

THE MINIMUM INCOME: a monetary transfer to poor families with children in school age in Brazil¹

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1 INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the outcomes of a survey on Brazilian Minimum Income proposals and experiences taking place in Brazil. I intend to identify tendencies and characteristics of those proposals and experiences, to establish a relationship between poverty and this social policy as well as to discuss some basic questions pointed out by its' debate.

First of all, it is necessary to point out the Minimum Income as a monetary transfer to families or to individuals, seen in the context of the Brazilian Social Protection System. So, it can express compensatory or distributive/redistributive contend. It is well known that the international and national debate and the experiences, implicitly or explicitly, are supported by three presuppositions:

- a) The **Liberal/neoliberal approach** sees the Minimum Income as a compensatory mechanism, efficient against poverty and unemployment. It also sees the Minimum Income as a substitutive policy for social services and programs and as a mechanism that can simplify the Social Protection Systems;
- b) The **Progressive/distributive approach** that sees Minimum Income as a mechanism to redistribute the wealth socially built and as a policy to complement the existent social services and programs;
- c) The **Insertion approach** that place the Minimum Income as a mechanism directed to the social and professional insertion of the citizen in a conjuncture of poverty and unemployment.

Those theoretical and ideological foundations guide the formation of two models of Minimum Income that are present in the Brazilian experiences:

- a) Minimum Income as a compensatory and residual policy which is based on the liberal/neoliberal presuppositions, oriented to the maintenance of the market interests. It is guided by the comprehension that unemployment and social exclusion are inevitable. It has as objectives the autonomy of the individual as a consumer; to weaken the more perverse effects of the poverty and social inequality, without considering the growth of the unemployment and income distribution, and it is oriented towards the focalization on the extreme poverty, without discouraging work. The impact is, necessarily, the reproduction

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of a class of poor people, among with the guaranty of survival in a Poverty Line;

- b) Minimum Income as a redistributive policy, oriented by criteria of Universal Citizenship and having as fundaments redistributive presuppositions, guided by the establishment of the social minimums. In this case, the objective is to reach the citizen autonomy and the orientation is the positive focus that is able to include all who need the benefit in order to maintain a worthy life. The expected impact is the social inclusion.

It seems to occur an apparent agreement among Brazilian politicians of different political orientations, in relation to propositions of Minimum Income programs. One can find some different initiatives that come from politicians of several political parties of different ideological orientations. They range from the extreme conservatism to a progressive left. However, a progressive/distributive orientation seems to predominate. The assumption is suspected by the fact that 65% of the proposals and experiences of Minimum Income, in Brazil, werw started by the politicians of the Worker Party. At once, this does not mean that those are, necessarily, an expression of a progressive political project. So, it needs further and deeper research.

2 THE DEBATE AND THE EXPERIENCES OF MINIMUM INCOME IN BRAZIL³

2.1 The Conjunctural Context

The recent debate on Minimum Income policies takes place in a conjuncture of great economical changes in capitalism. It is the era of technical and economical revolutions. As a consequence, there is a new order conducting capitalism towards a context of globalization with deep consequences on the wage society and in the work market, such as instability of jobs and the increase of unemployment. This process has inspired new social questions and demands (ATKINSON, 1995; BRITTAN, 1995; BRESSON,1993; VUOLO, 1995; GORZ, 1991).

The traditional patterns of the Welfare State – social security – set by a contribution from the employees and employers, and social care - represented by social aids, directed to some social groups, independently of contribution, are not able to answer the new social questions anymore.

The debate on Minimum Income, in Brazil, was initiated as a part of a limited agenda, in 1991, when Senator Eduardo Suplicy's Project of Law was approved in the Senate. He is a member of the Workers' Party, who proposed the creation of the Warranty Basic Income Program (Programa de Garantia de

³ About Minimum Income Program in Brazil, see SILVA (1997).

Renda Mínima – PGRM), in a national level and directed to Brazilian workers with 25 years of age and over, who earn around two minimum wages⁴.

In this period, it could be perceived what might be considered the major economical recessive crisis since 1930. All the attention of the Brazilian government and of the public opinion was given to fight against a growing inflation and to focus on the problems of a high external national debt. The economical growth and a policy of the exportation of the production are the priorities. So, there was no room for a policy against the growing poverty and sharing of wealth. Wealth was perceived as a consequence of economical growth and the stability of the currency.

This conjuncture started to change in 1992 with an Ethical and Political Movement, started with the impeachment of president Fernando Collor de Mello. This movement had the merit to bring the problems of hunger and poverty to the public agenda. It started The National Campaign of the Action Against Hunger, Misery and in Favor of Life. This Campaign was incorporated by the Brazilian president, Itamar Franco, in 1993, with the denomination of Plan of Fight Against Hunger and Misery.

A second moment of the debate on Minimum Income started, in Brazil, in 1993, when J. M. CAMARGO wrote an article called «The Miserables». He proposes, in this article, an articulation between income and attendance of the children and young poor people from 5 to 16 years of age to public schools. He also proposed a monetary transfer around a minimum wage to the families that had children or dependents from 5 to 16 years of age, if they had a regular school attendance. Therefore, the link between Minimum Income programs and the public school is the warranty of the focus on poor families. This is an important characteristic of the programs because, in Brazil, just the poor people attend public schools and, at the same time, it is very difficult to identify the real income of poor families because of the high level of informal jobs.

Therefore, the debate on Minimum Income assumes a new position, qualified by two innovations: the introduction of the family unit instead of the individual as a beneficiary of the programs and the link between monetary transfer and education. The objective is to stop the simple assistance by the incorporation of a structural component.

The third moment of the debate on Minimum Income started in 1995 when the first experiences begun in the cities of Campinas and Riberão Preto in the State of São Paulo as well as in Brasília, the federal capital of Brazil. These experiences were followed by several proposals and experiences in several cities and States, in different regions of the country and in national level. These initiatives were the response of the governments to the social pressure to fight against increasing poverty. The Minimum Income policy, in

⁴ A minimum wage in Brazil is about US\$ 85,00.

this context, is no longer an utopia, that can not be reached, in order to become an alternative to social policy.

The debate, the increasing number of proposals and the Brazilian experiences of Minimum Income are supported by the following traces, since those three moments:

- Ø elevation of the indexes of unemployment and the insecurity of the job social relations, in consequence of the liberal economical policies and the structural adjustment of the national economy to the competitiveness of the international and global economy, adopted during the 90's;
- Ø elevation of violence in big cities;
- Ø low qualification of the Brazilian workers to answer the new demands of the new working world;
- Ø elevation of the indexes of infantile work, with exploitation of children and adolescents;
- Ø elevation of poverty, being the children and the young people the more affected.

Furthermore, the national debate on Minimum Income has been influenced by two contradictory situations. The identification of historical limits, in the sense, that it gives particularities to any effort of implementation of that policy, such as:

- Ø existence of a large contingent of the population living below of the absolute poverty line, even indigence, with a long history of social exclusion and limited access to the basic social services;
- Ø adoption of concentrator and excluding economical models;
- Ø the State, in national level, the State and local level, with limited and bad use of the resources, lack of technical capacity; presence of private interests in the State and political and clientelist manipulation;
- Ø lack of focus of social programs aimed at a target public;
- Ø lack of tradition of the follow-up and evaluation of the social programs;
- Ø fragility of the organization of society, oriented by a citizenship based on merit instead of necessities.

In the other hand, motivator components are identified in order to adopt Minimum Income programs, such as:

- Ø several studies have demonstrated evidence of its' low cost to surpass poverty;
- Ø low efficacy of the social programs have also been demonstrated in relation to the focalization on the poorest population. Social expend, even when high, has been incapable to modify the situation of poverty of the high range of the population. This maintains the vicious circle of poverty and it also decreases the possibility of the State to support programs directed against poverty;

- Ø possibility to maximize resources with direct monetary transfer to beneficiaries and when to enhance the possibility to make a good decision about how to spend the money;
- Ø success of pioneer experiences that have been showing the viability of the Minimum Income programs.

In short, the increase of unemployment and the destitution of social rights represent the central aspects of the conjuncture that maintain the debate and the practice of the Minimum Income policy in Brazil.

2.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Dimensions of the Minimum Income in Brazil: characteristics and particularities

An analysis of the Brazilian Minimum Income programs points out the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the proposals and experiences as important aspects for its' comprehension.

The present situation is demonstrated, quantitatively, by the following numbers:

- Ø The national experiences in development are 3: the Benefício de Ação Continuada – BPC, defined by the Lei Orgânica da Assistência Social – LOAS and directed to elder people from 67 years of age and over who live in families with whole per capita income up to a quarter of a minimum wage and handicap people living in the same economical situation; Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil – PETI, created by the federal government and implemented with the participation of State and local governments and the society, directed to the eradication of hard infantile work in urban and rural areas. This program has as an obligation to maintain children and adolescents, from 7 to 14 years of age, in school, through the completion of the family income; Programa de Garantia de Renda Mínima – PGRM directed to give support to local programs of Minimum Income in municipalities that have the budget below of the mean of the State budget and the beneficiary families must have a whole per capita income equal or below a half of the minimum wage and children from 0 to 14 years of age. The children and adolescents also have to attend school. This program is half supported by the federal government and supported by the local government, that is the author of the proposal. It is expected that youngsters from 7 to 14 years of age attend school and the benefit is at least about US \$ 9,00 a month per child or teenager.
- Ø The States proposals are 18, being 5 of them talking place in the States of Amapá, Amazonas, Brasília, Mato Grosso do Sul and Tocantins;
- Ø The city proposals are 107, being 45 of them taking place in several States. Among them, are 10 State capitals;
- Ø The State that has more concentration of proposal and experiences is São Paulo (59, 9%) followed by Minas Gerais (11,3%), Paraná (5,6%), Rio de Janeiro (4,7%) and Santa Catarina (3,8%). This means a strong concentration

of the proposals and experiences of Minimum Income in Brazil in the more developed States. However those experiences are present in all regions of the country, in almost all States and mainly in the State capitals;

- Ø The Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT is the political party that has the highest concentration of initiatives proposals and experiences of Minimum Income, in Brazil, (65,6%), followed by the Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro – PMDB (5,6%), Partido Socialista Brasileiro (4,8%), Partido Progressista Brasileiro – PPB (4,0%) and so on.

The qualitative dimension of the Minimum Income proposals and experiences has pointed out the following characteristics and particularities:

- Ø The Minimum Income is seen as a public policy in the context of social rights and citizenship with the possibility to establish direct relation State/citizen and to contribute to surpass the clientelist perspective and the political charlatan behavior that has marked the implementation of the Brazilian social policies;
- Ø The Minimum Income is seen as a public policy for insertion of the workers of the informal market into the Brazilian Social Protection System in order to surpass the «Regulated Citizenship» and meritocratic traces that have historically characterized this System;
- Ø The Minimum Income is seen as a public policy for completion of the other policies (education, health, work). Its' objectives are to link the compensatory trace of the monetary transfer to the structural mechanism of short and long term, to improve the sharing of the wealth socially built and to fight against poverty.

The above ideas, that seem consensual, have the following as reference presuppositions built during the history of social policies in Brazil:

- Ø necessity to assure a minimum for survival of the poor people, with supportable cost to the society and without discouraging work (liberal presupposition);
- Ø the comprehension that the organization of production create social inequality among people, and that it is the role of the State to develop social intervention in order to decrease this inequality (liberal presupposition);
- Ø there is no direct relationship between macroeconomic growth and social welfare even when the wealth is socially built and in growing amount. So, it is the role of the State to interfere in order to distribute more equitably the goods and social services assuring every one a pattern of human dignity (distributive presupposition).

It is important to emphasize that the link between monetary transfer, directed to poor families, and education of the children and young people seem to be the most important innovation on the Minimum Income programs in Brazil. The obligation to maintain children in school seems socially important and is the major expression of this policy, in Brazil. This pattern creates a relationship between the

fight against poverty and the improvement of educational conditions of the future generations, making the Minimum Income a pro-family, pro-child and pro-education policy.

The analysis of the projects, proposals, decrees, regulations, handbook, reports and other several publications on the experiences that have been implemented have pointed out qualifier elements and particularities of the Minimum Income, in Brazil, that made possible to built the chart below:

Basic Trends of the Minimum Income Programs in Brazil

Characteristics and Particularities	Qualifiers Components
Basic Characteristics	Articulation of a monetary transfer to poor families with education for children and adolescents.
Originality	Attendance of the children to a public school.
Origen and Context	Predominance of the local and existence of some State and national proposals and experiences.
Objetives	They are variables and specific of each program with main reference to changes in the lack of education, health, nutrition and in the situations of social risk, related to children and young people.
Beneficiary Unit	Family living in extreme poverty, being the main target population children or dependents from 7 to 14 or 0 to 14 years of age.
Basic criteria to allow the Program	Family income or family per capita income; age of the children and time of living in the municipality or in the State of the program.

Criteria of priority	They weaken the general enroll criteria in the program, linking income with other expressions of poverty.
Main Benefit	Monetary completion of the family income, being the reference of a social minimum a cut of the poverty line. It can be a differential value (variable) or a fixed one; the benefit is complementary to the income and to other basic social services.
Additional Benefits	It guides to the adults of the family to wards a professional training, to a job, or to a reading and writing course and to other social services (nursery care, health, leisure, etc.)
Requirements /Counterparts	Attendance of the children and the young, from 7 to 14 years of age, to a public school; regular attendance of the children to a health care; participation of unemployed adults in professional training of the benefited family; participation of the head of the family in periodical education meetings; insertion of the adults of the benefited family in an occupation activity.
Institutional links	Models like Campinas city – PGRM - Warranty Income Program - are located in a government sector of the States or Municipality responsible for Social Action or similar; Models like Brasília Federal District - Scholl Scholarship – Bolsa Escola - are located in a government sector of the State or Municipality responsible for education.

Strategy for implementation	Use of existing lists of the beneficiaries of other programs; selection of poor areas in the State or in the municipality; enrollment of a specific population; guiding of the members of the benefited family to other programs.
Financing	Budget of the States or municipalities, ranging from 0,20% to 3% of the annual budget, with predomination of 1%; other financial source.
Duration/ Disconnection	A initial time to the benefited families to remain in the program is set around one or two years, with the possibility to the renewed once or more times, according to the evaluation and improvement of the conditions of life of the benefited families.
Follow-up and Evaluation	Follow-up, policy evaluation, process evaluation, impact evaluation – during or after disconnection of the benefited family of the program.
Outcomes/Impacts	Attendance of the children to a school and a health care unit, decreasing school evasion; improving school learning; decreasing malnutrition rates; removing of the children and young from the streets; increasing the self-esteem and confidence in the future. However low gain in the social and economic conditions of life of the benefited families are registered.

Finally, we realize that from the proposals and experiences of Minimum Income in development in Brazil, it is possible to identify two models of monetary transfer to families. The first based on Campinas' experiences such as Warranty of Familiar Minimum Income (Garantia de Renda Mínima Familiar) and the other based on Brasília's experience, such as the Scholarship Program (Programa Bolsa-Escola). Other initiatives, oriented by the logic of monetary transfer to families, are developed by municipal foundations, federal, State and municipal governments, institutions from the civil society and international agencies. Among them are the programs direct explicitly to fight against hard infantile work, mixing two aspects: scholarship programs to families with children from 7 to 14 years of age and professionalization programs to families with children from 14 to 18 years of age. The following experiences are examples: Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil of the federal government with States and municipality participation; The Programa Pioneiros Mirins of the Tocantins State government; The Programa Direito à Vida of the Amazonas State Government; The Programa Rede de Apoio e Proteção à Família of Porto Alegre (AMARAL et al. 1998).

It is possible to point out central questions and some problematic aspects after this explanation based on the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the proposals and experiences of Minimum Income in Brazil.

2.3 Central Questions

The following central questions call attention of the most of the ones who are following the implementation of Minimum Income in Brazil, even though the issues must be deeply researched. They are:

a) Minimum Income as a Policy to Fight Against Poverty

The fundamental cause of poverty, in Brazil, is, in fact, the inequality in the sharing of the income and wealth socially built more than the incapacity income generation.

It is well known that the repartition of income needs to focus on the rich people, taking more from them, as well as on poor people, giving them possibilities to get more income. Any policy to fight poverty, in this sense, needs to link social to economical policies. It means articulation between compensatory programs with social investments in the middle and large term. This also means that the prevention of poverty seems to demand serious policies, articulating employment and income repartition. Therefore, the Minimum Income Policy must be placed in this larger context in order to become an effective mechanism to fight poverty.

b) Minimum Income, Education and Infantile Work

Education and infantile work are, along with the poverty, identified as central aspects that justify the Minimum Income In Brazil.

The articulation between a monetary transfer and the obligation of the insertion of the children of poor families into the educational system means to link a compensatory policy, directed to soften the immediate poverty in a short time, to the structural policies, directed to reduce poverty, stopping the vicious circle of its' reproduction in a long term. This link is education in the case of the Minimum Income, in Brazil. It also maintain tied a relationship with job and income opportunities. This means that the early participation of the children in the work market might stop their participation in the educational system in the present time. It also stops the possibility of the future generations to get out of poverty. Because of that, the Minimum Income functions as a monetary compensation in order to cover costs of income opportunities that could mean the infantile work for poor families. This compensation allows children go to school, representing a effort of articulation between social objectives of short time with social objectives of long term in order to smash the reproducer circle of the poverty.

It is important to make clear that, although this explicit relationship between Minimum Income, education and other basic social policies, the proposals and the experiences do not clarify how to create real conditions in order to make possible

this articulation. This intention demands that the basic social services became available to the whole population. This means to change the conjuncture in order to establish relationships between economical grow, employment generation and redistribution of income and wealth with social policy. To remove the children from the streets or from the precocious work and send them to school is not enough. It is necessary that all children have possibilities to go to good schools. This means that to articulate Minimum Income programs with basic social services demands to raise the standard and to democratize those programs and services in order to reach the whole population that require them.

c) Minimum Income as a Focalization Mechanism on Poor Population

Available studies about the experiences on Minimum Income in Brazil emphasize that those programs have reached a level of focalization on poor families superior to other social programs (URANI, 1999; SABÓIA, 1999; NEPP; 1996). However, this focalization seems to mean just concentration of the programs on the poor population, independently of how many people are reached in the same economical and social conditions. This programs seems, in this sense, to be more of a mechanism of fragmentation of poverty because, in a hand, poor families are reached but, at the same time a larger number of poor families are also pushed away from the program in the same municipality or State. This can be illustrated by the chart bellow:

Distribution of the Minimum Income Programs with Major and Minor Attendance

Programs	# of reached poor families
Programa Direito à Vida (Amazonas State)	55.387
Programa Pioneiro Mirim (Tocantins State)	29.221
Programa Bolsa –Escola (Brasília – DF)	22.663
Programa de Garantia de Renda Mínima (Presidente Bernardes – SP)	25
Programa Bolsa Escola para Educação (Mundo Novo – MS)	70
Programa Nossa Família (Santos – SP)	72

Source: Grupo Geração, 1998

Therefore, our preliminary hypothesis is that the majority of the Minimum Income programs, in Brazil, are still symbolic if we consider the number of poor families that are reached even when they fill out the criteria of the programs.

Furthermore, there are other criteria that exclude poor population, such as: no attendance of the poor families with children from 0 to 7 years of age by the majority of the other programs; introduction of some priority criteria that are more restrictive of the attendance to poor families; low financial capacity of the larger number of the municipalities to initiate and to enlarge the programs.

d) Minimum Income and Decentralization

The social movements placed the decentralization of social programs into the public agenda during the 80's as a fundamental condition for democratization and social control of those programs. Decentralization became a principle in the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988. However the same principle was incorporated by neoliberal ideology that penetrates in Brazil during the 90's without the same ethical and political principles that guided the social movement of the 80's. Decentralization means much more, to the neoliberalism, the possibility to transfer responsibilities of the federal government to the municipalities, in general, without transferring the necessary resources or even with transfer of State's responsibilities to society, under the justification of the partnership. The decentralization, any way, has become a consensus in the social policy field, being the articulation among the three levels of government (federal, State and local) and society. The decentralization has a foundation in the centralized orientation of the social programs, presented during the dictatorial period in Brazil, from 1964 to 1985; in the economical, social and cultural diversity that mark the large regional and interregional situation of the country, as well as in the necessity to approach the social programs and services towards the population in order to make possible their access, participation and social control. The municipal public sphere becomes an important space for the implementation of the social policies and programs.

The decentralization is very important when it places the possibility for active participation of the local population in the social programs as a condition for democratization of the access of the poor population and as a condition to reduce the fraud that has been present in the most of the social programs, in Brazil. However to think about the decentralization, in the Brazilian reality, it is necessary to point out the limits of this practice. Among them, there are the diversity of the almost 5 thousand municipalities in Brazil. They are, in its' majority, small towns, with a population inferior to 10 thousand of people, supported by federal resources; its limits regarding material and human resources, and lack of skill for management roles. We find, furthermore, a daily administrative practice marked by patrimonialist and clientelist behavior of the administrators, as well as it weakens popular organization, putting more limits to a real local power and possibilities for participation and social control on the municipal actions by the population.

The tendency of the implementation of the Minimum Income programs in a local level has showed its' concentration in the more developed States and regions (São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Paraná, Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina States),

with 85% of the proposals and experiences. This situation calls more attention when it is adopted as a criterion of admission to the programs the time of residence of the families in the municipality or States, in general, it ranges from 2 to 5 years. The conclusion is that this decentralization can make worse the regional differences, making the social situation worse, increasing the poor families, what is a contradiction with the speech of citizenship and to the objective directed to reduce the poverty as an orientation of the Minimum Income programs.

It is important the knowledge that the decentralization of social programs do not invalidate national policies. It seems as a general orientation that must guide the decentralized practices and as mechanism of economical support of those practices, mainly in the Brazilian case where the majorities of the municipalities do not have enough resources to support social programs, such as the Minimum Income. Furthermore, to reduce poverty and to improve education demands decentralized policies, but under the orientation and support of a national policy. This perception places a national Minimum Income policy as a central question on its' debate.

In order to clarify more the debate and the central questions of the Brazilian experiences on Minimum Income pointed out above, it necessary to consider what we call problematic questions about this subject.

2.4 Problematic Questions

The development of the technical and scientific studies and the experiences on Minimum Income in Brazil allow to draw some indications, even initial, about some aspects that can been considered as problematic ones. This aspects must be faced in order to move forward to the improvement of the debate and of those experiences. Such as:

- Ø The focal point of Minimum Income in Brazil – articulation between monetary transfer with the obligation of the children to go to school is a controversial aspect because the obligation is not enough to modify the educational situation of the future generations and, consequently, to change the poverty situation. This obligation demands the expansion, democratization and improvement of the public educational system. It is not enough for the children to be enrolled and going to school. The learning needs to be good and to be adjusted to the contemporary demands. This does not seems to be a clear and looked aspect for the majorities of the proposals and experiences;
- Ø Other problematic aspect that has been pointed out by the practitioners of the programs is the lack of articulation between Minimum Income and other social policies and programs. This aspect is identified when a beneficiary is guided to a complementary actions, such health care, nursery care, professional training, etc. Their necessities are not taken into consideration most of the time. This situation shows the necessity of the enlargement and democratization of the

basic social services as a condition to the success of the Minimum Income programs;

- Ø The criteria of admission of the family into the program is also a problematic aspect, mainly in regarding to two aspects: the income as a criterion of access is insufficient to measure poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon, even being an important indicator. To raise the real income in an economy where the majority of the workers are developing informal, autonomous and unstable jobs is difficult. The time of living in a city or State as a criterion of inclusion and exclusion is also controversial because it can leave out of the programs the poorest families who are recent immigrants;
- Ø The time of permanence and detachment of the benefited families in the programs has been pointed out as another problematic aspect. Each program fixes a time from one to two years of permanence of the benefited families into the program with the possibility to renew this time. The question is: which is the necessary time to generate desirable impacts on poor families who have insufficient income, lack of education, health problems and so on? The programs have not so far set reference in order to decide about this matter, just some of them are trying to make some adjustments. The only aspect that have been placed is the necessity to have transparence about the adopted criteria for admission and for detachment. Therefore, the experiences must be followed regarding this aspect in order to decide about the best path to follow in this situation;
- Ø The objectives and the scopes of the proposals and experiences of Minimum Income are so large that can be seen as a problematic point placing them very far way from the reality reached by the practices. The more indicated positive outcomes are: attendance of the children to a school and a health care unit, decreasing school evasion; improving school learning; decreasing malnutrition rates; removing the children from the streets; increasing the self-esteem and confidence mainly of the mothers of the future. However this outcomes have been identified during the permanence of the benefited family into the programs. The question is: are these outcomes durable even after the detachment of the families from the programs? Evaluation has also been showing low gain in the social and economic conditions of life of the benefited families like insertion of the adults in the job market. This can be attributed to the particular characteristic of the attended families because of their lack of education and professional qualification, but it is well known the serious problem in the job market in general, mainly because of the increasing of the unemployment rates during the last twenty years. The time is not enough yet to identify impacts regarding to two central objectives of the Minimum Income policy in Brazil: changing in the educational situation of the population and reduction of the poverty rates among them;
- Ø Another situation that seems to be considered as a problematic question is the maintenance of programs and its expansion and continuity. There is a historical practice, in Brazil, to initiate a social program and to stop it in the following administration in local, State and even in federal levels. There is also a kind of culture to create a social program and it remains in a symbolic sense, reaching

just a small number of people, working much more as a mechanism of fragmentation of the poverty with separation of poor people. As we saw before these aspects have been present in the Minimum Income programs;

- Ø Finally, the incapacity of the of financial support of The Minimum Income program by the majority of the Brazilian municipalities, as seen ahead, is a problematic aspect in the sense that creates problems for the maintenance of those programs. It is important to emphasis that the financial question demands two aspects: political intention to assume such programs and development of a national policy to give financial support by the federal government to the municipalities, according to a particular situation.

3 CONCLUSIONS

The experiences of Minimum Income in Brazil are new but they seem to start a new possibility in the field of the social policies. For that, it is necessary to maintain and to deepen the pre-conditions for access of the poor population to the basic social services as well as sharing policies of the income and wealth. This means to insert Minimum Income in the context of a coordinated policy to fight against poverty in national level. In this sense, should the Minimum Income be a local, regional, State or national policy? We have more doubt than certainty about this subject. The most important is to consider the magnitude of the informal work market, the spatial heterogeneity; the bureaucratic structures marked by the concentrated and personal administrative tradition; corporative and clientelist political relationship; a social protection system marked by the merit instead of the necessities of the population; a weak popular organization that can not press for a universal citizenship.

Furthermore, A Minimum Income policy must consider central questions drawn from the follow up of the experiences in course, such as:

- Ø necessity to fix the social minimums according to each reality, in order to allow objectivity in the determination of the amount of the benefit;
- Ø necessity of inclusion of the children from 0 to 7 years of age in the programs because this is the period of life pointed out as more important for development of the individuals;
- Ø maintenance of the family as a basic unit to be attended by the programs;
- Ø effective articulation between monetary transfer with other economic and social policies, like education, health and job. This means to expand and to democratize those policies and to carry out complementary actions to reach the autonomy of the families;
- Ø development of a set of quantitative and qualitative basic social services essential to human growing;
- Ø universalization of the programs to the target population identified by the focalization criteria and transparence to clarify why the families get in or get out from the programs;

- Ø monitoring of the development of the process of the programs, making needed corrections and evaluation of the outcomes of the programs during the permanence of the families in the programs.

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