Abstract

This thesis is a case study of the food security movement that is active in urban areas in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. It examines the role that innovative governance structures, particularly horizontal and vertical intergovernmental cooperative agreements, and partnerships between governments and civil society play in building capacity for food security, social inclusion and sound public administration in such urban areas. For its theoretical basis, the thesis examines the literature on food security and its links to democratic governance and citizenship, as well as the discourse on Brazil’s own process of democratization and the move to decentralized, participatory approaches to governance.

After providing an historical overview of how Brazil's food security systems have evolved over time, the thesis turns to an assessment of urban food security governance in São Paulo state. Here it examines some of the key factors required for the development and implementation of effective municipal food security policy, as well as some of the challenges faced by local policy-makers.

In the penultimate chapter, the thesis considers how effective practices in food security planning at the local level can be extended beyond the borders of a few resource- and knowledge-rich municipalities, through the creation of regional and state-level governance structures. The thesis concludes with a summary of the empirical findings, an overall conclusion with theoretical considerations, implications for action for those involved with food security planning in similar environments, and implications for further research.
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Preface

This thesis is the culmination of a long-time interest in the politics of food and agriculture, and the history of social change in Brazil. During my undergraduate studies at McGill University, I became acutely aware of socially and ecologically destructive processes of development in Brazil, historically entrenched since the era of sugar plantations under colonial rule. I also became aware of some potential sources of resistance to those processes: the quilombos or runaway slave communities of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, capoeira, the elegant Afro-Brazilian marshal art once practiced by gangs resisting oppression in an elitist society, and the MST, Brazil's Landless Rural Workers Movement, which to this day struggles for agrarian reform through grassroots mobilization.

Through my work with Toronto-based food security NGO FoodShare, I became conscious of yet another agent of social change in Brazil: the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores, or PT), with its innovative approach to urban governance and conceptualization of politics as entailing both action from within the government, and mobilization from without. When many of my contemporaries looked towards PT policy innovations like participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, and transit-friendly urban development in Curitiba, my attention was turned towards municipal food security policy in the city of Belo Horizonte. When Lula da Silva of the PT came into power at the federal level in 2003 on a promise of ending hunger in the country, I was curious to see what would happen. Would such local innovations in food security governance be repeated elsewhere?

A three month trip to Brazil in early 2003 did not do much to help me answer this question or other related ones. My decision to do a master's degree at UBC's School of Community and Regional Planning at UBC, however, provided an opportunity for further investigation. SCARP's institutional ties to Santo André and Campinas provided rationale for me to focus on food security governance processes in São Paulo state, rather than the more familiar territory of Belo Horizonte in Minas Gerais, or even Rio de Janeiro. One result of this initial, exploratory research is exposure to different political cultures and approaches to addressing food insecurity than those to which I had hitherto been acquainted. This exposure has been a valuable learning experience for me and, hopefully, to my reader as well.

In researching and writing this thesis, I have attempted to balance my fundamental belief in public participation and grassroots mobilization as essential tools in the struggle for social justice and equity, with a commitment to sober, critical analysis and academic honesty. This balancing act has been a significant challenge for me, not only as a planner, and historian, but also as a human being. It is my hope that my efforts to address this tension within me have not resulted in a product which is convoluted and paradoxical, but rather one which is all the more rich in understanding of the realities that Brazilians face in their struggle to deepen democracy.

Stephen Cody Bentley

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Chapter One  
Overview

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines the relationship between governance structures and the promotion of food security in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. The central question being addressed is: how can certain governance interventions—particularly partnerships between different levels of government, between different government agencies operating at the same level, and between governments and civil society, contribute to social inclusion and food security over the long-term?

There are several reasons for examining this problem in the Brazilian context. Perhaps the most obvious is the severity of the problem of food insecurity in the country. Though far from being one of the most destitute countries in the world, Brazil is marked by rampant socio-economic inequities, leaving an estimated 44 million poor people (28 percent of the population) living in poverty (Instituto Cidadania, 2001). Historically entrenched processes of exclusion have left many without the economic means to access sufficient quantities of adequate food. The problem of food insecurity is not simply one of hunger resulting from poverty, however. With the industrialization and commercialization of the country's food system, growing numbers of people are suffering from nutritional problems such as obesity. In fact, the number of overweight people in Brazil now exceeds the number who are underweight (IBGE, 2004a). Also associated with this process of industrialization are concerns about the mainstream agricultural sector. Not only does the sector's mechanization and use of mono-cropping and agrochemicals threaten ecological sustainability (also a concern of food security), its large-scale format and orientation towards export markets tends to favor private economic interests, rather than generate food and employment for the Brazilian populace (Von der Weid, 2004).

A second reason for this investigation is that Brazil has been increasingly regarded as an innovator in governance initiatives that seek to address some of the country's historic injustices. This is not only true with respect to urban policy and public administration at a general level, but also with regards to the issue of food security. The 2001 World Social Forum in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, brought global attention to the Brazilian Worker's Party (PT)'s use of participatory budgeting and other strategies of inclusive governance, both in that city and elsewhere in the
country. A number of academic studies have looked at such budgeting processes (e.g. Abers, 1998; Wampler, 2004; Baiocchi, 2003), as well as at the relationship between social movements and more inclusive democracy in Brazil more generally (e.g. Alvarez, 1993; Hochstetler, 1999).

In the area of food security governance, some (e.g. Rocha, 2001; Aranha, 2003) have looked quite positively on the integrated approach taken by the Municipality of Belo Horizonte, under PT leadership, while still others have looked at how social activism can contribute to guaranteeing the right to food (Valente et al, 2001), as well as agrarian reform (Stédile, 1999).

With the first-time-ever election of the Brazilian Worker’s Party at the federal level in 2002, many people who were already aware of such innovations in local governance wondered what would happen. President Luiz Ignácio “Lula” da Silva’s campaign promise to put three square meals per day on the plate of every Brazilian by the end of his mandate through a comprehensive program labeled “Zero Hunger” (Programa Fome Zero) certainly raised expectations. Since coming to power in January 2003, the PT has faced many challenges, including denouncements of its “neoliberal” policies (Ortellado, 2003; Petras & Veltmeyer, 2005), as well as a protracted scandal concerning payouts to other political parties in 2005. Zero Hunger has itself encountered problems related to leadership, high public expectations for immediate results, and widespread confusion about whether it is a voluntary food distribution campaign or a series of government initiatives. The collapse of the “Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security” (Ministério Extraordinário de Segurança Alimentar—MESA), and its folding into a newly created Ministry of Social Development and Hunger Combat (Ministério de Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome—MDS) within the first year of its existence has posed additional challenges (Takagi, 2006). Irrespective of such setbacks to the PT and to Zero Hunger, dedicated federal funding and the President’s call to action have been decisive in advancing the establishment of state and municipal level food security initiatives across the country.

While subnational efforts towards food security were greatly expanded following the election of the PT at the federal level, however, they cannot be wholly equated with Zero Hunger. A rich tradition of mobilization and governance around food security predates Zero Hunger by more than a decade, and continues to run parallel to it. For this movement, food and nutritional security is regarded as being an integral component of expanding citizenship and deepening democracy in Brazil. This thesis seeks to examine some of the governance structures and institutional relationships associated with this movement in order to determine how this vision of food security and democracy is being carried out in practice. The paper focuses primarily on
food security councils and programs operating at the municipal, regional, and the state levels in São Paulo, where both the food security movement, and governance institutions more generally, are quite well developed. These local institutions are examined within the context of national level developments in food security governance. The aim of the thesis is to contribute to a better understanding of the complex and sometimes contradictory relationships between the promotion of food security and social inclusion on the one hand, and decentralized, participatory governance on the other.

1.2 Empirical Questions to be Addressed in the Thesis

The key questions to be examined with respect to local food security governance in São Paulo state are as follows:

   1.1 What are the pertinent governance arrangements in the region and what is their relationship to higher level (i.e. national) structures and policies?
   1.2 How and why were these structures developed?
   1.3 At a general, technical level, how do such institutional arrangements (horizontal and vertical governmental partnerships, government-civil society councils and commissions, etc.) function?

2. Conceptualizing Food Security in the Case Study Area.
   2.1 What does the discourse used by the key institutions’ representatives reveal about their conceptualization of food security and its relation to governance?
   2.2 To what extent is public participation in planning to design and deliver programs a conscious goal of these institutions (food security councils, commissions, and municipal programs)? How are these goals expressed?

3. From Concept to Action: Governance, Policy, and Food Security.
   3.1 Do these organizations’ actions live up to their rhetoric?
3.2 What is the relationship between the governance structure of São Paulo’s food security councils, commissions, as well as other public food security programs, and a) the empowerment of civil society and b) the promotion of universal (i.e. not just localized), sustainable food security?

4. Building Sustainable Public Policy.

4.1 How can civil society participation in governance contribute to the development and/or maintenance of effective food security policy and programs over the long run?

4.2 What is the role of local leadership (competence, ideology, etc.) in promoting effective food security policy? How important is strong, informed leadership, relative to good planning process (e.g. meaningful public participation)?

4.3 How do discourse, policy, and funding operating at higher (e.g. state and national) levels influence local policy and vice-versa?

1.3 Methodology and Limitations

This thesis is a case study in the sense that it is a “bounded system” (Creswell, 1988; Stake, 2000). That system is the set of institutions, the relationships between these institutions, and the relationships between these institutions and society that make up the food security movement in the São Paulo state, Brazil. Following Yin (1994), the study might be classified as an “embedded case study,” that is an examination of the subunits of this particular bounded system, as well as the entire system itself. The subunits of the study include food security commissions, councils, programs, and groups of people from civil society operating at the municipal, regional, and state levels. The broader system is in one sense the sum of these parts operating throughout the state. But this system is embedded within yet a broader system, the national food security movement in Brazil. In this sense, it might make more sense to label the study a “double embedded case study.”

Of course, case studies examine systems that are bounded by time as well as place (Creswell, 1988). São Paulo’s food security system is not only bounded by the borders of the state, but also by time: it is contemporary. I carried out my field research and initial data collection from May to August of 2005, and undertook additional research from January to August of 2006 using
primary sources (obtained in the field and on-line), as well as secondary sources. While my research on the history of food security governance in Brazil covers most of the post-war period, my treatment of São Paulo’s food security governance system places a greater emphasis on recent developments.

Stake (2000) suggests that a case study may be *intrinsic*, where the focus lies on the unique, particular aspects of the case, or *instrumental*, where the case is of secondary importance to broader theoretical considerations. This distinction is not particularly useful in the context of this thesis. Not only is Brazil’s approach to governance unique in the world, but food security governance is arguably more advanced in São Paulo state than most other places in the country. These structures, then, are worth studying for their intrinsic value. That said, the unique nature of the case can be used instrumentally, to illustrate how innovative approaches to governance can be conducive to the promotion of food security. This case study eschews not only Stake’s *intrinsic-instrumental* dichotomy, but also the distinction made by Yin (1994) between *exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory* case studies. The following chapters not only explore the relatively novel research topic of food security governance in Brazil, but also describe its unique characteristics, and explain how certain governance processes can contribute to food security.

Another way in which this case study differs from prescribed research methodologies is in its very open-ended approach to research. While Yin (1994) suggests that researchers develop study questions and study propositions (hypotheses) from the outset, in this case, on-going observations and loosely-constructed discussions in the field preceded the development of the final research questions and hypothetical propositions. In fact, to the extent that it did not begin from a position of existing theory and pre-defined concepts, but rather endeavoured to let these theories and concepts emerge out of data collection, coding, and analysis of a variety of sources, the research process resembled *grounded theory* methodology. That said, the research process did not follow Glaser & Strauss (1967) in any strict sense, as it was informed by my own prior understanding of theories of food security, food policy, as well as the history, politics, and institutional culture of Brazil.

Field research was carried out from May to August of 2005, primarily in the state of São Paulo, but also in Minas Gerais. In São Paulo I attended food security-related meetings, seminars, and regional forums, visited food supply centres (CEASAs) and food security projects, carrying out open-ended interviews, based on my evolving understanding of food security governance in
Brazil. My research in São Paulo state was carried out while participating in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada’s Canada Corps Internship Program. In Minas Gerais, I participated in a course offered by Ryerson University in Toronto, “Urban Food Security Policy and Programs – The Case of Belo Horizonte, Brazil.” Taught by Prof. Cecilia Rocha, the course provided an opportunity for students to visit the many different programs developed by the municipal government to reduce hunger, malnutrition, and general food insecurity in that city. More specific details on the cities and institutions included in the research can be found at the end of Chapter Three.

In practice, the case study research methodology that was used entailed:

- Coding policy documents, interviews and other audio recordings for patterns and inconsistencies;
- Triangulating interviews and observations with written discourse (primarily policy documents);
- Looking for synergies and discrepancies to determine “what is going on” and the relationship between discourse and action;
- Ongoing comparison of data with the academic literature to help bring out the broader theoretical significance of the case.

There are some important limitations to the research. As field research was carried out over a limited time-frame with the goal of getting a sense for the breadth of approaches to food security governance in Brazil, the research may be said to lack depth. The depth of research may also be inconsistent. Is some places, I spent more time, and/or found people more open to conversation, which may have resulted in greater depth of understanding of planning and policy processes in those places. Another limitation of the research is a high level of reliance on the accounts of key informants. These informants were not selected through random sampling, but rather as they became available to me. Their accounts, therefore, may not be representative of the general sentiments among activists, policy-makers, and program coordinators in the food security movement in São Paulo or Brazil more generally. Moreover, I was not able to ask the same set of questions to an exactly equivalent cross section of people in each city. Such inconsistencies undermined my ability to carry-out the highest quality of comparative research. An additional problem may be associated with the unavailability of quantitative data to measure food insecurity at the local level. Notwithstanding such limitations, the variety or primary and
secondary resources sources consulted in the research process, and the triangulation of their accounts, provide the basis for developing initial answers to the empirical questions itemized above.

1.4 Outline of Thesis

Chapter Two serves to frame and elaborate on the problem statement. It explains some key concepts such as food security, food sovereignty, the right to food, food policy, and discusses how these ideas relate to processes of democratic governance, broadly understood. The chapter then provides a brief overview of some of literature on participatory governance and social movements in Brazil which will be relevant to subsequent discussion of "food democracy" in Brazil.

Chapter Three provides background on the problem of food insecurity in Brazil, and the various institutions of governance that have been used to address this problem over time. This historical overview is contextualized within Brazil's evolving economic, political, and social structures. The movement from top-down, centralized military rule, to increasingly decentralized, participatory governance—albeit within a neoliberal macroeconomic framework—is a key focus. The types of mechanisms for addressing food insecurity currently in existence in Brazil at the national and subnational level are described, both at a general level, and as they pertain to my empirical research.

In Chapter Four I present my research findings on food security governance at the municipal level. I describe what I see to be some of the key factors for success in food security governance in Brazil. The role of leadership, political support, and intersectoral approaches to administration and policy making are seen as key. Also important is having a clearly and appropriately defined vision of food security, and an active civil society. Challenges to innovative food security governance are also identified.

Chapter Five takes as its starting point the needs and challenges of effective food security governance at the municipal level. It tries to show one way that the food security movement in Brazil is being extended beyond the municipal level, namely through the creation of regional food security commissions and regionally representative Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security Council at the state level. The chapter provides background on these institutions, and an overview of their purpose and work to date. The chapter finishes with a discussion of the
challenges that the regional commissions and state council face, in order to assess their effectiveness at institutionalizing a vision of "sustainable food and nutritional security" in São Paulo state.

Chapter Six concludes the thesis. What can be said about the politics of food security governance in the state of São Paulo? What can be concluded about the role of civic action and government policy in fostering food security? What is the role of higher level leadership and resources versus sound leadership and active civil society participation at the local level? What is the significance of the answers to those empirical questions for food security and governance theory? What are the implications of the findings for fostering effective public policy in similar contexts? The chapter will address these questions.
Chapter 2
Food Security, Food Policy, and Democratic Governance:
Theoretical Considerations

This chapter aims to provide some theoretical background to the case study of food security governance in Brazil. It looks first at two broad conceptual threads, food security—linked to issues of rights, entitlements, sovereignty and political will; and food policy—which encompasses broader concerns about the food system, including the impacts of urbanization and an increasingly globalized food supply on health, the environment, and local economies. Genuine democratic governance, understood to entail both strong, accountable state institutions and active civil society participation is argued to be a key aspect of realizing either food security or effective food policy. In the last section, the chapter examines how these concepts pertain to Brazil. Given the relative paucity of literature on food security governance in Brazil, the discussion moves to a review of some of the literature on social mobilization and participatory democratic governance in Brazil more generally. The focus which Brazilian social movements place on social inclusion and expanded citizenship, as well as the transforming nature of governance in the country, are argued to be compatible with calls for “food democracy” and “food citizenship” made in the food security and food policy literature.

2.1 Food Security, Human Rights, and Food Sovereignty

2.1.1 Defining Food Security

Food Security has been defined as “the guarantee that everyone has permanent access to good quality food in sufficient quantities, based on healthy eating habits and without adversely affecting access to other essential needs nor the future food system, which should be implemented on sustainable bases,” i.e. sustainably (Menezes, 1996, p. 30). Maxwell and Slater (2003) contrast the concept of food security with the notion of food policy that emerged in the 1970s in response to crises in food supply. While the discourse on food policy was primarily concerned with issues of national production and supply, the discourse during the 1980s— influenced by the writings of Amartya Sen (1981) — shifted to food security which emphasized issues of entitlement, vulnerability and access. According to Sen (1996), it is not the total amount of available food in a country or region that determines whether a person or family goes
hungry, but rather their "food entitlement," that is, the amount of food they can obtain, own, and use. The mere availability of food does not guarantee food security. It is one influence among many.

The concept of food security, understood as focusing on individual or household access, had been cemented or "mainstreamed" by the time of the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization's (UN FAO) World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996 (Maxwell & Slater, 2003; Thompson, 1996). It has been regarded as a useful concept with respect to both developed and developing countries. Power (2005), for example, discusses individual and household food security in Canada, with the aim of promoting solutions that will address the concerns of low-income people. This author's use of social policy analysis contextualizes the problem of food insecurity within the context of socio-economic inequalities, which are seen to be a product of policies that affect income distribution, and impact both household income levels and population health. The concept of individual or household food security has also been used in an international development context, framed within the framework of "sustainable livelihoods" (Thompson, 1996). Here, livelihoods are defined as "comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of a living (Chambers & Conway, 1992, in Thompson, 1996, p. 25). The Sustainable Livelihoods concept is seen as a way of analyzing food security issues with respect to people's vulnerability context and in relation to policy.

Of course, the notion of food security is concerned with other issues besides individual and household food access. According to the Ryerson Centre for Studies in Food Security (2003), accessibility (the assured physical and economic access to food) is but one of five key components of food security. The others are: availability—food in sufficient quantities to meet people's needs; adequacy—safe and nutritious food, produced in environmentally sustainable ways; acceptability—food that is culturally acceptable, produced in a manner that does not compromise peoples' dignity, self respect, and human rights, and agency—which refers to the policies and processes that allow food security to be achieved (CSFS, 2003). The issue of agency is of particular importance for this paper, which focuses on the role that governance structures play in guaranteeing food security.

A key link between discussions of food security and structures of governance is the idea that the realization of food security requires upholding the human right to food. There is international consensus that while the right to food is an individual right, food security conditions are conceived of as belonging to a unit of society (state, community, household), under which the
individual's right to food may be realized (Riches, 1999a). Advocates of social policy and anti-hunger perspectives argue that if food is a basic right and cannot be guaranteed by the market economy, it is the duty of the state to fulfill that right (Riches, 1999a; Power, 1999; Allen, 1999). For international governance structures such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, it is national governments which are primarily responsible for upholding the right to food (Rocha, 2005). Thus, although the right to food has been repeatedly upheld in international covenants and non-binding declarations – including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (which both Canada and Brazil have ratified), the International Convention on Rights of the Child (1992), the World Declaration on Nutrition (1992), World Declaration on Social Development (1995), and the Rome Declaration on World Food Security (1996) from the World Food Summit (Riches 1999a) – governments must be actively engaged in realizing this right.

The linkage between the right to food, food security, and domestic action is made clear by the 1996 Rome Declaration, where heads of state from around the world “reaffirm[ed] the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger,” and “pledge[d] their political will and [...] common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015.” (UN FAO, 1996)

2.1.2 Food Sovereignty and the Politics of Food Security

Given the importance of government action in upholding the right to food in the context of international trade and development regimes which may not be conducive to food security (Via Campesina et al, 2003), the concept of “food sovereignty” has been increasingly advocated over the last decade. Food sovereignty, first used by civil society in the lead-up and during the 1996 World Food Summit, has been defined as “the right of each nation to maintain and develop its

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1 It is worth noting here that in its preparation for the 1996 World Food summit in Rome, Brazil was active in creating a strong conceptual link between food and nutritional security with human rights (Valente et al, 2001). Brazil’s presence in Rome was felt not only among the heads of state at the official summit, but also at the parallel NGO Forum where one of the largest delegations was Brazilian (Menezes, 2001b).
own capacity to produce the staple foods of its peoples, respecting their productive and cultural diversity," (Menezes, 1996, p. 29). More elaborately, food sovereignty means:

the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self reliant; to restrict the dumping of products in their markets, and; to provide local fisheries-based communities the priority in managing the use of and the rights to aquatic resources (Via Campesina et al, 2003, p. 1).

Obstacles to food sovereignty include trade deregulation, structural adjustment policies, the control of food systems by multinational corporations and multilateral financial institutions (Menezes, 1996; Via Campesina et al, 2003).

The food sovereignty movement clearly rebuts processes of trade deregulation and neoliberalism. There is less clarity, however, regarding the precise relationship between food sovereignty and food security. Rosset (2003) argues that food sovereignty goes beyond food security, which has been stripped of its meaning, such that it no longer includes any consideration of where or how our food was produced. Genuine food security, in Rosset’s view, requires that rural people have access to production land and receive fair prices for their crops. That is, food security requires that local economic development be prioritized over the demands of international trade regimes, which in turn requires food sovereignty. By contrast, authors that conceptualize food security in its full sense see food sovereignty as necessary but insufficient for realizing the right to food. Menezes (1996), for example, notes that food sovereignty must be compatible with social equity, guaranteeing access for all and the distribution of quality food that is nutritionally adequate and culturally appropriate. Rocha (2005) points to the requirement of political will, in addition to food sovereignty. In her view, governments and civil society must be committed to the right to food as a human and civic right if food security is to be realized.

In practice, however, the domestic political will needed for the realization of food security—upholding the right to food via strategies of food sovereignty—is often lacking. In a Canadian context, Riches (1999a), who agrees that successful food security strategies must place the right to food at the centre of social policy, suggests that “the right to food as a fundamental human right no longer exists...despite its ratification in a number of UN conventions and Canada’s signing of recent World Summit declarations concerning nutrition, poverty, and food security” (p. 207). Similarly, Valente (2001) notes that,

In Brazil, as in other countries, the existence of a law guaranteeing a specific human right does not guarantee that this right will be effective, or even that it be culturally accepted as
a right, just as it does not ensure that specific mechanisms of legal or administrative recourse be implemented. The inclusion of food and nutritional security and human rights in political agendas, supported by legitimate political will, is at least as important as having these rights incorporated in law (p. 10, my translation).

One key mechanism for achieving the level of political will that is required to guarantee food security is social mobilization. Riches (1999a) speaks of the role of civil society, both in monitoring the actions of higher level governments (in Canada) to ensure their compliance with international human rights conventions, and in promoting food security at the local level. Following Dreze and Sen (1989), the author notes elsewhere that adversarial work is sometimes necessary to monitor and, when necessary, contest federal and provincial actions (and inaction) Riches (1999b). Along similar lines, Valente (2001) suggests that "[s]ocial mobilization and social movements that raise awareness\(^2\) are fundamental in guaranteeing the effective implementation of rights, especially for the poor and excluded" (Valente, 2001, p. 10). In the author’s view, partnerships between the state and civil society are essential to the human rights approach to food security and require that social movements mobilize the other sectors, rather than being confrontational. They also demand that government leaders be sensitive to social demands and open spaces for dialogue, and that each sector of society understand that there are connections with other sectors (Valente, 2001b). Advocates of sustainable livelihoods and rights-based approaches to health have argued for social mobilization and participation of the poor in policy making as an effort to improve food security, livelihoods, and health as well as strengthening democracy (Thompson, 2001; Mancusi-Materi, 2000; Villar, 2004).

2.2 Alternative Frameworks: Food policy and Community Food Security

2.2.1 The New Food Policy

The active engagement of civil society in holding governments accountable to the right to food stands as a clear link between food security and democratic governance, the main theme of this paper. It should be noted, however, that not everyone interested in issues related to food security – such as fighting hunger, poverty, and malnutrition, and promoting sustainable family agriculture, is a proponent of food security, at least as it has been outlined thus far. Maxwell and Slater (2003) argue that at the same time that the concept of food security was becoming mainstreamed into international declarations, a whole host of food-related issues began to arise

\(^2\) Literally “conscientization,”—conscientização.
which were not part of the food security discourse. These included: concern over the food system's commercialization and industrialization, the role of institutional actors in food trade, the ecological consequences of new technologies, and health problems such as the growth in nutrition-related illnesses and issues related to food safety. Thus, the authors speak of a "new" food policy, as differentiated from both the "old" food policy of the 1970s, with its focus on food availability and economic analysis, as well as from the food security concept of the 1980's and 1990's, which emphasized issues of access and entitlement. Maxwell and Slater suggest that although those concerned with famine and severe under-nutrition may find concern with these issues to be superfluous, in fact the "new" food policy cannot be ignored.

Lang (1999) expresses similar concerns about a changing global food system, speaking of a "food policy crisis" resulting from "a rising awareness that the nature of food production has been profoundly altered from the field, in factories, on the shelves, and in kitchens." The author notes that food policy and practice are currently in "particular ferment" not only in the area of social justice (which deals with some of the more traditional food security concerns discussed above), but also with respect to public health (where degenerative diseases are on the rise north and south), the nature of supply (where agrochemicals and genetic modification are increasingly associated with ecological problems) and consumer demand, where "overconsumption occurs alongside underconsumption; distorted demand, alongside real need; and the rhetoric of consumer sovereignty alongside consumer confusion and anxiety" (Lang, 1999). Resonating with the food sovereignty perspective discussed above, additional concerns might be raised about the social consequences of an increasingly globalized food economy dominated by the United States and European Union, which are responsible for cheap food imports into many developing countries, marginalizing small farmers and undermining key agricultural sectors vital to food security, employment and poverty reduction (Watkins, 1996, in Smith, 1998, p. 1; Murphy, 2001).

2.2.2 Urbanization and Community Food Security

Intimately related to many of these "new" food policy concerns is the process of urbanization, which has only recently come to be regarded as relevant to food policy. Drakakis-Smith (1997) notes an absence of discourse on urban areas in many analyses of the global food system, along with a failure to consider the role that the food system plays in most research on cities.
“Food and urbanization,” the author remarks, “have seldom been brought together in conceptual analyses which shed light on either the development process or sustainable urbanization” (Drakakis-Smith, 1997, p. 810). Writing from a North American perspective, Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999; 2000) argue that the food system is notably absent in the academic planning literature, plans prepared by practitioners, and in urban planning curricula. Despite its apparent invisibility, these authors argue that the food system is an important aspect of the urban fabric, affecting neighbourhood quality, public health, the economy and the environment (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999). Food is an important urban issue in developing country contexts as well, for a variety of reasons. It is intrinsically linked to health, poverty and vulnerability (which raise issues of access that have been addressed in terms of entitlements, and exclusion), as well as employment, the urban environment, and shelter. In addition, the growth in food-related health concerns (mentioned above) is connected to the cultural transformation of urban populations that has paralleled the growth in western-style diets in many developing countries (Drakakis-Smith, 1997).

Recognition of the transforming nature of the food system raises issues about how food policy is conceptualized and what kinds of policy initiatives and governance structures can create effective food policy. A key food policy concept that has emerged in North America, is that of community food security (CFS). While no single definition of community food security exists, Fisher et al (1997) have defined it as “all persons in a community having access to culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate food through local non-emergency sources at all times” (p. 4). Hamm and Bellows (2003) have also included food safety in their definition, and emphasized a “sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice” (p. 107). CFS considers the needs of low income communities, addresses a broad range of problems affecting the food system, makes an explicit aim to unite urban and rural regions, and seeks to promote solutions to food system deficiencies that are integrative and holistic (Fisher et al, 1997).

While proponents of individual and household food security (e.g. Power, 2005) put a strong emphasis on social policy and the role of the nation state in guaranteeing food security, advocates of community food security (e.g. Fisher et al, 1997) focus on building local community capacity. Advocates see community food security as being much broader in scope than food security, moving beyond concerns with the adequacy of personal resources needed to access food to include an examination of the food system itself, including the social and ecological
impacts of its globalization. Gottlieb and Fisher (1996), for example, note that the distinction made in CFS between global and regional food systems can “be seen as having powerful environmental implications” (24). Lezberg and Kloppenberg (1996) reject the notion that the global market is the most suitable arbiter of what gets produced and who gets to eat, offering an alternative conceptualization of food security based on sustainable, self-reliant, local/regional food production, the “foodshed,” which stands analytically and normatively in opposition to the global food system. Calling for food economies to be restructured for the benefit of communities and labour rather than corporations and stockholders, Lezberg and Kloppenberg argue that food production should be based not only on the strength of community institutions and regional investment in job creation, but also in democratic participation in the local food economy.

Practically speaking, community food security may be realized through community development projects that build local capacity, such as community gardening, and urban agriculture projects, direct marketing initiatives such as farmer’s markets, and small-scale food processing. All of these initiatives, Gottlieb and Fisher (1996) argue, promote both social and environmental justice. Community food processors, for example, promote local agriculture (presumably benefiting the environment by reducing the distance that our food travels, and the energy consumed therein) and by providing economic development for working class, inner-city populations. Community gardens cannot only supplement the diets of low-income urban residents, but also facilitate urban greening (Gottlieb & Fisher, 1996). Aiming to empower communities, including low-income populations, such initiatives are regarded as providing higher quality food in a more dignified manner than that obtained through charitable institutions such as food banks (Power 1999). In addition to local community development initiatives, community food security is also carried out through community planning, partnerships; and policy development (Fisher et al 1997). As is the case with food security advocates such as Riches (1999a; 1999b) and Valente (2001), cited above, CFS proponents see the potential to improve food security policy and practice as resting on the ability of people to demand change. In their view, the creation of coalitions, networks, and food policy councils are among the most effective means of achieving this (Hamm & Bellows, 2003; Fisher et al, 1997).

Before discussing such governance and policy initiatives in greater detail, it would be worthwhile to address some of the critiques that have set upon the community food security movement. One area of concern lies with the “romanticization” of the local and its equation with democratization and social justice. Hamm and Bellows (2000) note that while local food systems
may be seen as integral to the resistance of market hegemonies, they may also strengthen inequitable and unsustainable patterns of labour and resource use. Speaking in an American context, they contend that the use of pro-local import-substitution strategies may "reproduce locally the nations' generally unsustainable food production conditions at the same time it reduces jobs elsewhere" (p. 273). Allen (1999) comments on the limitations of local development as a strategy of reducing food insecurity:

> While the appeal and promise of localism is significant for the empowerment goals of the community food security movement, there are aspects of community-based food systems that may limit their practical relevance for meeting the food needs of the poor. In working toward food security and sustainability, some analyses and actions will have to be local, others will need to be national and international" (p. 122).

In the Allen's view, working exclusively at the local level is not only insufficient to address the power imbalances that cause socio-economic disparities, it may actually be counterproductive (Allen, 1999).

Problems with the community-based approach include its piecemeal quality and blindness to class and gender issues. Dowler (2003) notes that many community initiatives are "small scale in comparison to the decline of local shops and the viability of neighbourhood retailing" (p. 576), fail to address broader structural issues, divert attention from realities of those with low incomes, and cover-up the need for fundamental change. Power (1999) suggests that community food projects for the poor are but one part of a larger picture of food security but have become isolated from a broader vision of social change. Highly skeptical of the ability of the needs of the poor to be addressed within a broader movement for sustainable food systems, Power argues that community approaches to food security (namely self-provisioning and direct marketing) fail to address issues of class, power and exclusion and may place increased burdens on women, and "reinforce individualistic neoconservative social policies. Concerned with "[o]ff-loading the functions of the welfare state onto communities," the author notes that "[f]ood programs aimed at the poor tend to reinforce the individualistic ideology of neoconservative policies in that they suggest that the victim is to blame, rather than blaming socioeconomic policies that leave the poor without resources" (Power, 1999).

### 2.2.3 Food Systems Planning and Policy

While such critiques are of tremendous value to the food security/food policy debate, some clarifications and distinctions need to be made. First of all, while community food security does
focus on building local capacity though community development initiatives, it does not (or at
least does not have to) do this to the exclusion of public policy. Allen (1999) speaks of the need
to "reweave the food security safety net" by combining self-reliant, entrepreneurial approaches
to food security with social welfare initiatives. Pothukuchi (2004), in recognition that CFS "cannot
be expected to solve all the ills emerging from the current global food system," asserts that:

community food security is scarcely intended as a replacement for federal
entitlement programs aimed at poor and vulnerable residents. Rather, it is an
approach that seeks to increase community influence on these systems, to offer
an integrated view of the links within the food system and between food and
communities, and to provide more sustainable alternatives to current streams

Advocates of food systems planning, strongly influenced by the community food security
movement, see such community influence on the food system as occurring primarily at the local
level through such measures as community food assessments (Pothukuchi, 2004), stakeholder
analysis and dispute resolution (Caton-Campbell, 2004), social mobilization to incorporate food
policy into official community plans (Wekerle, 2004), and community food policy councils (Welsh
& MacRae, 1998; Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999). Food policy councils, comprised of
representatives of diverse segments of the food system community such as farmers, anti-
hunger advocates, and food retailers, usually aim to "monitor their city's food system and work
to get various rips and tears in that system mended" and "pursue the goals of a more equitable,
effective, and ecologically sustainable food system" (Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 1999, p. 219). In
North America, food policy councils typically exist outside government structures, but this is not
always the case: the Toronto and Vancouver Food Policy Councils are linked respectively to the
Toronto Board of Health and the Vancouver Social Planning Department.

Participation on food policy or food security councils is not the only way that governments can
develop food policy, of course. Given the increasingly urbanized nature of the food system,
municipalities play an essential role in developing and influencing food policy through other
means. In addition to the food policy council, Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999) have suggested
that a department of food, and city-planning agency can also play an important role in managing
the urban food systems. In their estimation, a department of food (purely hypothetical in the
North American context) might perform functions related to community outreach and education,
regulation, capital programming, development and administration of food related services. The
municipal planning department ought to be involved in food policy, Pothukuchi and Kaufman
(1999) argue, since planners are concerned with improving human settlements (of which food is
an essential aspect), as well as with the linkages between different sectors and perspectives (which the food system needs).

In response to critiques of CFS’s over-emphasis on local development, it should be said that food policy need not be restricted to local action, whether based in the community, or municipal government. Riches (1999a; 1999b) points to the need to engage government agencies not only at the local level—and here he includes actors such as regional school and health boards and band and tribal councils—but also at the provincial, federal, and international scales if concerns about food policy and food security are to be addressed. Lamenting the “Americanization of public policy [which] tends to celebrate the virtues of the hands off state,” Lang (1999) calls for strong government intervention, assumedly at the national level: “Looking ahead at food-policy challenges, I see no alternative to a thoughtful role for a state that can mediate between individual and collective wills. Only a benign state, democratically accountable, can tame the worst excesses of increasingly powerful corporations in the food sector.”

Of course, the promotion of effective food policy requires not simply more government intervention, but better intervention. Writing in a Canadian context, MacRae (1999) notes that problems in the food and agricultural system are mainly a product of deficiencies in the policy-making system, where the key formal actors in policy-formation are federal and provincial governments. Not only is policy developed “along commodity lines, not for food systems” (p. 188), but responsibilities within and between governments are fragmented as well, such that the negative consequences of policy interventions in other areas those where they are made are not well thought through. As an alternative system, MacRae proposes a food and agricultural policy framework based on integrated responsibilities, macro-policy, trans-disciplinary policy development, systems theory, and close proximity of policy makers to the problems they are addressing. He also suggests the creation of new governance structures at the municipal, provincial and federal levels, whose policies and actions are holistic, coordinated, and decentralized.

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3 Toronto has recently incorporated food policy into its Official Plan (Wekerle, 2004). In Brazil, organizers in the City of Campinas have discussed the possibility of incorporating food security into that city’s Master Plan (Plano Diretor) (Fome Zero Campinas website, 2006).
2.3 Links to Brazil: Food Security, Democracy, and Citizenship

Thus far, this chapter has discussed concepts relevant to our understanding of food security in a fairly abstract manner. How do these concepts apply in a Brazilian context? While all of the ideas discussed above are useful for our understanding of food security in Brazil, it should be said that they do not all neatly apply. One important difference relates to the distinction between food security and food policy. The rights-based approach to food security is the norm among many food security proponents in Brazil (e.g. Valente, 2001; CONSEA, 2004; Takagi, 2006). However, the Brazilian concept of food security includes broader food policy concerns within it. Such concerns can be seen in the language used to talk about food security in Brazil. The term “food and nutritional security” (segurança alimentar e nutricional, often referred to as the acronym SAN), for example, is commonly used in Brazil, emphasizing not only that everyone have access to enough food, but also that people have access to food that is nutritionally adequate. More recently, the term “sustainable food and nutritional security” (segurança alimentar e nutricional sustentável—SANS) has come into use, connoting a strong linkage between food security and environmental sustainability. The concept of “intersectoralism” (intersetoralidade) is also associated with food security in Brazil, reflecting a concern for integrated, systems-approaches to policy that parallels the food policy, CFS, and food systems planning discourse discussed thus far.

2.3.1 Food Citizenship

These and other Brazilian concepts will be discussed in greater detail in the empirical chapters of the thesis. Before moving on to the case study, however, I would like to elaborate upon the conceptual linkages between food security and democratic governance, both generally, and as they apply in the Brazilian context. Whether framed through a social policy/anti-poverty lens, or from a broader food policy perspective, the promotion of food security is linked to democratization since it requires either the intervention of a welfare state in order to address social inequities, or democratic control (through national or subnational institutions) of a globalizing food system. A number of writers have been quite explicit about this connection,

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4 The phrase “Food and nutritional security” appears to have come into common parlance around the time of the creation of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional—FBSAN) in 1998. I have not seen SAN used before this, and have seen it used extensively after this.
using language of “food democracy” and “food citizenship.” Hassanein (2003), for example, explores the concept of “food democracy” as a means to address value conflicts in debates around the sustainability of the food system. She calls for active civic participation to work out differences, and suggests that: “the thoughtful practice of pragmatic politics and the development of strong food democracy will be key to transformation of agro-food systems in the long run” (p. 78).

Welsh and MacRae (1998) use the terms “food citizenship” and “food democracy” in association with the concept of community food security—in contrast to traditional anti-hunger advocacy, which they deem to be accepting a fallacious logic of consumer rights. They see the Toronto Food Policy Council as one mechanism for realizing “food citizenship,” which emerges from peoples’ active participation in shaping the food system, rather than accepting the system as passive consumers. Lang (1999) sees food system dynamics as a struggle between control and pressure to democratize, using the term “food democracy” to refer to “the demand for greater access and collective benefit from the food system.” Subtly contrasting the CFS perspective, the author places less emphasis on participatory governance, and more upon strong state intervention. Effective government policies require political support, however, which in turn entails social mobilization, as was discussed above.

2.3.2 Participatory Democracy and Citizenship in Brazil

The role that the mobilization and participation of civil society, particularly of the poor, plays with respect to food security and broader processes of democratization, has been raised in an international development context (e.g. Thompson, 2001; Mancusi-Materi, 2000). However, with a few exceptions (e.g. Valente et al, 2001), the English language literature has not examined this theme in much detail in a Brazilian context. This is not to say that there has been an absence of research regarding processes of democratization and participatory governance in Brazil or Latin America, more generally speaking. Indeed, a wealth of studies have looked at the transition from dictatorship to democracy in the region, and the role of social movements in making democracy more participatory and inclusive. Research in this area addresses a number of the key food security-related issues discussed above, including: urbanization, local governance, community empowerment, the relationship between the state and civil society, and the emergence of concepts of citizenship and democracy that go well-beyond their traditional
legal definitions. A brief overview of some of the ideas and processes expressed in this research, therefore, can inform the investigation into food security governance in Brazil that follows in the subsequent chapters.

Campbell (2003) uses the term “quiet revolution” to examine the processes of decentralization and democratization, particularly the rise of participatory democracy, which have taken root in Latin America, including Brazil in recent decades. The author notes that the participation of grassroots organizations has “breathed new life into planning, policy making, and project implementation of neighbourhood works and services,” while citizen participation has “rejuvenated the character and the quality of local government” (96). Looking at participatory budgeting processes in the city of Porto Alegre, Brazil, Baiocchi (2003) found that public participation in such government processes can provide an opportunity for expanding the public sphere, particularly among traditionally marginalized urban populations. In the same city, Abers (1998) found that participatory budgeting processes actually can contribute to the authentic empowerment of the poor.

Assessments of Brazil’s turn to decentralized, participatory governance are not all positive, however. In his case study of three Brazilian municipalities, Wampler (2004), found that participatory regimes do not necessarily improve the accountability of Mayors. Campbell (2003) notes that moving government closer to the people has not always led to more efficient governance, and may lead to local corruption. Similarly, Abers (1998) has observed that while “democratization and substantially increased municipal fiscal autonomy have made it possible for local governments to become more responsive to the poor” decentralization has also bolstered the power of conservative local elites, as decisions are generally made behind closed doors (p. 42). Looking at a broader Latin American context, Petras and Veltmeyer (2005), contrast the perspective of “good governance” associated with the rising participation of civil society with a more “radical,” confrontational role for social movements. They contend that the push towards “governance” is intimately linked to processes of economic globalization, with proponents of neoliberalism advocating for increased participation of civil society, while the state retreats from its social and developmental responsibilities. These authors’ argument certainly resonates with one of the critiques of community food security raised above, namely that an excessive focus on community self-help projects draws attention away from the need for change at the structural level, and is compatible with neo-conservative social policy.
In Brazil, however, unlike elsewhere in Latin America, the process of decentralization that is so intimately linked to “good governance” has never been criticized by leftist political forces and civil society as bound-up with the neoliberal project (Melo & Rezende, 2002). Not everyone, moreover, sees civil society involvement in governance as a call for reducing public expenditures, consistent with neoliberalism. Abers (1998), notably, contrasts two arguments for participatory governance: an “instrumentalist” perspective—whereby the small scale and close contact that civil society organizations have with government translates into increased bureaucratic efficiency and reducing government costs—and an empowerment perspective, which aims to empower traditionally excluded groups, serving to strengthen democracy and fight poverty. Abers contends that although small scale efforts and civil society action can counter exclusionary, top-down development patterns, development projects will only be viable on a large scale if the state channels resources to civil associations. She notes that while the empowerment perspective of participation promotes civil associations, it does not necessarily see their participation as a way to diminish government spending.

While the proliferation of studies of participatory budgeting processes in Brazil is a relatively recent phenomenon, the movement to empower the marginalized has a much longer history, linked to struggles for democracy and democratic consolidation. While electoral democracy established itself in Brazil in 1985, continued structural inequities and social injustices have earned Brazil the label of an “ugly democracy” (Pereira, 2000). Given the problematic nature of formal democracy in Brazil, Koonings (2004) points to the relevance of the “quality” of democracy. The author sees the issue of quality as linked to the “consolidation” of democracy, which, following Linz and Stepan (1996) requires democratic norms not only in the area of politics, but also with respect to the economy, civil society, public administration and the legal order. According to these authors, such norms need to be integrated, with human rights and citizenship respected as the basis for the rule of law. Koonings puts particular emphasis on the relationship between the quality of democracy and citizenship, with the latter understood to include civil, political and social aspects.

The concept of citizenship has also been a banner for struggle by Latin American social movements against dictatorship, beginning in the early 1980s (Roberts, 1996, in Koonings, 2004). In Brazil, the use of the language of citizenship by social movements took off after the establishment of electoral democracy in 1985, as Hochstetler (2000) points out. Hochstetler argues that social movements function in broad cycles, with “opposition to the military” providing
the "collective action frame" of the 1978-1985 social movement cycle, and "citizenship" becoming the master frame in the post-1985 period. Under their respective master frames, the pre- and post-democracy social movement cycles used a common language of inclusion and exclusion to encompass a diverse array of issues, albeit within different political contexts. In the democratic period, the definition of citizenship was expanded well beyond its legal and political definition to include broader issues of political and economic participation related to deepening democracy (Hochstetler, 2000). Koonings (2004) echoes this argument, claiming that "[s]ocial movements and civic associations in Brazil have ... adopted the concept of citizenship as a banner for democracy and [are] using it to empower and benefit the poor and excluded popular masses" (Koonings, 2004, p. 82).

The language of citizenship has been used by a diversity of social movements, including environmentalists. As Jacobs (2002) notes, popular struggles for the environment have been linked to issues of quality of life, and civil rights, creating spaces for citizenship and participatory democracy. How the issue is framed, the author remarks, has been crucial to the environmental movement's ability to spread across sectors and appeal as a mass movement. Another social movement that has used the language of citizenship is the Citizenship Action Against Hunger, Misery and for Life movement of the 1990s. The rhetorical link made by this national grassroots food security coalition (as well as other governmental and non-governmental organizations such as Instituto Cidadania) between food security and citizenship parallels the concept of "food citizenship" discussed above. To be sure, Citizenship Action differed from Welsh and MacRae (1998) and Hasseinein (2003) in emphasizing fighting hunger among Brazil's most needy people over addressing broader food system concerns. That said, the notion that citizenship can entail active participation in addressing fundamental problems in the food system, however, is common to both North American and Brazilian food security advocates.

In Brazil, the expansion of citizenship through active public participation in shaping the food system—and public policy more generally—has been greatly facilitated by the evolving relationship between the state and civil society. Hochstetler (2000) notes that while social movements have historically been defined in opposition to the state, they have moved closer to it in the post-1985, "citizenship-oriented" period. Social movements are now open to pragmatic and empowering arrangements with state agencies and politicians (Koonings, 2004). While some of their "strategies of contention" are the same as older social movements, new strategies have also been developed, including non-protest networking, and participation on government
councils (Hochstetler 2000). In fact, such strategies are inter-connected. During the drafting of Brazil's 1988 Constitution, popular lobbies organized themselves into a cross-sectoral Pro-Popular Participation Plenary in Brazil that pushed for citizen input in the constitution-writing process as well as in the document itself (Hochstetler 2000). The result was the creation of a Brazilian Constitution that facilitates direct democracy in several ways.\(^5\)

Legal mechanisms for public participation in governance were not limited to the Federal Constitution, however. State and municipal constitutions passed in 1989 and 1990 likewise recognized the legitimacy of civic participation in governance (Alvarez, 1993). Beyond the constitutional realm, participatory mechanisms for governance were institutionalized following federal, state, and municipal "organic laws" that established rules for setting up tripartite councils between the state, civil society, and business in a wide array of sectors such as health, and social assistance. Between 1990 and 1999, more than 28 000 such councils were established, with more than 35 000 in place by 1992. With the rapid spread of decentralization though the 1990s (a process legitimized by the 1988 Constitution), Brazilian political culture evolved, making municipal governments "much more permeable to interests from the urban popular sector than before" (Melo & Rezende, 2002 p. 42).

### 2.4 Conclusion

The increasingly urban, decentralized and participatory nature of Brazilian democracy has enabled significant innovations in local governance and administration to occur. This is true not only at a general level (as with respect to participatory budgeting, for example), but also with respect to food security policy and programming. Complementing civil society initiatives such as Citizenship Action, food and nutritional security councils—the Brazilian equivalent to the North American food policy council—now exist throughout the country. Usually composed of one-third government and two-thirds civil society councilors, these councils function at the municipal, state, and national levels. Brazilian equivalents to Pothukuchi and Kaufman's (1999) proposed department of food have also been developed over the past decade and a half. Belo Horizonte's Municipal Secretariat of Food, for example has played an important role in using integrated public management towards the realization of food security (Aranha, 2003; Rocha, 2001). In so

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\(^5\) These included mandating that urban social movement associations be consulted during urban planning processes (Alvarez, 1993).
far as such institutions promote participation in managing the food system, such that it better serves the collective will, such initiatives reflect the notions of “food citizenship” and “food democracy” used by Welsh and MacRae (1998), Hasseinein (2003), and Lang (1999). Unfortunately, such institutions have not received much attention in the English language academic literature. An examination of how these diverse institutions function individually and in relation to each other, such as this thesis provides, can inform our collective understanding of the transforming nature of urban governance in Brazil, as well as how urban food security (in its fullest sense) might best be promoted in such a context.
Chapter 3
The Brazilian Case: An Overview of Food Security and Governance in Brazil

The previous chapter examined the interrelated concepts of food security, food policy, and democracy, as well as processes of social mobilization and participatory governance in Brazil, in an abstract and general way. This chapter investigates how the concept of food security applies in the Brazilian context, beginning with a statistical analysis of food and nutritional insecurity in the country, both at a general level, and with reference to the case study area analyzed in the next two chapters: the state of São Paulo. The rest of the chapter provides an overview of how the problem of hunger and food insecurity has been conceptualized in Brazil over time, as well as the various governance structures and policy mechanisms that have been employed to address this problem.

The evolution of food security governance in Brazil is placed in the context of broader political-economic changes in the country, with a focus on centralization in the period of dictatorship to increasing decentralization and fragmentation of policies in the phase of electoral democracy and neoliberal economic policies, followed by increased efforts towards coordinated governance under the current Workers Party (PT)'s Zero Hunger Program. Although the scope here is national, many of the actions and structures discussed have been instituted at the local level, particularly as Brazil decentralized. The goal in this chapter, then, is to provide context for the next two chapters, by providing an historical overview of food security governance at the national level, and to paint a picture of the diversity of local actions and institutions active at the subnational scale.

3.1 The Nature of Food Insecurity in Brazil

Food insecurity is largely a question of poverty. Brazil is not poor in absolute terms: According to the World Bank's 2004 World Development Indicators, Brazil has the 12th highest gross national income (GNI) in the world, $US494.5 Billion (2002 statistics). The country appears to be less wealthy when we consider that, with a population of 174 million, income GNI per capita is only $US 2830, ranking 91st in the world (World Bank 2004). Of course this number is an average and not evenly distributed among the population. Thus, the World Bank also reports, the poorest quintile of the population earns only 2 percent of national income (p.18). The UNDP (2003) has
used Brazil's high Gini coefficient of 0.66, an indicator that it is an unequal country ("0.0" being the most egalitarian and "1.0" being the most inequitable) and noted that the income of the richest 10 percent of the population is 70 times that of the poorest ten percent.

Brazil then, is a country of inequality. Economic disparities in the country are manifested spatially, both from region to region, and from urban to rural areas in the same region. IBGE's Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares (POF) (Family Budget Research) of 2002-2003 notes significant regional income disparities. Average family income per month is greater in the southeast ($R 2,204.71/month) than the national average ($R 1,789.66), higher than any other region, and just over twice as high as in the Northeast (IBGE, 2004b). This wealth is somewhat deceiving, however: while poverty rates are highest in the North and Northeast (36 and 49 percent of these regions' populations), in terms of absolute numbers of people, poverty is greatest in the Northeast (22 million), with the Southeast ranking second (11 million) (data from Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios (PNAD) and Censo Demográfico de 2000 cited in Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 76).

The distribution of poverty in Brazil needs to be understood not only from region to region, but in terms of urbanization as well. Of the estimated 44 million poor people living in Brazil (28 percent of the population), nine million live in metropolitan areas, 20 million in non-metropolitan areas, and 15 million in rural areas (Instituto Cidadania, 2001). Per capita income is higher in urban than in than rural areas in all five regions of Brazil. On average, income in Brazil's rural areas is 45 percent less than income in urban areas. This disparity is most extreme in the Northeast, where income in rural areas is only 41% that of urban ones. However, similar inequality also exists in the Southeast, where income in rural areas is just over half that of rural areas (R$ 1,172.2 vs. R$2,294.75 per family per month) (IBGE, 2004b).

That said, in absolute numbers, poverty levels in the Southeast are greater in urban areas. To take our case study area, São Paulo state, which has a total population of 34.73 million (1999 statistics), there are 2.4 million people living in poverty in metropolitan areas, more than any other state. One-point-six million poor people live in non-metropolitan urban areas in the state (ranking third for this class of areas in Brazil, next to Bahia and Minas Gerais states), while 442,000 live in rural areas (Instituto Cidadania, 2001). To sum up the obvious, then, poverty is a significant problem in Brazil, including its wealthiest region, the highly urbanized Southeast.
Brazil's extreme poverty and income disparities have significant implications for food security. Low-income families in Brazil spend 70 percent of their monthly budget on food and housing, with food being the second largest expense in the family budget (32.7% percent of income), after housing. Such families spend three times as much of their monthly income on food as wealthier people. (In this assessment, low income families, with an income of R$400/month or less, account for 16.4 percent of the population; families with an income over R$6000 account for five percent of the population). Accessing food can be particularly challenging for urban populations, which spend twice as much on food outside the house as rural ones do. The rate of expenditure outside the house is highest in the Southeast region of Brazil (27% of the monthly family budget), 75% greater than in the Northeast (IBGE, 2004b).

Food insecurity in Brazil is not just a question of not being able to access food due to lack of income. It is also a matter of eating adequate, healthy food, regardless of socio-economic status. The Brazilian diet is increasingly marked by high consumption of fats and refined sugars and low consumption of fruits and vegetables. Thus, it is not surprising that IBGE's Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares (POF) of 2002-2003 found that while the proportion of the population that is underweight has declined in the past 30 years (with weight deficits diminishing as incomes rise), the proportion of overweight people has grown. In fact, the number of overweight people in Brazil actually exceeds the number of underweight people by eight times among women and fifteen times among men. This pattern was found to exist in most parts of the country with little variation. On average, 41 percent of adult men and 40 percent of adult women are considered overweight while 8.9 percent of adult men and 13.1 percent women are obese (IBGE 2004b). Among men, the proportion of the population that is overweight and obesity increase with income; in higher income groups (those with an income of five-plus minimum monthly wages), more than half of Brazilian men are overweight. The percentage of the female population that is overweight and obese rises as women's income increases from one-quarter up to two minimum wage salaries, then declines as women's income levels further increase. IBGE's findings are an important reason to conceptualize food security as entailing more than issues of access or entitlement. The widespread use of the term "food and nutritional security"—segurança alimentar e nutricional or SAN—in Brazil, is one sign that food-related health concerns are taken seriously by the movement.
3.2 Food Security Governance in Historical Context

While the numbers of obese and overweight people in Brazil have grown significantly over the past 30 years, poverty and hunger are not new phenomena. Rather, they have become deeply entrenched in Brazilian society throughout the country's history. The nature and extent of poverty and hunger, as well as the social and political institutions that perpetuate them have evolved over time. Likewise have the institutions that have sought to remedy these injustices. This section traces these social, economic, and institutional developments from the 1960s to the present.

3.2.1 The Military Dictatorship, 1964-1985

The socio-economic aspect of this evolution has been described by Skidmore (1999). Under the first phase of Brazil's military dictatorship (1964 – 1973), the country experienced rapid industrialization and rapid economic growth, particularly in the country's Southeast region. During the second half of military rule (1974 – 1985), Brazil's so-called "economic miracle" came to a close. When global oil prices were increased in 1973 and 1979, Brazil, highly dependent on petroleum imports, began borrowing extensively from abroad to correct its balance of trade. Extensive borrowing combined with rising interest rates threw Brazil into a severe debt crisis in 1982. In absolute terms, incomes increased across the population during this period, and indicators such as literacy rates and infant mortality rates improved. That said, socio-economic disparities in the country were greatly exacerbated. Over half the country's labour force fell out of the formal economy altogether, making them ineligible for healthcare benefits and pensions (Skidmore, 1999, p. 181).

According to Instituto Cidadania (2001), the problem of food insecurity during this period was believed to be one of intermediaries in the food chain. Prior to this period, hunger resulted mainly from lack of supply: when international commodity prices were high, agricultural production turned to export, resulting in a lack of food produced for the domestic population, and consequently, the need for food imports. With the consolidation of the domestic food sector in the post war period, food production responded to the internal market. At this point in time, hunger became regarded as a problem of intermediaries or “middlemen” who were viewed as being the primary cause of high retail prices for the increasingly urban population (p. 79).
Thus, in the 1950s and 1960s, the Brazilian government became increasingly concerned with the sale of food produced, particularly with a desire to avoid price speculation. To address this concern, the government began to establish a series of Food Supply Centres (Centrais de Abastecimento, CEASAs). These institutions, 47 of which were eventually created, were intended to shorten the distance between food producers and consumers, cutting out intermediaries in order to reduce food retail prices (Takagi, 2006; Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 79). Other government price-regulation initiatives were introduced during this period including the SOMAR network of the 1970s, created to distribute foods directly via controlled prices.

According to Takagi (2001), this approach reflected a pattern of "conservative modernization" of social policies that characterized the dictatorship period. Following Fagnani (2006), such "conservative modernization" featured the centralization of governmental decision-making processes and sectors including social assistance, health and food assistance, the regression of public spending, and institutional fragmentation (Fagnani cited in Takagi, 2006 p. 30). Takagi (2006) notes that governmental efforts to control prices and profit margins [of intermediaries], and to modernize commerce during this period were quite inefficient. The CEASAs never brought producers and consumers closer together and the system ended up being controlled by private wholesalers, which came to comprise a new link in the distribution chain. In practice, agents and traditional markets came to act in these new, publicly sponsored spaces, without substantial changes in the supply of food (Belik et al. 2001, cited in Takagi, 2006). Regardless of their shortcomings, Brazil’s CEASAs still exist today, and often play an important role in food policy. The next chapter will include a discussion of the roles that two CEASAs in São Paulo state currently play in this capacity.

During the 1970s, the urban food supply problem was “solved” not by the CEASAS, but by consolidation of the supermarket industry; the old retail sector (including markets and emporiums) was replaced by the consolidation of this new industry. The supermarkets themselves reduced intermediaries, by contracting directly to producers (Takagi, 2001; Instituto Cidadania, 2001). No significant agrarian reform was carried out during this period, however. While large producers benefited from domestic demand as well as growing export markets for products such as orange juice and soybeans, in part due to government credit programs and export subsidies, small producers did not benefit as a whole (Skidmore, 1999). The problem of unequal distribution of land complemented the pattern of unequal distribution of income during the dictatorship period.
Reflecting an awareness of the nutritional plight of Brazil's impoverished populations, the Brazilian government introduced a number of food assistance policies during the 1970s, albeit with limited resources (Takagi, 2006). A National Institute of Food and Nutrition (Instituto Nacional de Alimentação e Nutrição – INAN), linked to the Ministry of Health was established. INAN was responsible for proposing the National Food and Nutrition Program (PRONAN – Programa Nacional de Alimentação e Nutrição). While the first PRONAN (1973-1994) was not particularly successful, the second (1976-1979) has been regarded as the first model of a national food policy. Recognizing that improving the population’s nutrition levels depended on better distribution of income, the second National Food and Nutrition Program (PRONAN – Programa Nacional de Alimentação e Nutrição) was a conceptual advance of the late 1970s (Torres Filho e Carvalho, 1989, cited in Takagi, 2006, p. 32).

Programs coordinated by INAN focused on the use of basic foods in food programs and support for small rural producers. A Brazilian supply company (Companhia Brasileira de Abastecimento – COBAL) was created to unify purchases for government programs. In addition to the National School Meals Program (PNAE), which significantly expanded an already existing government school meals initiative, ten government food and nutrition programs were created during this period. For example, a Food And Nutrition Program (Programa de Nutrição e Saúde, PNS) was launched in 1975 with the goal of supplying basic foodstuffs to health clinics to biologically vulnerable populations. A basic foodstuff rationalization initiative (Programa de Racionalização da Produção de Alimentos Básicos – PROCAB) was created in 1975, with the goal of purchasing basic foodstuffs from small producers for INAN programs. Another initiative (Programa de Abastecimento de Alimentos em áreas de Baixa Renda – Proab) was created in 1979 to supply retailers in low-income areas with basic foodstuffs at reduced prices (Takagi 2006). Also created, was a workers food program (Programa de Alimentação do Trabalhador - PAT), in 1976. Structured as a partnership between government, business and workers, PAT aimed to attend to the basic food and health needs of the work force in formal sectors (Pessanha, 2002).

3.2.2 Democratization, 1985-1990

In 1985, Brazil's first non-military government in two decades inherited a massive foreign debt, an inflationary crisis and attenuated economic recession. Efforts to control inflation were
launched in 1986 under the “heterodox” (i.e. non-orthodox) Plano Cruzado Plan, which entailed a new currency, along with price and wage freezes. While the program was briefly successful, it was abandoned in 1987, and inflation resumed. In this economic climate, consumers’ lack of purchasing power became the primary cause of hunger in the country (Instituto Cidadania, 2001). Not only were unemployment high and economic disparities growing, few public resources were available for social services such as healthcare (Skidmore, 1999, pp. 199 - 201).

That said, public resources were much more plentiful during this immediate post-dictatorship period than they would be in the 1990s. Fagnani (2001) makes a clear distinction between the 1985-1989 period and the 1990-2002 period. The author refers to the former as a period of democratic transition with antagonistic movements of construction and destruction of the state, noting characteristics of the welfare state. The post 1990 era is referred to as a period of liberal counter-reforms and the deconstruction of the welfare state developed in the early post-dictatorship period.

Takagi (2006) follows Fagnani’s overall framework in her analysis of food policy in Brazil. The author shows that the government food assistance programs introduced during the latter part of the dictatorship period continued through the 1980s, partly as a response to the return of direct democratic elections, with politicians seeking to provide responses, albeit temporary, to pressing social problems. In 1985, emergency plans to fight hunger were created as part of a larger movement to restructure government social policy and expand existing food assistance programs. The National School Meals Program, Food And Nutrition Program, and Food Supply Program for Low-Income Areas, were among those expanded. New programs, such as the National Milk Program for Needy Children (Programa Nacional do Leite para Crianças Carentes (PNLCC) (1986) were also created. Thus, by the end of the 1980s, twelve federal food and nutrition programs were in operation in Brazil.

This is not to say that these programs were necessarily effective. Peliano (1992) evaluates the federal food and nutrition programs of the 1980s as being unsatisfactory due to the fact that they were not a political priority, received an inadequate and uneven flow of resources, and experienced management problems (Peliano 1992, cited in Pessanha, 2002). Additionally, it has been said that they failed to focus on low-income populations and on less-developed regions of the country, were too centralized, lacked control by beneficiary communities, and were characterized by the superimposition of actions and lack of coordination (Peliano, 2001).
3.2.3 Neoliberalism and Decentralization, 1990 – 2002.

Brazil's nascent welfare state came abruptly to an end in 1990, when president Fernando Collor de Melo came into power. Collor de Melo sought again to control inflation, dismissed thousands of federal workers on the grounds of redundancy in the context of a fiscal crisis, slashed some of the world's highest tariffs, and moved towards privatization through a series of provisional measures decrees in 1990 (Skidmore, 1999). Policy instruments linked to health and nutrition were demobilized and numerous policies extinguished. In 1992, five previously existing federal food programs were paralyzed (Takagi, 2006, p. 37). Under president Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Brazil experienced continued privatization of state owned enterprises (by 1998, had privatized more than 50 state firms) and reduction of bloated state and municipal pay roles and the continued unavailability of federal funds for social services (Skidmore, 1999; Montero, 2000). INAN, the National Institute of Food and Nutrition was itself extinguished in 1997. According to the highly partisan Instituto Cidadania (2001), "[t]he total absence of a coordinated social policy, and, inside of it, a national policy for fighting hunger and malnutrition, in coordination with poverty reduction was increasingly clear" during this period (p. 25).

Government policy during the 1990s cannot wholly be regarded as an assault on efforts to achieve food security, however. While the privatization of state companies and the scaling back of the state can be seen as having negative impacts on job security, such initiatives are significant when we consider that the bureaucratic state in Brazil has historically served the interest of an elite that wishes not only to retain their power through the federal system, but also to undermine social reform (Roett, 1999). State attention to broader macroeconomic concerns such as inflation, moreover, was badly needed. In 1994, Cardoso (then-finance minister) launched Plano Real, a highly successful inflation-control program that pegged a new Brazilian currency (the Real) to the U.S. dollar (at least initially). Roett (1999) has suggested that Plan Real was Cardoso's greatest contribution to reducing poverty: since the poor generally lacked access to banks, where accrued interest might allow the value of their meager savings to keep up with inflation, their purchasing power was constantly eroded. Plano Real made an important contribution to the population's ability to access food, since it improved their purchasing power.

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6 Instituto Cidadania's Projeto Fome Zero: Uma Proposta de Política de Segurança Alimentar para o Brasil would come to be a pillar of the Worker's Party, a political opponent of the Cardoso government.
The establishment of two conditional cash transfer programs in 2001, the *Bolsa Escola*, where income transfer to low-income families is conditional on children's school attendance (Soares, 2004), and the *Bolsa Alimentação*, where the transfer to poor mother's is dependent on prenatal care, vaccination, and health education (IFPRI, 2006) may also be regarded as important to the promotion of food security. Irrespective of how one perceives the neoliberal reforms of the 1990s, Brazil did see an improvement in a number of social indicators over the course of the decade. GDP, enrollment in primary education, access to improved water and adequate sanitation all increased while the percentage of malnourished people, child-mortality rates, and illiteracy rates all decreased. As well, Brazil was successful in the planning and implementation of HIV/AIDS treatment programmes (UNDP, 2003).

These positive indicators aside, the effective management of policy to address what Cardoso referred to as Brazil's "social debt" was (and still is) a constant challenge, due not only to a lack of funds resulting from the country's fiscal crisis, but also to an absence of coordination in government policy—a product of Brazil's haphazard process of decentralization. While fiscal and political decentralization guaranteeing subnational governments increased power over spending and policy decisions was firmly entrenched in the 1988 Constitution, the decentralization process began much earlier, before the establishment of democracy. Samuels (2000) notes that the distal causes of the power given to the municipalities in the Constitution were the product of both demographic changes, namely urbanization, as well as two specific dictatorship-era policies: the military regime chose not only to maintain municipal elections at that period, but also to deal with municipal governments directly, in a depoliticized, bureaucratic fashion, bypassing the intermediation of militarily-appointed state governments.\(^7\) One important result of these demographic changes and policies was that municipal government came to be seen as an important venue for politicians to advance their careers, and remained so upon the return to democracy. Members of the 1988 constitutional convention therefore sought to solidify municipal autonomy into the Constitution (Samuels, 2000).

Unlike their municipal counterparts, state governments were not democratically elected for the greater part of the dictatorship period. However, Montero (2000) argues that the states did gain

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\(^7\) Samuels contends that both policies were ostensibly designed to curb municipal autonomy. While the military's decision to deal directly with the municipalities would appear to support this claim, Samuels does not make a clear case for why maintaining municipal elections could be seen as limiting municipal autonomy.
significant political power before the return to full electoral democracy in 1985. Not only did the military government decentralize fiscal resources to subnational governments, political decentralization occurred before the election of a democratically elected executive or the establishment of a national constitutional system. Particularly important in the decentralization process were the democratic state level elections in 1982 (three years before the first national democratic elections), which empowered governors to shape the formation of democratic institutions in favour of local political structures. Such factors, Montero (2000) contends, served to strengthen local clientelism and weaken the central state, thereby challenging the federal government’s ability to address macroeconomic and resource distribution issues.

If Brazilian politics during the 1980s was characterized by strong decentralization, Montero regards the early part of the 1990s as a period of “reequilibration of intergovernment authority,” where “the central state halted unsustainable patterns of fiscal devolution and subnational spending from the previous decade” (p. 59). Cardoso’s Plano Real, the author contends, was a significant step in the central government’s move to regain control over the financial system. Social policy, however, remained largely decentralized, and the decentralization of policies such as health care failed to improve the financing and overall quality of public services to the poor (Montero, 2000). Part of the problem faced in service delivery was the 1988 Constitution’s vagueness about each level of government’s specific attributes with respect to policy, surely a product of the country’s ad hoc decentralization process. Coordination between different levels of government was a problem, Samuels (2000) notes, because decentralization was not a conscious policy choice and did not involve a plan for states and/or municipalities to take over the provision of services.

The lack of coordination and uncertainty about responsibility for different policies was compounded by a general lack of funding for social policies. After 1988, municipalities were granted the right to spend an increasing proportion of the public purse, significantly more than they collected in taxes (Montero, 2000). The municipalities gained significant resources, mostly in the form of automatic transfers of funds from state and federal governments (as opposed to “politicized” discretionary transfers), increasing their political autonomy. However, since the federal government lacks the resources to provide sufficient funding for many policies, municipal governments have increasingly assumed responsibility for formerly federal social services and policies, and have even become active in completely new areas. While this de facto decentralization has in some cases led to innovations in local governance, with municipal
governments acting as service providers, the situation remains challenging as most municipalities remain without independent sources of revenue. While municipalities are constitutionally empowered to collect some types of taxes, most lack the valuable property and service sector industries required to collect significant levels of tax revenue. This problem is most acute in the smaller municipalities (Samuels, 2000).

Some of the difficulties that this political and social-economic situation imposes upon policymakers working at the subnational level will become manifest in the next two chapters, which examine innovations in governance related to food security at the municipal, regional, and state levels. As it happens, the challenging socio-economic environment of Brazil during the 1990s provided pressing rationale for the making of a powerful grassroots food security movement in the 1990s. This movement evolved in terms of its structure, its relationship to governmental bodies, and its policy objectives throughout the decade, culminating in the formulation of a proposal for an ambitious national food security strategy in 2001, loosely adopted as government policy two years later. Because Brazil's grassroots food security movement has so profoundly shaped the manner in which food security is conceptualized in Brazil and the resources and governance mechanisms that are now available to realize it, we now turn to this movement's development.

3.2.4 Civil Society Mobilization and Food Security Policy, 1990-2002

While it is patently evident that food security per se—as distinguished from poverty reduction through economic and fiscal reform—was not government priority during the 1990s, important advances were made in the field, particularly though civil society action. According to Valente et al. (2001), civil society mobilization was not only important in the struggle for democracy and direct elections in the 1970s and 1980s, but also, under the coordination of the Movement for Ethics in Politics, responsible for the impeachment of president Collor due to corruption charges, in 1992. After the impeachment, this mobilization broadened in terms of participation, and directed itself towards hunger, poverty, and social inclusion. The movement became institutionalized as Citizen Action Against Hunger, Poverty and for Life (Ação Cidadania Contra a Fome, a Miséria e pela Vida). The basic principles of Citizenship Action was that the state and all citizens were responsible for the progressive realization of the universal right to food, and more broadly, of the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights. During the 1990s, more
than 7000 local committees were established, implementing programs and projects involving distribution of food, capacity-building, income generation, urban agriculture, support for agrarian reform, and literacy skills (Valente et al., 2001). Though Citizenship Action was organized and propelled by IBASE (Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas), and coordinated by the influential sociologist Herbert de Souza (popularly known as “Betinho”), the movement operated in a decentralized, non-hierarchical manner, through autonomous and spontaneous local committees (Friedman, 2003).

Despite the grassroots, nonpolitical (i.e. not connected to formal political parties) nature of the Citizenship Action campaign, civil society mobilization during this period was not wholly separated from government activities. As discussed in the previous chapter, civil society participation in governance processes was made legally possible through the 1988 Constitution, due largely to the lobbying efforts of a coalition of social movement, and subsequently became common practice. In the realm of food security governance, the establishment of a National Food Security Council (CONSEA) was an important venue for government-civil society cooperation. In 1991, the so-called “Parallel Government” (Governo Paralelo) of the opposition Workers’ Party drafted a proposal for a National Plan to Combat Hunger and Poverty. The plan, based on principles of administrative and financial decentralization, solidarity, broad-based participation and cooperation between government and civil society, treated food security in a structural and intersectoral manner. Though ignored by then-president Collor, the proposal made an impression on the new government of Itamar Franco (Menezes, 2001) and many of the National Plan’s principles were taken up via the establishment of a National Food Security Council (CONSEA) under Franco’s presidency in 1993. Including participation by both government and civil society, CONSEA was formed in conjunction with Citizenship Action, and its civil society councilors largely chosen by the Movimento pela Ética na Política (Valente et al., 2001).

According to Instituto Cidadania (2001), CONSEA’s priorities included: income generation, democratization of the land and settlement of Brazil’s landless rural producers, fighting maternal and child malnutrition, as well as expanding and decentralizing initiatives such as the National School Meals Program. One important achievement of CONSEA included forcing hunger and poverty on the public agenda, as a government problem that ought to be linked to the Cabinet of the president. In the context of poor cooperation between governmental sectors described above, CONSEA also launched a coordinated, intersectoral effort towards achieving food
security, involving different levels of the government and civil society actions to avoid duplication and overlapping and to achieve the proposed objectives. Instituto Cidadania (2001) notes that:

"[t]he vigilant action of civil society representatives on CONSEA guaranteed resources for priority programs. At the same time, it transformed itself into a privileged space of debate between the government and civil society, collaborating to mobilize public opinion regarding the theme and deepening the participation of civil society in the formulation and control of public policies. In this manner, CONSEA succeeded to effectively include food security in the Brazilian policy agenda"

"CONSEA represented a novelty in terms of mechanisms of governability in the country: representatives of the first echelon of the federal government and of civil society discussed proposals that could accelerate the process of eradicating hunger and misery" (Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 23).

In 1994 CONSEA organized a National Food Security Conference, preceded by preparatory debates at 26 state conferences (Valente et al, 2001). Both the preparatory events and the National Conference included representation from civil society (local committees and NGOs) and all three levels of government (Friedman, 2003). The Conference itself included the participation of 1800 delegates, from all regions of the country (Menezes, 2003). In the analysis that issued forth from the conference, concentration of income and land were seen as the main determinants of hunger and food insecurity. Its main policy directives were: “to guarantee the right to adequate food for all inhabitants as a basic human right,” “to expand the conditions of food access and reduce their impact on the family budget,” “to assure health, nutrition, and food to determined population groups,” and “to guarantee the biological, sanitary, nutritional, and technological quality of food and their use, stimulating healthy food practices and lifestyles” (Consea, 1994, cited in Valente, 2002). The document became a reference of the path to be followed by Brazil’s food security movement (Menezes, 2003).

Despite its role in advancing Brazil’s food security movement in the 1990s, CONSEA did experience significant shortcomings. Though it purported to be intersectoral in nature, Instituto Cidadania (2001) argues that decisions referring to economic policy continued to be marginalized from discussions on their impact on food security, hunger, and poverty. They argue that communication was limited to social ministries and CONSEA often functioned only to mounting pressure to guarantee resources for social programs and policies, and that economic policy-makers continued to accept the international financial institutions prescriptions of fiscal austerity.
In 1995, president Cardoso abolished CONSEA, replacing it with the Community Solidary Council (Conselho de Comunidade Solidária). Unlike CONSEA, the focus of Comunidade Solidária extended beyond food security to include broader issues of social inclusion. The council sought to strengthen civil society and make government social policy more responsive to the needs of the poor than it has been historically. It encouraged partnerships between government, civil society, and the private sector to improve literacy, education in low-income communities, and job training for youth. (Cardoso 2006; 2002; 1999). Though not limited in scope to food security, the Community Solidarity Council did adopt and expand the priorities set out by CONSEA (Valente et al, 2001). Under pressure from the civil society-based National Citizenship Action Forum (Fórum Nacional da Ação da Cidadania), Comunidade Solidária maintained the discussion on food and nutritional security. A Technical Committee on Food Security (Comitê Técnico de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional), composed of various ministries, was established, forming the basis for the group that would prepare for the UN FAO' 1996 World Food Summit (Instituto Cidadania 2001).

While Comunidade Solidária became a point of focus for the follow up to the Summit, changes in the council’s Secretariat after the 1998 elections, resulted in a loss of momentum in the right to food approach (Valente et al, 2001). Civil society action towards food security was channeled into several venues. A National Forum on Food and Nutritional Security (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional – FBSAN) was created in 1998. Unlike CONSEA, FBSAN lacked the participation of government ministries. However, what the Forum lacked in terms of links to executive power, it made up for via its power to critique. Whereas governmental interests shaped the participation of CONSEA, FBSAN membership was open to anyone, including radical critics of government policy such as Brazil’s Landless Rural Workers’ Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra, MST).

FBSAN was instrumental in encouraging state governments to undertake consultation processes to establish food and nutritional policy aimed at upholding the right to food. As of 2001, this process was underway in seven states, with food security councils established in three states: Minas Gerais, Rio Grande do Sul, and Mato Grosso do Sul, with the process underway to create another such structure in the state of Alagoas (Valente, 2001; Instituto Cidadania, 2001). Other state and municipal councils were subsequently created (São Paulo state’s being in 2003). As such 27 state councils, and 203 municipal ones currently exist (CONSEA, 2006). Though the specific issues addressed by these councils and forums varies...
from state to state, they all generally followed the CONSEA’s objective of coordinating state and civil society actions to further food security. The role that these councils currently play in subnational food security governance will be examined in subsequent chapters.

The other major activity of civil society during this period was the drafting of the Zero Hunger Project: A Proposal for a Food Security Policy for Brazil in 2001. Published by the non-profit Instituto Cidadania, the document was created with the participation of NGOs, research institutes, labour unions, popular organizations, and other movements linked to the food security question from across the nation (Instituto Cidadania, 2001). The project was a significant achievement for two reasons. Firstly, from a policy perspective, the proposal attempted to analyze the structural causes of Brazil’s persistent problem of food insecurity and proposed policy measures needed to address the problem. Secondly, from a political perspective, the ambitious proposal became a central part of the platform of the Brazilian Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT). The PT’s presidential candidate Luiz Igácio Lula da Silva, himself of humble origins in Brazil’s impoverished Northeast made fighting hunger a high priority in his election campaign. When Lula came into power in January 2003, a bold effort was made to bring the Zero Hunger initiative to life, albeit with very mixed results. The next section looks at the proposal’s key elements, along with the evolution of food security governance structures associated with it.

3.3 The Current Era: Food Security under National PT leadership, 2003-2006

3.3.1 The Zero Hunger Proposal

The Zero Hunger proposal identified the Brazilian population’s lack of purchasing power as the primary cause of hunger in the country from the late 1980s and early 1990s onward. Lack of purchasing power resulted in insufficient demand, which in turn inhibited the greater production of food. Lack of demand was seen as being a product of income concentration, low salaries, high levels of unemployment and low levels of growth, especially in sectors that could expand employment. According to the proposal, these reasons were intrinsic elements of Brazil’s pattern of growth, forming

a truly vicious cycle, the cause of the latest instance of hunger in the country, being growing unemployment, fall of purchasing power, reduction in the food production, more unemployment, greater fall in purchasing power, greater reduction in food production (Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 81).
The hunger problem was seen to have three fundamental dimensions: insufficient demand, resulting from income concentration, high unemployment and underemployment, and low purchasing power of workers; the incompatibility of current prices with the low purchasing power of the majority of the population; and the exclusion of the poorest from the market, populations who require emergency assistance.

Ending this “perverse cycle,” the Zero Hunger document proposed, requires state intervention to incorporate those who are excluded from the labour market and/or have insufficient income to provide their families with a dignified food supply, into the food consumption market. To achieve this end, mechanisms are needed to increase demand for food, reduce food prices, provide emergency food assistance for those excluded from the market.

The proposal treated the issue of emergency policy with due diligence, noting that:

> such initiatives have always been the object of resistance, for they only lighten up the perverse effects of social exclusion, making difficult the confrontation and overcoming of the real factors that promote injustice. It is pointed out, as well, by the fact that “assistencialism” is built in the camp of demagogic and populist practices, by diverting resources, and by corruption. In this way, the admission of their existence is almost always accompanied by resolutions to the fact that they need to exist and reaffirmations of the expectation that they be provisional (Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 83).

While such provisional policies were proposed for confronting the pressing problem of hunger, they needed to be linked to a structural transformation in the conditions that produced food insecurity. The Zero Hunger initiative therefore proposed three types of initiatives:

1) Structural Policies. These included income generation, universal social assistance, support to family agriculture, intensification of agrarian reform, school bursary and minimum wage programs;

2) Specific Policies. These included food stamps, expansion of the Worker’s Food Program (PAT), emergency food donations, maintaining security stocks, school meals; and,

3) Local Policies. These included proposals made for a) rural areas, b) small and medium cities c) metropolitan areas.

As this thesis is largely concerned with food security policy at the municipal level, it seems worthwhile highlighting some of the Local Policies recommended for urban areas. The municipal level initiatives proposed by Instituto Cidadania (2001) were essentially programs already
functioning in some municipalities with relative success. A strong emphasis is placed on municipal food supply policies. Such policies consist of *food supply programs*, such as *sacolões* (government subsidized bulk produce markets), popular markets, convoys (delivering affordably priced commodities), price controls, and aspects of production such as community gardens; *planning and information services*, which provide data on markets, harvests, economic conditions, *etc.*; and on "micro interventions" which are devoted to promoting local production, strengthening alternative forms of sales for small producers, controlling oligopolies in the wholesale sector through projects such as producer cooperatives, and other such initiatives.

Complementing Zero Hunger's proposed short-term emergency measures, such municipal initiatives offered potential for the promotion of longer-term economic development and social inclusion. According to the proposal,

> Municipal food supply programs can help create spaces that promote the production and distribution of food carried out by small and medium rural and urban enterprises. It is in the scope of local (municipal) and regional action that some of the main required elements for the challenge of "building markets", one of the main challenges which confront small and medium producers, small agri-food industry, and traditional retail. At the same time, in stimulating activities that create jobs and income, this is a route that expands the availability of quality food in a less challenging manner, shortening the distance between production and distribution and valuing diversity in regional food habits (Instituto Cidadania, 2001, pp. 93-94).

There is no single best institutional framework for carrying-out such policies. Such food supply-related activities could be carried out either partially or completely by CEASAs, the Food Supply Centres established during the dictatorship era, or by other municipal bodies such the *secretariats of supply* established in Belo Horizonte and São Paulo. Whatever institutional framework is suitable to a given locale, the Zero Hunger proposal highlights the importance of having municipal food supply policies that take an integrated approach to food security. The proposal therefore encourages cooperation between various public agencies, such as secretariats of food supply, agriculture, education, health, social assistance, and public sanitation.

The document pointed to frequent administrative discontinuity in food supply programs, which compromised their effectiveness. The Zero Hunger proposal highlighted the fact that partnerships (with associations, private agents and institutions) and popular support have historically played an important role in sustaining projects and programs in the face of the discontinuity that can result from changes of orientation in public administration. These factors also suggest the appropriateness of creating inter-secretarial municipal food security councils in
partnership with civil society, modeled after the councils at the state and formerly the national level (Instituto Cidadania, 2001).

3.3.2 Zero Hunger: Implementation with Mixed Results

While many of Zero Hunger's proposed policies were intended to be implemented in a decentralized manner, consistent with Brazil's contemporary political structure, implementation could not occur without effective leadership and coordination at the federal level. What form this leadership would take was a matter of dispute. In developing the Zero Hunger proposal, concern was expressed over the need for a permanent, rather than temporary governance body, one that was not bound to a specific ministry (Instituto Cidadania, 2001, p. 104). The Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security was one of the leading advocates of this view. Rather than create a specific ministry, the Forum promoted the creation of a secretariat directly linked to the president, in order to establish an intersectoral approach to food security (Menezes, 2003).

In the end, the Lula Administration did create a specific (and temporary) body to coordinate the Zero Hunger Program when it came into power in January of 2003. This was the Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security (Ministério Extraordinário de Segurança Alimentar – MESA). At that time, the National Food and Nutritional Security Council (CONSEA) was reestablished to accompany the work of MESA. Like its predecessor during the 1990s, the revived CONSEA was composed of representatives from various federal government ministries as well as diverse sectors of organized civil society. It is also regionally representative (CONSEA, 2004). In spite of some of their limitations, the creation of such national governance structures devoted to food security marked a significant political triumph. At the time of its initial implementation, the Zero Hunger Project was seen by food security advocates such as Francisco Menezes, then president of the National Food and Nutritional Security Forum (subsequently president of CONSEA), as being "a true inversion of the national political agenda, until then entirely concerned with the humours of the market and the then foreseen monetary destabilization," as well as an important statement of political will (Menezes, 2003, p. 50).

The Zero Hunger Program has faced – and continues to face – a number of challenges, however. One such challenge was the enormous pressure put on the government by the public and the media to achieve immediate results. Such pressure contributed to the dissolution of
MESA and its replacement by a newly created Ministry of Social Development and Hunger Combat (Ministério de Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome, MDS), in January 2004. As Takagi (2006) notes,

the wear-down suffered by the Federal Government in fighting hunger, especially by means of the media, did not reach the Zero Hunger Program, but did fundamentally reach MESA and the other ministries of the social areas, resulting in an institutional change after only one year of the term (p. 188).

Part of the problem was the name “Zero Hunger” itself, which created unrealistic expectations to end hunger in the short term rather than build food security over a longer period. Interviewees previously involved in the Zero Hunger program have suggested that this institutional change (seen as negative by these critics) would not have occurred if the Lula government had created a Secretariat of Food Security rather than an Extraordinary Ministry to Combat Hunger at the outset. If such a Secretariat had been allowed to calmly analyze the situation and develop policies focused on income generation without being pressured to end hunger in the short term, it was suggested, such an institution would still be around today (CRAISA interview, 08/15/05).

Of course, public pressure for immediate results was only one reason for this institutional change. Takagi (2006) argues that many of the critiques of Zero Hunger, including the absence of coordinated social policy – assumed to be developed by MESA – came from within the government itself and the PT. Another significant problem with MESA is related to the former ministry’s leadership. The Zero Hunger proposal had largely been developed by a group of academics from the Instituto de Economia of UNICAMP. This group became the core component of the newly created ministry under the leadership of a new minister, UNICAMP economist José Graziano da Silva. While the UNICAMP team were clearly adept at analysis, they may have lacked prowess in public administration. Graziano in particular was criticized by his colleagues in the ministry for his inability to operate at the head of the government’s main social program (Rila & Gustavo, 2006).

At the time of Graziano’s dismissal, Lula believed that the person responsible for Zero Hunger needed to be someone executive, capable of both thinking how food could get to the poorest people and at the same time able to coordinate actions with other ministries (Dimenstein, 2003). The academic bent of the MESA team stands in contrast to the practical focus of its successors in the Ministry of Social Development. Not only was MDS led by the former mayor of Belo Horizonte—a city with a longstanding tradition of effective administration of integrated food
security policies, the new ministry has expanded most of the food security-related initiatives carried out by both MESA and the former Cardoso government.

Another challenge to the Zero Hunger program is the criticism that it is "assistencial," i.e. that it consists more of patrimonial handouts than of policies devoted to addressing the structural causes of food insecurity in Brazil. The mobilization of civil society to accompany Zero Hunger has been encouraged by the Brazilian government itself, under both the Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security and the Ministry of Social Development. Recommended actions to this end included: mobilization against hunger and poverty among the needy through donations of food and money; creation of voluntary groups to accompany recipient families of the Food Card Program; and more specific campaigns such as literacy promotion and the construction of cisterns in the arid Northeast; among others (CONSEA, 2004).

A 2004 document of the Ministry of Social Development, *Mobilização Social do Fome Zero* (*Social Mobilization of Zero Hunger*) states that although the project involves the three levels of government, "the great protagonist is Brazilian society. The success of [Zero Hunger's] public policies depends on its mobilization" (Betto, 2004, p. 4). The document proposes a series of roles that civil society can play toward this end by way of easily remembered names, some of them acronyms. For example, Zero Hunger's voluntary operative councils, charged with coordinating and monitoring collection and distribution of food donations, were referred to as "CUP" (*COPO – Conselho Operativo do Fome Zero*). Voluntary groups that actually performed the collection and distribution of donations, like those created during the Citizen Action Campaign of the 1990s, were referred to as "PLATE" (*PRATO – Programa de Ação Todos pelo Fome Zero*). The *Mobilização Social do Fome Zero* document emphasizes that such committees play an educational, civic role, and not just hand-out donations,

> [b]ecause, beyond collecting food, Fome Zero wants to collect solidarity in a manner that unites hunger for food with the will to act. Fome Zero is not assistencialist, but looks to social inclusion. The PRATOS have to help beneficiary families to walk from exclusion to social inclusion; from poverty to income generation; from dependency to citizenship" (Betto, 2004, p. 8)

The educational component was also intrinsic to other committees participating in the campaign. Food and nutritional security agents, the "Salt" (*SAL – Agente de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional*) were to perform an educational function, with a focus on social citizenship and sustainable "solidary" economy, accompanying recipient families and beneficiaries in moving towards social inclusion (Betto, 2004).
Despite the government's rhetorical commitment to education and social inclusion expressed in such documents, critiques of "assistencialism" have continued. While Menezes (2003) noted five months into the program that such critiques were "fragile" since the program included both numerous structural initiatives and conditionalities on its emergency measures that discouraged dependency, the author acknowledged that many of the structural policies "remain[ed] on the shelves of good intentions, to wait for the said political and economic conditions to be applied" (Menezes, 2003, p. 52). This is not to say that the government all together failed to support structural policies related to food security: in 2003, government financing for family agriculture increased by $R 360 million from the previous year; funding for primary education meals programs increased by $R 105 million, and $R 224 million was spent on a newly created program to purchase food from small-scale family agricultural producers. Conditional income transfers in 2003 increased by over $R one billion from 2002 levels (Camara dos Deputados, 2005). Still, the low visibility of such structural policies, combined with a restrictive macroeconomic climate in 2003 that impeded their expansion, and extensive media coverage of voluntary anti-hunger campaigns led to the popular impression that the program was an emergency assistance initiative rather than a collection of public policies (Takagi, 2006).

For Yasbek (2004), there is some truth to this popular impression. In her analysis, which echoes the social policy approach to food security expressed by Power (1999; 2005), Riches (1999b) and others, as noted in the previous chapter, the first year of Zero Hunger can be seen to be consistent with neoliberal policies where poverty and social inequality are increasingly approached as questions of philanthropy and social solidarity. In this context, the role of the state in social protection is "reductionist" and devoted to extreme cases, with a high degree of selectivity and focus, and policies are directed towards the poorest of the poor. In Yasbek's view, the Zero Hunger proposal itself did not fully consider the structural fundamentals of social inequality in the country (though it included structural elements), and failed to take into consideration other social programs devoted to confronting poverty, particularly policies of social security. While Zero Hunger in practice did include a number of government policies, these were rather minimalist and excessively targeted. The program therefore ran the risk of existing only on the plane of assistencialism and moral and humanitarian duty to help the poor, rather than realizing a social right (Yasbek, 2004).

If true in early 2004, Yasbek's analysis may be less accurate today under the expanded income transfer programs of the Ministry of Social Development. The MDS was not simply MESA
renamed and re-staffed. The new ministry united the work of MESA, the former Ministry of Social Assistance, and the Executive Secretary of the Bolsa Família (family allowance) Program. The Bolsa Família was created in October 2003 to unify the government's existing income transfer programs: the Auxílio Gás (Cooking Gas Allowance), Bolsa Escola, and Bolsa Alimentação instituted by former President Cardoso, and the Food Card Program initiated by President Lula as part of Zero Hunger. Under the unification, conditional income transfer programs have increased from $R 3.36 Billion in 2003, to $R 5.31 Billion in 2004, and $R 6.54 Billion in 2005. The Minister of Social development has claimed that the Bolsa Família reached 6.5 million families by the end of 2004, and that almost 8.7 million families would be included in the program by the end of 2005. Not only does the program provide incentives for school attendance (such that primary school attendance is now almost universal), it uses transparent, universal criteria for serving all poor people. Through the Unitary Social Assistance System (Sistema Único de Assistência Social –SUAS), the minister argues, the MDS is putting an end to a tradition of clientelism and assistencialism in public policy: "the constitution of public policies seeks to universalize the access to rights. And rights are not favors" (Ananias, in Conseia, 2005).

The shift from MESA to MDS, I would argue might be seen as signifying a movement towards a social policy approach to food security in the Brazilian Federal Government. While positive changes in policy implementation have accompanied this ministerial reshuffling, the shift has received some criticism. Takagi (2006) argues that the institutional change had negative impacts for food security, both conceptually and structurally. Whereas food security had been the primary concern of MESA, MDS was primarily concerned with administering the Bolsa Família, which subsumed MESA's Food Card Program (whereby beneficiaries were provided with a monthly allowance that had to be spent on food), during the unification of existing income-transfer programs. The Bolsa Família, the author asserts, was fundamentally an anti-poverty income transfer program, not one that deals with access to food as a human right. She argues that the right to social assistance does not supercede the right to food, but rather that both need to be upheld, each in their own specific manner, as with all social rights in the Constitution (Takagi, 2005, p. 175). Of course, Takagi's criticisms of the MDS hardly seem surprising considering that she was one of technical coordinators of the original Zero Hunger proposal, and had the ex-minister of the now extinct MESA, José Graziano da Silva, on her doctoral dissertation committee at UNICAMP. They do, however, provide food for thought.
Structurally speaking, the author contends that while the Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security had been an inter-ministerial body linked to the President himself, food security governance in Brazil lost these attributes when it fell under the coordination of a Food Security Secretariat within the Ministry of Social Development. This is not to say that MESA did not experience challenges in partnering with other ministries (such as the ministry of health), nor that it possessed the strength to successfully engage in strategic governmental planning, only that its structure was conducive to inter-ministerial action. Although a number of policies related to food security still exist (in many cases in expanded form) at present, they are implemented by various ministries without any overall coordination. Although CONSEA still plays an inter-ministerial coordinating role, it does not have the executive power to coordinate the actions of various ministries (Takagi, 2005).

To be sure, both MESA and MDS have demonstrated an ability to coordinate inter-ministerial cooperation, for example though Zero Hunger's Food Acquisition Program. This initiative supports small family farmers participating in the National Program to Strengthen Family Agriculture (*Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar – PRONAF*) of the Ministry of Agrarian Development. The foodstuffs purchased from small farmers are then used to supply social programs for food-insecure populations. The Program is governed by a Management Group, which, currently coordinated by MDS, includes the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Agrarian Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Supply, and Ministry of Finance. The group is responsible for the transfer of resources and monitoring of agreements with state and municipal governments, and CONAB (the Brazilian Supply Company\(^8\)) through which the program is implemented (MDS, 2006). While the cooperative structure of the Food Acquisition Program is itself a significant achievement, I would argue that MDS’s ability to maintain and expand such inter-ministerial partnerships stands as one the key governance challenges to the promotion of food security in Brazil.

3.4 From the National to the Local: Data Sources and Collection Methods

Thus far, this chapter has described the evolving nature of food insecurity in Brazil, both in general terms, and with particular reference to the case study region, the state of São Paulo. It

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\(^8\) CONAB, linked to the extinct Ministry of Agriculture, was created in 1991 when the Brazilian Supply Company was merged with the Brazilian Food Company and Production Finance Company (*Companhia de Financiamento da Produção*).
has also examined the development of governance structures designed to address the problem of food insecurity over the past half century. This overview was intended to provide an introduction to the kinds of institutional and policy mechanisms available for encouraging food security at both the national and subnational levels.¹⁹ While the former consists primarily of the Ministry of Social Development and Hunger Combat and the National Food and Nutritional Security Council, a number of important food-related programs are managed by other ministries and agencies, including the Ministry of Agrarian Development (PRONAF), the National Supply Company (CONAB), linked to the Ministry of Agriculture and Supply, and the National Development Fund for Education, (Programa Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação – FNDE), which finances the National School Meals Program.

At the subnational level, governance structures involved in the promotion of food security include CEASAs (Centres of Food Supply, like North American Food Terminals); municipal secretariats as well as less formal programs devoted to food security; and Food and Nutritional Security Councils comprised of government and civil society members. Universities, Community Colleges and a host of charitable and civil society institutions (many of them faith based) such as daycares, soup kitchens and other hunger-relief programs also play important roles in addressing food security at the local level.

The next two chapters will take a closer look at food security governance in the state of São Paulo. Chapter Four will discuss work going on at the municipal level, primarily in the municipalities of Santo André and Campinas, but also in São Paulo, and Santo André's neighbouring municipalities of Mauá and Diadema. Santo André was chosen both for its reputation as a leader in promoting food security and social inclusion, but also because of its close ties with the University of British Columbia.¹⁰ Interviews were carried out with staff at CRAISA, the Integrated Regional Supply Company of Santo André (Companhia Regional de Abastecimento Integrado de Santo André) the city’s version of a CEASA, as well as other City staff working on Santo André’s Food Security Program. Policy documents were also collected. Additional interviews were carried out with government and civil society participants of the

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¹⁹ Given the highly decentralized nature of Brazil’s democracy, the former greatly impacts the latter, particularly with respect to the kinds of resources that are available to local policy makers. Thus it was deemed necessary to examine both, though our initial and primary area of inquiry relates to the local.
¹⁰ UBC’s Centre for Human Settlements was the lead Canadian partner in a four-year by-lateral Community-Based Watershed Management Program which ended in 2004.
Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Council (Conselho Municipal de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional, COMSEA), as well as the city's Urban Agriculture Pilot Project.

In a similar vein, Campinas was chosen both because of its reputation for advancing food security and because of UBC's evolving relationship with the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Campinas (PUCC). In relation to the conceptualization of food security, the city may be best known for the Instituto de Economia of UNICAMP (the University of Campinas), the intellectual home ground of some of the Zero Hunger Program. In relation to practice, Campinas was one of the program’s “pioneers.” CEASA-Campinas is the headquarters for Fome Zero Campinas (the city's food security program), other food-related initiatives, and the Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Council (COMSEA). Data was collected though reading of policy documents, interviews with CEASA staff and council members, and site visits to some of CEASA's projects, food donors and recipients.

Visits and interviews were also carried out in São Paulo, the state capital, due to its proximity to Campinas and Santo André (the municipality of Santo André is a suburb of São Paulo) and my own interest in its Secretariat of Food Supply. Interviews were carried out with representatives of the Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Council (COMUSAN), the General Supervision of Food Supply (formerly the Secretariat of Food Supply, and the Secretary of the Environment, which coordinates a municipal urban agriculture program. Visits were also made to the NGO Instituto Polis, and its Food Security Reference Centre pilot project. One of the coordinators of the municipal food security program of Diadema, also a suburb of São Paulo, was also interviewed.

Chapter Five deals with the restructuring of São Paulo's state-level food security council though the creation of regional food security commissions. While my own awareness of this process came through internet research, actual contact was made through municipal food security leaders from Campinas. Through networking and outreach, I was able to attend events for the training and election of provisional commissions in the ABC region (which includes Santo André, as well as Mauá, Diadema, and four others), the Baixa Santista (on the coast of São Paulo), as well as the definitive commission of the Metropolitan Region of Campinas. In addition to observation during these events, and interviews carried out before, during, and after them, analysis of news releases and other legal and policy documents have informed my understanding of this process.
Chapter 4
Fostering Sustainable Food Security Policy at the Municipal Level

The previous chapter traced the historical evolution of food security governance in Brazil, providing an overview of the types of policies, institutions, and relationships that have been used or promoted for advancing food security in the country. This chapter looks at these same issues, only from a municipal perspective. The intent is to describe some of the factors that I found to be decisive in the advancement of urban food security, based on qualitative research carried out for the most part in the cities of Santo André, Campinas, and the state capital, São Paulo.

The chapter deals first with the state itself, and the role that leadership, sustained political support, and effective administration—including the practice of intersectoral approaches to policy formation and governance—play in advancing urban food security. The discussion then turns to some of the challenges that food security councils and municipal governments face, including a lack of coordinated action or resources. Arguing that such resource poverty can result, at least in part, from the divergent perspectives and priorities of the federal government on the one hand, and municipalities on the other, the paper turns to the issue of how food security is conceptualized and facilitated at the local level. This discussion attempts to address broader questions about the relationship between the state, civil society, and social inclusion: To what extent do governments promote food security via strategies that empower society? What role does civil society play in putting food security on the public agenda and making governments more accountable and inclusive? It is argued that while both state and civil society actions are essential, considerations of efficiency and the distinction between economic and political empowerment, as well as between organized and unorganized civil society, also need to be made.

4.1 Municipal Governance for Food Security

4.1.1 The Role of Leadership—Administrative, Political, Technical

Leadership at the federal level—namely through the PT government's Zero Hunger initiative—was an important factor in putting food security on the policy agenda throughout the country. The establishment of food and nutritional security councils was encouraged by federal
legislation and coordination efforts at the beginning of the current government's mandate (COMUSAN interview, 07/27/05). Subnational governments across the country, including the state of São Paulo, and the municipalities of Campinas and Santo André, established food councils in 2003 and 2004. Following the federal government's call to action municipal food security programs have also been created throughout the country.

Municipal leadership around food security was already manifest in a number of locales before the PT came to power at the federal level in 2003, however. The city of Belo Horizonte in the state of Minas Gerais, for example, legally established a Municipal Secretariat of Food Supply (*Secretaria Municipal de Abastecimento, SMAB*) in 1993 to implement a Municipal Policy of Food Supply (Aranha, 2003). Organized into three separate departments dealing with food consumption and nutrition, administration of food distribution, and incentives for basic food production, the SMAB has been able to promote food security in the city by improving nutrition among high-risk groups, controlling prices via market intervention, increasing accessibility to quality food in marginal parts of the city, facilitating direct links between producers and consumers, and other measures. A number of indicators suggest that the city's food security program is dealing with some of the significant challenges associated with hunger and malnutrition and may even serve as a model for other municipalities (Rocha, 2001). Unfortunately, a thorough treatment of the Belo Horizonte experience is beyond the scope of this thesis, which focuses on food security governance in the State of São Paulo.11

Within the case study region, the city of São Paulo established the first municipal food security council in the state in 200112, following its first *Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Forum*. CEASAs—food supply centres—were well established in a number of cities, as well, including Belo Horizonte, Campinas, and São Paulo. While one might assume that many of these have stayed close to their original mandates, however ineffectively implemented, others sought innovative ways to advance food security before the launching of Zero Hunger. For example, according to one of its directors, CRAISA, the Integrated Regional Food Supply Company of Santo André always functioned in a different manner than other CEASAs. It was created in 1990

11 A comparative analysis of approaches to municipal food security governance in the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais—say, in the cities of Santo André and Belo Horizonte—certainly calls for the attention of researchers, however.

12 The coordinator of COMUSAN, The São Paulo's Municipal Food and Nutritional Security Council, actually claimed that the Council was the first of its kind to be established. In fact, COMASA, the Food Security and Supply Council of Belo Horizonte, was established in 1994 to advise that city's then recently created Municipal Secretariat of Food Supply.
with the intention to manage the city’s food supply, providing a single location to coordinate programs such as school meals, and (publicly subsidized bulk produce markets, also a hallmark of the Belo Horizonte administration). Such initiatives, along with legislation related to open markets and partnerships with the Department of Public Health to finance a course for street vendors, were attributed to the creation of a team dedicated to such issues during the 1990s (CRAISA interview, 08/15/05) Under this team’s leadership, CRAISA became the coordinating institution of the first public food bank in Latin America, in 2000 (Santo Andre, 2005c).

In Campinas, such leadership around food security has been more recent. In 2001, the city’s CEASA ceased to be a mere commercial outlet, opening itself up to the implementation of social projects (CEASA-Campinas 2004). In that year, under the coordination of CEASA, and through coordination with other municipal agencies, the City launched its Food Security Program. According to CEASA-Campinas’ website, Campinas is a “pioneer” in Zero Hunger. Indeed, it has put into practice some of the proposals of the Zero Hunger document, including the improvement of the school meals program in the city, implementation of a food bank, community gardens, and a Seal of Quality for Restaurants initiative.

In trying to understand the impetus behind the development of a food security program in Campinas at this time, it is worth noting that José Graziano da Silva, the UNICAMP economics professor who helped develop the Zero Hunger proposal and subsequently became Brazil’s Minister of Food Security was formerly a member of the administrative council of CEASA-Campinas. A supportive political environment was also key for advancing food security in Campinas and elsewhere. The current president of CEASA-Campinas, has stated that “Toninho,” the former (assassinated) Worker’s Party mayor who appointed the president to the position, was sensitive to the hunger issue (CEASA interview, 07/30/05). Toninho’s immediate successor, Izalene Tiene, has also expressed a solid understanding of the food security issue during her mandate (CEASA, 2004).

Effective municipal food security requires sustained leadership and political support, it should be noted. The extent to which the current government of Campinas supports municipally led food security initiatives is subject to some debate. While the Executive Secretary of the Campinas’s municipal food security council (COMSEA) told me that the municipality was totally supportive of the council’s work, a civil society-based council member confided to me that City Hall really did not understand COMSEA at all, but rather believed that its only concern was food donations.
This lack of an understanding of food security on behalf of the municipal government can be perceived in the renaming of Campinas' "Sustainable Rural Development and Food Security Group" (GDR) to simply the "Sustainable Rural Development Group," in 2005. Formerly linked to the Cabinet of the Mayor, the GDR was transferred to the Secretariat of Commerce, Industry, Services, and Tourism. Somewhat curiously, the president of CEASA-Campinas claimed at the time that the move was a positive one in terms of generating employment and preserving the countryside. (CEASA-Campinas, 2005).

Institutional restructuring accompanying changes in government has occurred elsewhere, as well (and in fact may be the norm in countries such as Brazil, and perhaps developed countries, too). In 2005, São Paulo's Municipal Secretariat of Supply merged with the Secretariat of Public Management and renamed the General Supervision of Supply. Though some tangible changes were manifest—the municipality's community gardening program was transferred then to the Secretariat of the Environment, for example—the current Secretary of Supply has stated that there have been no significant changes in the day to day operation of Secretariat/Supervision of Supply since the transfer. Since I spoke with him the institution has moved positions in the municipal bureaucracy once again, this time to the Municipal Secretariat of Services. In the city of Mauá, food security ceased to be a priority of the municipal government following the last (2004) election.

In addition to a supportive political environment, effective food security policy requires technically qualified staff working in public administration. This concern has been longstanding in the municipality of Santo André, interviewees at CRAISA informed me. Santo André's former mayor Celso Daniel once created a "government school" that trained municipal officials in public policy and administration. Public administration was not to be guided by technical knowledge in the narrow sense, but by a global, "technical-political" vision. The technical and political aspects of public administration could not be separated, it was argued, "because often if you leave it just to the technician, with the politician on the other side, you're not going to execute it. Because (its going to be) dependent on the state government..., dependent on the federal government, on city council, on the opposition within the government itself..." as well as the civil society that elected it. "There's always these two ideas," I was told, "because if not, if you only have a technical vision, [the policy or program] will never get off the ground." Granted the importance of the political question, it was recognized that it is the technician who ultimately executes a given initiative since "its not going to turn out right if it's a politician" (CRAISA interview, 08/15/05).
4.1.2 Intersectoralism and the Councils

Political support and competent local leadership and administration, then, are key factors in advancing the food security agenda at the municipal level. One of the key roles of effective leadership, in the context of food security policy, is the ability to facilitate coordinated action by diverse sectors. "Intersectoralism" (intersetoralidade) has been said to be a basic element to food security in Brazil (CONSEA, 2004). Its importance at the local level has also been expressed. The former mayor of Campinas has stated, for example, that the priorities of quality food for children, redistribution of food to low income families, incentives for local production, and a clear food supply policy for Campinas are "assumed by our administration and implemented by CEASA Campinas in an intersectoral action that involves various secretaries and public companies in the municipality" (Izalene Tiene, cited in CEASA, 2004, p. 5). This point was reiterated by the Executive Secretary of COMSEA-Campinas (the municipal food security council), when he stated that the action of such diverse actors as CEASA, the Secretariats of Health, Education, and Citizenship (or Social Assistance), as well as the People’s Bank (Banco de Povo) plays an important role in realizing food security: "[t]his union of diverse departments is important for the work to flourish, to develop as best as possible" (COMSEA-Campinas interview, 09/15/05). Intersectoral action is not limited to government agencies, but encompasses the private and non-governmental sectors. The Municipal Food Bank of Campinas, for example functions in partnership with both industry and community and faith-based organizations, both in law and in practice.

One sees this focus on intersectoral action in other municipalities as well. Municipal employees in Santo André use the term "matricialidade" to connote this idea of interdepartmental action, which is also encouraged there. The municipality’s Urban Agriculture Program, which aims to produce quality food for people in a situation of food insecurity or "precarious insertion in the labour market" is a clear example of this principle in action (Prefeitura de Santo André, 2005). By law, the city’s Urban Agriculture Policy is coordinated by an Urban Municipal Management System for the Urban Agriculture Policy (SISGEAGRU) which includes the Secretary of the Government, COMSEA, CRAISA, Secretariat of Regional Development and Action, Secretariat of Education and Professional Training, Secretariat of Finance, Secretariat of Social Inclusion and Housing, among others (Prefeitura Municipal de Santo André, 2004). To carry out the program, partnerships with utility companies such as Eletropaulo and Petrobrás, as well as
religious institutions were also encouraged. Visits to the city's urban agriculture pilot project confirmed that cooperation between many of these actors was in fact occurring.

As was seen to be case in North America in Chapter Two, food security councils are one way that such an intersectoral approach can be cultivated. The same is true in Brazil. The councils are generally consultative, and focus on policy development and execution. The objective of capital city's council, COMUSAN, for example, is "to act in the formulation and control of the execution of a food and nutritional policy, in the strategies and promotion of the process in all its breadth, within the public and private sectors" (Prefeitura Municipal de São Paulo, 2003). COMSEA-Campinas is mandated "to work in the development of local policies, to be implemented through initiatives and partnerships between the Municipality and civil society, such as the food bank, incentives to urban agriculture and self-provisioning, popular restaurants, and the modernization of food" (Prefeitura Municipal de Campinas, 2003). Santo André's COMSEA is by law intended to "[p]ropose, accompany and monitor the actions of the municipal government and civil society in the areas of food and nutritional security." It should also "cooperate in the coordination\textsuperscript{13} of areas of the municipal government with civil society organizations for the implementation of actions devoted to fighting the causes of poverty and hunger in the municipality" (Prefeitura Municipal de Santo André, 2003).

While the precise role of the councils varies from city to city, they are generally composed of representatives from a diverse array of sectors relevant to food security, usually in the format of one third government and two-thirds civil society councilors. (This ratio is based on the "Organic Law" of a given municipality. Santo André's Organic Law stipulates a 50/50 split between government and civil society representation on municipal co-management councils). COMSEA-Campinas includes representatives from diverse municipal departments, other management councils (namely the Councils for Social Assistance, Children and Adolescents, Health, Student Nutrition, and the Development and Participation of the Black Community), universities, social movements, the business sector, and social organizations (Prefeitura Municipal de Campinas, 2003). In São Paulo, the council is composed of representatives from government, organized civil society, and associations of workers of the food industry (Prefeitura Municipal de São Paulo, 2003). Through such composition, and the mandate to work with other government

\textsuperscript{13} Literally "articulation" — articulação, a common term in Brazilian public policy that does not translate into English altogether neatly.
agencies and civil society organizations, the councils facilitate an intersectoral approach to policy development and implementation. In theory at least.

In practice, the councils face significant challenges in the effective development and implementation of food security policy. One problem is low participation levels. Turn-out was low in council meetings I attended in both Campinas and Santo André. In the former municipality, a civil society council member noted that most meeting participants are from the government sectors, even though civil society positions are, by law, supposed to be twice as numerous (COMSEA-SA interview, 09/09/05). According to one government-affiliated councilor, civil society participation was “a problem with voluntary work.” This person expressed a general dislike of voluntary work since it demands substantial amount of time, and also brings problems of punctuality (CEASA-Campinas interview, 08/23/05). On the other hand, government councilors may also be guilty of low participation. Civil society members of COMSEA-Santo André stated that the president of the Council, a civil servant appointed by the mayor, was only present during the formation of the council, and never actually attended meetings. One admitted that he did not know the president directly, nor the president’s position in the municipality. One of these councilors recognized, however, that “civil society, as much as the government, is not accompanying COMSEA as it should” (COMSEA-SA interview, 09/15/2005). Low participation exists, apparently, despite policy obliging attendance. Attendance at meetings of COMUSAN, the food security council of the city of in São Paulo was apparently so inconsistent that the number of people required for quorum had to be reduced.

An additional concern with the councils relates to conflicts of interest generated by their composition. One clear example of such a conflict has been observed with respect to COMSEA-Campinas, whose former president held a prominent post in the municipality, Secretary of Social Assistance (Secretária de Assistência Social). One council member expressed to me that this president’s position meant that COMSEA could never take a position contrary to that of the municipality, and therefore could never take action. The president, it should be noted, has subsequently moved to a representative of commerce. Now, “things are much more clear, more open. There doesn’t exist ‘protectionism,’” this councilor told me, “so if I want to speak, I can speak. While she was not certain how things would turn out with the new president, this councilor felt that she was “well disposed to act..., to do something concrete,” something that the councilor had yet to see in the year that she had been participating in the council (COMSEA-Campinas interview, 09/09/05).
On some councils, the kind of conflict of interest manifested in Campinas may never arise, since the president must come from civil society (as with Brazil’s National Food and Nutritional Security council). On other councils, however, such as COMUSAN in the city of São Paulo, the head of the council must by law be a government representative. In such instances, obviously, conflicts of interest with the government cannot be resolved by changing the leadership away from a government position. Interestingly enough, however, internal conflicts in São Paulo’s council have not concerned the government representatives so much as the other, non-governmental and labour sectors. COMUSAN’s coordinator reported that conflict occurred between these sectors with respect to representation in the run-up to São Paulo’s Second Municipal Food Security Conference, and that more experienced sectors managed to “pull the rug out” from under others, effectively excluding them from participating in the Forum (COMUSAN interview, 07/27/05).

Beyond internal problems, the more-or-less consultative councils may face challenges coordinating with more executive public entities, and even other councils. This was particularly evident in São Paulo where the modes and speeds of operation between COMUSAN and the General Supervision of Supply were very pronounced. When asked about the relationship, the council’s coordinator told me the following:

[The work of COMUSAN] is really slow. And the rhythm of service is rapid. It is necessary to provide immediate responses for the population. How does the market work? How does the fair work? How should the food bank work? So, two velocities exist: one for services which is very fast, and they are all working, and that of the council, which is very slow, [and] takes time to acquire information and work this information in order to give a response, give an opinion” (COMUSAN interview, 07/27/05).

Posed the same question, São Paulo’s Secretary of Supply, now also the president of COMUSAN responded:

These questions are complicated... and not just here. The municipality is more of an executive organ. The role of the municipality is to be an executive organ. Our Secretariat is more of a highly executive secretariat, we are doers, doers of things. Councils such as COMUSAN and others, they are elaborators of ideas. They are laboratories of ideas. In practice, they don’t have practical actions, see? Almost no practical action...They shouldn’t have to have this responsibility. ...They are laboratories of ideas. This is important (SEMAB interview, 07/27/05).

The divergent nature of this pair of institutions is not necessarily a problem, since both ideas and action are necessary to address any issue, including that of food insecurity. It is, however, a tension that needs to be addressed in this instance and other food policy related contexts.
4.1.3 Coordination of Resources

Municipal bodies devoted to policy and those concerned with implementation are not the only public entities that require concerted efforts towards coordination. In addition to the tension just discussed, the coordinator of COMUSAN remarked that no formal channels of communication existed between her (municipal) council and the state level food security councils, besides the periodic state-wide food security conferences. She also expressed concern about the coordination of resources. Because initiatives sponsored by the federal and state governments coexist with municipal food supply and monitoring programs in the city of São Paulo, COMUSAN was working to create a municipal food security policy to coordinate these actions.

This is not to say that financial resources are in abundance. São Paulo’s Secretary of Supply complained to me that “for a city so large, the state and federal governments don’t think that we need help.” While one might be inclined to think, along with these senior governments, that the largest city in Latin America would have its own financial means, the Secretary argues that the municipality was in fact quite poor in resources because of a large concentration of poor people on the urban periphery who demand services but contribute little to the municipal tax base (SEMAB, 07/27/05). Lack of funds are not limited to São Paulo, of course. Finding funding for food security projects can be particularly challenging, an interviewee from the city of Mauá told me, because food security, as an urban problem, is quite new. Consequently, it often does not have its own budget, like the more traditional sectors of health and education (interview, 08/16/05).

In some cases, resources do exist—Belo Horizonte’s SMAB has its own dedicated budget, for example, while the cities of São Paulo, Santo André, and Campinas by law each have budgets allocated for the work of their food security councils. Where resources for food security programming are not extensive, however, local leaders need to be creative about acquiring new resources and taking advantage of existing ones. Partnerships with the private sector are one strategy that has been used. The Municipalities of Santo André and Campinas, for example, have created partnerships with public utility companies in their efforts to implement urban agriculture programs. Use of federal resources such as those associated with the Zero Hunger initiatives is another obvious option. The Municipal Food Bank of Campinas is a Zero Hunger project, and that municipality is in the process of developing a Popular Restaurant as well, also using federal resources. In Santo André, CRAISA has made use of the Federal Food Acquisition Program to purchase goods from local producers settled through the Federal government’s
agrarian reform program for its food bank. The Food Acquisition Program will also be used to purchase produce from the association of low-income producers formed through the municipality of Santo André’s urban agriculture pilot project.

The use of such resources is not without complications, however. For one thing, they need to be sought out. When I mentioned Santo André’s use of the Food Acquisition Program, coordinated by MDS and CONAB (the Brazilian Supply Company), to São Paulo’s Secretary of Supply, he responded: “Here in São Paulo this doesn’t happen. CONAB doesn’t help us. I don’t know how it functions in other cities. Here it doesn’t help” (SEMAB interview, 07/27/05). While the Municipality could use this resource if it wanted to, it was evident from my interview with the Secretary that, in the demanding context of managing food supply for one of the world’s largest cities, the Food Acquisition Program was not a priority. I would suggest that support for small family producers by municipal agencies in Santo André and Belo Horizonte, through this program or other means (such as BH’s “Direct from the Countryside” initiative), results from a conviction among leaders in those places that such support plays an important role in promoting food security. It would appear that this conviction is not so strong in São Paulo’s General Supervision of Supply.

At issue here is not simply whether a given municipal government agency believes in food security or not (the General Supervision of Supply clearly believes in the goal of promoting food and nutritional security), but how it conceptualizes food security. The degree to which local visions of food security are consonant with the vision of policy-makers in senior governments will affect which state and federal resources municipalities will choose to make use of. We now turn to the issue of how food security is conceptualized by institutions working at the subnational level, compared to those working nationally, and the issues entailed in potential discrepancies.

4.2 Framing Food Security at the Local Level: “Assistencialism” versus Empowerment

At the heart of much of the discussion in previous chapters is the issue of empowerment and role of the state. As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the concerns of the community food security movement is to provide food for low-income populations in a more dignified manner than through emergency food assistance through self-provisioning projects like community gardens. This view was contrasted with a social policy or anti-hunger perspective that favours state interventions such as welfare programs to address the structural causes of poverty. This
tension also exists in Brazil, but in a different form. In Brazil, the extent of poverty and food insecurity are much more profound than they are in North America. Thus, Instituto Cidadania's (2001) Zero Hunger proposal included a series of government policies aimed at addressing the structural policies of social exclusion and food insecurity, combined with emergency measures for marginalized populations. In practice, however, Zero Hunger has been criticized by some as being "assistencialist," a term associated with populism and dependency on the state, for focusing too much on emergency measures rather than more empowering structural policies and programs. Some critics, it was noted in Chapter Three, have even taken issue with the name "Zero Hunger," which they argue is suggestive of a short-term goal of ending hunger, rather than a longer-term objective of promoting food security through more complex interventions such as education, job creation, and other means.

This is an important conceptual difference, one with significant practical implications in terms of both programs and governance structures operating not only at the national level, but at the local level as well. Not too surprisingly, the precise manner in which food security is labeled and conceptualized varies from locale to locale. Food security program coordinators in Campinas and Diadema, for example, closely identify with the federal Zero Hunger project, while those in Santo André prefer not to. Of course it might be argued that "Zero Hunger" is only a label, a signifier for something more complex. The fact that Instituto Cidadania's original (2001) proposal was titled "The Zero Hunger Project: A Proposal for a Food Security Policy for Brazil" (my emphasis) and called for addressing the structural causes of food insecurity is a clear statement to this fact. There are, however, some discernable differences in how much emphasis different municipalities place on "assistencial" versus capacity-building approaches to food security.

According to the website of CEASA-Campinas, the city is a pioneer in the Zero Hunger, "a program that gives fish and teaches how to fish." To this end, the municipality has established both emergency programs, such as a food bank, and capacity-building ones, such as affordable cooking classes, promotion of cooperatives for low income people, and community gardens. Some limitations exist, however. As has already been noted, the city's food security council had not, as of August 2005, achieved any significant gains in policy development, while the Sustainable Rural Development Group had been de-linked from its original goal of promoting food security. Moreover, the emphasis of the food bank itself remained largely on food donations. While the bank operates a nutrition education program, the one seminar that I was able to attend was not for food insecure populations, but rather well-to-do housewives. (Granted
of course, this seminar might have been an exception to the norm). I would argue that the lack of resources for the City’s Urban Agriculture Program, which is operated by one committed individual, provides another example of relatively low emphasis placed on the more structural aspects of food security.

By contrast, I would argue that the municipality of Santo André has been less ambiguous in its focus on a capacity-building approach to food security. Conceptually, Santo André’s Food and Nutritional Security Program has been presented as requiring the balance and integration of the “tripod” of the Right to Food (which includes initiatives such as the food bank), the Right to Economic Activity (through initiatives such as Popular and Solidarity Economy “Economia Popular e Solidária”), and the Right to Education (Prefeitura de Santo André, 2005b). The focus on education and employment as key pillars of food security is suggestive of the empowerment approach practiced in the municipality, for example in its urban agriculture pilot program in a favela (informal settlement) known as Pintassilgo. In addition to providing technical support and committing to purchasing the garden’s produce through the Federal Food Acquisition Program, the City facilitated a series of popular education workshops in the community in order to help the residents form an urban agriculture association and establish the garden. The workshops discussed themes such as food security, entrepreneurialism, and organic pest control, using accessible language and a sensitivity to the participation of illiterate people.

The emphasis on education can also be seen in the work of Santo André’s Municipal Food Bank. In addition to the more conventional goals of collecting and distributing food donations, the Bank’s actions also include: “[r]ealizing educational actions with registered organizations and also with the population in the situation of social vulnerability in the Municipality whether or not they are included in our diverse Municipal Social Programs” and “developing activities that promote and improve the quality of life,” not to mention “providing incentives and promoting actions that fight waste” (Prefeitura Municipal de Santo Andre, 2005c). Such objectives are linked, staff at the bank told me. Education not only helps eliminate waste in the food chain, but also helps low-income people improve the nutritional level of their family through better use of the resources that they do have access to. While some might argue that food banks themselves fall under the banner of “assistencial” policies, a representative from the bank in Santo André asserted that “food banks ... are assistencialist if you only give. If you give and educate...its different.”
CRAISA has encountered challenges in implementing their vision of education and employment as pillars of food security, in part due to lack of resources available for the kinds of initiatives that are perceived as necessary. Under the Ministry of Social Development and Hunger Combat, which manages Zero Hunger, funding exists for a number of food security initiatives. However, interviewees complained, no federal funding exists for equipment for food education such as computers and scales to weigh children during nutritional assessments:

The government, MDS gives a course to enable people to give still other courses, it's a multiplier. Only there is not, in any of the proposals of the MDS, funding specifically for municipalities to train people. Inside the project, there is training, but it's the training of your official ... I don't need funding to train my official. If I am a technician, I train. Without cost. What I need is equipment to train the population (CRAISA interview, 08/15/05).

In this case, the problem is that although federal funds exist, they are not earmarked for what is deemed from the municipal perspective to be necessary for promoting food security.

This point was also argued with respect to the Popular Restaurants. One of Brazil's best known Popular Restaurants was established in the city of Belo Horizonte in the 1990s, as one part of an integrated food security strategy launched by the city's Municipal Secretariat of Food Supply. That restaurant, and others like it (there are now two in BH), serves thousands of meals per day, usually at the cost of One Real. Many observers have been impressed by the Popular Restaurants in BH, not only by their scale of operation, but also because they are universally accessible and do not isolate and stigmatize the poor. Interviewees in Santo André, however, were less sanguine about their efficacy at promoting food security, not to mention their cost effectiveness. They argued that such institutions were expensive, but not targeted toward the poor, thus requiring a public subsidy to populations that already have the resources to eat. The poor, it was also noted, tend to be dispersed around the edges of cities, while the restaurants, by virtue of their scale, need (or at least tend) to be located in city centres. As an alternative, the interviewees promoted a smaller-scale, capacity-building alternative that required registration:

...it would be better, instead of putting a popular restaurant in the middle of Belo Horizonte, that everybody eats in a small place, but closer to the population...[that you] make a space for [the low-income population] to eat, make a space also to generate income. Its an (other) vision.

Not only would this alternative generate income so that registrants did not have to continue to eat at such institutions, it would be more cost effective and therefore not "wear down" the government as Popular Restaurants, in their view, are inclined to do.
A number of points might be said in response to these critiques of the Popular Restaurants. It might be pointed out that while Popular Restaurants often are not located close to where vast numbers of poor people live, they do tend to be situated close to where many of them work, namely in city centres. By virtue of economy of scale, these institutions do encourage food security among large sectors of the urban poor. One might also argue that while these restaurants certainly are open to abuse (i.e. use by non-needy populations), there is little need for or desire by more affluent people to frequent them, since higher quality, more diversified meals are available elsewhere (and without having to wait in a long line-up, as one must do to enter a Popular Restaurant in Belo Horizonte). One might also point out that, in BH at least, these restaurants are only one part of a larger, comprehensive approach to food security, which also includes targeted initiatives dedicated to nutritional education, and economic development.

It might also be argued that CRAISA staff members’ critiques of the Popular Restaurants are in part a reflection of political and ideological differences with the Ministry of Social Development with which the institutions are now associated. Both staff members whom I spoke with played a role in advising the former Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security, which was replaced by MDS in 2004. Accompanying this ministerial transition was a change in Minister and staff, with some personnel from Campinas and Santo André being replaced by a new team, several members of which originated from Belo Horizonte. Former MESA-allies’ complaints about MDS programs may reflect some residual bitterness about this political changeover (a potential bias I noted in Takagi’s account of the Zero Hunger Program in the previous chapter).

While resentment towards the MDS may be in part political, I would suggest that it equally, if not more so, ideological and policy-oriented. As noted above, a focus on education and income-generation are two pillars of the Andreënse approach to food security. A belief in measures which are targeted at vulnerable populations and specifically designed to promote food security—such as training programs requiring registration, and a food card (a modernized version of the American system of Food Stamps) that can only be spent on food—is another key aspect of the Santo André vision. This vision, I would suggest, contrasts the policy perspective of MDS which favors more universally accessible programs such as Popular Restaurants and the Bolsa Família income transfer program, over targeted ones. While the latter approach clearly has its own advantages, it may not be particularly helpful in securing funding for municipal policy makers dedicated to a different vision of food security, one which emphasizes targeted programs and the empowerment of marginalized communities.
4.3 Civil Society and the Politics of Food Security

The question of the degree to which local governments promote social inclusion through an empowerment model is not limited to the economic and educational realms. It also has to do with politics, specifically with regards to how the state and civil society interact. If the Brazilian state has historically acted in exclusionary and paternalistic ways, not just economically but politically as well, the question remains: what role does public participation in governance play in moving away from dependency, towards social inclusion? This section seeks to address this question.

4.3.1 Participation of Organized Civil Society

In Chapter Two, it was noted that if social movements in Brazil defined themselves in opposition to the government during the dictatorship period, this is no longer the case (following Hochstetler 1999). During the democratic period, the concept that the Brazilian public sphere is shared between governments and civil society has emerged, arguably due to grassroots activism. Celso Daniel, the late professor of public administration and mayor of Santo André, explains this shared public space:

For some years, I have worked with the idea that democracy has to be conceived as a system that involves the relation between the state, the government and civil society. The concept of democracy as a political regime, as a "poliarchy" (Poliarquia), is a very restrictive concept, that does not understand that the basic conditions of citizenship are very much decided by the relations established inside society itself, and by the relations established between the state and society (Celso Daniel, 2001).

Political/policy decisions, Daniel notes, depend on the spaces where public opinion is formed. These spaces can be expanded and strengthened through existing and new channels through which opinion is formed, including the public management councils. "For this reason," Daniel notes, "the improvement and strengthening of the councils is extremely important for citizenship in a country such as Brazil, since they signify a public sphere that is shared between the government and society, without being purely state-based" (Celso Daniel, 2001).

Such a shared space can be seen in the food and nutritional security councils. A member of COMSEA-Campinas who recognized the need for government participation, also emphasized the profound need for the presence of civil society on the council. Civil society, it was argued, was invaluable in bringing new problems to the table that government members were not aware of, along with suggestions about how they are to be addressed. The nutritional situation of
adolescents, who often work by day and study by night without eating a proper meal was cited as one example of the kinds of problems that civil society might present. The role that civil society plays in connecting government with the realities that communities face was echoed by a food security activist from Mauá:

The government thinks that it knows everything! And it doesn’t know. It doesn’t know where hunger is, where unemployment is, where poverty is; it doesn’t know. Civil society knows. A residents association knows where the pockets of hunger and misery are. The evangelical church, the catholic church, the football team, the band centre, spiritual centre, they know where it is… (Interview, 08/16/05).

Civil society, then, is an invaluable source of information for food security policy makers. Beyond providing ideas and information, however, civil society has the responsibility of making demands. Councilors from COMSEA-Santo André spoke of their “right to demand,” referring to the need to push for resources from higher level governments, as well as to press for the participation of government council members when they fail to show up in meetings. Their tone was not wholly confrontational, however. One of these councilors stated that is was necessity to “make demands of the government and do it together” (Interview, 09/15/2005, my emphasis).

Civil society’s involvement with putting food security on the agenda is not limited to participation on the councils, it should be indicated. A program coordinator of Zero Hunger Diadama pointed out to me that the municipal program did not emerge from thin air, but was in fact preceded by the existence of a civil society-based food security forum of 400 people in the city. In this coordinator’s view, such an active civil society is essential to putting food security on the public agenda, and keeping it there. “If [civil society] stays simply waiting for the government…you’re not going to succeed in institutionalizing a public policy… it stays a government policy. A government enters, a government leaves, everything changes.” The extinction of the original CONSEA by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso during the 1990s, and the relative loss of focus on food security in the city of Mauá following elections in 2004, were attributed in part to the inability of civil society to keep food on the public agenda. This sentiment was echoed by several other people whom I interviewed.

The notion of a public policy that is not strictly a government policy but rather one that is shared by government and society echoes Daniel’s idea of a shared public sphere. This shared public space is in constant tension. While the councils are sometimes intended to monitor the actions of government, their independence may be threatened by government appointments and actions. Given the challenges of maintaining the councils’ autonomy, networks that are
exclusively based in civil society are all the more necessary. A member of the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security from the non-governmental organization, Instituto Polis, argued that such institutions, as compared with the co-management councils, were necessary because of their independence, and their openness to the participation of all, including radical critics of the government.

Even outside the councils, however, social movements may be threatened by government co-optation. The activist from Mauá cited above claimed that after elections, a government will often try to absorb some members of civil society on which its electoral success depended:

The government brings important leaders from civil society inside itself, that could help to govern from the outside, making demands, pointing fingers, correcting goals, making proposals, promoting popular participation. But this creates work, wears the government down to see the people making demands, see the people demonstrating in front of City Hall, in front of the Secretariat. And this is wrong, because it’s this movement that gives life to the government, that makes the government right. You have to work together (Interview, 08/16/05).

Clearly the maintenance of co-managed public sphere is a challenging, though much needed balancing act.

A vibrant civil society plays an important role in maintaining this sphere, not only in terms of providing information and making demands for public policies and much needed resources, but in implementing projects that are in the public interest. Civil society’s knowledge of their communities, mentioned above, is an important reason for this—community leaders are more inclined to understand the specific needs of their neighbourhoods than are policy makers in municipal government. But there is another important reason why civil society institutions are well disposed to act: freedom from the confines of municipal bureaucracy. In the city of São Paulo, both a working group of COMUSAN and the NGO Instituto Polis have been trying to developing Food and Nutritional Security Reference Centres in the city. The concept behind the Reference Centres (also being developed in other locales), is that they provide a space close to low-income communities to train people about food and nutritional security. This end is to be realized through providing education about concepts such as food security and the environment, as well as through income generation. As of July 2005 COMUSAN had taken a policy approach to the Centres, where as Pólis had gone the practical route and established a Centre in the neighbourhood of Butantã. The coordinator of COMUSAN described the situation as follows:

A proposal exists that was approved in the Second [Municipal Food Security] Conference regarding the creation of Reference Centres in the whole city. But only two exist [as of yet] – one in Butantã, and the other in Ipiranga. That of Ipiranga is on paper, it was
officially created, only it's not functioning. And that of Pólis exists in operation, but it
doesn't exist on paper. By law this Reference Centre doesn't exit. But it functions. These
are strange things, aren't they? (COMUSAN interview, 07/27/05).

Ultimately, the creation of a municipal policy for such institutions should facilitate their
institutionalization. The importance of policy should not be understated. Policy formation takes
time, however. In the mean time, the initiative taken by Instituto Pólis to actually create a Food
Security Reference Centre is invaluable for promoting food security at the community level, and
in the bureaucracy. When I made the observation to a Pólis staff person after sitting in on a
workshop at the Centre in Butantã that many of the workshop participants were middle class
rather than food insecure people, she conceded this point but also offered an explanation: the
Centre was intended to train and empower not only low-income people, but also City staff.
Considering that food and nutritional security is an inherently intersectoral concept, the Centre
provided important opportunities for staff from various public agencies to think and work
together.

4.3.2 Participation of Unorganized Civil Society

Thus far, this discussion on public participation in governance and policy making has been
primarily devoted to the role of organized civil society. Civil society mobilization and participation
in policy making can help inform and bring new issues to the table, put and maintain food
security on the policy agenda, and facilitate policy and program implementation. Yet to be
addressed is participation of unorganized civil society, particularly that of the poor. Many see
this as necessary. As noted in Chapter Two, the “Sustainable Livelihoods” literature highlights
the importance of poor people’s participation in policy formation, for example, while participation
of the poor in municipal budgetary process has been shown to promote their empowerment.

Empowerment is not the only reason for public participation, however, as Abers (1998) has
observed —others promote it for “instrumentalist” or cost-reducing reasons. I would suggest that
the goals of efficiency and empowerment do not have to be seen in opposition to one another.
In the context of economic, as distinguished from political, empowerment, the Popular
Restaurants have been argued to be highly inefficient by food security advocates in Santo
André. While this particular view is certainly contentious (indeed the PRs can be argued to be
quite efficient at feeding the urban working poor, by virtue of their economy of scale ), it does
touch upon a broader concern with efficiency which is very real for municipal policy makers,
given the lack of financial resources in many Brazilian cities. This concern with efficiency, I would suggest, also holds true with respect to popular participation in governance.

It has already been observed that co-management councils often suffer from both low participation of organized civil society as well as inefficiency in making policy decisions (at least in parts of São Paulo state—the efficacy of councils elsewhere certainly warrants investigation). It seems doubtful that the participation of unorganized society would be more consistent or improve the efficiency of the policy-making process. Participation would, moreover, need to be subsidized in both indirect and direct ways, ironically contributing to a kind of clientelism or assistencialism, rather than the ostensible goal of empowerment through political engagement. I would suggest that resources might be better spent on promoting empowerment through education and pro-poor economic development, so that people can exist the state of poverty that keeps them from participating in society in more meaningful ways. Technically knowledgeable staff with a clear vision of food security, both its multifaceted, intersectoral nature, and its dependence on the economic empowerment and education of the poor will be essential in implementing such development strategies.

By no means am I making an argument for top-down planning without community consultation, the absence of civil society participation in government decision-making processes, or even militant activism outside or against them. Public policy makers certainly need to be responsive to the needs of the poor when trying to advance food security and social inclusion, more generally. And civil society clearly plays an important role in this regard by bringing information, community concerns, and fresh perspectives to the table, as well as through advocacy, and even educating government policy makers on how to better work with each other and with the public, including the low-income population. The public sphere in Brazil is shared, however, between government and society. Thus, the advancement of social inclusion and food security at the local scale requires that social movements and organized civil society work together with supportive, capable municipal governments with a clear, well thought-out vision of food security.

This conjunction of requisite factors is rare, however. Not all municipalities have the supportive political environments, knowledgeable administration, or resources needed to effectively promote food security. There is a tendency for the “best and the brightest" potential leaders to concentrate in metropolitan areas. State-level institutions may also provide better service to large cities than smaller ones, contributing to the concentration of knowledge and resources. CONSEA-SP, the Food and Nutritional Security Council of the state of São Paulo, has
historically been a case in point. Traditionally, many of its councilors were concentrated in large cities such as the capital. An additional concern is that while municipal governments may have gained increased fiscal autonomy and an increased share of the federal revenues by the 1988 constitution, a federal fiscal crisis has left many without adequate resources. Lack of coordination of government policies is another problem (Montero, 2000). Given such issues, the universalization of food security—beyond the borders of a few municipal oases of policy innovation—remains a significant challenge. The next chapter examines efforts to meet this challenge through the reformulation of the Sustainable Food and Nutritional Council of the State of São Paulo (CONSEA-SP) into a regionally-representative institution, which seeks to seeking to create a participatory, state-wide plan for food and nutritional security.
Chapter 5
Restructuring Food Security Governance:
Regionalization in São Paulo State

In Chapter Two, it was noted that the advancement of food security requires not only local actions, but the coordinated action of civil society and governments working at multiple levels: local, state/provincial, national, and even international. In subsequent chapters, I noted some of the problems in policy and resource coordination associated with Brazil’s ad hoc decentralization process, both at a general level, and in specific municipalities. Inequitable distribution of knowledge, skills, and resources needed to institutionalize food security is one of the reasons why the Sustainable Food and Nutritional Council of the State of São Paulo (CONSEA-SP) was restructured into a regionally representative governance body over the course of 2005. The goal of the reformed council is to coordinate state-wide and regional actions devoted to food security as well as resources coming from federal, state, and provincial levels. One of the mechanisms for this objective is the creation and implementation of a state-wide food security plan through a systematic, democratic, regionally representative process (COMSEA-Campinas interview, 09/15/05).

At a glance, the restructuring and subsequent action of CONSEA-SP and its local counterparts, the Sustainable Regional Food and Nutritional Security Commissions (CRSANS), would appear

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NB: shortly after the data collection process used for this thesis was formally ended, the process of restructuring CONSEA-SP was reversed. On July 21st, 2006, the governor of São Paulo, Cláudio Lembo, altered the legislation governing the council, transferring the council’s leadership and budget to the State Secretariat of Social Assistance and Development (Secretaria Estadual de Assistência e Desenvolvimento Social). The former president of CONSEA-SP subsequently disassociated himself from the council, saying that the Lembo’s signified the impossibility of reaching the council’s goals, agreed upon with the former governor (Neves, 2006). On August 17th, the governor passed additional legislation, defining a new composition for the council. While some representatives of civil society (primarily affiliated with universities) are included in the new composition, no mention is made of the regional commissions (or regional representation more generally), and the council appears again to be controlled by members of the state government. These changes stand as significant challenges to the argument of this chapter. Perhaps the most optimistic way to read the chapter would be to see it as an account of what kind of institutional organizing is possible, rather than a current state of affairs. In light of these challenges, I would suggest that civil society will have to be all the more organized, if in a manner that is separate from state activities, for food security to be promoted.
to address a number of the challenges faced by the Brazilian food security movement that have surfaced in the paper up to this point. While it might be premature at this juncture to attempt any definitive evaluation of these institutions and processes, this chapter endeavors to provide at least a preliminary assessment. The chapter begins with an overview of the council, the rationale for its redevelopment, and some of its key features, then turns to its activities to date and proposed future actions. Finally, I examine the discourse used by the Council and participants in the restructuring process, as well as my own observations about the process, in order to assess the Council and Commissions’ prospect for advancing food security in the state of São Paulo. I acknowledge that my assessment of CONSEA’s actions rests largely on observations and interviews from last year, even though much has developed since then. I therefore wish to reiterate the preliminary nature of this investigation.

5.1 Background and Purpose of CRSANS/CONSEA-SP

The mandate for this process has been seen to have emerged from the National Food and Nutritional Security Conference, which took place in Olinda, Pernambuco, in 2004. The National Conference established directives for a national work plan, including the creation of food and nutritional councils at the state and municipal levels. In São Paulo, a State council had already been established in 2003 and numerous municipal councils, including those discussed in Chapter Four, had also been established in 2003 and 2004. Many municipalities did not have the knowledge, capacity or the political will to create their own food security council, however, and CONSEA-SP itself suffered from structural problems. While formally composed of one-third government representatives and two-thirds civil society, the civil society councilors had not previously been elected but rather appointed by the State government itself. CONSEA-SP thus remained essentially under the “orientation” of the State. Moreover, the council was not regionally representative, since the councilors tended to live in the major cities, particularly the capital (COMSEA Campinas interview, 09/15/05). For such reasons, CONSEA-SP, under the leadership of charismatic bishop Dom Mauro Morelli, decided to restructure the Council so that thirty of its thirty-six civil society members would be elected by newly-created Sustainable Regional Food and Nutritional Commissions dispersed throughout the state. Both the election of the councilors by the regional commissions, and the sharing of power and functions between the government and civil society was passed by legal decree (Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2004).
The structure of the Regional Commissions mirrors that of the State Council – each is composed of one-third representation from local governments, and two-thirds representatives from civil society, drawing from relevant sectors such as research and educational institutions and food production (Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2004). The commissions themselves are formed in plenaries, where government participants elect their five representatives, and civil society selects its ten. Beyond rendering the State CONSEA-SP more regionally representative, the establishment of the CRSANS helps to address the seemingly impossible goal of establishing food and nutritional councils in every city in the state. The president of CEASA-Campinas explained the situation like this:

Previously, actions were very independent, municipality by municipality... Some had a food security council, others didn't. Now I think, believe, that they are beginning to see the state, from which comes the obligation that all municipality have a CONSEA ... at the local level. Now in São Paulo, we have [640 or 645 municipalities]. So we should have 645 CONSEAs. If we have [but] 100 CONSEAs, it's a lot. So we must, in this way, take up this action (CEASA interview, 08/23/05).

To “take up this action” entails ensuring that all 640 municipalities in the state are accounted for in a regional commission that maintains links with the state council through its elected representative. Ideally, all municipalities in the state will have a local institution thinking about their needs, in terms of food security policy and no one gets left behind.

The goal of the regional commissions, according to the Secretariat of COMSEA-Campinas, who has been closely involved with CRSANS process in the Metropolitan Region of Campinas, “is that each region study its characteristics, each region sees what can be done in terms of policies of food and nutritional security, ... not just policies in the sense or proposals, but in the sense of actions as well—what can be done joining the forces of the various municipalities” (COMSEA-Campinas interview, 09/15/05). In the context of Campinas, he speaks of this process as part of a union or “sum” of forces involving the municipality, the state, and the nation related to a work plan for food security, established at the National Conference. One reason for this union is financial:

It's important that the union isn't just an exchange of experiences, but also a question of money, resources. Resources exist that come from the federal government, resources that come from the state government, and in our case of Campinas, resources that come from City Hall. Such a union is important because even in the question of resources, you know, there can be a greater volume of financing for making investments (COMSEA Campinas interview, 09/15/05).

The commissions thus facilitate the coordination of policies, actions, and the resources needed to finance that action at the regional scale. This role makes them quite conducive to addressing...
some of the concerns that local governments face, such as a lack of resources and the inefficient use of existing ones. The restructuring process shows promise of facilitating a more inequitable distribution of knowledge and resources, not only within each region but throughout the state as a whole.

5.2 An Overview of CONSEA-SP/CRSANS' Past and Proposed Future Actions

The state-wide processes of food-security capacity-building being discussed here can be divided into two stages. The first phase is the reform of food security governance in the state through the creation of the CRSANS and the restructuring of CONSEA-SP. The second stage is the actual work carried out by these institutions. This includes both the creation of a food security plan for the state, and on-going capacity building activities.

One of the outstanding features of the commissions is the systematic manner in which they were established. In the state of Minas Gerais, regional commissions had been created through a less structured process. Due to high demand in certain regions, commissions were created in these places, but not others (COMSEA interview 09/15/05). When the process was initiated in São Paulo, by contrast, the creation of the commissions was scheduled on the calendar, starting in February 2005, and finishing in October (quite symbolically on World Food Day) of that same year. The amount of work and degree of coordination involved in carrying out this process was significant. With the help of local organizers, CONSEA-SP, facilitated a series of regional forums throughout the state, first for selection of provisional food security commissions, and subsequently for the establishment of more permanent bodies.

To achieve this, members of the state council divided themselves into two teams. The initial forums included background on the concept of sustainable food and nutritional security, the roles and responsibilities of the commissions and the council, and some of its broader objectives. The elected provisional council members were requested to attend further training, before hosting forums in their respective regions for the election of a permanent commission.

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15 It is worth noting that the Capital was the last on the list of regions involved with this process. While this may reflect the complexity of working with such a large city, it may also reflect a desire on the behalf of CONSEA-SP leadership to better represent areas outside the Capital. (Regardless of the rationale, one food security coordinator in the Capital expressed some annoyance with the seeming neglect of the CONSEA-SP).
including its Executive Coordination, and civil society representative to CONSEA-SP. After the Permanent Commissions were selected, CONSEA-SP hosted a Technical Planning Seminar for the new councilors. This session included a proposed work schedule, and further training and orientation, including a more extensive background on the theory and practice of food and nutritional security (including presentations on the right to food, and the value of local food culture and family agriculture), as well as a strong emphasis on the roles and responsibilities of each councilor (CONSEA-SP, 12/11/05).

Once established in its reconfigured form, CONSEA-SP moved into action mode. The first priority of the State Council has been to develop, in conjunction with the state government, a food and nutritional security law for the state, and have it passed by the end of the 2006 (CONSEA-SP, 09/05/05). According to Morelli, the law would establish “a sustainable food and nutritional security system based on human rights, with the environment as a determining reference, [and] a healthy people as the goal and reason to be of development...” (CONSEA-SP, 20/04/06). According CONSEA-SP’s news releases, the plan itself will be finalized at the Third Conference on Food and Nutritional Security of São Paulo State, taking place in December 2006. In the lead-up to the Conference itself, CONSEA-SP proposed a series of preparatory events, to be facilitated either by CONSEA-SP itself, or—hopefully—by local organizers in the various regions. The process was to take place in stages, consistent with the highly-structured format used to create the commissions:

- **Stage 1: June 1 - 4, 2006 – Preparatory Meeting.** The meeting was to take place in the city of Ribeirão Preto, and included an introduction of the food security plan development process, a panel on the “legal mark,” and discussion of the Third Conference’s themes, contents, methodology and stages of the preparation process.

- **Stage 2: June to August, 2006 – Municipal Level [Activities].** During this time, CONSEA-SP recommended a series of municipal actions such as television shows, debates, media articles, and even municipal food security conferences.

- **Stage 3: September, 2006, Regional Conferences.**

- **Stage 4: October-November, 2006 – Documentation.** CONSEA-SP called for the drafting of reports and proposals from the regional conferences to be delivered on World Food Day (October 16th). These are then to be compiled and published along with the
conference working paper by November 11 so that they can be studied and voted on during the State Conference.


- Stage 6: Conference directives and proposals are to be published by the end of the year.

- Stage 7: February, 2007. The proceedings from the Third Conference are to be presented to the Governor and the President of the Legislative Assembly (Consea-SP 09/05/2006; Consea-SP, 20/04/2006)

This plan of action is suggestive of a decentralized, participatory approach to policy formation, that could actually be of tremendous value to those interested in advancing food security throughout the state of São Paulo.

The potential benefit of this process is significantly augmented by the ongoing capacity-building work being carried out throughout the state by CONSEA-SP. This work includes the establishment of thirteen community kitchens and twelve “Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security Reference Centres,” distributed regionally throughout the state. While such institutions are intended to be established through agreements with the municipalities, the state has contributed 80 thousand Reais (about $36 000 Canadian) – 20 thousand Reais for community kitchens, and 60 thousand for the Reference Centres. According to CONSEA-SP, the Centres are “a meeting point between academic knowledge and popular ingenuity” (Consea-SP, 09/05/2006). Functioning in partnership with professional education institutions and universities, the institutions “have to be an instrument for training (“capacitação”) in the area of food and nutrition, beyond subsidizing the collection and processing of information, principally for an initial diagnosis of the regional reality” (Consea-SP, 09/05/2006). They aim for the “universalization of services” for those in need, that is, to reach the entire population in their area, independent of their social-economic level, age, or sex, but giving priority to pregnant women, nursing mothers, and the elderly, due to the urgent need (CONSEA-SP, 25/01/2006). To help establish the Centres, CONSEA made presentations and facilitated workshops on their implementation, as well as training sessions for those involved with them in the early part of 2006.

The creation of these centres is positive in several regards. As with the Centre in Butantã discussed last chapter, Food Security Reference Centres have the potential to build capacity, not only in the community but also in the public sector since they bring people from various
municipal departments together, to think and act collaboratively in addressing the necessarily multifaceted problem of food security. The *Regional* Reference Centres perform this capacity-building role, as well, only at a more profound level since they also provide an opportunity for cooperation between municipalities. Moreover, they facilitate such inter-institutional and inter-municipal cooperation in areas throughout the state, not just in large cities that host progressive NGO's.

5.3 The CONSEA-SP/CRSANS Process: A Preliminary Assessment

From what has been said so far, the restructuring of food security policy making processes in São Paulo state provides substantial room for optimism. It appears that intellectual, administrative, and financial capital needed for food security is moving from major metropolitan areas to other areas throughout the state. A couple of key questions, related to those addressed in the previous chapter, need to be asked of this undertaking, however. The first is conceptual: is the “right” vision of food security being broadcast across the state? As has been noted earlier, some critics have questioned the value of the federal government’s Zero Hunger program, not only in terms of its name, but also with respect to the kinds of initiatives it funds. Hopefully, CONSEA-SP would be advancing a holistic vision that addresses the structural causes of food insecurity. If this is the case, then we also need to ask: to what extent are these governance institutions effective at institutionalizing this vision? What challenges do they face?

5.3.1 A Vision for “Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security”

In May of 2004, the Food and Nutritional Security Council of São Paulo, officially became the Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security Council in 2004 (Governo do Estado de São Paulo, 2004, Article 4-2). Is this wording change merely cosmetic, or is it an indicator of a deepening understanding of the meaning of food security on behalf of the council? The language used by the Council in its documentation and during the regional forums that I attended suggests that the latter is true. The discourse includes consideration for the environment, health, citizenship and income generation, as well as a greater emphasis on children and the family.

While terms such as “social sustainability” and “economic sustainability” are increasingly coming into use, the term “sustainable” is most often associated with the environment. The significance
of environmental sustainability for food security has been repeatedly emphasized by the leadership of CONSEA-SP, for example when it underscored the importance of a sustainable food and nutritional security system “with the environment as a determining reference, [and] a healthy people as the goal and raison d’être of development, with nutritional monitoring in all cycles of life...” (Consea-SP, 09/05/2006). In the regional plenaries that I attended, the president of CONSEA, Dom Mauro Morelli spoke of the need to work with and respect the environment. When I spoke with him about the process, he told me that the creation of the regional commissions was not only to facilitate democratization, but also to better reflect the fact that each region has a different environment, and hence different needs. Even the Food Security Reference Centres “in their conception, are integrated with the environment, avoiding waste, and making use of natural resources in their structuring and functioning” (CONSEA-SP, 04/20/2006).

Another consideration in assessing the vision of CONSEA-SP has to do with its attitude toward social inclusion. The council’s frequent use of the language of “citizenship” is indicative of its concern for this question:

in the time of Easter the hope for a new world where each human person can live with dignity and citizenship is rejuvenated. In this way we are obliging CONSEA-SP in contributing to the defense and promotion of the basic human right to adequate food (CONSEA-SP, 04/20/06);

We want people to be healthy, well-humoured, intelligent and to participate. All this is possible starting from good food and citizenship (CONSEA-SP, 12/15/2006)

Social inclusion cannot be promoted without addressing the country’s vast social inequities, however, and creating jobs for the socially excluded. During one of the regional seminars, Morelli challenged the very structure of the food economy. He noted that Brazil continues to be a significant producer of food, enough to feed the entire population. This food, however, is being produced for export, in the of service of Brazil’s trade balance. One of the government policies that need to be implemented to address the country’s inequities was a [minimum] wage policy (política salarial). Salary, Morelli noted in an interview, is the “greatest policy of income distribution...in the capitalist system.” Acknowledging the enormous scale of the federal Ministry of Social Development’s income transfer program, the Bolsa Família, Morelli affirmed that, “in truth, the greatest program is salary, the best route to distributing income, is a salary [wage] policy.” Such a policy would need to be complemented by strategies to create jobs for Brazil’s historically excluded, of course. Thus, in the move to create a state-wide food security policy that upheld the right to food, CONSEA-SP emphasized the need “to take to all communities
policies related to the creation of jobs, income transfer and generation programs, work campaigns and programs, orchestrating an action between families, societies, and governments in their diverse levels" (CONSEA-SP 12/15/2006)

Concern that food security policy encompass considerations of environmental sustainability, as well as social inclusion—including the need to challenge structural inequities and integrate the poor into the labour market—are key components of the discourse used by CONSEA-SP. These elements are not separate from one another, but integrated as key components of food security and democracy. This connection can be seen in Dom Mauro Morelli’s statement, in reference to the Food and Nutritional Security Reference Centres. Morelli affirms that there is:

...an urgent need for the creation of spaces for the life of citizenship and social living, through which research, databanks, the integration of action, social mobilization, training and capacity building, the promotion of citizenship and social participation for the human right to healthy and nutritional food, launching integrated public policies, as well as technological, pedagogical, and methodological solutions for sustainable food and nutritional security, for local and integrated sustainable development, and job and income generation alternatives, in this way contributing to the reduction of maternal and infantile malnutrition, the promotion of the health of the population, and consequently the strengthening of democracy” (CONSEA-SP, 25/01/06).

This statement certainly suggests that CONSEA-SP is working to establish a comprehensive, sustainable (in both ecological and political-economic terms) vision of food security in the state of São Paulo. But is the CONSEA-SP/CRSANS governance structure adequate to the task of implementing this vision of food security and “the strengthening of democracy”? This remains to be seen.

5.3.2 Governance Challenges.

The institutionalization of this vision of food security in the state of São Paulo entails the effective decentralization of knowledge, information and financial resources. Municipalities can share resources and experiences with other municipalities in each region, the regions can transmit their local realities to the state, and the state can transfer resources to the regions to implement initiatives that are responsive to those realities. The tasks of inter-municipal cooperation and state-region cooperation involved in this process, then, are highly complementary. Beyond providing a venue to exchange experiences and coordinate actions at the local level, the regional commissions give the municipalities strength in communicating with
senior government. As a public sector nutritionist from Hortolândia, in the Greater Metropolitan Region of Campinas explained:

[We have to think in a regional perspective. It doesn't work for us to think, when you are going to enter into a discussion with the state, with the federal government, if you go to the federation alone, knock on someone's door, you don't win resources. If you make a policy for the region, for this discussion of the region—what are the programs that Hortolândia has? What are the programs that Campinas has? – look, you grow with this and you gain force in the discussion... So I think this regional commission plays this role. You have a voice. You are closer to the decisions and have management power in these decisions, so as to discuss what is happening.” (CRSANS-Campinas interview, 08/23/05).

One of the commissions' roles, then, is to perform the "demand" function of civil society described last chapter. This role is clearly recognized, not only at the local level, but by the leadership of CONSEA-SP itself. It can be seen in the decision to restructure the Council in the first place, and in language made throughout the process, such as in Morelli's statement in Diadema that, while respecting the various governments' work promoting food security to date, we need to "bother all levels of government. We need to orchestrate" (Diadema, 09/15/2005).

Whether or not it resulted from the orchestrated demands of the commissions or not, the CONSEA/CRSANS governance process has shown some initial signs of success, namely in the funding and training for community kitchens and food security reference centres. That said, participation on the commissions (as with the management councils more generally, whether they function at the municipal, state, or federal level) is not without problems. One issue is the question of disinterest. During the forums I attended in the Greater ABC and Baixa Santista regions, Morelli spoke of the qualities required of the commissioners. They were encouraged to think critically – not parochially, but from a regional perspective. It was emphasized that they should not seek power, or be expecting favours for their participation.

The existence of such power-seeking and parochial vision, however, was manifest in the ABC Regional Forum. As with all the commissions, ten seats were available for civil society. As there were delegations from six municipalities present at the event, the facilitator of the election process suggested that each delegation begin by electing its candidate so as to guarantee that all municipalities are represented. The four remaining spaces on the commission were to be filled by representatives of organizations that, though perhaps based in one of the six municipalities, served the entire region. In selecting these seats, the participants were asked to think carefully about the qualities of the people, keeping in mind the end goal of guaranteeing the right to food. The facilitator asked:
Who are the people that can contribute to the region? It's not to contribute to my secretariat, to my municipality, my mayor, my sector, my church, my union, no. It's how can my sector, how is it going to contribute to the region, is it going to contribute to my municipality, is it going to contribute to the municipalities that are partners in this work plan?

Despite the repeated emphasis on choosing councilors who are disinterested, a protracted dispute erupted over one of the spaces, where the leader of a community organization responsible for 90 children argued that she should represent the region. A staff member from CRAISA, in Santo André summarized the situation as follows: “Nobody sees the global picture. They just want to bring an advantage to their own institution.”

An additional concern is the issue of low participation. Poor attendance in municipal food security council meetings was discussed last chapter. There is no reason why the regional councils would not fall victim to this problem as well. The overlapping workloads, resources, and personnel of the municipal councils and regional commissions (where the two co-exist in a given locale), further threatens participation and effective action on each. The commissions civil society representatives on CONSEA-SP may also find it difficult to attend meetings, if they lack time and financial resources.

Beyond the participation of individuals on the commissions, the institutions also suffer from the problem that not all municipalities in each region participate. The power struggle in Diadema just discussed might have been all the more complicated had all seven municipalities in the ABC Region been present at the Forum, rather than six. In the Metropolitan Region of Campinas (RMC), only nine of the nineteen municipalities in the region participated in the process of formalizing a Regional Commission. In light of this fact, the president of CEASA-Campinas pointed to the need to raise awareness about the issues and the institutions in the other municipalities. This is a valid concern. Until each municipality in a given region is fully engaged in the process, there is a risk that resources secured by state and federal governments will be appropriated by those municipalities that are well organized. Despite the emphasis that the CONSEA-SP leadership places on regional thinking and regional action, the councils run the risk of serving more narrow interests.

Finally, there is the issue of leadership. One of the reasons that the ambitious project of creating thirty regional commissions, theoretically representing 645 municipalities could be carried out in such a short time, is due to the charisma of Dom Mauro Morelli. An eloquent speaker and mobilizer, Morelli falls under the tradition of “Betinho,” who was able to inspire people from
across the nation to establish committees to put an end to hunger during the 1990s, not to mention president Lula himself. Both the establishment of the commissions and the work that they are undertaking with CONSEA-SP effectively builds on the Citizenship Action campaign and Zero Hunger Program associated with these leaders. While it is hoped that this process will so firmly entrench an integrated concept of food security into the population and institutions of the state of São Paulo that it is no longer dependent on any one individual's leadership, a certain degree of instability is always associated with the cult of personality.

Keeping cognizant of these risks and challenges, the process investigated in this chapter provides significant evidence for optimism. A focus on strengthening democracy at the grassroots regional level, combined with building local capacity and pushing for legislation at the state level shows promise of advancing the cause of food security in the State of São Paulo.
Chapter 6
Concluding Notes

6.1 A Summary of Initial Answers to the Thesis’ Empirical Questions

This section returns to the empirical questions outlined in Chapter One.


1.1 What are the pertinent governance arrangements in the region and what is their relationship to higher level (i.e. national) structures and policies?

A diversity of food security governance institutions exist in São Paulo state. At the municipal level these include food and nutritional security councils, CEASAs (centres of food supply, essentially food terminals), and food security programs. The latter may be coordinated by a municipal staff members, either in a secretariat or supervision of food supply (as in the city of São Paulo) or smaller municipal department (as in Diadema), or in a CEASA with the support of City Hall (as in Campinas and Santo André). Food and nutritional security councils and municipal food security programs have been encouraged by the current federal government since it came into power in 2003, as well as by CONSEA, the National Food and Nutritional Security Council. Municipal food security programs may receive federal funding for a several types of initiatives. In addition to such municipal institutions, Sustainable Food and Nutritional Security Commissions (CRSANS) now exist across the state. These commissions aim to promote food security in all municipalities in the state, and are linked to the Food and Nutritional Security Council of the State of São Paulo (CONSEA-SP), via their elected representative.

1.2 Why were these structures developed?

The establishment of municipal food security initiatives has been encouraged by the federal government and national food security movement. In many cases, however, municipal food security institutions preceded such encouragement. The majority of the CEASAs, for example, were created in the dictatorship era, ostensibly to reduce retail prices by shortening the distance between producers and consumers. Some CEASAs have since then expanded their mandate to include social programs. CEASA-Campinas, for example, plays a significant coordinating role in
the city's food security program which has been heralded as a "pioneer in Zero Hunger." I would surmise that the program was inspired, at least in part, by the professors at UNICAMP who developed the national Zero Hunger proposal. Some CEASAs, such as CRAISA in Santo André, were created more recently with the intention of managing the city’s food supply and coordinating programs such as school meals and sacolões. Santo André’s municipal food security strategies, I would suggest, can be seen as an extension of a long-standing municipal commitment to social inclusion and income generation. Interviewees in Santo André claimed that food security institutions in the city did not result from a national call to action but rather a local one.

In cities such as São Paulo, the rationale for creating food security programs is less clear. One might speculate that the long-time existence of a secretariat of food supply in that city resulted from a perceived need by municipal authorities to adequately manage the food system of the country’s largest city. The creation of the first municipal food security council in the state (COMUSAN) may have fit well within the City’s mandate of creating co-management councils, and may also reflect pressure from a highly organized of civil society. State councils such as CONSEA-SP have been established at the encouragement of civil society thorough such institutions as FBSAN and the national CONSEA. The renaming of CONSEA-SP, and its restructuring into a regionally representative body was largely a product of a change in the council’s leadership in 2004.

1.3 At a general, technical level, how do such institutional arrangements (horizontal and vertical governmental partnerships, government-civil society councils and commissions, etc.) function?

Vertical cooperation occurs in food security governance in a similar manner to other policy areas by virtue of the decentralized nature of public administration in Brazil, where policy initiatives are often executed at municipal level even if funding comes from senior governments. In the case of food security, federal funding exists for such programs as food banks, popular restaurants, community kitchens, and acquisition of agricultural commodities from small-scale family producers for social projects. While funding is, in these instances, associated with the Zero Hunger Program, other sources of revenue for food security programs exists. Food security reference centres are now being funded by the state government, for example, while the
National School Meals Program is funded by all three levels of government. It is incumbent upon local governments to make effective use of resources from senior governments.

In addition to such vertical partnerships, horizontal governmental cooperation also occurs in municipal food security governance. Beyond being promoted by CONSEA (2004), intersectoral action, or cooperation between various municipal agencies can be seen at the municipal level. The success of Campinas' food security initiatives, for example, has been said to hinge on cooperation between CEASA, the Secretariats of Health, Education, and Citizenship (or Social Assistance). Interdepartmental cooperation can be used to implement a single program, as in the case of Santo André's urban agriculture pilot project, but it can also be employed in policy formation. Municipal food and nutritional security councils can play a significant role in this latter regard. The councils, which consist of representatives from a diversity of municipal agencies and civil society groups generally meet monthly or bi-monthly (as defined by the legal decree that creates them), with the intention of developing public policy related to food security. Those councils which I investigated had their own operating budget. They usually consist of one-third governmental representatives and two-thirds civil society representatives (at least in principle), though Santo André's food security council is composed of equal numbers of government and civil society representatives.

The regional food security commissions are structured in a fairly similar manner to the councils: one-third governmental and two-thirds civil society representatives. This structure provides potential for promoting horizontal cooperation in policy formation and program implementation in micro-regions across the state. The commissions might be distinguished from the municipal councils, not only in their regional scope, but also in that they facilitate vertical, not just horizontal cooperation. While the municipal councils are relatively autonomous from senior governmental or quasi-governmental bodies, the commissions are linked to CONSEA-SP.

2. Conceptualizing Food Security in the Case Study Area.

2.1 What does the discourse used by the key institutions' representatives reveal about their conceptualization of food security and its relation to governance?

The discourse employed by food security programmers in the case study area is somewhat heterogeneous. Some municipal food security planners choose to identify with the label "Zero Hunger," for example, while some do not. And the phrase itself may be seen to be either
privileging short-term solutions to hunger over more integrated, long-term approaches to food security; or, conversely, as connoting a complex (if perhaps politically untenable) strategy to address the structural causes of poverty and hunger. Whether a given food security planner uses the Zero Hunger moniker or not, they all seem to agree that policies that addressed the structural causes of food insecurity should be promoted as a complement to emergency measures. The emphasis that policy makers place on fostering empowerment through education and income-generation appears to be strongest in Santo André, where the strongest antipathy towards the Zero Hunger label was expressed.

Some of the terminology used expresses an increasingly broad concept of food security. The term “food and nutritional security” (segurança alimentar e nutricional, or SAN) is now ubiquitous in Brazil’s food security movement, suggesting a widespread belief that it is imperative not only that everyone have enough to eat, but that all people are able to eat a nutritionally adequate diet. Nutrition is not the only common concern, however. The use of terms such as “intersectoralism” (intersetoralidade) by food security planners suggests a belief that food security is a complex, multifaceted concept. Such terminology has implications for policy, but also for governance. Phrases such as intersectoralism and matricialidade are used by food security programmers to signify the trans-departmental cooperation which is regarded as being necessary for policy development and program implementation relating to the theme of food and nutritional security.

The increasing use of the term “sustainable food and nutritional security,” most notably be the State Food Security Council, CONSEA-SP, suggests that sustainability (environmental, if not social) is coming to be viewed as an intrinsic element of food security in Brazil. The language of citizenship, perhaps first linked to food security by the Citizenship Action campaign of the 1990s, has also been used extensively by CONSEA-SP. The council’s discourse associates citizenship with the promotion of the right to adequate food, a starting point for fostering an active, healthy populace. It also links citizenship and social inclusion to the need to address historical social inequities via wage policies, job creation, and income transfer (e.g. the Bolsa Família) (CONSEA-SP, 04/20/06; 12/15/2006). CONSEA-SP has expressed a concern for strengthening citizenship not only via policy, but also through social mobilization and participation, which are regarded by the council as being important elements in strengthening democracy.
2.2 To what extent is public participation in planning to design and deliver programs a conscious goal of these institutions (food security councils, commissions, and municipal programs)? How are these goals expressed?

Public participation in governance is entrenched in the 1988 Constitution and stands as an essential element of all of Brazil's management councils, not just food security councils. While much ado has been made about the participation of the poor in some aspects of Brazilian governance (e.g. participatory budgeting processes), I have not seen evidence that the municipal food security councils or the regional commissions are specifically designed to include the voices of the poor in policy-making. That said, these institutions do aim to bring the voice of civil society into governance more generally. The stipulation that the councils facilitate public participation is expressed in the legal decrees that establish the councils and *regimentos internos* that regulate how they are to function. Such legislation also states that civil society organizations are supposed to play a role as partners in implementing the councils' food security policies. Policy documents regulating specific municipal food security programs (such as Santo André's Urban Agriculture Program and Campinas' Food Bank) also call for the participation of civil society-based organizations. Like the municipal councils, the regional food security commissions in São Paulo state are defined by law as including government and civil society representatives. As mentioned in Question 2.1 above, the discourse employed by CONSEA-SP reflects a rhetorical concern for public participation as a means of working toward food security and social inclusion.

3. From Concept to Action: Governance, Policy, and Food Security.

3.1 Do these organizations' actions live up to their rhetoric?

I believe that the language of cooperation between sectors of government and between state and civil-society is substantiated by practice, generally speaking. As mentioned in Question 1.3 above, such cooperation can be seen at the municipal level, both in the food security councils, which provide a venue for people from diverse governmental agencies and civil society to work together in policy formation, and in practical projects such as food municipal food banks and urban agriculture. Such trans-departmental cooperative efforts do suggest that municipalities are endeavouring to work towards a holistic understanding of "food and nutritional security."
However, some councils suffer from low participation and have been slow in developing policies and tangible projects, as is the case of COMUSAN in São Paulo and COMSEA in Campinas. The role of intersectoral and state-civil society collaboration could be greater than it is at present. Subtle discrepancies exist, moreover, between municipalities regarding the extent to which they address the structural causes of food insecurity via strategies of education and income-generation. While Campinas has managed to radically improve the administration of its municipal school meals program and helps to foster cooperatives among the low-income community, the City's decision to de-link its Sustainable Rural Development Group (GDR) from food security concerns may prove detrimental to the largely rural city of Campinas' efforts to address the structural causes of hunger. In comparison with Campinas, I believe that Santo André is making greater headway in addressing the structural causes of food insecurity.

At the regional level, the discourse of public participation used by the CONSEA-SP leadership was certainly reflected in the deliberative, democratic process used to establish the sustainable regional food security commissions. However, this process was not without conflict and self-interested behaviour, as Chapter Five's account of the forum in the ABC Region attest. Furthermore, the commissions may also experience low participation, both of individual councilors and of municipalities within the jurisdiction that the various regional commissions purport to serve. A high level of dependence on charismatic leadership may be another potential limitation.

3.2 What is the relationship between the governance structure of São Paulo's food security councils, commissions, as well as other public food security programs, and a) the empowerment of civil society and b) the promotion of universal (i.e. not just localized), sustainable food security?

While the structure of the councils and commissions does promote the participation of some members of civil society as councilors and partner institutions, the political empowerment of society at large, including low income populations, is not necessarily a goal of these institutions. On the other hand, the councils and commissions may develop and implement (or accompany) public policies that promote the economic empowerment of impoverished populations through education, training, and income-generations strategies. Those elements of organized civil
society which are engaged in the planning process can contribute to improving the effectiveness with which the councils respond to the needs of such populations.

The food and nutritional security commissions play a particularly important role in universalizing food security in the state, by virtue of their micro-regional scope, and their linkage to the state foods security council, CONSEA-SP. This structure facilitates the ability of municipalities to share information, coordinate actions, and procure state resources (both financial and technical) for regional initiatives. The commissions can also play a role in integrating their own realities into state-wide food security policy making. The restructuring of CONSEA-SP into a regionally representative governance body shows promise of facilitating a more equitable distribution of knowledge and resources throughout the state as a whole. In this sense, it is conducive to the universalization of food security in São Paulo.

4. Building Sustainable Public Policy.

4.1 How can civil society participation in governance contribute to the development and/or maintenance of effective food security policy and programs over the long run?

Civil society's participation on the councils and commissions enables it to bring new ideas to the table, monitor the government to ensure that it follows through with its promises, and make demands on government representatives to participate. Being closer to the communities that local governments purport to serve, civil society council representatives can bring community perspectives and new issues to the table that the state may be unaware.

Societal action in governance is not limited to the councils, but can occur outside the government, as well. A few of the planners I spoke with emphasized the role that a vibrant, independent civil society can play in putting food security on the agenda (as was apparently the case in Diadema) and fostering public policy that is not strictly government policy. Food security networks and forums (such as the Brazilian Forum on Food and Nutritional Security and subnational equivalents) can play a significant role in this respect. Civil society groups may also support food security by implementing projects that are in the public interest. Their relative freedom from the confines of government bureaucracy means that they may be better disposed to action. Beyond serving the needs of food insecure populations, civil society-led projects, such as Instituto Pólis' food security reference centre can support the improvement of food security
policy and governance by providing opportunities for staff from various public agencies to think and work together.

4.2 What is the role of local leadership (competence, ideology, etc.) in promoting effective food security policy? How important is strong, informed leadership, relative to good planning process (e.g. meaningful public participation)?

Local leadership plays a vital role in fostering effective food security policy. I would suggest that supportive leadership needs to be present in both the political context (e.g. city council or state government) in which a given food security initiative operates, and among the people who operate the initiative. Food security planners in Santo André placed particular emphasis on the need a "technico-political" vision, where technically qualified staff working in public administration are able to effectively implement programs which are supported politically. Considering the complex and integrated nature of the food security concept, the ability of local leadership to facilitate cooperation of diverse municipal agencies and stakeholders will also be essential. The way that local policy makers envision or conceptualize food security will certainly have qualitative impacts on the kinds of policies that are developed and implemented. If local leaders are ideologically committed to sustainability or education or emergency relief measures, for example, it seems likely that public policy will reflect such commitment. Measuring such terms such as "leadership" and "good planning process" against each other is a challenging task, considering their highly subjective nature. I would suggest, however, that they each play essential, complementary roles in promoting effective food security policy.

4.3 How do discourse, policy, and funding operating at higher (e.g. state and national) levels influence local policy and vice-versa?

Considering that the widespread establishment of municipal food security programs and councils in Brazil did not occur until after the launching of the Zero Hunger initiative in 2003, and likewise that the establishment of the sustainable regional food and nutritional security commissions throughout the São Paulo state resulted from the organizing efforts of the state food security council (CONSEA-SP), it would appear that high level policy profoundly influences local policy. At this point, I cannot with any certainty state the degree to which implementation of certain municipal policies results from a thorough agreement with the state and federal food
security policy agenda, and how much such policies are implemented because of the mere availability of funds from senior governments. In an era when local governments remain largely dependent on transfers from senior governments, the availability of funds for local initiatives associated with the Zero Hunger and other programs should not be understated. In all likelihood, I would suggest, municipal projects such as popular restaurants, food banks, community gardens and food and nutritional security reference centres simply would not be established outside a select few metropolitan areas without a financial resources originating from above.

To be sure, it would be rather cynical to suggest that the widespread establishment of local food security programs results exclusively from the pragmatic desire to tap into available funding. All participants in São Paulo’s food and nutritional security movement whom I spoke with expressed a genuine interest in the food security agenda, whether framed as part of “Zero Hunger,” the “sustainable food and nutritional security” movement, or otherwise. I would hazard to guess, then, that the establishment of local food security programs generally results from an idealistic commitment to food security on the behalf of local planners and policy makers, in conjunction with a perceived opportunity to take advantage of available funding from the state and federal governments.

Of course, this will not always be the case. One might speculate that in some instances a pragmatic interest to take advantage of funding might stand out ahead of the desire to promote food security. Conversely, as my interview in Santo André revealed, local political interests and commitment to a particular vision of food security policy may be strong enough that local policy makers may not wish to implement certain kinds of policies associated with another vision, even when funding from senior government exists. This is not so say that all external funding would be rejected by local policy makers (most municipalities are not in a financial position to be that particular), only that they may be selective about the kinds of programs they implement.

This issue of conflicting policy visions at municipal and federal levels leads us to the second part of the question (4.3), namely how local actors influence higher level policy. One way that this occurs is by example. As mentioned in chapter three, a number of the local policies recommended in the Zero Hunger proposal (such as food supply programs and popular restaurants) had already been implemented in certain cities with some success. Cities such as Belo Horizonte and Santo André which were quite advanced in food security planning clearly leant themselves to providing examples for Zero Hunger. Beyond this proposal, I am told that
food security policy-makers and technicians from Santo André were involved in program development in the former Extraordinary Ministry of Food Security (MESA). The fact that the minister and staff-members of the Ministry of Social Development (MDS) were formerly involved in public administration in Belo Horizonte (including the Minister who was formerly mayor of BH), and that MDS is now supporting the implementation of some of the city's signature programs, such as the Popular Restaurant, also suggests that local policy can affect national policy. Direct participation of local actors in senior government activities, then, is another source of influence. Finally, initiatives such as the decentralized, participatory approach toward creating a sustainable food and nutritional security plan for the state through the regional commissions, and the state food security conference scheduled to take place at the end of 2006, provides a further means by which local actors may influence state policy.

6.2 Final Conclusion

Considering the answers to the thesis's empirical questions, it appears that governance institutions in São Paulo state, Brazil can support food security in diverse ways. State and civil society can play complementary roles in planning for food security, by developing and implementing effective public policies, plans and programs at the municipal, regional, and state levels. Supportive political environments at the subnational and national levels, informed leadership with a strong, holistic vision of food security, and an ability to implement such a vision through coordinated action between governmental agencies and non-governmental stakeholders are key factors in advancing food security. Municipal, state, and regional food security councils and commissions play an important role in fostering vertical and horizontal governmental cooperation for food security. Civil society can play a role in governance by participating on the councils and commissions, performing advocacy and community development work outside governmental institutions, and partnering with governments and councils in program implementation. Through such activities, civil society can promote food security by making demands on governments, monitoring their actions, providing ideas and information, and educating government workers and the public at large about the concept of food security, and practical strategies for supporting it.

It would appear that the observations made by authors such as Hochstetler (2000) and Koonings (2004) that Brazilian social movements are using the language of citizenship in their
struggles for social justice, and are increasingly working in partnership with the state applies to mobilization around food security. The role that São Paulo state’s food and nutritional security councils and commissions, and some local programs play in promoting a participatory approach to food security promotion that fosters cooperation between multiple stakeholders may even be said to reflect (however unintentionally) Welsh and MacRae’s (1998) concept of food citizenship. It should be said that the civil society activism operates outside food security councils and commissions, as well as within them, and that such external action also plays a role in advancing food security and deepening citizenship for those involved.

As persuasive as the idea that participatory democracy supports the social inclusion and empowerment of the poor may be, however, factors such as poverty and lack of education may inhibit many people’s ability to participate in governance. For such populations, government programs that promote food security, income distribution, education, job training, agrarian reform, etc. play an essential role in expanding citizenship and democracy. Such programs may be developed or monitored by the food security councils and commissions that we have been discussing at the subnational levels, but also need to be supported at the federal level. The widespread implementation of programs such as the federal Ministry of Social Development’s Bolsa Família stands as a significant achievement in universalizing income security (and by extension food security) across the country. Such a success might be characterized as a triumph for a social policy approach to food security in Brazil, as advocated for by authors such as Power (1999), Riches (1999a) and Yasbek (2004). Such federal social policies play an important role in addressing the social equity issues entailed in the promotion of food security. While they may not directly promote the expansion of “citizenship” in the participatory political sense (as, say, the councils might do), they can promote it indirectly, by taking the edge off the extreme poverty which prevents many people from developing their full human potential and participating more actively in civic life.

Considering the increasing complex nature of the food system, such social policy initiatives will need to be accompanied by actions which place a greater emphasis on food policy issues such as nutrition, local (versus globally-oriented) development, and the sustainability of the food system. Targeted efforts to empower the poor and food insecure through education and income-generation strategies executed at the local level will also be key factors in upholding the right to food in a more sustained manner. While advocates of social policy, food policy, and empowerment (roughly akin to community food security) approaches to food security may at
times be in political and ideological conflict with one another, I would suggest that these approaches are fundamentally complementary in advancing food and nutritional security. Despite potentially conflicting visions, moreover, coordinated action by policy makers in senior and local governments, and in state and civil society, plays an essential role in promoting food an nutritional security. It is hoped that some of the governance institutions examined in this thesis are having a significant impact in mediating such conflicts and fostering such coordination, thereby contributing to sustained food security and the deepening if democracy and citizenship in Brazil.

6.3 Implications for Food Security Governance Elsewhere

One of the more outstanding features of the Brazilian case of food security governance are that a number of local and senior governments are actually providing financial support for food security initiatives. At the local level, institutions such as CEASAs, Secretariats of Food Supply, and other municipal programs provide tangible (if in some cases rough) equivalents to the hypothetical “Department of Food” advocated for by Pothukuchi and Kaufman (1999). Given the increasingly urbanized nature of poverty and of the food system, such institutions may play an increasing role in supporting food security. They might even be established outside Brazil, provided that they are structured in ways that are well-adapted to local political and administrative cultures, and their programs are developed in such a manner that they can adequately address the needs of local populations. Given the general trends or urbanization and political decentralization throughout Latin America, the concept of using such municipal institutions to implement food security programs funded wholly or partly by senior governments might also be attempted elsewhere on the continent.

In North America, NGOs and civil society networks supporting food security (such as FoodShare Field to Table in Toronto, the U.S.-based Community Food Security Coalition, and Food Secure Canada) are now well-established, while a few cities have established food policy councils linked to local governments. However, the extent of cooperation between state and civil society that can be seen in Brazil's food and nutritional security councils and sustainable food and nutritional security commissions does not exist elsewhere, at least not to my knowledge. Whether and how such governance institutions might be applied outside, then, is certainly a topic that begs for investigation. Considering that the civil society participation in governance
that these institutions facilitate is constitutionally mandated in Brazil—and that this mandate itself originated in civil society’s lobbying efforts—I would suggest that their replicability outside the country will depend on the existence (or the ability to foster the existence) of a legal, cultural and/or political environment that supports them.

Likewise, places which already have an established tradition of regional governance may be in a better a place to create institutions akin to Brazil’s sustainable regional food and nutritional security commissions. The idea of using such commissions to facilitate a highly decentralized process to create a state food security plan that is responsive to the needs of local populations is certainly laudable. A parallel planning process is being used in the state of Minas Gerais (also under the leadership of Mauro Morelli). Such a planning process could certainly be relevant elsewhere in Brazil, and perhaps even outside of it. As is the case of São Paulo, strong leadership and impressive feats of organization and mobilization would be required for such a process to be successful.

6.4 Implications for Further Research

This thesis has aimed to provide some preliminary answers to questions about food security governance in Brazil. More structured, extensive research that looks at how municipal and regional governance processes in other parts of the state have functioned could help provide a more complete picture of the institutions and processes examined. The use of more concrete indicators (economic, social, nutritional) that could be used to measure the effect that certain municipal, state, and federal policies have on advancing food security in a more quantitative manner could also help provide more complete answers to the questions addressed.

One area of further research might be comparative analysis of governance structures in São Paulo state and elsewhere in the country. An obvious locale for comparison would be the neighbouring state of Minas Gerais, which stands at a relatively similar state of social and economic development and has also been a leader in food security governance at the municipal, regional, and state levels. Such a comparative analysis could provide a better understanding of food security in Brazil.

The above suggested areas for further research might also include a comparative analysis of the work of the food and nutritional security councils and commissions (city by city, region by region, and/or state by state), which includes a survey of participation levels, and tangible
achievements in program development. Such a survey could help provide a more conclusive assessment of their efficacy of the councils. The effect that governance structures such as the councils have on improving public administration outside the field of food security (e.g. by promoting interdepartmental cooperation in policy development) might also be examined.

This thesis has suggested that governance structures such as food security commissions, a regionally representative state council, and regional food security reference centres may play a role in distributing resources needed for the promotion of food security away from metropolitan areas of one particular state. As it were, however, capital in Brazil is concentrated not only in metropolitan areas, but in the South and South-Eastern regions of the country. The promotion of food security in regions such as Brazil's North and Northeast—where poverty is endemic—may require not only local governance structures such as those that have been examined in this thesis, but also federal efforts to redistribute the country's wealth. The role that federalism plays in promoting food security throughout Brazil, therefore, is another obvious area for further research.
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