

## A Plan to Alleviate Brazil's Favela Plight

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In the second half of this year, Brazil's Ministry of Cities will begin to execute new construction projects as part of the Inhabit Brazil program.

Thirty one new contracts, worth US\$ 119 million (313 million reais), will be put in effect for the urbanization of shantytowns ("favelas") in 16 Brazilian states.

The infrastructure projects include water treatment, sewage systems, storm drains, paving, public lighting, and housing. 119 municipalities in metropolitan areas and capital cities will participate in the program. 400 thousand people who live in 119 shantytowns in 25 Brazilian states should benefit from the effort.

According to Inês da Silva Magalhães, director of Urbanization and Precarious Settlements in the Ministry, the purpose of the project is to prevent the development of new encroachments.

"It is important for us to help enable municipalities to deal with the housing issue," she declares.

The contracts have already been signed, and infrastructure projects in areas such as water and sanitation, together with home improvement, are expected to get underway in the second half of the year, benefiting 24 thousand families.

Since 2003, resources from the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) have financed investments of US\$ 222 million (R\$ 589 million) in the program.

According to Magalhães, besides bettering the infrastructure, the project intends to encourage social mobilization. She affirmed that through the program it is hoped that families will achieve emancipation, through the generation of jobs and income, community organization, and environmental sanitary education.

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