

BELO HORIZONTE, BRAZIL: SMASAN

#fooddepartment #latinamerica

THE ACTION AND ITS AIMS: Belo Horizonte's sub-secretariat for food security and nutrition (SMASAN) is a municipal entity that runs food related programmes across six workstreams: subsidised food sales; food and nutrition assistance; supply and regulation of food markets; support for urban agriculture; food and nutrition education; job and income creation.

WHY IT WAS NEEDED: The municipal entity was created in 1993 in order to centralise all food-related activity in the city, including those that were previously run by other departments.

WHO INITIATED IT, WHO IS INVOLVED: It was created by then-Mayor Patras Ananias, initially as a stand-alone municipal agency that was on a par with other, more usual municipal departments (such as education, planning, etc.). Subsequently, in 2011 it became subdivision of the Department of Social Policies. SMASAN is led by a director (appointed by the Mayor) and employs 180 civil servants. Other municipal departments and non-governmental organisations contribute to implementation where appropriate. Currently, SMASAN has three advisory boards, each with different constellations of actors and sectors: COMUSAN (civil society and municipal departments); CAISAN-BH (municipal departments); and FOMASA (food businesses).



Belo Horizonte (Brazil), Shutterstock/EAFO

OUTCOME/HOW IT STRENGTHENED COORDINATION: By centralising all food activities for the city, SMASAN is credited with the creation of a government-led alternative food system that runs in parallel to the conventional, market-led system. Around 300,000 people – 12% of the population of Belo Horizonte – use SMASAN's programmes and services each day.

MORE INFORMATION:

- Case studies: What makes urban food policy happen?, IPES-Food, June 2017
http://www.ipes-food.org/img/upload/files/Cities_full.pdf
- Book: The governance of city food systems: case studies from around the world. Belo Horizonte: the opportunities and challenges of urban food security policy (2016)
<https://fondazionefeltrinelli.it/app/uploads/2020/05/The-Governance-of-City-Food-Systems-The-Cases-Study-from-Around-The-World.pdf>

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