

Did you know that...



poverty and inequality lead to hunger and malnutrition. Food and other basic goods and services that affect food security, health and nutrition - clean drinking water, a clean environment, safe housing conditions, schools, health care services - must be available for all people, including the poorest.

Some facts about my country

With about 180 million people, Brazil is the largest and most populous country in South America.

One out of five Brazilians - over 40 million people - lives on less than two dollars a day.

Nearly 16 million people, including many children, are hungry.

Many people live in slums which lack basic services and work opportunities.

Life in the countryside is hard: nine out of ten rural people lack access to clean drinking water and most rural houses have no toilets. Nearly five million rural families are landless or struggle to survive on small pieces of land.

Yet Brazil is not a poor country. It is one of the major food producers and exporters in the world. Brazil is also doing well in education: almost all boys and girls (97 per cent) go to primary school.

The Zero Hunger Programme, a massive national effort aimed to fight hunger, malnutrition and extreme poverty, was launched by the Brazilian government in 2003.



Read my story to find out...



Why people in Vila Esperança are hungry and sick.

What needs to change to make life in Vila Esperança better.

How the community is helping itself and what we can do to help the community.

Side By Side and Worlds Apart



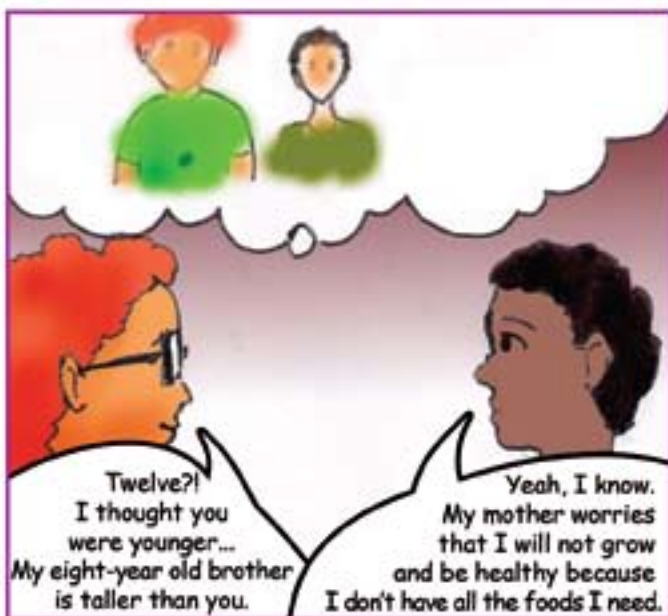
human rights: advantages that should belong automatically to everyone, such as life, education, health care, shelter, food

poverty: not having enough money for basic needs - food, shelter, clothing

commitment: duty, something a person should or should not do

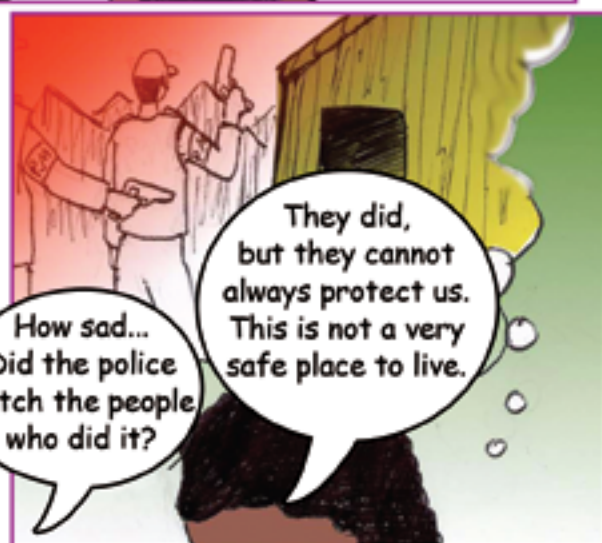
Side By Side and Worlds Apart

THE TEACHER HAS ORGANIZED A SCHOOL TRIP TO VILA ESPERANÇA, JUST OUTSIDE A BIG BRAZILIAN CITY. THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE LEFT THE RURAL AREAS BECAUSE OF POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND LAND DISPUTES.



unemployment: not having work

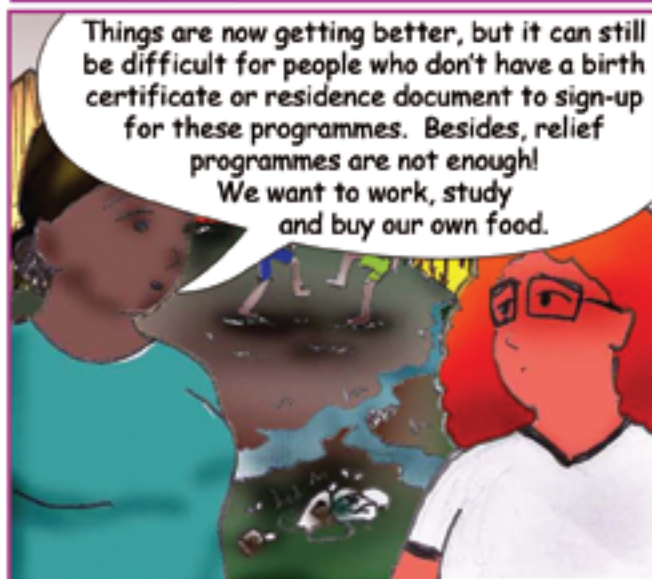
land dispute: disagreement over who owns a piece of land



Side By Side and Worlds Apart



dignity: sense of worth, pride or self-respect



charity: something given to a person in need

relief programme: temporary help - money, jobs, food, clothing, clean water, shelter, health care - given to people in need

Side By Side and Worlds Apart

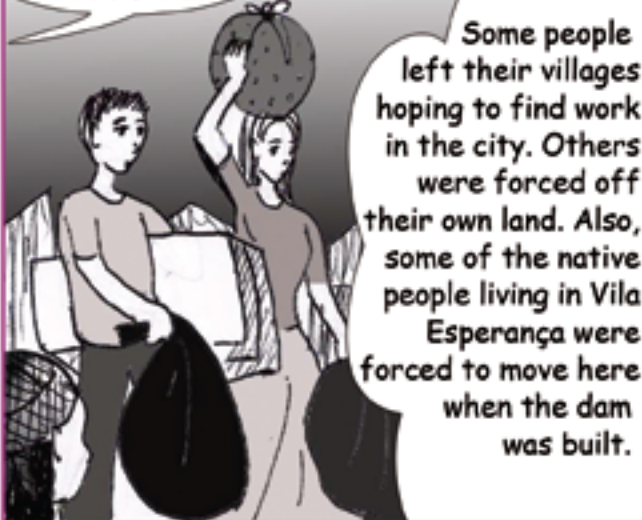
Well, our life here is very hard. If you look around closely, you will notice that we lack many things you take for granted. Many children do not go to school because they have to help their families. Others become street children because they have no home.



When we came here more than twenty years ago this was abandoned land. There was no fence and no owner. So we occupied the land and built our huts.



And where did you come from?



Some people left their villages hoping to find work in the city. Others were forced off their own land. Also, some of the native people living in Vila Esperança were forced to move here when the dam was built.

Some families were able to build good houses. Others still live in canvas tents and sleep on the ground.



And now is this place yours?



No Davi, not yet. There are still struggles over how this land should be used. The city is growing and some people want to force us out. They have even burned some huts and destroyed people's gardens.

But Dona Maria, that's not fair!! People must learn about the situation. The newspapers, radio and television stations should publicize your cause.



You are right, Paola; it isn't fair. But people often prefer to ignore things that are disturbing or unfair in society.

native people: people who have lived in a particular region for thousands of years, the original inhabitants of a place

dam: a barrier built to hold the flow of water



Pedro was one of the first to arrive in Vila Esperança. When they tried to force us out, he attracted attention to our problems. He collected signatures, organized demonstrations, wrote letters to local and national newspapers and TV and created the Association.



healthy balanced diet: a diet that provides an adequate amount and variety of foods to keep a human body healthy and help it grow