

Practical Guide:

How to use international instruments related to the right to food at the national and subnational levels - the case of Brazil

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND GENDER EQUALITY

10



PRACTICAL GUIDE: HOW TO USE INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS RELATED TO THE RIGHT
TO FOOD AT THE NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL LEVELS - THE CASE OF BRAZIL

The Human Right to Adequate Food and Gender Equality



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INTRODUCTION

BRAZIL AND THE HUMAN RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

At the heart of today's debates on equity, justice, sovereignty and democracy lies the human right to adequate food (right to food). It is not only about ensuring access to food and meals; it also means recognising that land and territory, water, health, food culture and food supply are inseparable parts of a fundamental right – one that underpins citizenship and must be guaranteed through public policies.

Brazil enshrined the right to food in the Constitution in 2010 and has since developed pioneering public policies for food and nutrition security. This is a collective achievement, resulting from decades of social mobilisation, academic work, institution-building and international commitments undertaken by the Brazilian State. This accumulated experience is expressed in a set of legal instruments, treaties, resolutions and pacts that have recognised the right to food as a legal, political and ethical guideline.

Today, this framework is not only a reference for Brazil: it has become a concrete example, able to inspire governments, institutions and civil society. In a global context of geopolitical instability, environmental crises and deep inequalities, the realisation of the right to food cannot be treated as a mere administrative choice. It is a constitutional duty and a moral imperative. Hunger, deforestation, water insecurity and an exclusionary, health-damaging agri-food model are all symptoms of the same system, which continues to violate rights and destroy lives.

Brazil has a responsibility to maintain and deepen its normative frameworks. This means advancing public policies, strengthening participatory democracy, protecting traditional peoples and communities, ensuring agroecology as a viable horizon, and confronting interests that seek to reduce food to a commodity and to superficial solutions.

The existing set of international normative instruments related to the right to food has been fundamental in guiding Brazilian public policies on how to use human rights-based approaches at national and subnational levels. This guide provides an overview of how public policies of major relevance to the realisation of the right to food in Brazil connect with international instruments adopted by the United Nations and by regional bodies as part of an advanced normative framework on the right to food; how these instruments can be used for effective policies to combat hunger and malnutrition, to guarantee healthy food; and how they relate to key areas such as social participation, accountability, corporate power and finance.

Bringing together the core instruments that underpin the right to food internationally and nationally, linking them to public policies in practice, and identifying challenges is not a bureaucratic exercise. It is a political act. It is a way of insisting that rights cannot be suppressed, diluted or negotiated away. It affirms our place in a history that moves forward when the State plays its role and when civil society participates, holds authorities to account, proposes solutions and drives change.

The human right to adequate food is more than a constitutional provision: it expresses a social pact. A pact that allows no setbacks, and that demands vigilance, commitment and courage to meet the present while keeping our eyes on the future.

CONSEA Brazil

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND GENDER EQUALITY

INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

United Nations (UN) Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition (2024)¹ – Although these guidelines are voluntary, Brazil, as a member of the CFS, adopts them as a reference for public policies on food security, while recognizing the importance of a gender perspective. Their fundamental principles are: commitment to human rights and the realization of the human right to adequate food (right to food); empowerment of women and girls (with self-determination, autonomy, voice and agency); gender-transformative approaches (from symptoms to structural causes); strengthening policy coherence (between gender-equality policy and multisectoral policies); context-specific gender analysis and approaches; gender

1 Voluntary Guidelines of the CFS on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition. See: www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs2021/gender/CFS_GEWE_Zero_Draft_final_PT.pdf

mainstreaming combined with targeted actions; strengthening the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data; inclusion and participation in policy formulation; interlinkages and a multidimensional approach (such as intersectionality with race, ethnicity, social class, religion, age, disabilities and migration); collaboration and partnerships among various stakeholders; adequate financial, technical and human resources, supported by political commitment and public policies.

The central themes are:

1. Women's participation, voice and leadership in policies and in decision-making at all levels;
2. Elimination of violence and discrimination against women for improved food security and nutrition;
3. Access to education, capacity development, training, knowledge and information services;
4. Women's economic empowerment in the context of sustainable food systems;
5. Access to and control over natural and productive resources;
6. Access to labour markets and decent work;
7. Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work;
8. The possibility for women and men to make strategic choices with regard to healthy diets and good nutrition;
9. Social protection and food and nutrition assistance.

UN Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview (2002)² – This international reference guides governments, organizations and programmes to incorporate a gender perspective into policies, projects and actions in different sectors, including food and nutrition security, agriculture, health and social development. It adopts the following terms:

2 Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview, 2002. See: www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/pis/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/05_integracao_perspectiva_genero.pdf

- Gender mainstreaming: making gender equality an integral part of the conventional system (ideas, attitudes, practices or main dominant trends) in society, in such a way that women and men benefit equitably. This implies analysing every phase of policies (design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) in order to promote equality between women and men.
- Sex: biologically determined differences between women and men, which are universal.
- Gender: social differences or roles assigned to women and men, which change over time and depend on culture, ethnic origin, religion, education, class and the geographic, economic and political environment.
- Gender impact analysis/assessment: assesses policies and practices in terms of the possibility that they may affect women and men differently, taking into account indicators and statistical data disaggregated by sex.
- Specific/positive action: favours specific groups of women or men in order to eradicate identified inequalities or to address particularly resistant problems.

World Food Programme (WFP) Gender Policy (2022)³ – With the objective of accelerating progress towards gender equality and women’s empowerment, this policy recognizes that food and nutrition security depend directly on women’s autonomy. The policy guides WFP programmes and operations to systematically integrate the gender perspective, promoting equitable access to resources, opportunities and decisions, and strengthening women’s participation in productive and community processes. By prioritizing actions that increase women’s capacity to influence policies, manage resources and ensure adequate food for their families, the policy helps reduce structural inequalities and strengthen sustainable development.

UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (1979)⁴ – Promulgated in Brazil by Decree No. 4,377/2002, the convention obliges the country to adopt measures to eliminate gender discrimination, including in rural

3 WFP Gender Policy, 2022. See: https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document_download/WFP-0000136378

4 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979. See: www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm

contexts and in food security, ensuring equal rights, legal protection and public policies focused on women.

Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Training guide: research on gender and climate change in agriculture and food security for development (2012)⁵ – This document provides guidance on how to structurally include the gender perspective in food security, nutrition and agriculture projects. It proposes going beyond a merely ‘gender-sensitive’ approach, focusing on changes in social norms, power relations and institutions. It presents practical steps throughout the project cycle: diagnosis with gender analysis, a transformative theory of change, dedicated budgeting, safeguards against risks, active participation of women, monitoring with disaggregated data and feedback mechanisms. The guide offers tools to strengthen women’s agency and transform inequalities, linking these advances to improved food security and economic autonomy.

Gender Impact Platform Guidelines for measuring gender-transformative change in the context of food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture (2023)⁶ – These guidelines by FAO, WFP, CGIAR and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) offer a methodology and conceptual model for measuring gender-transformative change in agriculture and food security. The following points need to be considered when developing indicators of gender-transformative change: identify the core area(s) of gender equality to be measured; consider intersectionality in the indicator-development process; recognize internal perspectives when measuring gender-transformative change; develop outcome indicators and identify incremental changes to be measured; strike a balance between qualitative and quantitative indicators; adapt research design to overall objectives and available resources; distinguish between reach, benefit, empowerment and gender-transformative change indicators. The guidelines present steps for developing indicators of gender-transformative change as follows:

5 Training guide: research on gender and climate change in agriculture and food security for development. See: www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3385e/i3385e.pdf

6 Gender Impact Platform, 2023. See: openknowledge.fao.org/bitstreams/821502e3-f7ae-449b-b432-11abd1a5bb87/download

Step 1. Create an impact statement; Step 2. Identify key challenges; Step 3. Identify which groups need to change and the sphere(s) of influence; Step 4. Develop outcome statements; Step 5. Develop context-specific indicators of gender-transformative change.

2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁷ – The SDGs establish core commitments to address inequalities and promote sustainable development. Two of them are directly connected to the theme of food security and gender equality:

- SDG 2 – Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture: seeks to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030, ensuring that all people have access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food. It also calls for increased agricultural productivity, especially for family farming, women, Indigenous Peoples and small-scale farmers, ensuring access to land, inputs, markets and technologies, as well as promoting sustainable and climate-resilient food systems.
- SDG 5 – Gender Equality: aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; recognize and value unpaid domestic and care work; ensure women’s full and effective participation in leadership spaces; and guarantee equal access to economic resources, including land, credit, technology and financial services. The Goal also reinforces the need for policies and legislation to promote women’s empowerment in all spheres.

CEDAW Committee General Recommendation No. 34 on the rights of rural women (2016)⁸ – This document calls on governments to address issues such as access to land, resources, health care, food and education, while at the same time protecting people from violence and discrimination by changing discriminatory laws and customs.

CEDAW Committee General Recommendation No. 39 on the rights of Indigenous women and girls (2022)⁹ – This document defines specific obligations for States, including guaranteeing rights to land and natural resources; guaranteeing access to justice, health and

7 UN 2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). See: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal2>; See: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>

8 See: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/835897?v=pdf>

9 See: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-recommendation-no39-2022-rights-indigeneous>

education; and promoting their full and effective participation in public and political life. The Recommendation urges governments to address specific barriers and to incorporate the specific needs and rights of Indigenous women into national laws and policies.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION IN BRAZIL

The **1988 Federal Constitution** established gender equality as a fundamental principle, ensuring the prohibition of any form of discrimination on the basis of sex in the national territory. In this context, Brazil also made an international commitment by signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. To ensure the applicability of these principles in the domestic legal order, CEDAW was incorporated into Brazilian legislation through Decree No. 4,377 of 13 September 2002, giving the country a formal commitment to implement public policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Rural women workers play a central role in food production, farm management, animal care and maintaining families in the countryside. Recognizing their importance, the 1988 Federal Constitution guarantees fundamental rights that ensure gender equality, social protection and decent working conditions. Article 5 guarantees equal treatment regardless of sex; Articles 7 (XVIII) and 7(XIX) prohibit wage differences between men and women for work of equal value and guarantee maternity protection, including maternity leave and appropriate conditions for nursing mothers. Articles 6, 196 and 203 guarantee universal access to health, including women's health care, and social-assistance policies targeted at women in situations of vulnerability.

In the field of Food and Nutrition Security, Brazil has implemented various initiatives focused on women, recognizing their central role in production, supply and family food care. Notable among these initiatives are:

“Bolsa Família” Programme – Established by Law No. 14,601/2023, the programme forms part of the gradual implementation of a universal basic income for citizens. It stipulates that financial benefits should preferably be paid to women, thereby strengthening their economic autonomy and their central role in household management.

Law No. 11,326/2006, National Policy on Family Farming and Rural Family Enterprises

– This policy establishes that a family farmer or rural family entrepreneur is someone who carries out activities in rural areas and simultaneously meets all of the following criteria:

I – the person must not hold, under any title, a property larger than four fiscal modules (a land-measurement unit defined by INCRA, which varies between approximately 5 and 110 hectares depending on the municipality);

II – the person must predominantly use family labour for the economic activities of the establishment or enterprise;

III – the person must obtain a minimum share of their family income from the economic activities carried out on the establishment or enterprise; and

IV – the person must manage the establishment or enterprise together with their family.

Family farmers who meet these criteria are eligible to access programmes such as credit lines specifically for women under the **National Programme for Strengthening Family Farming (PRONAF)**, which offer lower interest rates to encourage women's rural enterprises.

Law No. 8,171/1991, Harvest Plan (“Plano Safra”) – Through this law and its annual regulations, credit lines expand access to finance, promoting economic autonomy and strengthening women's leadership in family farming. The latest plan included a significant advance in specific measures to strengthen the leadership and economic autonomy of rural women. Among these, a microcredit line exclusively for women farmers stands out, with more favourable conditions, especially for productive home gardens. The Plan also incentivizes agroecological and organic production systems, areas where women are strongly active, offering differentiated rates. In addition to expanding the overall resources allocated to PRONAF, the Plan explicitly recognizes women as protagonists, demonstrating institutional progress from a gender perspective.

Law No. 12,512/2011, Rural Development Support Programme – This programme created the Programme to Support Rural Productive Activities, aimed primarily at families living in poverty and extreme poverty in rural areas.

Decree No. 11,642/2023, Productive Home Gardens for Rural Women Programme – This programme aims to promote women’s economic autonomy and leadership in the countryside, on inland waters and in forests by integrating public policies for qualifying productive and economic processes, generating healthy and sustainable food and products, valuing the work of women and strengthening women’s organizations. A productive home garden refers to the space around the house used for growing vegetables and medicinal plants; keeping small animals; establishing orchards, nurseries or other diversified production practices. It is an integrated, small-scale and highly efficient system that combines self-consumption, complementary income generation and environmental conservation. For many rural families – especially women – productive home gardens represent a form of economic autonomy, work organization and strengthened food and nutrition security. The Programme coordinates the following actions: I – supporting rural women’s access to productive-support and rural-credit programmes; II – providing technical assistance and rural extension services to rural women and their economic organizations; III – promoting rural women’s access to programmes supporting water infrastructure and food processing and agro-industry; IV – training women on cooperativism, enterprise management and networking; V – supporting women’s access to public-procurement programmes for family farming and to local, national and international markets; VI – supporting the development and dissemination of social and sustainable technologies for the use of soil, water and biodiversity led by rural women; and VII – preparing studies and carrying out research on women’s work and their contribution to the rural economy.

Law No. 12,873/2013, National Programme to Support Rainwater Harvesting and Other Social Technologies for Access to Water (Cisterns Programme) – This programme promotes access to water for human and animal consumption and for food production, through the implementation of social technologies, targeting low-income rural families affected by drought or irregular water supply. Cisterns are social technologies for capturing and storing rainwater to meet basic consumption or production needs during periods of drought. They are built with brick structures or cement slabs, which serve as safe, low-maintenance reservoirs with high social impact, suited to the semi-arid climate and fundamental for living sustainably with drought. For rural women, the arrival of cisterns has meant a structural change in daily life. Previously obliged to travel long distances in search of water – a task almost always assigned to them – women were suddenly able to rely on water stored safely and of good quality in their own homes or on their properties. This shift reduced physical

strain, increased the time available for productive and educational activities, and strengthened women's autonomy both within and beyond the household. Having water close at hand also made it possible to maintain kitchen gardens, productive home gardens and small livestock rearing on a regular basis, ensuring food for self-consumption and generating surpluses for sale. In this way, the programme not only improved water security but also increased economic autonomy, income and women's leadership in family farming and production.

Complementary socioeconomic rights include access to Social Security benefits under Law No. 8,213/1991, as well as the guarantees set out in Decree-Law No. 7,352/2010, Article 4(I), which establishes the provision of nursery and pre-school education in rural areas, enabling women farmers to have time available for work.

Maternity rights in Brazil are safeguarded by a solid body of constitutional and infra-constitutional norms aimed at protecting women's health, ensuring the baby's development and strengthening the mother-child bond. Maternity leave, the central element of this framework, is provided for in the 1988 Federal Constitution, which guarantees working women 120 days of paid leave (Article 7, XVIII) and job security from confirmation of pregnancy until five months after childbirth (Article 10, II, "b", of the Transitional Constitutional Provisions Act - ADCT). The Constitution also reinforces the full protection of children (Article 227), recognizing breastfeeding as an essential component of early childhood.

In the infra-constitutional sphere, the Consolidation of Labour Laws (CLT) regulates the exercise of this right. Article 392 governs maternity leave, ensuring 120 days of leave without loss of salary, with the possibility of beginning up to 28 days before childbirth. Article 396 guarantees the right to breastfeeding in the workplace, providing for two special half-hour breaks each day until the new-born reaches six months of age. Complementarily, Law No. 8,213/1991, by regulating maternity pay (Articles 71 to 73), guarantees income during the period of leave to all female beneficiaries of Social Security, covering formal workers, self-employed workers, rural workers, domestic workers and other categories.

More recently, Law No. 15,222/2025 expanded legal protection by allowing the extension of both maternity leave and maternity pay when the mother or the new-born remains hospitalised for more than two weeks. In such cases, the leave period begins only after hospital discharge, ensuring that the time of actual cohabitation and initial care is not compromised.

National Care Policy – Established by Law No. 15,069 of 23 December 2024 this policy represents a significant step forward in promoting gender equality and valuing care work in Brazil. This policy recognizes that care – whether of children, adolescents, older persons or persons with disabilities – is a fundamental right and a shared responsibility of the State, civil society, the private sector and families.

Law No. 11,340/2006 (Maria da Penha Law) – This legal framework protects women against domestic and family violence in Brazil. It defines different forms of violence – physical, psychological, sexual, patrimonial and moral – and establishes measures for prevention, protection and accountability of the aggressor. This includes urgent protective measures and specialised services provided by public bodies such as women’s police stations, reference centres and health services.

However, in rural areas, several factors undermine the effectiveness of the Law. Many women live far from police stations, health posts and legal services, which makes both reporting and access to protection extremely difficult. Economic and social dependence on a partner – especially for access to land, agricultural production and income – increases women’s vulnerability and limits their ability to seek justice. Cultural and social barriers also play a role: gender stereotypes and patriarchal norms in rural communities often discourage women from reporting violence. In addition, both women and local authorities may be unaware of the rights guaranteed by the Law, which further hampers its implementation.

These challenges are compounded by the lack of specialised police units, trained professionals and public policies adapted to rural contexts. Together, they restrict the effectiveness of protective measures and highlight the need for integrated responses that are sensitive to rural realities.

Law No. 14,611/2023 – Known as the Equal Pay Law between Men and Women, this legislation aims to promote economic and gender equality by guaranteeing equivalent remuneration for work of equal value. Although it does not directly provide for the right to food, it indirectly contributes to its realization by reducing inequalities and strengthening women’s economic autonomy, expanding access to essential resources. The norm establishes salary-transparency mechanisms, such as mandatory disclosure of semi-annual reports, oversight of discriminatory practices and application of sanctions in cases of non-com-

pliance. It thus represents a milestone in advancing social justice and gender equity, with positive effects on people's dignity and living conditions.

MAIN CHALLENGES

From a gender perspective, the 2023 report of the PENSSAN Network reveals that households headed by women have a higher prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity than those headed by men (19.3 percent versus 11.9 percent), as well as a lower prevalence of food security (35.9 percent versus 46.4 percent). These data show that Brazilian women face structural barriers that compromise the realization of their right to food, reflecting gender inequalities deeply rooted in the country's social and economic organization.

Furthermore, rural women face a series of structural, social and economic challenges in their daily lives that generate food insecurity – or, more precisely, are among its main causes. As detailed below, these challenges occur across multiple dimensions

Economy and production: Rural women face restricted access to credit and finance, low pay and the devaluation of their agricultural work. They also encounter difficulties in accessing inputs, technologies and technical assistance, as well as barriers to marketing their products. Together, these obstacles severely limit their economic autonomy.

Territories and land: Rural women's access remains significantly limited. Land ownership is still predominantly male, and land conflicts, frequent in rural areas, often threaten or prevent women from remaining on their properties. This situation compromises not only their economic autonomy, but also their capacity to produce food and ensure their families' food security, revealing structural gender inequalities in rural areas.

Social and cultural challenges: Rural women bear a double workload – productive and reproductive. They also face gender stereotypes that limit their autonomy, political participation and community leadership. In addition, they have less access to education and technical training, which reduces their opportunities for innovation and negotiation.

Rights and social protection: Rural women face limited coverage by social-security benefits, technical assistance and comprehensive health services, as well as the absence of specific public policies that take their distinct needs into account.

Environment and climate: Rural women are more vulnerable to climate change, such as droughts and floods, which directly affect their production and food security, while at the same time having low participation in decisions on the management of natural resources such as water, forests and soils. These interconnected challenges reveal the structural gender inequalities present in rural areas and compromise the realization of Brazilian women's right to food.

Restricted access to credit and finance: Rural credit programmes often require collateral that women do not have or have difficulty accessing.

Low pay and recognition for agricultural work: Women often receive less than men for the same work, and domestic and care work is rendered invisible.

Difficulty accessing inputs and technologies: machinery, seeds and technical assistance generally reach men more.

Exclusion from markets and commercialization: logistical and social barriers make it difficult for women to sell their products at fairs or regional markets.

CORPORATE POWER

Control over productive resources – Large agribusiness companies and market intermediaries exert power over seeds, inputs, credit, transport and marketing. Rural women, especially family farmers, often face restricted access to these resources, which limits their productive and economic autonomy.

Exploitation of women's labour – Women's work in rural areas, both productive and reproductive (caring for children, animals and domestic activities), is often unpaid or undervalued, while corporations and market structures benefit from increased productivity without taking labour and social rights into account.

Influence over public policies – Corporate power can shape agricultural, environmental and land policies so as to prioritize the economic interests of large companies to the detriment of rural women's rights, such as access to land, credit, training and social protection.

Impact on food and nutrition security – By centralizing control over inputs, seeds and marketing channels, corporations can make production more vulnerable to market fluctuations and external decisions, affecting women's ability to ensure adequate food for their families.

Barriers to participation and leadership – Corporate structures and historically male rural hierarchies restrict women's participation in community decisions, agricultural councils and associations, keeping them in subordinate positions.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENFORCEABILITY

This principle ensures that the commitments undertaken in national norms and international instruments do not remain merely declaratory, but can be demanded in practice through legal, institutional and social mechanisms.

In Brazil, this principle guarantees that:

- The State has clear duties – to respect (not violate), protect (prevent third parties from violating) and fulfil (create conditions for the realisation of) the right to food and gender equality.
- Public policies must be monitored to verify whether they in fact expand women's access to land, credit, technical assistance, markets and political participation.
- Social oversight mechanisms – such as CONSEA, rights councils and civil-society organisations – serve as instruments for demanding the implementation and effectiveness of policies.
- The justice system (Public Prosecutor's Office, Public Defender's Office, Judiciary) can be called upon to ensure the effectiveness of rights, for example in cases of violence against women in rural areas, discrimination in access to land or food insecurity.
- International justiciability is also possible, given that Brazil is a State party to treaties such as CEDAW and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which recognise both gender equality and the right to food.

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

The social participation of rural women still faces numerous challenges, deeply rooted in gender inequalities. The overload of domestic and care work limits the time available for them to engage in decision-making processes, in addition to difficulties in mobility and access to information and technologies. Moreover, sexist practices and male predominance in representative spaces devalue their knowledge and restrict their voice in decision-making bodies.

Despite these barriers, there is growing female leadership in political and social life. Rural women have expanded their engagement in public-policy councils, trade unions, associations and cooperatives, gaining visibility for agendas such as gender equality, the right to land, credit and agroecology. The mobilization of women in social movements and their participation in training and capacity-building processes also strengthen their autonomy and help transform historically exclusionary realities.

The World March of Women (WMW) carried out a mobilization in all Brazilian states in 2000, leading to a major national mo-

ment of this action with the *Marcha das Margaridas* (Margaridas' March), proposed by women of the National Confederation of Rural Workers and Family Farmers (CONTAG). The *Marcha das Margaridas* is one of the largest women's mobilizations in Latin America and one of the most powerful symbols of the struggle for gender equality, social justice and sustainability in Brazil. It represents the collective voice of rural women workers. First held in 2000, the mobilization brings together peasant, Indigenous, Quilombola and riverside women who march to Brasília, the Federal Capital, demanding public policies that guarantee dignity, autonomy and recognition of women's work in rural areas. The march is named after Margarida Maria Alves, a trade-union leader brutally assassinated in 1983 in the state of Paraíba. She became a symbol of resistance and the struggle for rights in rural Brazil. Since then, the march has been consolidated as a collective expression of the women's strength that sustains the country, while at the same time denouncing and confronting the structural inequalities that have historically marked rural life

in Brazil. By giving visibility to the demands of rural women, the Marcha das Margaridas reaffirms the importance of gender equality, social justice and the construction of a sustainable future in which women's work and rights are respected and valued. It is a collective expression of the resistance of the women who feed the country and, at the same time, face the structural inequalities that mark life in rural Brazil. It is a space for civic education and political organization by women of the countryside, waters and forests. Its preparation mobilizes all spaces of political organization, from formulating demands, through rounds of hearings in different areas of government, to presenting the platform to the Brazilian State. The Marcha das Margaridas thus consolidate a democratic, participatory process that directly influences the formulation of public policies, such as strengthening family farming, access to land, inclusion and expansion of rural credit and the defence of agroecology. It is, therefore, a movement that combines political struggle and a societal project, proposing a solidarity-based, sustainable economy free of gender-based

violence. Held every four years, it reaffirms the role of popular and peasant feminism in transforming power structures and in defending nature's commons, in a context of climate crisis and long-standing social, economic and political inequality.

There is also the Indigenous Women's March, which is the largest gathering of Indigenous women in Brazil and takes place every two years. The Indigenous Women's March brings together Indigenous women from various parts of the world to promote gender equality, the defence of women's rights and the preservation of Indigenous cultures. The first march brought together more than two thousand women from all biomes in 2019. The second March brought together around five thousand women from more than 150 Indigenous Peoples from all of Brazil's biomes in 2021. In 2023, more than six thousand Indigenous women from different Peoples, territories and biomes gathered for the third Indigenous Women's March, organized by the National Coordination of Indigenous Women Warriors of Ancestry (ANMIGA).

FINANCING

Financing actions aimed at gender equality, women's empowerment and food security in rural areas involves multiple actors and sources of funds. The Brazilian State plays a central role, allocating resources from the federal, state and municipal budgets to programmes such as the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE), the Terra da Gente Programme and PRONAF Mulher, which aim to strengthen women's economic autonomy and ensure food security.

In parallel, international and multilateral organizations – such as FAO, IFAD, WFP, UN Women, UN Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank – support projects on sustainable agriculture, social inclusion and women's empowerment, providing financing, technical assistance and training.

Civil-society organizations, rural trade unions and private foundations also contribute, engaging in direct organizing, advisory services, training, monitoring and legal support, while public-private partnerships make it possible to combine public and private resources, involving companies, cooperatives and development banks. This diversity of sources is fundamental to enabling policies and programmes that promote the right to food, economic autonomy and the full social participation of women in rural areas.

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