

Experience Report

# Collective actions and solidarity networks in working with young people in the (post) pandemic context

## *Ações coletivas e redes de solidariedade no trabalho com os jovens no contexto (pós) pandêmico*

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### Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened a series of challenges already present in the daily lives of young people, such as job and income instability, relationships with school, and access to social rights. In this context, social occupational therapy gains even more relevance by connecting citizenship, human and social rights as central axes in working with groups and territories marked by vulnerability. This article presents an experience report developed by members of the Metuia Laboratory/UFPB with young people from a community association in the city of João Pessoa, PB, Brazil, both during the pandemic and in the post-pandemic period. Throughout this period, the construction of solidarity networks and collective mobilization were the focus of social occupational therapy actions with young people in this territory. The “Jovens Solidários” project emerged from the initiative of the young people in the community themselves, who organized themselves to meet emerging needs in the pandemic context. From the creation of a support network, they involved different partners and social movements, expanding the scope of the actions. Within this collective construction, anchored in social occupational therapy, the idea of the “viable unprecedented” is strengthened: solidarity becomes a driver of social transformation and a possible path to reinvent other presents and futures.

**Keywords:** Occupational Therapy, Citizenship, Adolescent, Solidarity.

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## **Resumo**

A pandemia da COVID-19 agravou uma série de desafios já presentes no dia a dia dos jovens, como a instabilidade no trabalho e na renda, a relação com a escola e o acesso a direitos sociais. Nesse contexto, a terapia ocupacional social ganha ainda mais relevância ao conectar cidadania, direitos humanos e sociais como eixos centrais no trabalho com grupos e territórios marcados pela vulnerabilidade. Este artigo traz um relato de experiência desenvolvido por membros do Laboratório Metuia/UFPB junto a jovens de uma associação comunitária na cidade de João Pessoa, PB, Brasil, tanto durante a pandemia quanto no período pós-pandêmico. Ao longo desse período, a construção de redes de solidariedade e a mobilização coletiva foram o foco das ações em terapia ocupacional social com os jovens desse território. O projeto “Jovens Solidários” surgiu a partir da iniciativa dos próprios jovens da comunidade, que se organizaram para atender a necessidades emergentes do contexto pandêmico. A partir da criação de uma rede de apoio, envolveram diferentes parceiros e movimentos sociais, ampliando o alcance das ações. Dentro dessa construção coletiva, ancorada na terapia ocupacional social, a ideia do “inédito viável” se fortalece: a solidariedade se torna um motor de transformação social e um caminho possível para reinventar outros presentes e futuros.

**Palavras-chave:** Terapia Ocupacional, Cidadania, Juventude, Solidariedade.

## **Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light and intensified social issues affecting the lives of Brazilian youth, especially those from low-income backgrounds and residents of favelas and urban peripheries, areas where the impacts of the pandemic continue to resonate today. The effects of the crisis went beyond health and hospital-related concerns, also abruptly impacting employment and income conditions, young people's relationship with formal education, and their access to social rights. In a “post-pandemic” context marked by persistent deep inequalities, we see rising unemployment, decreased purchasing power, and greater difficulty in accessing decent housing and essential services, highlighting the fragility of Brazil's social protection system (Araújo et al., 2021).

During the Brazilian presidential term from 2019 to 2022, the management of the crisis was marked by the adoption of a *necropolitical approach* (Mbembe, 2018, p. 17), defined by decisions over “who lives and who dies”. This scenario was sustained through the systematic violation of human, social, political, and environmental rights, deepening inequalities and reinforcing discriminatory structures against various marginalized groups. The government encouraged deforestation and the devastation of biomes, facilitated the expropriation of Indigenous and quilombola lands, and allowed the invasion of these territories, resulting in the genocide of their peoples. In favelas and peripheries, the politics of death manifested in the extermination of poor Black youth.

Despite being a scenario marked by oppression, violence, and attacks on the lives of these populations, it was from these places and territories that possible experiences of agency and resistance emerged to confront the pandemic, particularly through collective solidarity actions led mainly by social movements to minimally ensure what should have been the State's responsibility: the survival of the population.

Even after the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the end of the public health emergency of international concern in May 2023 (Organização Mundial da Saúde, 2023), Brazilian social issues remain numerous and complex, reflecting the deep impacts that the health crisis intensified in society, such as unemployment and precarious work, social inequality, access to and retention in educational institutions, access to healthcare and social assistance, and domestic and gender-based violence, among others.

Given the importance of this debate to social occupational therapy, which works with groups in situations of vulnerability based on the principles of citizenship and human and social rights, it is essential to discuss practices that promote the active participation of individuals in the construction and maintenance of their rights and in the fight against inequality (Lopes & Malfitano, 2023). In this context, between 2020 and 2022, a university extension initiative was developed in a community association in the city of João Pessoa/PB, aiming to strengthen support networks and foster collective strategies for resistance and social transformation.

The initiative involved the collaboration of two occupational therapy professors and ten students, along with three social work students from the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), in partnership with around 15 local community youth. Weekly meetings were held online on Friday afternoons and aimed to create spaces for dialogue and support, promoting activities that addressed topics such as social rights, citizenship, and personal development, with the goal of empowering youth to engage with and respond to their realities.

Since 2018, the extension project developed by the Metuia Laboratory/UFPB, entitled "Timbó em Movimento: espaço público, educação e ação coletiva - Timbó in Movement: public space, education, and collective action", has promoted activities with youth from a local community association (Figure 1). This project is grounded in the theoretical-methodological framework of social occupational therapy, using its resources and social technologies (Lopes et al., 2014). It focuses on reflecting on ways of life and urban daily experiences, valuing public spaces such as streets and squares to discuss citizenship, coexistence, and collective action (Arendt, 2007). Youth are encouraged to actively participate in building a more democratic and participatory community, fostering support networks and solidarity.

This account aims to share and reflect on part of the journey taken by this group in helping organize and mobilize youth in the face of the issues worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. During the period of social distancing, strategies of dialogue and remote actions were adopted to maintain closeness with the daily lives and realities of these youth, even from a distance. As vaccination progressed and in-person activities gradually resumed, it became possible to develop initiatives that culminated in the creation of more robust and diverse projects, in partnership with community youth who took on an active role in creating and implementing the initiatives.



**Figure 1.** Comunidade do Timbó.

## **Youth, Social Movements, and Solidarity**

In social occupational therapy, whose practices address everyday life problems deeply interconnected with persistent precariousness or the lack of social conditions that provide a dignified existence, the pandemic revealed, and the post-pandemic continues to reveal, aspects that call for action-reflection-action “[...] articulating, technically and politically, citizenship, universalization of rights, social policies, radicalization of democracy [...]” (Lopes, 2016, p. 46), in favor of expanding access to social rights and goods that achieve and make possible the search for social justice (Malfitano et al., 2020).

The concepts of citizenship and identity formation are essential in the interpretation and development of intervention projects in occupational therapy. By placing citizenship at the center of its practice, social occupational therapy seeks theoretical references and develops methodologies that confront the paradoxes of a deeply unequal society (Barros, 2004), guiding interventions and creating tools to promote a more just society.

According to Santos (2012), citizenship results from learning processes that shape people’s subjectivities and identities, creating cultural ties. Citizenship is a continuous struggle, never fully complete, requiring successive generations to intervene in the legal system to guarantee rights through legal and institutional mechanisms. However, Santos warns that laws alone do not ensure citizenship; it must be claimed, which requires a critical reading of the world and political and collective participation.

In this context, it is essential to problematize the social impacts of the pandemic on the professional practice of social occupational therapy and to emphasize the importance

of inventiveness in the actions developed. The experiences lived during COVID-19 have exposed in a forceful manner the vulnerabilities faced by young people and the need for innovative strategies to deal with these realities. We therefore take on the challenge of maintaining the premise that “the social occupational therapist works based on the interpretation of demand that is simultaneously individual and collective” (Barros, 2004, p. 93), which implies an approach that also considers territorial and community specificities.

The structural difficulties of collective life in large cities, especially in marginalized territories – favelas, communities, and peripheries – led various segments of society to seek alternatives through the creation of active solidarity networks. These were led primarily by youth from cultural collectives, popular movements, Black movements, neighborhood associations, anti-fascist football fan groups, and groups of friends and families who organized to exercise horizontal solidarity – based on the notion of resistance and collectivity as a fundamental axis for transformation and social justice (Cardoso et al., 2021).

Hannah Arendt (2011) identifies solidarity as a complex and multifaceted concept within the context of politics and collective action. For Arendt, solidarity is not limited to empathy or passive compassion, but is essentially a form of political action that arises when individuals come together around a common goal, especially in times of crisis or oppression. She emphasizes that political solidarity is not necessarily based on shared identities or personal interests, but on the ability of individuals to act together, take responsibility for one another, and engage in collective actions aimed at justice and emancipation.

Solidarity, more than just an emergency response, constitutes a political practice of collective emancipation. By engaging in solidarity, youth build networks that confront power structures and point toward a society that values collective construction and social justice, breaking away from the individualism promoted by neoliberalism.

Throughout history, youth have played a fundamental role as protagonists of major social transformations and struggles for social justice, both in Brazil and globally. Young people across the world have joined together in collective actions, social movements, and solidarity networks to resist oppression, inequality, and injustice. Their mobilizations have demanded democratic processes, access to social rights, and quality education. Additionally, they have fought against school closures and opposed inequalities stemming from gender, race, and sexuality-based oppression (Scherer-Warren, 2008).

Briefly recalling some significant movements since the beginning of the pandemic in Brazil, the solidarity campaign “*Periferia Viva*”, organized by Levante Popular da Juventude in partnership with other social movements<sup>1</sup>, stood out nationally.

This initiative was significant because it facilitated a connection between agroecological food from agrarian reform efforts and the severe food insecurity faced by residents of peripheral urban areas (Cardoso et al., 2021).

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Popular Youth Uprising, the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST), the Small Farmers' Movement (MPA), the Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB), the Workers' Movement for Rights (MTD) and the Movement for Popular Sovereignty in Mining (MAM) took part.

In addition, various grassroots solidarity efforts emerged locally in the peripheries, such as “Nós por Nós” (“Us for Us”), which mobilized over five thousand favelas and involved around one hundred thousand people, including activists, community leaders, and volunteers. This initiative had a considerable impact not only on the collection and distribution of food but also in combating *fake news* that circulated during and about the pandemic.

In contrast to the approach adopted by large corporations and business groups who often raised the banner of charity through a model similar to what Paulo Freire described as “banking education” – where knowledge is passively deposited into individuals –, social movements and youth prioritized the construction of networks. In these networks, participants were active agents who gave and received, considering cultural realities and mutual exchanges. This fostered the development of new knowledge grounded in resistance, popular wisdom, and collectivity (Cardoso et al., 2021).

Social movements offer youth a space and opportunity to build a collective identity that goes beyond individual experiences. By engaging in solidarity networks, these young people not only recognize themselves as citizens but also as protagonists in the struggle for rights, re-signifying their role in society and reinforcing the notion of participatory citizenship.

In this context, the solidarity experienced by youth and social movements is deeply connected to the territories in which they live and act. It is within these concrete spaces that support networks are formed and resistance to imposed inequalities takes shape. Thus, the territory, according to Santos (2005), has been and must continue to be the space where solidarity takes place.

Regardless of its size, it is in this space that civil society’s resistance is located, essential for learning how to challenge the State and demand its responsibilities to the people. Santos (2005, p. 251) emphasizes that the territory is “the only possibility for resistance against the world’s perverse processes, given the real and effective possibility of communication, and therefore of the exchange of information, and thus of political construction”.

Responses to the pandemic varied among states and cities, but none were able to conceal the lack of foresight and capacity among officials to address emergencies that were, and continue to be, clearly signaled. As Santos (2005) notes, it was – and will continue being – necessary to imagine solutions grounded in participatory democracy, focusing on neighborhoods and communities. Moreover, it is essential to promote education that prioritizes solidarity and cooperation rather than emphasizing entrepreneurship and competitiveness at all costs.

Freire (1996) and Santos (2000) underscore the importance of political participation in the construction of social, political, and cultural practices. For such participation to be effective, individuals must organize collectively and strengthen their political capacities. Both authors stress the need for collective empowerment that enables people to recognize and understand the subtle forms of domination exercised by hegemonic groups within the dominant system, who “manipulate public opinion through advertising” (Santos, 2000, p. 48). And for this to happen, action must be rooted in the territory.

To achieve this, thinking about territorial-community action involves moving between the collective and the individual/singular, and vice versa. The centrality of the

territory in the search for new horizons of resistance reveals itself as an essential space for the construction of utopias, with political and collective action mediating the relationship between the world, society, and the individual. The territory thus becomes indispensable for understanding the functioning of contemporary life (Santos, 1988). In the “post-pandemic” era, the territory has intensified as an arena of conflict, where hegemonic actions of neoliberal financial capital confront movements capable of weaving cooperation networks and enriching the social fabric of specific communities.

In light of this scenario, social occupational therapy practices gain renewed importance, particularly in minimizing, as much as possible, the daily life impacts experienced by people in vulnerable situations. As Malfitano et al. (2020, p. 4) assert, “[...] occupational therapy work within people’s daily lives only becomes concrete through the struggle for a possible life for all, in all the strengths and differences that give it meaning and reduce inequalities.” In this way, social occupational therapy contributes to resistance movements, autonomy, citizenship, and the guarantee of rights for individuals facing social vulnerability, by fostering spaces of solidarity and collective action.

### **Solidarity Youth and the “Meu Timbó” Communication Network**

The “Solidarity Youth” project was created by youth from the Timbó community, high school students in their second and third years in 2020. At the beginning of the pandemic, in April of that year, the youth quickly noticed the growing food insecurity affecting their families, friends, and neighbors. Motivated by requests for help, they mobilized efforts to build a support network, involving partners and social movements, such as teachers, members of the student council, the Levante Popular da Juventude (People’s Youth Uprising Movement), two civil society organizations, and an extension project from the Metuia Laboratory at UFPB. This coordination was essential for structuring an effective response to the emerging needs, seeking the “untested feasible” (inérito viável) (Freire, 2014), with solidarity as the driving force for social transformation.

Through mobilizations and organizing led by the youth, support networks were established, mainly via *Instagram* and *WhatsApp*, soliciting donations of food or money through an online crowdfunding platform (*Vakinha Online*). To support this process, one of the social technologies adopted by the extension project team was the Articulation of Resources in the Social Field (Lopes et al., 2014). This approach facilitated dialogue and partnerships with organizations such as the Central Única das Favelas (CUFA), the Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT), the Landless Workers’ Movement (MST), the Municipal Council for Children and Adolescents (CMDCA), as well as local bakeries and poultry farms.

The proposal involved a variety of actions, both individual and collective, encompassing groups, social movements, and political and management institutions. The central strategy was to coordinate practices at different levels of care, focusing on common goals and maximizing the use of available resources, which ranged from financial and material to relational and emotional.

One of the key activities of the “Solidarity Youth” project was the delivery of food baskets to the community, following a door-to-door registration effort (Figure 2). This



method allowed for a detailed survey of the families' situations – not just financially, but holistically – enabling the prioritization of those facing the most critical conditions, such as single mothers, elderly people, and households with a higher number of children.

The project reached over 200 families whose social vulnerability had worsened during the pandemic. Most of these families were headed by informal workers, many of whom were women and single mothers. With social distancing guidelines and the closure of various institutions, many of these individuals were unable to secure income, further deteriorating their living conditions.



**Figure 2.** Family registration carried out by the Timbó community.

Due to the impossibility of in-person engagement during the pandemic, the extension project, over approximately a year, worked in partnership with community youth to produce a series of printed informational bulletins. These materials were delivered along with the basic food baskets and pasted in strategic locations around the community, in the form of posters (Figure 3) (*lambe-lambe*)<sup>2</sup>.

The informational materials produced by the project addressed essential precautions to prevent coronavirus infection. The guidelines followed those issued by the WHO: proper use of masks, the importance of hand hygiene, preventive measures, and the identification of the main symptoms of COVID-19. In addition to providing health information, the project also sought to promote reading and knowledge among children by distributing children's books.

Another initiative was the production of informational videos that explained how the Basic Health Unit (UBS) and other services available in the community operated.

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<sup>2</sup> Posters pasted on walls or posts containing critical messages or promoting creations and art by artists in public spaces (Freitas, 2019).



These videos were designed to facilitate residents' understanding of and access to health services. In addition, the youth conducted live broadcasts, organized and edited by the extension project team, where they discussed everyday topics. These live streams allowed young people to share their experiences and reflections with the community they are part of, while also being open to the general public.



**Figure 3.** Posters pasted throughout the community.

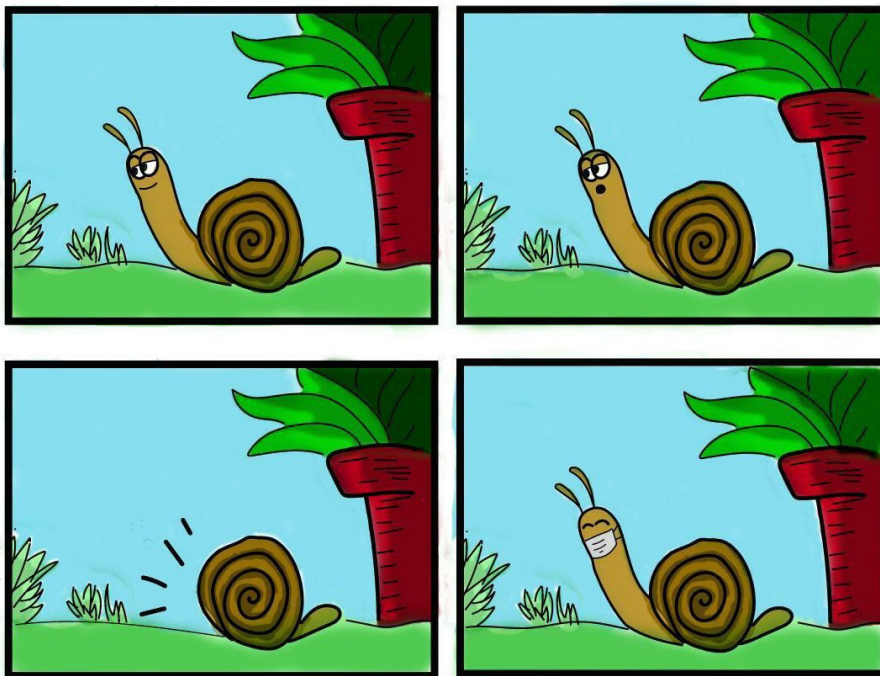
Over the course of this initial stage, which lasted approximately five months and involved the distribution of basic-needs baskets, including food, cleaning supplies, and personal hygiene products, young people from the community began requesting help from the extension project team to study and understand transversal issues that arose during meetings and interactions. While families picked up their baskets at the school, where the entire operation was based, the youth began what they called “political education”.

The topics addressed during these so-called political education sessions were selected by the youth themselves and, each week, featured a guest teacher, either from the school or a university, who facilitated what essentially became debates. The chosen subjects reflected urgent and relevant issues in the lives of the youth and their community, including: social inequality and the pandemic; mental health and the pandemic; fascism and democracy; and the meanings of political positions such as right, left, center, and “centrão”.

In an effort to document and share the knowledge, reflections, and debates from the political education sessions, the “*Rede de Comunicação Meu Timbó (Meu Timbó Communication Network)*” was created. This initiative started with a website, which became a key platform for the dissemination of information and the promotion of an open space for expression and dialogue.

Through this website, young people shared their experiences and learnings with other youth from their community and beyond, contributing to stronger ties between the extension project team and the youth, as well as among the youth themselves and the wider community. The network initially expanded virtually, allowing information to reach a broader audience, encouraging the exchange of ideas, and helping build a more connected community.

Approximately 50 posts were published on the Communication Network, showcasing artistic and cultural expressions such as poetry, song lyrics, dance videos, drawings, illustrations, GIFs, and photographs. Each contribution depicted the reality and social issues surrounding the lives of the youth, allowing them to express their worldviews and personal experiences in a unique way (Figure 4). Topics included challenges brought on by the pandemic, social inequality, politics, racism, sexism, violence, and other pressing social issues in Brazil.



**Figure 4.** Content produced for the “*Rede de Comunicação Meu Timbó (Meu Timbó Communication Network)*” website).

These productions took place virtually, involving the active participation of both the youth and the extension project team. The creative process unfolded in various formats – individually, in pairs, or in groups – and was based on the social technology of *Singular*

and *Territorial Follow-ups* (Lopes et al., 2014). Even in a remote setting, this approach made it possible to identify and explore the unique traits, demands, and needs of each young person, considering their ways of life and connection to their territory.

Though conducted online, this approach facilitated communication and proved to be an effective tool to create a space where youth could share their stories, experiences, aspirations, and projects. The flexibility in format and schedule, along with extended interaction time, was especially important for those who worked, ensuring everyone could participate. Thus, a meaningful and viable environment for expression was created, enabling connections and strengthening relationships between the youth and the project team.

A deeper understanding of the youth allowed for closer relationships, which were essential to guiding subsequent practices in social occupational therapy. The actions developed began to interconnect macro- and micro-social aspects, following the approach of Lopes et al. (2014), which emphasizes the importance of acting on multiple levels and integrating the individual into the collective. As a result, interactions between the team and the youth became more meaningful, with stronger bonds that contributed to forming a cohesive and motivated group. This growing engagement with the website and the content produced reflected a greater sense of belonging, identity, and collaboration among the youth.

One example of this engagement was the creation of four *podcast episodes*, which required more investment in study, reading, organization, and idea-sharing. The podcasts served as a way to explore topics chosen by the youth themselves and broaden the project's reach, allowing the content to connect with a wider audience. The audio format encouraged attentive listening and reflection, contributing to deeper discussions.

The *first podcast episode* explored the history of the Timbó community, examining its formation, organization, challenges, and the collective mobilizations that have shaped its trajectory. The second episode focused on the social inequalities that intensified during the pandemic, reflecting on the widely used phrase at the time, “we’re all in the same boat,” and highlighting how this statement does not apply to everyone's lived reality. The third episode, recorded during the 2020 municipal elections, aimed to clarify key aspects of Brazil's electoral process, including the roles of the executive and legislative branches, the construction of democracy, and the importance of voting and social participation.

The final episode was created in collaboration with the high school community where the youth studied. It featured the acting principal, a philosophy teacher, a student, a mother, and a community leader. Together, they discussed the possibility of building a school based on an antiracist, intercultural, and decolonial pedagogy (Oliveira & Candau, 2010). This conversation reflects the perspective and practice of social occupational therapy, which positions itself as a political and ideological force in the fight against oppression (Farias & Lopes, 2022).

The partnership with the youth was fundamental in building the *website*, not only to strengthen relationships with them but also to reach and connect with other young people through what we called “virtual active outreach,” especially via *Instagram*. This strategy allowed us to expand our access to the community's youth. We began inviting them to contribute content for the site, and in turn, they invited their friends to share

poems, texts, videos, drawings, and other artistic expressions, creating an increasingly extensive and cohesive virtual network.

At a time when social interaction and togetherness were drastically disrupted by social distancing guidelines, we chose to discuss the technical action of social occupational therapy through a space that promotes solidarity as a political, critical, and conscious stance. This approach not only aims to influence social order but also opens possibilities to transform it (Pereira et al., 2020). As Paulo Freire states in dialogue with Walter Oliveira (Freire & Oliveira, 2014), solidarity is the antithesis of individualism; it is an essential force for social cohesion, facilitating community functioning and life in society. Solidarity must therefore be intrinsically linked to critical and political awareness, fostering deeper and more transformative community engagement.

The project was guided by the aim of promoting and strengthening existing social and community networks of solidarity. In the case of the Timbó community, this dynamic has been led by youth who develop projects and initiatives aimed at acting collectively and in coordination in response to local needs and shared interests. The goal is to transform conditions of injustice and social inequality into drivers for community self-care. The partnerships formed throughout this process continued to strengthen and remain active to this day, resulting in the creation of other collective, collaborative, supportive, and critical projects, built by community members engaged in strengthening their own territory.

Thus, the youth of the Timbó community and association played an essential role as partners in this work, actively contributing to the development of strategies and actions aimed at empowering individuals, especially young people, in relation to the needs and potentials of their community. Through this collaboration, collective approaches were created to solve problems and generate responses, or, at least, to better understand the shared challenges of local youth's daily lives. This partnership dynamic allowed for the creation of a safe and welcoming space for dialogue, where young people's voices and experiences were valued and considered in the action process.

Through community actions that created support networks and strengthened collective care practices, young people from the outskirts of cities challenged state abandonment during the pandemic while also denouncing the state's omission. These networks not only filled emergency gaps, but also helped develop new leadership and create an imaginary of resistance that goes beyond the pandemic and can serve as inspiration for other groups.

The State's failure to act during the pandemic highlighted the precariousness of social policies, and solidarity networks acted as immediate and autonomous responses. These actions demonstrate the urgency of reassessing the State's role and fostering policies that recognize and support community efforts, thus promoting an alliance between the State and civil society to guarantee basic rights.

The joint work facilitated the identification of urgent issues to be addressed by the community and encouraged the creation of actions that sought to meet its specific demands. The initiatives that emerged from this collaboration reflected the realities experienced by young people and were fundamental to strengthening solidarity and a sense of belonging, promoting greater integration among the different subgroups of the community. This process enabled the emergence of solidarity, a sense of community, creativity, resilience, and resistance to current and future crises.

## **Final Considerations**

The local and specific initiatives led by Timbó youth show us possible paths for reflection-action in social occupational therapy. These experiences expand the possibilities for action with social movements and civil society organizations, strengthening solidarity networks and encouraging the social participation of youth in collective care movements. By incorporating the experiences and demands of youth into occupational therapy practices, we not only respond to the immediate needs of the community, but also contribute to the construction of a society that moves towards social justice.

In addition to the essential insertion of occupational therapy in public and social policies (Bezerra & Trindade, 2013), it is essential to deepen the articulation and dialogue with social movements and organized groups, which are fertile ground for activism and significant collective mobilization. This interaction strengthens, among young people, a sense of belonging to that community, an expanded critical awareness and a more solid understanding of their rights. Through their individual and collective trajectories, these young people develop advocacy skills and concrete strategies to face the daily challenges of their communities.

The pandemic has exposed extreme vulnerabilities, awakening a feeling of collective helplessness and an imminent risk of worsening social inequalities. However, this same experience has also reinforced the importance of solidarity actions, even when permeated by conflicts and challenges. In this context, we can see the contradiction between the growing organization of civil society and the retreat of the State's role in these spaces, especially in a neoliberal scenario in which the public authorities benefit from community initiatives to address structural deficiencies. In view of this, it is essential that social movements and collective organizations not only offer direct support to vulnerable populations, but also pressure the State to assume its responsibilities through social policies that meet collective needs.

Working with social movements and organized groups is essential to fostering the autonomy and political mobilization of young people. Critical awareness and collective organization are essential tools for these young people to not only understand the mechanisms of domination that surround them, but also to find ways to intervene in reality and transform their living conditions – a process that occurs primarily collectively. In this sense, social occupational therapy plays a central role, working with young people and strengthening these resistance networks.

Inspired by Freire's concept of “viable unprecedented” (Freire, 2014), we believe that social occupational therapy, in partnership with young people, can contribute to building a more equitable and supportive future. To this end, it is essential that the technical skills of the occupational therapist are articulated with solidarity networks and social movements, strengthening support initiatives in the post-pandemic context and creating creative solutions to everyday challenges. The great challenge lies in expanding the insurgencies that emerge from territories and communities, ensuring that these networks remain active and capable of charting collective paths to confront inequalities that still surround us and promote significant social transformations.

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