

Improving Nutrition in early childhood

UNICEF Brazil
Global Thematic Funds - SC189903

Progress Report



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Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
CGAN	General Coordinator of Food and Nutrition
CHA	Community Health Agents
CP	Country Programme
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
C4D	Communication for Development
ECA	Statute of Child and Adolescent Statute
IBFAN	International Baby Food Action Network
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PCU	Platform of Urban Centres
PNDS	National Survey of Demography and Health of Children and Women
POF	Family Budget Survey
SAS	Secretariat of Health Care
SISVAN	Food and Nutritional Surveillance System
SUS	Unified Health System
UNDIME	Union of Municipal Education Managers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present report reflects the planning process carried out by UNICEF Brazil during 2018 based on the Country Programme (CP) 2017-2021. UNICEF Brazil is focused on the development and implementation of strategic interventions on child health and malnutrition, on promoting breastfeeding and healthy complementary food, and on preventing overweight and obesity in children and adolescents living in UNICEF Brazil prioritized territories (Legal Amazon, Semi-arid regions and 10 large urban centers). Given the nutritional status of children and adolescents in Brazil, UNICEF works in extreme situations of nutritional transition, ranging from the chronic malnutrition of indigenous children under five to the overweight and obesity epidemic.

The CP focuses on the inclusion and reduction of inequities that affect children and adolescents in Brazil and has innovative and challenging elements. Therefore, strategic partnerships are key for the programme implementation and to achieve the expected results. In addition, through the UNICEF Municipal Seal of Approval (UNICEF Seal)¹ and the Platform of urban Centres (PCU)² strategies (see annex I), UNICEF Brazil reaches the most vulnerable populations in the country concentrated in the Legal Amazon, the Semi-arid regions and the vulnerable communities of the large urban centres.



¹ A total of 1,919 municipalities in Amazon and Semi-arid region are enrolled in the current edition of the UNICEF Seal, which represents 83% of the municipalities in these territories (<http://selounicef.org.br/index.html#faq>)

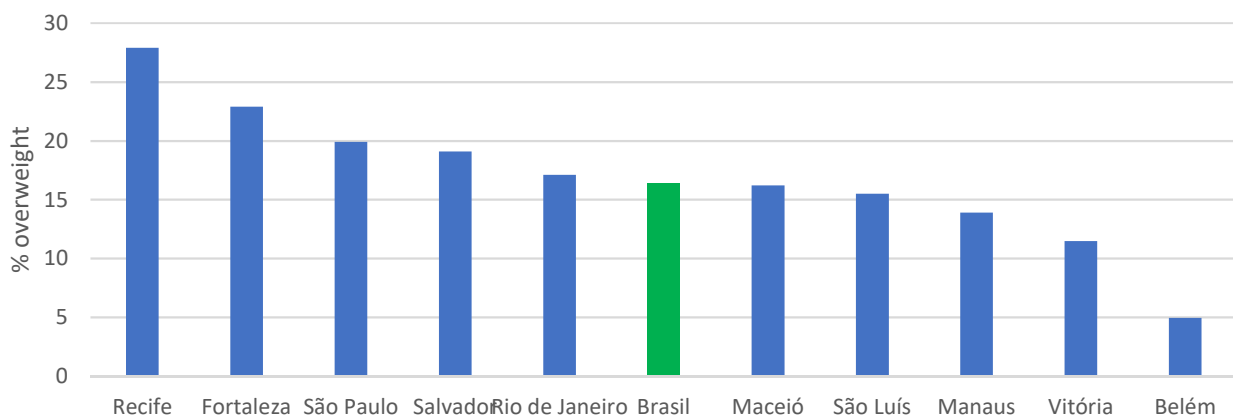
² The PCU currently involves 10 major capitals, including Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro state; São Paulo, São Paulo state; Vitória, Espírito Santo state; Salvador, Bahia state; Recife, Pernambuco state; Maceió, Alagoas state; Fortaleza, Ceará state; São Luís, Maranhão state; Belém, Pará state and Manaus, Amazonas state.

1. SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Brazilian population has undergone a major social transformation in recent decades that led to substantive changes in people's nutritional habits, with important decrease in the levels of undernutrition, and a steep increase in overweight in all segments of the population.

Overweight and obesity are often identified in five years old children from families of all income levels, as well as in all Brazilian regions. Processed foods, high in sugar and fat, and poor in nutrients, have become part of the dietary routine of many families. Recent data (2015)³ on children under five years of age who are enrolled in the public primary health care system showed a prevalence of 16.4% of overweight, with 7.6% being obese.

The graphic below shows the percentage of children under five years old overweight for their age, living in the 10 large urban centres prioritized by UNICEF Brazil in 2015:



Source: Nutrition Surveillance System/MoH, 2015

The causes of obesity are complex and multifactorial but feeding habits within families play an important role on the Brazilian scenario, starting from the early childhood. Brazil has adopted international guidelines and has national policies on breastfeeding and complementary food. However, only 38,6% of children are exclusively breastfed until the sixth month, and the rates of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months have stagnated since 2006⁴. Moreover, early introduction of food before two months is a practice in 14% of children, increasing to more than 30% in children between four and five months. At the same time, young children are increasingly exposed to sugary and ultra-processed food stuff. In 2013, one in three children under two years of age regularly consumed soda and sugary drinks (32.3%), and 60.8% of children were fed on

³ Nutritional Surveillance System (SISVAN), 2015

⁴ Bobbolini CS et al, 2017 – Revista de Saúde Pública

biscuits and cakes⁵. A total of 40.5% of children between 6 months and five years, regularly had soda drinks, while the consumption of vegetables was low (21.8%)⁶.

Existing policies have not yet been able to stop the epidemiological trend in Brazil. UNICEF Brazil targets children and adolescents living in vulnerable areas, with an approach that includes all the environments in which these children are living (household and families, pre-schools/schools and primary health care units) in order to change this epidemiological scenario and promote the rights of children and adolescents to good health and healthy food.

2. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The project had as its main purpose to develop and implement strategic interventions focused on child health and malnutrition, on promoting breastfeeding and healthy complementary food, and on the prevention of children and adolescents' overweight living in the territories prioritized by UNICEF Brazil (Amazon and Semi-arid regions and large urban centres).

2.1 Country Programme (CP) Results 2017-2021

UNICEF Brazil has as main implementation strategies at sub-national levels, the UNICEF Seal that covers 1,919 municipalities in the current edition (2017-2020) where many dimensions of inequity overlap and children are disproportionally vulnerable, and the Platform for Urban Centers (PCU) that aims to bring together the diverse sectors of society to reduce the interurban inequalities affecting children and adolescents living in large Brazilian cities (see Annex I).

Jointly with governments, NGOs, private sector, UN agencies, media, academia, children and adolescents and their families, UNICEF Brazil works to promote children's rights.

Through integrated programmes designed for the new CP 2017-2021, UNICEF Brazil expects to bring more innovative, sustained and integral change in support of children's rights. The proposed programme consists of four components: (a) enhanced policies for excluded children; (b) quality social policies for vulnerable children; (c) prevention of and response to extreme forms of violence; and (d) engaged citizenry and participation.

This project falls under the following outcome and outputs of UNICEF Brazil's Country Programme:

- [Outcome 1: Enhanced policies for excluded children](#)

By 2021, the most excluded boys and girls benefit from enhanced and inclusive public policies and services, and actively participate in decision-making processes.

⁵ National Health Survey, Brazil, 2013

⁶ Jaime, PJ et al. Rev.Bras. Saúde Matern. Infant., v.16, n.2, 2016

Outcome 2: Quality social policies for vulnerable children

By 2021 boys and girls have increased access to quality and responsive health, education and social protection programmes, and actively participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of these services.

-Output 2.1: Qualified health services

Families, communities and civil society have increased knowledge of health practices and government agencies, and health professionals provide culturally and age and gender responsive health services.

- Outcome 4: Engaged citizenry and participation

By 2021, engaged citizens, including boys, girls and families, millennials, individual donors and private sector partners, are driving public action for the realization of children's rights.

3. OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED RESULTS

3.1 General objective

To improve local capacity development and enable the environment to prevent overweight and obesity with focus among early childhood.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- Advocacy and mobilization of government and civil society to strengthen the regulations and legislations related to food and beverage industries;
- Protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding;
- Mobilization of municipal managers to improve actions to prevent overweight and obesity in early childhood;
- Development of a strategy for the enablement of preschool settings for the prevention of child overweight;
- Development of a toolkit on breastfeeding and healthy food for children up to two years old, aimed at working with families and train community health agents and other home visitors.

3.3 Beneficiaries

Pregnant women, families and caregivers of young children; municipal managers; children and teachers from pre-schools/ day-care centers; health professionals; and the general population.

Direct beneficiaries

- Pregnant women, families and caregivers of young children, and children under five years old living in the municipalities enrolled in the UNICEF Seal and large urban centers from the PCU;
- Managers, health professionals and community health agents at the primary care units;
- Pre-school teachers and children enrolled in pre-schools.

Indirect beneficiaries

The day-care centers, pre-schools and primary care unit environments, and the general population.

3.4 Geographical focus

The activities were implemented in the in the municipalities participating in the UNICEF Seal and the Platform for Urban Centers (PCU).



4. PROGRESS AGAINST EXPECTED RESULTS

The results are organized in 4 outputs, as follows:

Output 1- Revised regulation of foods and beverages labelling and marketing approved.

Output 2- Laws that guarantee healthy eating habits prepared and disseminated nationally.

Output 3- Day-care and pre-school teachers trained and adopting improved practices for children up to four years old/ Community Health Workers and other home visitors trained to work with families.

Output 4- Improved knowledge and practices on breastfeeding and healthy food disseminated in 1,919 municipalities in the Legal Amazon and Semi-arid regions.

At the moment, UNICEF Brazil is at the process of setting up the partnerships with implementing partners and aligning the strategies to best address the results.

Results/output 1: Revised regulation of foods and beverages labelling, and marketing approved

Progress to date:	<p>UNICEF Brazil has been in contact with experts in the area of regulation and legislation for food and beverage industries aiming to formulate strategies.</p> <p>Together with experts such as IDEC (Costumer Protection Institute) and “Aliança Pela Alimentação Adequada e Saudável” (Alliance for Adequate and Healthy Food), UNICEF is gathering information on the law projects and best strategies to address the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The current tax benefits that exist for sugar beverage industries in the Manaus Free Trade Zone;- Marketing aimed at children;- Front-of-pack food labelling. <p>After the change of government in January, UNICEF has been in a meeting with the key personnel working with nutrition within the Ministry of Health for aligning the priorities for 2019. It was confirmed that the Ministry of Health considers the change/strengthening of legislation for food and beverage industries as a priority, and that UNICEF Brazil will be a support for achieving results.</p>
Key partners for this result:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CGAN/MoH• IDEC• Aliança Pela Alimentação Adequada e Saudável

Results/Output 2: Laws that guarantee healthy eating habits prepared and disseminated nationally

<p>Progress to date:</p>	<p>UNICEF Brazil and partners are producing a questionnaire directed at managers from the municipalities enrolled in the UNICEF Seal for diagnostic and analysis of the food and nutritional situation for early childhood in their area of coverage.</p> <p>Also, UNICEF Brazil and partners are producing a material directed at managers aiming to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlight the importance of their engagement in actions related to the prevention of childhood obesity; - Highlight the responsibility of the municipality in promoting continuous health education; - Support managers in the elaboration of a Plan of Action focusing on the prevention of childhood overweight and the promotion of healthy habits; - Engage managers to adopt and implement municipal policies to support a non-obesogenic environment.
<p>Key partners in this result:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBFAN (International Baby Food Action Network)

Results/Output 3: Day-care and pre-school teachers trained and adopting improved practices for children up to four years old/ Community Health Workers and other home visitors trained to work with families

<p>Progress to date:</p>	<p>UNICEF Brazil is at the process of hiring two implementing partners to develop distance learning courses aimed at health professionals/CHA, day care centers and pre-school teachers/caregivers, to develop capacity building among professionals in the municipalities enrolled at the UNICEF Seal.</p> <p>The content will be based on two documents produced by UNICEF Brazil to work with families and caregivers of children up to two years old, adolescents and young people: <i>"The 10 Steps for Breastfeeding and healthy complementary food - From Birth to Two Years of Age"</i> and <i>"It is Better to Eat Well - Tips for Promoting Healthy Food Among Children and Adolescents"</i>.</p>
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	The methodologies of training were developed and tested last year to train health professionals, social workers, educators, adolescents and young people.
Key partners in this result:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoH • IBFAN • UNDIME (Union of Municipal Education Managers)

Results/Output 4: Improved knowledge and practices on breastfeeding and healthy food disseminated in 1,919 municipalities in the Legal Amazon and Semi-arid regions.

Progress to date:	<p>UNICEF Brazil and partners are developing flyers, posters and mini books based on the two documents produced last year (<i>"The 10 Steps for Breastfeeding and healthy complementary food - From Birth to Two Years of Age"</i> and <i>"It is Better to Eat Well - Tips for Promoting Healthy Food Among Children and Adolescents"</i>).</p> <p>These documents will be part of a toolkit on breastfeeding and healthy food for children to be distributed at scale to the municipalities enrolled in the UNICEF Seal for the engagement of families, caregivers, and health professionals at the primary health care units.</p>
Key partners in this result:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF Seal participating municipalities • IBFAN

5. LESSONS LEARNED AND OPPORTUNITIES

- By associating the implementation of programmatic nutrition efforts with UNICEF's work in large territories, scale is gained, facilitating access and partnership with a large number of municipalities, families, children and adolescents.

6. FUTURE PLANS

UNICEF Brazil is finalizing the documents and process for setting-up the partnership with implementing partners. From the next months, the following activities will be put in place:

- The implementation of strategies of advocacy and mobilization of government and civil society to strengthen the regulations and legislations related to food and beverage industries;

- Continuous support of breastfeeding and healthy food through the distribution of a toolkit on these topics, the capacitation of health staff, and the improvement of the provision of nutrition counselling to caregivers of young children;
- Enablement of day care centers and preschool settings through the capacitation of teachers on the prevention of childhood overweight, the inclusion of basic nutrition literacy classes, improved food standards, and the prevention of marketing aimed at children;
- Activities for the development of skills and capacity building of health, education, social assistant professional to be continuously developed in the 10 large urban centres and in the 1,919 municipalities enrolled in the UNICEF Seal until 2021.

7. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Thematic Pool 3: Nutrition Brazil

Thematic Contributions Received for Thematic Pool 3 by Unicef Brazil in 2018

2018 Thematic Contributions Received (in US dollars)			
Donors	Grant Number	Contribution Amount	Programmable Amount
Thematic MTSP 2018-2021 Outcome 2: Health	SC189903	350,000.00	245,000.00
Total		350,000.00	245,000.00

**Thematic Pool Area 3: Nutrition
Brazil
Planned Budget and Available Resources for 2019**

Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2019 (in US Dollars) - Global Thematic Nutrition - SC189903				
Intermediate Results	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
Online courses on Breastfeeding and healthy food for community health workers and early child education and social workers	ORR	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00
Support to ENAM and the 3rd. World Breastfeeding Conference/1st World Complementary Feeding Conference;	ORR	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
Prevent child obesity in school settings in the Platforms of SAB, TAM and PCU	ORR	25,000.00	25,000.00	0.00
Promote breastfeeding and healthy food in SAB and TAM	ORR	68,350.00	33,350.00	0.00
Advocacy and Mobilization of Government and civil society (social media campaigns C4D materials, travel and life histories)	ORR	75,250.00	75,250.00	0.00
Monitoring and Evaluation	ORR	36,400.00	36,400.00	0.00
Total		245,000.00	245,000.00	0.00

8. EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF Brazil takes the opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to the Global Thematic funds. This remarkable support allowed the implementation of comprehensive strategies to work with children living in vulnerable obesogenic environments, helping to fight malnutrition in Brazil. The activities initiated in 2018, and to be accomplished this year will surely contribute to the visibility of health, nutritional status and the rights of children to healthy food.



UNICEF Brazil looks forward into continuing the work proposed for this fund in 2019 to ensure a healthier environment and a stronger system to promote health and fight malnutrition among Brazilian children and adolescents.

9. ANNEXES

Annex I: UNICEF work in Brazil

The current 5-year UNICEF programme in Brazil covers the period 2017 – 2021. The Country Programme Document provides a strategic and programmatic framework for the implementation of joint activities that address the main challenges faced by children and adolescents in Brazil, thus protecting and further strengthening their rights.

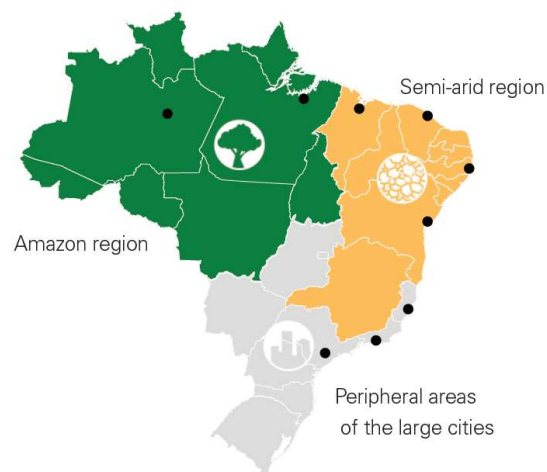
The UNICEF programme is aligned with the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals which propose coordinated global action among governments, business, academia and civil society to eradicate poverty and to promote a dignified life for everybody everywhere.

UNICEF Brazil's work on the ground is focused on the two most vulnerable areas of the country (the Amazon and the Semi-arid regions), as well as on 10 large urban centers, where the largest numbers of vulnerable people live, using two strategies: the **UNICEF Municipal Seal⁷** and the **Platform of Urban Centers (PCU)**.

The municipalities that enroll in the **UNICEF Seal** commit themselves to undertake, through a participatory process, a situational assessment of the situation of children and adolescents living in their communities. Supported by UNICEF they develop and implement a Municipal Plan of Action that addresses the key issues identified that affect girls and boys. A total of 1,919 municipalities in 18 states are enrolled in the current edition, focusing on improving 17 social indicators and achieving systemic results. Among the expected results is the improvement of children's nutritional status, the promotion of breastfeeding and healthy feeding practices, measured by the percentage of overweight children in each municipality.

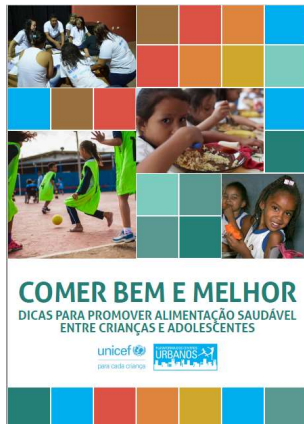
The **PCU** strategy comprises 10 Brazilian capitals (Manaus, Belém, São Luís, Fortaleza, Recife, Maceió, Salvador, Vitória, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo) and aims to promote the rights of children, especially those most affected by inequalities within each city. One of the four priorities of the PCU agenda is early childhood development, including the reduction of avoidable deaths in the first days of life, the transmission of congenital syphilis, and the prevention of obesity on the first years of life.

Both strategies are essential for the implementation of UNICEF activities to reduce inequities in the country and to promote the rights of children and adolescents in the Amazon and Semi-arid regions and in large urban centers.



⁷ <https://www.unicef.org/brazil/selo-unicef>

Annex II: Other Visual and Tangible Products



“It is Better to Eat Well - Tips for Promoting Healthy Food Among Children and Adolescents”

https://www.unicef.org/brazil/pt/resources_38398.html



“The 10 Steps for Food and Healthy Habits - from birth to two years of age”

<https://www.unicef.org/brazil/relatorios/os-10-passos-para-alimentacao-e-habitos-saudaveis-do-nascimento-ate-os-2-anos-de-idade>

Annex III: Donor feedback Form

Name of Report:

Reference number:

SCORING: 5 indicates “highest level of satisfaction” while
0 indicates “complete dissatisfaction”.

1. To what extent did the narrative content of the report conform to your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could improve on next time?

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2. To what extent did the fund utilization part of the report conform to your reporting expectations?

5	4	3	2	1	0

If you have not been fully satisfied, could you please tell us what we could improve on next time?

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3. What suggestions do you have for future reports?

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4. Any other comments you would like to share with us?

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