

Chmielewska, Danuta; Souza, Darana

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Danuta Chmielewska

Darana Souza

International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth

Country Study

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International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth

Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco O, 7º andar
70052-900 Brasília, DF - Brazil
Telephone: +55 61 2105 5000

E-mail: ipc@ipc-undp.org ■ URL: www.ipc-undp.org

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THE FOOD SECURITY POLICY CONTEXT IN BRAZIL*

Danuta Chmielewska** and Darana Souza**

1 INTRODUCTION

Brazil currently offers an important conceptual framework for food and nutritional security, and a relevant context of related public policy and programming. Recently, moreover, the country included the right to food among the social rights stipulated in its constitution. These achievements are the result of a longstanding process of public intervention and broad social mobilisation that has involved a variety of stakeholders from the government and civil society.

As far as public programming is concerned, several actions that may reflect on food and nutritional conditions were taken in Brazil throughout the twentieth century, such as the minimum wage in 1940, supply programmes, school meals and dining halls for workers in the 1950s, and food supplement programmes in the 1970s (CONSEA, 2009).

Nevertheless, the recent mobilisation around the concepts of food and nutritional security started to acquire significant national scope mainly in the 1980s. Important initiatives from this period include the preparation of the document 'Food Security–Proposal for a Policy to Fight Hunger' by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1985, which offered an important technical discussion; and the mobilisation of the civil society that led in 1986 to the first National Food and Nutrition Conference (CNAN), which played a significant political role (CONSEA, 2009).

The following decade also saw significant progress on ideas and activities in the areas of food and nutritional security. In 1993, civil society conducted an important awareness raising campaign called Citizenship Action against Hunger and Poverty and for Life. The campaign fostered substantial mobilisation about hunger in Brazilian society and led to the amassing of thousands of tons of food to be distributed to the needy.

Then-President Itamar Franco gave backing to the matter within government. He declared hunger an absolute political priority and assumed responsibility for implementing a proposal on a National Food Security Policy. This commitment led to four important events.

First, in order to understand the phenomenon, Brazil's Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) was tasked with drawing up a nationwide hunger map. The map showed that there were 32 million destitute people, accounting for more than 20 per cent of Brazil's population at the time (IPEA, 1993a). The hunger map provided the material needed to prepare the National Plan to Combat Hunger and Poverty, which was launched in 1993 and included several steps to be taken to tackle these problems (IPEA, 1993a). Concomitantly, under pressure from civil society, the government created the National Food and Nutritional Security Council (CONSEA), an advisory body to the presidency comprising representatives of the government and civil society. Additionally, the first National Conference on Food Security

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** International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth.

(CNSA) was held in 1994. This brought together almost 2,000 participants from all over the country to discuss conditions in Brazil and government actions on the matter (CONSEA, 2009).

Nevertheless, the first CONSEA experience lasted only two years, since the government discontinued it in 1995. At the start of that year, as the newly elected President Fernando Henrique Cardoso assumed office, the fight against poverty, rather than hunger, became the political priority. This was set forth in the strategy *Comunidade Solidária*, which linked and coordinated a range of public policies on poverty. The food and nutritional security debate lost force but did not disappear from the government's view, since it became part of the agenda of the Council of *Comunidade Solidária*. Worth highlighting are three initiatives during Cardoso's first term (1995–1998): the drafting of the Brazilian document for the 1996 World Food Summit, the proposal to create a monitoring system for food and nutritional security, and the organisation of political dialogue on food and nutritional security within *Comunidade Solidária*. This dialogue was particularly important in furthering the food and nutritional security debate in Brazil since it involved a wide range of intellectuals and practitioners in related conceptual discussions (IPEA, 1996). The issue, however, nearly disappeared from the governmental sphere during Cardoso's second presidential term (1999–2002).

Social mobilisation, however, spurred the establishment of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (FBSAN) in 1998. This was a national network of social organisations, researchers and government technical specialists that took shape in meetings held in the states. The forum now has more than 100 affiliated entities and was an important supporter of the reestablishment of CONSEA by President Lula in 2003. It played an important role in forming the Council's agenda and in linking with other networks concerned with food and nutritional security: land reform, a "solidarity economy", agro-ecology, indigenous people, traditional populations, and so on.

Also worth noting is that the family agriculture sector emerged as an important social and political category in the 1990s, and the Ministry of Health approved a National Policy on Food and Nutrition (PNAN) in 1999.

As regards governmental action, food and nutritional security was subject to particular attention in 2003 when Lula assumed the presidency and the Zero Hunger (*Fome Zero*) programme was created. A symbol of the moment was his inaugural speech, in which he stated that if at the end of his mandate all Brazilians could eat three meals a day, he would have accomplished his mission. Social mobilisation and political will became a milestone of the commitment to combat hunger. These developments became crucial in advancing the human right to adequate food in Brazil, and in progress on related policy and programming.

2 BRAZIL'S FOOD SECURITY POLICY FRAMEWORK: A BRIEF PRESENTATION

2.1 THE FOOD SECURITY POLICY DEBATE IN BRAZIL: UNDERLYING CONCEPTS AND ORIENTATIONS

The food-security policy framework in Brazil is an evolving structure marked by significant accomplishments, among which in recent years are the Zero Hunger strategy and the National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN). These involved several concepts and orientations that strongly characterise the national policy debate.

Food security is defined by the Organic Law of Food and Nutritional Security (LOSAN)¹ of 2006, offers a broad understanding of the term:

“food and nutritional security is the realisation of everyone’s right to regular and permanent access to quality food in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other essential needs, based on health-promoting food practices that respect cultural diversity and that are environmentally, culturally, economically and socially sustainable” (Brazil, 2006a).

This concept reflects some leading discussions on food security in Brazil that inform public policy and programming. The *human right to adequate food* has been a milestone in the national policy debate for several years. The major related legal instrument, however, was created only in February 2010 by means of a constitutional amendment² that made the right to food part of Brazilian social rights.

The broad understanding of the importance of *availability and access to food in proper quantity and quality* is also at the heart of the debate. It reflects concern about two major issues originally involved in the discussions—rural development and health—that are also evident in the term “food and nutritional security”, which is widely used in Brazil rather than purely “food security”. These concerns have been fundamental to the development of recent food schemes, through support for the production and consumption of diversified and nutritionally balanced food items.

It is important to add that the Brazilian debate also rests on the perception that food and nutritional security can only be attained by a *combination of structural changes and short-term actions*. Recent, related public action comprises interventions geared to tackling the underlying causes of hunger, such as inequality, poverty and social exclusion. They aim at supporting insertion into the workforce, increasing family income and redistributing resources. Food-security interventions include programmes targeting immediate access to food as both regular and emergency interventions.

This approach is consistent with a comprehensive vision of food and nutritional security that reaffirms its diverse dimensions and the consequent need for a *multi-sectoral intervention*. As a result, government food-security activities include programmes in various areas that fall under the responsibility of different government institutions: labour, social assistance, health, education, rural development and so forth. They are also expected to be coordinated by multi-sectoral bodies under the National System for Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN), as discussed below.

This multi-sectoral approach is extended to the various levels of government (federal, state and municipality). Brazil’s decentralisation process started in 1988, along with recognition that local-level interventions are crucial for food security because they can properly link producers’ and consumers’ needs. This has motivated various local undertakings, such as food banks and community kitchens.

Civil society also plays a leading role in this approach. It takes part in proposing and monitoring programmes on food and nutritional security. Participation and social accountability are mainly structured around the work of the food and nutritional security conferences (CNSAN) and councils (CONSEA), which have a presence at the national, regional and local levels. This system, comprising representatives of government and civil society, has

been important in the development of Brazil's food and nutritional security policies, and characterises the multi-stakeholder approach to the issue.

A complement to the food and nutritional security framework is the concept of *food sovereignty*. This is defined by CONSEA as “the right of a people to define its own policies and strategies for food production, distribution and consumption” (CONSEA, 2009). This notion goes beyond a country's capacity to produce food for internal consumption and to regulate trade. It highlights national choices in terms of government support to different food-production models and diversified food habits.

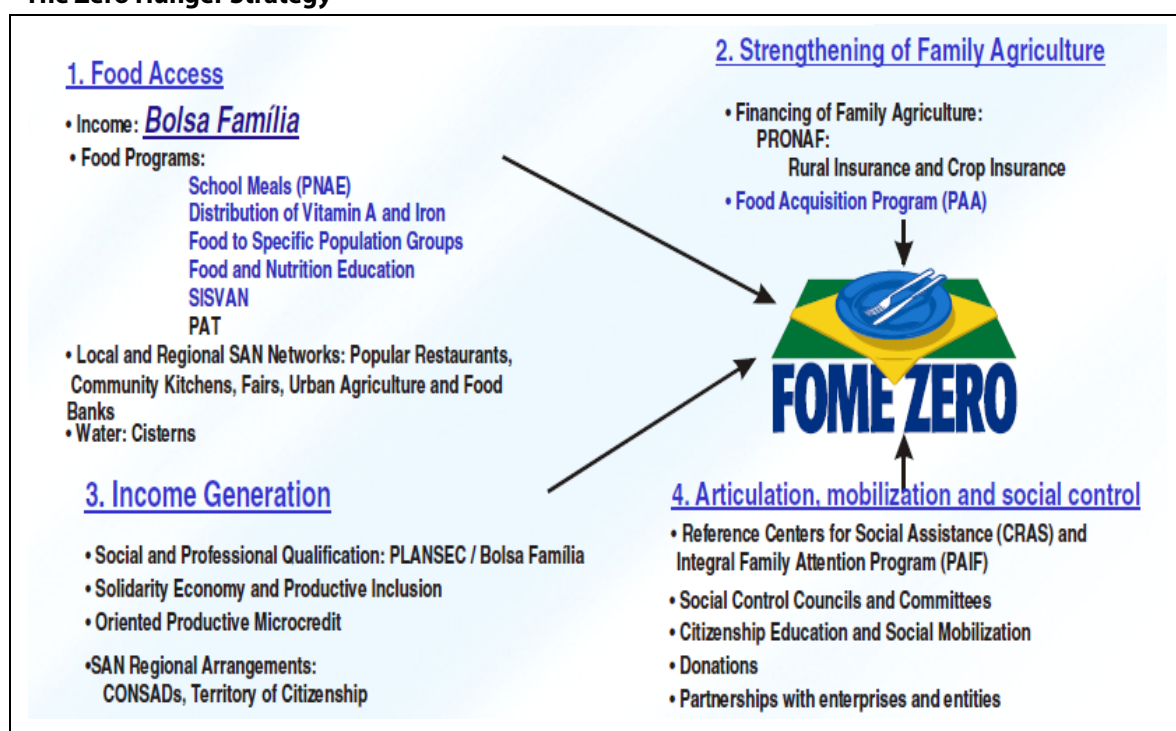
The concepts and orientations mentioned above are at the heart of the Brazilian food and nutritional security debate. They also form the basis of the related government interventions based on Zero Hunger and the recently created National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN).

2.1.1 The Zero Hunger Strategy

Zero Hunger, Brazil's national strategy on food and nutritional security, consists of more than 20 initiatives in four axes of intervention (see Figure 1). Its creation in 2003 was a milestone in the recognition of food and nutritional security as a leading and cross-cutting priority on the political agenda. Zero Hunger is a combination of continuity and innovation. On the one hand it introduced major programmes such as the *Bolsa Família*, a conditional cash transfer scheme. On the other, it incorporated a range of existing initiatives³ in an effort to put together a multi-sector array of public interventions to tackle hunger and guarantee universal access to quality food.

FIGURE 1

The Zero Hunger Strategy⁴



Source: Aranha (2010).

Bolsa Família is the framework's main programme in terms of financial resources and scope. It has the largest budget within Zero Hunger, equivalent to over US\$8 billion in 2010, followed by two other programmes: the National Programme for Strengthening Family Farming (PRONAF) and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE).

Drawing up, funding and implementing each programme and action fall under the responsibility of the government institutions involved in the related public sector. For instance, PRONAF is managed by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) while the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) and its local public partners are in charge of *Bolsa Família*.

The maintenance of food security as a leading political priority in the years of Zero Hunger's implementation is a subject of continuing discussion. There are many reasons for this, including the transformation of the Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security (MESA), which was created in 2003, into the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) the following year. Since MDS also became responsible for social assistance, which previously was managed by the National Secretariat for Social Assistance, this change would represent a decline in the importance of food and nutritional security as a leading priority (Takagi, 2006). Moreover, the scale of *Bolsa Família* in recent years, in terms of budget and visibility, could be interpreted as a shift in focus from food and nutritional security to poverty reduction. In any case, it is reasonable to say that food and nutritional security has been among the key thematic issues of the political agenda.

Nevertheless, the maintenance of Zero Hunger itself as a long-term framework for public action brings uncertainties. This is aggravated by the new presidential term that starts in January 2010, when President Lula, whose two consecutive terms were Zero Hunger's implementation period, will be replaced.

2.1.2 The National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN)

In addition to the implementation of Zero Hunger, in recent years Brazil has made efforts to create a National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN). The preparation of the policy was the result of work by various sectors of the government and civil society working through significant institutions: the Inter-Ministerial Chamber on Food and Nutritional Security (CAISAN), the National Council on Food and Nutritional Security (CONSEA), and the National Conferences on Food and Nutritional Security (CNSAN). Their efforts gave rise to an August 2010 decree⁵ that establishes PNSAN, gives guidelines for the future preparation of the National Food and Nutritional Security Plan, and provides further regulations on LOSAN.

PNSAN's general aim is to promote food and nutritional security and to ensure the human right to adequate food. Its specific objectives are to: (Brazil, 2010c)

- Identify, analyse, disseminate and act on the factors that influence food and nutritional insecurity in Brazil.
- Link the programmes and actions of various sectors to respect, protect, promote and provide the human right to adequate food, considering the variety of social, cultural, environmental, ethnic-racial, equity of gender and sexual orientation, as well as provide tools for its accountability.

- Promote sustainable agro-ecological systems for food production and distribution that respect biodiversity and strengthen family agriculture, indigenous peoples and traditional communities, and that ensure consumption and access to adequate and healthy food, respecting the diversity of national food culture.
- Include respect for food sovereignty and the guarantee of the human right to adequate food, including access to water, as a state policy, and to promote them in international negotiations and cooperation.

PNSAN is to be implemented through the National Plan on Food and Nutritional Security. This four-year plan will be drawn up by CAISAN according to guidelines determined by CONSEA and CNSAN. The first plan is expected to be ready by August 2011, and to contain programmes that cover a range of issues that are already covered by different public interventions: (Brazil, 2010c)

1. Food access for students, workers and people in conditions of food vulnerability.
2. Income transfer.
3. Education for food and nutritional security.
4. Support to people with special dietary needs.
5. Strengthening family agriculture and urban and peri-urban food production.
6. Government procurement of food from family farms for general supply and stocks.
7. Mechanisms to guarantee minimum prices for agricultural products from family farmers and from socio-biodiversity.
8. Access to land;
9. Conservation, management and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity.
10. Food and nutrition to ensure health.
11. Health surveillance.
12. Access to safe water for consumption and production.
13. International humanitarian assistance and South-South cooperation on food and nutritional security;
14. Food and the nutritional security of indigenous peoples, *quilombolas* and other traditional peoples.

The decree also mentions other issues concerning PNSAN and the plan, such as funding and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The necessary financial resources are to fall under the responsibility of the federal government, the states and the municipalities. They are to be allocated to the operation of the National System for Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN), as well as to the different government sectors related to food and nutritional security. Additionally, a system will be introduced to monitor the realisation of the human right to adequate food, implementation of PNSAN and the results of the plan.

PNSAN and the future plan comprise an important additional step to Zero Hunger and a significant consolidation of government action on food and nutritional security. On the one hand this broadens the scope of the Zero Hunger strategy, opening up the possibility of including other issues in the food-security policy framework, and ensures follow-up mechanisms. On the other, government action is now legally enshrined as state policy and can thus endure whether or not Zero Hunger is maintained by future governments.

2.1.3 The Brazilian Food Security Situation and the Policy Context

Food security in Brazil can be measured by various indicators that are captured in a range of data systems. In general, the information gathered by these systems (which are presented briefly below, focusing on the national level), is disaggregated to a helpful degree, such as by location (regions and states), rural/urban areas, gender, and populations (race and ethnicity).

The Brazilian Food-Insecurity Scale (EBIA) is a recent effort to provide a picture of the country's food security situation. This methodology consists of a set of questions about the informant's perceptions of household access to food in proper quantity and quality. EBIA was applied for the first time in 2004 as part of the Brazilian National Household Sample Survey (PNAD), developed by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), and was again applied in 2009. Its latest application showed that 30.2 per cent of households were in some degree of food insecurity in 2009. This means that in 2009, 65.6 million people in 17.7 million homes had some constraint on their food intake or at least some concern about the possibility of constraints because of a lack of resources to buy food. The data released in 2010 show a total of 18.7 per cent living in mild food insecurity,⁶ 6.5 per cent in moderate,⁷ and 5 per cent (2.9 million people) in severe food insecurity⁸ (IBGE, 2010c).

Additionally, the health sector's System of Food and Nutritional Surveillance (SISVAN) is a data tool used to track the nutritional status and food consumption of the people who attend the basic units of the public health system and are served by the family health strategy. It covers all ages—children, adolescents, adults and seniors—and consists of a combination of various surveillance strategies, such as information systems to promote continuous data on the population's nutritional and food conditions, determination of the prevalence of nutritional problems among children (0–5 years old), periodic population surveys, promotion of and access to scientific literature, and nutrition and health indicators of the population. SISVAN reveals that in 2010, some 3.7 per cent of children below five years of age who had used the related health systems had low or very low weight-for-age, while 7.2 were overweight. It also showed that not as much of 6 per cent of infants below two months old had an exclusively breastfeeding diet (SISVAN, 2010).

The Ministry of Health also finances the National Survey of Demography and Woman and Child Health (PNDS). This is part of the global project MEASURE DHS (Demographic and Health Survey) supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and partners. PNDS launched its second and most recent edition in 2006. It describes the profile of the female population of childbearing age and of children under five years old, identifies changes in the health status and nutrition of these two groups over the past 10 years, and applies EBIA in its considered scope. It reveals that, nationwide, 4.3 per cent of women aged between 15 and 49 are underweight, which is below the levels considered proper for healthy populations (5 per cent). The Northeast region, however, is slightly above that level and has the highest share of the regions at 5.2 per cent. At the national level, 7.0 per cent of children

below the age of five were estimated to have insufficient height-for-age, with a higher share in the Northern region (14.7 per cent) (Ministry of Health, 2009).

In addition, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) develops the National Household Budget Survey (POF) to investigate families' financial conditions and to gather other information about living standards. POF provides important data on food and nutritional security, such as household spending on food items, perceptions of the quantity of and preference for the food consumed, and the nutritional status of youths. The 2008–2009 POF reveals significant trends in the population, with a substantial decline in malnutrition and food insecurity, and worrying figures on overweight. Some 6 per cent of children under five years old have height deficiency. The proportion of those who are overweight (33.5 per cent) is eight times higher than the underweight in the 5–9 age group and more than eighteen times in adults (the alarming figure is 49 per cent). On the other hand, the share of households perceiving that they have access to sufficient food has increased by over 11 per cent in the last six years, and currently stands at 64.5 per cent, but 35.5 per cent of households still say that they do not have access to enough food. Conditions are more disturbing in the North and Northeastern regions, where over 50 per cent of families reported that they do not consume sufficient food (IBGE, 2010a).

The development of this vast range of information schemes is a significant feature of the Brazilian experience, but some related matters still need to be strengthened. First, these are dispersed datasets that have not yet been combined into one common system for a broad food-security assessment. CONSEA, in collaboration with the government and non-governmental actors, is building a system to monitor realisation of the human right to adequate food. This is meant to be a set of indicators, based on existing databases in Brazil, that could regularly provide information on which individuals and groups have their right violated, how many of them there are, where they are, why they are in that situation and what could be done to eliminate food and nutritional insecurity. The indicators cover seven areas: food production, food availability, income and living conditions, access to food, health and access to health services, education, and public policies.

The lack of a common information system hampers related public programmes and actions from responding to a broad analysis of food and nutritional security. Each intervention, including those under Zero Hunger, defines and uses its own targeting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Furthermore, several programmes related to food and nutritional security have only limited systems for permanent monitoring and evaluation, precluding deeper analysis of their effectiveness or impacts. In general, the available data concern a restricted amount of quantitative information such as the number of beneficiaries and the allocated budget. Hence the need to improve data and analytical capacity so as to properly understand the programmes' effects on food and nutritional security.

3 MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF BRAZIL'S FOOD-SECURITY POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 THE RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

As regards the legal framework of the right to food, Brazil has signed all the main international conventions. The country is party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and

Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the most important human-rights instrument for the right to food, and thus the government has committed itself to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food.

The ICESCR originally used the term “human right to adequate food” in 1966. In 2002, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food defined the term as follows (ABRANDH, 2010a): “The right to food is the right to have regular, permanent and unobstructed access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensures a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free from anxiety.” This right is realised when “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

At the national level, Brazil has made significant progress on the legal framework of food and nutritional security (Table 1). In 2006, the Organic Law of Food and Nutrition Security (LOSAN) was enacted and the human right to adequate food (HRAF) was clearly stated. HRAF adds important value to the conception of food and nutritional security in Brazil, and to the related programmes, with legal matters and principles of human rights. Moreover, Brazil has recently included the right to food among the social rights stipulated in its constitution (see below). In Brazil, the right to food is conceived as consisting of two indivisible dimensions: (i) the right to be free from hunger and malnutrition; and (ii) the right to adequate food, which implies the duty of the public sector to respect, protect, promote and provide that right, as well as monitoring and evaluating the realisation of the right and thus guaranteeing the mechanisms to claim it (CONSEA, 2009).

TABLE 1

Timeline of Legal and Institutional Consolidation

1990s	
1993	Creation of CONSEA
1995	Discontinuation CONSEA
1995	Creation of the Solidarity Community Programme
1999	National Policy on Food and Nutrition (PNAN)
2000s	
2003	Launching of the Zero Hunger Strategy
2003	Reestablishment of CONSEA
2003	Creation of the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA)
2004	Establishment of <i>Bolsa Família</i>
2006	Establishment of SISAN by LOSAN
2009	Inclusion of junior high school students, youth and adult education programmes in PNAE
2009	Stipulation that 30% of the food bought for schools must come from family farmers
2010s	
2010	Establishment of the National Policy of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (PNATER)
2010	Approval of the constitutional amendment that includes food among the social rights
2010	Establishment of the National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN)

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The implementation of Zero Hunger aimed to ensure the human right to adequate food for the segment of the population at the highest level of food and nutritional insecurity, in an effort to have significant impact on inequality and poverty.

HRAF has been the basis of the country's recent efforts to develop public policies on food and nutritional security as a whole. "The realisation of everyone's right to regular and permanent access to quality food in sufficient quantity" (Brasil, 2006) is the notion that has guided the formulation and implementation of those policies, as well as accountability for them. *Bolsa Família* illustrates this approach since it provides the means (in the form of a cash transfer) to help families acquire food.

Civil society has also played a crucial role in this process. The consolidation of the national CONSEA and its counterparts at the state and municipal levels,⁹ as well as the establishment of the Standing HRAF Commission in CONSEA and the Special Commission for Monitoring HRAF violations in the Civil Rights Division (CDDPH) of the Attorney General's Office, have all contributed to the realisation of the human right to adequate food (see Table 2).

Similarly, the availability of indicators on food and nutritional insecurity disaggregated by race, ethnicity, geographic region, age group and so on has facilitated a clearer identification of inequalities and their causes. This data are extremely important for the work of the abovementioned commissions and for other commissions in CONSEA.

Other major achievements of civil society activity are the establishment of the National Rapporteur on Human Rights to Food, Water and Rural Land of the National Platform on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (DHESCA) (further detailed in Table 2) and the growing mobilisation of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (FBSAN).

As mentioned earlier, until recently Brazil's constitution did not specifically mention the right to food. The inclusion of that right among the constitution's social guarantees in February 2010 strengthens the national legal framework of food and nutritional security. The constitutional text now states: "Article 6. Social rights are education, health, food, work, housing, leisure, safety, welfare, protection of motherhood and childhood, and assistance to the destitute" (EC 64/2010–Brazil, 2010a).

Congressional approval of the constitutional amendment that guarantees the right to food was significantly encouraged by a national campaign, *Alimentação: um direito de todos* ("Food: A Right for All"), led by CONSEA with civil-society organisations, social movements, public and private agencies, non-governmental organisations, artists and citizens from across the country. This approval was the result of a long process: the first proposal was made in 2003, seven years before the National Congress made a final decision.

The intention of including this in the constitution was to make HRAF an obligation of the state, to be fulfilled through permanent policies implemented by the government at all three levels (federal, state and municipality). In other words, food and nutritional security should become a matter of state rather than of government. This shift strengthens public policies and ensures that there are no breaks to their continuity. At the same time, this constitutional amendment now requires that society make a commitment to the accomplishment of the right. Henceforth, both the government and society are to follow and support the practical implications of this amendment, exemplified by the consolidation of monitoring and evaluating mechanisms for programmes that address the human right to adequate food.

Nevertheless, Brazil's constitution already made provision for a wide range of entitlements and obligations related to the right to food. They include guarantees such as the right to life, minimum wage, social assistance, education, the provision of school meals, non-discrimination, special protection for vulnerable groups, and land reform.

Land reform is prominent, since there is a constitutional provision allowing the expropriation of land for redistribution. This is one of the features that make the Brazilian constitution one of the most progressive in the world. According to UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food: "The right to food and the right to land can be complementary in this context" (De Schutter, 2009).

Although significant progress has been made on the rights-based approach, these national and international normative advances have not been sufficient to ensure full implementation of the HRAF and other human rights in Brazil, considering the innumerable and complex challenges to their realisation.

The country needs to develop a clear understanding of who is accountable for realising the right to food and how rights-holders can claim it and receive answers in a timely manner. A first step is to recognise that for every human right there are corresponding obligations and responsibilities held by various stakeholders (state, individuals, households, communities, non-governmental organisations, civil-society organisations and the business sector) for the realisation of that right. In other words, once a human right is defined, it establishes a right-holder and determines who should be held accountable if the right to food, for example, is violated.

In human-rights legislation, the obligations ultimately belong to the state when the state is responsible for the exercise of executive, legislative and judicial powers, including the implementation and use of public resources. Thus it is the state's responsibility to comply with human-rights laws, ensuring the right to adequate food is respected, protected, promoted and provided for. This means (ABRANDH and CERESAN, 2009):

- Respect: the obligation to respect human rights requires that states take no measures that result in the realisation of these rights being blocked. The state may not, through laws, policies or actions, hurt the realisation of human rights, and when it does it has to create mechanisms for redress.
- Protect: the state must protect the inhabitants of its territory against the actions of companies or individuals that violate human rights.
- Promotion: the state should engage proactively in activities geared to strengthening people's access to resources and means, as well as people's use of them, in order to guarantee their human rights. The state must promote and facilitate public policies that increase the capacity of households to feed themselves.
- Provide: the state has an obligation towards individuals or households that, for structural or cyclical reasons, have not been able to secure food, adequate housing, education and healthcare for themselves. The state, for example, has the obligation to ensure food and nutrition with dignity to households suffering from hunger or malnutrition because of conditions beyond their control. The state must also seek to guarantee that these households and individuals regain the ability to feed themselves.

Other stakeholders also have specific responsibilities in the area of human-rights guarantees. For example, each individual has the duty to respect the human rights of all and to require that the state and third parties comply with human-rights norms. Additionally, individuals should not consume in excess, waste or contaminate food and food sources, or prevent access to common sources of food.

For the principle of the human right to adequate food and all other rights to be realised, it is essential that accessible and functioning instruments are available to allow all citizens to complain and receive responses when they regard their rights as being violated. The inclusion of the right to food among the social rights of Brazil's constitution reinforced the need for related instruments through which people could demand their rights. In addition, the demandability of HRAF has its legal basis in the LOSAN, and finds support in the international human rights treaties that Brazil has ratified. This demandability can be satisfied at different levels (ABRANDH, 2006, 2010a, 2010b):

1. Administrative—within services and institutions directly responsible for ensuring the HRAF by means of administrative instruments (complaints, ombudsman system and so on). Examples of these services or institutions are schools, clinics and social assistance offices. For the administrative demandability to be effective, it is crucial that policies and public programmes have accessible routines and procedures of public knowledge that who are the rights holders; what would be violations under the programme and when they can occur; which agencies are responsible for upholding the obligations and for redressal of violations; what mechanisms are available for the collection of duties and who may require them; and how these obligations may be levied.
2. Political—within public management bodies (executive branch) or shared management organisations (participatory councils) responsible for enforcing policies at municipal, state or national level. Political demandability, therefore, is the ability to require that the political community make more effective and diligent choices, contemplating social participation and other principles for the guarantee of human rights.
3. Quasi-judicial—within public instruments vested with some power of coercion, capable of mediating negotiations between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and with the authority to start legal action if necessary. Examples of actions in this case include the Conduct Adjustment Agreement¹⁰ and civil investigation available to the Attorney General.
4. Judicial—within the judicial branch. In Brazil, a class action can be used.

Each country has different public institutions and instruments for the defence and demandability of rights. In Brazil, the National Food and Nutritional Security System (SISAN), as well as other systems of national public policies, depend on public authorities for the defence and demandability of human rights, on the advice of public policy councils and human rights councils and on civil society initiatives. Some of the main initiatives supporting the demandability of the HRAF in Brazil are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Main Initiatives Supporting the Demandability of HRAF in Brazil

Locus	Initiative	Major outcomes
CONSEA	Standing Commission on HRAF	In partnership with PNAE, the Commission developed instruments to enable students and their families to participate effectively in the monitoring of HRAF realisation within the programme.
	Executive Working Group of Indicators and Monitoring (established in 2006)	Proposal for monitoring the progressive realisation of HRAF in the context of the SAN.
Attorney General's Office—Civil Rights Division (CDDPH)	Special Commission for Monitoring Violations of HRAF (established in 2005)	In partnership with several state agencies, the Commission has helped identify concrete alternatives to the suspension of transfers of PNAE funds to the states and municipalities charged with misusing funds of the school feeding programme. Articulates a series of arrangements to demand from the state a more effective linking of FNS policies targeted at the indigenous population.
Attorney General's Office	Working Group of the HRAF (established in 2004)	Launched in 2008, a manual on HRAF promotion to be used as guidelines by the Civil Rights Division.
	State Attorney	Awareness raising on how to use Attorney General mechanisms with regard to HRAF.
National Platform on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (DHESCA Brazil)	National Rapporteur on Human Rights to Food, Water and Rural Land (established in 2002)	In 2005, a procedure was developed and tested to document, investigate, report and monitor human rights violations. Partnership with the Attorney General. Monitoring recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on HRAF.

Source: ABRANDH (2006, 2010a, 2010b); ABRANDH and CERESAN (2009).

Two civil-society organisations, in particular, should be mentioned: the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (FBSAN) and Brazilian Action for Nutrition and Human Rights (ABRANDH) (see Table 3). Because of its broad-based and cross-sectoral composition, the former has been a central collaborator in developing a national food and nutritional security concept that involves the HRAF approach, which provided a better understanding of the HRAF used by the related institutions for the defence and demandability of that right. The latter is considered a focal point among the main Brazilian organisations engaged in the promotion of HRAF, and it also played a crucial role in awareness raising on HRAF. Other public institutions and instruments, outlined in Table 3, have also played an important role.

As an example, we briefly describe some activities undertaken by the Attorney General related to the promotion of HRAF. In Brazil, any human-rights violation can be reported through the State Attorney's Office. For a complaint to be accepted, it is important to attach as much evidence or information as possible. In most municipalities there is at least one state attorney, who may be found in the state's attorney office or in the city forum (ABRANDH, 2010a).

TABLE 3

Other Important Initiatives Supporting the Demandability of HRAF in Brazil

Civil society organisations ¹¹	FBSAN – Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security ABRANDH – Brazilian Action for Nutrition and Human Rights
Public institutions and instruments	Public Defender's Office Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives (CDH) Commission on Human Rights and Participative Legislation of the Senate Parliamentary Front for Food and Nutritional Security Constitutional instruments

Source: ABRANDH (2006; 2010a; 2010b); ABRANDH and CERESAN (2009).

The State Attorney of Alagoas conducted a series of public hearings to assess the functioning of PNAE and other programmes, and to identify possible violations of HRAF in various cities in the state. This led to recommendations to the government in the form of a Conduct Adjustment Agreement. These initiatives have helped improve the operation of the programme and related activities in different municipalities.

The State Attorney of Pernambuco has established a Special State Attorney to guarantee the social function of land, on the basis of several demands presented by the state's rural social movements. This Special State Attorney has acted with all the attorneys of the state to provide information for action on land disputes.

3.2 THE FOOD-PRODUCTION CONTEXT

Brazil is a net food exporter that had a positive agricultural trade balance of US\$55 billion in 2009 (MAPA, 2010). It is also a major producer of most of its basic foodstuffs,¹² including rice, beans, maize, cassava, dairy, beef and poultry. National agricultural production has been rising in recent decades, mainly as a result of productivity increases, and there is no concern about domestic food availability.

The country's addresses a concern for food and nutritional security by paying particular attention to the production model. Questions such as who produces the food, what is produced and how it is produced are crucial. The policy framework thus includes support for small and medium food producers, and for diversified food items that respond to local food habits. Support to farmers within Zero Hunger and PNSAN, therefore, is concentrated in the "family farming"¹³ sector and related categories (land-reform settlers, indigenous and traditional populations, quilombolas,¹⁴ fishing communities, forest pickers and so on).

Brazil's rural population¹⁵ comprises different socioeconomic profiles that co-exist in a context of considerable land concentration. There are at least two major categories for policy purposes, "family farming" and "agribusiness", representing various groups supported by related public institutions and programmes. The agribusiness category is a largely monocultural export-led sector. It accounts for 62 per cent of the country's gross agricultural production value and is very largely responsible for Brazil's main products in the international

market, such as soy, beef, orange juice, coffee and sugar. Characterised by relatively large properties (310 hectares on average), it accounts for 15 per cent of the 5.2 million rural establishments and more than three-quarters of the rural land area (IBGE, 2009).

The second category, family farmers, form the bulk of the rural population: nearly 4.4 million families on 85 per cent of the country's rural establishments. With properties of 18 hectares on average, this sector employs about three-quarters of rural labour, or 12.3 million people. It produces most of Brazil's basic foodstuffs: 87 per cent of the cassava, 70 per cent of the beans, 58 per cent of the milk and 50 per cent of the poultry (IBGE, 2009).

Apart from the importance of family farming for food production, this sector and related categories comprise a significant share of the population's poor and food-insecure. In 2008, 12.5 per cent of the rural population lived on less than US\$1.25 a day, while the national average was 4.9 per cent (IPEA, 2010). Similarly, in 2008–2009, no more than 54.4 per cent of the rural population had access to sufficient food at all times, as compared to 64.5 per cent at the national level (IBGE, 2010a). Support to these groups is thus critical for food availability and food access. This support is treated just as strategically as Zero Hunger, given that "strengthening of family farming" is one of its four axes, and as the PNSAN, which includes such strengthening among its objectives.

Brazil has a range of programmes targeting these groups; some of the key initiatives will be highlighted below. They form the national framework of rural development strategies and reflect the consolidation of government support to specific populations in recent decades. In the 1990s, family farmers and related categories emerged as a considerable political force in Brazil, especially through labour organisations such as the National Federation of Family Farm Workers and social movements such as the Landless Workers Movement (Delgado, 2010). This consolidation also gave rise to important legal instruments, such as Law 11.326 governing the future drafting of the National Policy of Family Agriculture and Rural Family Enterprises. This law mentions a wide range of areas to be contemplated by the policy, including on-farm and off-farm support, research, education and infrastructure.

The development of the framework of programmes and actions, as well as their increasing budgets, are important achievements in Brazil's public policies. In general, however, public support for export-oriented agriculture is still more significant than that for family farming and related categories, despite the importance of the former to food production and access in Brazil. The public budget for the 2009–2010 agricultural year, allocates over six times more resources to the agribusiness sector than to family farming (MAPA, 2009).

Another significant challenge is the limitation on available monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for several programmes supporting family agriculture. Hence it is not easy to assess their impacts. Some figures on family agricultural production and rural poverty, however, reveal current trends. The share of the rural population living on less than US\$1.25 a day fell from 51.3 per cent in 1990 to 12.5 per cent in 2008 (IPEA, 2010). The proportion of the rural population living with some restriction on food quantity, whether regularly or sporadically, fell from 56.9 per cent in 2002–2003 to 45.6 per cent in 2008–2009, but remains quite high (IBGE, 2010a).

There are internal disparities of note. The Northeastern region, which is the most important in terms of family farming, still has the most alarming conditions of rural poverty. It accounts for half the country's family-farming properties, which amounted 89 per cent of the

establishments in the region. It also has the smallest rural properties in Brazil at 13 hectares on average (IBGE, 2009). Poverty reduction, on the other hand, has occurred at similar rates throughout the country in the last 10 years, and thus the proportion of people living on less than US\$1.25 a day (nearly 10 per cent) in the Northeast is twice as high as the national average (IPEA, 2010).

A related and significant challenge is to guarantee participation in rural development programmes for the different profiles of farmers among the sector of family producers, especially as regards an increase in food production and income generation. Although the National Programme to Strengthen Family Farming (PRONAF), the largest related initiative, has been accessed by a sizeable number of beneficiaries (over 2 million family farmers are outside this sector), proper support to this group—which tends to be the most marginalised in social and economic terms—is still to be consolidated.

Another substantial challenge related to the link between rural development, on the one hand, and food and nutritional security on the other, refers to environmental concerns. This is particularly relevant because PNSAN includes the choice of support to agro-ecological food production systems among its directives and goals. Brazilian agriculture faces significant controversies in this regard. This is exemplified by the vast use of agro-chemicals, given that the country is the world's largest user of these products¹⁶ (Carneiro and Almeida, 2010), and the deregulated expansion of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), since Brazil has the second largest production area of GMOs worldwide (ISAAA, 2009).

Some major experiences of rural development interventions targeting family farmers and related categories are presented below.

3.2.1 Land Reform

A key area of government intervention in Brazil is land reform. It comprises a framework of actions based on the II National Plan of Land Reform. The plan includes land redistribution, regularisation of land tenure, credit, education in rural areas, rural extension and activities geared to different groups (women, *quilombolas*, displaced populations and so on). The main body responsible for these initiatives is the National Institute for Colonisation and Agrarian Reform (INCRA).

The land-reform process has had various achievements and faced various challenges. The number of settled families has been increasing in recent years and now amounts to nearly 907,000 in more than 8,500 settlements covering 84 million hectares. Land-reform activities have been diversified, with a particular focus on post-land-distribution interventions and settlement development. These actions include special lines of credit, such as those for housing and productive projects undertaken by women's groups, as well as literacy and other educational projects. These developments are reflected in INCRA's budget, which rose by 300 per cent in the last seven years and stood at about US\$2.6 billion in 2009 (INCRA, 2009).

Land reform, however, requires further consolidation, since land concentration remains a considerable challenge. The country has had a growing Gini index for land distribution in the last decade, now measured at 0.872 (IBGE, 2009).

In this context, the political arena is marked by conflicting interests. Efforts have been made to curb the ability of social movements¹⁷ to take action, such a legal instrument of 2000¹⁸ stipulating that rural property that has been occupied¹⁹ by those who demand land will not be

inspected for land-reform purposes for two years following the end of the occupation. In the first half of 2010, however, more than 130 farms were occupied by landless peasants outside the official land-distribution process, involving nearly 11,000 families (CPT, 2010). The number of land-related conflicts²⁰ has increased in the Northeast, the poorest region and by far the one most marked by these clashes: there were 126 cases in that period (CPT, 2010).

3.2.2 Credit

PRONAF is one of the main initiatives in terms of budget and scope. It was created in 1995 to provide financial support for family farming. It is now the responsibility of the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA), the leading public institution tasked with supporting this sector. PRONAF provides loans nationwide, mainly through public banks, to cover yearly costs or longer-term investments in agriculture, agro-industry or other rural activities. It has different credit lines with their own limits and interest rates according to clients' income levels and activities. Annual interest rates vary from 0.5 per cent to 4.5 per cent, and the highest individual limit for loans is R\$130,000 per project (about US\$72,000) (MDA, 2010a). In 2009, nearly 1.3 million credit contracts were signed, amounting to about US\$5.5 billion (MDA, 2010b).

PRONAF has had some significant achievements in the last 15 years. First, the amount of financial resources available and the number of beneficiaries have increased. It has covered nearly 2 million families nationwide and currently offers the lowest interest rates for rural credit available in Brazil (MDA, 2009). Another important feature of the programme was the creation of two insurance lines accessed during the credit operation that offer protection against climate hazards and price fluctuations. The Family Farming Insurance (SEAF), created in 2004, covers 100 per cent of the loan and 65 per cent of the expected net income from the harvest, in the event of losses caused by drought, rain, hail, wind and other factors. Over 685,000 families contracted SEAF in the 2008–2009 agricultural year, totalling over US\$2.6 billion (MDA, 2010a). The Price Guarantee Programme for Family Farming (PGPAF) has insured producers against price falls since 2006. It offers a discount on the credit payment that is equivalent to the value difference between market prices and the reference prices defined by the National Supply Company (CONAB).

3.2.3 Technical Assistance

Another significant public initiative concerns the availability of technical assistance and rural extension services. These services were offered to farmers by the public sector with the support of the federal government until 1990, when they were discontinued at the national level. The support was reestablished in a new format by MDA more than 10 years later, focusing on family farmers and related categories, in an effort to offer cost-free services nationwide. Now, 1.2 million farmers have access to these services and the beneficiaries' yields have risen by 13 per cent for cassava, 9 per cent for beans, and 6.3 per cent for rice (MDA, 2009).

An substantial achievement in the consolidation of these services is the 2010 law (12,188/10) establishing the national policy (PNATER) and the national programme (PRONATER) of technical assistance and rural extension for family farming and rural reform. The text formalises the principles and objectives of PNATER, and the guidelines to draw up and implement PRONATER. Highlights of the document include the mechanisms for social participation and for contracting implementing agencies. These services, however, still face significant challenges in terms of scope and regularity.

3.2.4 Access to Markets

A distinct initiative is the Food Acquisition Programme from Family Farming (PAA). This has the dual aim of providing food items for vulnerable populations and promoting social inclusion in rural areas. The programme has a complex arrangement that includes different modalities with particular aims and means of operation. It is funded by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) and the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS). Implementation is the responsibility of the National Food Supply Company (CONAB),²¹ states and municipalities. On the one hand, PAA facilitates market access exclusively for family farmers and related categories by means of the government's direct purchase of various agricultural goods at market prices and by providing financial resources to be used as net capital by family farmers' organisations. On the other hand, it sets up public food stocks to regulate prices and for the purposes of donations to institutions dealing with food-insecure populations. It thus targets two groups of beneficiaries: food producers and food consumers.

Between 2003 (when it was first implemented) and 2009, the programme spent more than US\$1.5 billion to buy nearly 2.6 million tons of food. In 2009, 138,000 family farmers sold products through PAA, which were donated to about 13 million people. The main items bought were dairy products (44 per cent of the purchased value), grains (23 per cent), fruits (8 per cent) and vegetables (8 per cent). PAA's disbursed budget in that year totalled over US\$340 million (Managing Group of PAA, 2010).

PAA involves efforts to create and strengthen short food chains, so as to link support to local production with food habits. This approach is consistent with the development of local food-security circuits, a feature of various interventions in the area of food and nutritional security.²² It has allowed PAA to offer significant commercial opportunities to family producers and to play an important role in improving their market capabilities. PAA has also made a diversified range of quality and locally important foods available to those who benefit from the programme's "food access" component (Chmielewska and Souza, 2010).

Although PAA distributes food to millions of people, it is of limited scope in benefitting producers, since its producer-beneficiaries account for just over 3 per cent of Brazil's family farms. It deals mostly with better-off family farmers,²³ which account for 62 per cent of its food suppliers. It is worth mentioning, however, that the most vulnerable family farmers, especially in the Northeast, are also strongly involved in the programme since they account for 22 per cent of the beneficiary producers (Managing Group of PAA, 2010).

Another challenge for PAA is to consolidate the targeting and monitoring of beneficiary consumers. Social assistance and related institutions, such as schools, charity centres, religious entities, hospitals and so on play a key role in the distribution of the goods. They receive PAA food donations and provide them to their target populations. Over 28,000 institutions have participated in the programme. But a close follow-up of participating and potential institutions, their beneficiaries and the impacts of the food distribution is still to be developed.

3.3 SUPPORT FOR FOOD ACCESS

In a country like Brazil where enough food is produced to feed the whole population, food access, rather than availability, can be one of the key issues in understanding food insecurity. Jean Ziegler, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations on the Right to Food, reported in 2003 after his mission to Brazil: "more than 22 million

Brazilians still go undernourished every day, in a country which is now one of the world's largest food exporters" (Ziegler, 2003). These figures come from a report prepared by the Brazilian government for the visit of the Special Rapporteur.

The problem of food access can be understood by the poverty situation. Definitions of poverty and income poverty lines (and therefore the results obtained regarding the number and proportion of the poor and destitute) often involve some arbitrariness. International organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) use an income poverty line based on \$US at purchasing power parity (PPP) per person per day. In that same year the UNDP's methodology, which at that time consisted of US\$1 PPP/person/day, placed 8 million Brazilians below the extreme poverty line.

The lines used in the report provided to Ziegler, however, come from the methodology developed by Brazil's Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), which uses regionalised lines for poverty and indigence. The indigence line refers to the cost equivalent to a food basket, regionally defined, covering an individual's minimum caloric intake needs (IPEA, 2002). People living below this line are those whose income cannot guarantee the most basic need: food.

More recent data from the latest national monitoring report of the MDGs in Brazil indicate that from 1990 to 2008, the percentage of the population below the poverty line (US\$1.25 PPP/person/day) fell from 25.6 per cent to 4.8 per cent.²⁴ Although considered to be a significant fall, this percentage indicates that about 8.9 million Brazilians were still below the poverty line in 2008 (IPEA, 2010).

In this context, Brazil's food-security policy framework considers food access as essential; this is stated in PNSAN and is one of the axes of Zero Hunger. To meet this expectation, Zero Hunger combines compensatory actions to face emergency issues, such as hunger, with policies geared to promoting access to food without compromising too substantial a portion of household income.

Access to food covers different themes in PNSAN and various programmes and actions within Zero Hunger: (i) cash transfer—the *Bolsa Família* programme; (ii) food and nutrition—the National School Feeding Programme, Food to Specific Populations, Cisterns, Low-Price Restaurants, Food Banks, Urban Agriculture/Community Gardens, Surveillance System for Food and Nutrition, Distribution of Vitamin A and Iron, Food and Nutrition of Indigenous People, Food and Nutrition Education and Education for Consumption, Healthy Feeding/Promotion of Healthy Habits; (iii) tax incentives—Support Programme for Workers (PAT); (iv) tax reduction—fiscal exemption for basic staple food.

Among these initiatives, the focus here will be on those that have larger budgets and wider scope: *Bolsa Família* and the National School Feeding Programme. More will also be said about an important system that includes the low-price restaurants and food banks: the Network of Public Utilities for Food Security and Nutrition (*RedSAN*).

3.3.1 *Bolsa Família*

The *Bolsa Família* programme is a conditional cash transfer (CCT) scheme launched at the end of 2003 as a result of the unification of several pre-existing CCTs. It is directed at households facing poverty (whose income per person is between US\$40 and US\$80) and extreme poverty (income per person up to US\$40). Municipalities, usually through their social assistance

departments, are responsible for registering the beneficiaries. The Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) is in charge of programme management and the Caixa Econômica Federal (a federal financial institution) operates the transfers. The programme includes education and health conditionalities for receipt of the transfers, basically related to school attendance, children's immunisation and pre- and post-natal care, according to the composition of beneficiary families.

The programme links three dimensions that are essential to overcoming hunger and poverty: it promotes immediate poverty relief; strengthens the exercise of basic social rights in health and education; and coordinates complementary programmes. It serves more than 12 million households nationwide (MDS, 2010).

Several studies demonstrate the programme's contribution to reducing social inequalities and poverty. Recent research (IBASE, 2008; MDS, 2007) has revealed the *Bolsa Família's* importance to beneficiaries because of the guarantee of a regular, additional income to the household budget and because of the flexibility in the use of resources. The cash transfers can alleviate adverse living conditions, making it possible to for different kinds of daily needs to be met by the market or even enabling investment in productive activities.

As regards the repercussions of *Bolsa Família* for food and nutritional security, several transformations are taking place. The main impact is greater stability in access to food, as well as an increase in the quantity and variety of food consumed, especially items preferred by children (IBASE, 2008). Such changes, although generally positive, should be observed carefully because greater consumption of important sources of protein can be accompanied by a greater intake of other foodstuffs with high energy density and low nutritional value, which can easily lead to overweight and obesity (IBASE, 2008).

The latest impact evaluation of the programme indicates that its health conditionalities have increased the practice of prenatal care among pregnant women in beneficiary families. The nutritional status (height and weight) of children of preschool age (0–6 years) among beneficiaries improved between 2005 and 2009 (IFPRI, 2010). These findings underline the importance of a cash transfer programme in addressing a longstanding problem such as malnutrition, especially in Brazil, where undernutrition stems from insufficient food rather than from poor nutrients.

This is reinforced by the latest Household Expenditure Survey (POF 2009–2010), which shows that 35 per cent of households still face difficulty in accessing food (IBGE, 2010). These perceptions of the quantity of food are more favourable than in 2002–03, when this assessment was last undertaken, but regional disparities are striking. In the North and Northeast, nearly 50 per cent of households reported an insufficient quantity of food consumed (IBGE, 2010a).

Bolsa Família has become important on the Brazilian political agenda. Although there was much uncertainty regarding the process at the time when previous programmes were unified, *Bolsa Família* has become central in the fight to overcome hunger and poverty in the country.

3.3.2 National School Feeding Programme

Another initiative that uses substantial public resources is the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). Created at the beginning of the 1940s, PNAE is Brazil's oldest food programme and one of the largest school meal schemes in the world. It currently guarantees

school meals for all students in basic education. This includes those in kindergarten, elementary school and high school, as well as youths and adults enrolled in public schools and charity systems. PNAE allows financial resources to be transferred from the Brazilian federal government as a supplement to the states and municipalities. Its goal is to meet the nutritional needs of students during their time in the classroom, contributing to their growth, development, learning and academic achievement, as well as promoting healthy eating habits (BRAZIL, 2010b).

A law enacted in June 2009²⁵ established new guidelines and new means of implementing PNAE. The law made high school students, as well as youths and adults in public schools, beneficiaries of the programme. It also created an institutional link between the food offered at public schools and family agricultural production. At least 30 per cent of the total financial resources transferred by the federal government to states and municipalities must now be used to buy food directly from family farmers. The programme is to be monitored and supervised directly by society through several councils.

The programme's 2010 budget was US\$1.7 billion for about 47 million students in basic education. PNAE has a significant scope, since it provides a daily meal to about a quarter of the country's population. About US\$500 million of its budget is accounted for by the 30 per cent to be invested in family agriculture. This investment offers another market-access option to these farmers and aims to stimulate the economic development of their communities.

This achievement is a result of a long process in which PAA was a milestone. Given the multiple dimensions of food and nutritional security, PAA has contributed to discussions about the origin of the food consumed. It revealed that concerns should not be limited to ensuring that sufficient food is available, but should also consider where this food comes from and how and by whom it is being produced. After about seven years of PAA's implementation, the civil society and governmental bodies involved in this matter had gathered enough arguments to approve revision of the 2009 law that established the guidelines of the School Feeding Programme. PAA proved that family farmers can organise and coordinate properly, and ensure regular quality production to respond to public procurement needs.

An important aspect of PNAE is the progressive transformation of its objectives over the years. In 2000 it focused on the transfer of financial resources to meet children's nutritional needs, since it was geared mainly to the fight against hunger. Now, it aims to contribute to growth, bio-psycho-social development, learning, school performance and the development of healthy nutritional habits among students. The programme's educational role is thus central to it. A clear example of this change is the revised role of nutritionists, who previously were only in charge of setting the school menu but now are responsible for implementing the programme, which requires strong educational skills.

3.3.3 Network of Public Utilities for Food Security and Nutrition (RedSAN)

Another set of policies aimed at promoting access to food is the Network of Public Utilities for Food Security and Nutrition (*RedSAN*). It consists of low-price restaurants, community kitchens, food banks,²⁶ street fairs and markets.

Coordinated by MDS, the network seeks to promote certain food habits, to produce and offer free or low-cost meals, and to fight wastage. It also aims to stimulate the commercialisation of family farmers' produce and adoption of regionally adapted healthy eating habits, so as to promote the consumption of safe food and improve the population's overall health.

Low-price restaurants offer universal access to their food services. So that they reach vulnerable and food-insecure populations, however, the units are located in areas with a heavy flow of people, especially in large urban centres, close to mass transit terminals and to health-service institutions. Community kitchens, which have a similar purpose, operate as smaller units in populated neighbourhoods of city suburbs. They serve a minimum of 100 meals per day and operate at least five days a week.

3.3.4 Other Initiatives

Apart from the programmes and actions in the Zero Hunger framework, several other factors have influenced low-income populations' greater access to food. They include the increase in employment and continuous growth in the value and purchasing power of the minimum wage, which also affects the amounts paid in pensions and social assistance benefits.

An important example of the social security benefits is the Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC). This is a monthly, unconditional cash transfer for individuals of any age with severe disabilities and for the elderly over the age of 65 whose household per capita income is less than a quarter of the minimum wage. The individual transfers under the BPC are much higher than those under *Bolsa Família*, since they correspond to the minimum wage. Hence, while the per-beneficiary cost of *Bolsa Família* is lower, the capacity of BPC to bring families above the poverty line is higher (Medeiros et al., 2008).

The two programmes have very different legal frameworks. While *Bolsa Família* was created by means of a presidential provisional measure, BPC was enshrined in the 1988 constitution and is therefore a constitutional right. In recent years no government has committed its political strength to support an independent programme such as BPC in the same manner that it has sought to protect a programme considered its own (Medeiros et al., 2008).

Finally, it is important to address another dimension of food access: food adequacy. In Brazil, adequate food is conceived of in the HRAF and is a core issue in the discussion on food and nutritional security. The term covers a wide range of elements, such as diversified and nutritionally balanced food items, regional products that respect the diversity of food habits, and safe food that is free of pesticide residues. In practical terms, in PNAE for instance, the specific needs of kindergarten children should be met. Similarly, students with food-related diseases should be treated as such in any level of public education (for example, a diabetic must receive proper meal). In this regard, the discussion about fighting hunger moves towards the promotion of the human right to adequate food, which is a broader approach to the debate on food and nutritional security.

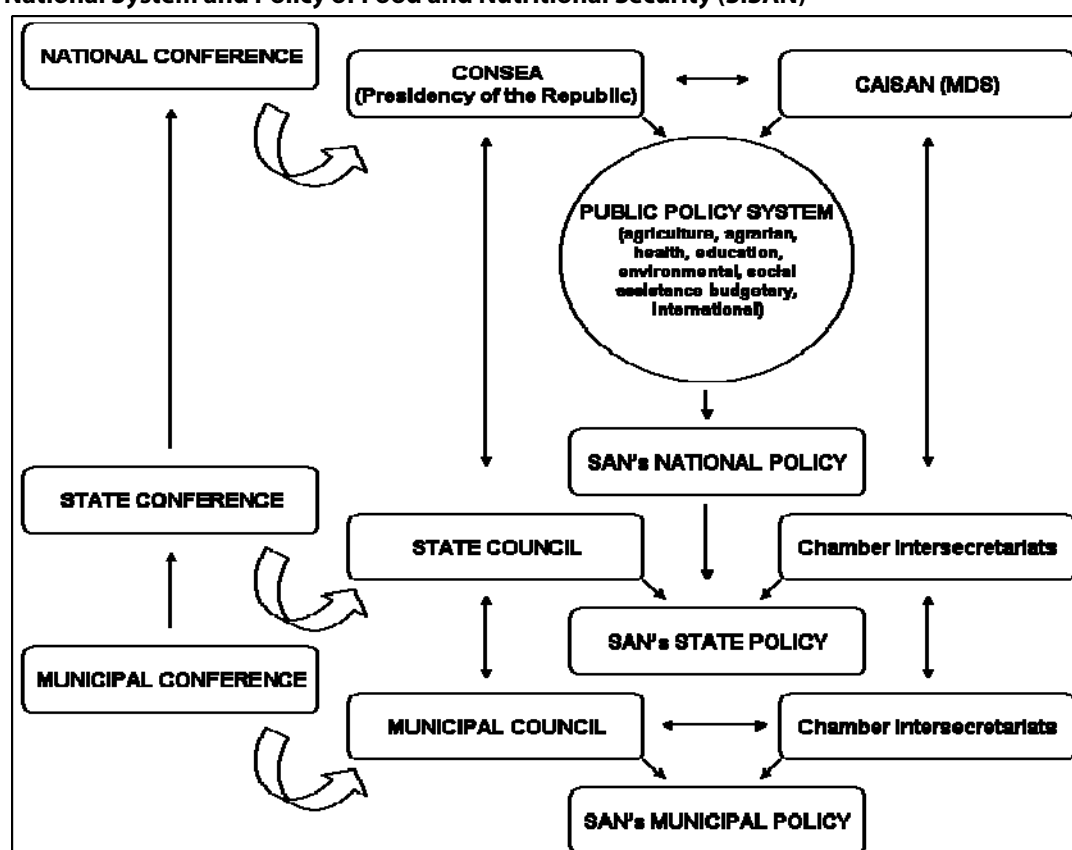
3.4 THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH

The implementation of integrated actions is a central issue in the consolidation of the food-security framework, given the complexity of the matter. Hence Brazil established a system to promote public-sector multi-sectoralism and coordination mechanisms with social participation. This is the National System for Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN), provided for in the LOSAN of 2006. The establishment of the system was an important step towards the consolidation of food and nutritional security in Brazil.

SISAN comprises two coordination bodies in the three levels of government (federal, state and municipal): the Inter-ministerial Chamber on Food and Nutritional Security (CAISAN) and the Council on Food and Nutritional Security (CONSEA) (Figure 2). Both bodies are to follow the deliberations of the Conferences on Food and Nutritional Security (CNSAN). At the federal level, the conference indicates the guidelines and priority of the National Food and Nutritional Security Policy and in the future will assume the same role regarding the National Food and Nutritional Security Plan.

FIGURE 2

National System and Policy of Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN)



Source: CONSEA (2009).

3.4.1 Multi-Sectoralism

CAISAN is a governmental body headed by MDS and was established by decree in 2007 (Brazil, 2007). Its creation institutionalised the inter-sectoral efforts that had been made until then by the Zero Hunger working group and by CONSEA. At the federal level, 19 ministries of state and special secretariats responsible for areas related to food and nutritional security are part of CAISAN (Figure 3).

CAISAN's mission is to consider the proposals made by CONSEA for the design and implementation of public programmes. Often, this is not a simple task, especially because of the number of governmental bodies involved. CAISAN's duties are: (i) to draw up, on the basis of directives from CONSEA, the National Policy and Plan for Food and Nutritional Security, indicating directives, goals, sources of funds, follow-up instruments, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for implementation; (ii) to coordinate the execution of the policy and the plan; and (iii) to link policies and plans at the level of states and municipalities.

In line with its duties, CAISAN established two technical committees in mid-2009. One was responsible for preparing a review of the implementation of the proposals that emerged from the last National Conference, and for defining CAISAN's strategies and communication mechanisms. The other was responsible for making a proposal on the National Policy and Plan of Food and Nutritional Security.

FIGURE 3

Government Participation in SISAN

Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS)	Ministry of the Cities
Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management (MPOG)	Ministry of Health (MS)
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA)	Ministry of Finance (MF)
Ministry of Science and Technology (MCT)	Ministry of Education (MEC)
Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture (MPA)	Ministry of National Integration (MI)
Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA)	Ministry of the Environment (MMA)
Ministry of Labor and Employment (MTE)	Ministry of Foreign Relations (MRE)
Special Secretariat of Human Rights (SEDH) – Presidency	General Secretariat – Presidency
Special Secretariat of Women's Policies (SPM) – Presidency	Civil House – Presidency
Special Secretariat of Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR) – Presidency	

Source: Prepared by the authors.

CAISAN's importance was later underlined by the National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN). CAISAN has a central role in the policy and the institution could become the locus of food and nutritional security in the government. Apart from presenting an inter-sectoral view of food and nutritional security, the policy highlights the importance of the different governmental levels—that is, the participation of states and municipalities is as crucial as that of the federal government. Some of the tasks expected of CAISAN henceforth (Brazil, 2010) are: the establishment and coordination of tripartite forums for dialogue and agreement with representatives of state and municipal, inter-sectoral governmental chambers of food and nutritional security as regards their policies and plans; dialogue and agreement with federal government agencies on the management and integration of programmes and actions within the National Food and Nutritional Security Plan; and presentation to CONSEA of reports and information needed to monitor the National Food and Nutritional Security Plan.

The actual implementation of multi-sector programmes, however, requires further consolidation. SISAN stipulates the need for a budgetary policy linked to the aims and policy guidelines for food and nutritional security, so as to ensure that maximum resources go to programmes related to food and nutritional security. To address this issue, CONSEA has developed a methodology that allows it to submit proposals and monitor the implementation of programmes that are considered part of a food and nutritional security budget. The budget lines in Brazilian public action, however, are generally defined for each sector, a circumstance that poses some difficulties to multi-sectoralism in programme implementation. An interesting experience, however, is the PAA, which that appears in the budget lines of two different ministries: the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) and Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS).

3.4.2 Participation and Social Accountability

Social accountability and participation mechanisms in the food and nutritional security policy framework are mainly related to the councils (CONSEA) and conferences, which follow the council and conference systems used widely in Brazil. Both structures are defined by law (LOSAN) as part of SISAN (Figure 3) and are to exist at the three levels of government: municipal, state and federal.

At the national level, CONSEA is a major locus for the food and nutritional security debate in Brazil and plays a key role in bringing together different sectors of the public administration and of civil society on the issue. The national-level CONSEA is an advisory body to the president. Created in 1993, discontinued two years later and reestablished in 2003, it is responsible for proposing the guidelines, priorities and budgetary needs for the National Policy and the National Plan of Food and Nutritional Security, on the basis of orientations provided by the National Conference of Food and Nutritional Security (CNSAN). It also has the duty of monitoring implementation and linking the activities included in the policy and the plan. It is tasked with coordinating with the councils and chambers of food and nutritional security at the state and municipal levels.

The national-level CONSEA has 57 counsellors, of which a third are representatives of the 19 ministries participating in SISAN and two-thirds are representatives of civil society. CONSEA holds six regular plenary sessions a year, as well as special events, to discuss major policy matters such as programmes and budget needs, allocation and disbursement, the legal framework of food and nutritional security, and the findings of studies. The meetings bring together key stakeholders and have served to foster multi-sector dialogue. In this regard, CONSEA sometimes overcame the previous limits on consolidating an inter-ministerial body to coordinate the different public sectors involved in Zero Hunger at the national level.

ILLUSTRATION 1

CONSEA's Eighteenth National Plenary Session, August 2010



Picture: Darana Souza.

An important achievement of CONSEA is the diversity of the social sectors involved. The 38 members of civil society represent various non-governmental organisation (NGOs), social movements and networks, labour unions, religious institutions, professional associations and academia. These groups engage a wide range of stakeholders such as indigenous and *quilombola*²⁷ populations, farmers and rural workers. They were defined according to the representation criteria established by the CNSAN (2007). The chair of CONSEA, who must represent a civil-society group, is nominated by the council's plenary from among the representatives of civil society and appointed by the Brazilian president (Brazil, 2006).

This broad array of social representation is reflected in CONSEA's operations at the national level. It is divided into six permanent commissions comprising governmental and civil-society counsellors focusing on the following issues: (i) consolidation of SISAN; (ii) National Policy and Plan of Food and Nutritional Security; (iii) food and nutritional security in development strategies; (iv) human right to adequate food; (v) people of African descent and traditional populations; and (vi) indigenous groups. These commissions deal with specific issues before they are brought to the general plenary.

This range of social sectors is also represented in the CNSAN. These bring together representatives of the public sector and civil society to discuss the guidelines and priorities for food and nutritional security policies and to set the orientations for CONSEA's work. The conferences at each level of the administrative system are organised by the respective CONSEA. At the national level, the CNSAN are to be held at least every four years, according to LOSAN. Their participants are chosen by the state conferences. So far there have been three national conferences, in 1994, 2004 and 2007, with an average of 2,000 participants at each (CONSEA 2009).

Although the national Conference and Council do not have deliberative powers, they have shown much political capacity to influence policy, since they have had significant achievements. At the national level, drawing up LOSAN and consolidating SISAN were among the 47 priorities established at the second CNSAN in 2004. Moreover, the constitutional amendment stipulating the right to adequate food received significant campaigning support from CONSEA. Some federal programmes were also created or expanded in response to proposals from these bodies. The second (2004) and third CNSAN (2007) prioritised, among other needs, an increase in the budget per student for PNAE and its expansion to secondary school and adult education; these measures finally came into force in 2009. The influence of these participatory bodies was also crucial in the PAA, whose preparation and implementation was the result of the strong participation of family farmers. CONSEA's work was also critical in maintaining the government's commitment to food and nutritional security and ensuring social accountability in related policies (Takagi, 2006).

The noteworthy development and achievements of this participatory system in Brazil stemmed from a combination of qualified social engagement and significant government commitment. Social mobilisation and advocacy on food and nutritional security were crucial to the establishment of the food and nutritional security framework in 2003. The process began during the democratisation period of the 1980s and became more structured in the following decade. In that process, many civil-society initiatives became very important, notably the national campaign "against hunger and misery and for life" and the creation of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (FBSAN). This mobilisation played an important role in the establishment of CONSEA and CNSAN, as explained in Section 1 of this document.

The federal government regarded the fight against hunger as one of its main priorities. Its commitment to the issue was reflected in the support to the related participatory system. CONSEA was re-created at the national level in 2003 and the priorities it establishes receive political attention. Moreover, the federal government finances the operations of the national CONSEA, including a permanent executive secretariat, the regular plenary sessions and the national conferences, which can amount to a few million dollars per session.

Brazil's system for participation and social accountability in the area of food security, however, still faces challenges. A crucial one is to establish a monitoring system to allow CONSEA to undertake regular follow-up on the programmes, considering matters other than budget control. This is particularly testing because several government programmes do not have systematic follow-up mechanisms that allow for the timely gathering, organisation and dissemination of broad, related data. This matter is being considered in current efforts to establish a food and nutritional security monitoring system.²⁸

The consolidation of state and municipal councils and conferences also raises concerns. At the state level, CONSEAs are operating in all 27 federal units of the country. They support the state government in the legal framework and actions related to food and nutritional security, on the basis of consultative prerogatives, as exemplified by the Council of Bahia, or deliberative ones, such as in Minas Gerais. But not all state governments are willing to pay proper attention to food and nutritional security. The same can be said of civil-society movements and organisations. Still ongoing processes, therefore, are state governments' recognition of the council as an influential body and their commitment to their duty to support it financially, the awareness raising of public policymakers, the establishment of state LOSANs and CAISANs, and the capacity building of social organisations.

These challenges are more striking in the municipalities, especially in small ones, where institutional and budgetary capacity is more limited. The councils are expected to discuss local programmes, make recommendations, and monitor different stages of the programmes' implementation. In *Bolsa Família*, for instance, CONSEA or another local council designated by the local mayor monitors all phases of the programme and reports any irregularity to the responsible policymaker locally or to MDS. In PAA, the councils have to approve the list of beneficiaries proposed by the municipality and monitor food distribution. There are now nearly 600 councils, covering about 10 per cent of Brazil's municipalities. Since the ability to influence and monitor public actions must be expanded and improved, questions remain about how to successfully establish and build the capacity of CONSEA in the more than 5,500 Brazilian municipalities.

3.5 THE CONVERGENCE BETWEEN THE FOOD SECURITY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER FRAMEWORKS

To explore the convergence between programmes in the food and nutritional security framework and complementary frameworks, we present three initiatives, two related to the health sector and one to the labour sector.

The Food and Nutritional Surveillance System (SISVAN) is an undertaking of the General Coordination of Food and Nutritional Policy (CGPAN), which is part of the organisational structure of the Ministry of Health and SISA. The measures taken by this Coordination are in line with the guidelines of the National Food and Nutritional Plan (PNAN) developed by the Ministry of Health.

In the health sector, SISVAN tracks the nutritional status and food consumption of the people who attend the basic units of the public health system and the family health strategy, as explained in Section 2.1.3. The system also monitors the health conditionalities of the beneficiaries of *Bolsa Família*, which include the development of children below seven years of age and the health status of pregnant women. SISVAN integrates different frameworks. On the one hand, it includes the monitoring of *Bolsa Família*'s health conditionalities. On the other, it monitors the most vulnerable group of children, aged 0–5, and supports public health interventions geared to the needs of this group.

Also worth mentioning in the health sector is the Residue Analysis of Pesticides in Food Programme (PARA). According to new PARA data published by the National Agency for Sanitary Surveillance (ANVISA) in June 2010, pesticides that pose a high risk to human health are being used in Brazil, regardless of whether they are authorised by the federal government for use on foodstuffs (*O Estado de São Paulo*, 2010). Abuses in the use of products were identified in 15 of the 20 crops analysed. Irregularities, which increase the health risk for rural workers and consumers, include the use of these substances on crops for which they are not allowed and the presence of pesticide residues above the permitted limit.

Similar news last year indicated that Brazil was the champion consumer of agro-chemicals in 2009²⁹ (Carneiro and Almeida, 2010). ANVISA plays a vital role in this regard. Its area of toxicology monitoring regulates, analyses, controls and inspects products and services that involve health risk, such as pesticides and related components and other chemicals that pose toxicological concerns. As part of that area, PARA provides an important approach. Initiated in 2001 by ANVISA, PARA continuously assesses the levels of pesticide residues in fresh food that reach consumers. This strengthens the government's capacity to guarantee food safety and thus avoid possible damage to people's health. But the programme only identifies problems; the process of actually banning specific pesticides is extensive. It is strongly influenced by the international pesticide market, comprising large enterprises. This is particularly strong in Brazil, where the market in pesticides grew by 172 per cent between 2000 and 2009, compared to a 94 per cent increase worldwide in the same period (ANVISA, 2010). Furthermore, the period between the entry of a new product into the market, realisation of its effects and its withdrawal in the event that it causes harm is lengthy. Moreover, the damage to health caused by pesticides is usually long-term, which makes it difficult to establish causal effects. Hence market regulations in this sector need to be discussed further.

Another important area that interacts with the food-security framework is the labour sector. In this arena, the "solidarity economy" movement offers an interesting example. In Brazil, solidarity economy is conceived of as a set of economic activities—production, distribution, consumption, finance and credit—organised and carried out jointly by workers of a collective and self-managed enterprise. In 2003, as part of the country's history of mobilisation and coordination of the solidarity economy movement, the National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy (SENAES) was created within the Ministry of Labour.

A national System of Solidarity Economy began to be implemented in that year. According to the system, there were about 22,000 solidarity-economy enterprises in Brazil in 2007 (SIES, 2010). A disaggregated analysis based on data from 2005, when the number of enterprises was about 15,000, indicated that almost 50 per cent of these enterprises were in the Northeast and that 64 per cent were in the agricultural sector (Singer, 2005). This is important, since most of the country's family farmers are in the Northeast (IBGE, 2006).

Although there is much potential to develop these solidarity-economy agricultural enterprises, the national secretariat still struggles to reinforce itself within the Ministry of Labour and to broaden its actions. Hence consolidation of a solidarity economy as a development strategy is a work in progress.

4 GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF BRAZIL'S FOOD-SECURITY POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY ARENA

The construction of the food and nutritional security framework in Brazil has been a longstanding process that has yielded significant results and faces substantial challenges. In recent years, it has been marked by critical efforts to make related public interventions less dependent on specific governments and more identifiable to state matters. These efforts corresponded to the development of a specific system of legal instruments that reinforce the rights-based approach to the issue. They attempt to ensure that the continuation and further development of current action relies less on existing political will and social mobilisation (though it is likely to be strengthened by these factors), since it is expected by law to be guaranteed by whichever government is incumbent.

This legal framework was based on several instruments, notably LOSAN of 2006, the PNSAN of 2010, and constitutional amendment 64 of 2010. Approval of this amendment, which made the right to food an obligation of the state, greatly reinforces the need to implement programmes and actions to discharge that duty and which are supported in PNSAN. Although it represents important achievements, this legal consolidation is still at an early stage and the rights-based approach needs to be consolidated further. A clear challenge is to define who should be accountable for the violation of that right, as well as to establish and make known the proper mechanisms to ensure that accountability.

Building this legal foundation was paralleled by an important institutional development, shaped by SISAN and marked by multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and multi-level features. It links different stakeholders, named governmental and civil society institutions, and it is present at different levels of government, since it follows the decentralisation and participation processes through which the country has passed in recent decades.

Civil-society mobilisation on the issue, which was already quite active before the creation of SISAN, has played a crucial role in it, mainly through CONSEA and the CNSAN. They have followed programme budget needs, allocation and disbursement, and have influenced significant achievements of public intervention, including the creation and expansion of specific programmes. Progress on this work, however, should take account of more solid monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that would allow for follow-up on the food and nutritional security situation in Brazil.

As regards multi-sectoralism, it is present in Zero Hunger, further expanded by PNSAN. This includes actions in various areas under the responsibility of different government institutions—labour, social assistance, health, education, rural development, and others. It remains a major challenge, however, to consolidate a multi-sector approach and effective coordination, along with the consequent assertion of food and nutritional security as a systemic and supra-ministerial axis. This requires the strengthening of SISAN, since CAISAN is

still being structured, and permanent dialogue and the engagement of ministries towards common concerns is yet to be reinforced. In practice, the programmes in the Zero Hunger strategy are still mostly prepared and implemented according to the regular sectoral definitions of the related ministries.

There are also challenges in engaging states and municipalities in food and nutritional security, and in creating and structuring state and municipal CONSEAs. These challenges include raising awareness and building capacity³⁰ among related stakeholders regarding interventions on food and nutritional security.

Finally, Brazil's experience is marked by the development of a framework of public support to small and medium food producers, which was later incorporated into the food and nutritional security context. These categories emerged through the "family farming" sector in the 1990s and became the targeted population for important public programming consolidated since then. The food and nutritional security arena reinforced this process, since it is clearly oriented towards support to family farms as the model responsible for ensuring food sovereignty. This also highlights further aspects of food-production systems, such as the promotion of agro-ecological production systems as a guideline for the development of the National Food and Nutritional Security Plan in Brazil.

4.2 IMPACTS ON FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY

Assessing the results of the food and nutritional security framework in Brazil is not simple, since the production of information that would allow for impact evaluations remains a significant challenge in several related programmes and actions. In fact, regular policy impact analysis, particularly based on a broad set of quantitative and qualitative information, along with the consolidation of a food security monitoring system, are very important in Brazil.

Despite these analytical constraints, some significant trends can be highlighted. Brazil has made much progress in reducing malnutrition, food inaccessibility, poverty and inequality in recent decades. The percentage of children under five years old whose weight is below that expected for their age has decreased from 4.2 in 1996 to 1.8 in 2006, according to PNDS (MS, 2009). According to the Brazilian Food Insecurity Scale (EBIA), the number of households facing some degree of food insecurity declined from 34.9 per cent to 30.2 per cent between 2004 and 2009 (IBGE, 2010c). The percentage of the population living on less than US\$1.25 a day fell from 25.6 in 1990 to 4.8 in 2008 (IPEA, 2010). The Gini coefficient has also fallen continuously, particularly from 2001 (when it was 0.594) to 2008 (when it was 0.544) (Presidência da República, 2010). Brazil has already met the targets of the first MDG and has defined more ambitious goals of reducing extreme poverty by a quarter and eradicating hunger by 2015.

This progress at the national level, however, masks significant internal disparities such as wide differences in all related indicators in terms of regions, urban and rural areas, and race. The North and Northeast regions are, enduringly, those that have the most critical socioeconomic conditions: respectively, 3.2 per cent and 2.2 per cent of children in those areas are malnourished, against the national average of 1.8 per cent in 2006 (Ministry of Health, 2009). In general, the figures for rural areas are more worrying than those for urban areas, as evident in the percentage of the population that say they have a continuous lack of access to sufficient quantities of food: nearly 12.3 per cent in rural areas and 8.6 per cent in urban areas

(IBGE, 2010a). These differences are also apparent in the 9 per cent difference in the share of people living on less than US\$1.25 a day in rural and urban areas in 2008 (IPEA, 2010). The proportion of the population that self-identified as “white” living on less than US\$1.25 a day in 2008 was 2.8 per cent, while among the “non-white” it was 6.6 per cent (IPEA, 2010).

New challenges have emerged in recent years and special attention is now to be paid to problems of overweight and obesity. Among children below the age of five registered in SISVAN, the incidence of overweight increased from 6.4 per cent in 2003 to 9.7 per cent in 2009. As regards obesity, there is a higher incidence among youth and adults, regardless of income levels (Nilson, 2010). Hence food education is a central issue to be incorporated in the food and nutritional security framework, since it is generally recognised that it has been neglected. Consequently, renewed efforts to establish permanent processes of food and nutritional education, research and training are among the guidelines of the National Food and Nutritional Security Policy (PNSAN).

Finally, Brazil faces significant challenges in reconciling agricultural-production practices with food and nutritional security concerns, particularly related to environmental matters and their impact on food safety. While PNSAN clearly states the choice of supporting agro-ecological techniques, Brazil is the world’s first consumer of agro-chemicals³¹ (Carneiro and Almeida, 2010) and the second largest producer of GMO’s³² worldwide (ISAAA, 2009). Regulating related practices and consolidating the incentives and support programmes to agro-ecological models are therefore important necessities.

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NOTES

1. Law 11,346 of 15 September 2006.
2. The constitutional amendment proposal–*Proposta de Emenda Constitucional* 047/2003–known as PEC 047/2003 was approved in the National Congress in February 2010 and promulgated as constitutional amendment 64 (EC 64/2010).
3. This is illustrated by the Programme of Support to Workers (PAT), created in 1977, and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), which has existed since 1955.
4. For more information about the programmes, actions and allocated budget for Zero Hunger, see http://www9.senado.gov.br/portal/page/portal/orcamento_senado/LOA/Elaboracao:PL.
5. Decree 7,272 of 25 August 2010.
6. Mild food insecurity is characterised by households' restrictions on food quality and concern about future access to food.
7. Moderate food insecurity exists when there are restrictions on food quantity within households.
8. Severe food insecurity refers to limitations on food quantity to both adults and children within households.
9. The CONSEA system is further explained in section 3.4.2.
10. This is an agreement in which the Attorney General's Office obtains, with the government, its commitment to comply with certain obligations.
11. For a complete list of civil society organisations that act on behalf of HRAF, see *Avanços e Desafios da Implementação do Direito Humano à Alimentação Adequada no Brasil* (ABRNDH and CERESAN, 2009).
12. A major exception to this situation is wheat, which Brazil imports in large quantities, primarily from Argentina. In 2009, the country imported 5,445 million tons of wheat (Miklasevicius, 2010).
13. In Brazil, family farmers are legally defined in the National Family Farming Act (Law 11.326) according to four requirements: the rural establishment (or undertaking area of activity) does not exceed four fiscal modules (defined in each municipality); the labour used in the related activities is predominantly family-based; the family's income predominantly originates from activities related to farming and the small-holding; and the establishment is directly managed by the family.
14. *Quilombola*–descendant of former slaves. *Quilombo*–settlements built by descendants of former slaves.
15. The rural population in Brazil, according to official data, accounted for about 15.6 per cent of the population in 2010 (IBGE, 2010c).
16. This data refer to absolute consumption in tons.
17. Social mobilisation on land reform in Brazil brings major players to the political arena, illustrated by the Landless Workers Movement (MST). MST is the largest social movement in Latin America, with an estimated 1.5 million landless members in 23 of 27 states (MST, 2010). The movement uses land occupation as one of its strategies to demand land reform.
18. Provisional Measure 2.183-56/2001.
19. The occupation of land is common in several agrarian reform movements in Brazil. This strategy aims to pressure the government and public opinion to bring about land reform.
20. Land conflicts are defined as actions of resistance and confrontation for the property and use of land.
21. CONAB is a public company under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA).
22. This is also present in the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). For more details, see sections 2.1 (Framework) and 3.3 (Food Access).
23. Family farmers are divided into different categories by the MDA for policy purposes, taking into account income levels. The better-off family farmers are those with higher income levels.
24. The US\$ PPP/capita/day increased from US\$1 to 1.25 PPP/capita/day.
25. Law 11,947 of 16 June 2009 (Brazil, 2009).
26. Food Banks in Brazil receive donations of food unfit for marketing but suitable for consumption. Food is given to non-profit civil-society institutions which are responsible for distributing the food to the population, either through the provision of ready meals or direct allocations to vulnerable families. As counterpart, the entities served by the Food Banks participate in training activities and food and nutritional education. Only municipalities with population over 100,000 people can host such a project.
27. *Quilombola*–descendant of former slaves. *Quilombo*–settlements built by descendants of former slaves.
28. See Section 2 on the Brazilian Food Security Policy Framework.
29. This data refer to absolute consumption in tons.
30. Some initiatives have begun, such as the Training Course for Public Managers of Food and Nutritional Security (FGP-AN-2010) promoted by RedSAN.
31. This data refer to absolute consumption in tons.
32. This data refer to absolute production area.



International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)

Poverty Practice, Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP

Esplanada dos Ministérios, Bloco O, 7º andar

70052-900 Brasília, DF - Brazil

Telephone: +55 61 2105 5000

E-mail: ipc@ipc-undp.org ▪ URL: www.ipc-undp.org