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The Bolsa Familia Program: Access to and Dissemination of Information



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Welcome to the Webinar

The Bolsa Familia Program: Access to and Dissemination of Information

Presented By:



Cibelle Colmanetti – Communications Advisor
National Secretariat of Citizenship Income (SENARC)
Ministry of Social and Agrarian Development (MDSA)



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The Bolsa Familia Program: Access to and Dissemination of Information



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Cibelle Colmanetti works with the communication of the Bolsa Familia Programme and the Single Registry. She is a journalist with years of experience in institutional communication, advising the staff of SENARC since 2013.



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The Bolsa Família:

Social Participation and Communication Strategies for Families



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Content

- ✓ The Bolsa Família Program
- ✓ Context
- ✓ Timeline
- ✓ Lines of action
- ✓ Challenges



The three fronts of Bolsa Família Program

Income Transfer

- Created in 2003, focuses on poverty/extreme poverty (family income max. R\$ 170 per person per month)
- Benefits are paid to families with or without children
- Income transfer is supplementary – families enrolled in the Program can and do work

Conditionalities

- Education: School attendance is monitored for children 6-15 and youths 16-17
- Health: Infants 0-6 (vaccination and growth monitoring), Mothers (prenatal and postpartum care)
- Goal: to foster the use of social services and interrupt the poverty cycle between generations

Supplementary Programs

- Beneficiaries are considered one of the most important target groups by the Unified Social Service System
- A Unified National Registry is used by other social inclusion programs
- State programs supplement income transfers.



Some Bolsa Família Stats

13.8 million families receive funds from the program (June 2016) –
Average income: R\$ 161 (US\$ 48)

48 million people are direct beneficiaries – 22% of Brazil's population

9 million families are monitored twice a year regarding >>
health conditionalities

<< 15 million students are monitored every two
months regarding the education conditionality

Annual cost: R\$ 28.7 billion (US\$ 8.7 billion) – about 0.5% of GDP

Operates in all 5,570 municipalities – more than 170,000 workers



Strategic and operational alliances

Coordinate the Unified Social Services System and policies for the extremely poor



Operates payments (by a national network of bank branches, lottery houses and others). Provides IT services



Offer Social Services, collect data on conditionalities and enroll families in the Unified Registry



Responsible for managing the Bolsa Família and the Unified Registry, formulates policies, coordinates efforts

Mobilize national, state and municipal networks and agents (schools, public healthcare services, etc.), maintain IT systems for monitoring conditionalities



Coordinate regional implementation, train instructors (multipliers)

Social Participation, Social Control and Communication Strategies

Over the years, the Bolsa Família Program has strengthened its selection mechanisms and benefit payment systems to achieve scale and automatization.

After enrolling in the Unified Registry for Social Programs, families are selected to receive the benefit if they meet the Program criteria. They receive at home, by mail, a magnetic card which allows them to withdraw the monthly income transfer.

Despite the automatization and impersonality achieved, the Program acknowledges and fosters an understanding of managers and users as legitimate stakeholders who must be heard: **Participation** and **social control** are guaranteed rights in the Brazilian Constitution.



Social Participation, Social Control and Communication Strategies

Social or grassroots control allows society to scrutinize the activities of government, especially those concerning public expenses. It is a form of accountability which depends on active transparency. For example: the names of all beneficiaries and values of the benefits received are divulged on the Federal Transparency Website (<http://www.portaltransparencia.gov.br/>).

Social participation aims to promote dialogue between civil society and government during the entire policy-making process.

Access to information is directly related to both issues. One can only participate in a debate if one understands how the policy works. Information is a right of the beneficiaries. It's also a key instrument for the local teams to manage the Program and to correctly guide the families.

This is one of our main challenges in communication: making complex policy design understandable to all – especially to socially vulnerable beneficiaries.

Communication and Social Control Timeline

- The Bolsa Família is created, integrating various pre-existing programs.
- MDS creates a Call Center.

2003

- MDS creates the Ombudsman Office.
- Senarc begins to send a weekly newsletter, *Bolsa Família Informa* (local workers).

2005

- Payment receipts start being used to communicate with families.

2007

- Congress approves the Information Access Law, which benchmarks transparency: any person can ask for information about government affairs.

2011

- Legislation regulating the program establishes that municipalities must install councils for social control and participation.

2004

- Beneficiaries start to receive official notifications, for not fulfilling conditionalities.
- Regular transfers help local governments pay expenses incurred managing the program (social control).

2006

2010

- A decree establishes that states and municipalities must submit expense reports specifically to their respective Social Service Councils.

Communication and Social Control Timeline

- For the first time, communication with and notification of beneficiary families receive a specific budget.

- The National Social Service Council passes a resolution establishing that the social control and participation in Bolsa Família are responsibilities of Social Service Councils.

- Senarc promotes focal group discussions with beneficiaries, revealing that communication letters and messages must be shorter, more to the point and less technical.

2012

2013

- On the 10th anniversary of the Bolsa Família, MDS launches various publications and the official Program profiles on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

2014



Communication and Social Control Timeline

- A National Forum of Users (Beneficiaries) of social programs and the Unified Social Service System is created. All states and the Federal District create similar forums.

2015

- The Federal Savings Bank release The Bolsa Família [Application for smartphones](#).
- A national add campaign reminds BF beneficiaries to read the messages in their payment receipts.
- Digital TV converters with information about the Program start being distributed.



2016

- For the first time, the vice-president of the National Social Service Council is a representative of the users/beneficiaries.

Social Participation, Social Control and Communication Strategies

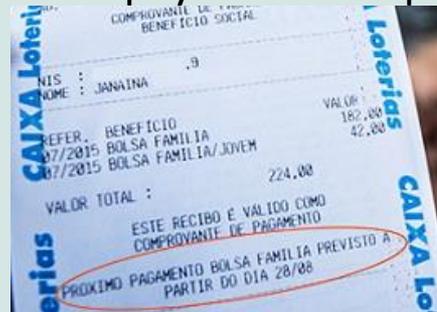
Lines of action

Social Participation and Control

- Instances of Social Control
- Councils of Social Service – Federal state and municipal levels
- Conferences
- Other forums of users and managers
- Committees with representatives from the three levels of government

Information and Communication for families

- Letters
- Printed messages in the payment receipts



- Smartphone App
- Digital TV App
- Facebook and Twitter

Services

- MDSA Call Center
- Ombudsman Office
- A computerized service receives requests and questions from any citizen. The questions are distributed to the respective areas at the department (deadline)

Social Participation, Social Control and Communication Strategies

Some numbers

CALL CENTER

2015

3.2 million
calls

96%

of them regarding
the Bolsa Família or
the Unified Registry

48 million
calls and
740,000 e-mails
from 2003
to 2015

OMBUDSMAN OFFICE

2015

17,500

requests,
complaints and
questions

85%

of them regarding
the Bolsa Família
or the Unified
Registry

6,000

requests,
complaints and
questions in 2016
(until May)

LETTERS

2016

8 million

letters to be
sent to beneficiaries
and families enrolled
in the Unified
Registry

BOLSA FAMÍLIA APPLICATION FOR SMARTPHONES

1.38 million

downloads
from October 2015
to July 2016



Next challenges

- **Communication/information for families:**
 - ✓ To investigate if the street level bureaucrats are well trained and if they transmit correct information to the families;
 - ✓ To sensitize municipal management regarding their role in helping beneficiaries understand more about the Bolsa Família;
 - ✓ To produce a series of videos about the Program designed for beneficiary families and those who enroll the Unified Registry;
 - ✓ To foster the dissemination of information about Bolsa Família by our partners (schools and health agents).



- **Participation and social control:**

- ✓ To strengthen the council members' contribution to the best functioning of the Program in local level;
- ✓ To encourage beneficiaries to participate in instances of social control, such as councils;

- **Local teams and Call Center team:**

- ✓ To help the municipalities improve the way their teams serve our target groups, by establishing procedures and basic protocols;



- ✓ To create more qualification opportunities for the Bolsa Família/Unified Registry local teams;
- ✓ To perfect the periodic training of the MDSA Call Center staff.



CADASTRO ÚNICO

BOLSA FAMÍLIA

SEGURANÇA ALIMENTAR E NUTRICIONAL

CURSOS DE QUALIFICAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL

ASSISTÊNCIA SOCIAL

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<http://mdspravoce.mds.gov.br/> (The Ministry's Charter of Public Services)

<http://mds.gov.br/assuntos/bolsa-familia>

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Antonio Claret Campos Filho

Researcher at the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) and Associate Researcher of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)

Graduate in Psychology and Master in Social Psychology at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), he completed his doctorate in the formulation and implementation of public policies in 2007 by the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, with the defense of the thesis "Income transfers with conditionalities and capacity development: An analysis from the integration of the Bolsa Family and New Life Programmes in the City Nova Lima".

Permanent member of the career as Public Policy and Management specialist since January 2000, he held several positions in the Federal Public Administration, including advisor to the Secretariat of Evaluation and Information Management (SAGI), special advisor to the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger, director of programs of the Ministry of Environment, adviser and chief of staff of the Ministry of Agrarian Development.

As managing director of the Family Grant Program (2005-2006) he coordinated, among other topics, the accession process of the 5565 Brazilian municipalities and regulation of conditionalities of the programme.

From January 2011 to January 2015 he was transferred to the State Government of Rio de Janeiro, where he held the position of the Under-Secretary for the integration of Social Programmes, where he coordinated the formulation and implementation of the Plan Rio without Poverty. This plan covers various social protection programmes, with the flagship Income Programme Renda Melhor - cash transfer programme with conditionalities within the State that benefited 280,000 families in extreme poverty, in coordination to the federal program Bolsa Família. From June to November 2012 he served as Secretary of State for Social Assistance and Human Rights. Currently, he works as a researcher at the Institute of Applied Economic Research - IPEA and is associated with the IPC-IG.



The Bolsa Familia Program: Access to and Dissemination of Information



Luis Henrique Paiva

Researcher at the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) and Associate Researcher of the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG)

Luis Henrique holds a B.A. in Sociology from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (1992), as well as a Ph.D. in Sociology and Politics from the same institution. He also holds a Master's in Sociology (Federal University of Campinas—Unicamp, 1995) and Social Policies (University of Southampton, 2009). A permanent civil servant for the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management, Luis Henrique has extensive experience working at the Ministries of Social Security, Labour and Social Development and Fight Against Hunger, where he served as advisor, national secretary and assistant national secretary for the Bolsa Família programme. He was recently seconded to the Institute for Applied Economic Research (Ipea). Working with the Institute's Directorate of Studies and Economic Relations and International Policies (DINTE), he collaborates with the IPC-IG in joint projects between both institutions



Questions and Answers

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