

***The Millennium Development Goals called for cutting by half the proportion of hungry people in the developing world between 1990 and 2015.***

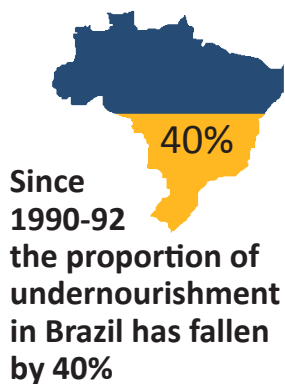
According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), we've cut the prevalence of chronically hungry people in the developing world by 45 percent since 1990. Seems the goal is within reach, right? At least that's the message repeated throughout mainstream media. What doesn't make headlines? Without progress in China -- mostly in the 90s-- the world would have seen only a 6 percent drop in the number of chronically hungry people since 1990. We still see inequality increasing in most regions of the world.

***795 million people are hungry even though we produce 2,900 calories per day for every man, woman and child.***

This official number of hungry people captures only severe calorie deficiency lasting more than a year. It doesn't include short-term calorie deprivation or nutritional deficiency. Yet many with adequate calories suffer life-long harm due to malnutrition: One-quarter of children worldwide are stunted by undernutrition and 1.8 billion people suffer from nutritional deprivation. Fortunately, FAO is creating more comprehensive monitoring through a Suite of Food Security Indicators and a self-assessment tool known as the Food Insecurity Experience Scale.

***Hunger & hunger-related disease kills 3.1 children every year--equal to a Hiroshima bomb going off every 8 days. Yet, some countries are making amazing progress...***

### **AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT'S WORKING:**



**BRAZIL** — In 2010, Brazil added the Right to Food to its constitution, spurring the country's Zero Hunger initiatives. They include cash transfers reaching a quarter of Brazilians, conditioned in part on keeping kids in schools. In cities, 100 public "people's restaurants" serve nutritious meals for 50 cents to tens of thousands each day, using food from local farmers. The largest social movement in the hemisphere, the Landless Workers Movement, has resettled 370,000 families on roughly 20 million acres. The movement launched Brazil's first organic seed line and offers training and support in ecological agriculture.

Plus, during the 2000s, jobs with benefits grew 3 times faster than informal jobs, and the buying power of the minimum wage nearly doubled. So, inequality in Brazil — long known as among the world's worst — is now lower than it's been in more than 30 years.

**LESSONS** — No country is a model, but many, like Brazil, offer powerful lessons. Stable political conditions and economic growth, social protection policies targeted at vulnerable population groups and self-organized citizen movements are helping reduce hunger. Some of the most effective initiatives support small scale, sustainable farming, and the Right to Food. Let's learn from what's working...

### **WE CAN'T BLAME SCARCITY**

Ongoing, massive hunger can't be explained by lack of food. Today the world produces 3-4 pounds per person per day. And that's only counting what's left over after half the world's grain goes to livestock feed, fuel, and other purposes.

### **THEN IMAGINE OUR UNTAPPED POTENTIAL**

Three-quarters of the world's agricultural land is used for livestock, yet livestock provide only 17% of the world's calories. Roughly one-third of food is wasted, about one pound for every person, every day.

**45 PERCENT DECREASE IN PREVALENCE OF CHRONICALLY HUNGRY:** United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015: Meeting the 2015 International Hunger Targets: Taking Stock of Uneven Progress*, Rome: 2015, Annex 1, pages 8, 42, accessed July 5, 2016 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4646e.pdf>

**MAINSTREAM MEDIA MESSAGE:** Claire Provost, "MDG Target to Halve Prevalence of Hunger Within Reach, Says UN," *The Guardian*, October 9, 2012, accessed July 5, 2016 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/datablog/2012/oct/09/mdg-halve-hungry-people-within-reach>

**6 PERCENT DROP IN NUMBER OF HUNGRY EXCLUDING CHINA:** United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015*, Rome: 2015, Table A1, page 40, accessed July 5, 2016 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4646e.pdf>

**795 MILLION PEOPLE HUNGRY (THIS MEASURE CAPTURES ONLY CALORIE, NOT NUTRIENT DEFICIENCY):** Ibid, page 3.

**2,870 CALORIES PRODUCED PER PERSON EVERY DAY:** FAOSTAT, Food Balance Sheets, Country: World + (Total), Year: 2011, Food Supply (kcal/capita/day), accessed July 5, 2016, <http://faostat3.fao.org/download/FB/FBS/E>

**ONE-QUARTER OF ALL CHILDREN STUNTED:** UNICEF-WHO-World Bank Group joint child malnutrition estimates, *Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition: Key findings of the 2015 edition*, September 2015, accessed July 5, 2016, [http://www.unicef.org/media/files/JME\\_2015\\_edition\\_Sept\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/media/files/JME_2015_edition_Sept_2015.pdf)

**2 BILLION LACK ESSENTIAL NUTRIENT:** *State of Food and Agriculture 2013: Food Systems for Better Nutrition*, page ix, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3300e/i3300e.pdf>

**FAO's MORE COMPREHENSIVE MONITORING:** FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World: The Multiple Dimensions of Food Security*, Rome 2013, page 16-17, accessed July 5, 2016, [www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3434e/i3434e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3434e/i3434e.pdf); Suite of Food Security Indicators, <http://faostat3.fao.org/faostat-gateway/go/to/download/D/FS/E>

**CHILD DEATH TOLL FROM HUNGER:** Calculated from World Food Programme, Hunger Statistics page, <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>. Explanation: 3.1 million children die each year from poor nutrition; 66,000 Hiroshima deaths/8493.15 child deaths per day=7.77, which rounds to 8: Every 8 days the child death toll from poor nutrition equals the death toll of Hiroshima.

## WHAT'S WORKING:

**PERCENT REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF HUNGRY FOR BRAZIL:** Calculated from: UN FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2013*, Rome: 2013, Technical Annex 1, 44-45, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3434e/i3434e04.pdf>

**BRAZIL:** Oxfam America, "Halving Hunger: Still Possible?" Research Report 139: 2010, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/halving-hunger-still-possible> and "How Brazilian Agricultural Policy is Promoting Family Farms," International Platform, Rural 21, 38, accessed July 5, 2016, [http://www.rural21.com/fileadmin/\\_migrated/content\\_uploads/rural\\_2011\\_4\\_36-39\\_01.pdf](http://www.rural21.com/fileadmin/_migrated/content_uploads/rural_2011_4_36-39_01.pdf)

**For low-cost meals:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Right to Food: Lessons Learned in Brazil," (Rome, 2007), 12, accessed July 5, 2016, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/a1331e/a1331e.pdf>

**For labor policy:** Janine Berg, *Laws or Luck? Understanding Rising Formality in Brazil in the 2000s*, International Labor Office, Brasilia, 2010, 2, 4, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://www.ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/BergLaborFormalityBrazil.pdf>

**For MST:** Eric Holt-Gimenez et al., *Food Rebellions: Crisis and the Hunger for Justice*, (Oakland, CA: Food First Books, 2009), 104.

**For inequality statistic:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Right to Food: Lessons Learned in Brazil," (Rome, 2007), accessed July 5, 2016, <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/a1331e/a1331e.pdf>.

## WE CAN'T BLAME SCARCITY:

**WORLD GRAIN USE:** Basic Foodstuffs, Grains, Food and Agriculture Organization, accessed July 5, 2016, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/006/y4343e/y4343e02.htm>

**3-4 POUNDS OF FOOD PER PERSON PER DAY:** FAOSTAT. Food Balance Sheets. Country: World + (Total). Year: 2009. <http://faostat3.fao.org/download/FB/FBS/E>. Note: 3-4 pound calculation is based on uncooked food. Cooked grain and legumes would result in a significantly higher poundage per person.

## WASTED POTENTIAL:

**THREE-QUARTERS LAND USED FOR LIVESTOCK:** Hans Herni, et al., "Key Implications of Land Conversions in Agriculture" in *Wake Up Before It Is Too Late*, Trade and Development Review 2013, United Nations Conference on Trade Development (UNCTAD), 2013, 221, accessed July 5, 2016, [http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf)

**LIVESTOCK PROVIDE 17 PERCENT OF WORLD'S CALORIES:** Mario Herrero and Philip K. Thornton, *Livestock and global change: Emerging issues for sustainable food systems*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 110, no. 52 (2013): 20879, accessed July 25, 2014, doi:10.1073/pnas.1321844111.

**ONE-THIRD OF FOOD IS WASTED:** Robert van Otterdijk and Alexandre Meybeck, "Global Food Losses and Food Waste: Extent, Causes and Prevention," Food and Agriculture Organization, (Rome, Italy: 2011), page v, [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/sustainability/pdf/Global\\_Food\\_Losses\\_and\\_Food\\_Waste.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/sustainability/pdf/Global_Food_Losses_and_Food_Waste.pdf)

Read Frances Moore Lappé, *Small Planet Institute co-founder*, and Joseph Collins's book: *World Hunger: 10 Myths* (Grove Press, Food First 2015). To request a review copy, submit corrections about this fact sheet, or to ask any questions, email [info@smallplanet.org](mailto:info@smallplanet.org)