

Brazil's Example to deal with Food and Nutrition Leadership

In 2003 Brazil set up a national council on Nutrition security. "The Brazilian National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA) has a special construction, being made up from one-third government and two-thirds non-government executives and workers. It has special powers. It is housed in and reports to the office of the president of the republic. It is responsible for formulating and proposing public policies whose purpose is to guarantee the human right to healthy and adequate food. There are also CONSEAs at state and municipal levels that deal with specific issues, also responsible for organising CONSEA conferences at their levels. CONSEAs are charged to represent Brazilian social, regional, racial and cultural diversity at municipal, state or national level. At national level CONSEA collaborates with the Inter-ministerial Chamber of Food and Nutrition Security (CAISAN), to get its decisions implemented. CAISAN is made up from senior officials from many government ministries, ranging from social development to foreign relations. It is responsible for implementation of the national food and nutrition security policy and its related actions, following CONSEA's agreements and suggestions. CAISAN is also responsible for monitoring policies once these are translated into official actions."

CONSEA¹ is a body that can only be challenged by the Parliament, because of the constitutional status of the CONSEA and CAISAN system, but it is not expected that they will over turn the decisions of CONSEA. In Brazil this is set up by law, which states that 'adequate food and nutrition is a basic human right, inherent to human dignity'. This embodies CONSEA and CAISAN.

Since 2/3rd persons on CONSEA are from civil society, they hold the government responsible and accountable. CONSEA regularly monitors and mobilizes action. Further CONSEA goes on to recommend to the President what comes out of its conferences. Some of the key recommendations include e.g. strengthening State capacity to regulate, restricts acquisition of land by foreigners, intervene at WTO to revise the trade policy, promote family farming etc.

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