

Brazil's Family Grant, Which Gives Up to US\$ 42 a Month, Ahead of Schedule

Contributed by Lana Cristina
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The Brazilian government's Bolsa Família program, which makes payments to poor families with incomes of up to US\$ 44.08 (R\$ 100) per month and provides them with medical and nutritional care with the understanding that they must keep their children in school, now looks like it will reach all of Brazil's 11.2 million poorest families ahead of schedule; that is, before the end of next year.

It is estimated that there are a total of between 40 and 45 million poor people in Brazil and the Bolsa Família program, part of the Zero Hunger initiative, aims at reaching all of them. Its payments vary from around US\$ 7 (15 reais) to US\$ 42 (95 reais) per family.

Romulo Paes, at the Ministry of Social Development, says that the program is already operating in every municipality in the country and that it does not have technical or budgetary problems, which could keep it from reaching its targets ahead of time.

"In September the Bolsa Família reached a total of 7.8 million families, a target we expected to reach only in December. We are ahead of schedule because of improved management skills, local authorities who are better prepared and a close working interface at the federal and local levels," declared Paes.

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