

 Thifany Helena Torres<sup>1</sup>  
 Fernanda Baeza Scagliusi<sup>2</sup>  
 Fernanda Sabatini<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidade de São Paulo,  
Faculdade de Saúde Pública,  
Departamento de Nutrição,  
Programa de Pós-Graduação em  
Nutrição em Saúde Pública. São  
Paulo, SP, Brasil.

<sup>2</sup> Universidade de São Paulo,  
Faculdade de Saúde Pública,  
Departamento de Nutrição. São  
Paulo, SP, Brasil.

**Correspondence**  
Thifany Helena Torres  
thif.torres@usp.br

## **Food for the homeless people in the context of Covid-19 in Brazil: a qualitative debate based on the newspaper O Trecheiro**

### **Alimentação da população em situação de rua no contexto da Covid-19 no Brasil: debate qualitativo a partir do jornal O Trecheiro**

#### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** The food and nutritional insecurity of the homeless population goes beyond the denial of basic rights, such as housing, and encompasses the uncertainty of what, when, where and how to eat. It is therefore essential to give voice to the vulnerabilities and demands of this population. **Objective:** To describe and discuss the main issues that permeated the theme of food and eating in articles in the newspaper *O Trecheiro*, focused on the social realities of the homeless population in Brazil, during a period of the Covid-19 pandemic (March 2020 to February 2021). **Methods:** This was a generic qualitative research with data production from documentary analysis; the content analysis method was adopted to categorize the documentary corpus and discuss the themes constructed from the data. **Results:** "Food as a right" emerged as part of the knowledge and struggles of homeless people. The themes and sub-themes that emerged included food as a right that is not guaranteed, linked to the failure to guarantee other needs (land and work); ways of guaranteeing food and other inputs (solidarity, popular struggle); and the senses and meanings that food and the rituals surrounding it have for homeless people. **Conclusion:** Thinking about the care and feeding of this population requires a comprehensive and multifactorial approach that takes into account the complexity of the group studied, as well as the various aspects that permeate the experiences of these individuals, such as structural and socio-political issues and the individual experiences discussed in this article.

**Keywords:** Food and nutrition security. Public health. Homeless people. Covid-19.

#### **Resumo**

**Introdução:** A insegurança alimentar e nutricional da população em situação de rua passa a negação de direitos básicos, como moradia, e abrange a incerteza do que, quando, onde e como se alimentar. Assim, dar voz às vulnerabilidades e reivindicações dessa população é essencial. **Objetivo:** Descrever e discutir as principais questões que permearam a temática da alimentação e da comida nas matérias do jornal *O Trecheiro*, focado nas realidades sociais da população em situação de rua no Brasil, durante um período da pandemia de Covid-19 (março de 2020 a fevereiro de 2021). **Métodos:** Tratou-se de pesquisa qualitativa genérica com produção de dados a partir de análise documental; adotou-se o método de análise de conteúdo para categorizar o *corpus documental* e discutir os temas construídos a partir dos dados. **Resultados:** A "alimentação enquanto direito" surgiu como parte dos saberes e lutas da pessoa em situação de rua. Os temas e subtemas construídos abrangeram alimentação enquanto

um direito não assegurado, vinculando-se à não garantia de outras necessidades (terra e trabalho); às saídas para a garantia do alimento e de outros insumos (solidariedade, luta popular); e aos sentidos e significados que a alimentação e os rituais em torno dela possuem para a pessoa em situação de rua. **Conclusão:** Pensar sobre o cuidado e a alimentação dessa população exige um olhar integral e multifatorial que considere a complexidade do grupo estudado, assim como os diversos aspectos que atravessam as vivências desses indivíduos, como questões estruturais, sociopolíticas e experiências individuais discutidas neste artigo.

**Palavras chave:** Segurança alimentar e nutricional. Saúde pública. População em situação de rua. Covid-19.

## INTRODUCTION

The homeless people (HP) is a heterogeneous group that suffers great stigma and social suffering. The National Policy for the HP (PNPR in the Portuguese acronym) characterizes them as a group of people who are in extreme poverty, with broken or weakened family ties, who do not have conventional or regular housing, and who use, temporarily or permanently, public places (examples: sidewalks, overpasses and parks), degraded areas (examples: abandoned buildings) and shelters as a place to live and spend the night.<sup>1</sup> In this sense, they experience situations of vulnerability that violate Food and Nutrition Security (FNS), which consists of guaranteeing the right to constant access to food in adequate quantity and quality, based on eating practices that are consistent with the promotion of health, cultural diversity and economically and environmentally sustainable practices.<sup>2</sup> FNS is closely related to the Human Right to Adequate Food (HRAF), which in turn includes "uninterrupted physical and economic access to adequate food or to the means necessary to obtain it"(p. 2).<sup>3</sup> This right has been included in the Brazilian Federal Constitution since 2010, following Constitutional Amendment 64, which makes food a social right.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, data shows that situations of food and nutritional insecurity (InSAN in the Portuguese acronym) and hunger are worsening in Brazil. The II National Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Brazil - II VIGISAN -, carried out by the Brazilian Research Network on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (PENSSAN Network in the Portuguese acronym) in 2021/2022, showed that 33 million Brazilians (15.5% of Brazilian households) are in a situation of hunger, represented by severe InSAN.<sup>5</sup> By comparison, in the 1st VIGISAN, carried out in 2020, this same indicator was represented by 9% of Brazilian households (19 million Brazilians).<sup>6</sup> These surveys refer to households, so the situation is probably much more serious for those people who do not live in households, such as HP. These people face significant violations of their HRAF, including strategies for accessing food by scavenging in garbage cans, donations from third parties and leftover food from restaurants, all of which affect this population's barriers to accessing quality, decent food.<sup>7</sup>

During the Covid-19 pandemic, which was characterized and announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, the vulnerability scenarios already experienced by the HP were aggravated. The United Nations (UN) has warned that the pandemic represents a threat to FNS in the world, especially for the most vulnerable populations, and could increase hunger and extreme poverty.<sup>8</sup> When comparing the data from the I and II VIGISAN, shown above, it can be seen that this estimate is already a reality in Brazil, and understanding that the HP itself represents a group in InSAN, it is also important to note the increase in this population. In September 2019, the HP in Brazil was estimated at 206,691 people;<sup>9</sup> in March 2020, the estimate was 221,869, most of whom were in the Southeast, mainly in the city of São Paulo.<sup>9</sup>

The significant increase in this population during the pandemic is linked, among other reasons, to more fragile employment relationships, loss of housing and insufficient emergency public policies.<sup>10</sup> In this context, there are emerging issues such as poorly controlled exposure to the Covid-19 virus by the HP and greater difficulty in accessing quality food in sufficient quantity, due to less movement of people on the streets and the closure of shops.<sup>10</sup>

The complexity of the aspects that influence and condition the HP diet during and beyond the pandemic is linked to homelessness, difficulty in guaranteeing basic resources, stigma and social exclusion<sup>11</sup> and therefore elucidates debates that cross transdisciplinary and intersectoral discussions, dialoguing with the field of Food and Nutrition in Public Health. We therefore consider the debate on the eating of the HP to be relevant, given the context of the advance of InSAN in Brazil and, above all, the advance of hunger and poverty, in order to understand the weaknesses and needs surrounding the issues of the HRAF and FNS for the HP.<sup>8</sup>

Faced with the various demands of the HP, communication vehicles are produced with them - such as printed newspapers and radio programs - which expose and give voice to the demands of this group for better living conditions and access to basic needs, as well as the experiences and meanings of "being on the street" for the homeless, including the issue of food. An example of this is the newspaper *O Trecheiro - Notícias do Povo da Rua* (The Street People's News), which promotes news about the rights and experiences of the homeless, especially in São Paulo, where there is a large concentration of this population, but also in other parts of Brazil. Acosta and Resende<sup>12</sup> discuss the role of the newspaper *O Trecheiro* as an instrument that gives the HP a voice and enables access to discursive space. This newspaper exposes the challenges faced daily by the HP, bringing them in as collaborators in the writing, production and interlocution of the newspaper; it also disseminates content among the HP themselves, empowering in a political dimension.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, it also becomes a document of interest for academic analysis.

The context of the Covid-19 pandemic has required a rethinking of the methodologies used to carry out qualitative scientific research. Studies carried out remotely have become more frequent, but with the same concern for delving deeper into what is intended to be understood.<sup>14</sup> Thus, looking at documents that were produced in the context of the pandemic and that bring the perspective of HP, such as the newspaper *O Trecheiro*, has allowed us to return to the complexity of the theme of homelessness and FNS in a context of social isolation.

Thus, this article aims to describe and discuss the main issues that permeate the theme of food and eating in articles in the newspaper *O Trecheiro*, which unfolds around the social realities of HP in Brazil, during part of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## METHODS

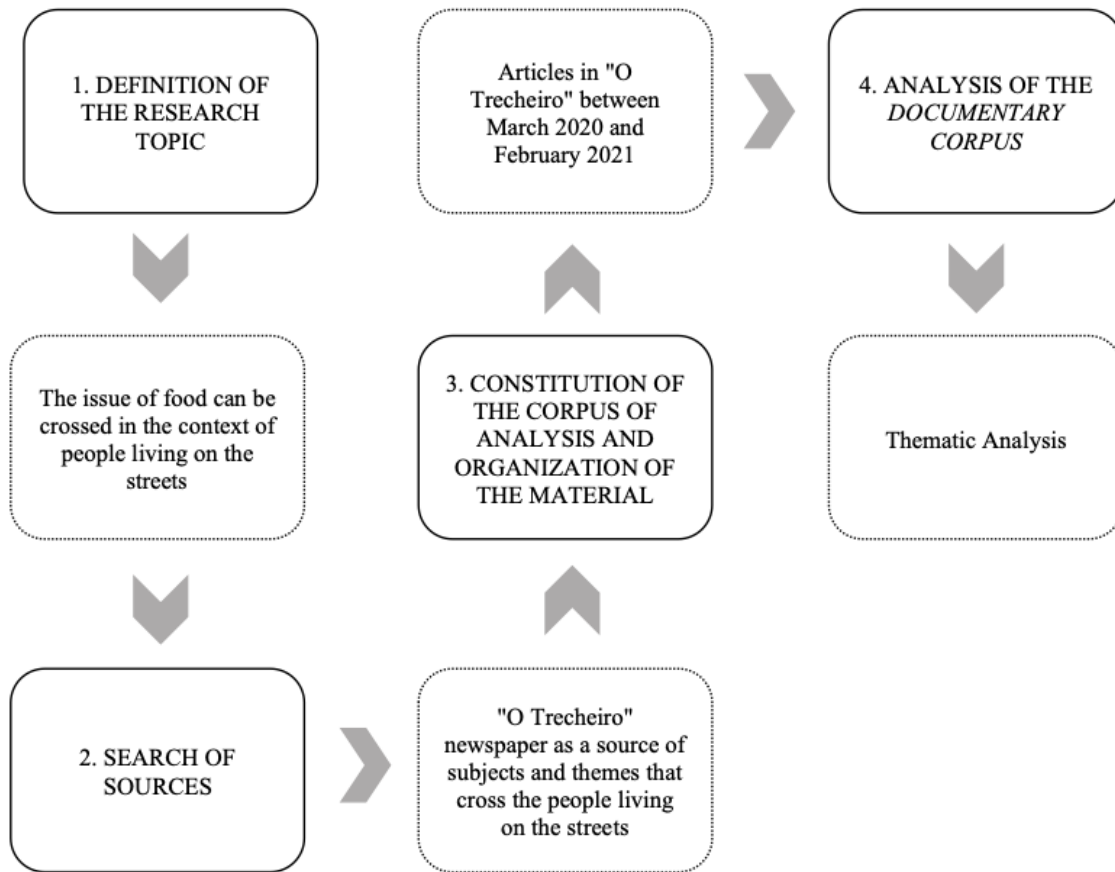
### Study design

The present study is designed as generic qualitative research with data produced from documentary analysis. Generic qualitative research does not have strictly defined delimitations on methods and techniques for its application: it combines established methodological approaches, associating techniques and tools from more than one methodology or re-adapting rules and guidelines from a single methodology; it creates something new that does not claim a formal methodological structure.<sup>15</sup> We chose this design because it seeks to discover and understand processes, perspectives and worldviews. To this end, descriptions, interpretations and understandings of the phenomenon are included and patterns of themes and subjects are identified, outlining a process for understanding what is intended to be understood, even if the theoretical references and methodological frameworks are not explicitly adopted.<sup>16</sup>

The documentary corpus included and analyzed online articles from the newspaper *O Trecheiro - Notícias do Povo da Rua* (The People Living on the Street News), in the "blog" and "online repository" sections of the public website <https://rederua.org.br/o-trecheiro/>. The articles selected were all published over a twelve-month period starting in March 2020, the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil. This study was submitted to and cleared by the Ethics Committee of USP's School of Public Health (Opinion 4.726.784).

We carried out the documentary research based on the stages proposed by Pimentel,<sup>17</sup> which are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figura 1. Stages of documentar research for the stundy Debates on food and the homeless population during the Covid-19 pandemic: a qualitative analysis from the newspaper "O Trecheiro", based on Pimentel (2001) <sup>17</sup>



Soucer: Authors. Table based on Pimentel (2001) <sup>17</sup>

## Study material

The newspaper *O Trecheiro - Notícias do Povo da Rua* (The People Living on the Street News) is the first project developed by the *Rede Rua* Association, a Civil Society Organization and non-profit charity.<sup>18</sup> The Association, based in the city of São Paulo, aims to contribute to networks of support relationships for HP and to participate in the promotion of dignity and rights for this population. The newspaper focuses its circulation on the streets and facilities that welcome HP in the city of São Paulo.<sup>13</sup> The HP in the city of São Paulo - the target audience and contributors to the newspaper - are characterized by great heterogeneity of social and cultural characteristics, as well as a concentration in the central area of the city.<sup>10,13</sup>

Before the pandemic, the newspaper was printed in partnership with a publisher and distributed on the streets of the city of São Paulo, in HP care centers and government agencies, and was made available on the website and social networks of the *Rede Rua* Association. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is now posted in places where HP circulate, such as HP care centers and government agencies, in the city of São Paulo - mainly in the central region - in the form of a mural, while the electronic distribution format remains, with online and public access, from the "online repository" and "blog" sections available on the *O Trecheiro* website - means that increase the newspaper's reach beyond the municipal level. The editions of the online collection were interrupted between March and May 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and resumed in June. During this interruption, independent articles continued to be published in the "blog" section of the newspaper's website.

The inclusion criteria were: articles published electronically on the blog or online archive of the newspaper *O Trecheiro* in the twelve-month period from the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in Brazil, from March 2020 to February 2021. Between March 2020 and May 2020, due to the interruption in the publication of editions of the online collection, we only used the articles available in the "blog" section for analysis. All the articles available during this period were read in full. Between June 2020 and February 2021, we used both articles available in the newspaper's digital collection and those available in the blog section, excluding those that were repeated.

## Analysis and interpretation of the documentary corpus

The data was analyzed using thematic content analysis, comprising, according to Bardin<sup>19</sup>: (1) pre-analysis, (2) exploration of the material and (3) treatment of the data and interpretation of the results.

(1) In the **pre-analysis stage**, we organized the documentary corpus to be analyzed: articles from the newspaper *O Trecheiro*, the archive and the blog, from March 2020 to February 2021. There was also direct contact with the content of the documentary corpus, from complete readings, in which we identified striking topics in the text that communicated with our objectives. During the reading, we identified key terms contextualized to the theme of food and eating, which guided us through the corpus in a more detailed search, identifying content pertinent to the research.

(2) The **material exploration phase** involved coding and categorizing the corpus. We used the "cutting and sorting" technique systematized by Bernard et al.<sup>20</sup> Through this technique, coding and categorization consisted of building analysis themes based on common expressions and ideas throughout the material, which were coherent with our objectives and contextualized to the corpus. This stage was carried out by two researchers trained in the "cutting and sorting" technique and a Codebook was developed and applied to implement and standardize the categorization. According to the recommendations of Mac Queen et al.,<sup>21</sup> the Codebook presented: the name of the theme constructed; a description of the theme; inclusion and exclusion criteria for the passages identified in that specific theme; examples of excerpts included whose meaning was typical of the inclusion criteria defined ("Typical Examples"); excerpts whose meaning was not typical of the inclusion criteria defined, but still belonged to the idea of the theme ("Atypical Examples"); and examples of excerpts with a meaning very close to the inclusion criteria, but which did not fit the theme ("Close, But No"). To ensure the rigor of the study, the reliability of the categorization between the two researchers was calculated using the Kappa coefficient, with the aid of the GraphPad QuickCalcs online software.<sup>22</sup>

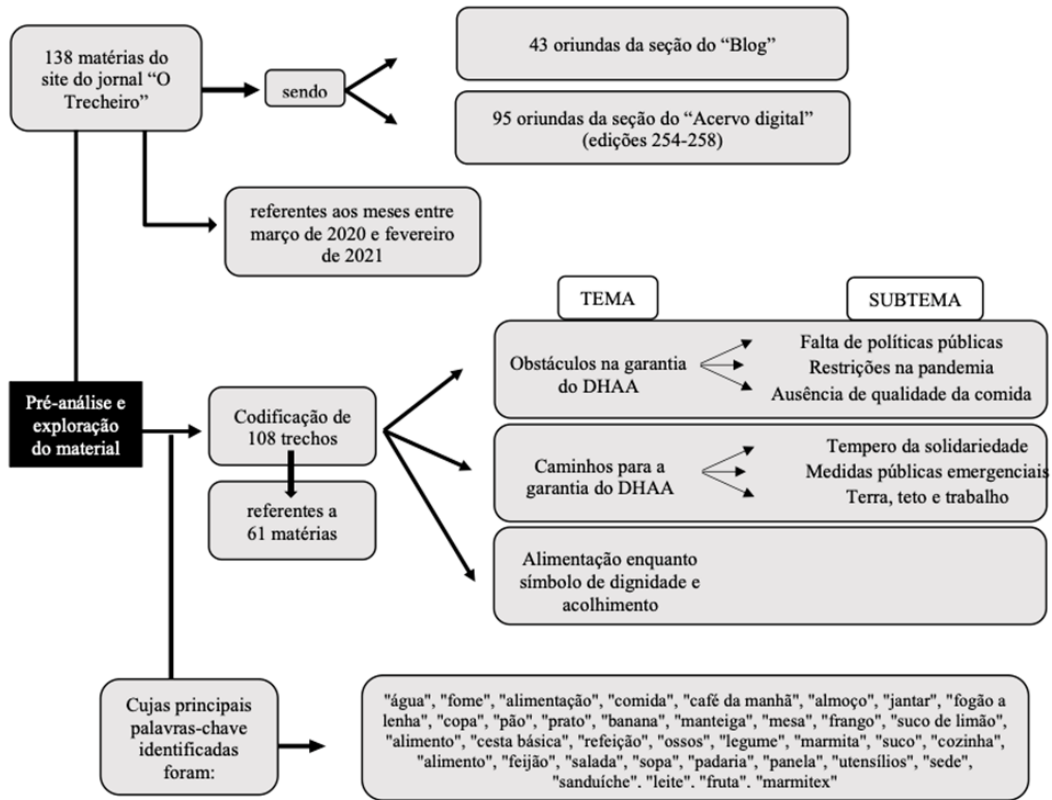
(3) **Data processing** included the extraction and organization of data such as: information on the characterization of the material (edition of the article included, month and year), the interlocutors of the coded excerpts, the title of the articles of the excerpts included, the authors and the possible links they have with organizations or movements, and the main subject of the articles whose excerpts were included. Looking at this information helped us to contextualize the themes and respective coded excerpts in order to interpret them. In analyzing and interpreting the data, we looked, as Bernard et al. recommend,<sup>20</sup> for the central trends of meaning of the themes constructed (the most common and typical meanings that appear in the excerpts within each theme), the nuances (aspects that complexify and deepen each theme, by presenting differences and contrasts in meanings between excerpts from the same theme) and the breadth of meaning of these themes (the range of meanings that the excerpts encompass in each theme). Finally, we triangulated these meanings with scientific literature in the areas of Food and Nutrition and Public Health.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We read 138 articles from the *O Trecheiro* newspaper website: 95 from the online collection (issues 254-268); and 43 from the blog section. Figure 2 shows the flowchart of the path from the selection of the articles, through the

identification of key words during the pre-analysis, to the final construction of the themes and sub-themes. The Kappa agreement values for each theme and sub-theme can be found in Table 1.

Figura 2. Summary of the pre-analysis and material exploration stages of the articles\* from March 2020 to February 2021 on the website of the newspaper "O Trecheiro".



Source: Authors. \* Articles from site <https://rederua.org.br/o-trecheiro/>

Table

1. Kappa coefficient values achieved for the constructed themes/subthemes

Theme	Sub-theme	Kappa coefficient	Classification
Obstacles to guaranteeing the HRAF	Lack of public policies	0,68	Substantial agreement
	Restrictions in the pandemic	1,00	Almost perfect agreement
	Lack of quality food	0,77	Substantial agreement
Ways to guarantee the HRAF	The spice of solidarity	0,73	Substantial agreement
	Emergency public measures	1,00	Almost perfect agreement
	Land, shelter and work	0,75	Substantial agreement

Food as a symbol of dignity and welcome		0,73	Substantial agreement
---	--	------	-----------------------

Source: Authors.

Approximately 45% of the total articles read and 31% of the excerpts coded were published in March and April 2020. In addition, there was a concentration of coded excerpts on the themes "Obstacles to guaranteeing the HRAF" and "Ways to guaranteeing the HRAF" in April 2020. These months represent the beginning of the pandemic in Brazil and, consequently, the worsening of vulnerabilities that permeate the realities of the HP, which were reported and brought to light by the newspaper with emphasis, unfolding in the emergence of initiatives and measures to guarantee the rights of the HP. These issues are reflected in the predominance of articles and excerpts related to the theme of the HRAF of the poor in this period.

Among the coded articles, some did not have a specific author's signature, and the authorship was described as "Columns", "Editorial" and "Trecheirinhas". In those where the authorship was specified, the authors varied between members of the *O Trecheiro* newspaper team (i.e.: journalists, the reporting and writing team and the administrative board); and other collaborators, such as social educators, students and individuals involved in groups, movements and projects - examples: Group linked to the Continental Cry of the Excluded; the National Movement of Waste Pickers (MNCR in the Portuguese acronym) and the Center for the Defense of Human Rights (CDDH in the Portuguese acronym). The articles featured other people heard in interviews and testimonies, which we call "interlocutors" (Table 2). Although the city of São Paulo was the main geopolitical context of the articles analyzed, the cities of Salvador and Guarulhos were also mentioned.

**Table 2.** Characterization of the interlocutors of the excerpts analyzed, based on the identifications that appear in the articles\* analyzed from the newspaper *O Trecheiro* from March 2020 to February 2021.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Homeless people</li> <li>● People who have already been homeless</li> <li>● Immigrants and families in social vulnerability</li> <li>● Residents of shelters and community centers for homeless people (e.g. Comunidade Trindade, Núcleo São Martinho)</li> <li>● People who are unemployed</li> <li>● Waste pickers</li> <li>● Social workers from institutions and projects (e.g. SEFRAS and the "Banhoprageral" project)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Militants, participants and collaborators of popular struggle movements (e.g. National Homeless People's Movement and Central Única dos Trabalhadores – Workers' Union Central)</li> <li>● Collaborators from institutions that support people in vulnerability (e.g. Gaspar Garcia Center for Human Rights)</li> <li>● Idealizers, organizers and volunteers of initiatives to support the homeless population (e.g. Pastoral do Povo da Rua, Instituição SEFRAS, RuaemAção and "SopãoEliseu")</li> </ul>
---	---

Source: Authors. \*Segments from site <https://rederua.org.br/o-trecheiro/>



## Themes and sub-themes

The section below describes and discusses the central meanings of the themes and sub-themes constructed. The meanings of the coded excerpts are not presented in a restricted way, but expand in nuances and ranges of meaning that come close to or distance themselves from their central meanings (Table 3).

### I. Obstacles to guaranteeing the DHAA

This theme focused on the difficulties of access to adequate food. It covered: the denial of this right by the public authorities (**Sub-theme - "lack of public policies"**), the obstacles related to the impacts, consequences and restrictions imposed by the context of the pandemic (**Sub-theme - "restrictions in the pandemic"**) and the lack of safety and confidence in the food offered to the homeless population (**Sub-theme - "lack of food quality"**) (see Table 3).

With regard to **"lack of public policies"**, the failure to guarantee the HRAF was discussed beyond the pandemic. Some excerpts highlighted the neglect and difficulties faced by the HP on a daily basis, and since before the pandemic. Others brought the perspective that the lack of public policies aggravates the lack of access to food during the pandemic, with the food accessed being referred to as coming mainly from non-state sources, such as donations. In recent years, there has been a dismantling of public FNS policies in Brazil, with significant cuts in funding for Income Transfer Programs, the dismantling of projects such as the Cistern Program and the Family Farming Food Acquisition Program, and the extinction of the Food and Nutritional Security Council (CONSEA in the Portuguese acronym) - an essential body for guaranteeing the participation of civil society in FNS actions. This dismantling made it difficult to guarantee the HRAF, especially for the most vulnerable populations, since they disorganize the conduct of policies to promote FNS and combat hunger at the national level.<sup>23</sup>

The sub-theme **"restrictions in the pandemic"** discussed the lack of access to adequate food or the worsening of this difficulty due to the situations and restrictions generated, specifically, by the pandemic: *"a loneliness that already existed, was veiled, hidden and now the realization has dawned that there is nothing for them at the moment"* [Father Paulo, advisor to the *Pastoral do Povo da Rua* (People's Pastoral) in Guarulhos. Blog, April, 2020]. The Covid-19 pandemic has added an extra layer to the difficulties of access, by reducing the movement of people and distributing food on the streets.

Paiva et al.<sup>11</sup> in their integrative review, discussed recent achievements in assisting HP, such as the PNP, at the national level.<sup>1</sup> At the municipal level, Law No. 17,252/2019 consolidates the Municipal Policy for HP, one of whose objectives is to ensure the FNS of HP.<sup>24</sup> However, even with such advances and achievements, social protection policies are still characterized by the discontinuity of programs and projects, as well as by specific actions that do not guarantee the social reintegration of HP.<sup>11</sup>

The sub-themes mentioned above deal with these discontinuities and highlight the permanent need to monitor, re-plan and strengthen existing policies and programs. They also demonstrate the importance of creating new assistance strategies to improve the conditions of this population.

The sub-theme **"lack of quality food"**, in turn, brought as its central meaning the lack of quality food distributed in shelters or by civilians, leading to situations of food poisoning and intoxication (see Table 3). Mattos & Backes<sup>7</sup> discuss the quality of the food offered to the homeless from the point of view of meeting

nutritional needs and the consumption of foods considered healthy, such as rice, beans, meat, legumes and vegetables. In this article, however, we add an extra layer to this discussion, in that we discuss situations related to the risk to the health and physical integrity of HP. These situations violate FNS in the sense that they do not guarantee quality and safe food and, consequently, violate the HRAF of the HP.

## II. Ways to guarantee the HRAF

The theme brought the sense of imminent access to food for the homeless, coming both from the solidarity of the population and institutions (**Sub-theme - "the spice of solidarity"**), and from public policies (**Sub-theme - "emergency public measures"**); as well as via popular struggle (**Subtheme - "land, shelter and work"**) (see Table 3).

In the context of political loneliness and the failure to guarantee the HRAF, solidarity emerged as a temporary way out through the sub-theme **"the spice of solidarity"**, which brought the central idea of distributing ready meals and food through donations that included initiatives and campaigns linked to religious institutions, companies and civil society. Some examples of groups and movements were: MNCR, *Alimenta São Benedito*, *Sopão Eliseu* and *Serviço Franciscano de Solidariedade*, (Franciscan Solidarity Service-SEFRAS). The ideas of donation and distribution contained in this theme, and which emerged with the notion of "solidarity" in the excerpts, also appeared through other terms, such as "solidarity network", "help", "donate", "gesture of charity", "campaign", "social project" and "social action".

Historically influenced by Christian conceptions, the notion of solidarity sometimes carries a meaning close to that of charitable aid.<sup>25</sup> However, in the excerpts, the notion of solidarity was also linked to the production of meals from agrarian reform and solidarity economy (especially linked to the production of the Landless Rural Workers' Movement - MST in Portuguese acronym). The solidarity economy expresses itself through different organizational forms based on self-management, democratic decision-making and horizontal social relations and cooperation between people and groups.<sup>26</sup> In this sense, solidarity, law and social justice can be understood in a connected way, where solidarity would be a form of inclusion and correction of inequalities, as well as a concept of struggle for the working class, being used with the aim of creating unity and belonging within a social group to demand better working conditions.<sup>25</sup>

It should be noted, however, that even if we recognize the important role of civil society in guaranteeing food for the HP, the role of the state, based on joint structural actions and policies between different spheres, is indispensable for the fulfillment of the HRAF and other essential rights for vulnerable populations. In this sense, the neoliberal policies that have been emerging, and which are related to the current lack of assistance policies for these populations, are converging towards a minimal state, in which civil society is held responsible for actions such as food donations.<sup>23,27</sup>

In the context of the minimal state, in crisis situations, **"emergency public measures"** become imperative. This sub-theme brought the central meaning of emergency initiatives linked to the state, aimed at guaranteeing food and social isolation during the pandemic. These measures addressed the issue of access to food in a direct way - by extending the supply of meals in Food and Nutrition Security institutions and facilities (such as *Bom Prato*) - or indirectly - by offering vacancies in hotels, and consequently support for more adequate food in these spaces - as shown by the scope and nuances in Table 3.

The sub-theme **"land, shelter and work"** brought the central meaning of the people's struggle, political organization and the HP claim to the HRAF permanently, beyond the pandemic. It differs from the previous subtheme, above all, in that it deals with passages in which the figure of the people conquering and claiming

rights is stronger than the figure of public power itself; and also because it is not about emergency claims, but perennial ones. Based on this, he brought up aspects of what is being demanded, linking: the HRAF of HP to access to food production (Land); the right to housing as a place of shelter for rest, food organization, self-care and family life (Shelter); and the right to income (Work).

As a result, the demands made by this sub-theme went beyond the guarantee of food itself and encompassed access to housing, income and work; aspects that can also be understood by the HP as health needs.<sup>28</sup> Paiva et al.<sup>11</sup> go in the same direction, pointing out that the HP does not want "just food". They point out that providing food is extremely important, but it alone is not enough to restore the citizenship and dignity of HP.<sup>11</sup> The understanding that housing is a right that precedes guaranteeing access to food has been part of international public policies since at least 1992, as is the case with *Housing First*.<sup>29</sup> Going further, our results highlight that guaranteeing land, decent housing, income and health are intertwined with access to, preparation and production of food. In this way, the dignity, recognition and inclusion of homeless people as citizens cuts across these dimensions.

In view of this, popular participation - or social control -, which is very present in the sub-theme "Land, shelter and work", has played a fundamental role in the achievements made by the homeless over the last few years<sup>11</sup> and is provided for in the Municipal Policy for HP as a principle, including civil society in political decision-making aimed at the homeless. Social control is essential if progress is to be made in favor of the HRAF, especially for minorities - progress achieved by demanding permanent public policies, as well as emergency public measures, as discussed in our sub-themes.

### **III. Food as a symbol of dignity and welcome**

The theme focused on food as a source of dignity for the person who eats it, which is also built on welcoming processes. The scope, nuances and examples of passages included are also detailed in Table 3.

The notion of guaranteeing access to food, in documents such as the "Rede Cozinha Cidadã"(Citizen's Kitchen Network) program, establishes the connection, mainly or only, to the composition of the food and/or nutrients in the lunchbox offered, with the following criteria for the production and minimum composition of lunchboxes: "600 grams, portion of rice, portion of beans, portion of animal protein, portion of vegetable" (p.3).<sup>30</sup> Aspects such as commensality, origin,<sup>30</sup> processing and cultural contextualization of the meals produced to serve the population are not considered a priori.

On the other hand, in this topic we see broad issues linked to the notion of guaranteed food, such as autonomy in serving oneself and having meals, the possibility of contributing to tasks related to food and meals and the idea of a "full table" and sharing. Camargo<sup>31</sup> considered that "eating at the table" has a direct relationship with sociability, as various interactions and bonds take place during this ritual. In the same vein, Montanari<sup>32</sup> pointed out that this act carries with it a series of information and meanings, based on planning, the bonds established between people and cultural interaction. The authors discuss commensality based on a situation in which there is a guarantee of food, a table and a roof over one's head. In this article, however, we need to highlight that even for those people who are deprived of these conditions, commensality is recognized and valued based on the rituals surrounding food.

In this sense, adequate and dignified food in our analysis permeated the notions of welcome and belonging, when the interlocutor of the idea of adequate and dignified was the person in a situation of extreme vulnerability. FNS could also be discussed throughout the themes of this article in view of the supply of organic and agrarian reform food to the HP (example: "*We took stock and totaled 2,500 tons of organic*

*products, products of the Agrarian Reform, of the people's struggle.*" [Daiane Ramos, MST activist. Ed. 257, August 2020]). Agrarian law and, consequently, access to land, go beyond production and access to food, including labor relations, production and improvement of food quality, maintenance of biodiversity, rural identities, cultural wealth and sustainable development.<sup>26</sup>

Table 3. Scope, nuances and examples of excerpts included in the themes and sub-themes constructed.

Theme	Sub-theme	Categories	Description of categories and examples of excerpts
Obstacles to guaranteeing the HRAF	Lack of public policies	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure to guarantee various essential rights, negatively affecting access to food: a) failure to guarantee emergency aid; b) lack of structure in shelters and reception centers;</li> <li>• Lack of public policies that directly guarantee access to food.</li> </ul>
		Nuances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of public policies aggravating the situation of food insecurity in the pandemic.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Violence becomes clear when you walk through the city center. [...] The basics of the basics, which are food and protection against the cold and the virus, arrive through the generosity of institutions and churches, and never as a constitutional right"</i> [Editorial. Ed. 255, July 2020].</li> </ul>
	Restrictions in the pandemic	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prohibition and suspension of food distribution to the homeless population during the beginning of the pandemic;</li> <li>• Decrease in the circulation of people on the streets and closure of shops, leading to a decrease in food donations and spaces to drink water;</li> <li>• An increase in people looking for food on the streets, coupled with insufficient donations and meals distributed.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"The central region, Brás and Mooca are the places with the highest concentration of homeless people. With social isolation, the meals distributed by volunteers have been suspended. The organizations and groups that provide daily meals have noticed that the number of people looking for food has increased. [...] In the Brás and Parque Dom Pedro areas, people are wandering around looking for food. The city is practically deserted, there are no cans on the street and the shops are closed. How are these people going to afford lunch at Bom Prato?"</i> [Cláudia Pereira, reporting team. Blog, March 2020].</li> </ul>
	Lack of food quality	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poisoning via donated food and questions about food poisoning due to the consumption of inappropriate food in shelters because it is spoiled or has bugs in it.</li> </ul>
Examples of excerpts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"I got a stomach infection because of the food too [referring to the food in a hostel I used]. The beans came sour and the salad came with bugs in it, very precarious indeed"</i> [Joice Aparecida, homeless woman. Ed. 260, September 2020].</li> </ul>	

Table 3. Scope, nuances and examples of excerpts included in the themes and sub-themes constructed. (Continues)

Theme	Sub-theme	Categories	Description of categories and examples of excerpts
Ways to guarantee the HRAF	The spice of solidarity	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donation of food and supplies for collectives to continue distributing food or meals to the homeless population;</li> <li>• The notion of solidarity goes beyond the idea of donating food or donated supplies, and encompasses who carries out the solidarity: a) the work of volunteers who cook and distribute the food, or volunteers who animate the moments of donation and provide guidance on the pandemic; b) the participation of the homeless person themselves or volunteers "without many resources" as a voluntary support network at the time of distributing donations;</li> <li>• Solidarity aimed at people in vulnerable situations other than the homeless, such as the indigenous population and those living in squats.</li> </ul>
		Nuances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some excerpts, the term "solidarity" was linked to donations from the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), connecting the notion of solidarity to the idea of producing tasty agrarian reform food.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"However, the signs of life and hope were much more lasting and effective. [...] Solidarity became the key word that guided the social movements, pastoral care and the hundreds of groups that organized themselves to care for and protect the sectors most exposed to the virus. Overcoming fear, these groups made themselves present in the streets and squares of the city by distributing food, food baskets, masks, tents, hygiene and protection materials and so many creative forms of outreach"</i> [Editorial. Ed. 266, December 2020].</li> </ul>
	Emergency public measures	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing places in hotels for the homeless population, in order to promote distancing, health security and the provision of meals during the pandemic;</li> <li>• Providing free meals in popular restaurants;</li> <li>• Partnerships between the city and local restaurants for donations to the homeless population.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Since May 29, the Bom Prato popular restaurants have been offering food to homeless people. The supply is expected to end on July 30, with the possibility of an extension, given the crisis caused by Covid-19"</i> [Davi Amorim, journalist. Ed. 254, June, 2020].</li> </ul>
	Land, shelter and work	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guaranteed housing, employment and land for food production as tools to ensure food.</li> </ul>
		Nuances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political actions, supported by various popular movements and organizations, demanding rights such as food, income and housing;</li> <li>• Food production in settlements and popular collectives, linked to demands for agrarian reform.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"Once you've had your meal for the day, you have to choose between looking for a job or trying to find a place in a hostel for the night. [...] To change this reality, the only way to prevent this cycle from starting again the next day is to wage a fierce struggle for Land, Shelter and Work for all"</i> [David Zamory, reporting team. Ed. 268, February 2021].</li> </ul>

**Table 3.** Scope, nuances and examples of excerpts included in the themes and sub-themes constructed. (Continues)

Tema	Subtema	Categorias	Descrição das categorias e exemplos de trechos
Food as symbol of dignity and welcome		Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perception of dignity and a "dignified life" in places that offer shelter around meals (example: Núcleo São Martinho - São Paulo (SP), Comunidade Trindade - Salvador (BA));</li> <li>• Activities related to food in the place of welcome (making coffee, preparing food, washing dishes) as tools for participation and for building welcome.</li> </ul>
		Nuances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of the processes and rituals surrounding eating (the preparation of the food, the moment of the meal and sitting at the table) as symbolic tools for guaranteeing welcome and dignity;</li> <li>• Acceptance linked to the act of eating together, in a close and horizontal way, and to the notion of a set and full table, with the possibility of serving oneself.</li> </ul>
		Examples of excerpts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>"When I first came, Lúcia came to close the door. [...] When I was about to swear at her because she was closing the door and didn't give me anything, she grabbed my hand, pulled me close and said, 'Let's have some coffee! [...] When I arrived, I found the table full: bananas, bread, butter [...] She pulled me out of the depths... Lúcia gave me a big hug and took me to the café"</i> [José Lima, resident of Comunidade Trindade. Ed. 254, June 2020].</li> </ul>

Source: Authors. Examples of excerpts from articles taken from the site <https://rederua.org.br/o-trecheiro/>

## CONCLUSION

Food emerged from the documentary corpus as a right to be guaranteed, for which the HP itself stands as an active collective in the struggle for such a guarantee. The notion of food as a right was presented together with obstacles and potentialities for guaranteeing food, which are faced, experienced and lived by this population and communicate everything from symbolic issues about eating (Theme "Food as a symbol of dignity and acceptance"), to political-structural issues (Themes "Ways to guaranteeing the HRAF" and "Obstacles to guaranteeing the HRAF").

Regarding the senses and meanings of food for HP, these were related to perceptions of belonging, welcome and dignity. The issue of the struggle to guarantee adequate food proved to be an intersectoral field, encompassing demands for other basic rights, such as housing, access to food production and income. In addition, our results also touched on notions of food quality, access to land, income, sustainability and local food culture. Agrarian reform was linked to the notion of "quality food", linking food adequacy to food that comes from social justice and popular struggle; and organic food to tasty food.

From this point of view, thinking about the care and feeding of HP requires a comprehensive and multifactorial approach that takes into account the individual needs and complexity of the group studied, as well as the various aspects that permeate the experiences of these individuals. In this sense, there are structural issues relating to homelessness, socio-political issues about the difficulties in accessing food and issues specific to these people, such as their life stories, knowledge, experiences and perceptions about the realities in which they live. All these different dimensions interact with each other, cutting across the experiences of HP and influencing issues relating to health and food.

A possible limitation of our study is the impossibility of going to the field to observe how HP interacts with the newspaper, given the challenging context of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, this specific time and context allowed us to take a closer look at this moment of political, health and humanitarian emergency, which profoundly impacts the conditions of this public; and, from this, to build secondary data that dialogues with the voices of the HP and movements linked to the cause.

The newspaper *O Trecheiro* is an instrument of social resistance and struggle for individuals in situations of extreme vulnerability, given that it is largely produced voluntarily, distributed free of charge and includes HP in the production of the content. Thus, although we only analyzed one specific source of documents, it was very representative of the HP's social realities.

To summarize, this study raised questions and debates about HP around three main axes: food as an unguaranteed right, linked to the failure to guarantee other basic needs (housing, income, land); the solutions that emerge to guarantee food and other inputs for individuals in situations of vulnerability (solidarity, popular struggle); and the senses and meanings that food and the rituals surrounding it have for homeless people. In this sense, we understand and emphasize the importance of considering struggles and debates that go beyond access to food in future studies in the field of HP food and nutrition, including the symbolic connection with food and the guarantee of other fundamental rights, such as access to land and food production. Thinking about the FNS of HP means thinking about a food system that goes from access to land to eating at the table.



## REFERENCES

1. Brasil. Decreto nº 7.053, de 23 de dezembro de 2009. Institui a Política Nacional para a População em Situação de Rua e seu Comitê Intersetorial de Acompanhamento e Monitoramento, e dá outras providências. Diário Oficial da União. 24 dez 2009;Seção 1:16.
2. Brasil. Lei nº 11.346, de 15 de setembro de 2006. Cria o Sistema Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional – SISAN com vistas em assegurar o direito humano à alimentação adequada e dá outras providências. Diário Oficial da União. 18 set 2006; Seção 1:01.
3. Organização das Nações Unidas. Comentário Geral Número 12: O direito Humano à Alimentação (Art. 11). Brasília; 1999.
4. Brasil, Constituição (1988). Emenda constitucional nº 64, de 4 de fevereiro de 2010. Altera o art. 6º da Constituição Federal, para introduzir a alimentação como direito social. Lex: legislação federal e marginália, fev 2010;04:448.
5. Rede PENSSAN - Rede brasileira de pesquisa em soberania e segurança alimentar. II Vigisan: inquérito nacional sobre insegurança alimentar no contexto da pandemia da covid-19 no Brasil [internet]. Rio de Janeiro; 2022 [cited 2022 set 09]. Available from: <https://olheparaafome.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Relatorio-II-VIGISAN-2022.pdf>
6. Rede PENSSAN - Rede brasileira de pesquisa em soberania e segurança alimentar. Vigisan: inquérito nacional sobre insegurança alimentar no contexto da pandemia da covid-19 no Brasil [internet]. Rio de Janeiro; 2021 [cited 2021 out 15]. Available from: [http://olheparaafome.com.br/VIGISAN\\_Inseguranca\\_alimentar.pdf](http://olheparaafome.com.br/VIGISAN_Inseguranca_alimentar.pdf)
7. Mattos ACE, Backes V. Pelas ruas, o ecoar da fome transcende o direito à alimentação. Revista Interdisciplinar de Direitos Humanos. 2019;7(1):295-317.
8. Organização das Nações Unidas. Pandemia pode ampliar fome e jogar 49 milhões de pessoas na pobreza extrema, alerta ONU [internet]. Brasília; 09 jun 2020 [cited 2021 mai 03]. Available from: <https://brasil.un.org/pt-br/node/85980>
9. Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. Estimativa da população em situação de rua no Brasil (setembro de 2012 a março de 2020) [internet]. IPEA, Ministério da Economia 2020 [cited 2021 jan 14]. Available from: [http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/10074/1/NT\\_73\\_Disoc\\_Estimativa%20da%20populacao%20em%20situacao%20de%20rua%20no%20Brasil.pdf](http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/10074/1/NT_73_Disoc_Estimativa%20da%20populacao%20em%20situacao%20de%20rua%20no%20Brasil.pdf)
10. Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada. População em situação de rua em tempos de pandemia: um levantamento de medidas municipais emergenciais [internet]. IPEA, Ministério da Economia 2020 [cited 2021 mai 3]. Available from: [http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/10078/1/NT\\_74\\_Diest\\_Disoc\\_Populacao%20em%20Situacao%20de%20Rua%20em%20Tempos%20de%20Pandemia.pdf](http://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/10078/1/NT_74_Diest_Disoc_Populacao%20em%20Situacao%20de%20Rua%20em%20Tempos%20de%20Pandemia.pdf)

11. Paiva IKS, Lira CDG, Miranda MGO, Saraiva AKM. Direito à saúde da população em situação de rua: reflexões sobre a problemática. *Cien Saude Colet* 2016; 21(8):2595-2606. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1413-81232015218.06892015>
12. Acosta MPT, Resende VM. Discurso e protagonismo: população em situação de rua na produção discursiva de O Trecheiro. *Ver BrasLinguist* 2017;17(4):691-714. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1984-6398201711423>
13. *Jornal O Trecheiro, jornalismo a serviço da população em situação de rua: História*. Rede Rua [internet] 2021 [cited 2021 mai 3]. Available from: <https://rederua.org.br/o-trecheiro-historia/>
14. Deslandes S, Coutinho T. Pesquisa social em ambientes digitais em tempos de COVID-19: notas teórico-metodológicas. *Cad Saude Publica* 2020;36(11):1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-311X00223120>
15. Kahlke R. Generic Qualitative Approaches: Pitfalls and Benefits of Methodological Mixology. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. 2014;13(1):57-64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691401300119>
16. Merriam SB. *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. São Francisco (CA): Jossey-Bass, 1998.
17. Pimentel A. O método da análise documental: seu uso numa pesquisa historiográfica. *Cad Pesqui* 2001;(114):179-195. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0100-15742001000300008>
18. Quem somos. Rede Rua [internet]; 2021 [cited 2021 mai 3]. Available from: <https://rederua.org.br/quem-somos/>
19. Bardin L. *Análise de Conteúdo*. São Paulo: Edições 70; 2016.
20. Bernard HR, Wutich A, Ryan GW. *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches*. 2. ed. California: Sage; 2010.
21. Mac Queen KM, Mc Lellan E, Kay K, Milstein B. Codebook Development for Team-Based Qualitative Analysis. *Cult Anthropol Methods* 1998;10(2):31-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X980100020301>
22. GraphPad Software [internet]. 2022 [cited 2022 Nov 21]. Available from: <https://www.graphpad.com/quickcalcs/distMenu/>
23. Delgado NG, Zimmermann SA. Políticas Públicas para soberania e segurança alimentar no Brasil: conquistas, desmontes e desafios para uma (Re)construção [internet] Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Oswaldo Cruz; 2022 [cited 2022 Nov 01]. Available from: [https://www.arca.fiocruz.br/bitstream/handle/icict/52128/TD\\_83.pdf;jsessionid=D4113C7DFDF185364BCC56A934713A02?sequence=2](https://www.arca.fiocruz.br/bitstream/handle/icict/52128/TD_83.pdf;jsessionid=D4113C7DFDF185364BCC56A934713A02?sequence=2).
24. São Paulo (Cidade). Lei nº 17.252, de 26 de dezembro de 2019. Consolida a Política Municipal para a População em Situação de Rua, institui o Comitê Intersetorial da Política Municipal para a População em Situação de Rua e dá outras providências. *Diário Oficial da Cidade de São Paulo*. 26 dez. 2019;Seção 1:1.
25. Westphal VH. Diferentes matizes da ideia de solidariedade. *Rev Katálysis* [internet] 2008 [cited 2022 set 09];11(1):43-52. Available from: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rk/a/qctPHd95zN7VdhN9gZ7Ght/abstract/?lang=pt>

26. Maniglia E. As interfaces do direito agrário e dos direitos humanos e a segurança alimentar. São Paulo: Cultura Acadêmica; 2009.
27. Montañó CE. O projeto neoliberal de resposta à "questão social" e a funcionalidade do "terceiro setor", n.8. De comunas a cacerolazos: dois séculos de lutas sociais. São Paulo, 2002. <https://doi.org/10.23925/ls.v0i8>
28. Prado MAR, Gonçalves M, Silva SS, Oliveira PS, Santos KS, Fortuna CM. Pessoas em situação de rua: aspectos sobre a saúde e experiências com serviços sanitários. Rev Bras Enferm 2021;74(1):1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0034-7167-2019-0200>
29. Tsemberis SJ. Housing First: The Pathways Model to End Homelessness for People with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders. Minnesota: Hazelden; 2010.
30. São Paulo (Cidade). Decreto nº 60.155, de 29 de março de 2021. Dispõe sobre a isenção do rodízio municipal, a autorização para circular em vias destinadas à circulação de pedestres e a permissão de estacionamento em praças, ilhas e calçadas, aos veículos vinculados a entidades inscritas no Programa Sampa Mais Solidária. Diário Oficial da Cidade de São Paulo. 30 mar 2021;Seção 1:1.
31. Camargo LOL. Hospitalidade. São Paulo: Aleph; 2004.
32. Montanari M. Comida como cultura. São Paulo: Editora Senac São Paulo, 2008.

**Contributors**

Torres TH, Scagliusi FB and Sabatini F participated in the project design, analysis and interpretation of data. All author shelped in the writing, final review and approval of the article.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

---

Received: November 22, 2022

Accepted: November 10, 2023