Guidance Notes: Inequality in Brazil

Age range: 8-14 years

Time: Up to 2 hours

Outline
In 2014 Brazil hosts the World Cup. Historically Brazil has had some of the highest inequality figures in the world. However over recent years it has experienced significant improvements. This flexible resource deepens pupils’ geographical understanding of inequality in Brazil and examines how Brazil is challenging inequality in the 21st Century. The activities may be taught sequentially over a period of approximately 2 hours or as smaller bitesize activities. Opportunities for curriculum making are signposted.

Learning Objectives
• To explain how Brazil’s geography and history account for its high level of inequality.
• To assess how Brazil is attempting to overcome inequality and poverty and the degree to which this is successful.

Learning Outcomes
• Pupils use statistics and written information to evaluate the level of poverty in a sample of Brazilian states.
• Pupils make inferences from photographic evidence.
• Pupils draw conclusions about the main causes of Brazil’s inequalities and how they can best be overcome.
• Pupils assess the outcomes of Brazil’s attempts to overcome poverty and inequality.

Resources
• How much do you know about Brazil?
• Welcome to Brazil (4 states)
• Welcome to Sao Paulo
• Why is Brazil so unequal?
• Land grab!
• Better or worse?

There are PowerPoint slides to accompany the How much do you know about Brazil?, Welcome to Brazil and Welcome to Sao Paulo activities.

Key curricular links

England
• Geography: Human geography (international development, economic activity, use of natural resources).

Wales
• Geography: Understanding places, environments and processes, Communicating.

Scotland
• Curriculum for Excellence: Social Studies (People, Place and Environment).

Key Questions
• Which areas of Brazil are poorer than others?
• Why are these areas poorer than others?
• Why is Brazil so unequal?
• How can Brazil’s inequality be challenged?

Keywords
Inequality Poverty
This resource contains 6 activities about inequality in Brazil. They are designed to be worked through in sequence or each activity can stand alone as a bitesized piece of learning about Brazil.

These notes provide guidance for teaching each activity and links to the source data to inspire curriculum making.

**Activity 1 – How much do you know about Brazil already?** (10 minutes)

This activity is designed as a quick way for pupils to demonstrate what they already know (or don’t know) about Brazil. It will introduce the activities that follow or could stand alone with some follow up atlas work.

Ask pupils to label anything they know about Brazil already on the blank map. If there is more time, they could draw or shade in the features or places they have heard of. This could be framed by asking ‘what is Brazil famous for and where would you find it’ or you could ask specifically about cities, rivers and other geographical features.

Afterwards, discuss responses, show an accurate atlas map of geographical features and challenge any stereotypes (e.g. there are many great beaches in Brazil but the entire coastline isn’t a beach!). Pupils could also draft questions they’d like to ask about Brazil.

**Activity 2 – Welcome to Brazil** (25 minutes)

This activity explores the geography of inequality between four Brazilian states; Piauí, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina and Amazonas. These states were selected to be broadly representative of the geographical diversity within Brazil.

Pupils should work in groups and each group should be given a resource sheet for one of the four states. The sheets contain:
- a map showing the location of the state
- a photograph representing the geography of the state
- development statistics for the state
- similar development statistics for Brazil as a whole – these permit comparison
- a brief written summary of the state’s climate, history and main economic activities.

Pupils should work in groups to produce a brief presentation about their state. They should include:
- five key facts about their state
- the main features that make their state a good (or middling or bad) place to live and why
- whether they would recommend the other groups to open a business in their state and why.

The teacher should ask follow up questions to tease out the level of inequality between the states (e.g. What is infant mortality in xxx? How does this compare with Brazil as a whole and the other states? What effect does this have on peoples’ lives and what do you think it tells us about xxx?)

The discussion should conclude by stressing the large inequalities between Brazil’s states. Where a person lives in Brazil can greatly influence their quality of life.
Activity 3 – Welcome to Sao Paulo (15 minutes)

Inequality in Brazil occurs within as well as between states. For example there are wealthy people in Piaui and poor people in Santa Catarina. This activity begins to explore inequality within one of Brazil’s richest states, Sao Paulo.

The Google Map photograph shows part of the Paraisopolis favela, located within the wealthy Morumbi area of southern Sao Paulo. Searching for ‘Paraisopolis Sao Paulo’ on Google Maps will permit teachers to obtain different perspectives of the favela and its surroundings at different scales. There is also a well known photograph by Tuca Vieira at [http://bit.ly/W7TODA](http://bit.ly/W7TODA) and a BBC article from 2001 at [http://bbc.in/RhLBzv](http://bbc.in/RhLBzv)

The activity asks pupils to make some conclusions about the level of inequality between the inhabitants of Paraisopolis and the residents of the neighbouring apartment buildings and compare them with the overall statistics for Sao Paulo state. The purpose of the activity is to reinforce the idea that, although averages are useful, they have limitations when it comes to telling us about the lives of individuals. There are similar stark inequalities within other Brazilian states.

Activity 4 – Why is Brazil so unequal? (25 minutes)

Brazil’s high level of inequality is deeply ingrained in the long history of its development. For many centuries Brazil’s history was characterised by a series of ‘commodity booms.’ These affected different parts of the country and different commodities at different times. They led to the growth of deep inequalities between those who controlled resources and their workers (including millions of slaves up until 1888) and caused significant environmental damage.

The ‘commodity boom’ trend continues to this day with the discovery of large deposits of oil off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state. It remains to be seen whether the 21st century oil industry, occurring in the democratic era, will break Brazil’s historical trend of economic activity being associated with severe inequality and environmental damage.

To start this activity, ask pupils what they already know about Brazil’s history. Knowledge may not be extensive (an interesting point in itself) but issues such as colonialism and slavery may be common knowledge and are important.


Begin by asking ‘Why is Brazil so unequal?’ and, if possible, construct the first responses from their own knowledge. Then hand out the eight information cards to each group. These will both provide answers and also prompt new questions and connections between them.

After pupils have had sufficient time to consider the question, ask each group to present and explain their why-why-why chain to the class. A scribe could be asked to list the main reasons for Brazil’s inequality as a summary of the activity.
A follow up question could ask what are the challenges and potential for Brazil’s current democratic government to overturn inequality.

Activity 5 – Land grab! (25 minutes)

Brazil is now a democratic country with a left-leaning government committed to overcoming poverty. However, despite significant progress, old patterns of exploitation and dispossession persist. A 21st century ‘sugar boom’ in Pernambuco and neighbouring states is resulting in communities of poor farmers facing eviction by sugar companies. Their land is being planted with sugar cane to feed the world’s increasing demand for sugar in soft drinks and fast food. For some in Brazil this represents progress and development. For others it represents a denial of human rights and the further marginalisation of poor communities. This case study provides an opportunity for pupils to decide where they stand on this controversial issue.

The case study document has been kept deliberately short. The briefing paper ‘Sugar Rush: Land rights and the supply chains of the biggest food and beverage companies’ (Oxfam – 2013) goes into greater detail and provides opportunities for curriculum making. The ‘Brazil case study’ is particularly relevant. The paper can be downloaded at: http://bit.ly/QpHbFI

Pupils should begin by reading the Land grab! case study document. They should have an opportunity to ask questions to clarify their understanding.


The question to ask students may be varied but could be ‘Will new and bigger sugar plantations make Pernambuco state better off?’ Even slight changes to framing of the question could lead to very different opinions among pupils.


The activity could conclude about asking pupils what they think the best action is and why.

Activity 6 – Better or worse? (20 minutes)

The Brazilian government’s efforts to reduce poverty since 2002 have been impressive and successful, and inequality in Brazil has fallen significantly in recent years. However, all governments work in an environment where policy is implemented inconsistently or swayed by sectional interests. Furthermore, supporters of globalisation suggest that many elements of economic development are no longer under the control of national governments.

This activity asks pupils to weigh up some of the recent actions of the Brazilian government and decide the degree to which they have reduced inequality. Their final answers may be more nuanced than Brazil’s impressive poverty reduction statistics suggest.

The brief case studies come from the paper ‘Brazil: Poverty and Inequality. Where to next?’ (Oxfam –
Data about changes in Brazil’s Human Development Index indicators over time is on the Wikipedia page ‘List of Brazilian federative units by Human Development Index’.

Pupils should begin by reading the ‘Better or Worse’ information sheet and work in pairs to discuss each of the government actions. They should then complete the ‘Better or Worse’ recording sheet and weigh up the degree to which the actions have contributed to increasing or decreasing inequality. Pupils could be asked to make specific reference to three main social divisions in Brazil; urban or rural, northern or southern and richer or poorer, and feed back their conclusions to the class.
How much do you know about Brazil?

Introduction

Brazil is a federal republic, similar to the USA. It is made up of 26 states along with the Federal District of Brasilia, the capital city. Brasilia has a similar status to Washington DC in the USA.

You'll learn about four of Brazil's states in greater detail. They are Piaui, Minas Gerais (host to a World Cup semi-final), Santa Catarina and Amazonas (where England play Italy in the World Cup).

However, how much do you know about Brazil already?

Map: Wikimedia Commons

Take a blank outline map of Brazil.

Use the map to label or draw anything you know about Brazil already.

For example, think about Brazil's main cities, industries, rivers, mountains, natural features and so on. Then label or draw any of them that you know on the map. Don't worry about being wrong!

Discuss your answers afterwards. What sorts of things did you label? What sorts of things do you know (or think you know) about Brazil? What did you not know about Brazil? Are there any questions you'd like to ask about Brazil?
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BRAZIL?

Map: Pixabay Public Domain
**WELCOME TO BRAZIL – TEACHER'S NOTES**

**Introduction**

These resources introduce geographical evidence about four of Brazil’s 26 states and are designed to illustrate the degree of inequality between these states. There is also high inequality within states which is explored with a case study of Sao Paulo. Brazil is a federal republic and the constitution divides power between the Federal Government, the States, the Federal District of Brasilia (the capital city) and the Municipalities. Historically this may have contributed to inequalities, although the sample provides some evidence of Brazil being a *developmental state* active in attempting to overcome inequalities.

The Distrito Federal (Brasilia) has by far the largest GDP/capita in Brazil of R$49,045. However, the city’s concentration of well paid government jobs and relatively small population make it unrepresentative of even rich Brazilian states and it is not included. The four states of Piaui, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina and Alazonas were selected to illustrate Brazil’s diversity in both geography and human development.

**The data**

Most of the evidence is from the Wikipedia page ‘States of Brazil’ and the individual Wikipedia pages for each state. The statistics have been summarised from data collected by the IBGE, the Brazilian government agency responsible for data collection. See [http://www.ibge.gov.br/english/default.php](http://www.ibge.gov.br/english/default.php)

**Region**: Brazil is divided into five regions; North, Northeast, Centre-West, Southeast and South.

**Capital city**: the capital city of the state.

**Population**: the population of the state. There are significant differences in populations and population densities between Brazil’s states.

**GDP/capita**: the GDP/capita of the state in Brazilian Reais (R$). £1 = R$3.68 (April 2014). This figure is an average and masks inequalities within a state’s population.

**Literacy**: the percentage of the population that is literate. This is often used as an indicator of the quality of basic education.

**Infant mortality**: the number of children who die per 1,000 children under the age of 1 year. This is often used as an indicator of the quality of health services.

**Life Expectancy**: the average age of death of the population. This is often used as an indicator of the quality of health services.

**Brazil comparison**: comparable information for Brazil as a whole.
WELCOME TO BRAZIL

Piaui state

The climate of Piaui is hot and humid with cooler nights on higher ground. The main form of vegetation is *caatinga*, or shrubland, although some areas are forested. The coastal area is swampy and malarial.

Piaui was originally settled by poor immigrants from surrounding states. At the beginning of the 20th century the main economic activities were cattle and goat farming. Goats are hardy animals that can thrive despite poor nutrition and neglect.

Today, subsidies from the Brazilian government make up one third of Piaui’s GDP and services are the largest economic sector. Recent efforts to establish biofuel production in the state have had mixed results.

Brazil by comparison

Capital city: Brasilia
Population: 198.7 million
GDP/capita R$19,766
Literacy: 98.7%
Infant Mortality 13/1,000
Life Expectancy: 74.3 years
Welcome to Brazil

Minas Gerais state

Minas Gerais is one of Brazil's largest and most diverse states. It is roughly the size of France and its landscape and climate is varied.

Minas Gerais was first settled by gold miners in the late 18th century. Gold mining has diversified into the minerals and metals sector that makes up 50% of the state’s exports today.

The cooler region in the south of Minas Gerais has been a centre of coffee and milk production since the 19th century.

More recently, the motor industry has set up large factories in the Minas Gerais. Fiat’s biggest car factory in the world opened near the state capital of Belo Horizonte in 1974.

Since 2000 there has been new investment in biotechnology industries in the western part of Minas Gerais.

Brazil by comparison

Capital city: Brasilia
Population: 198.7 million
GDP/capita R$19,766
Literacy: 98.7%
Infant Mortality 13/1,000
Life Expectancy: 74.3 years
Welcome to Brazil
Santa Catarina state

Santa Catarina’s climate is warm with distinct seasonal differences between summer and winter. The inland vegetation is upland pine forest.

The state was settled by German immigrants in the 19th century. Most of these new arrivals were farmers and many towns in Santa Catarina retain their German cultural legacy today.

Today, industry and services, including tourism, are the largest economic sectors. Santa Catarina is located midway between the large Brazilian cities to the north and the large Argentinean cities to the south. This location has helped the state to prosper in MERCOSUL, the South American Common Market.

The industrial sector is diversified and includes technology, electrical goods, textiles and furniture. The beaches near Florianopolis are a major tourist destination.

Brazil by comparison

Capital city: Brasilia
Population: 198.7 million
GDP/capita R$19,766
Literacy: 98.7%
Infant Mortality 13/1,000
Life Expectancy: 74.3 years
WELCOME TO BRAZIL

Amazonas state

Amazonas is Brazil’s largest state by area. Most of the state is covered by tropical rain forest and half of the population of Amazonas lives in the state capital of Manaus, a city located on the Amazon River 1,500 km upstream from the coast. The climate is hot and wet all year round.

The 19th century wealth of Amazonas was founded on producing rubber and led to great inequality between the rubber merchants and enslaved Amerindian rubber tappers. However, rubber production went into steep decline after Britain opened rival plantations in Malaya in the late 19th century.

In the 1950s the Brazilian government rescued Amazonas from economic collapse. Manaus was made a ‘free economic zone’ which later encouraged the development of the mobile phone and electronics industries. A more recent gold rush along the Tapajos River led to unregulated mining and environmental damage.

Brazil by comparison

Capital city: Brasilia
Population: 198.7 million
GDP/capita R$19,766
Literacy: 98.7%
Infant Mortality 13/1,000
Life Expectancy: 74.3 years
Welcome to Sao Paulo

Inequality within Brazilian states

This image shows the densely packed Paraisopolis favela (or slum) located next to luxury apartments with swimming pools and tennis courts in the upmarket Morumbi area of Sao Paulo city.

Paraisopolis has between 80,000 and 100,000 residents and is the second largest favela in Sao Paulo.

Important information
Sao Paulo state
Region: Southeast
Capital city: Sao Paulo
Population: 44.1 million
GDP/capita: R$29,473
Literacy: 99%
Infant Mortality: 4.5/1,000
Life Expectancy: 79.8 years

Key Questions

What does this photograph suggest about inequality within Brazilian states and cities?

If the statistics on the left are averages for a state with 44.1 million inhabitants, what conclusions can you make about the statistics for:

- the inhabitants of Paraisopolis?
- the inhabitants of the apartment building?
Why is Brazil so unequal?

Brazil’s history provides a lot of clues as to why it is so unequal today. Cut up these cards, one set per group, before the lesson.

### Empire and land

Between 1532 and 1822 Brazil was a colony of Portugal. In order to govern such a large territory the Portuguese monarchy granted big areas of land and farms, known as *latifundios* and *fazendas*, to members of the nobility who paid the king money and agreed to provide some semblance of government in return. This highly unequal pattern of land ownership has persisted up to today. In many places the ordinary people who now occupy and farm the land do not have legal documents to prove they have the right to do so. This makes them vulnerable to land grabs and ownership claims from landowners and big businesses.

Image: The owner’s house of an 18th century coffee *fazenda* (Wikimedia Commons)

### Slavery

Brazil depended on slave labour on its sugar plantations, gold and diamond mines, coffee farms and cattle ranches. In total 4 million slaves were transported to Brazil from Africa. This was 40% of the total number of slaves transported to the Americas. Brazil was the last country in the western hemisphere to abolish slavery in 1888. This was 55 years after the abolition of slavery in the British Empire and 23 years after abolition in the USA. Slaves in Brazil frequently rebelled and escaped in large numbers to set up free communities, known as *quilombos*. Many slaves’ descendents still live in these communities today. They struggle to establish legal ownership of land their families have lived on for generations.

Image: Slaves in Brazil, 1830 (Wikimedia Commons)

### Commodities – Sugar

Brazil’s history is the story of the exploitation of its natural resources and a series of ‘booms’ that transformed different parts of the country at different times. This has made a small minority of its population rich at the expense of the vast majority. The very name Brazil is derived from the *pau-Brasil* tree which the first European settlers cut down to extract a valuable red dye from its bark. So many trees were cut down they almost became extinct.  

Image: A sugar plantation in Pernambuco, 17th century (Wikimedia Commons)

#### The sugar boom

Between 1540 and 1640 Brazil had virtually a world monopoly in the supply of sugar. Portuguese settlers introduced sugar production to the northeast of Brazil and used millions of slaves transported from Africa to cultivate the cane. Sugar production went into decline after the Dutch occupied Pernambuco state between 1630 and 1654 and then used methods learned in Brazil to develop sugar cultivation in the Caribbean islands. However, sugar is still grown on a large scale in Northeastern Brazil today and the region, particularly Bahia state, has a strong African Brazilian heritage.
Commodities – Gold

Brazil’s history is the story of the exploitation of its natural resources and a series of ‘booms’ that transformed different parts of the country at different times. This has made a small minority of its population rich at the expense of the vast majority. The very name Brazil is derived from the *pau-Brasil* tree which the first European settlers cut down to extract a valuable red dye from its bark. So many trees were cut down they almost became extinct.

Image: The gold rush town of Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais (Wikimedia Commons)

The gold rush

In the early 18th century *bandeirantes*, or adventurers, discovered large gold deposits in Minas Gerais state. This triggered a gold rush. More than 400,000 Portuguese settlers and half a million African slaves arrived to mine for gold. The economic centre of Brazil shifted south from the sugar plantations of the Northeast. The few who controlled the gold trade became fabulously rich while the vast majority worked for little or no reward. Gold is still mined in small quantities in Minas Gerais today, but the state is better known for large-scale iron ore mining and the extraction of other metals and minerals.

Commodities – Coffee

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Slaves on a coffee *fazenda*, 1885 (Wikimedia Commons)

The coffee boom

Brazil became independent from Portugal in 1822. The coffee boom in Sao Paulo state between 1840 and 1930 was therefore controlled by the new Brazilian government rather than the Portuguese. Early coffee cultivation depended on slave labour, but after the abolition of slavery in 1888 poor immigrants from southern Europe arrived to work on the coffee plantations. With land in abundant supply coffee farmers took little care of the environment. Coffee made up 63% of Brazil’s exports in 1891 and is still grown on a large scale today. However, coffee has become less important to Brazil’s economy due to other countries entering the global coffee market and Brazil developing new industries since the 1930s.
Commodities – Rubber

Brazil’s history is the story of the exploitation of its natural resources and a series of ‘booms’ that transformed different parts of the country at different times. This has made a small minority of its population rich at the expense of the vast majority. The very name Brazil is derived from the pau-Brasil tree which the first European settlers cut down to extract a valuable red dye from its bark. So many trees were cut down they almost became extinct.

Image: Manaus Opera House, built in 1896 with rubber boom wealth (Wikimedia Commons)

The rubber boom

The rubber boom occurred in the Northern region of Brazil between 1879 and 1912. This brought settlers and rapid social change to the Amazon river basin. Amerindian workers were enslaved to tap rubber trees and many died under conditions of forced labour. The owners of the rubber plantations grew fabulously rich, illustrated by the magnificent architecture of the Amazon city of Manaus. However, the rubber boom ended suddenly in 1912 when the British introduced rubber to its colonies in south-east Asia and Brazil lost its monopoly over rubber. There was a brief revival of rubber production in Brazil between 1942 and 1945 to supply rubber to the Allies during World War 2.

Dictatorship and development

In 1937 a period of political conflict in Brazil resulted in the end of democracy and the setting up of a dictatorship. Although democracy was partly restored later, the army ruled Brazil between 1964 and 1988. Brazil’s rulers between 1930 and 1988 aimed to develop the economy, introduce new industries and reduce Brazil’s dependence on commodity booms. For example, they protected new industries by deliberately restricting the importation of similar goods from other countries (this is known as import substitution). This policy attracted workers to the cities to work in new factories and offices. However, the governments of this period strongly supported business owners at the expense of the rights of ordinary citizens. Human rights were frequently ignored. Brazil was transformed and urbanisation increased, but the inequalities that had developed before 1930 remained and even deepened.

Image: The new capital city of Brasilia, a symbol of development (Wikimedia Commons)

Democracy

In 1988 the Brazilian people led a successful and peaceful campaign for the restoration of democracy. In 2002 the Partido dos Trabalhadores (the Workers Party) was elected with the mandate to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for ordinary Brazilians. The new President, Lula da Silva, was the first Brazilian leader to have been born into poverty. Programmes such as Fome Zero (or Zero Hunger, designed to improve nutrition), the Bolsa Familia (or Family Allowance) and the increase in the minimum wage have been successful in challenging extreme poverty. The level of inequality within Brazil has also been slowly reducing since 2001. However, the government has had greater success at tackling poverty and inequality through social security and welfare programmes than through changes to Brazil’s highly unequal economy. Large companies and wealthy individuals continue to hold significant power in Brazil.

Image: The first family to receive schooling allowance, 1995 (Wikimedia Commons)
**LAND GRAB!**

**Pernambuco state**

Pernambuco is in the Northeast region and is one of Brazil’s poorer states. The Brazilian government wishes to bring greater wealth and prosperity to Brazil’s poorer states.

Historically the coastal regions of Pernambuco were home to large sugar cane plantations. The sugar industry has been in long term decline. However, in recent years there has been a ‘new sugar boom’ in Pernambuco and other Northeastern states.

Soft drinks and fast foods use large quantities of sugar, and demand for sugar has doubled in the last ten years. Brazilian farming companies have responded to this demand by obtaining more land for their sugar plantations. The Brazilian government has supported the companies by investing billions of dollars in the sugar industry.

However, this also involves people living and working on the land being evicted to make way for the cane fields. Often these people have occupied the land for generations but don’t have the legal documents to prove their ownership. They risk losing their land and property, and being suddenly thrown into deeper poverty.

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**Important information**

Region: Northeast  
Capital city: Recife  
Population: 9.3 million  
GDP/capita: R$13,332  
Literacy: 92%  
Infant Mortality: 19/1,000  
Life Expectancy: 74.8 years  

This sign is outside the Usina Trapiche sugar mill in Sirinhaém, southern Pernambuco.

The sign reads ‘here’s investment from the Federal Government’ alongside the slogan ‘Brazil: A land for all’

Photo: Tatiana Cardeal/Oxfam
Meet Maria

Meet Maria Nazare (aged 41). She lived on land now farmed by the Usina Trapiche sugar company since she was born. Maria makes a living from collecting crabs in the mangrove swamps along the coast and selling them.

In 1998 families were evicted from the land to make way for the sugar plantation. Many like Maria moved to live in slums in the nearest town. She now lives in a house with water and electricity but has no way of making a living. So Maria makes the long journey back to the mangrove swamp and continues to fish for crabs. However, she says the sugar company has burned down her tent several times and the fertiliser used to grow sugar is poisoning the mangrove and the crabs.

Winners and losers?

The Brazilian government has invested billions of dollars to revive its sugar industry and respond to the world’s growing demand for sugar. New land has been planted with sugar cane. This creates jobs for sugar cane workers, who spend their wages locally, and makes large profits for the sugar companies. It helps to make poorer states like Pernambuco better off. However, fertilisers and pesticides damage land adjacent to the sugar cane fields.

Communities like Maria’s have occupied the land for many years and many have the legal right to live there. Despite this they are frequently evicted from the land they depend on for a living with little or no compensation or warning. Their homes and property are destroyed to make way for sugar. Large companies in Brazil can often do this no matter what the law says. Eviction pushes these communities deeper into poverty and increases local inequality.
PROGRESS IN BRAZIL

Since 2002 the Brazilian government has made great efforts to reduce poverty. These changes may also help to reduce inequality. During this time the country has seen progress. In six years, between 2003 and 2009, the number of people in poverty fell from 26.4% to 14.7%. It almost halved! There have also been big improvements in education and health since the 1990s. This has been to try to reduce inequality in Brazil.

Watch the news report here:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-26262345

Can you answer these questions?

1. What progress is being made in Brazil?
2. Can you list anything that the government is doing to help?
3. Is it helping to address inequality?
4. Are there still challenges?

Now watch the video in this report (halfway down the page) about 2 specific programmes being run by the government. (You can also try reading the report if you want)

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-24743675

Can you answer these questions?

1. What is the Brazilian government doing to help children get milk?
2. What is the Bolsa Familia, and how does it work?
3. How will it help reduce poverty?
4. Will it help reduce inequality?
BETTER OR WORSE?

As you have seen, the Brazilian government has done a large range of things to try and reduce poverty in the last decade. But have these changes consistently helped to reduce inequality? And how do they compare to some of the other things happening in Brazil?

Task: Investigate the information below which looks at a range of things happening in Brazil. Decide if each action is reducing inequality or making inequality worse.

A. The government are giving bank loans to people and small groups to set up businesses. These schemes, however, tend to favour big cities that already have strong economies.

B. The Brazilian government are providing school children with a free meal while making sure at least 30% of the food they buy for school lunches is from small scale family farmers.

C. The richest people in Brazil spend a smaller percentage of their earnings on tax than poor people. Tax is important as it supports government programmes to improve health, education and transport in the country.

D. There are more doctors in the richer South, Southeast and city areas of Brazil. Doctors often prefer these areas because working conditions are better. The government hasn’t persuaded more doctors to work in the North.

E. The Brazilian government are spending lots more on health care than they have in the past.

Glossary

Poverty – Someone living in poverty does not have a sufficient income to buy basic necessities. The United Nations sets the extreme poverty level at $1.25 per day.

Inequality – There is inequality when people do not have the same rights or opportunities as others.
## BETTER OR WORSE?

Think about the winners and losers.

- People in towns and cities? People in the countryside?
- People in the north? People in the south?
- Richer people? Poorer people?

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Reduces or Increases Inequality</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>Who benefits?</th>
<th>Who loses out?</th>
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## TEACHER SHEET: BETTER OR WORSE?

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<tbody>
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<td>A</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Rural communities do not have access to money – they can’t improve their situation.</td>
<td>Urban communities</td>
<td>Rural communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Reduce</td>
<td>Rural farmers have trade links. Poor children have free food.</td>
<td>Rural communities and poor people.</td>
<td>No one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Poor people have to give a larger % of earnings – they have less % left to spend.</td>
<td>Wealthy people. They have to pay a smaller % of their earnings.</td>
<td>Poor people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>People in the north and rural areas have less access to healthcare.</td>
<td>Urban communities / wealthy people in the south</td>
<td>Rural communities / people in the north.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Reduce</td>
<td>There is more health care available.</td>
<td>Everyone.</td>
<td>No one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>