

***The Impacts of the Family Allowance Program (Programa Bolsa Família) on the Development of the UN Millennium Development Goal 1 – Eradication of Hunger and Poverty made by Brazil between 2000-2015***

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**Abstract**

This paper addresses the fulfilment of the UN Millennium Goals by the Brazilian state, with special emphasis on the Millennium Development Goal number 1 (MDG 1), regarding the eradication of hunger and poverty. The timeframe utilized in the study is 2000-2015, in accordance to the UN Development Committee. Brazil in the XXI century still struggles with the most basic problems of the developing countries: a huge equality gap which tends to maintain a significance portion of the population under minimum life and dignity standards. This historical aspect is detailed in point 1 of the paper, explaining the actual public policy regarding the confrontation of hunger and misery situations: first with the Zero Hunger Program, advancing to the introduction of the Bolsa Família Program (the main objective of analysis of this research) and now with the Brazil Without Poverty program. Then it focused on the UN Millennium Goals and MDG 1, with all its institutional criteria of commitment: hunger levels, inequality indicators, employment rates, parity of purchasing power, equality related to men / women in income and parliamentary representation, etc. Regarding MDG 1, the study deepens on its sub-tasks, verifying the impact of the Bolsa Família program in the implementation of the goal. In its final considerations, the article sums up the undeniable progress made in the country on the period scrutinized in order to propose improvements in its operation and identify new challenges and goals for the new UN Sustainable Goals.

Keywords: Development; Public policies; Fundamental rights; Bolsa Família; UN Millennium Goals

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## **Introduction**

In 2000, there was an unprecedented consensus in the UN General Assembly and all of its members focused on one common goal: the development of nations. The date was auspicious, the crises that would follow the meeting had not yet begun, the world seemed ready for a turn towards peace, after a century marked by war, cold or hot, declared or virtual. In this chaos emerged the Millennium Development Goals; a series of goals to be met by countries in order to put them on route to sustainable development, raising its citizens to new standards of life.

A wide arrange of critical areas has been evaluated, varying from the eradication of hunger, through the need for continued study of children, to the global fight on certain diseases. In the extremely short time of 15 years, the world should become more equal, educated, healthy, and less hungry. What changed in Brazil during the period? How was it possible to have enough impetus for change, especially in a country with so much inequality? What were the responsible institutions, the rights and wrongs? The main scope of this article is to address those questions, analyzing how the Brazilian government has dealt with these myriad of issues, trough the Bolsa Família program, designed specifically to deal with the MDG 1, the fight of hunger and poverty.

Therefore, data from various sectors (employment, income, education) and sources (IBGE, IPEA, UNDP), will be compared and contrasted, in the light of the economic analysis of law, specially the New Institutional Economy authors, such as Williamson (1985) and North (2003). Institutions matter, as shown by the international framework outlined by the UN, in creating huge goals in an interactional statement, seeking the empowerment of every citizen on the globe (Sen, 2012).

Thus the structure of the article has four points: the introduction, where are presented the methodology and the theoretical framework utilized; followed by a historical overview of what are the Millennium Development Goals; reaching the heart of the matter proposed the analysis of the family allowance program (PBF – Programa Bolsa Família, in Portuguese) in compliance with MDG 1 - the eradication of hunger and poverty. At the end, in the final considerations, the article glimpses on the possible new steps to be taken at the international level in the next decades.

## **History of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the MDG 1 – the eradication of hunger and poverty**

In the new millennium daybreak, precisely between 6 and 8 September 2000 in the city of New York, 191 countries and nearly 150 heads of state and government, gathered for the largest international meeting of world history. There was finally adopted the Millennium Declaration, after months of negotiations and several Regional Forums, where thousands of people could be heard. This statement gave a whole new look and meaning to the United Nations (UN), which for the next 15 years (2000-2015) began to monitor, encourage and assist in many different ways (since sending food and funds, through the constitution of international arms from its offices within individual member countries), the compliance with the 8 core objectives defined in the Declaration.

The first issue addressed by the Declaration is the issue of globalization, and the concern that this “becomes a positive force for all the world’s people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed” recognizing that “developing countries and countries with economies in transition face special difficulties in responding to this central challenge” (UN, 2000, p.2) as it was, and still is, the Brazilian situation, as well narrated by SANTOS (2000). So leaders considered that “only through broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity in all its diversity, can globalization be made fully inclusive and equitable” (UN, 2000, p. 2), allowing human beings to reach their eternal search for better and more dignified conditions (SCHMIDT and REINERT, 2015, p. 207). Globalization, in its multiple effects (economical, political, social), creates winners and losers, the rich countries “with poor people” as Stiglitz (2007) puts.

The Declaration reiterates the core principles that should govern international relations in the twenty-first century: freedom, equality, solidarity (the world's problems must be tackled together and so “those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit more “(UN, 2000, p. 3), tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. This principled range is that delineate the eight Millennium Development Goals to be met by all signatory countries within 15 years.

The year 2015 is the culmination of the Declaration, when all countries should report their results and progress in various forums of thematic work. It is noticed that the option of making a declaration (soft law, using the definition of MENDONÇA, 2012, p.81) and not of a treaty (legally binding international agreement, *pacta sunt servanda*, in the words of PIOVESAN, 2009 , p.43), was, clearly, to raise the maximum number of ratifications, giving visibility and international recognition to this new UN joint work plan, seeking to revive the concept of international society<sup>1</sup> (MIALHE, 2008). Moreover, in recent sentences, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, based on the jurisprudence of other international courts (especially the European Court of Human Rights), has “converted quasi-legal international instruments [soft law] in legally binding regional instruments [hard law]” (Killander, 2010, p. 157), obliterating the distinctions traditionally made between the types of instrument in order to extend human rights protection scope<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the Millennium Development Goals cannot - and were not in fact - be seen only as general recommendations. This perception led countries like Brazil to invest heavy on social programs for compliance, such as the creation of the Brazil Without Poverty Program, which the Bolsa Família Program (family allowance program), to be detailed in the following, is part of.

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<sup>1</sup> To Mialhe 'The international society can be understood as a' group of independent political communities 'that far from forming a single system of behavior, looking through the' [...] dialogue and consensus rules and institutions ', organize '[...] their relations, in view of the interest that connect around certain agreements, pacts and principles' in the pursuit of their common interests. It differs from the international community 'is a natural and spontaneous unity, while society appears as a drive is somewhat artificial.' In the community prevailing 'converging values, ethical, common; in society, competing values, striving legislation, a convention, normalizing'(2008, p. 206).

<sup>2</sup> On the subject see SCHMIDT and LAPA (2014).

The UN directive proposes eight main goals to be achieved by this year's end:

- a) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- b) Achieve universal primary education;
- c) Promote gender equality and autonomy to women;
- d) Reduce child mortality;
- e) Improve maternal health;
- f) Combat HIV / AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- g) Ensure environmental sustainability;
- h) Develop a global partnership for development. (UN, 2015)

As indicated, the goals are very broad and encompass various aspects of human development in the world, merging health issues, education, eradication of hunger, income redistribution and international cooperation in objective, measurable targets, with a clear way to summarize the declaration and its principles into something achievable. This concern in changing the rhetoric into an action plan has been a constant in the UN in recent years - especially with the creation of the campaign "2015: time for global action for people and the planet" (UNDP, 2015) which contains millions of followers and is shared across the world.

Brazil, despite all their tribulations in the 90s (especially in macro-economic area, with the reflections of the great economic and financial belt tightening in the 80s and heavy stabilization of the Real Plan, then the neo-developments years of Lula (PEREIRA, 2015 )), is walking towards the achievement of all the established goals. As noted by Piovesan (2015, p. 10), "the risk of political and moral embarrassment violator of the State (the power of embarrassment or the power of shame) in the international public forum can serve as a significant factor for the protection [and expansion] human rights". Facing the possibility of being internationally criticized by the media, exploring the human rights violations perpetrated by the States or the non-compliance with the international order, the States find themselves forced to justify their practices or seek to improve their general internal conditions.

That is one the reasons why the Bolsa Família Program has been so widely diffused worldwide: the diminishment of hunger and poverty were, by the far, the most notorious accomplishments made by the country in the XXI century. According to the UN, MDG 1 is divided into three central themes:

- 1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on less than 1.25 dollars (purchasing power parity) per day;
- 2. Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people
- 3. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger (UN, 2015)

It appears that the eradication of poverty and hunger is guided by the question of raising the population's income, especially through paid work. According to the UNDP, Brazil was "one of the countries which contributed the most to the overall achievement of the MDG 1, reducing extreme poverty and hunger not only by half or one quarter, but to less than one-seventh of the level of 1990, from 25.5 % to 3.5 % in 2012. This means that considering the indicators chosen by the UN to monitor the MDG 1, Brazil has reached both the international and national goals" (UNDP, 2015). How was this possible? What are the legal and institutional routes chosen

(Williamson, 1985) and taken by the country to fulfill with such distinction the goal, shifting from a position of being one of the most violators of the UN Hunger Map, to a situation of almost residual hunger (below 3%<sup>3</sup>), in just over 25 years? These are aspects directly linked to the creation of the family allowance in the early 2000s and will be discussed further.

### **The entwining of the Family Allowance Program and the MDG 1**

The Family Allowance Program, was officially established in Brazil by Law 10.836 of 2004, which converted the Provisional Measure 132, of the previous year, in a legal program, ushering in a new phase in Brazilian social policies. The PBF was responsible for the unification of procedures for the management and implementation of cash transfer actions of the Federal Government, especially the scholarships, the National Access to Food Program, Food and Aid Gas Exchange, all associated with the Single Register – (CadÚnico), thereby facilitating access to low-income families and to more stringent control by the Government.

The program was formed as one of the Zero Hunger lines of action (MDS, 2014), gestated in 2002, and had its continuation and expansion to the guidelines of Brazil Without Poverty, from 2011. Its coordination is under the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger (MDS), the agency also responsible for the consolidation of all data related to the program.

According to article published by the World Bank, entitled “A quiet revolution”, it is the biggest income transfer program in the world, which benefits families in poverty and extreme poverty across the whole country. The program helps families with total income per capita below R\$ 77 monthly<sup>4</sup> (according to the latest 2008 adjustment), trying to guarantee them a minimum income for further productive inclusion and access to public services.

Its governance structure is divided into three main areas: a) the direct transfer of income to promote the immediate relief of chronic hunger; b) conditions to stay in the program, counterparts provided by the beneficiaries, also in order to increase access to basic social rights in the areas of education, health and social care; c) the complementary programs and governmental actions aim in the development of families, so that the beneficiaries can pass through vulnerable situations (MDS, 2014).

In terms of the public served and total budget, according to retrospective treated by Lima e Silva (2014), when it was created (2003) more than 3.6 million families benefited, with an R\$ 4.3 billion budget. In just one year, the number of families almost doubled to 6.6 million with a US \$ 5.3 billion budget. In 2004, the program began to serve 99.5 % of the Brazilian municipalities (totaling 5,533 attended). In 2005, the program extended to reach all 5,570 municipalities, with R\$ 6.5 billion budget, covering more than 8 million households.

In 2013 (the last year with a consolidated budget available), the government invested more than R\$ 25 billion in the program (almost 0.5 percent of the Brazilian GDP),

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<sup>3</sup> According to the criterion of the World Bank (2015)

<sup>4</sup> One real (R\$) equals three dollars (US\$)

which exceeded the mark of 14 million families served. According to the MDS data, taking into account an average of 3.97 of people per household in the country, about 56.4 million people were directly benefiting from transfers. These figures show a significant amount of citizens directly dependent from the benefit to have a minimum income able to keep their homes and, a fortiori, the long path of job and income generation which Brazil still need to develop, in order to include all of its citizens in the formal economy and enjoyment of minimum social rights.

The benefits paid by the program, according to Article 2 of its constituting law, are divided into four distinct categories: a) a basic benefit, aimed at households which are in extreme poverty; b) a variable benefit for families in poverty and that have pregnant women, nursing mothers, children and adolescents up to 15 years, within the limits of up to 5 variable benefits per family; c) a variable benefit related to adolescents 16 to 17 years, up to the limit of 2 per family, in order that they remain in school; d) a benefit to overcome extreme poverty, only one per family, for families which have cumulatively: children and adolescents up to 15 years of age and present a total sum of the monthly family income and financial benefits received in 'a', 'b' and 'c' equal to or less than R\$ 70.00 per capita.

The description on the law can construct the following table:

Benefício	Valor	Regra	Valor máximo por família
Básico	R\$77,00	Transferido a famílias em situação de extrema pobreza, com ou sem crianças ou jovens.	R\$77,00
Variável de 0 a 15 anos	R\$35,00 por criança	Transferido a famílias com crianças ou adolescentes de 0 a 15 anos.	R\$175,00
Variável a adolescentes	R\$42,00 por adolescente	Transferido a famílias com adolescentes de 16 ou 17 anos.	R\$84,00
Variável de gestante	R\$35,00 por gestante	Concedido a famílias com gestantes. Transferido até o fim da gravidez.	-
Variável de nutriz	R\$35,00 por nutriz	Transferido a famílias com bebês de 0 a 6 meses. Concedido por 6 meses.	-
Superação da extrema pobreza	Não há valor fixo	Transferido a famílias que, mesmo com o recebimento do PBF, seguem em situação de extrema pobreza. O benefício independe da composição familiar	-

*Fonte: Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social.*

Table 2. Values paid to BF beneficiaries (MDS, 2015).

The law points out (Article 3) only two counterparts to receive the benefit: in the health area, the necessity to perform a nutritional and health accompaniment, especially in the case of children and pregnant; in education, the fulfillment of 85% of school attendance in a regular educational institution for children and adolescents aged 6 to 15 or 75%, for teenagers from 16 to 17 years.

It is seen that the compensatory measures needed to receive the stipend depend directly upon the provision of other basic public services by the State - health posts and schools have to be ensured for all, in order for the beneficiary to claim the money.

The conditions are therefore a two-way street, because it forces Brazil to develop minimum social rights in accordance with its Federal Constitution. The beneficiaries will surely demand more rights from the government, especially when they could be penalized by the State inaction if they cannot fulfill their part of the bargain by exclusive fault of the government. With this intricate structure, one could recognize that the family allowance program today is one of the central pillars of the promotion of social assistance from the Federal Government, growing in budget, ministries and families served. Considering only its number of beneficiaries - more than a quarter of the Brazilian population – the PBF is similar to other universal public policies, along with the health, education and social security, forming the “backbone”(ALVES, 2014) of the Brazilian social policy outlined in the Constitution. Its budget, despite representing a small share of GDP (0,5%), is in the billions of real and there are strong indications that many municipalities depend on their lending to remain functioning (as demonstrated by LANDIM JR, 2015).

The program completed, in 2014, its first decade of legal and institutional existence. In a comprehensive timeline, it could be said that it has started as a part of the Zero Hunger program, advancing to the Brazil Without Poverty program in a clear improvement over the mere eradication of hunger. Recently, in another huge leap forward, Brazil is finally working to the eradication of poverty as a whole, not only hunger. The years that this new form of social assistance from the Federal Government has acted are evenly matched over the years provided by the Declaration of the Millennium Goals for compliance, which will allow us to compare data of the 90's (1990-2000) – the threshold analyzed by the MDG targets - with the post-implementation data of all this new social policy in Brazil, portrayed in the family allowance program with greater emphasis. To that end, and reminiscing about the central axis of the MDG 1 detailed in the last part of part 2, we will now analyze the 3 key points previously listed with the intersection of the following indices: HDI - Human Development Index and the UN Hunger Map; Gini index (measurement of inequality); Poverty rates; employment and income.

## HDI broken down

The Human Development Index, developed by the UNDP and economists Amartya Sen (2012) and Mahbub ul Haq, combines three distinct dimensions of minimum standards of life which a person needs to have to live with dignity (or to lead a “life that is worth living” in the words of Dworkin, 2009): a long and healthy life (reflected in life expectancy at birth); access to human knowledge (average years of schooling and expected years of schooling); and a decent economic level (GDP per capita). The evolution of the Brazilian HDI over the past 30 years can be followed below:

	Expectativa de vida no nascimento	Expectativa de anos de escolaridade	Média de anos de escolaridade	RNB per capita (PPP\$ 2005)	Valor do IDH
1980	62,5	14,1	2,6	7.306	0,549
1985	64,4	14,1	3,2	6.732	0,575
1990	66,3	14,1	3,8	6.978	0,600
1995	68,3	14,1	4,6	7.610	0,634
2000	70,1	14,5	5,6	7.698	0,665
2005	71,6	14,2	6,6	8.260	0,692
2010	73,1	13,8	7,2	9.812	0,715
2011	73,5	13,8	7,2	10.162	0,718

Table 3. Evolution of the HDI. UNDP, 2015.

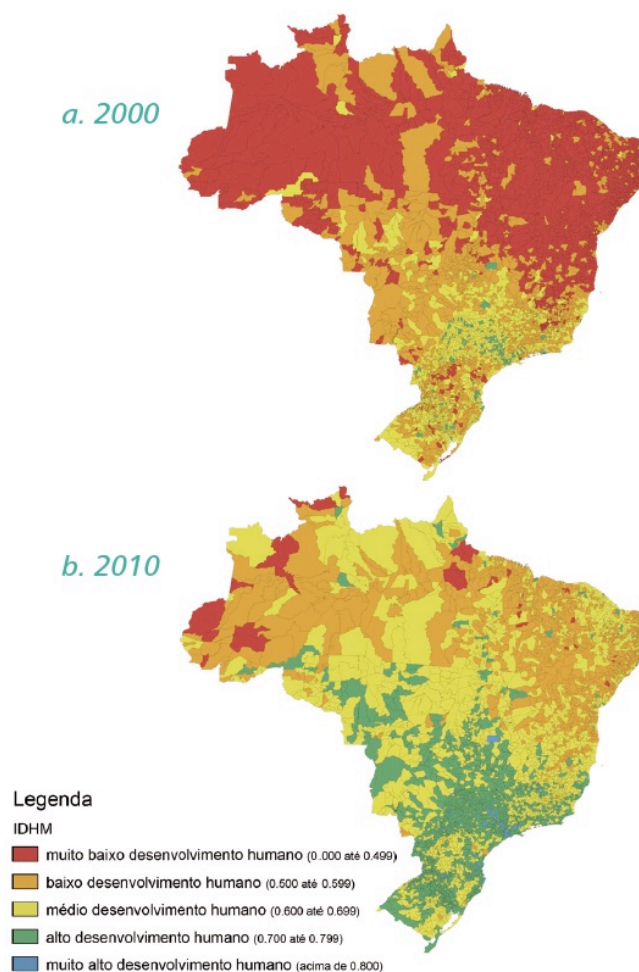
The above table shows that the biggest problem in Brazil remains a poor distribution of wealth, followed by an educational deficit. Life expectancy has increased more than 10 years in one generation, but the study year's numbers are in decline in recent years. While the total GDP of Brazil jumped from just over R\$ 731 billion in 1995 to almost R\$ 5 trillion in 2013 (an increase of almost 650%), making it the seventh largest economy in the world, per capita income practically stagnated in the period (growing just 33%).

The family allowance act precisely in these two crucial points: keep children and adolescents in school by the conditions of payment, and increase the purchasing power of the poorest families. The rates presented denotes that there was, after the program's inception, a drop in the expected years of schooling, which tends to show that heavier restrictions need to be imposed on the beneficiaries or that the supervision of school attendance is not being performed in a satisfactory way or is being somehow circumvented.

When analyzing the expansion of HDI since the implementation of the new social policies it grows almost 0.5 point in a decade (2000-2010), a rhythm that has remained constant since 1980, with minor percentage changes, depending on the macroeconomic situation. At the other end, when analyzing the national HDI map one can see that in the early 2000s (before the PBF) there was a massive concentration of very low HDI municipalities (0.000 to 0.499) in the North and Northeast regions. Ten years later, not only almost all the municipalities in these regions reached a plateau of average HDI (0.600 to 0.699) - with some exceptions in the forest border areas - as there was an unprecedented development in the regions Midwest, Southeast and South, covered by rates of over 0,700 and reaching the significant milestone of more than 40 municipalities with HDI 0.800 (very high Human Development).

The family allowance thus acted as a catalyst to lever the poorest and most underdeveloped municipalities, which now have a minimum income provided by the Federal Government. In addition, this growth has reflected positively throughout the country, which, in a visible way on the maps below, came out of a hot "red zone" of underdevelopment for a much more yellow-green zone of development:





Map 1. Map of the HDI. SAE, 2015.

This also led the country to a major victory internationally: in 2013, Brazil was officially removed from the UN Hunger Map, which outlines all global locations where people go hungry on a recurring basis and has problems of malnutrition and its associated illness. This issue can be accompanied in the next figure:

## SUBALIMENTAÇÃO

Porcentual entre 1990 e 2013, no Brasil

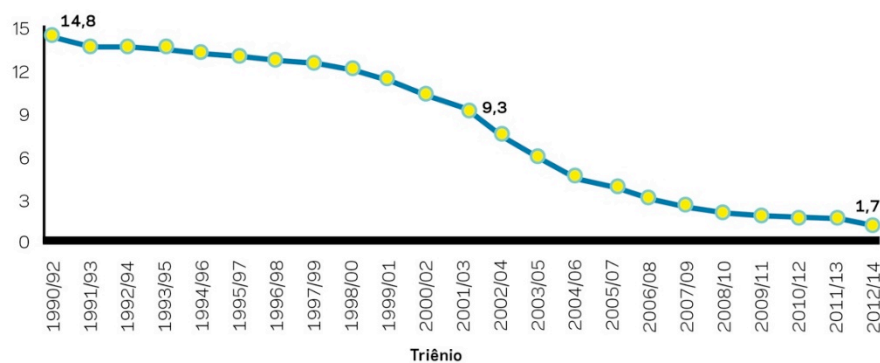


Figure 1. Malnutrition. Source: CAPITAL LETTER, 2015 to UN data (2015).

The Brazilian situation in the beginning of the UN analysis was not good in the “hunger” item for almost 15% of the population (over 20 million people at the time) had some degree of hunger. In 2012 Brazil reached a comfortable 1.7% of undernourished index (3.4 million), taking in just over 20 years (and without discounting the natural population growth), over 17 million people out of the poverty line. It is important to Rate, the graph, two moments: the 2000s, when the ratification of the MDGs, at which time the fight against hunger becomes a priority and several efforts began; and 2003, when the chart declines more sharply, which marks the beginning of the implementation of the Family allowance program.

When analyzing the graph curvature and the maintenance of such low undernourished index, it appears that the family allowance played an important role in the diet of Brazilian families and its payment in all Brazilian municipalities (ROCHA, 2014) can perpetuate the food security situation because households now have an income to ensure the minimum supply of its members. Clearly the mere provision of food for the population is not enough from a welfare state point of view (other public policies with global objectives - such as fostering formal employment – should also be in place). Nevertheless, with an extremely low budget, the program has, in an unprecedented way, ensured the exit of Brazil from the Hunger Map and reduced overall inequality in the country, stopping, for the first time, its ascending projection. This decrease is the subject of the next topic.

## **GINI Index**

Brazil is not yet a “Country of everyone” despite the motto and the efforts made by the Government. In an unequal level perspective ranging from 0 to 1 - where 0 would be the perfect income equality among people - the country is at the point 0.526. That is, only 10% of the population earns the equivalent to more than 42% of its income<sup>5</sup>. This mentioning only an economic indicator, one small side of which is the search for development (GONÇALVES, 2013), because the index takes into account just the concentration of the gross income, not other indicators<sup>6</sup>.

In the graph below one can see a sharp increase in inequality in Brazil until the 1990s, when it falls abruptly with the attempted financial stabilization of the Summer Plan, followed by a rise and the return to the average standard of the 80s. Exactly in 2000, with the specification of the MDGs and the gestation of the new social programs in Brazil, it starts to fall and since the implementation of the family allowance (2003), it shows a sharp drop to unprecedented standards of income equality in the country.

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<sup>5</sup> According to the IBGE, 2012

<sup>6</sup> Criticism by Thomaz Piketty (2014) to formulation of the index



Figure 2. Change in Gini index from 1976 to 2012. SAE, 2015.

Today only seven Brazilian States (Paraíba, Rio Grande do Norte, Maranhão, Distrito Federal, Bahia, Sergipe and Piauí<sup>7</sup>) have rates above 0.5. The northern region, once one of the most problematic in income distribution has already achieved an equal level similar to that of the southern states of Brazil. Rondônia and Acre, for instance, today figures in 2nd and 3rd place overall, behind only Santa Catarina, the champion in equalization of income (index 0.436).

Certainly, this is not a coincidence, but the results of a well-targeted policy, active precisely in the most critical points of inequalities in the country, according to the research of Lima e Silva (2014). The family allowance seems not only to fulfill its main objective of eradicating hunger by providing a minimum income for feeding people, but also has a redistributive nature, helping Brazil, albeit indirectly, in achieving more ambitious goals such as ceasing to be one of the most unequal countries in the world (IBGE, 2015). As logical consequence of the massive redistribution of income perpetrated by the program, it has also a very significant impact in the reduction/eradication of extreme poverty, as will be seen in the following part.

## Poverty

Brazil, according to the UNDP, was one of the countries that contributed the most to the global achievement of the goal of the MDG 1, reducing extreme poverty and hunger not only half or one quarter, but less than one-seventh of the level of 1990. In percentages, the decline was 25.5% to 3.5%, tending to achieve at the end of 2015 the level of residual poverty (3%) of the World Bank. This decrease can be seen in the chart below:

<sup>7</sup> IBGE, 2015

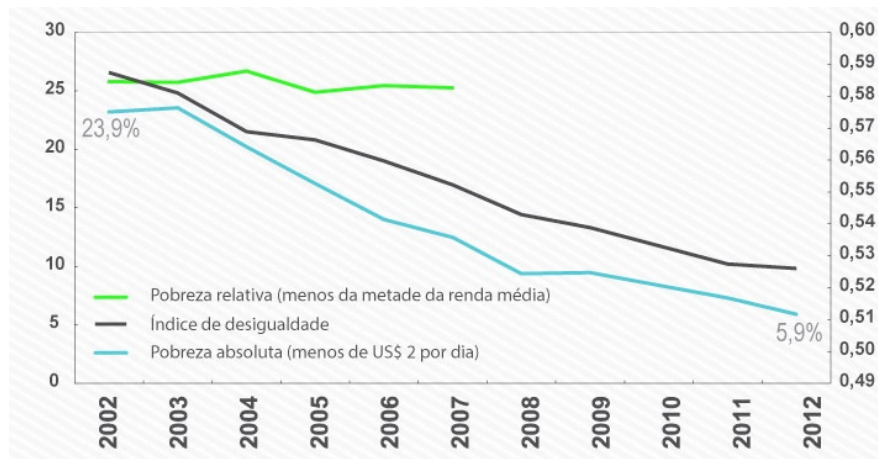


Figure 3. Poverty in Brazil. OECD, 2015.

Once again, the clear reflections of the implementation of family allowance can be seen. Until 2003 there was a growing trend of absolute poverty (people living on less than US\$1.25/day) in the country, which was reversed after the implementation of the program. In less than 10 years the absolute poverty index has fallen almost 20%, with a similar decreasing impact in the inequality index, as seen in the previous section. Besides the positive effects, the program may need to be even more incisive, because the relative poverty indicators (evaluating people living on less than half the national average income), remained stable in the period. This is due, to some extent, to the low amounts paid to the beneficiaries, which has greatly improved at first, but then remains in the same low-income bracket. This suggests that the program may encounter an inflection point soon: or to increase the amount paid to the benefit, or add new conditions that forces the recipients to seek other higher income sources, such as formal work or higher education.

### Final considerations

The theme, despite its apparent closure with the presentation of the MDGs reports by this year's end, remains not only open, but also lacking further study. The real work will begin with the final report of the Brazilian government when the points of vulnerabilities of the social policy development will finally emerge. A new array of objectives will have to be designed and the matter will be no longer just to meet the UN MDGs, but rather to overcome them. They were the beginning of a much broader path - no more goals at the turn of the millennium, but for the new millennium.

The most basic issues, such as the eradication of hunger, were successfully overcome. Nevertheless, it is just that: basic. An accomplishment to be celebrated, certainly, but as only a small step that was completed, towards a more equally distributed economic and social development. Brazil managed to raise as an exponent on several fronts of the MDGs: prevention of breast cancer, eradication of hunger, maintenance of jobs. And as a poor educator and a discriminating country of the gender equality in parliament. Those are just some of the new (and old) contradictions that need to be addressed in the new millennium.

The family allowance (and the federal eradicating poverty programs as a whole) has emerged as the world's largest income redistribution program and certainly shines in the Brazilian final report to the UN. It has its reasons to be praised: Brazil was finally

cut off from the UN Hunger Map. Undoubtedly, a huge stain was removed from the national curriculum - after all the 7th largest economy in the world could not, paradoxically, also be one of the places where its citizens die, literally, of hunger. Clearly, the program has many flaws, especially regarding the permanence of children and adolescents in school, but its structural and institutional merits are undeniable: reducing inequality and transferring huge sums of income to the poorest and historically backward regions was no small feat. Again, this should be seen as a fresh start, a turning point, not an ideal situation.

The PBF has only a decade of effective operation; there is still time and room for improvement of all kinds, including its mutation in a minimum income program and not just focused on eradicating hunger, goal already achieved. It is possible to aim and go further. Finally presenting the reports to the international community, we will be able to start talking of a new kind of power, instead of the power of embarrassment: the power of pride, feeling truly proud to present an overview better than the previous millennium to the world. It would be a change for the very form of work and motivation of the United Nations in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals, successor and magnifier for 2030 of the MDGs.

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