Food Security Programs in Belo Horizonte, Brazil

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Urban Food Security in Southern Africa: Strategic Policy Dimensions

Ekurhuleni Municipality, South Africa

Outline

- Belo Horizonte
- The beginning
- Main Programs
- Partnerships
- Challenges
- Values, Trust, Legitimacy

Brazil

VENEZUELA
SURINAME
GUYANA
French Guiana (FRANCE)
North Atlantic Ocean
COLOMBIA
Belém
São Luis
Manaus
Amazon
Fortaleza
Rio Ucayali
Rio Branco
Recife
PERU
Salvador
Cuiabá
BRASÍLIA
BOLIVIA
Corumbá
Belo Horizonte
Vitória
São Paulo
Santos
Rio de Janeiro
Rio Paraná
South Pacific Ocean
CHILE
PARAGUAY
Pôrto Alegre
South Atlantic Ocean
ARGENTINA
URUGUAY
0 300 600 km
0 300 600 mi

Basic Stats

- Belo Horizonte:
  - Capital of the state of Minas Gerais
  - Population: 2.5 million (over 5 million in the greater metropolitan area)
  - 59.2% drop in Infant Mortality Rate:
    35.3 in 1993; 14.4 in 2005
  - High HDI (over 0.8) in 2007
  - High inequality: Gini index = 0.61 (2005)

Belo Horizonte

The Beginning

- 1993: New coalition government led by the Workers Party (PT) – Mayor Patrus Ananias
- Creation of the Municipal Secretariat for Food Policy and Supply (SMAAB)
  - Centralize/coordinate food programs

Lines of Work

1. Subsidized Food Sales (Popular Restaurants; Popular Food Basket)
2. Food and Nutrition Assistance (School Meals; Preventing and Fighting Malnutrition; Food Bank)
3. Supply and Regulation of Markets (Abastecer; Worker's Convoy; Straight from the Country; Basic Basket Research; Farmers Markets)
4. Support to Urban Agriculture
5. Education for Food Consumption
6. Job and Income Generation

Popular Restaurants

- 4 Popular Restaurants (1994, 2004, 2008, 2009)
- Prices:
  - Lunch: R$1.00 (US$0.45)
  - Breakfast: R$0.25 (US$0.11)
  - Soup: R$0.50 (US$0.22)
- Serve over 20,000 meals per day
- Patrons range from families to students to homeless people to retired bank clerks

Popular Restaurants

Typical Lunch Meal

Esta é a nossa cara!

School Meals Program

- Served 40 million meals to 155 thousand students in 218 public schools (2007).
- Federal funding per child/day = R$0.22 (for food)
- Municipal government covers all other costs (infrastructure and personnel)

School Meals Program

Food Bank

- Founded in 2004
- Partnership with Municipal Secretariat for Urban Sanitation
- Selects, cleans and vacuum freezes perishable foods for distribution
- Can only distribute to charitable organizations and social service agencies (not individuals) for preparation of communal meals

Food Bank

Abastecer/Worker's Convoy

- Commercial outlets licensed with the city
- 20-25 items have the price (one price/kg for all items) set by the city (20-50% below market)
- SMAAB also monitors quality/safety
- Worker's Convoy are mobile (trucks or vans) required to serve low-income areas on weekends

Abastecer

Straight from the Country and The Country Store

- Main goal: help rural families to establish themselves in the countryside, halting rural-urban migration
- 2008: 34 producers from 8 surrounding rural municipalities

Straight from the Country

Partnership with Federal Government

- Zero Hunger (*Fome Zero*) strategy
- Family Grant (*Bolsa Familia*) Program
- School Meals
- Food Procurement Program

Challenges

- Extreme inequality
- Overweight and obesity
- Partnerships: Food policies and programs still viewed as complementary and “expendable”
- SMAAB’s programs have never accounted for more than 2% of municipal budget

Values, Trust, Legitimacy

- Right to Food as basis for policy
- Food insecurity as market failures
- Food security as public good
- Alternative food system created and maintained by government action
- System free of corruption, and offering high quality products and good service
- Social justice as central motivation

- "*Our secret is the ethics in our work, respect for the people we serve, a philosophy of work dedicated to the neediest population of the city, those who never had access or rights to anything… We wanted to show something new, something which would be ahead of its time from a social and democratic perspective. And this was something innovative, not only for the city, but for all of Brazil. We wanted to show the country that it was possible to do something of this nature, a good public enterprise*". (Carlos Henrique, Manager of the Popular Restaurant Program)

Thank you!

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