



The enactment of a coordinated and multidimensional strategy — with clear objectives and measurable targets — is one of the most important initiatives of countries seeking to reduce their poverty levels. This kind of strategy, which aligns different policy areas and takes advantage of the synergies among them, materialised in Brazil in 2011, with the launch of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan (Plano Brasil Sem Miséria).

This paper inaugurates a series prepared by the WWP about the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan,¹ with documents addressing:

- 1) Overview of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan;*
- 2) Poverty line and the target audience of the Plan;*
- 3) Targeting and the active search strategy;*
- 4) Intersectoral coordination of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan;*
- 5) Coordination between among the central, state and local governments;*
- 6) Axis on Income Guarantee;*
- 7) Axis on access to services and Brasil Carinhoso Action;*
- 8) Productive inclusion strategy;*
- 9) Rural productive inclusion strategy;*
- 10) Plan monitoring strategy*

Due to its introductory nature, this first paper goes over the conditions that resulted in the creation of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan and some of its main features.

BACKGROUND: Conditions that led to creation of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty”

The existence of a robust social protection system, the maturation of social programmes like *Bolsa Família* and the development of innovative tools such as the Unified Registry have elevated Brazil to the next level of social policies. All these factors, coupled with a good dose of leadership and political will, proved fertile in the implementation of a coordinated and multidimensional strategy at the national level for overcoming poverty throughout the nation.

Social protection system

From a multidimensional perspective, the existence of nationwide public systems devoted to providing universal free services in health, education and social assistance² has been fundamental to the fight against poverty in Brazil.

Just as essential is Brazil’s social security system, with elements that are contributory (insurance, retirement and pensions linked to the formal labour market) and non-contributory (rural retirement) in nature.

¹ The papers that make up this series are based on articles written by the Plan staff for the book “O Brasil sem Miséria”, published in 2014 and available at the WWP website.

² In the Federative Republic of Brazil, such services are co-funded by the Union (the Federal Government), states and municipalities (local entities).

This — coupled with social assistance benefits for people with disabilities and low-income seniors — comprises Brazil's comprehensive social protection system, involving social security, welfare and health.

Coverage of social benefits

Types of benefits	Inactive*	Active*
Contributory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits for the elderly and the disabled • Benefits for people suffering from diseases or work-related accidents 	Unemployment Insurance
Non-contributory	"Social assistance benefits (the elderly and disabled)"	Bolsa Família Program

(*) Active or inactive in the labour market

Bolsa Família Program and the Unified Registry

By the early twenty-first century, there were still people in Brazil who enjoyed no minimum income coverage and, to some extent faced difficulties in accessing universal healthcare and education systems. This group was made up of poor, working age adults — and, consequently, their children.

Since the inception of the *Bolsa Família* conditional cash transfer programme in 2003³, the population hitherto unserved was gradually covered as the program expanded.

In addition to supplementing the income of participating families, the programme strengthens access to education and health services through conditionalities. This requires strong coordination among the areas of social assistance, education and health — not only at the federal level, but also in all Brazilian states and municipalities.

Given that it benefits from intersectoral and federal coordination, *Bolsa Família* was paradigmatic in the design and implementation of the "Brazil Without Extreme Poverty" Plan. In addition, the expansion of *Bolsa Família* boosted coverage and improved the technical foundations of the Unified Registry, the main tool for mapping poverty and identifying and selecting the beneficiaries of the Plan's actions.

Political commitment and institutional nature

Last but not least, the implementation of such a bold large-scale strategy with national coverage like the "Brazil Without Extreme Poverty" Plan would not have been possible without significant political will. The firm determination of the president of the Republic⁴ was essential not only in ensuring the involvement of all ministries, but also that of the states and municipalities, as well as civil society, the private sector and academia.

The "Brazil Without Extreme Poverty" Plan was created by presidential decree⁵. A secretariat was created within the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger to coordina-

³ The programme features monthly transfers to a simplified account with the mother as the account holder. Participating families commit to keeping their children in school and monitoring the health of children and pregnant women (as conditionalities).

⁴ This commitment made it into the Federal Government's slogan between 2011 and 2014: "A rich country is a country without poverty".

⁵ Decree No. 7,492 of June 2, 2011.

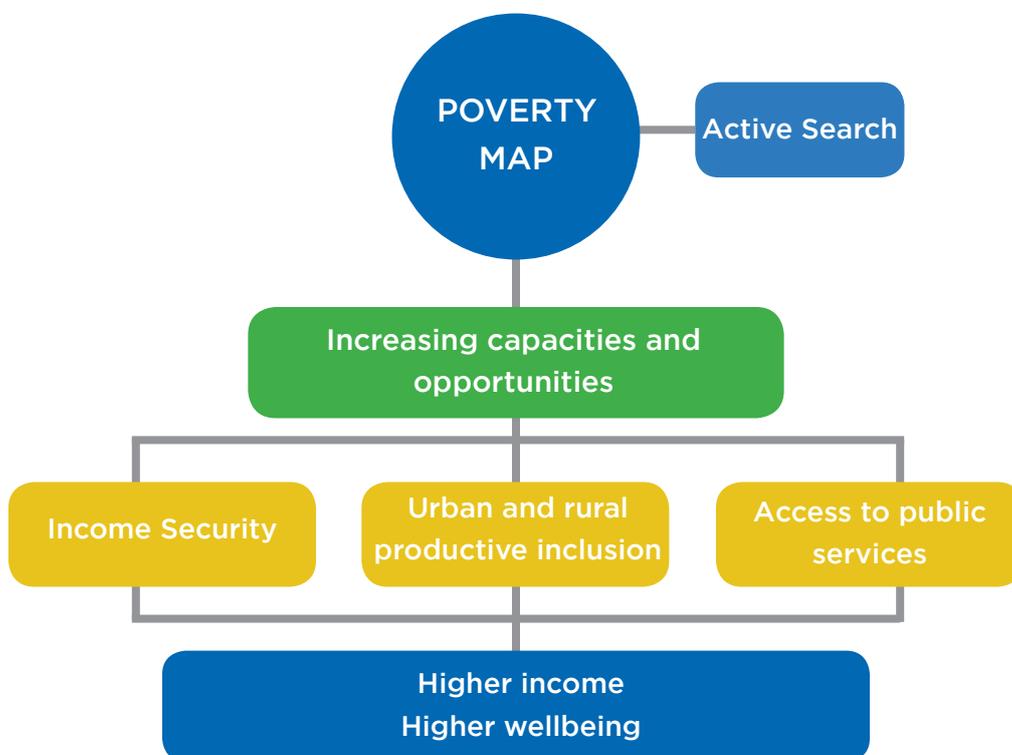
te the Plan at the national level: the Extraordinary Secretariat for Overcoming Extreme Poverty. The primary target audience was the extremely poor population throughout the country, as defined by the poverty line set forth in the decree that gave rise to the Plan (the line is currently set at R\$ 77 per household member per month). The objective was to overcome extreme poverty in Brazil.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE “BRAZIL WITHOUT EXTREME POVERTY”

Multidimensionality: the axes of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty”

Poverty is manifested in many ways that go beyond income insufficiency, including food and nutrition insecurity, low education and qualification, low insertion rates in the labour market, poor access to water, electricity, health and housing, among others. Overcoming extreme poverty requires intersectoral actions by the State.

As such, the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan was configured in a multidimensional fashion around three main areas of activity. The first aims at ensuring a minimum and stable income for the Plan’s target group. The second involves productive inclusion efforts, offering training, employment and income generation opportunities in rural and urban settings. The third aims to improve access to public services — especially education, health and social assistance — by directing the expansion of service networks to areas with higher extreme poverty levels. Several policies that make up the three axes are linked, thus amplifying their results.



The “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” benefits from the joint work of 22 ministries and all states and municipalities⁶ in executing the approximately 100 Plan actions — in several cases, through partnerships with the private and third sectors.

Guidelines for the actions in the Plan

To rapidly lift millions of people out of extreme poverty throughout the country, most of the actions and programmes under the aegis of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan follow these strategic guidelines:

- » Prioritise extremely poor individuals, ensuring that policies reach that portion of the population (without neglecting poor or low-income families vulnerable to extreme poverty);
- » Consider the specificities of the poor population, which requires special care (to prevent them from being left out of services unsuitable to their reality);
- » Large scale, considering the number of people in extreme poverty in Brazil at the beginning of the Plan;
- » Nationwide coverage, but with regional highlights (taking into account the specificities of each region);
- » A federative pact with formal adherence by all states and Plan actions in effect in each of the country’s municipalities;
- » Adoption of simple methods for executing and funding public policies (including direct execution by the Federal Government — as in the case of *Pronatec* - and fund to fund transfers for use by the municipalities — as in the case of *Acessuas Trabalho* and the day care centres under *Brasil Carinhoso*) to facilitate the work of states and municipalities and enable rapid implementation and effective results;
- » Institution of clear targets, with intensive monitoring and follow up, allowing for possible course corrections and transparency of results to society for accountability purposes.

Inclusion of new and pre-existing programmes

The design of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” was based on previously developed policies and tools and built upon successful experiences in reducing poverty, which were expanded, invigorated and coordinated with other actions. This is the case of *Bolsa Família*, the Unified Registry, *Mais Educação* Program and *Luz para Todos* Program. However, the Plan also introduced new programmes, as in the case of the boats and social assistance mobile teams, *Pronatec* vocational training courses, *Água para Todos* Program and *Bolsa Verde* Program⁷.

Active Search

To proactively reach out to the extremely poor - rather than waiting for them to turn to the government for benefits and services — the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan instituted the “active search” strategy by means of the nationwide social service network. This was a major shift in Brazil’s stance regarding the extremely poor.

⁶ There are 26 states plus the Federal District, and 5,570 municipalities.

⁷ To learn more about these programmes, see the papers in the series about the axes of the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan.

Intensive monitoring

In coordinating the “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty” Plan activities, the Extraordinary Secretariat for Overcoming Extreme Poverty (Sesep) has instituted an intensive monitoring scheme through “situation rooms” and computerised support systems, in constant coordination with different areas, states, municipalities and civil society organisations. This led to the creation of a “fast track” for managing restrictions, making it easier to overcome obstacles and bottlenecks when implementing the Plan’s actions.

This text is based on the following articles:

CAMPELLO, Tereza; MELLO, Janine. O processo de formulação e os desafios do Plano “*Brazil Without Extreme Poverty*”: por um país rico e com oportunidades para todos. In: CAMPELLO, Tereza; FALCÃO, Tiago; COSTA, Patricia Vieira da (Orgs). **O Brasil Sem Miséria**. Brasília: MDS, 2014.

COSTA, Patricia Vieira da; FALCÃO, Tiago. Coordenação intersetorial das ações do Plano “Brazil Without Extreme Poverty”. In: CAMPELLO, Tereza; FALCÃO, Tiago; COSTA, Patricia Vieira da (Orgs). **O Brasil Sem Miséria**. Brasília: MDS, 2014.