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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Information received from Brazil on follow-up to the concluding observations on its third periodic report*

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



I. Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship (MDHC)

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 14 of the concluding observations (E/C.12/BRA/CO/3) (human rights defenders)

1. In response to the request for information on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, specifically with regard to paragraph 14 (a) concerning the adoption of a new policy for the protection of human rights defenders, it should be noted that, throughout 2025, the Brazilian State consolidated a new robust regulatory and institutional framework for this area.

2. Firstly, it should be noted that the protection policy underwent structural updates aimed at its institutionalization and effectiveness. This process culminated in the publication of Decree No. 12,710, of November 5, 2025, which officially established the National Plan for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. The purpose of this decree is to coordinate actions between the federal government, states, and municipalities, governed by principles such as the integrity of rights and the protection of life, in addition to creating an Implementation and Monitoring Committee to ensure the transversality of the policy. In addition, MDHC Ordinance No. 892, dated June 9, 2025, was issued, regulating the procedures of the Protection Program (PPDDH), innovating by recognizing and detailing not only individual but also collective, territorial, and popular protection measures, explicitly covering communicators and environmentalists.

3. With regard to the requirement for “broad and multisectoral consultations,” it should be noted that the development of these new regulatory frameworks was based on an intense process of social participation. In response to the ruling of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the Gabriel Sales Pimenta case, the Technical Working Group created for this purpose conducted, over the course of a year, more than 54 public consultations, four in-person hearings, and several meetings with social movements throughout the country. In addition, the democratic management of the Program was strengthened by Decree No. 11,867/2023 and Public Notice No. 1/2024, which ensured the recomposition of the Deliberative Council (CONDEL) with parity for civil society and specific quotas for indigenous peoples, quilombolas, environmentalists, and communicators, ensuring that the policy is managed in a shared manner with those who work in the territories.

4. Finally, it should be noted that the PPDDH is currently operational throughout Brazil, ensuring capillarity through partner State Programs or Federal and Regional Teams, covering all five regions of the country and fulfilling the commitment to universal application of the protection policy.

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 (a) of the concluding observations (business and human rights)

5. The Brazilian State has developed a draft National Policy on Human Rights and Business (PNDHES), the text of which is in the final stages of negotiation between the Executive Secretariat of the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship and the Civil House of the Presidency of the Brazilian Republic.

6. In this regard, it is important to mention that the development of the PNDHES involved extensive inter-institutional coordination within the federal public administration and a qualified process of social participation, through the work of the Interministerial Working Group (GTI), established on the basis of Presidential Decree No. 11,772/2023 and Presidential Decree No. 11,926/2024. It is also important to note that this GTI included representatives from 17 federal agencies.

7. The construction process included various mechanisms for social participation, such as public hearings, hearings with experts, and self-managed events, between 2024 and 2025. In this vein, three public hearings and eleven hearings with experts were held, in addition to self-managed events, with broad thematic coverage, such as regulatory frameworks, state and corporate obligations, accountability, due diligence, climate justice, and sectoral impacts.

8. Furthermore, it is essential to highlight that the draft of the aforementioned National Policy, conceived as a central guideline for state action aimed at preventing, mitigating, and remedying human rights violations perpetrated by companies, is based on the Inter-American Standards on Business and Human Rights, considered in light of regional and local peculiarities and specificities, and dialogues with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

9. Despite its political and institutional relevance and its role in shaping business practices in line with international human rights standards, the proposal is that the PNDHES will be established by presidential decree, an infralegal normative act of the Executive Branch. Thus, as a presidential decree, the instrument does not have sufficient normative density to autonomously innovate the legal order or to establish direct legal duties that are mandatory for companies, notably with regard to the mandatory implementation of human rights due diligence mechanisms.

10. In this vein, the PNDHES proposal is conditional on the voluntary adherence of economic agents. Even so, the structured text of the National Policy on Human Rights and Business plays an important normative role by establishing interpretive principles, state commitments, and guidelines that inform the actions of the federal public administration and promote the progressive incorporation of a human rights perspective into corporate governance arrangements, especially with regard to the effects on affected groups and communities.

II. Ministry of development and social assistance, family and combat against hunger (MDS)

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 40 (a) of the concluding observations (right to social security)

11. In this regard, I hereby submit the contributions formulated by the technical areas of this Ministry regarding paragraphs 40 (a) and (b) (right to social security).

Bolsa Familia Program

12. The National Secretariat for Citizenship Income (SENARC/MDS) reported that, first of all, it should be noted that Social Security is an integrated set of public policies that aims to guarantee social protection for the entire Brazilian population, based on the principles of human dignity, solidarity, and social justice (source: IPEA). According to the Federal Constitution of 1988, the Social Security system is based on three essential pillars: Health, Social Security, and Social Assistance. Its scope extends throughout an individual's life cycle, with the aim of protecting them from various social risks, including: inability to work (due to illness, advanced age, permanent disability, or imprisonment); insufficient or no income (in specific population groups or due to the absence of formal employment); and vulnerability related to the life cycle, violence, illness, and health problems.

13. Benefits can be monetary (such as retirement pensions, pensions, and income transfers) or non-monetary (health services, social assistance, medicines, and goods). Examples of benefits that cover the life cycle include the Bolsa Familia Program (PBF), the Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC), family allowances, and health services such as prenatal care and immunization, among others.

14. The Social Security system is based on the principle of solidarity and financed by society as a whole, through funds from the federal, state, Federal District, and municipal budgets, as well as social contributions levied on employers (payroll, revenue, profits), workers/insured persons, lotteries, and importers.

15. The Bolsa Família Program (PBF), recreated by Law No. 14,601/2023, is a conditional cash transfer program aimed at protecting families in poverty, with financial benefits calculated according to specific rules based on family composition. It is a non-contributory policy aimed at the vulnerable population registered in the Single Registry for

Social Programs (Cadastro Único) and promotes the coordination of social assistance, health, and education policies, in addition to integrating complementary actions, such as productive inclusion programs, housing policy, sanitation, among others.

16. There are clear criteria for granting the benefit, such as registration in the Cadastro Único, family income per person of up to R\$ 218, updated registration with no pending issues, and budget availability for the program.

17. The financial sustainability of the Bolsa Família Program is ensured by actions aimed at guaranteeing its focus. As the gateway to the Program is the Single Registry, the registration qualification process conducted by the Secretariat for Evaluation, Information Management, and Single Registry of the MDS (SAGICAD/MDS) is fundamental to the proper management of the PBF.

18. Registration qualification is a set of periodic actions to review, correct, and update family registrations, ensuring that the data reflects the actual situation of income, family composition, and other socioeconomic information. It is conducted by the MDS in partnership with municipal administrations and involves administrative routines, the use of national databases, and the summoning of families for interviews and the presentation of documents.

19. As already noted, the quality of the Single Registry data is directly related to the targeting of the Bolsa Família Program, ensuring that the benefit reaches those who really need it, for as long as that need lasts. When a family's per capita income exceeds R\$ 218 but is below R\$ 706, it enters the so-called Protection Rule, receiving half the value of the benefit, avoiding immediate cancellation and allowing for a gradual transition to autonomy. If the family's per capita income falls back below R\$ 218, the family will once again receive the full value of the benefit.

20. According to data from the Federal Government (Bolsa Família: poverty reduction, autonomy, and management efficiency), in July 2025 alone, approximately one million households stopped receiving Bolsa Família because their income had increased. In June of the same year, the Federal Court of Accounts (TCU) pointed out that the MDS achieved 100% of the goals set for the Program in the first year of the 2024–2027 Multi-Year Plan (PPA). The control body noted that Bolsa Família had recovered the gains lost during the Covid-19 pandemic and highlighted its positive impact on poverty reduction.

21. In addition, the new design of the Program contributed significantly to Brazil's removal from the Hunger Map, as announced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO/UN) in July 2025.

22. The World Bank's study "Cash transfers and formal labor markets – Evidence from Brazil" highlights the indirect economic impacts of Bolsa Família. In addition to the immediate benefits to beneficiary families, the study revealed important results in formal employment and the economy in general. According to the study, the program stimulates municipal economies by encouraging the consumption of food, clothing, and other products, favoring commerce in areas with beneficiary families, which resulted in a multiplier effect of 2.16 for the local economy.

23. From a public health perspective, there is ample evidence of the positive effects of the Bolsa Família program, as found in studies conducted by researchers at the Center for Data and Knowledge Integration for Health (CIDACS/FIOCRUZ): reduction in the risk of suicide; a reduction in AIDS deaths among women in vulnerable situations; and a reduction in child malnutrition, among others.

24. All these results demonstrate that the Bolsa Família Program has impacts that go far beyond simple cash transfers. They span generations, transcend household boundaries, and amplify economic activity, public health, and the mitigation of income and gender inequality, bringing dignity and better prospects to millions of Brazilians. In this sense, the financial sustainability dimension is not capable of encompassing the complexity and importance of the Bolsa Família Program for Brazilian society.

Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC)

25. With regard to measures to ensure effective administration and supervision of the social security system in order to safeguard its financial sustainability, the National Secretariat for Welfare Benefits (SNBA/MDS) expressed its opinion based on its powers, as provided for in Decree No. 11,392/2023, amended by Decree No. 12,628/2025. That said, it stated that, within the scope of the National Social Assistance Policy, the sustainability of the BPC, a benefit under its responsibility, depends on maintaining the legal eligibility criteria and continuously reviewing the registration and socioeconomic bases of beneficiaries.

26. The registration review was intensified between 2024 and 2025, becoming a permanent routine in the benefit maintenance process. The actions taken allowed for the selection of more than four million benefits, reaching an overall inclusion/update rate of approximately 85%. It was also found that more than one million beneficiaries and their s initially identified as not registered in the Single Registry were subsequently registered, reaching a regularization rate of over 99%. In addition, benefits were terminated solely due to the lack of registration updates, which demonstrates the effectiveness of the control measures adopted. These results highlight the quality of the registration databases and the integrity of welfare spending, ensuring that benefits remain targeted at the population that meets the eligibility criteria.

27. Furthermore, relevant regulatory measures were adopted to improve the administration and control of the benefit. Joint Ordinance MDS/MPS/INSS No. 33/2025 standardized the process of biopsychosocial reassessment of persons with disabilities, establishing uniform procedures for medical examination and social assessment, as well as rules for summons, deadlines, and grounds for dismissal. This regulation strengthens the supervision of eligibility and ensures that the benefit is maintained only for those who meet the criteria set forth in the Organic Law on Social Assistance (LOAS). Joint Ordinance MDS/INSS No. 34/2025, in turn, consolidated procedures for granting, maintaining, and periodically reviewing benefits, regulating the integration between CadÚnico, the National Social Security Institute (INSS), and the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS), reinforcing the importance of continuous income verification and registration updates. Section III of the aforementioned ordinance establishes that the review must comply with the requirements set forth in LOAS and Decree No. 6,214/2007, regardless of the means of granting, whether administrative or judicial, reinforcing the non-lifetime nature of the benefit and promoting legal and administrative certainty.

28. In summary, based on the analyses carried out by the SNBA, it is concluded that, with regard to the BPC, financial sustainability has been ensured through permanent registration reviews, the modernization and standardization of administrative procedures, and the strengthening of supervision, control, and integrity mechanisms.

Follow-up information relating to paragraph 40 (b) of the concluding observations (right to social security)

Bolsa Família Program

29. The Bolsa Família Program is one of Brazil's main public policies aimed at building the aforementioned "social protection floor," as it guarantees a basic income for vulnerable families, integrating the Brazilian Social Security system as a non-contributory income transfer policy. The PBF is one of the main instruments for ensuring full coverage of the population vulnerable to SDG 1.3 targets.

30. The sole paragraph of Article 6 of the Federal Constitution of 1988 establishes that all Brazilians in situations of social vulnerability shall be entitled to a basic family income, guaranteed by the government through a permanent income transfer program. In turn, Law No. 14,601/2023, which recreated the Bolsa Família Program, establishes in its § 1 that the PBF constitutes a stage in the gradual and progressive process of implementing universal basic citizenship income, as established in the sole paragraph of Article 6 of the Federal Constitution.

31. The conditional cash transfer policy represented by Bolsa Família is based on an understanding of the multidimensional nature of poverty, as well as its connection to issues of gender, race/color, age, territoriality, and other intersectionalities. The majority of the program's beneficiaries are women, especially black women (black and brown), with a high concentration in the North and Northeast regions of Brazil.

32. In the December 2025 payroll, of the total of 48,923,630 people who were members of families receiving the Bolsa Família Program in Brazil, 28,725,026 were female (58.71%) and 35,855,457 were black/brown (73.29%). A total of 18,707,740 families were served during the month, distributed among 1,821,079 families from Priority Groups (due to their greater vulnerability), including 243,434 families with indigenous members, 285,071 families with quilombolas, 390,790 families of recyclable material collectors, 247,667 families with homeless members, and 647,708 families identified as at risk of food insecurity.

33. Regarding the request for information on the Program's coverage and budget, I report the following:

- Coverage rate of Bolsa Família families, based on PNADC (VISDATA): 90.77% (Nov/2025);
- Budget allocation for the Bolsa Família Program for the 2025 fiscal year (Monitora MDS): R\$ 158,632,791,717.

34. Detailed information on the profile of beneficiaries and their geographical distribution can be found in the tools available on the MDS website, such as VISDATA. Among the available data:

- Female beneficiaries of the Bolsa Família Program, by age group ;
- Families benefiting from the Bolsa Família Program, by Traditional and Specific Population Group (GPTE);
- Homeless families who are beneficiaries of the Bolsa Família Program;
- Indigenous and quilombola families who are beneficiaries of the Bolsa Família Program.

Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC)

35. Still considering the measures related to the establishment of a social protection floor that ensures universal coverage and adequate benefits, with special attention to Afro-descendant and indigenous women in the North and Northeast Regions, it should be noted that the BPC is one of the pillars of the non-contributory social protection floor provided for in Article 203, item V, of the Federal Constitution. The benefit guarantees a monthly income of one minimum wage to elderly people aged 65 and over and to people with long-term disabilities, provided that the criterion of a per capita family income equal to or less than one quarter of the minimum wage is met, as established in the LOAS. Currently, the benefit ensures income protection for more than six and a half million people in vulnerable situations.

36. Thus, LOAS establishes three central eligibility criteria: per capita family income equal to or less than one quarter of the minimum wage, age 65 or older for the elderly, and, when applicable, disability characterized by a biopsychosocial assessment. This focus on income, age, and disability allows for reaching groups in extreme poverty regardless of gender, race, or territory, provided that the legal requirements are met. Although the BPC does not establish identity criteria for eligibility purposes, it is observed that the North and Northeast regions have a higher proportion of families in extreme poverty, and that Afro-descendant and indigenous women face greater structural inequalities. Thus, the criteria of income, age for the elderly, and the ability to identify vulnerabilities through biopsychosocial assessment and permanent updating in CadÚnico allow this population to be reached whenever the legal requirements are met. In this way, the benefit, although not identity-based, covers Afro-descendant and indigenous women in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability, contributing structurally to ensuring a minimum level of income and dignity.

37. Therefore, the SNBA/MDS points out that the financial sustainability of the BPC is being ensured through continuous registration reviews, the modernization and

standardization of administrative procedures, and the strengthening of supervision and integrity mechanisms. It is also reported that the BPC is a fundamental instrument of Brazilian social protection and, due to its eligibility criteria, reaches a significant portion of the population in vulnerable situations, including Afro-descendant and indigenous women in the North and Northeast regions who meet the income, age, and disability requirements set forth in the legislation.

38. With regard to the budget, the BPC is financed by Social Security resources, in accordance with the principle of solidarity that guides this system. Under the terms of Article 195 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, Social Security is funded by society as a whole, directly and indirectly, through resources from the budgets of the Union, the states, the Federal District, and the municipalities, as well as through social contributions levied on payroll, revenue, or turnover and profits of companies, in addition to other legally established sources. Thus, although the BPC does not require prior contributions from beneficiaries, its maintenance is directly linked to the solidarity-based and collective financing of Social Security, ensuring the sustainability of the benefit and the realization of the constitutional right to social protection for elderly and disabled people in situations of poverty and dependency.

39. The number of benefits by type (persons with disabilities and elderly persons) and the corresponding total amounts were distributed as follows between January and November 2025:

- BPC – Persons with Disabilities: 3,738,508 benefits – Amount disbursed: R\$ 61,641,611,503.59;
- BPC – Elderly: 2,667,875 benefits – Amount disbursed: R\$ 45,272,715,330.96;
- Total: 6,406,383 benefits – Total amount disbursed: R\$ 106,914,326,834.55.¹

40. The distribution of benefits, considering active benefits in November 2025, was as follows:

- North: Persons with disabilities: 414,212 | Elderly persons: 266,529 | Total: 680,741
- Northeast: Persons with disabilities: 1,519,299 | Elderly persons: 793,432 | Total: 2,312,731;
- Southeast: Persons with disabilities: 1,126,935 | Elderly persons: 1,109,195 | Total: 2,236,130;
- South: People with disabilities: 386,948 | Elderly people: 262,705 | Total: 649,653;
- Midwest: Persons with disabilities: 291,114 | Elderly persons: 236,014 | Total: 527,128.²

41. With regard to the social guarantees of social protection policies for specific populations, it is important to note that the majority of the Brazilian population is made up of women, with black women accounting for 57 million, according to the latest IBGE Census. Black women face the greatest difficulties in terms of social mobility and have vulnerabilities that are exacerbated by issues related to housing, violence, and limitations in the labor market and education—both in terms of access and permanence. In this sense, the BPC is an important instrument for the realization of social rights within the scope of Social Security, with special relevance for black and indigenous women, who historically find themselves in contexts of greater socioeconomic inequality, structural discrimination, and restricted access to public policies. For these groups, the BPC represents not only a guarantee of minimum income, but also a concrete mechanism for reducing multiple vulnerabilities associated with poverty, structural racism, gender inequalities, and territorial and institutional barriers.

42. The distribution of BPC recipients by gender, considering active benefits in November 2025, was as follows:

- Male: Persons with disabilities: 2,089,785 | Elderly persons: 1,059,080;

¹ Source: DATAPREV/Maciça.

² Source: DATAPREV/Maciça.

- Female: Persons with disabilities: 1,648,693 | Elderly persons: 1,608,786;
- Not reported: Persons with disabilities: 30 | Elderly persons: 9.³

43. Considering the benefits active in November 2025, among the indigenous population, 17,529 people received the BPC – Person with disability, and 4,579 received the BPC – Elderly person, totaling 22,108 benefits among indigenous people.⁴

44. The number of BPC benefits for persons with disabilities by age group over or under 16, considering the benefits active in November 2025, was distributed as follows:

- Over 16 years of age: 2,848,301;
- 16 years old or younger: 890,199;
- Date of birth not reported: 8.⁵

45. Thus, by ensuring a regular and stable income, the BPC contributes to increased economic autonomy, food security, and reduced dependence on informal support networks, in addition to promoting better access to essential services, such as health care, strengthening the expanded social protection of the public for which it is intended. In relation to indigenous peoples, the BPC contributes to individual and family subsistence, respecting its non-contributory nature and its lack of connection to the formal labor market, a characteristic that is particularly relevant for indigenous peoples, whose forms of economic and social organization are not guided by urban or social security standards. In this sense, the BPC acts as an instrument of equity, recognizing sociocultural diversity and different forms of vulnerability.

46. Finally, it should be noted that the BPC is a structuring instrument of the Brazilian social protection floor. The effectiveness of the BPC is associated with its ability to promote dignity and ensure a minimum level of social protection for the population in situations of social vulnerability, in accordance with constitutional objectives and social assistance policy. By guaranteeing income security, especially for black and indigenous women in the North and Northeast regions who meet the legal criteria, historically marginalized groups, the benefit reaffirms its role as an essential public policy and contributes to the promotion of social justice, racial and gender equity, the reduction of social inequalities, and social inclusion within the scope of the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS).

³ *Source:* DATAPREV/Maciça.

⁴ *Source:* Cross-referencing (DATAPREV/Maciça X CadÚnico).

⁵ *Source:* DATAPREV/Maciça.