by the Movement's youth.

From reports that addressed various initiatives in the field of culture, others that narrated the difficulty of rural students in returning to classes due to the absence of school transport, to an article that covered the 24 years of the National Education Program in Agrarian Reform (PRONERA), cultural actions in the settlements, until arriving at a letter drawn up by the youth gathered at the “1st Pedagogical Camp for Landless Youth in Roraima” – which demanded several agendas for the youth of the region, among them, the educational one, as can be seen in the excerpt following:

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<sup>3</sup> Available at: <https://mst.org.br/>. Accessed in: Apr. 2022.

EDUCATION:

- Recognition of the Degree Course in Rural Education at the Federal University of Roraima and implementation of Rural Education in schools in the state;
- Failure to close rural schools;
- Investment in school transport and the structuring of rural schools to enable the return of face-to-face classes for the daughters of family farmers in *Roraima*;
- Internalizing public universities to meet the needs of young peasants and indigenous people, allowing them access to quality education without leaving their territories [...] (MST, 2022b, our translation).

Another report that came close to the established filter referred to the meeting of the expanded political and pedagogical coordination of the “Education and Agroecology Project in rural schools in Agrarian Reform territories,” held in *Ceará* in the first fortnight of April, which included educators from all over Brazil. The excerpt from the following report stands out because it raises some issues that we presented previously, such as lines of action that the MST should debate:

The implementation of agroecology in primary education schools is of fundamental importance in the training of students, as it has the prospect of contributing to the construction of new socio-ecological relationships based on the popular Agrarian Reform project. In this sense, it recalls the need for an organic link between the pedagogical practices that schools develop with the social methods developed by peasant communities,” highlights Dionara Soares, from the *Escola Popular de Agroecologia Egidio Brunetto* (BA) and project coordinator (MST, 2022c, our translation).

Moving on to the website section dedicated to storing videos, the first item on the list was a video entitled “Take the title and remove Bolsonaro,” encouraging 16-year-olds to take advantage of the right to vote. In addition to this encouragement to vote, the youth were encouraged to organize alongside activists in the video “What are the Popular Committees?”. Regarding the educational debate, the state government, in the Movement to repossess the Quilombo Campo Grande Camp, found only one material denouncing the destruction of the Eduardo Galeano School in *Minas Gerais*.

As they could not obtain more current data on the number of schools, the levels and modalities of education covered in the different states and municipalities, as well as publications more focused on the pedagogy of the Movement, it was necessary to clarify further points, and this was only possible from direct contact with subjects belonging to and knowledgeable about the dynamics within the MST. Searching for contact details of members who could ask questions was difficult, as the pages did not have email addresses or telephone numbers.

Considering the above, they had access to the contact details of the first interviewee through the ALERJ<sup>4</sup> Education Committee. At the time of the interview, she was part of the MST's national leadership but had also been a member of the MST's education sector in *Rio de Janeiro*<sup>5</sup>. In conversation, as stated on the website, he affirmed that the MST has approximately 2,000 schools distributed throughout the country, but he was unable to specify exactly the number and stages they cover nor where we could find more detailed data.

Regarding the general aspects of the MST, he reported that peasants have, on average, four or five years of formal schooling because of difficulties in accessing schools offering early childhood education, with all primary and secondary education in the countryside. Regarding teacher training, he reported efforts to resolve the issue of educators without training in agrarian reform and the importance of partnerships with INCRA<sup>6</sup>, through PRONERA and with different universities in performing rural education/pedagogy courses.

The second interview occurred on April 25, 2022, via Google Meet, with an activist from the Paraná Education Sector and the MST National Education Collective, nominated by the first interviewee. The conversation began with the interviewee's report, which pointed out the Movement's significant challenges in discussing society in general and, more specifically, about education. In this way, he stated that in addition to the need to build collective educational alternatives to the historical moment experienced, he believes it is essential to maintain unity from the viewpoint of the foundations, objectives, and principles already defined in the history of the MST. However, he highlighted that this could materialize in different ways in an environment of exchange of experiences and propositions in which unity of analysis is sought from other starting points. Regarding the debate on the New Secondary Education (NEM), for example, he rescued the experience of schools in *Ceará*, which has significantly advanced the discussion of agroecology as a training matrix of schools in *Paraná*, which reworked the perspective of the life project demanded by the NEM under a collectivist bias, and has also thought about new subjects, such as Financial Mathematics and Computational Thinking, under a logic that observes the Pedagogy of Movement.

It was asked if there is an exact and updated number of schools registered and belonging to the MST, in addition to those listed on the website, knowing how many effectively offer each stage of primary education. Regarding this question, it was answered that there is not, although

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<sup>4</sup> Legislative Assembly of the State of Rio de Janeiro.

<sup>5</sup> We conducted a semi-structured interview via Google Meet on March 15, 2022, to clarify some doubts.

<sup>6</sup> National Institute of Colonization and Agrarian Reform.

there is an effort to ensure that state and regional groups make this data available and update it with the national sector since there is an excellent movement regarding the closure of schools in the countryside<sup>7</sup>, especially in areas of agrarian reform. According to the interviewee, it is also impossible to state that the Movement is homogeneous since some schools more firmly incorporate the principles of the MST, while others, for different reasons, are weakened. Hence, social distancing has somewhat hampered the constant effort to seek organicity and maintain meetings and seminars.

Regarding the Movement's efforts to make visible what is experienced by its members in the daily struggle for land and their educational work, he stated that there is an effort by the Communication Sector in this regard without going into further details.

Returning to the analysis of the content made available in the media, from September onwards, a new video was posted on the MST website, entitled "*Os Sem Terrinha*"<sup>8</sup> from the National Secretariat of the MST and the Escola Nacional Florestan Fernandes visited the Art Museum of São Paulo (MASP)", in which the MST presents some works that tell part of its history. Others, including poets and cultural activities, are also available. Posts of a partisan political nature intensified because of proximity to elections for the federal executive.

When analyzing the official MST page on Facebook (MST, 2022d), a greater dynamic was noticed in the posts, covering topics such as agroecological food, popular committees, elections, and culture. However, there was a greater emphasis on pedagogical actions by different schools in Brazilian states and municipalities than observed on the website. In the month of October, for example, we noticed an intensification of posts of this nature, as it was children's month and the *Sem Terrinha* day was held.

It is worth noting that, aware of the potential of social networks, the MST also created a WhatsApp group, *MST ZAP*, in May 2022, which interested parties joined through a link posted on social media, being able to receive some general information about the Movement, nothing specific about the educational project.

Given this material, the question was: why is there still so much misinformation regarding the MST's role in society? Why does public opinion, broadly speaking, still reject the Movement's activities and ignore its educational work? Would it be interesting to think about more specific channels to systematically communicate what is being done in academic terms in the Movement? In what way? Through traditional media, social media, or print?

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<sup>7</sup> Paraná, in fact, has stood out with the campaign "Closing school is a crime" and "School is life in the countryside".

<sup>8</sup> *Sem Terrinha* is the collective identity of the Movement's children, adolescents, and young people.

## Final considerations

Before finalizing the text, they found it relevant to reaffirm that the school is part of the struggle for land, central to the existence of the Movement. In this sense, when education is increasingly under attack, especially free public education, it is essential to bring to light the successful experiences of training children, adolescents, young people, and adults, which they often have in camp schools. And settlements are their only possible contact with school education.

Back to the two conversations that were held with members of the MST and based on the information collected there, it was noticed that there were data on education in the Movement, but that they needed to be updated due to the constant dynamics of closing rural schools in areas of agrarian reform. Interlocutors also reported that much of what happens regarding training comes from partnerships with some universities and teachers. As previously mentioned, it was not easy to access the interviewees' contact details, which, for security reasons, are not disclosed on the Movement's networks.

How can we think of other channels besides traditional media, commonly hegemonized by elitist views, that can more effectively engage the general population? How can we use available social media as systematic spaces for publishing what is happening in schools?

The creation of printed material with accessible language can be a possible way to be publicized at agrarian reform fairs, which are spread across several cities in the country, or even accompanying food baskets, sold online, at *Armazém do Campo*<sup>9</sup> stores, from the MST. This material could publicize some actions, such as the counterproposal to the Secondary Education Reform, which has been discussed this year, with successful experiences, such as schools in *Ceará* and *Paraná*<sup>10</sup>.

We understood that it is crucial to think about the possibility of creating a group with teachers/researchers from universities and the Movement, intending to map the situation of MST schools throughout Brazil in direct contact with the Movement's communication sector so that some practices of different schools in the country are systematically made visible through the production of digital and printed materials, seeking to promote the expansion of dialogue with society.

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<sup>9</sup> MST stores, both virtual and physical, located in several Brazilian cities, are responsible for selling products grown and produced in agrarian reform areas.

<sup>10</sup> The author conducted a specific study on this topic based on a notice launched by the Lula Institute at the beginning of 2022. Available at: <https://institutolula.org/>

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