

**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 FOOD MARKETS

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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 Food Markets



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## INTRODUCTION

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### **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**

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# THE HUMAN RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND FOOD MARKETS

## INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS<sup>1</sup>

### **United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines for Agro-environmental Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean (2017)<sup>2</sup>**

– These Guidelines aim to promote the transformation of food systems—and market systems themselves—into instruments for sustainable development, social inclusion and the appreciation of biological and cultural diversity. They call for strengthening small-scale agro-industries as a strategy to add value to local production, with priority given to marketing spaces for agroecological and organic products from family farming, small-scale fisheries and low-input aquaculture. The Guidelines also en-

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1 For this document, we understand food markets as part of an integrated food supply system that encompasses production, processing, storage, transport, distribution, marketing and consumption, with the aim of promoting food sovereignty and food and nutrition security.

2 Voluntary Guidelines for Agro-environmental Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2017. See: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/c43056ea-5d3a-44ff-9637-f736ce55476d>

courage short production, processing, marketing and consumption circuits; household and community-based production for self-consumption through home gardens and backyard systems, with targeted support for women; the economic organisation of producers and fishers into associations and cooperatives according to local specificities; the promotion of local markets through fairs and other forms of direct sales; the expansion of sustainable products in public food procurement; and the promotion of solidarity markets and responsible consumption.

**UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Policy Recommendations on Connecting Small-Scale Farmers to Markets (2016)**<sup>3</sup> – These CFS recommendations include: estab-

lishing regular systems for collecting market data disaggregated by age, gender and region, with accessible information for small-scale farmers; ensuring fair remuneration for farmers; supporting transparent mechanisms for access to market information adapted to small-scale farmers, enabling them to make informed decisions on what, when and where to produce and sell; promoting and expanding public food procurement programmes with inclusive purchasing arrangements; empowering small-scale farmers—especially women and youth—to play an equitable and effective role in designing and implementing contracts; strengthening the level of organisation among small-scale farmers; promoting inclusive participation in local food systems; investing in and improving processing and storage facilities; enhancing access to inclusive financing systems; developing and upgrading infrastructure for small-scale farmers, such as irrigation systems, processing and packaging centres, direct-sale market roads and access to energy; recognising the value of natural resource management; promoting integrated approaches across national policies and strategies; supporting products that preserve traditional practices, knowledge and biodiversity; facilitating production diversification to increase climate resilience; promoting short supply chains; strengthening training and capacity building; and supporting South-South cooperation.

**Connecting Small-Scale Farmers to Markets: An Analytical Guide (2016)**<sup>4</sup> – This document was developed by the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) as

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3 Policy Recommendations on Connecting Smallholders to Markets, 2016. See: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/54ec3a0a-656f-4a71-b30b-b749cb925784/content>

4 CSIPM (formerly CSM). Connecting Smallholders to Markets – Analytical Guide, 2016. See: [https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1516/cfs43/CSM\\_Connecting\\_Smallholder\\_to\\_Markets\\_EN.pdf](https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1516/cfs43/CSM_Connecting_Smallholder_to_Markets_EN.pdf)

part of its continued work following the CFS negotiations on the document of the same name. It presents policy recommendations and guidance aimed at integrating small-scale farmers into markets, with the goal of strengthening their economic participation, ensuring food and nutrition security and promoting sustainable rural development. The Guide emphasises the need for adequate infrastructure, technical training, access to market information, financial support and integrated public policies, ensuring that small-scale farmers can negotiate under fair and competitive conditions. It also highlights the importance of transparent and inclusive market relationships to reduce inequalities and build more sustainable and equitable food systems in which small-scale farmers can participate strategically and sustainably.

**FAO Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food and Nutrition Security (2004)**<sup>5</sup> – In Guidelines 2 and 4, on “Economic Development Policies” and “Market Systems”, these FAO Guidelines emphasise that States should establish policy objectives and reference parameters based on the food and nutrition security needs of their populations; promote an adequate and stable food supply; adopt measures to improve the functioning of their markets—particularly agricultural and food markets—in ways that simultaneously stimulate economic growth and sustainable development; guarantee non-discriminatory access to markets and prevent practices that undermine fair competition; ensure adequate consumer protection against fraudulent commercial practices, misinformation and harmful foods; promote the establishment of local and regional small-scale markets and cross-border trade to reduce poverty and strengthen food security, especially in poor rural and urban areas; and take into account market failures in relation to environmental protection and public goods.

**2030 Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**<sup>6</sup> – This UN framework includes Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), which calls for the implementation of the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with shared responsibility among countries and with each country expected to exercise leadership and support developing countries according to their capacities. Among its specific

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5 Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food and Nutrition Security, 2004. See: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/8316667b-59fa-40a1-98ea-1344daa68247>

6 2030 Agenda – Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). See: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

targets, the 2030 Agenda highlights the need to achieve, by 2030, the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources; reduce by half global food waste throughout the production and supply chain, from post-harvest to final consumption; and promote sustainable procurement practices.

**Codex Alimentarius**<sup>7</sup> – Created in 1963 by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO), the Codex brings together governments, specialists, civil society organisations and representatives of the productive sector to develop international food standards. Its objective is to protect consumer health and ensure fair practices in international trade by establishing standards on hygiene, pesticide and veterinary drug residues, food additives, contaminants and nutritional labelling. The Codex structure is composed of Member countries of both organisations, represented by governments, technical experts, research institutions, civil society organisations and actors from the productive sector, who collaborate in formulating and updating international standards.

**FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (1995)**<sup>8</sup> – This is a soft-law instrument containing non-binding principles and guidelines, and adherence to it is voluntary. Brazil incorporates its principles through national fisheries legislation, such as Law No. 11.959/2009. The international Code, particularly Articles 11 and 12, states that countries must ensure a safe, transparent and sustainable fish market. This includes guaranteeing product quality and safety, protecting consumers against fraud, harmonising sanitary standards and strengthening certification systems to facilitate trade. The Code also encourages promoting fish consumption, increasing value-added processing in developing countries and ensuring traceability of product origins. In international trade, its rules should follow the principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO), be based on scientific evidence and avoid discriminatory barriers, thereby supporting fair markets consistent with the conservation of fishery resources.

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7 C Alimentarius. See: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/en/>

8 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, 1995. See: <https://www.fao.org/iuu-fishing/international-framework/code-of-conduct-for-responsible-fisheries/en/>

**Agreement on Agriculture of the World Trade Organization (1995)**<sup>9</sup> – Incorporated into Brazilian law through Decree No. 1.355/1994, this Agreement is a central framework governing global agricultural trade. It establishes rules that guide international commerce in agricultural products, seeking to balance trade liberalisation with the protection of domestic producers. The Agreement regulates the use of subsidies, disciplines tariff barriers and sets parameters for the application of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, promoting greater transparency and predictability in agricultural trade between countries.

**Codex Guidelines CXG 2-1985 – Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling**<sup>10</sup> – These Guidelines establish clear and standardised rules for providing nutritional information on foods. They define which nutrients must be declared—such as energy value, proteins, carbohydrates, fats and other relevant components—and set out how this information must be presented on labels. They also provide guidance on the proper use of nutrition claims such as “low”, “high in” or “reduced”, in order to prevent consumers from being misled.

**Codex Guidelines CXG 20-1995 – Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification**<sup>11</sup> – Official food inspection and certification systems are essential legal instruments within sanitary control policies and the regulation of international trade. In line with the Codex Alimentarius, which guides international good practice, these systems should follow principles such as transparency, equivalence, proportionality and scientific justification, consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, particularly the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). Consumer trust—linked to the protection of health and the right to safe information—depends on the credibility provided by State oversight mechanisms, which serve as guarantees of compliance with safety and quality standards.

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9 Agreement on Agriculture of the World Trade Organization, 1995. See: [https://www.wto.org/english/docs\\_e/legal\\_e/14-ag\\_01\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/14-ag_01_e.htm)

10 Codex Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CXG 2-1985). See: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/thematic-areas/nutrition-labelling/en/>

11 Codex Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CXG 20-1995). See: <https://www.fao.org/4/y6396e/y6396e01.htm>

**Codex Guidelines CXG 103-2024 Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Markets for Food**<sup>12</sup> – These Guidelines provide guidance to authorities, vendors and consumers on ensuring food and nutrition safety and hygiene in traditional markets. They emphasise that market infrastructure must prevent risks, particularly by separating areas where raw foods and ready-to-eat foods are handled. They define the roles and responsibilities of authorities regarding regulation, registration and inspection of vendors, and guide operators on safe handling practices such as ensuring the proper origin of foods and protecting them from contamination. The Guidelines further highlight the importance of personal hygiene among food handlers—including handwashing, covering wounds and avoiding inappropriate practices during food preparation—and establish procedures for cleaning, pest control and waste management.

## **PRACTICAL EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION IN BRAZIL**

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**Brazil Sovereign Plan** – This plan seeks to mitigate the impacts of tariff measures imposed on Brazilian products by the United States government and to strengthen the country's economic autonomy. Its central actions include: diversifying export markets; supporting affected productive sectors; adopting trade-defence instruments; stimulating reindustrialisation; expanding innovation and technology; strengthening food and energy security; and intensifying economic diplomacy. Its objective is to protect the Brazilian economy, safeguard jobs and reinforce national sovereignty in the face of tariffs being used as instruments of external pressure.

**Law No. 11.346/2006, which establishes the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SISAN)** – This law guides the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (PNSAN), implemented through the Third National Food and Nutrition Security Plan (III Plansan), which is composed of 18 strategies and 219 initiatives. Among them are actions focused on food supply and food markets. Announcement No. 5 addresses the theme: “The Brazilian population increasingly consumes healthy and agroecological foods produced by family farmers, as well as by urban, peri-urban and Indigenous producers and by traditional peoples and communities, who have expanded their role in the country's food supply.”

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<sup>12</sup> Codex Guidelines for Food Hygiene Control Measures in Traditional Food Markets (CXG 103-2024). See: <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/codex-texts/guidelines/en/>

Plansan sets out guidelines to strengthen fairs, public markets and short marketing circuits; improve supply-chain infrastructure; expand institutional markets such as the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA) and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE); integrate logistics, sustainable production and distribution; reduce food losses and waste; and support traditional markets with appropriate hygiene and safety standards. These measures link production, marketing and access to healthy food, contributing to the realisation of the human right to adequate food (right to food).

**National Plan for Agroecology and Organic Production (PLANAPO)** – Implemented on the basis of the National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production (PNAPO), established by Decree No. 7.794/2012, this plan coordinates government actions to promote agroecology and organic production as expressions of constitutional rights – adequate food, an ecologically balanced environment and support for family farming. In addition to encouraging agroecological transition, the Plan integrates research, technical assistance, environmental conservation and socio-productive inclusion. Among its axes, the guidelines on food markets stand out, emphasising the role of these spaces in food and nutrition security and sustainability. The Plan also provides for strengthening agroecological fairs, local markets and short supply circuits; expanding institutional markets such as the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA) and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE); supporting logistical and storage infrastructure; and adopting sustainability guidelines, including reducing losses and waste and ensuring proper waste management.

**National Food Supply Plan – “Alimento no Prato” (Planab) 2025–2028** – This public policy is grounded in the Federal Constitution and aims to guarantee the right to food (Article 6 of the Constitution) and to operationalise the National Food and Nutrition Security System (LOSAN). Legally, it is supported by the principles of the economic order (Article 170), such as consumer protection, the social function of economic activity and preferential treatment for small producers, as well as the State’s duty to plan and regulate markets (Article 174). The Plan sets out market-oriented guidelines to democratise access to food, reduce inequalities and address economic concentration. These include strengthening short marketing circuits; upgrading food-supply infrastructure; expanding institutional markets such as the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA), the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) and the Minimum Price Guarantee Policy (PGPM); restoring public stocks to stabilise prices; and promoting quality and traceability standards aligned with the Codex Alimentarius.

**Food Acquisition Programme (PAA)** – Reinstated by Law No. 14.628/2023, the PAA aims to strengthen family farming while combating food insecurity. The Programme operates through a “purchase with simultaneous donation” mechanism: the government buys food—at least 30 percent of which must come from family farmers—encouraging local and regional production, and distributes it to people in situations of vulnerability through public facilities and social assistance networks such as community kitchens, food banks and popular restaurants. The Programme also promotes the direct sale of food produced by Indigenous Peoples, Quilombola communities, women and agrarian reform settlers, and its distribution to populations in situations of vulnerability, in ways that respect their customs and cultures.

**National School Feeding Programme (PNAE)** – Although the Programme’s main focus is the provision of healthy food in public schools, the PNAE also plays an important role in stimulating local and regional production by requiring that at least 30 percent of the resources transferred by the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE) be used to purchase products from family farming.

**Second Intersectoral Strategy for the Reduction of Food Loss and Waste in Brazil (2025)**

– This Strategy promotes actions and initiatives to prevent and reduce food loss and waste in Brazil by coordinating efforts among public and private actors. It defines “losses” as the reduction in the availability of food for human consumption along the food supply chain, including post-harvest handling on farms, storage, transport and processing; and “waste” as food losses that occur at the final stages of the supply chain (food services, retail and final consumption), largely due to behaviours in retail establishments, restaurants and households, although problems in earlier stages of the production chain may also lead to waste.

The Strategy highlights practices such as improving logistics and infrastructure, enhancing handling and harvesting techniques, strengthening food banks, creating regulatory frameworks and economic incentives, promoting food and environmental education campaigns, supporting technological innovation and expanding monitoring and data production. Its implementation involves strengthening storage and distribution infrastructure, training producers and incorporating traceability technologies, as well as promoting educational campaigns for responsible consumption.

**“Alimenta Cidades” Strategy** – Established by Decree No. 11.822/2023, this strategy aims to expand access to and consumption of healthy foods among vulnerable populations living in urban peripheries, in line with the right to food. In its food-supply axis, the Strategy provides for actions to reorganise and improve the urban infrastructure for food distribution, strengthening fairs, public markets, food and nutrition security facilities and short marketing circuits that connect family farmers to urban consumers. It also includes mapping food-access conditions, identifying territories experiencing food insecurity, upgrading points of sale and promoting more efficient logistical arrangements. By integrating urban food diagnostics, municipal planning and intersectoral cooperation, the strategy seeks to reduce territorial inequalities in food supply and promote healthier and more sustainable urban food environments.

**Law No. 11.265/2006** – This law regulates the marketing of foods intended for infants and young children, as well as related childcare products, with the aim of protecting breastfeeding and ensuring adequate nutrition in the earliest stages of life. It establishes rules that restrict commercial practices and promotions that encourage the early use of breast-milk substitutes. Among its main provisions are: controls on marketing and advertising, strict labelling requirements, a ban on distributing samples and gifts, limits on donations to health services and the requirement that technical guidance be free from commercial influence.

**Normative Instruction (IN) No. 75/2020 of Anvisa** – This regulation defines the technical criteria for front-of-pack nutrition labelling, which uses a magnifying-glass symbol to warn when a packaged food contains high levels of added sugars, saturated fats or sodium. The model facilitates quick identification of nutritional risks, reduces information asymmetry between industry and consumers and strengthens health protection. By standardising limits per 100 g or 100 ml, the regulation ensures comparability among products and encourages food reformulation, contributing to healthier food environments and to the realisation of the right to food.

**Law No. 13.874/2019 and Decree No. 10.178/2019** – These instruments establish the **Declaration of Rights of Economic Freedom**. They eliminate the requirement for an operating licence for low-risk activities, which become subject to self-declaration by the regulated party. They also introduce a new classification for the level of risk—“medium risk”—which does not exist in the risk categories traditionally used in sanitary surveillance.

This regulatory framework places the economic de-bureaucratisation agenda in direct conversation with the State's constitutional duty to protect health. The elimination of the licensing requirement for low-risk activities and the adoption of self-declaration as a pre-authorisation mechanism alter the traditional logic of sanitary surveillance, historically built around preventive control. Even so, this simplification does not remove the State's mandatory sanitary responsibilities, nor does it diminish the strict liability of suppliers towards consumers. The creation of a "medium risk" category—absent from the technical sanitary framework—raises concerns about the limits of regulatory authority, given that economic criteria cannot override technical classifications that form the core of sanitary police powers. In this context, harmonising economic freedom with health protection becomes essential to avoid regulatory gaps and legal uncertainty, particularly in a sector as sensitive as food.

**Geographical Indications (IG)** – A Geographical Indication is a registration granted to products or services that are characteristic of their place of origin, giving them distinct value and identity and distinguishing them in the market. The legal framework for Geographical Indications in Brazil is the Industrial Property Law (Law No. 9.279/1996). In Brazil, examples include Café do Cerrado Mineiro, Queijo Canastra and Cachaça de Paraty, all exclusive Brazilian products internationally recognised for their origin. Geographical Indications strengthen the value of family farming products and traditional territories in both domestic and international niche markets.

## **MAIN CHALLENGES**

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**Institutional markets** – Institutional markets face obstacles in incorporating products from family farming and agro-extractive producers into programmes such as the Food Acquisition Programme (PAA), the Support Programme for the Commercialisation of Extractive Products (PAE), the Minimum Price Guarantee Policy (PGPM), the Minimum Price Guarantee Programme for Family Farming (PGPM-AF) and the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). Challenges range from intermediaries who offer immediate cash payments to producers, to the difficulty of completing the systems and documentation required to participate in these programmes. For example, although PNAE legislation requires that at least 30 percent of purchases come from family farming, family farmers still face difficulties in

organising themselves to meet this demand. There is a need to strengthen and better manage institutional procurement within the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SI-SAN), which could include establishing institutional procurement committees at the state level and adopting digital applications capable of organising and facilitating the management of these purchases.

**Certification** – The Organic Agriculture Law (Law No. 10.831/2003 and Decree No. 6.323/2007) requires organic certification by an officially recognised certifying body. Social, socio-environmental and eco-social seals for agro-extractive products complement certification systems such as organic agriculture, but they remain insufficient for certifying traditional and agroecological systems.

**Weaknesses in urban food policies and loss of public marketing spaces** – Many state capitals and municipalities still lack structural policies to ensure permanent public markets and street fairs, which favours the expansion of large retail chains over local production and trade. Logistical bottlenecks and distribution difficulties increase food losses and waste due to precarious infrastructure, the presence of intermediaries between producers and consumers (leading to lower payments to producers and higher prices for consumers), and the limited access of small producers to financing, technologies, machinery and knowledge suited to family farming. These challenges reduce productivity, are compounded by a lack of technical assistance and market barriers, and are worsened by organisational limitations that hinder access to formal, informal and institutional markets.

**Compliance with sanitary and phytosanitary standards** – Establishing domestic rules and governance mechanisms to harmonise international standards requires attention to labelling, advertising, regulatory governance, inclusion of family farmers, regional trade, digital marketing, product integrity and measures in school environments.

Harmonising international standards with domestic rules requires balancing health protection, the right to information and economic competitiveness. In the area of labelling—particularly front-of-pack interpretative labelling—the challenge is to reconcile public health evidence with commercial interests by adopting rules that are proportional, technically justified and accompanied by transition periods and instruments that prevent litigation and avoid the exclusion of small producers. Clear delineation of competencies among regulatory bodies is also essential to prevent institutional conflict.

The regulation of advertising of ultra-processed foods aimed at children requires stronger State action, increased inspection capacity and updated monitoring tools.

Regulatory governance still has structural gaps: fragmented inspection systems, insufficient laboratory infrastructure and logistical challenges that compromise the uniform application of standards, particularly for family farmers, solidarity-economy enterprises and micro-entrepreneurs. Excessively rigid sanitary and labelling requirements often prove incompatible with the realities of these actors, creating barriers to entry and risks of economic exclusion.

At the regional level, technical divergences among countries—within Mercosur and in bilateral agreements—can operate as technical barriers to trade, raising costs and increasing the likelihood of disputes. This calls for processes of harmonisation, mutual recognition or regulatory equivalence.

Lastly, issues such as fraud, adulteration and chemical residues highlight the need for clear standards, effective inspection and strong institutional capacity. Policies involving taxation or restrictions on the sale of certain foods in school environments may also face legal and political challenges, requiring a solid legal basis, proportionality assessments and robust evidence of effectiveness.

**Low recognition of geographical-indication products in the domestic market** – Despite international recognition and the protection granted under the TRIPS Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO), many Brazilian products with geographical indications—such as manioc flour, Cerrado pequi, artisanal cheeses from Minas Gerais (particularly those from less consolidated regions such as Araxá and Salitre), pink pepper from the Caatinga, babassu and its derivatives, as well as traditional handicrafts associated with Quilombo-la and Indigenous territories—continue to face significant obstacles to their valuation and presence in the domestic market. Low visibility, competition with cheaper industrialised products and limited availability in retail channels hinder their consolidation among consumers.

In this context, the innovative experience of Catrapovos Brasil, established in 2021 by the Chamber of Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Communities of the Federal Prosecution Service, becomes particularly relevant. The initiative strengthens permanent dialogue platforms between government, civil society, and traditional peoples and communities,

ensuring compliance with the legislation that requires at least 30 percent of food for the National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) to be purchased from family farming, while also promoting the inclusion of traditional foods in institutional markets. The work of Catrapovos shows that when interinstitutional coordination is in place and food identities are recognised, traditional products—many of which already hold, or have the potential to obtain, geographical-indication status—are able to overcome barriers relating to marketing, value recognition and scale.

## SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

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Social participation councils such as the National Food and Nutrition Security Council and its state and municipal chapters, as well as the National Council for Sustainable Rural Development and the National Commission on Agroecology and Organic Production, serve as key spaces and mechanisms for dialogue. These forums frequently address issues related to market access and regulation, and the implementation of food-supply policies.

Social participation goes beyond formal institutional spaces. Organising into associations and cooperatives strengthens small-scale producers by enabling them to negotiate better prices, reduce transport and input costs, and access larger, more formal markets that would otherwise be out of reach for individual producers.

However, it is essential to strengthen mechanisms and instruments for social participation in global markets, where challenges are significantly greater. Only a limited number of small-scale producers—particularly those organised in groups and receiving support—are able to enter export markets, selling specialised niche products to other countries.

Promoting social participation in food markets requires action from the State, ensuring opportunities for consultation during policy formulation, and providing financing instruments and technical support. It also depends on social mobilisation and the strengthening of grassroots organisations. Democratising food systems likewise means recognising the leadership of actors historically excluded from the dominant agri-food model, and ensuring their participation in social-governance spaces while protecting them from power asymmetries.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENFORCEABILITY

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In Brazil, there is no clear or accessible pathway for claiming rights in this field, especially for family farmers, small-scale extractive producers, and Indigenous Peoples and traditional communities. Strengthening ombudsperson services and expanding access to public defender's offices (which provide free legal assistance) are essential steps. Oversight and regulatory bodies must also offer user-friendly channels for submitting complaints, and they should actively follow up with those who file them, providing clear feedback on the actions taken in response.

The high concentration of a few companies in the food market—especially in large retail chains—reduces competition and directly affects food prices. To prevent corporate capture of food systems, regulations are needed to govern partnerships between

food corporations, large agribusiness actors and food-system institutions, in order to safeguard public food and nutrition security policies and to protect governance spaces at national and international levels, such as the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONSEA) and the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

It is also important to develop specific rules for the participation of private entities, whether for-profit or non-profit, in the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SISAN). Such rules should include mechanisms to identify, prevent, manage and mitigate conflicts of interest so as to protect food environments from the influence of large corporations, particularly those linked to ultra-processed or otherwise unsustainable food products.

## CORPORATE POWER

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Corporate power in food markets is concentrated in a small group of global and national companies that control a significant share of the production chain, from inputs to distribution and retail.

In international markets, a few corporations dominate key brands and strategic inputs. In Brazil, large companies exert strong influence over food production, prices and availability. This power is expressed through **market concentration, control over multiple stages of supply chains** and the **ability to shape public policies and regulations**. As a result, they influence not only access to and diversity of foods, but also agricultural practices and value chains. This corporate structure underpins a highly centralised food system in which a handful of companies directly affect **food and nutrition security, prices and consumer habits at global scale**.

These corporations shape both consumer choices and food environments – whether by limiting the availability of fresh or minimally processed foods (creating “food deserts”), saturating territories with ultra-processed products (“food swamps”), or centralising supply chains in ways that concentrate markets. They also promote false market-based solutions, such as large corporate investments in food banks that distribute near-expiry ultra-processed products, giving the impression that corporations – rather than public policies – are the most effective response to hunger, poverty and climate emergencies. At the same time, technology companies and digital food delivery platforms generate substantial profits, while delivery workers face hunger and have their labour rights weakened.

## FINANCING

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Support for the commercialisation of family farmers' production in Brazil relies on a combination of public policies, financial instruments and technical assistance aimed at securing income for producers and expanding their access to markets. Programmes such as the **Food Acquisition Programme (PAA)** purchase food from family farmers for distribution to people experiencing food insecurity and for provision to public institutions, while the **Minimum Price Guarantee Policy (PGPM)** ensures income through direct purchases or compensation payments that cover the gap between market prices and minimum prices.

Special credit lines and subsidy programmes complement these mechanisms by financing products not covered by the PGPM and supporting specific sectors.

The **Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (Sebrae)**, together with a range of cooperation agreements, provides technical assistance, supports business formalisation and strengthens quality labelling initiatives. Stock-formation mechanisms also help stabilise prices and open up new commercial opportunities. Together, these policies and institutions foster a **more secure, efficient and inclusive marketing environment**, connecting family farmers to markets at both local and global levels.

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