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**FRAGILE GAINS? THE LEGACY OF WORLD BANK–FINANCED RURAL  
EXTENSION PROGRAMS**

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This study examines the policy change process induced by World Bank-financed rural extension programs in São Paulo state, Brazil, analyzing how these projects totaling US\$ 250 million transformed the state's public rural extension system between 2000 and 2018. Using the Kaleidoscope Model as an analytical framework, we conducted a qualitative case study combining documentary analysis of 15 documents and semi-structured interviews with six key actors involved in program design, implementation, and evaluation. Our findings demonstrate that these programs successfully catalyzed sequential paradigmatic shifts in rural extension approaches. The Microbacias I (2000-2008) transformed Coordenadoria de Assistência Técnica Integral (CATI)—the

state-level public rural extension agency—from a crop-specific, productivist approach to one centered on sustainable development and participatory methodologies. The Microbacias II (2009-2018) further shifted this trajectory toward market-oriented frameworks emphasizing competitiveness and value chain integration. However, our analysis reveals a fundamental paradox: successful implementation created structural dependency rather than institutional autonomy. Despite internalizing new approaches, CATI proved unable to sustain rural extension services through state resources alone. After World Bank financing ended, the agency faced severe operational contraction. These findings demonstrate that in contexts of chronic resource scarcity, multilateral partnerships can revitalize public extension services but simultaneously create dependencies that challenge long-term sustainability and institutional sovereignty.

Palavras-chave: rural development; kaleidoscope model; public policy; public rural extension; multilateral organizations.