The struggle for housing and land regularization in Vila Recanto II, Sobral – CE

A luta pela moradia e regularização fundiária na Vila Recanto II, Sobral - CE

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Paula Mirelle Chaves Costa
Master in Geography by the Graduate Program in Geography of Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú (UVA)
Institution: Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú (UVA)
Adress: Sobral - CE, Brasil
E-mail: mirellecosta.12@gmail.com
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6127-9883

Francisco Clébio Rodrigues Lopes
PhD in Geography
Institution: Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú (UVA)
Adress: Sobral - CE, Brasil
E-mail: clebio_lopes@uvanet.br
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8048-2093

ABSTRACT
The policy of social land regularization, when it intervenes in the urban, social, environmental, and legal aspects of informal settlements, brings about socio-spatial changes and contributes to the construction of the right to decent housing. In light of this, this article aims to analyze how social struggles and the Policy of Social Land Regularization contribute to the achievement of the right to housing, through investigations in the Vila Recanto II Housing Complex, located in the Novo Recanto neighborhood in Sobral, Ceará. Therefore, bibliographic and documentary research, field visits, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the population of Vila Recanto II and employees of the Municipal Government of Sobral. It is concluded that social struggles and the consequent land regularization in Vila Recanto II have provided socio-spatial transformations that have contributed to the achievement of the right to housing.

Keywords: community organization, right to housing, socio-spatial transformations.

RESUMO
A política de regularização fundiária social, ao intervir nos aspectos urbanísticos, sociais, ambientais e jurídicos dos assentamentos informais, provoca mudanças socioespaciais e contribui para a construção do direito à moradia digna. Diante disso, este artigo tem como objetivo analisar como as lutas sociais e a Política de Regularização Fundiária Social contribuem para a conquista do direito à moradia, por meio de investigações no Conjunto Habitacional Vila Recanto II, localizado no bairro Novo Recanto, em Sobral, Ceará. Para tanto, foram realizadas...
pesquisas bibliográfica e documental, visitas de campo e entrevistas semiestruturadas com a população da Vila Recanto II e funcionários da Prefeitura Municipal de Sobral. Conclui-se que as lutas sociais e a consequente regularização fundiária na Vila Recanto II proporcionaram transformações socioespaciais que contribuíram para a conquista do direito à moradia.

**Palavras-chave:** organização comunitária, direito à moradia, transformações socioespaciais.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The capitalist city is marked by socio-spatial contradictions that lead to a precariousness in human reproduction. These can be visualized and analyzed at the level of housing, as housing materializes the contrasts of spatial production.

Furthermore, housing, as a commodity, has increasingly become a product that only a few can afford. Hence, informality is so prevalent in Brazilian urbanization. Irregularity and illegality have excluded portions of the population from the right to decent housing. In this scenario, the policy of social land regularization emerges as a possibility to reverse this situation through physical, social, legal, and environmental interventions in informal settlements. However, it is worth noting that social policies are regulated by the State, which is more in the service of capital than society.

Therefore, they do not definitively solve social problems but rather alleviate conflicts to disguise the hegemonic logic (RODRIGUES, 2016). Thus, land regularization does not intervene in the contradictions of capitalist urban space production but positively contributes to the achievement of the right to decent housing.

In light of the above, we highlight the Vila Recanto II Housing Complex, located in the Novo Recanto neighborhood in Sobral, Ceará (see Figure 1), as an example of a space that has experienced socio-spatial changes caused by the policy of social land regularization.
Therefore, this research aims to analyze how social struggles and the Policy of Social Land Regularization contribute to the achievement of the right to housing, through investigations in the Vila Recanto II Housing Complex, located in the Novo Recanto neighborhood in Sobral, Ceará.

For this purpose, bibliographic and documentary research was conducted, including the analysis of the newspaper "Correio da Semana" from Sobral, as well as relevant legislations such as Federal Law No. 11,977/2009 and Municipal Law No. 1,691, dated November 29, 2017. Field visits were also carried out, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the population of Vila Recanto II and employees of the Municipal Government of Sobral.

The work is structured into five sections. The first section is this introductory part, which presents the study. The second section discusses the origin and contradictions of land regularization. The third section explores the regularization policy in the city of Sobral. The fourth section presents the implementation of the policy in Vila Recanto II. Finally, the conclusion provides the final considerations.
2 THE POLICY OF SOCIAL LAND REGULARIZATION - ORIGINS AND CONTRADICTIONS

The policy of social land regularization emerged as a response to popular movements demanding better living, working, and housing conditions. This was a result of the absence of agrarian reform and the rapid urbanization in Brazil, which led to a precariousness of life in cities.

Already in the 1960s, the first demands in urban areas arose but were soon interrupted due to the military coup in 1964. Even in this dictatorship scenario, pioneering cases of land regularization occurred, where the distinctive feature of these programs was the recognition of informal settlements as part of the city, as evictions and clearance were common practices until then.

In this context, we highlight the Municipal Slum Regularization Program (PROFAVELA) in 1983, developed in Belo Horizonte, and the Plan for the Regularization of Social Interest Zones (PREZEIS) in 1987, in Recife. Both aimed primarily to legalize informal housing.

However, both programs did not succeed as they yielded very limited results. PREZEIS, for example, defined only 26 Social Interest Zones, and only two experienced urban interventions, while one went through legal regularization (SILVA, 2020).

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, still within the context of dictatorship and the pursuit of democracy, popular movements regained strength and led to the creation of the National Movement for Urban Reform (MNRU) in 1985 (SOUZA, 2005). This movement enabled the development of a proposal for a law to be incorporated into the 1988 Federal Constitution. Thus, a popular amendment was sent to the National Congress, giving rise to Chapter II of urban policy, composed of Articles 182 and 183 (SOUZA, 2005).

In summary, Article 182 of the 1988 Federal Constitution establishes the responsibilities of the municipal sphere, the requirement of a Master Plan for cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants, and addresses the social function of property. Article 183, on the other hand, deals with the instruments of land regularization.

Thus, the MNRU inaugurated a new phase of Brazilian urban policy, marked by popular participation. In addition to this movement, the National Forum for Urban Reform (FNRU) was developed with the aim of regulating the chapter on urban policy in the 1988 Constitution. Furthermore, the FNRU led to the creation of the National Housing Fund for Social Interest
(FNHIS), which later gave rise to the National System of Social Interest Housing (SNHIS) (SAULE JÚNIOR; UZZO, 2010).

In 2001, Law No. 10,157/2001 was enacted, known as the City Statute, which regulated Articles 182 and 183 of the 1988 Constitution. Land regularization is set as one of the guidelines of this legislation and aims to promote the full development of the social function of the city and property.

In 2003, the Ministry of Cities (MCidades) was created, which established the country's land policy. It also gave rise to the Papel Passado Program, which supported land regularization in urban areas. Alongside this, the Urbanization and Integration Program for Precarious Settlements was also created.

However, it was only in 2009 that comprehensive legislation was developed to address irregular housing throughout the national territory (CARVALHO, 2017), through the enactment of Law No. 11,977/2009, known as the My House My Life Program (PMCMV).

Chapter III of this law addresses land regularization and provides for two modalities: social interest, intended for settlements inhabited by a low-income population, and specific interest designated for middle and upper-class subjects.

In addition to addressing land regularization, this program was also responsible for the construction of housing units. However, the PMCMV has been subject to various criticisms for not breaking with the densification in the outskirts, as the housing promoted by the program is often located on the peripheral fringes of cities. This characteristic exacerbates socio-spatial segregation and increases land prices (ROLNIK, 2019; MARICATO, 2014; RODRIGUES, 2011).

The year 2016 marked a new phase in Brazilian urban policy (BALBIM, 2022), characterized by a regression in terms of social participation and democratic aspects of project development and legislation. The first sign of this new context in land regularization policy was the revocation of Chapter III of Law No. 11,977/2009 and the enactment of Provisional Measure (MP) 759/2016, which led to the enactment of Law No. 13,465/2017, known as Urban Rural Land Regularization (REURB).

A REURB has been subject to various criticisms for streamlining certain legal aspects of land regularization and emphasizing the economic bias of the policy. Like the previous legislation, it also has two modalities: social interest - REURB-S, and specific interest - REURB-
E. According to Article 13, Clause I of REURB-S, beneficiaries are exempt from paying the costs required for regularization, as these costs are borne by the government (BRASIL, 2017).

The main innovation of REURB was the creation of the legal instrument of land legitimization. According to Gonçalves and Rizek (2020), this instrument is one of the mechanisms for streamlining the process, as it separates property titling from physical interventions. Additionally, the authors draw attention to the fact that the legislation allows for the delivery of property titles before interventions in other aspects of informal settlements, which may result in incomplete regularization and singularize the policy towards a legal bias.

Thus, it can be seen that the policy has transitioned from a focus on guaranteeing the right to adequate housing to placing property and the economic aspect as central (ALFONSIN; COSTA; IACOVINI, 2019). Therefore, we can affirm that Brazil has experienced two models of regularization: one that involved urban, social, environmental, and legal interventions in informal settlements, and another marked solely by property titling.

Without closing this cycle, the National Congress created MP No. 996/2020 in 2020, which led to the enactment of Law No. 14,118/2021, known as the Casa Verde Amarela Program (PCVA), with the intention of replacing the PMCMV. According to Balbim (2020, n/p), the program is bicolor where it "is nothing more than a sequence of shades of gray, a smokescreen that hides, in detail, the institutionalization of mechanisms of urban spoliation and expropriation."

The program's goal was to regularize 2 million homes, provide financing for 1.6 million families, and make housing improvements in 400,000 residences by 2024. Regarding PCVA, Guerreiro and Rolnik (2020, n/p) state that: "[...] We see that the land regularization proposed by PCVA does not aim to provide better housing and urban conditions or ensure security of tenure but mainly to 'extract value from the house' through indebtedness."

Furthermore, PCVA removed the obligation of the government to bear the necessary costs of social interest land regularization and allows the beneficiaries themselves to bear the costs through the Social Development Fund (FDS).

Thus, what is observed is a regression in Brazilian urban policy. We conclude that land regularization has not enabled a reversal of housing informality because it does not address the root of the issue, as it takes a curative action that does not break the vicious cycle of housing informality.
Based on this model of land regularization, Oliveira (2006, p. 77) asserts that "[...] this form of regularization [...] will temporarily calm things down, and soon after, the satanic cycle will begin again. Mercilessly. [...] Regularization is a pious and virtuous procedure."

In light of the above, we highlight the city of Sobral, where we analyze social interest land regularization

3 LAND REGULARIZATION OF SOCIAL INTEREST IN SOBRAL

The land regularization of social interest in Sobral had its first appearance as a housing policy in 1997, through the Popular Housing Program (1997-2000). During this program, housing complexes were constructed with the intention of relocating families residing in high-risk areas, urbanizing precarious areas, constructing sanitation units, and much more (CANUTO, 2013).

However, this policy gained greater visibility in the housing sector and in the political discourse of Sobral only in 2017, following the enactment of Law No. 13,465/2017, which established the REUB, and subsequently the Municipal Law No. 1,691, dated November 29, 2017, which regulates the instruments of land regularization, namely Land Legitimization, Granting of Real Right of Use (CDRU), and Granting of Special Use for Housing (CUEM) for properties granted through Sobral's social interest housing policy, as expressed in Articles 1 and 3 of the law.

Article 1: The Municipal Executive Power is authorized to grant Land Regularization, Special Concession for Housing (CUEM), and Real Right of Use Concession (CDRU) of municipal public property, with the purpose of promoting the land regularization of properties within the scope of the Social Interest Housing Policy of the Municipality of Sobral, observing the guidelines established in this Law.

Article 3: The Land Regularization, Special Concession for Housing (CUEM), and Real Right of Use Concession (CDRU) will be granted by the holder of the Municipal Secretariat of Human Rights, Housing, and Social Assistance (SDHAS), in cases related to the land regularization of properties that hold the Permission of Use of properties within the scope of the Social Interest Housing Policy of the Municipality of Sobral (SOBRAL, 2017).

In addition to that, there is also Municipal Decree No. 1,892, dated June 14, 2017, which created the Unit for the Management of Urban and Rural Land Regularization Policy.
(UGPRFUR), with the purpose of overseeing the land regularization implemented by the municipality, primarily in the housing developments of the city.

In addition to the Decree and the Municipal Law, there is a technical cooperation between the Municipal Government of Sobral (PMS), responsible for the descriptive memorial and property plan, and the Public Defender's Office of Ceará, which handles the legal aspect. This cooperation aims to address the spontaneous demands for legal regularization in various neighborhoods of Sobral. The most commonly used instrument for these cases has been urban adverse possession (usucapião urbana).

However, it is important to note that this cooperation focuses solely on property titling, which in itself does not address the issue of informal settlements. Thus, the capitalist bias of regularization becomes prominent, as it facilitates the sale of properties and consequently does not break the vicious cycle of urban informality.

In this regard, Alvarez (2012) observes that while legal regularization ensures the permanence of the poorest in the city, it can intensify the real estate market by facilitating land negotiations and even state expropriations, which in many cases are insufficient for acquiring new housing.

Regarding the other areas regularized in Sobral, it should be noted that they consist of housing developments, some of which were built to resettle families living in high-risk areas or areas expropriated for public urbanization projects, such as the construction of bridges and avenues. Most of these houses were built through collective efforts, while the municipal government provided the land, necessary materials, and urban design plans.

Therefore, these are areas that underwent urban and, in some cases, environmental interventions in the past. Thus, the current focus is on legal regularization of these dwellings. According to Alfonsin (1999), it is important to regulate settlements that have undergone physical interventions to avoid eviction problems and waste of public funds.

Attention should be drawn to the fact that some of these housing developments are located on private properties, with multiple registrations in the registry office, and have remained irregular for decades. At the same time, the local government expropriates vast hectares of land and donates them to companies for the establishment of ventures in the city.
Costa, Celestino Neto, and Lopes (2021) discuss the above-mentioned point when studying the Sobral Economic Development Program (PRODECON), whose main objective was to attract investments to the city through the donation of tax incentives and zero-cost land.

Thus, the municipal government expropriated several plots of land in the neighborhoods of Dom Expedito and Cidade Gerardo Cristina de Menezes for the establishment of Terra Nova Development (see Figure 2), which spans approximately forty-four hectares and is intended for economic activities.

On the other hand, the housing complexes where the most vulnerable population resides are areas where housing informality prevails, considering that some complexes were only regularized after 20 years of their establishment. This characteristic proves that the state intervenes where it is most beneficial for capital (RODRIGUES, 2016).

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1 In the neighborhood of Cidade Gerardo Cristina de Menezes, there is the Monsenhor Aloisio Pinto Complex, which is formed by the combination of several housing complexes.
The legal regularization process in the city follows the following phases: first, a meeting is held in the informal settlement. Then, an individual diagnosis is initiated with the population, which involves collecting personal information from families in each residence. Finally, all measurements and markings are made on the territory and housing units to begin the legal regularization process.

Thus, legal regularization has taken place in the following housing complexes: Cesário Barreto, Monsenhor Aloísio Pinto Complex, Vila Recanto II, and Parque Mucambinho (see figure 3).

Figure 3- Location map of the Regularized Housing Complexes in Sobral-CE

Source: PMS (2020)

We conducted an analysis of the social interest land regularization carried out in the Vila Recanto II Housing Complex, considering that it was one of the first areas where the entire policy was completed. Therefore, we will discuss it more extensively in the following section.

4 HE LAND REGULARIZATION IN VILA RECANTO II

Vila Recanto II was established through informal occupations near the Sobral-Camocim railway line. The area was initially inhabited by former railway employees who remained in the
area even after its deactivation in the 1940s. However, it was around 1998 that many families started to arrive.

The majority of individuals who settled in the area came from rural districts of Sobral and even residents from the urban center who were living in rented accommodations. Thus, the search for better living conditions, employment opportunities, and homeownership were the main motivations behind these occupations.

The occupations were marked by struggles and community organizations aimed at securing the land in the face of territorial conflicts with neighboring plot owners who claimed that the occupied lands belonged to them. The conflicts began shortly after the railway line was deactivated, as expressed in the interview below:

But with the pressure when the railway line was deactivated, the owners, or those who claimed to be owners, came to occupy, saying that it belonged to them, that the government had taken control of it, but hadn't compensated anyone. The families who were living there would become their residents, their workers, in a very oppressive way, or they would have to leave, with nothing, without any rights. There were some instances where they themselves would come and tear down the shanties, armed with many men, firing shots in the air, and then demolishing the houses with axes. I witnessed this happening two or three times (Interview conducted in October 2022).

In the face of this scenario, the population organized themselves and fought to stay in the area. With the help of the Catholic Church and social movements, a residents' association was created. This marked the beginning of a long-standing resistance in the quest for claiming the space. Ribeiro (2012) suggests that resistance generates conflicts while simultaneously presenting itself as a possibility for change and transformation of spatial production.

Therefore, the resistance was accompanied by conflicts. The increase in population density due to new occupations further mobilized the neighboring landowners, who arrived with the police and an eviction order for those residing there. This fact reveals that private property takes precedence over housing needs (RODRIGUES, 2009).

On the other hand, it also highlights the role of the law, which "serves as an instrument for wealth accumulation and income concentration in cities, and therefore, as an unequivocal source of legitimization of an exclusionary and unjust order" (ALFONSIN, 2007, p. 72).
However, the occupants remained resilient. They united and sought information about the land, managing to stay in the area as it was owned by Rede Ferroviária S/A, and therefore, by the federal government. As expressed in the excerpt from the interview below:

"[...] we went with this information, we recorded it, asked for permission, recorded his audio, released it to the press, and took it to the mayor. The mayor, supportive of the movement, also provided us with full support. The city's attorney's office supported us, and then they started backing down when they saw that we were well organized and strong. There was also a gentleman named Timóteo, who was part of the Landless Workers' Movement, and he came here to support and assist us. There were also the lawmakers, those who identified most with these movements, if I'm not mistaken, José Alfredo at the time. They also presented various motions of support and condemnation of the situation happening here with us, and I think all of that helped us. But, you know, this was an experience for us. For me, at that time, transitioning from adolescence to adulthood, it was through the movement that we truly managed to achieve this, with those families who were there from the beginning of the movement and the association, which was very strong, and with this committee, we succeeded" (Interview conducted in October 2022).

Based on the interviews conducted, it was reported that after that incident, there were no further problems involving the landowners and the occupations. Thus, after securing the land, the struggle shifted towards improving living conditions because there was no infrastructure or basic services available in the area, such as electricity, piped water, or sewage. "We were occupying a space with no infrastructure, completely empty, not even the basics were there [...] we were occupying out of the necessity for shelter" (Interview conducted in March 2022).

In addition to the poor conditions in the village, the houses were self-built in a very rudimentary manner, as indicated in the following excerpt from an article: "There, they are building 300 huts, made of wood and wattle, cardboard, canvas, and remnants of constructions, where 200 families are already living with an estimated population of 1,000 people" (JORNAL CORREIO DA SEMANA, October 26th to November 1st, 1998. Year 80. No. 277. p. 4).

The practice of collective work ("mutirão") was also present in the area. In order to obtain, even in a rudimentary way, some services such as water, which was not available on-site, the residents built a water source where the pipeline connected from Alto da Brasília to Recanto.

However, the challenges did not end with these characteristics. There were many other issues, such as deficient access to the area, which caused great discomfort for the residents. There were no paved roads, lighting was inadequate, and the surroundings were overgrown with vegetation. Furthermore, due to the proximity to the Mata Fresca Creek, there was a narrow and unsafe bridge.
Through interviews, we were able to capture some aspects of this reality, as highlighted in the following statement:

In the past, mentioning Recanto II was something dangerous. It was a marginalized neighborhood that faced prejudice and was considered an isolated and distant area from the rest. To cross over, there was a narrow stretch of unpaved road, full of holes and mud when it rained, with a small iron bridge leading to the Grendene Avenue. It was very uncomfortable because there was no decent lighting, nothing at all, and there was a lot of overgrown vegetation. The bushes were very tall, so it became quite challenging... (Interview conducted in June 2022).

The excerpt from the interview highlights the disconnect between the so-called "illegal" city and the "formal" city, which further intensifies socio-spatial inequality and limits the use of the city, including access to leisure, culture, and public services and facilities. Additionally, it perpetuates stigmas associated with these areas.

On the other hand, it is evident that in these spaces where informality is the norm for accessing land, there is an ongoing demand for urban services and facilities (HOLSTON, 2013). In Vila Recanto II, community organizations and struggles only received effective responses from the municipal government in 2004 when a project for urbanization of the area was developed. However, the actual transformations took place in 2006 through interventions carried out under the Program for Urbanization, Regularization, and Integration of Precarious Settlements.

The Program for Urbanization, Regularization, and Integration of Precarious Settlements aims to support the public authorities in actions related to land regularization, security, sanitation, and habitability of informal settlements, with the intention of ensuring the residents' permanence or relocation (BRASIL, 2006).

Some of the program's actions include: a) support for improving the habitability conditions of precarious settlements, b) support for prevention and eradication of risks in precarious settlements, c) support for sustainable land regularization projects in urban areas, d) support for environmental sanitation projects in precarious settlements (PAT/PROSANEAR), e) support for urbanization of precarious settlements (Habitar - Brasil), f) financing for urbanization of precarious settlements, g) financing for individual housing improvements (BRASIL, 2006).

In Vila Recanto II, physical interventions were carried out in the area, along with legal regularization of the properties. Among the actions, Melo (2019) and Silveira, Cavalcante, and Pontes (2019) highlight paving, sanitation, water supply, electricity, and construction of masonry
houses. Regarding the project's objectives, Silveira, Cavalcante, and Pontes (2019) point out: a) ensuring access to decent housing, b) improving the urban conditions of the intervention area, c) regularizing the properties by granting property rights to each family, and d) preserving the population's identity with their local history and culture.

The regularization of the Vila involved several stages, starting with a diagnosis of the local situation, followed by the development of an urban project. There were also meetings between the local government and the beneficiary population to explain the phases of the program.

However, Alfonsin (1999) emphasizes the importance of popular participation in the development of land regularization, as residents should be seen as protagonists in this policy, actively participating in the decision-making process rather than being treated as objects.

In the case of Vila Recanto II, the beneficiaries did not have a significant role as protagonists in the interventions resulting from the land regularization policy, as they did not actively participate in the decision-making process. The community leadership played a more prominent role but only helped in some stages, as shown in the following statement:

In the development phase of the housing project, the construction of new masonry houses was carried out, which required the demolition of the old mud houses that were on the site. However, the population remained in the area throughout the process. Families who were building their houses were relocated within the neighborhood itself as the masonry house blocks were completed. Even if the families were not yet occupying their final homes, they were moved into the masonry houses to allow for the demolition of the rammed earth houses and the reconstruction of the blocks. This process was slow, as families were not removed for social rent; they remained on site during construction.

This information was captured in an interview conducted in March 2022, where the following excerpt stands out:

"They were demolishing a block of houses, but these families were not moved to another location. Those who were being built left that place, were sent to others, but within the neighborhood. With the blocks that were being built, they took those families who were in the mud houses and brought them into the masonry houses, even if that family that was occupying there did not yet have their final home. But they were there to be able to knock down the blocks of mud houses, and then they would rebuild the blocks. The process was like that and it was slow, because it took time to build, because the families were not moved to social rent. They stayed here and the construction took place” (Interview conducted in March 2022).
All housing units have the same floor plan, which includes the following rooms: a living room, two bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a utility area. The standardization and homogenization of the landscape have been the subject of criticism because it represents a space that does not take into account the particularities of each family and disconnects the use from social reproduction (LEFEBVRE, 2008).

According to Damiani (1993, p. 18), this type of housing is characterized by "[...] a programmed everyday life that seems to find its most suitable form by discerning needs and isolating them in the terrain. Everything is conceived separately, designed individually, on disconnected 'islands': areas for services and commerce, leisure and housing." On the other hand, Alves (2018) asserts that this conceived space is marked by ruptures that arise from the appropriation of the existing space and trigger transformations.

We were able to observe some of these transformations during our visits to the area. We noticed the presence of new land occupations, which reveal the lack of space in the dwellings as the occupied areas have made way for the creation of animal spaces, leisure areas, places to hang clothes, garages, etc.

Furthermore, there has been land occupation for the construction of new houses by the families benefiting from the policy. As a result, there are currently about 30 irregular dwellings in the area. The interview better illustrates this situation:
"Like that street back there, it didn't exist. It originated from these houses that provided access to another street, and there were no houses. Then, the children grew up and built, giving rise to a street, doing it with their own resources. The children of those people who lived in the house grew up, got married, worked, started their families, and then built other residences. In the case of my house here, I have my little wall, but my wall faces my neighbor's house, which is turned towards the other block. In the case of those houses that don't have it, it was just the house, the little wall providing access to another street, and then these people, the children of those people, started building houses, and another street originated. There are about 30 families living on that street" (Interview conducted in May 2022).

However, despite the contradictions inherent in the production of conceived space, the regularization intervention brought benefits to the residents of Vila Recanto, transforming it from a precarious area into a habitable one, as demonstrated by the following statement:

"We see a very radical change when we start entering the neighborhood and getting to know it. And we think, 'What was Recanto like before, and what is it now?' It's a radical change; we can't see the past anymore, we can't see where people were hungry, where children were sent to school to eat because there was nothing to eat at home. It was a very harsh, very cruel reality. But, thank God, we went through many stages, improvements came from the program, it came to help and collaborate with the community. It was a radical change, I think that's part of it" (Interview conducted in June 2022).

However, we must assume that social policies are generated by the State, which is the institution that guarantees private property (MARX; ENGELS, 2001). Thus, there are no fundamental changes in the core of the issue, even though land regularization promotes improvements in the realm of housing, it does not trigger changes in the contradictory movement of capitalist accumulation.

Furthermore, land regularization should include the implementation of urban facilities and services in informal settlements. However, in Vila Recanto II, these facilities were only introduced through the residents' struggles. According to the interviewees, the urban project of the housing complex initially only included the presence of the neighborhood memorial, which was never used and was eventually replaced by the Youth Station and, finally, the square. For this reason, the struggles for improvements did not end with the program's interventions. Over
the years, various facilities have been achieved, which are represented on the map below (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5 - Map of public facilities in the Novo Recanto neighborhood**

The figure below (see Figure 6) presents a summary of the spatial transformations that have occurred in Novo Recanto. We observe that in the year 2005, there were no roads or asphalt. By 2010, we can see the construction of new ones. In 2014, the presence of asphalt and public amenities becomes evident. Finally, in 2021, the production of a new space is clearly noticeable.
Legal regularization was the final stage of the Urbanization, Regularization, and Integration Program for Precarious Settlements. It involved the delivery of 434 land title deeds to the residents of Vila Recanto II.

Furthermore, the interviews revealed that the residents of the village see regularization beyond the mere ownership of their homes. Thus, when discussing the policy, they mention not only the property titling but also all the improvements they have experienced. Melo (2019) asserts that the transformations that have taken place in the area are the result of community mobilizations that fought for better living conditions and the right to housing.

5 FINAL REMARKS

Social land regularization aims to trigger socio-spatial and legal changes in informal settlements, connecting them with the rest of the city and enabling the achievement of dignified housing. However, over the years, this policy has become primarily focused on the delivery of property titles, thus emphasizing its economic dimension.
The analysis conducted in Sobral led to the realization that the municipal government was responsible for the formation of housing illegality by constructing housing developments on private land and keeping the population without property titles for years.

Additionally, it was found that social struggles were essential for socio-spatial transformations to occur in Vila Recanto II. Community organization played a crucial role in enabling the residents to remain in the area and claim their space. Finally, these mobilizations were instrumental in bringing about improvements in the community's living conditions.

The inquiries in Vila Recanto II demonstrate the contradictions that arise during the regularization process, such as the impositions of the conceived space and its inability to break the vicious cycle of housing informality. However, at the same time, it highlights the potential of this policy in securing the right to housing.

The study in Vila Recanto II revealed that when regularization occurs in a comprehensive manner, encompassing urban, environmental, social, and legal transformations in settlements, it brings positive changes to the living conditions and, consequently, to social reproduction. However, despite the improvements it brings, it does not fully overcome the contradictions of space production.

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