

Brazil's Hunger Minister Says Country Is Winning Fight Against Absolute Poverty

Contributed by Thais Leitão
Wednesday, 21 December 2005

According to Brazil's Minister of Social Development and Hunger Combat (MDS), Patrus Ananias, the government is on track with its social programs. Ananias said targets had been reached in 2005.

The Brazilian Minister reported that at the moment the Bolsa Família (Family Voucher) program reaches 8.7 million families permitting them to "eat adequately and maintain family ties." He said his Ministry's budget for 2005 was US\$ 7.1 billion, and that in 2006 it will rise to over US\$ 8.8 billion.

"This is the first time in the country's history we have a cabinet-level ministry dedicated to the specific task of the amelioration of the individual, the family and poor communities. We are winning the fight against hunger and absolute poverty," said the Minister.

According to the MDS, since 2003 the federal government has spent US\$ 11.3 billion on programs to combat hunger in Brazil.

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