

## Quilombola education and sustainable development in perspective in the state of Amapá<sup>1</sup>

*Educação quilombola e desenvolvimento sustentável em perspectiva no estado do Amapá*

*Educación quilombola y desarrollo sustentable en perspectiva en el estado de Amapá*

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**Abstract:** This article aims to analyze the importance of the Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project, developed by the Daniel de Carvalho State Quilombola School, in light of Law No. 10.639/2003, and its interface with sustainable development. The problem investigated consists of verifying whether the project is capable of minimizing the impacts of the advance of the grain agricultural frontier on the local black identity. The research, with a qualitative approach, uses oral history (through informal conversations) and the methods of bibliographic research and documentary analysis. It is concluded that the project presents a connection with sustainable development by seeking to strengthen cultural identity, focusing on the future generation and the preservation of nature.

**Keywords:** Quilombola Education; Sustainable Development – Amapá; Cultural Identity; Basic Education - Law No. 10,639/2003; Educating Project.

**Resumo:** O presente artigo tem como objetivo analisar a importância do Projeto Educar para a Igualdade – Quilombo Minha Identidade, desenvolvido pela Escola Quilombola Estadual Daniel de Carvalho, à luz da Lei nº 10.639/2003, e sua interface com o desenvolvimento sustentável. A problemática investigada consiste em verificar se o projeto é capaz de minimizar os impactos do avanço da fronteira agrícola de grãos sobre a identidade negra local. A pesquisa, de abordagem qualitativa, utiliza a história oral (por meio de conversas informais) e os métodos de pesquisa bibliográfica e análise documental. Conclui-se que o projeto apresenta conexão com o desenvolvimento sustentável ao buscar fortalecer a identidade cultural, com foco na geração futura e na preservação da natureza.

**Palavras-chave:** educação quilombola; desenvolvimento sustentável – Amapá; identidade cultural; educação básica - Lei nº 10.639/2003; Projeto Educar.

**Resumen:** El presente artículo tiene por objetivo analizar la importancia del Proyecto Educar para la Igualdad- Quilombo, Mi Identidad, es un programa en desarrollo por la escuela Quilombola Daniel de Carvalho, a la luz de la Ley nº 10.639/2003, y su interface con el desarrollo sustentable. La problemática investigada consiste en verificar si el proyecto es capaz de minimizar los impactos de avance de la frontera agrícola de grano sobre la identidad negra local. La pesquisa, de carácter cualitativo, utiliza la historia oral por medio de conversas informales, métodos de pesquisa bibliográfica y analisis documental. Concluye se, el proyecto

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presenta conexão com el desarrollo sustentable, visando fortalecer la identidad cultural, com foco em las generaciones futuras y em la preservación de la naturaleza.

**Palabras clave:** Educación Quilombola; Desarrollo Sustentable – Amapá; Identidad cultural; Educación Básica - Ley nº 10.639/2003; Proyecto Educar.

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## Introduction

The state of Amapá is located in the North region, in the Brazilian Amazon, and is made up of 16 municipalities. In 10 of them, there are quilombola communities: Macapá, Calçoene, Ferreira Gomes, Itaubal, Laranjal do Jari, Mazagão, Oiapoque, Santana, Tartarugalzinho and Vitória do Jari.

According to the results of the 2022 Demographic Census, the quilombola population residing in Brazil is 1,327,802 people, corresponding to 0.65% of the national population. In the North region, there are 166,069 quilombolas, and, in Amapá, the quilombola population is 12,524 people, representing 1.71% of the state's 733,508 inhabitants. Amapá is, therefore, the second unit of the Federation with the largest number of quilombolas (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2023).

The state has 31 quilombola communities with different land statuses: four titled communities; one community with a decree; three with a Technical Identification and Delimitation Report (TIDR); one with a TIDR and a technical study; and 23 with a technical study (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2023). Despite this, there is no quilombola school in any of the 31 quilombola communities in the state.

According to Fiabani (2005, p. 390), "The contemporary quilombo [...] consists of groups that have developed daily practices of resistance in maintaining and reproducing their characteristic ways of life and in consolidating their own territory."

Decree No. 4,887 of November 20, 2003, in its art. 2, establishes that

For the purposes of this Decree, remnants of quilombo communities are considered to be ethnic-racial groups, according to self-attribution criteria, with their own historical trajectory, endowed with specific territorial relations, with a presumption of black ancestry related to resistance to the historical oppression suffered (Brazil, 2003b).

In this regard, the Statute of Racial Equality, established by Law No. 12,288 of July 20, 2010, in Art. 31, reaffirms the State's duty to issue definitive land titles for quilombo community remnants occupying their lands (Brazil, 2021). Furthermore, in Art. 32, the statute assigns the responsibility to the Federal Executive Branch to develop specific public policies for the sustainable development of these communities, respecting their environmental protection traditions.

In light of this, the present article seeks to understand the importance of the pedagogical experience of the Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project (Amapá, 2023), as well as its impact on strengthening the teaching-learning process and the cultural identity of the Quilombo Santo Antônio da Pedreira, considering the advance of the agricultural frontier. This advance represents, in the state of Amapá, the expansion of the grain agribusiness over historically occupied territories.

The interest in the topic of this article stems from the author's personal experience, as a descendant of a traditional black territory, the Carmo do Macacoari Village, in the municipality of Itaubal, in Amapá. In addition, her professional background as a teacher and her work in the Black women's movement in Amapá allowed her to realize that successful projects in quilombola schools in Amapá are still restricted to the local context. It is also important to note the silent expansion of the grain agribusiness in the state, especially on the AP-070 highway, where the state quilombola schools (SQS) José Bonifácio, Nestor Barbosa da Silva, Pedro Alcântara Chaves Lopes and Daniel de Carvalho are located.

In this context, the present study poses the following guiding question: Can the Educating for Equality – Quilombo My Identity Project minimize the impacts of the expansion of the grain agricultural frontier on the local Black identity?

We believe that this study will contribute to quilombola education in Amapá, promoting the debate on the challenges of implementing Law No. 10,639 of January 9, 2003, and other specific educational legislations to education in quilombola territories of the Amapá Amazon, whose lands are being impacted by the expansion of the soybean agribusiness.

The theoretical basis of this study is supported by Castro (1998, 2012), Custódio (2023), Gomes (2015), Lobato (2009), Malcher (2008), Moreira and Candau (2011), Porto-Gonçalves (2008), Salles (1971) and Santos (2019), among others.

The methodology adopted was oral history (informal conversation with a guiding script), along with bibliographic research and documentary analysis. According to Meihy and Holanda (2015, p. 14), “Oral History is a part of the set of oral sources, and its most well-known manifestation is the interview”. This is a qualitative research approach; according to

Minayo (2001, p. 22), “the qualitative research addresses very particular questions”. In the social sciences, it focuses on what cannot be quantified.

The Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project began to be developed in 2023, so there are no published works on it yet. Thus, the proposed methodology sought to hear from people involved in its conception and execution, such as the school administration (which could not be interviewed due to scheduling conflicts) and two teachers participating in the project. These interviews took place in June 2024, at locations previously arranged by the research interlocutors. The information was obtained through the following guiding script.

Table 1 – Guiding Script

<p>1) In a few words, tell us about yourself:</p> <p>a) What’s your full name, your education background and your role at SQS Daniel de Carvalho?</p> <p>b) How long have you been at school? Are you from the community or not?</p>
<p>2) Regarding the Educating for Equality – Quilombo My Identity Project:</p> <p>a) Do you consider this project a successful experience? If so, why?</p> <p>b) Do you believe it is aligned with sustainable development? If so, in what aspects?</p>
<p>3) Regarding the sustainable education:</p> <p>a) What does sustainable education mean to you?</p> <p>b) Does the Educating for Equality – Quilombo My Identity Project address the impact of grain agribusiness on local identity?</p>
<p>4) Regarding the institutional support:</p> <p>a) How can the Amapá State Department of Education's management and the Ethnic-Racial Center support quilombola educational projects focused on sustainable development, developed by schools?</p>

Source: prepared by the authors.

The conversations with the two teachers were recorded on a digital voice recorder and transcribed. The information from this oral document is in the “Successful projects and their interface with sustainable development” section of this article. The present study aims to analyze the importance of the Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project, developed by SQS Daniel de Carvalho, based on Law No. 10.639/2003, and its interface with sustainable development. In addition, we seek to highlight the positive results in terms of strengthening the local quilombola identity through the execution of the project, as well as to give visibility to a successful initiative developed by a quilombola school in the Amazon region of Amapá.

This study is structured in three sections: “Brief history of the Black presence in Amapá”, “Successful projects and their interface with sustainable development” and “Dialogue with the State on the advances and challenges of quilombola education in Amapá”.

## Brief history of the Black presence in Amapá

For a long time, Brazilian historiography erased the presence of enslaved African people from Amazonian themes, denying them the right to recognition of their ethnic composition and cultural contribution to the Amazon. In response to this ethnic and cultural silencing, scholars examined official documents from the colonial period in Brazil and found evidence of Black enslaved labor in the Portuguese Amazon as early as the 17th century.

According to Cambraia and Lobato (2013), Amazonian historiography highlights that free and enslaved Indigenous people were the main labor force in the colonial Amazon from the 16th century to the mid-18th century. However, research indicates that during this period, African labor also made a significant contribution to the region. In 1749, there was already an “important mocambo on the Anauerapucuo River, whose Black inhabitants moved further north when discovered by expeditions rescuing Indigenous people,” and by 1788, there were 750 African slaves in Macapá (Salles, 1971, p. 221).

Researchers Vergolino-Henry and Figueiredo (1990), upon analyzing the public archives of the state of Pará, confirmed the presence of Black people in Amapá from 1775 to 1779 for the use of enslaved labor. In documents related to the construction of the Fortaleza de São José de Macapá, the authors identified records of Black and Indigenous labor in the construction of military fortifications, such as the construction of this fortress in 1767.

Marin (1999) *apud* Gomes (2015) states that the construction of the São de Macapá Fortress lasted 10 years (1764-1773). During this period, slave owners were forced to make their slaves available for the fortification and construction of the fort. In 1765, over an 11-month period, the workforce at the fortress construction sites consisted of 2,598 Indigenous people and 2,394 enslaved Black people.

Vergolino-Henry and Figueiredo (1990) also confirmed the presence of black people in farm and agricultural work, especially in rice plantations, as well as in urban construction (such as town halls and public jails), in sawmills, as cart drivers, in pastoral activities and in shipyards (cutting wood and firewood and making canoes).

The process of quilombization during the colonial period acquired, over time, new meanings related to the way of quilombizing, due to the differences, but with similar meanings, and due to the locations in economic frontier lands of occupation, protected by the geography of the region (Gomes, 2015). These elements were essential to guarantee the mobility and resistance of the quilombos that spread throughout Brazil.

In the Amazon regions, extractive quilombos proliferated, which constantly moved, occupying territories and using water resources, hunting, and fishing, including in Amapá. In

1779, expeditions against mocambos found traces of dismantled manioc plantations, without the presence of quilombolas. In addition, there were mercantile quilombos, which carried out exchanges with indigenous people and regattons (Gomes, 2015).

According to Souza (2019), to understand the African presence in the Amazon, it is necessary to understand the diverse contexts of struggle in which these individuals were, and continue to be, able to adapt, developing, whenever possible, their own logics of resistance, whether in the creation of quilombos or mocambos.

Clóvis Moura (2021) defines the quilombo as a permanent node of resistance to the slave system, grounded in its social role of confronting slavery and fostering the creation of an alternative society of marginalized free individuals, regardless of their color.

### **Data on the recognition of quilombola communities in Amapá**

The event known as the "Encontro de Tambores" (Drumming Encounter), in 2023, completed its 28th edition. Held during Black Consciousness Month at the Amapá Black Culture Center, the event reaffirms the significant Black presence in the state. It is one of the most anticipated cultural manifestations for groups that inherit and preserve the greatest cultural expression of Amapá, the marabaixo, especially collectives from quilombos and rural Black communities.

During this period, people migrate to the capital, Macapá, to participate from the opening of the event, with the beating of drums, when urban and rural drums come together.

The first Drumming Encounter took place in 1995, in the Curiaú Community, but it was only in 1998 that this community had its land regularized by the Palmares Cultural Foundation (FCP) ([2016]). The following year, on November 3, 1999, it received the definitive title of Remnant Quilombo Community.

The Federal Constitution of 1988, in Article 68 of the Transitional Constitutional Provisions Act (ADCT), recognizes the definitive ownership of lands occupied by the remnants of quilombo communities, with the State being responsible for issuing the respective titles. Since then, the terms "quilombo" and "quilombo remnant" have referred to territorial rights. Bringing together under the category of "remnants of quilombo communities" individuals belonging to a diversity of quilombo communities, rural Black communities, "terras de preto," "terras de santo," mocambos, among other regional and local denominations, the constitutional text recognizes the State's duty to guarantee territorial security (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2023).

Superti and Silva (2015) refer to the approval of this constitutional provision and the re-signification of the concept of quilombos, emphasizing the contribution of social movements, which projected, in the Brazilian political scenario, previously invisible sectors of society.

According to the 2022 Quilombola Census, 426,449 quilombola people were registered in the municipalities of the Brazilian Legal Amazon, representing 1.60% of the total resident population of the region and 32.11% of the total quilombola population in Brazil (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2023). In light of this, it is necessary to highlight the role of two Black movement entities, the Center for Black Culture of Maranhão (CCN-MA)<sup>4</sup> and the Center for Studies and Defense of Black People in Pará (Cedenpa)<sup>5</sup>, recognized as pre-constitutional Black movements. These two entities were instrumental in creating the category of "quilombo remnant" during the discussions of the 1988 Constitution. The final draft of the text was submitted by politicians from Rio de Janeiro and the Northern and Northeastern regions, but it was the CCN-MA and the Cedenpa that first presented the proposal for the titling of quilombola lands, including the use of the expression "quilombo remnant" to be incorporated into the constitutional text. Thus, a certain foundation was formed in this field, which, in this case, was initiated by Cedenpa, from the Constituent Assembly discussions until the period of the 1998 Constitutional Review, when a deputy from Pará, Eliel Rodrigues, attempted to remove Article 68 of the ADCT from the Constitution (Pinheiro, 2022).

According to Almeida (2022), regarding quilombola issues, Ribeiro (2014) mentions the First Black Culture Meeting of Maranhão, held in São Luís in August 1986, under the theme "The Black Person and the Constitution," organized by CCN-MA, Cedenpa, and the Afro-Brazilian Association of Rio de Janeiro. According to narratives of Black activists from that time, there are still internal discussions about who first presented this proposal. These organizations claim that the proposal originated in the Amazon region, with the text written by Cedenpa militants Nilma Bentes<sup>6</sup> and Zélia Amador.<sup>7</sup>

The expression 'quilombo remnant', conceived within the Amazonian context, dismantled the argument that there was no Black population in the Amazon, enabling a new perspective of freedom and bringing visibility to hundreds of quilombola communities in the region.

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<sup>4</sup> A civil society entity founded on September 19, 1979, by a group of Black people concerned about the situation of Black people in Brazil and Maranhão.

<sup>5</sup> Founded on August 10, 1980, during the redemocratization movement in Brazil, by Black people outraged by both overt and covert racism present in society.

<sup>6</sup> Raimunda Nilma de Melo Bentes, known as Nilma Bentes, is an Amazonian agricultural engineer, writer, human rights defender, co-founder of Cedenpa, founder of the Fulanas Network - Black Women of Brazilian Amazon (NAB), and creator of the National March of Black Women in Brazil.

<sup>7</sup> Zélia Amador de Deus is an Amazonian Black woman, university professor, actress, and theater director, a militant for the rights of the Black population and one of the founders of Cedenpa.

Based on Decree No. 4,887/2003, which, in its Article 1, regulates the procedure for the identification, recognition, delimitation, demarcation, and titling of lands occupied by remnants of quilombo communities, it is up to the FCP to certify the self-identification of quilombo communities (Brazil, 2003b). According to data from the Palmares Cultural Foundation ([2016]), in the state of Amapá, there are 40 certified quilombo communities, of which four have already been titled by the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA): the quilombos of Curiaú, Conceição do Macacoari, Mel da Pedreira and São Raimundo da Pirativa.

### **Survey of state and municipal quilombola schools in Amapá**

Among the quilombola schools in the state of Amapá, the SQS Daniel de Carvalho stands out. It was inaugurated on August 2, 1946, in the former federal territory of Amapá. The school is located in the Quilombola Community of Santo Antônio da Pedreira, on the AP-070 highway, Alceu Paulo Ramos, in the municipality of Macapá.

For approximately one year, SQS Daniel de Carvalho has been developing the "Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity" Project, based on Paulo Freire's popular education methodology. The project's overall objective is to equip and train education professionals, students, and civil society leaders to address institutional racism and sexism.

The project also aims to implement Law No. 10,639/2003 at SQS Daniel de Carvalho, through a promotion and information program, with the intent of expanding the school's participation in the spaces where it is inserted.

The recognition of our cultural identities, according to Moreira and Candau (2011), is "grounded" in the foundation of educational processes, but it needs to be identified, revealed, and valued. Based on this logic, the project aims to demonstrate new perspectives and attitudes in addressing institutional racism and sexism, both in the school environment and in the community context, as well as to promote the effective implementation of Law No. 10,639/2003.

According to data from the Quilombos and Education Project: Public Policies and Pedagogical Practices, there are 2,526 quilombola schools throughout Brazil, according to the 2020 Basic Education Census (Center for Studies on Labor Relations and Inequalities, 2024).

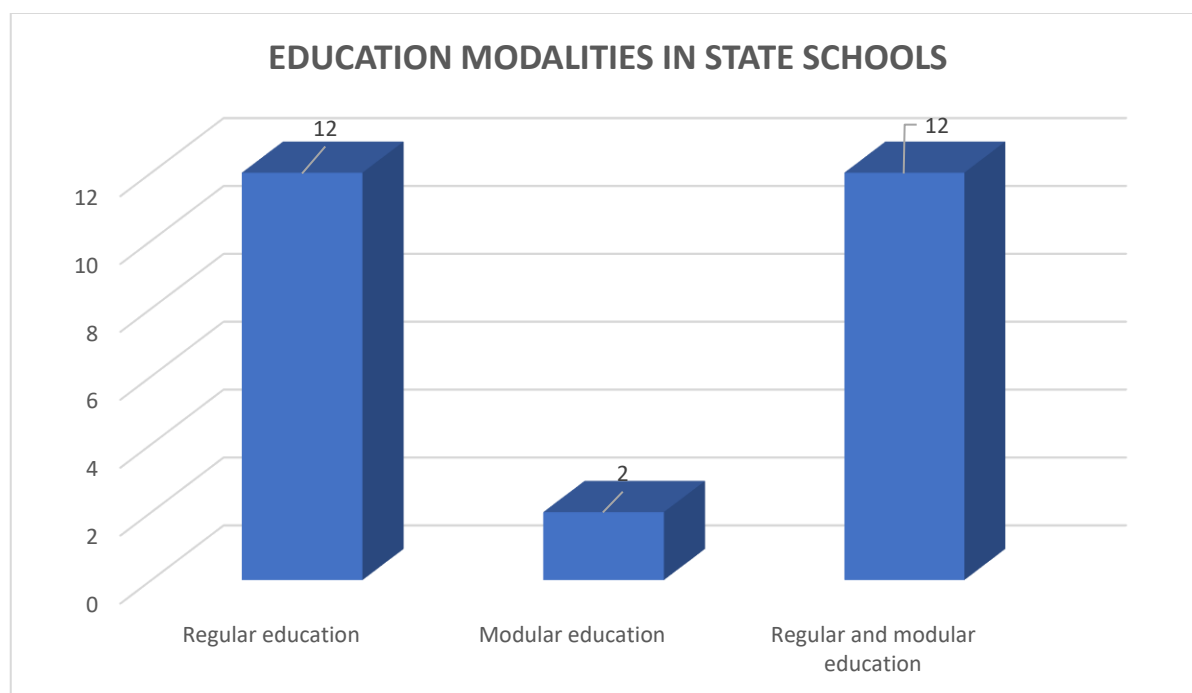
According to data from the Ethnic-Racial Education Center (Neer) (Amapá, 2024), part of the Amapá State Department of Education (Seed-AP), there are 26 state quilombola schools



in the state education network<sup>8</sup>, with a total of 2,992 students. These schools are distributed across the municipalities of Macapá (14), Santana (10), Oiapoque (1), and Tartarugalzinho (1), in accordance with Decree No. 3,652 of August 26, 2019, which incorporates the term "quilombola" into their original designations (Amapá, 2019).

Of these 26 quilombola schools, two offer only the modular education system, seven adopt the regular education system, and twelve use both the regular and modular systems.

Figure 1 – State quilombola schools by teaching modality



Source: Amapá (2024).

Table 1 – Education modalities in state schools

Modality	Number of schools	Percentage
Regular education	12	46,00%
Modular education	2	46,00%
Regular and Modular education	12	7,69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100%</b>

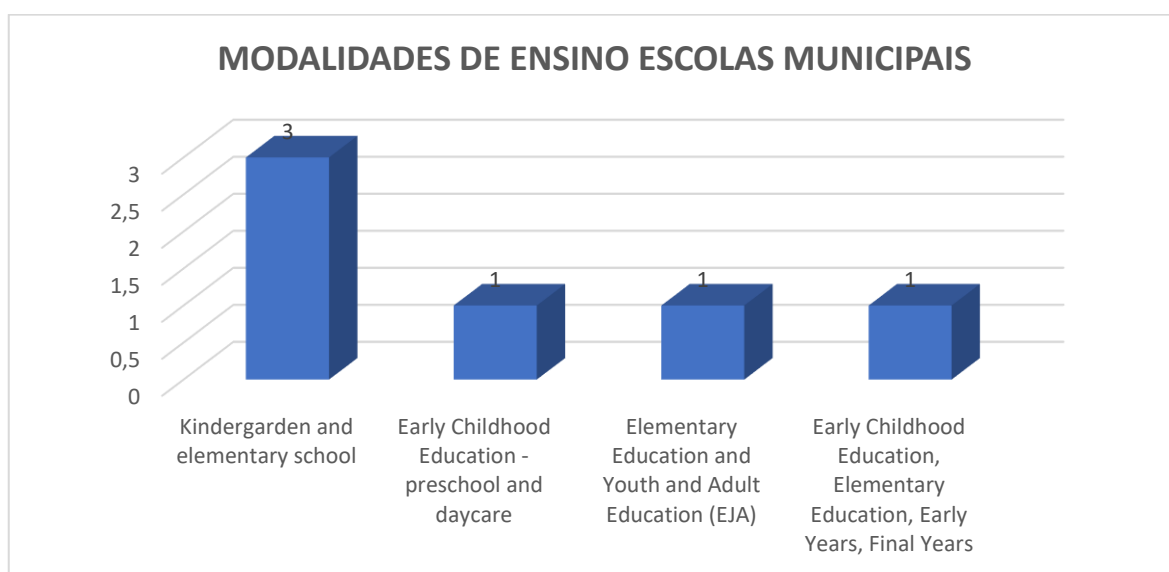
Source: Macapá (2024).

<sup>8</sup> SQSs Pedro Alcântara Chaves Lopes, Professor Joaquim Manoel de Jesus Picanço, Cachoeira do Rio Pedreira, Professor Raimundo Pereira, Conceição Do Maruanum I, José Bonifácio, Igarapé das Armas, Belmiro Macedo Medina, General Carrombert Costa, Lagoa dos Índios, Antonio Bráulio de Souza, Retiro do Pirativa, Nestor Barbosa da Silva, do Rio Pescado, Maruanum II, Daniel de Carvalho, Santo Antônio do Matapi, São João do Matapi, Professor David Miranda, Teixeira de Freitas, Foz do Rio Pirativa, Raimunda Barreto, São Sebastião Lago Pirativa, São Tomé do Aporema, Professor Antonio Figueiredo, Vila Velha do Cassiporé, Belmiro Macedo Medina and Vila Velha do Cassipe.

When referring to the education system adopted by these 26 schools, the teaching modalities are as follows: ten schools offer elementary education I; eleven schools offer both elementary education I and II; nine schools offer middle school; one school offers youth and adult education (EJA); and three schools offer elementary education II.

Analyzing the data from the Diversity Division of the Municipal Education Department of Macapá, we can verify the presence of six quilombola schools in this municipality<sup>9</sup>, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Quilombola Schools in Macapá by Education Modality



Source: Macapá (2024).

In the state of Amapá, specifically in the municipality of Santana, the Quilombola Community of São Tomé Alto Pirativa is home to the Municipal Quilombola School Joaquim Cacilo da Silva do Alto Pirativa. This school provides regular education, including early childhood and elementary levels. It serves not only the local community but also neighboring ones such as São Raimundo da Pirativa, Santo Antônio da Pirativa, Cinco Chagas, Nossa Senhora do Desterro, and Nova Esperança do Pirativa.

In the other municipalities of the state where there are Quilombola communities, up to the time of writing this article, there are no schools with decrees of designation as Quilombolas.

<sup>9</sup> Municipal elementary schools (EMEF) Velho Chico, Vô Lixandre, Joana Santos da Silva, Luzia Costa da Silva, Goiás, and Valmito Moraes Brazão.

## Successful projects and their interface with sustainable development

In the 1990s, after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Eco-92), the government of the state of Amapá sought an alternative development model that would break with previously applied models, which were imposed by external demands and characterized by being exploitative and segregationist (Amapá, 1999). The proposed alternative consisted of a model capable of recognizing the importance and role of traditional populations, promoting the rational and sustainable exploration of local biodiversity, through the Sustainable Development Program (SDP).

In this context, various spaces for the valorization of local culture were created, such as the Amapá Black Culture Center and the Sacaca Sustainable Development Museum. In addition, the Amapá Biodiversity Access Law was enacted.

At the same time, the Curiaú Community had its lands regularized by the FCP. Due to its rich biodiversity and its proximity to the capital, Macapá, this region was also transformed into an environmental protection area (EPA).

Amapá became a pioneer in recognizing indigenous territorial rights, creating the Indigenous Teacher Training Program (ITTP), currently known as the Indigenous Education Center (NEI). In contrast, the black population was treated allegorically, and only 18 years after the creation of the NEI, Decree No. 4,258/2008 founded and structured the Neer. These nuclei emerge as instruments for strengthening indigenous and quilombola education in public policies.

Considering that sustainability is a fundamental principle for traditional populations, Amazonian quilombola territories, in their essence, already practice sustainability. The figure of the quilombola subject cannot be dissociated from sustainability. For quilombolas, nature is seen as a subject, with humanities. This conception must permeate the process of formal education.

Forests, especially the rivers of Amapá, were places of refuge and encounters for enslaved African blacks until they found firm land to establish their quilombos. It can be said that rivers were political spaces, where escapes were planned, as well as the present and future of the lives of the enslaved. They were also places of sociability, as encounters took place there between different African ethnicities and also with indigenous peoples.

These places also had an educational character, since individuals exchanged experiences with each other and with the original peoples. They learned to live with local biodiversity and with Amazonian temporalities<sup>10</sup>, both in terms of survival and from the perspective of seeing these elements as allied subjects, being a starting point for struggles, defense, and shelter.

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<sup>10</sup> In the geological, geomorphological, archaeological, anthropological, and historical fields, according to Porto-Gonçalves (2008).

Therefore, Amazonian quilombola territories are spaces of collective memories. Rivers, plants, farms, manioc flour retreats, dances (such as marabaixo and batuque), ancestries, enchantments - all this is sustainability, as they are elements intrinsically linked to community development.

The Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project, from the SQS Daniel de Carvalho, does not have sustainable development as its main focus, but, since it involves other subjects besides the school-territory, it can be said that its pedagogical action has an interface with sustainable development.

We deal with sustainable development from the perspective of Porto-Gonçalves (2008, p. 24), who proposes the existence of "Amazons", that is, the need to think about the Amazon from the perspective of biodiversity, paying attention to the cultural diversity of the region. Alegretti (1989, p. 27) defends the sustainable use of forest resources based on the "recognition of the peculiarities of ecosystems, the social scope of technical solutions, and the capacity for permanent income generation".

The "Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity" project challenges the SQS Daniel de Carvalho to transgress, in the sense of detaching itself from hegemonic pedagogy, by recognizing the existence of other pedagogies within his territory of operation. As Arroyo (2012) states, recognizing that these peoples possess other pedagogies, which are producers of knowledge, ways of thinking, of liberating oneself and of humanizing, would destabilize the very self-identity of hegemonic pedagogy.

The quilombola pedagogy, structured by Joana Carmem Nascimento Machado<sup>11</sup>, a methodology under construction, proposes that, in the process of learning and teaching in a quilombola school, practice and the specific territory must walk together. The practice is educating. These educational practices need to be linked to ancestry and community experiences. The specific territory needs to be based on identities, memories, and existences. The pedagogical proposal of Professor Joana Carmem Machado is one of the ways to apply Resolution No. 8, of November 20, 2012, of the National Council of Education (CNE) (Brazil, 2012), which defines the National Curricular Guidelines for Quilombola School Education at the Basic Education level, of Resolution No. 25/2016, of the Amapá State Education Council (CEE-AP) (Amapá, 2016), which establishes norms for the creation and operation of quilombola school institutions within the scope of basic education in the state of Amapá, and of Law No. 10.639/2003 (Brazil, 2003a).

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<sup>11</sup> Black Amazonian woman, Portuguese language teacher, graduate in Letters and Arts, master in Education, activist of Cedenpa.

Regarding the Amazon, specifically Amapá, the question arises of how to apply the resolutions and laws aimed at quilombola school education in a territory where the agricultural frontier is advancing, especially on the AP-70 highway, where the state quilombola schools José Bonifácio, Nestor Barbosa da Silva Pedro Alcântara Chaves Lopes and Daniel de Carvalho are located.

The agricultural frontier in Amapá has recently represented the advance of agribusiness over cerrado and forest areas of small villages, resulting in changes in the ways of life of rural communities, whether they are family farming or traditional communities, such as quilombolas. This process involves the production of grains to replace the productive practices of these communities and increases the concentration of land in the hands of a few, as well as forcing the expulsion of rural workers to other localities (International Institute of Education of Brazil, 2020).

As Edna Castro (2012, p. 59), observes "the border is a complex space. They are territorial identities at play, spaces of transit of cultures, and ethnicities that are often overlooked in the superficial interpretations of borders". Therefore, this article seeks to understand the importance of the pedagogical experience of the Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project and its impact on strengthening teaching and learning and the cultural identity of the Santo Antônio da Pedreira quilombo, in the face of the advance of the agricultural frontier, which, in the state of Amapá, represents the expansion of grain agribusiness over historically occupied territories.

According to Moreira and Candau (2011), education cannot exist without being immersed in the context in which it is situated. In the case of quilombola territories in Amapá, this is a crucial point for schools to consider in their teaching and learning processes.

In Amapá, there are evangelical quilombola communities, those that celebrate Catholic saints' festivals, communities located along highways, others along rivers, some dedicated to crafting pottery from clay, and those focused on cassava flour production and family farming.

In an informal conversation with teacher Mônica Roque dos Santos, who teaches Philosophy at SQS Daniel de Carvalho, she acknowledged the impact of the soybean agribusiness on family farming. Families who previously cultivated gardens sold their land to agribusiness and moved from the Quilombo Community of Santo Antônio da Pedreira to the outskirts of Macapá. The teacher is not from the community and has been working at the school for 10 years. It was only in 2023, with the implementation of the Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity Project, during Black Consciousness Month, that she realized the richness of African philosophy, of which she had no knowledge, as it was not part of her training. About this, she commented:

I had heard of Ubuntu, but I didn't know its meaning. I've learned so much. I am because you are; I am because we are. I only used to work with modern philosophy, ancient philosophy, and Medieval philosophy. I talked about German philosophers and didn't mention African philosophers. When I researched, I found out that there are many African philosophers. My students loved it. My God, how ignorant I was!

The teacher, in an oral report, mentioned that, after the project, she decided to include African philosophy in the curriculum, thereby implementing Law nº 10.6939/2003. Before the project, her students had German philosophers as their primary reference, but they now have African philosophers as references. She recognizes that this was a significant advance.

Similarly, in a conversation with teacher Neucirene Oliveira de Almeida, who, although not from the quilombo, has been working at the school for 20 months and is the creator and one of the coordinators of the project, she expressed concern about the expansion of the agricultural frontier and the grain agribusiness. She has already discussed this issue in the classroom, highlighting its causes and consequences for the community and the sustainability of the Santo Antônio da Pedreira quilombo, as well as for neighboring quilombos, in terms of both land and territory.

She stated that this is a delicate topic and needs to be carefully addressed in the classroom, as SQS Daniel de Carvalho receives students from diverse origins: quilombolas, riverine people, many farmers, settlers, and Afro-Indigenous people.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, some students work in soybean plantations, while others are involved in agribusiness. She exemplified this with a student's intervention during class: "Teacher, many people think agribusiness is bad. But it's not bad because it supports our families, it's not bad for the soil. It's this that you don't understand it." She emphasized that teachers need to carefully observe their students to adapt their approach and stated that she understands that the topics discussed are new to the students.

For this teacher, the project has brought positive results, such as the implementation of Law nº 10.639/2003; the promotion of debate on combating institutional racism and sexism; and the involvement of teachers in conducting research, which now includes, in their disciplines, content on Africa, quilombos, racism, as well as the exchange of experiences with other colleagues. All these changes occurred after the implementation of the project.

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<sup>12</sup> She also mentioned the need for caution regarding religious matters, as there are many evangelical students at the school.

Another positive aspect of the project, pointed out by her, comes from the students. They express in their speeches: "I am quilombola," "I am a black boy," "I am a black girl." In their National High School Exam (Enem) registration, a student said to the class: "I signed up for the quotas, I said I was black and quilombola. I have the right to the quotas." Another example can be heard in the school corridors: "Don't say that because it's racism." The teacher concludes by saying: "A student from the school took third place in the Seed-AP essay contest, when there were 10,000 essays written. When I read the student's essay, I see my words from the classroom. It is a successful project."

Another result achieved by the project, during its eight months of execution, was the implementation of activities and workshops for promotion and information, tailored to each subject area. Among the activities developed, we highlight workshops on marabaixo percussion, braiding, visual arts, crafting flowers, necklaces, bracelets and earrings by marabaixo women, as well as marabaixo drums and capoeira.

Figure 3 – Art workshop on Racism<sup>13</sup>



Source: SQS Daniel de Carvalho (2023).

<sup>13</sup> "Friendship doesn't choose color, it simply happens. Say 'no' to racism".

Figure 4 – Sociology workshop on Marabaixo



Source: SQS Daniel de Carvalho (2023).

These symbolic and educational activities are instruments for strengthening the cultural identity of the Quilombo of Santo Antônio da Pedreira. According to Moreira and Candau (2011), there is an intrinsic relationship between school and culture, being profoundly intertwined universes. This affinity can be compared to the mystical relationship between the Amazonian subject and nature, both intrinsically linked. Souza (2019), when discussing the role and function of schools, argues that, in addition to its schooling process, its action needs to transcend this process, encompassing the cultural, social, and economic aspects of the context in which it is inserted.

As observed, the Educating for Equality – Quilombo My Identity Project intersects with sustainable development by aiming to strengthen cultural identity, focusing on the education of future generations and the preservation of nature. The project also emphasizes care for both human and non-human subjects, as well as the territory, reflecting the teachers' concern about the impact of the agricultural frontier on cultural identity.

### **Dialogue with the Government on the advances and challenges of quilombola education in Amapá**

To approach the dialogue with the Government, we began with a 1952 review that presents an incident involving the poet Álvaro da Cunha, who was then an advisor to the territorial government of Amapá. On November 5, 1952, he published, in the Castelo newspaper, an article entitled "Education in Brazil and the Territorial Problem", produced by the Rui Barbosa student union of the Colégio Amapaense (Lobato, 2009). In this piece, the



poet Álvaro da Cunha expressed his concern about the discrepancy between the content taught by teachers in the classroom and the life experiences of students outside school, as well as the regional reality. He also proposed a training course for secondary school teachers focusing on the history and challenges of the regional context.

In the 1950s, in the Amazon, the poet denounced what Antônio Bispo dos Santos (2019) refers to as a "frontier." According to Santos (2019), the frontier represents the meeting of worldviews that perceive the same place with differing interests, particularly regarding land use. For this author, the frontier is the meeting space between the worldview of traditional peoples, bearers of organic knowledge, and the modern Eurocentric worldview, based on synthetic knowledge. In this encounter, organic knowledge engages in dialogue, while synthetic knowledge does not establish a frontier but rather a boundary.

In response to the colonialist logic that imposes limits on quilombola communities, such as in the process of establishing a school within the quilombo and throughout its teaching-learning practices, Santos (2019) proposes the theory of decolonization. The major challenge of decolonizing in quilombola education is allowing the territory to express itself; with each practice, the local context reveals itself and reshapes pedagogical actions, practices, and decision-making (Nunes, 2021).

Castro (1998) advocates for the national and international validation, even if partial, of the knowledge and innovations of Indigenous peoples and all traditional populations, emphasizing that this knowledge holds value beyond its economic worth and preventing scientific knowledge from disqualifying and devaluing other forms of knowledge.

According to Custódio (2023), this is an emblematic issue in quilombola education in Amapá. It is necessary that this recognition begins in the State's Basic Education Curricular Guidelines, valuing local culture, quilombola knowledge, indigenous peoples, and traditional peoples.

Neer has achieved significant progress but still faces substantial challenges in quilombola education in Amapá. Its main goal is to implement and support educational policies and practices that recognize and respect racial differences, promoting inclusive and anti-racist education. However, much work remains to be done.

Law No. 10,639/2003 (Brazil, 2003a) establishes the guidelines and basis of national education, including the mandatory study of Afro-Brazilian history and culture in the official curriculum of the school network. This created opportunities for the Black movement in Amapá to demand that the state government implement the theme "Afro-Brazilian History and Culture" in state schools and establish a specific department within Seed-AP to address the subject.

After several dialogues and pressure from the Black movement, the government responded with the enactment of State Law No. 1.196, of March 14, 2008, which makes the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture mandatory in public and private elementary and secondary schools in the state, and with the creation of the Neer (Amapá, 2008). This law, in addition to adhering to the original text of Law No. 10.639/2003, adds an important innovation in its sole paragraph, establishing the offer of specialization courses for History teachers in the public school system (Custódio; Foster; Superti, 2013).

In summary, through decrees and laws, the Neer was formalized by Law No. 12.230/2008, subsequently revoked by Law No. 2.257, of December 5, 2017, which reorganizes the structure of Seed-AP. In this new structure, Neer is subordinated to the Coordination of Special Education (Ceesp) (Amapá, 2017b).

In 2011, Neer held the First State Meeting on Quilombola Education, bringing together teachers, administrators, technical staff from quilombola schools, leaders from organized civil society, and Seed-AP managers. In 2024, it hosted the fifth meeting. This was a crucial step for Seed-AP to formally recognize quilombos and their educational demands. In a way, professionals in quilombola schools began to familiarize themselves with Law No. 10,639/2003 (Brazil, 2003a) and State Law No. 1,196/2008 (Amapá, 2008), paving the way for discussions on other legislation relevant to the topic.

The continuation of quilombola meetings organized by Neer/Seed-AP was essential for strengthening quilombola education. Several significant events were held, including the Second State Quilombola Meeting and the First Meeting on Afro-Amapaense Studies in 2013; the Second Meeting on Afro-Amapaense Studies in 2014; the Third State Quilombola Education Meeting in 2015; the First State Meeting of Quilombola Managers of Amapá and the Second State Meeting on Quilombola and Indigenous Education in 2016; the Second Meeting of Quilombola Managers in 2017; the Fourth State Meeting on Quilombola and Indigenous Education in 2018; the Fourth State Meeting of Quilombola Managers in 2019; and the Fifth State Meeting of Quilombola Managers in 2024.

Souza (2019) highlights as key advancements the awareness-raising efforts promoted through the public actions of Neer/Seed-AP, such as the quilombola meetings and the participation of Seed-AP managers in these formative processes, particularly regarding budgetary aspects for quilombola schools.

Regarding the progress in the self-identification of schools and the shift in managers' attitudes, Souza (2019) suggests that the National School Feeding Program (Pnae), through the National Education Fund (FNDE), has been an important incentive. This is due to its provision of an additional per-student amount for quilombola schools.

With the implementation of Resolution No. 25/2016, of the CEE-AP (Amapá, 2016), Neer has been assigned the task of advising, evaluating, and monitoring the state's quilombola schools in Amapá. This is a great challenge for Neer, not due to a lack of technical capacity, but due to a lack of logistics. Neer operates in a small room, which barely accommodates the technical team, and faces a lack of autonomy. As a department subordinated to the Ceesp, it does not have transportation or an adequate budget to fulfill the planning of continuous training in quilombola schools.

We consider the main current challenge for Neer/Seed-AP to be guiding and monitoring quilombola schools located in territories affected by the expansion of the agricultural frontier, always emphasizing development and sustainability. This challenge is particularly significant concerning the applicability of paragraph V, Article 15 of Resolution No. 25/2016 by the CEE-AP (Amapá, 2016), specifically its clause 2, which states that school pedagogical projects must: "Include as one of their guiding principles territoriality, associated with ethnodevelopment and socio-environmental and cultural sustainability, as well as the forms of work and life production of quilombola communities."

In our view, Neer should guide these schools to adopt the logic of biointeraction in their activities, instead of the traditional logic of sustainable development. Biointeraction is based on the triad of extracting, using, and reediting, as well as valuing collective community relations and an integrated experience with nature (Santos, 2019). The department should also approach state institutions that work with family farming and land regularization, as well as the Seed-AP School Feeding Department, to promote dialogue on the theme of "education and land". This is essential to demonstrate that the existence of formal education, schools, food, and cultural heritage is unfeasible without land. Finally, an important challenge is to confront structural racism within Seed-AP.

## Conclusions

In the Amazon region of Amapá, the presence of Black people can be found in both urban and rural areas. In rural areas, quilombola communities and rural Black communities stand out, where orality remains the primary way of narrating stories and preserving cultural memory.

From the analysis of the "Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity" project and teachers' reports, we found that the project fulfills its objective of implementing Law 10.639/2003. This is evident in the valorization of Black and quilombola identity by students, who reaffirm their identity with conviction.

The project also sparked concern within the community about the lack of written records of their history. Since 2015, the community has been certified as a quilombo by the FCP (Process No. 01420.015467/2015/61) and saw the project as an opportunity to document this journey. *“The process of building quilombola identity is a unique contribution to the study of territory”* (Malcher, 2008). Teachers and community members are expected to take on the responsibility of recording this history, drawing from oral tradition and local memories.

Considering the potential of the project to contribute to the preservation of the territory in the face of the advance of soybean monoculture, the first step was taken when the community itself realized the importance of recording its history, converting orality into written documentation. The second step involves the school adopting the oral history methodology or creating its own methodology that safeguards local identity and territoriality, considering the political, economic, cultural, environmental, and social dimensions of the territory. The third step is to incorporate the project as interdisciplinary content and include it in the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP) of Daniel de Carvalho School.

The limited execution time of the project presents itself as a limitation of the study; expanding the number of interlocutors could enrich the research. By adopting the principle of the sustainability of quilombola territories, the project interfaces with sustainable development by promoting, in the classroom, the debate on grain monoculture and its impacts on local knowledge linked to the land, even facing difficulties in extending this debate outside the school environment, as it is a topic associated with economic development and capital.

As a suggestion, it would be relevant to establish partnerships, as the Quilombola Community of Rosa, in Macapá, did in the 2000s, when it prevented the Indústria e Comércio de Minérios S.A. (Icomi) from depositing toxic manganese waste in its territory.

The "Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity" Project reveals that the application of legislation for quilombola education in Amapá occurs mainly due to the initiative of teachers committed to the issue, rather than from school management.

In conclusion, it is essential to uphold Resolution No. 25/2016 of the CEE-AP (Amapá, 2016), particularly regarding democratic management, prioritizing quilombola leaders as school administrators, and fostering cooperation between school management, pedagogical coordination, and local quilombola organizations.

It is urgent that Seed-AP supports the acquisition of literary works addressing racial issues and the production of specific educational materials for quilombola schools in the state. In summary, it is essential to overcome the structural racism within the department and dismantle the barriers separating traditional knowledge from scientific knowledge

This study concludes that the "Educating for Equality - Quilombo My Identity" Project interfaces with sustainable development by seeking to strengthen cultural identity, focusing on future generations, nature preservation, care for human and non-human subjects, and the territory, as well as addressing the impact of the agricultural frontier on quilombola cultural identity.

This project is aligned with Resolution No. 8 of November 20, 2012, of the National Council of Education (CNE), which defines the National Curricular Guidelines for Quilombola School Education at the Basic Education level; with Resolution No. 25/2016 of the CEE-AP (Amapá, 2016), which establishes norms for the creation and operation of quilombola school institutions within the state's basic education system; with the Guidelines for Rural Education, according to State Resolution No. 56/2017 of the CEE-AP (Amapá, 2017a); and with Law No. 10.639/2003, which establishes the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in the official curriculum of the education network (Brazil, 2003a).

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