

Unified registry of the poor (Brazil)

Summary:

The Unified Registry for Social Programs of the Brazilian government (Cadastro Único) is a tool for identification and socio-economic characterisation of low-income families that can be used for social programs and policies geared towards such families. The Unified Registry database allows the government to understand who the poorest and most vulnerable population segments are.

Objectives:

Brazil's targeted poverty alleviation programmes rest on the creation of a national registry of the poor, an online database of the poor to allow for more effective targeting. The main objectives of Cadastro Unico Para Programas Sociais are (Barca, 2017):

- Registration of families that earn monthly income up to one half of a minimum wage per person or on a total of three minimum wages per family. The database can identify and provide characteristics of the socially vulnerable population
- Linking existing policies and building a social protection network
- Generate an effective planning tool for social protection and poverty alleviation programmes
- Aids in measuring poverty and vulnerability dimensions and acts as a poverty map of the country
- Converge social protection and welfare efforts to prioritise the offer of services to families in vulnerable situations

Key Stakeholders:

- National Secretariat of Citizenship Income (SENARC) of the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS)
- Caixa Econômica Federal (Caixa)
- State Governments and Municipalities
- Ministry of Employment
- Brazilian Federal Revenue Office
- INSS National Institute of Social Security
- Ministry of Planning, Budgeting and Management
- Ministry of Social Security
- Beneficiaries of government-sponsored social service schemes (30)

Implementation strategy:

Cadastro Unico Para Programas Sociais (Unified Registry for Social Programs) was created in 2001 by the Ministry of Social Development (MDS). Cadastro Unico (CadUnico) is a single database that contains information about extremely poor and poor families that may qualify for different social programs. Cadastro Único's main role is to support the identification and socio-economic characterisation of low-income Brazilian households to support beneficiaries' selection for social assistance programs run by the federal government.

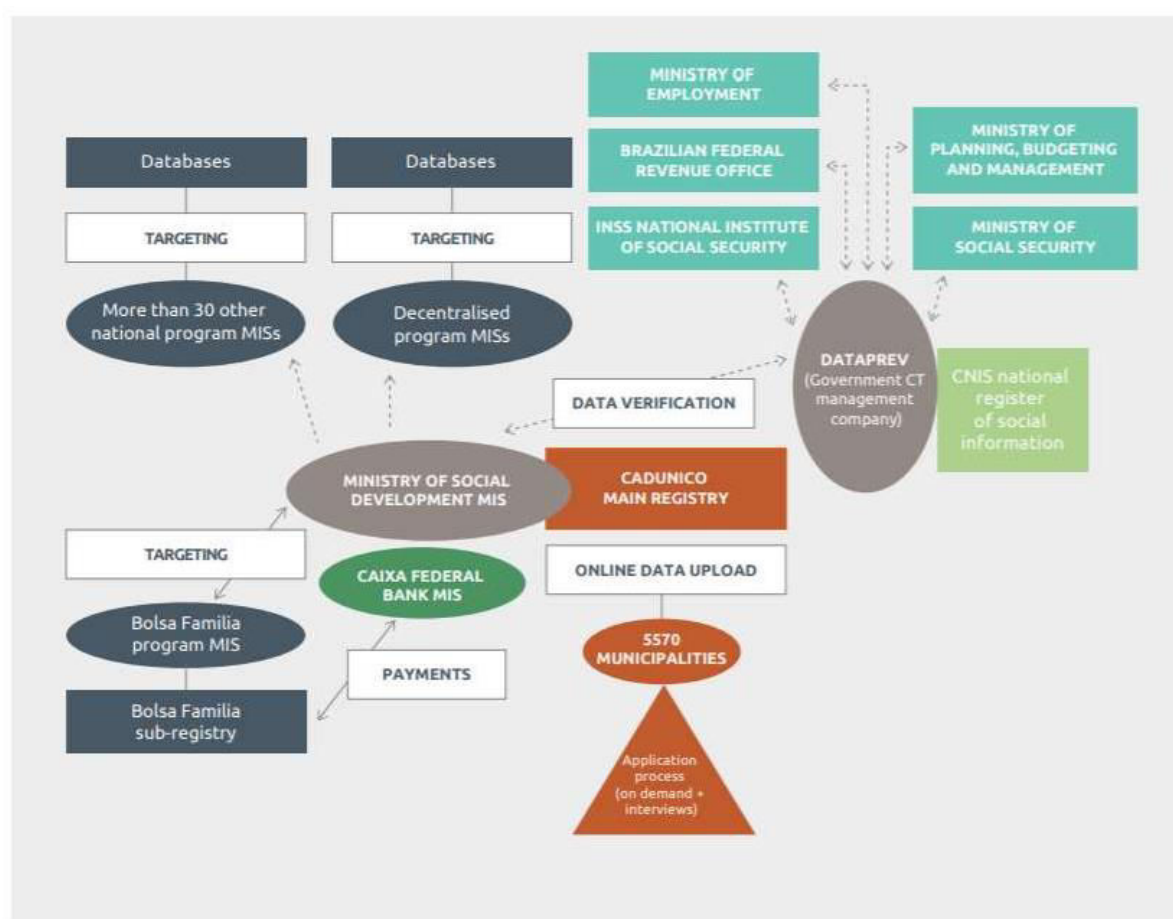
The different government tiers use this database to determine which families and individuals are eligible for the 30 government-sponsored social service schemes. These include (Barca, 2017)

- Social Programmes: Bolsa Família; 71 Auxílio Emergencial Financeiro (emergency financial aid); PETI (child labour eradication); Bolsa Verde (Green Grant); Programa de Fomento as Atividades Produtivas Rurais (support to rural productive activities)
- Taxes and contributions: Tarifa Social de Energia Elétrica (Social Tariff for Energy); Carteira do Idoso (Senior Citizen ID); fee waiver for civil service tests; Telefone Popular (Popular Telephone Program); Minha Casa Minha Vida (My House, My Life) and other housing programs (Ministry of Cities); Programa Nacional de Crédito Fundiário; etc.
- Infrastructure: Água Para Todos (Water For All); Programa Cisternas (Cistern Program); etc.

- Social services: Brasil Carinhoso (Affectionate Brazil creches); Brasil Alfabetizado (Literate Brazil); Mais Educação (More Education); National Program for Access to Vocational Training and Employment (Pronatec); etc.

Resource Utilisation:

The institutional arrangement Cadastro Único involves the federal government, states, federal districts and municipalities. At the federal government level, National Secretariat of Citizenship Income (Senarc) of the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) has the overall responsibility for coordinating, monitoring and supervising the implementation and execution of the registry. The federal government also extends financial support to the municipalities and the Federal District to support ongoing registration, update existing entries and maintain the data's quality. Caixa Econômica Federal (Caixa) at the federal level is responsible for assigning social identification number (NIS) for each registered person and coordinating with the municipalities. State governments provide technical support to municipalities that need to manage Cadastro Único at their level by conducting training, supporting the improvement of municipal infrastructure and troubleshooting on any operational or technical issues. Municipalities are responsible for identifying areas where there is a high incidence of poverty, collecting poverty data, and inclusion and updating data in the Cadastro Único system. Municipalities also promote home-visits to low-income families periodically to register. Thus, this system ensures that no low-income family is left out of the country's social system (Ciixa, 2020). The figure below presents the overall structure of Brazil's Cadastro Único:



Source: (Ciixa, 2020)

Funding for the programme is provided at the federal level. The Federal Government then provides financial support to municipalities and the Federal District through the transfer of funds calculated via the Municipal Decentralized Management Index - IGD-M. These funds are used to support the creation of new entries, update existing ones, and maintain the data's quality. (WWP, 2015)

Impact/ Outcomes:

- The CadUnico database has information about more than 40 per cent of Brazilian households, which is about 80 million people. This dataset is comprehensive and contains detailed and precise information about the country's vulnerable and low-income families. This precision is key to effective

targeting of the numerous social programs and finding the eligible participants. The use of high-tech solutions for the management of the single registry; generating poverty maps to improve identification and targeting of poor, and automation of the payment system have facilitated the program's spread and improved transparency in its operations.

Challenges/ Lessons Learnt:

- One major challenge that CadUnico tackled was that most of the poor families lived in slums (or favelas) with no address or permanent residence. Being illegal settlements, these favelas did not have any pin codes and were not in the government systems. This made it difficult for them to furnish documents required for registration. CadUnico overcame this shortcoming using intelligible questions about the housing situation of the respondent. (Poverty, 2001)

Replicability & Sustainability:

- The biggest success factor for CadUnico for serving as the backbone for its social programs since the 2000s has been reducing social programs' transaction costs and making it possible to register all poor and vulnerable families along with their socio-economic characteristics. This has aided to inclusive target setting for social programs (Poverty, 2001)

Fact Sheet:

Thematic area	Registry for Social Programs
First-year of the program	2001
Responsible institution	Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger (MDS) – National Secretariat of Citizenship Income (SENARC).
Target audience	Low-income families
Coverage	Brazil - National