


ANALYSIS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL OF REDUCING INEQUALITIES IN AGING

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Alessandra Conceição Leite Funchal Camacho¹, Gustavo Martins Lemos Tavares², Harlon França de Menezes³, Maria Eduarda Araújo Alves⁴, Rosana Moreira de Sant'Anna⁵ and Juliana de Oliveira Nunes da Silva⁶

ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze sustainable development goal 10 in reducing inequalities in aging to access public health policies. It is a reflective study with a qualitative descriptive approach that is based on a narrative with analysis topics: areas of action for the decade and sustainable development goal 10 in the Brazilian scenario. In this context, pertinent discussions on this topic have emerged and, based on reflections, can lead to new research in the area of Nursing and health. It is necessary to promote equity, through focused policies, in combination with the promotion of equality, with universal access by the principles of the Unified Health System, being the most effective way to promote the reduction of inequalities in the Brazilian scenario. With the articulation of its areas of action and the effective adaptation of sustainable development goal 10 in the Brazilian scenario, state actions with the most vulnerable groups of elderly people are essential, aiming at strategies to correct injustices and promote equity/equality.

Keywords: Elderly. Aging. Sustainable Development. Social inequality.

¹ Doctor in Nursing from EEAN-UFRJ
Fluminense Federal University (EEAAC), Brazil
E-mail: alessandracamacho@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6600-6630>

² Student of the Undergraduate Course at the Aurora de Afonso Costa School of Nursing
Fluminense Federal University, Brazil.
E-mail: gustavomlt@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6207-4118>

³ Doctor from PACCS-UFF (EEAAC).
Fluminense Federal University, Brazil.
E-mail: harlonmenezes@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9884-6511>

⁴ Student of the Undergraduate Course at the Aurora de Afonso Costa School of Nursing.
Fluminense Federal University, Brazil.
E-mail: eduardaalves@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6218-7398>

⁵ Doctor from PACCS-UFF (EEAAC).
Fluminense Federal University, Brazil.
E-mail: rosanamoreira@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7817-1895>

⁶ Nursing Resident at the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO)
Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
E-mail: juliana_nunes@id.uff.br
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9111-3806>

INTRODUCTION

In the global context, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) correspond to a global initiative launched by the United Nations (UN) in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These goals highlight universal goals aimed at actions to end poverty, protect the environment, and ensure that all people have access to opportunities and well-being, equitably and sustainably. In the case of these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 17 established goals are interconnected and propose some specifications that cover various social, economic, and environmental issues that seek to overcome the most urgent challenges in the world (United Nations, 2022; Fiocruz, 2018a).

The focus of this article is centered on Sustainable Development Goal 10, which aims to reduce inequalities within and between countries in aging with a view to access to public health policies. In other words, by 2030, it aims to progressively achieve and sustain income growth for the poorest 40% of the population; and empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion (UN Brazil, 2024a).

Taking these data into account, the effects of this demographic change highlight that older people do not have access to the basic resources necessary to have a dignified life and many others face multiple obstacles to fully participate in society (PAHO, 2020).

As a global challenge, Sustainable Development Goal 10 aims to guarantee equal opportunities and reduce inequalities through the adoption of public policies (fiscal, wage, and social protection) with the goal of equal rights (UN Brazil, 2024b; Fiocruz, 2018a).

In the case of the elderly population, the publication of the Census carried out in 2022 by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) highlighted an increase of 7.6% compared to 2012. For people aged 60 or over, the increase was from 11.3% to 14.7%, going from 22.3 million to 31.2 million. In percentage terms, there was a growth of 39.8% in the elderly population (IBGE, 2022).

Therefore, it is essential to combat social exclusion and discrimination related to the elderly by promoting an inclusive and fair society and recognizing the importance of ensuring a healthy and active life. It is necessary to ensure that the elderly continue to contribute to the community and enjoy a dignified and happy life (UN Brazil, 2024b; Fiocruz, 2018a).

The commitment of Sustainable Development Goal 10 to reducing inequalities in aging allows us to envision access to public health policies with visibility through relevant partnerships in health care provided by what is desirable and of quality in a collaborative

interprofessional and intersectoral context, being in the Brazilian scenario tangential to the principles of the Unified Health System.

Nursing, committed to the Sustainable Development Goals in reducing inequalities in aging, seeks to "... promote health, gender equality, reduce inequalities and even build more just and peaceful societies, by ensuring equal access to quality health care" (TAMINATO; FERNANDES and BARBOSA, 2023).

Therefore, this article aims to analyze Sustainable Development Goal 10 in reducing inequalities in aging with a view to access to public health policies.

METHOD

This is a qualitative and descriptive reflection work with the objective of analyzing sustainable development goal 10 in reducing inequalities in aging with a view to access to public health policies.

Considering that we are in the decade of healthy aging in the Americas (2021-2030), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) leads the agenda in the region of the Sustainable Development Goals. The elderly population in Latin America and the Caribbean is undergoing a more accelerated demographic transition, with more than 8% of the population being 65 years of age or older in 2020 and this percentage is estimated to double by 2050 and exceed 30% by the end of the century (PAHO, 2020, Fiocruz, 2018a). The Sustainable Development Goals are part of the Global Strategy through the World Health Organization's Plan of Action on Ageing and Health (2016-2020), as well as the United Nations Political Declaration and Plan of Action of Madrid on Ageing and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (PAHO, 2020).

In a dialogical context, this article seeks to understand the relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Sustainable Development Goal 10, in reducing inequalities in aging to access to public health policies.

In this context, discussions have emerged today pertinent to this topic and based on reflections can lead to new research in the area of Nursing and health.

Therefore, this article is developed in the following analysis topics: areas of action of the decade and the sustainable development goal 10 in the Brazilian scenario.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

AREAS OF ACTION OF THE DECADE

As highlighted in the introductory aspects of this article, this global agenda focuses on the efforts of governments, civil society, international agencies, professional teams, academia, the media, and the private sector to improve the lives of older people, their families, and their communities (PAHO, 2020).

These actions need to organize situational diagnoses by municipalities, with the support of government organizations at their highest levels and institutions directly linked to the elderly population, to develop more concrete proposals that can achieve their effectiveness (SILVEIRA et al, 2022). In this sense, the areas of action for the decade were outlined, the first of which is Action Area I, aiming at changes in the way we think, feel, and act about age and aging, avoiding age discrimination in all age groups of the elderly (PAHO, 2020). Although the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals is in its infancy, aging is still discussed generically and superficially. Brazil needs to adapt to take a more conscious look at the needs of the elderly to serve future generations. In terms of education, health, and work, we are still on a slow path toward equal access to these services and public policies that cover the demands of the population in its aging process (Cicarini and Avelar, 2022). The Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons specifically advocates the importance of ensuring: independence and autonomy; informed consent regarding health; equal recognition of the law (with an emphasis on equity); social security, accessibility, and personal mobility; ensuring fundamental human rights (PAHO, 2020).

SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) makes it crucial to ensure that older persons live with dignity and security, interconnecting. It requires integrated policies that consider economic, health, and education aspects, ensuring the inclusion and protection of older persons (Andrade, 2024).

Expanding the scope of action of SDG 10, there is also Area of Action II, which aims to ensure that communities promote the capabilities of older persons in physical, social, and economic environments (both rural and urban), which are important for healthy aging; age-friendly environments with a view to an age-friendly community (PAHO, 2020).

To this end, Area of Action II requires the understanding that there is technical assistance to countries to create age-friendly environments, ensuring the inclusion of the most vulnerable; opportunities to connect cities and communities, exchange information and experiences, and facilitate learning (in countries, cities, and communities in different contexts) taking into account their specificities; tools and support for countries, cities, and

communities to monitor and evaluate progress in creating age-friendly environments; and the identification of priorities and opportunities for collaborative action and exchange (PAHO, 2020).

In Brazil, the Age-Friendly Brazil Strategy was developed and is configured as a continuous, unlimited route, aimed at achieving improvements for society, assuming (municipal) assessments with their respective course corrections and adjustments in projects, actions, programs, and initiatives carried out and underway at the time of the assessment aimed at the elderly (Brazil, 2021).

In this context, Area of Action III is relevant to the effective delivery of care and primary health care services that are person-centered and appropriate for the elderly. In this area, health systems with quality health care for older people are needed, linked to the sustainable provision of long-term care; the implementation of services aimed at maintaining and improving functional capacity is essential to achieving healthy aging (PAHO, 2020).

In this sense, the growth of the elderly population highlights the urgent need for measures, with a continuous commitment to ensure that cities and communities are prepared to face the challenges that arise in our daily lives (Andrade, 2024).

In Action Area III, there is the importance of changing the care of older people; Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment in Health Care for Older People; specification of criteria for Health Intervention in Older People; and, finally, the full optimization of Health Care for Older Patients (PAHO, 2020).

Collaborative integration between governments at their levels is necessary, civil society organizations, the private sector, and academic institutions to address the multifaceted challenges of population aging and achieve the SDGs (Andrade, 2024).

Furthermore, there is Action Area IV, which aims to provide access to long-term care for older adults who need it. In this regard, there is a pertinent concern about access to good-quality long-term care to maintain functional capacity; guaranteeing basic human rights and living with dignity; and supporting caregivers to develop appropriate care and take care of their own health (PAHO, 2020).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 10 IN THE BRAZILIAN SCENARIO

In the Brazilian scenario, at the 3rd National Conference on the Rights of Older Persons, priority proposals were established by the working groups (Brazil, 2020).

It is necessary to promote equity in access to health services in conjunction with investment in professional training. Reality demands the adaptation of successful innovations from other contexts, which are essential measures in response to population aging (Nascimento, 2024).

There is an understanding of the constant change and updating of legislation by needs with the intention of universalizing the rights of the elderly, as well as their social inclusion (integrated management in the three spheres of government) aiming at autonomy, access to information, benefits, quality services, family and community life. In this sense, it also aims to continually expand care and combat violence and mistreatment against the Elderly through the actions of Reference Centers, Specialized Police Stations, and the agility of the Judiciary (Brazil, 2020).

Public policies must be focused on research initiatives specifically aimed at the elderly population according to regional specificities, bringing real benefits, and avoiding generalist and ineffective solutions.

For its effectiveness, public policies must be accessible to the elderly, with the availability of prevention, health promotion, treatment, and rehabilitation programs, with specialized health care centers for the elderly, which are the responsibility and funding of the three spheres of government. Its effectiveness is also centered on the need to expand public education policy to include the elderly in all stages of education - literacy, elementary, secondary, and university education (Brazil, 2020).

The elderly, in their social role in accessing their rights, must have effective participation in the planning of social programs in the areas of health, education, and social assistance. To this end, it is necessary to continually disseminate and promote educational and information campaigns, encouraging, and providing opportunities and training for the elderly in the three spheres (municipal, state, and federal) (Brazil, 2020).

The strong relationship between education, quality of life, and the elderly's permanence in the market reaffirms the role of education in helping these individuals continue to participate in society, in order to increase their life expectancy (Cicarini and Avelar, 2022).

To strengthen this, it is necessary to integrate the National, State, and District Councils, and increase interaction and participation through forums, public hearings, debates, seminars, lectures, and other events of a similar nature, which encourage social participation and continued training. This articulation aims at social protection in social

security, and solidarity with individuals, families, and groups in certain situations of dependency or vulnerability (Brazil, 2020).

It is opportune for communities and municipalities to implement actions for human development and the promotion of active, healthy, sustainable, and civic aging, aiming to address the vulnerabilities inherent to social life and implied in the natural advance of age (Brazil, 2021) according to their reality.

It also aims at social promotion: related to the expansion of the supply of social goods and services, policies of productive inclusion (right to work) with the action of these aspects in a transversal and articulated manner to reduce inequalities broadly, not forgetting the vulnerable elderly population in terms of income and assets (Brazil, 2020).

For the success of the proposals of the sustainable development goals 10 in the Brazilian scenario, the effective participation of society as well as its awareness is necessary. It is necessary to respect regional differences, taking into account inequalities in a diverse context where there are significant impacts on education and the environment, especially regarding environmental issues and the climate, where the elderly are the most vulnerable in these situations (Fiocruz, 2018b).

Recognizing the relationship between population aging and environmental sustainability is of utmost importance. Public policies must be focused on the continued promotion of sustainable and resource-efficient practices to directly benefit the elderly. Climate change in recent years has increased demands for natural resources and environmental services, as well as the production of waste and emissions. Addressing these issues within the sustainable development goals becomes essential to ensure that the elderly live in a healthy environment (Andrade, 2024).

The actions involve a Brazil that develops an empathetic society focused on a culture of respect with quality education in all social classes and effective public policies to combat inequality for the elderly (Camacho, 2024).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article aimed to analyze sustainable development goal 10 in reducing inequalities in aging to access to public health policies.

In this regard, it is important to understand the role of the state in its instances and the development of public policies in reducing inequalities, as the best way to offer services to combat them. To this end, it is necessary to promote equity through targeted policies,

combined with the promotion of equality, with universal access by the principles of the Unified Health System being the most effective way to promote the reduction of inequalities in the Brazilian scenario.

With the articulation of its areas of action and the effective adaptation of sustainable development objective 10 in the Brazilian scenario, state actions with the most vulnerable groups of elderly people are essential, aiming at strategies to correct injustices and promote equity/equality.

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