

BRAZIL'S FOOD SECURITY POLICY



FOME ZERO

O BRASIL QUE COME AJUDANDO O BRASIL QUE TEM FOME

HUNGER ZERO

BRAZILIANS WHO EAT HELPING THOSE WHO DON'T

”We will make it possible for people in our country to eat three square meals a day, every day, with no need for hand-outs from anyone. Brazil cannot go on living with so much inequity. We must overcome hunger, extreme poverty and social exclusion. Our war is not to kill anyone it is to save lives.”

Luíz Inácio Lula da Silva

President of the Republic

Towards a final solution

Brazil’s economy is the fourth largest food exporter in the world. Our agriculture is strong enough to meet all of our domestic needs and still generate foreign currency through exports. Even so, right now in the 21st Century, access to food is still a problem for millions of Brazilians.

Today, nearly a third of the Brazilian population is in a situation of ”food insecurity,” meaning that they do not eat enough or well enough, with regularity or dignity.

Although emergency measures may be needed to mitigate the heritage of serious problems, hunger will only be vanquished when we include these millions of hungry Brazilians into the process of development, with access to full citizenship. This is the essence of the Hunger Zero Program, which materializes the commitment of President Luíz Inácio Lula da Silva to make the struggle against hunger his government’s number-one priority.

In a country with one of the world’s the most unequal income distributions, ending hunger demands political determination and planning.

Everyone must participate in a policy to assure that all Brazilians will always have access to enough health food, produced sustainably from national resources.

We have what it takes to put an end to hunger o Brazil.

José Graziano da Silva

Special Minister of Food Security and Hunger Combat - MESA

What is Zero Hunger?

Zero Hunger is a program of many activities that will be implemented gradually throughout the government's four-year mandate, with the aim of promoting food and nutritional security for all Brazilians. These activities involve nearly all ministries, the three spheres of government (federal, State and municipal) and the entire society.

The Special Ministry of Food Security and Hunger Combat - MESA, located within the Office of the President, was created to bring together these activities as well as to carry out its own actions.

From hunger to food and nutritional security

In Portuguese, we use the word "hunger" to refer both to the normal feeling of an empty stomach and to the social problem rooted in poverty and calamities like draughts, for example.

In Brazil, only a small share of the population is affected by the kind of stark hunger or starvation normally associated with draught. Even so, many other Brazilians do not have access to enough good food on a regular basis.

To avoid confusion or misuse of words, the Zero Hunger Program uses the concept of *food and nutritional security*.

Assuring *food and nutritional security* for the population of a country means providing all citizens with access to dignified food, with sufficient regularity, quality and quantity.

Dignified food

Someone pawing through garbage cans for food may not be undernourished, but they do not have food security.

Quality

An errand boy who has a hot dog for lunch every day is not hungry, but he does not have food security.

Regularity

A person who depends on occasional hand-outs to keep hunger at bay does not have food security.

Quantity

A family that cannot afford to buy food for all of its members does not have food security.

Brazil's appalling poverty and hunger

The dramatic conclusion is that, in Brazil, hunger and food insecurity are not due to any shortage of food. People simply cannot afford to eat. For lack of money, tens of millions of Brazilians have inadequate access to food.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Brazil produces 2,960 kcal/day in food for every inhabitant, well above the 1,900 kcal/day recommended minimum. Yet other FAO findings reveal that one out of every ten Brazilians eats less than an average of 1,650 kcal/day.

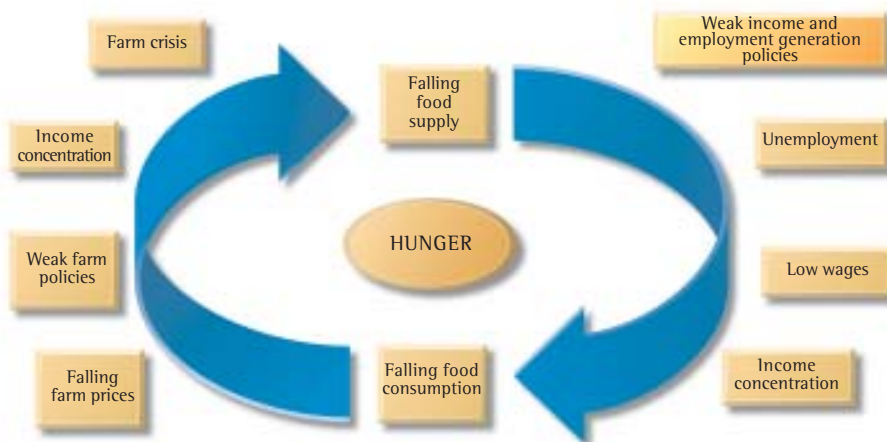
A Brazilian non-governmental organization, *Instituto Cidadania*, has estimated that 44 million Brazilians were in a situation of food insecurity in 1999. In 2001, they updated that figure to 46 million. At the same time, the official Applied Economic Research Institute (IPEA) calculated that 57 million Brazilians were "poor" in 1999, using a poverty-line concept of the based on total per capita income.

Different criteria and methods produce varying results, but there is no denying that every Brazilian facing an empty plate is enough to put the nation to shame.

A National Food Security Policy will benefit the country and recover the self-esteem of all Brazilians.

The vicious circle of hunger

Zero Hunger assumes that poverty is not bad luck, but the result of a perverse development model that produces ever greater concentration of income and employment. This situation leads into the vicious circle of hunger.



Poverty pockets

Brazil has three basic poverty pockets:

Metropolitan regions

Unemployed, underemployed and informal workers

Urban areas of small and medium-sized cities

Families with no regular income and the unemployed

Rural areas

Family farmers, informal workers, underemployed and unemployed

Fighting hunger in Brazil

Zero Hunger will fight hunger and assure food and nutritional security by attacking the structural causes of poverty. This demands a new development model, to make it possible to overcome poverty.

A grumbling stomach cannot wait, and the program will also deal with the emergency of empty plates. It will not, however, perpetuate soup lines but will generate opportunities, relying on sustainable local development in which municipalities have a fundamental role to play (see next page).

To achieve this objective, Zero Hunger is working around three hubs of activity:

Implementing public policies

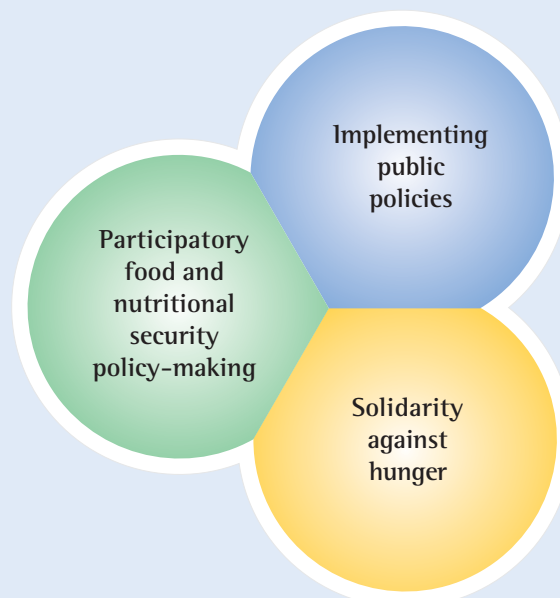
A combination of structural policies (aimed at the deeper causes of hunger and poverty), specific policies (to meet families' needs for access to food) and local policies (to be carried out by state and city governments and by organized civil society based on local needs), coordinated by the Special Ministry of Food Security and Hunger Combat - MESA.

Participatory food and nutritional security policy-making

The active participation of society in the formulation, execution and follow-up to a National Food and Nutritional Security Policy, whose highest body is the National Food and Nutritional Security Council - Consea.

Solidarity against hunger

A major national solidarity movement aimed at those who suffer the day-to-day impact of hunger and who cannot wait for the results of deeper changes in the country's economic and social structures. This movement involves both government and all of society.



Municipalities in the Zero Hunger program

Municipalities will play a strategic role in diagnosing social problems and producing creative solutions for these problems. Due to their structures and their links to communities, city governments are key buttresses for the establishment of Zero Hunger activities.

In the following pages, we highlight some of the initiatives that municipalities can take to create local food and nutritional security programs, including public policies, specific councils and agencies and support for initiatives by organized civil society.

Implementing public policies

Zero Hunger is not a charity program. It is seen as an innovative program by international agencies such as the FAO, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank because it creates mechanisms both to fight hunger and to change the causes that generate poverty. See how this is going to happen:

Stimulating the economy in poverty pockets

Emphasis is on local development, allowing greater demand for food to promote the growth of farming, industry and commerce, thus generating employment and income, above all in poverty pockets.

Tying down expenses

Every cent is earmarked for fighting hunger

The example of the Food Card

The Food Card Program (PCA) was one of the first activities implemented by the federal government. It shows how Zero Hunger can fight hunger while attacking the causes of poverty.

Pay attention

The PCA gives a certain amount of cash to families in situations of food insecurity. These families' food situation and their social and economic evolution are monitored by a team of administrators from the local government, members of the community and major groups of beneficiaries. The federal government guides the administrative committee to assure that the money is spent on locally-produced, highly nutritious food products.

In contrast to popular belief, the federal government spends nothing on audits. The administrative committee is responsible for this task and has autonomy to monitor the families' choices on the quality and origin of food and on how they spend the money.

The PCA stimulates the economy in the poverty pockets themselves, by encouraging the consumption of locally-produced and marketed food. This generates development, employment and income. Meanwhile, it ties down the spending by using public money directly to fight hunger, through mechanisms aimed at the emancipation of beneficiaries. The most important feature is that with the administrative committees, the government clearly displays its efforts and its confidence in an educational process for organizing society.

Major policies planned for the Zero Hunger Program

The following policies are references to be implemented gradually, while the Program can also be improved by new policies.



STRUCTURAL POLICIES

- Generation of employment and income
- Universal social security
- Incentives for family farming
- Land reform
- Social development within the semi-arid region
- School scholarships and minimum-income programs
- Basic health care



SPECIFIC POLICIES

- Food Card Program (PCA)
- Emergency food support
- Security stocks
- Food safety and quality program
- Expansion of the Workers' Food Program (PAT)
- Mother and child nutrition
- Expansion of school lunch programs



LOCAL POLICIES

For metropolitan regions

- Popular restaurants
- Food banks
- Modernization of food supply facilities
- New relations with retailers/supermarkets

For small and medium-sized cities

- Food banks
- New relations with retailers
- Stimulate consumption of local produce
- Incentives for urban farming

For rural areas

- Support for family farming
- Creation of local marketing spaces and facilities
- Technical assistance for farmers
- Expansion of credit
- Investments in infrastructure
- Support for production and self-consumption

Participatory Policy-making for Food and Nutritional Security

Society must be organized for us to vanquish hunger and overcome poverty in Brazil. The Zero Hunger program promote social organizing so that society can do its part in formulating, implementing and monitoring food and nutritional security policies. This democratic web will bring together the Food and Nutritional Security Councils made up of public authorities and representatives of organized civil society.

The National Food and Nutritional Security Council – Consea

The Consea is the national expression of that web. It is a consulting body to advise the President of Brazil on the development of guidelines for the country to assure the human right to food. This body will operate in an ongoing dialogue with the Special Ministry of Food and Hunger Combat – MESA, with other ministries and with society at large.

Who sits on the Consea?

13 Federal Ministers

11 observers

38 personalities from organized civil society

Total: 62 councilors with mandates through March 2004

President: Luis Marinho

Secretary: Minister José Graziano da Silva

State and Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Councils

Local action is fundamental. States and municipalities must create local councils to deal with food and nutritional security issues that are specific to their regions.

Detailed information on the membership and organization of these councils can be found in the site <http://www.fomezero.gov.br>

Collective campaign against hunger

The Anti-hunger “Mutirão” (a community-based collective campaign) includes emergency actions to mitigate the immediate suffering of Brazilians with nothing to eat. It involves the establishment of partnerships that can help eradicate the causes of the problem once and for all.

This collective solidarity campaign will involve the entire society. The government knows that no matter how strong its own commitment is, it will not win this war alone.

The Anti-hunger campaign works on several fronts:

Food donation campaign

Collection and distribution of food, with a priority on municipalities hit by calamities, with camps of landless families, indigenous communities and Afro-Brazilian *quilombola* communities, as well as charity agencies recognized by the city governments.

Small-scale donations are organized by city governments in partnership with civil-society organizations and groups of volunteers.

Large-scale donations (more than a truck-load) are centralized by the National Food Supply Company - Conab, which has infrastructure for storage and distribution.

To find out how to participate, check the site <http://www.fomezero.gov.br> or contact your local city government.

Financial donation campaign

The government encourages donations to be made directly to charity agencies that are already active in the municipalities, chosen by donors.

For those who wish to donate directly to the Zero Hunger Program, Zero Hunger accounts have been opened at the Banco do Brasil and at the Caixa Econômica Federal. The money goes into the Fund to Fight and Eradicate Poverty, whose administration is accountable and transparent (see box below).

Where do cash donations go?

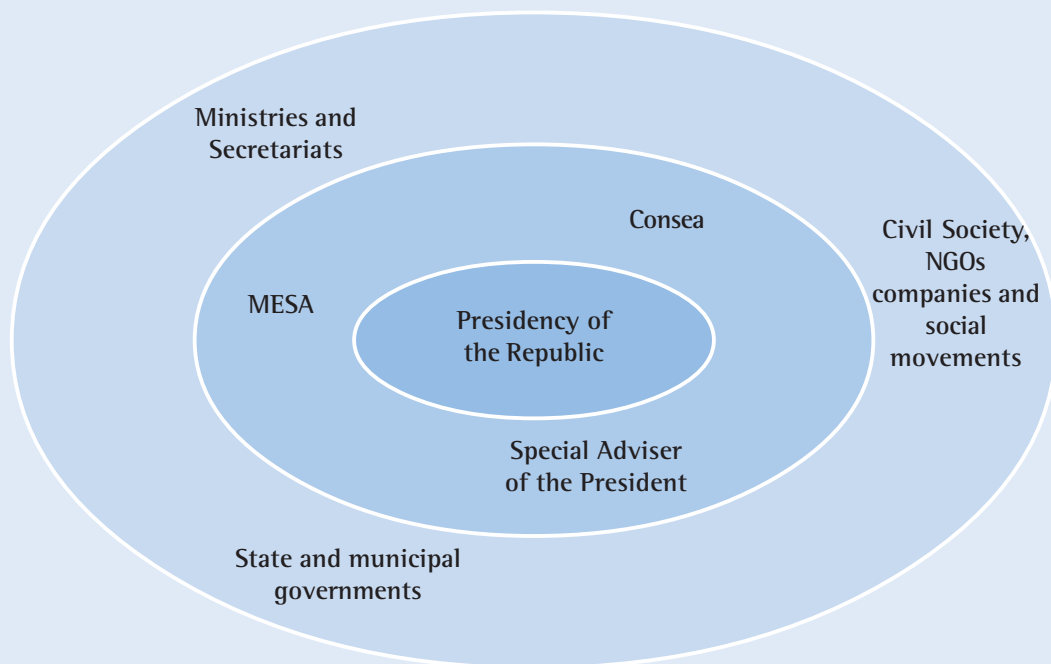
The Fund to Fight and Eradicate Poverty was created in 2001 to fund actions targeting poor families. The Fund works with budget allotments and with donations from individuals and companies located in Brazil and abroad. It is managed by the Special Ministry of Food Security and Hunger Combat – MESA, with the support of a Consulting Council. The funds from donations are used exclusively in actions to fight hunger.

Creation of volunteer groups

Food donations and other local Zero Hunger activities can be supported by the work of groups of volunteers. Municipal governments and the local Zero Hunger agencies are responsible for organizing people who want to participate.

To find out how to participate, contact your municipality's local government.

The Structure of the Zero Hunger Program



Special Ministry of Food Security and Hunger Combat- MESA
Minister José Graziano da Silva

Special advisors to the Presidency of the Republic for Zero Hunger
Oded Grajew
Friar Betto

Contact and information:

<http://www.presidencia.gov.br/ mesa>
<http://www.fomezero.gov.br>
<http://www.fomezero.org.br>
 e-mail: fomezero@planalto.gov.br

Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco A, 4° e 5° andares
 Brasília, DF – 70054-900
 Press and communication: (+55-61) 411-4726

General information for the public:
0800-707-2003

Ministério
Extraordinário de
Segurança Alimentar
e Combate à Fome – Mesa

