

### **XIII Global Labour University Conference, 2018 (Campinas, Brazil).**

#### **Theme addressed: 4. Development**

#### **Title of the paper: Labour analogous to slavery: combat strategies and socioeconomic development in Brazil**

Modern slavery is still a reality all over the world. Measures to tackle such extreme labour exploitation in the international picture are fixed by UN Convention on the Abolition of Slavery and ILO Conventions no. 29 and no. 105. In Brazil, Federal Constitution ensures that no individual can be submitted to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment. In addition, Brazilian Penal Code states that submit someone to conditions analogous to slavery (or slave-like conditions) is a crime.

Since 1995, over fifty thousand workers have been rescued from conditions analogous to slavery by the Brazilian Labour Inspection. This means that these workers were submitted to degrading working conditions, exhausting working hours or some kind of individual coercion. A survey carried out by ILO indicates that approximately 60% of people found by the State in these circumstances between 2006 and 2007 had already been victimized before. Therefore, the high level of recidivism of slave-like conditions leads to the conclusion that, in Brazil, Labour Inspection has not been successful to reach the structural causes of the problem.

Labour analogous to slavery implies damages to society in several fields, such as unfair competition (based on predatory work management rather than increasing productivity), income reduction, perpetuation of income concentration, restrictions to effective demand, encumbrances to social security system, continuity of rural areas emigration, etc. Thus, slave like conditions have severe negative impacts on the country's socioeconomic development.

In Brazil, there are few public policies to support workers rescued from these conditions. Among these policies, the project called *Ação Integrada* (Integrated Action, in English translation) stands out. Created in 2008 in the state of Mato Grosso, the project is joined by several public institutions and the ILO. Its main goal is to assist workers who are rescued or considered vulnerable through professional training to reintegrate them to labour market in better conditions. The analysis of *Ação Integrada*'s outputs is important for measuring its effectiveness and for the construction of socioeconomic development indicators that may lead to better public policies to prevent workers from being submitted to labour analogous to slave once again.

Up to the present stage of the research we are carrying out, data from workers that joined *Ação Integrada* Project between 2009 and 2017 indicate that the qualification of these individuals has not been sufficient to ensure their reintegration to labour market neither to guarantee better jobs for them. Therefore, we propose a sustainable alternative to combat slave-like labour, from the point of view of rescued workers' social reproduction, inserting them autonomously in associated rural production, without ties of subordination, providing the possession or ownership of the land, technical support and supplying necessary raw material and implements. The resources needed to promote this public policy will come directly from the compensations imposed to the employers by the Labour Court. This alternative, carefully arranged, would imply a different way of producing and living for workers, free from Polanyi's (1944) satanic mill.

This paper is an outcome of a research carried out at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA, in its acronym in Portuguese, located in Salvador, Brazil). We are seeking and analyzing the occupational trajectory of every worker submitted to slave like conditions in Mato Grosso since 2003. Beyond the current literature, the methodological approach combines analysis of Brazilian official data (CAGED, RAIS, FGTS, INSS), data from *Ação Integrada*, reports from the Brazilian Labour Inspection, interviews with workers.