

# ACCESS AND FOOD INFLATION – LIMITS OF INCOME TRANSFER PROGRAMS

Niemeyer Almeida Filho<sup>1</sup>  
Sabrina de Cássia Mariano de Souza<sup>2</sup>  
Henrique Dantas Neder<sup>3</sup>

The leading cause of world hunger is the difficulty of access to basic food. In addition, the access is synonym of an insufficient income because the food is in the market. The most common consequence is malnourished, often identified as a phenomenon of the poor and very poor populations.

The malnourished in Brazil were ten per cent of the population or 15.9 million people in the period 1996-98, representing almost 30 percent of estimated malnourished for Latin America, being the largest absolute number of undernourished in the region. These statistics have led FAO to allocated Brazil in category 3 – on a scale of 1 to 5, for increasing proportions of undernourished – drawing a moderate/high incidence of hunger.

According to the most recent data available, for the period 2006-2008, the classification of Brazil remains the same, although the number of undernourished has fallen to 11.7 million, equivalent to six percent of the population (FAO, 2011).

Despite those numbers still set up a serious problem, they reveal improvement in food deprivation in the country. The advance is a reflection of changing government policy for food security. Brazil is one of the pioneers in the actions in support of food security in Latin America, the region most advanced in terms of laws, institutions and public awareness on the rights to food.

This completely new panorama of policies directed to food security shows the relevance of studies on the topic. In addition, food security began to attract worldwide

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<sup>1</sup> Associate professor of the Institute of Economics at the Federal University of Uberlândia, Brasil.

<sup>2</sup> Professor of the Course of Technology in Logistics at the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Triangulo Mineiro, Brasil.

<sup>3</sup> Associate professor of the Institute of Economics at the Federal University of Uberlândia, Brasil.

attention, especially after high international food prices (wheat, maize, rice, soymilk, meat, etc.) featuring the "world food crisis".

The main concern was the inflation climbing to erode income gains of the poorest layers of the population and promote, at least in the case of Brazil, a setback in earnings provided by high employment, improvement in minimum wages and social policy of the Lula's administration.

Because of all these elements, the article proposed to examine food insecurity in Brazil, scaling the impacts of the main policy aimed at tackling the problem – the Bolsa Família – in a context of "world food crisis".

The hypothesis is that this program, although decisive and effective, is not able to resolve the problem of hunger in the country because the causes of this phenomenon are of broader scope.

The conclusion is that income transfer programs do not have the potential to overcome the phenomenon of hunger because do not act on the deeper and intrinsic aspects of social marginalization of capitalist development.

### **Bibliography**

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