

THE RIGHT TO FOOD AND THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER IN NICARAGUA

One Year of the Zero Hunger Program



**Reference**

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“I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.”

*Martin Luther King Jr.
during his speech when receiving the Nobel peace prize 1964*

Executive Summary

Upon invitation from the Nicaraguan Center for Human Rights, FIAN International analyzed the present situation of the Alimentary Productive Program (PPA) one year after its implementation. The analysis was performed to better understand this program, generally referred to as the “Zero Hunger” program.

The investigation was carried out in Nicaragua from July 19th until August 8th, 2008, with the purpose to observe the program’s advances, limitations and problems. The general objective was to verify how the Zero Hunger program and its application as a public policy to combat hunger and poverty in the country under Daniel Ortega’s government complies with the government’s international rights obligation incurred by the ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (PIDESC). The specific right referred to concerns the progressive fulfillment of the Right to Food as stipulated in Article 11 of this Covenant.¹

The methodology applied in this first look at Zero Hunger has taken into account various elements. First, there were interviews with different State and civil society actors in Nicaragua. Second, there was a workshop and question and answer session held on July 4th at the CENIDH main office with the opportunity to hear about the progress of the Zero Hunger program, as presented by Executive Director of the program, Ing. Gustavo Moreno. On the afternoon of July 4th, there was an ensuing analysis session with representatives of different civil society organizations that shared their experiences with Zero Hunger (the program is being widely published by governmental institutions under this name). Afterwards, field visits were carried out in 16 communities in the provinces of Matagalpa, Estelí, Chinandega and Masaya, where women who benefited from Zero Hunger were interviewed and their families provided testimonials of their experiences. During these field visits there was also the opportunity to talk to technical personnel of MAGFOR (Ministry for

Agriculture and Forestry) and with others who were not beneficiaries. Additional meetings with NGOs and international institutions, as well as a significant number of publications, press articles, the webpage of the PPA² and other documents were researched in order to provide for more substantiated conclusions about the program and to formulate the final conclusions.

According to the information provided by Ing. Moreno, Zero Hunger is being implemented in all provinces of the country and the distribution level of the productive package (a parcel of goods and animals) has reached 23,000 women who have benefited from this package between June 2007 and July 2008. The goal was to hand over 30,000 of these parcels at a cost of 825 million Córdoba by the end of 2008, which leads to a cost of 30,000 Córdoba per unit. However, the IEEPP Institute reported that the 2008 Zero Hunger budget has not been fully expended. According to MAGFOR, this under expenditure has been due to difficulties in delivering the packages during the summer. In addition to these climate related issues, the program’s director admitted that there were a number of problems in the implementation of the program due to its general magnitude and its countrywide distribution. The field visits revealed conclusions regarding the focus of Zero Hunger, the selection criteria for the beneficiaries and the participation of the communities, communal leaders, mayors and the Citizen Power Councils, which were created by the Ortega Government. The main criticism expressed by female beneficiaries has been the lack of help to persons suffering from extreme poverty, the deficient quality of the animals handed over, that the amount, which must be saved of 20% of the total package cost (about 5,500 Córdoba), should be used for a communal purpose and not only be savings for those already benefited, and that there should be a program component which allows women to buy land.

¹ Nicaragua ratified the PIDESC in 1992.

² PPA-Programa Productivo Alimentario=Alimentary Productive Program, is the original name of this program.

As the success of Zero Hunger depends to a large degree on the capacity of the technical personnel of MAGFOR that provides assistance, training and follow-up to the program, a certain weakness has been noted in the insufficient quality and quantity of personnel for the implementation of the program.

The final evaluation shows that the field visits generally confirmed the observations and conclusions made by the NGOs that have been working on similar projects for years, and also those from international agencies and institutions. One of the main complaints is the little transparency in the whole management of Zero Hunger and the nearly non-existent integration of the various organized actors of civil society. As already mentioned, there were also doubts whether MAGFOR can really benefit 15,000 families per year as planned. Another widely criticized aspect is the creation of the Citizen Power Councils which have assumed a decisive role in Zero Hunger and openly maintain partiality, thus violating human rights with regard to the non-discrimination mandate as established not only in the Constitution, but also in the International Covenants ratified by Nicaragua.

Above all, the big question mark remains whether Zero Hunger, as emblematic strategy of the Ortega Government, can fulfill its main objective to combat hunger and to abolish poverty in Nicaragua. In this context, it has to be said that even though the government of Daniel Ortega in its political statements shows a focused diction on sectors like energy, drinking water, health and education, and a more pro-poor tendency than former governments, it remains to be seen whether Zero Hunger will develop a sustainability which will reach further than handing out goods and animals, whether it will promote the Law for Alimentary and Nutritional Security and Sovereignty in a harmonized way to be approved finally in the National Assembly, and whether the government can develop a strategy in a progressive way so that the State of Nicaragua will fulfill its duty under the Right to Adequate Food in such a way that "every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement."³

In view of this analysis, a number of short-, mid- and long- term recommendations have been formulated, which might possibly help improve the Zero Hunger program, and some others which might give certain guidelines for the fulfillment of the State of the Right to Adequate Food in Nicaragua. They are as follows:

Short term:

- The government should exercise the utmost possible participation and transparency in designing and implementing public policies with regard to the Right to Food, land questions and rural development.

- It is recommended to establish an independent monitoring and evaluating committee constituted by civil society, which will help to solve any kind of problem and to improve the Zero Hunger program, and thus will assure its success and sustainability. This committee should also provide some kind of opportunity for claims to be presented by the population with regard to the program.
- Any kind of discrimination has to be eliminated from the implementation of Zero Hunger as established under the Constitution of Nicaragua, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other International Covenants ratified by the country. The original project executed by CIPRES (Center for Promotion, Investigation and Rural and Social Development) proved that tolerance as a strategy had an important impact, since the need to feed oneself and to overcome poverty were top priorities and families abandoned political and biased antagonism and became members of the PPA organizations.⁴
- Clear criteria should be established in order to determine which women should be beneficiaries and which ones not; the simple term "impoverished" is not sufficient to give priority to the persons most in need.
- The political pressure to implement the program with 15,000 packages distributed over a year should not impede handing over animals of good quality, to preparing the whole family to receive them well, and carrying out an integrated training in all the subjects necessary, especially when one third of the cost of the package is budgeted for this work (US \$500).

Mid term:

- It is recommended that in the implementation of Zero Hunger, knowledge and experiences of organizations working in agricultural and organizational projects should be used in order to guarantee success and sustainable development for the families benefited.
- The Zero Hunger program only assists families who own more than 1 manzana (= 0.7 hectares) of land. MAGFOR talks about a so-called "Backyard Package" for families who own less land. This aspect should get priority over handing out cows so that very needy families will be tended to. One and a half manzana of land (the amount necessary to graze a cow according to agricultural experts) cultivated in an intensive diversified way could feed several families.
- In order to empower women, it is not sufficient to hand over animals as their property. It is recommended to include the gender subject in such a way to assure success that the whole family will be involved. In this context, one has to be very careful that handing over the package does not turn into an additional workload for the women benefited.

³ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Observation No. 12, May 1999

⁴ Martínez, C., Navas, N: Informe de evaluación externa, Plan Estratégico CIPRES, 2004-2006, January 2007

- It is recommended to develop a strategy as part of Zero Hunger to promote the notion that women will be at least co-owners of the land or owners of the piece of land on which the house stands in order to truly empower them.

Long Term:

- In order to fulfill the obligation of the State of Nicaragua with regard to the Right to Food for all Nicaraguan women and men, it is necessary to develop a progressive strategy, apart from the Zero Hunger Program, that considers the highly marginal population which lives in extreme poverty.
- The government should adopt policies, norms and projects which guarantee and fulfill the Right to Food which refers to agrarian reform measures, access to water resources and creation of jobs, especially for vulnerable marginal groups.
- The question referring to land property has not yet been solved. The government should readopt a land policy in an overall agrarian reform framework, in which women should also be included, as only 10% of them are land owners and less than 10% receive rural credits. For the overall situation of peasant women, Zero Hunger is a mere palliative measure.
- The justiciability of the Right to Food should be assured by the State of Nicaragua which means that any individual person can claim this right if necessary in court. Therefore, the government should undertake the necessary steps so that the Law for Alimentary and Nutritional Security and Sovereignty will finally be approved in an agreed-upon way by the National Assembly and so that the Zero Hunger Program will include mechanisms of justiciability in order to assure the Right to Food.

1. Introduction

The Zero Hunger Program is the banner-bearing project of Daniel Ortega's Government for Reconciliation and National Unity and represents its principal strategy with the aim to "...contribute eliminating extreme poverty and hunger in the rural area and reduce by half between 1990 and 2015 the percentage of persons with an income lower than 1 dollar and/or who are suffering from hunger."⁵ Additionally, the Zero Hunger Program is an integrated part of the governmental Five Year Plan- 2008-2012 called "Revolution in Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Areas," with the intent to enhance "...capitalization and sustainability of small peasant production, benefiting 75.000 impoverished families."⁶ Zero Hunger was launched in June 2007 by the then newly installed Ortega Government and has achieved up to now – according to official figures – the distribution of 13.000 productive packages, which are integrated parcels of goods, animals and services, given out by MAGFOR (Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry) in order to reach the aforementioned objective.

The Right to Food is a central human right enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), ratified by Nicaragua in 1992, in particular in its General Observation No. 12 about Adequate Food elaborated by the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social rights which determines that: "The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement."⁷ Furthermore, the Right to Adequate Food establishes three levels of State obligations: the obligations to respect, protect and fulfill. The obligation to respect the access to adequate food requires that the State does not adopt any kind of measure which might impede this access. The obligation to protect requires that the State Party adopts measures to ensure that no individual or company will deprive persons of access to adequate food. The obligation to fulfill or facilitate means that the State must take steps toward a progressive realization aiming at strengthening the access to resources and their use by the population, so that it can secure its livelihood, including food security.

The CESCR particularly stresses that socially vulnerable groups, for example people without land and other portions of the population especially impoverished, may need special programs which will guarantee their economic access to food. The physical access implies that adequate food should be accessible to everyone, including physically vulnerable individuals, persons living in disaster-prone areas and other especially disadvantaged groups.

5 PPA (Alimentary Productive Program), MAGFOR, no date, p.9

6 Government for Reconciliation and National Unity, Five Year Plan 2008-2012, The Revolution in the system for Agriculture, Forestry and Rural areas, February 2008

7 CESCR, General Observation No.12, May 1999

The present report aims at a first look at the Zero Hunger Program after one year since its implementation. The general objective of the research was to find out in which ways this program as public policy of the government of Nicaragua to fight hunger and poverty in the country, contributes to the State's international rights obligation incurred through the ratification of the ICESCR with regard to the progressive fulfillment of the Right to Food as described beforehand.

In order to reach some conclusions and recommendations, the method applied in this paper regarding the Zero Hunger Program has considered various elements of consultation with State and civil society actors in Nicaragua. There was the opportunity to get to know the scope of the program during a workshop in July of this year, when it was presented by the program's director Ing. Gustavo Moreno. Statements of different civil society organizations of Nicaragua helped to achieve an insight into their experiences with the Zero Hunger Program. Later on, a series of field visits to benefited families in 15 communities in the departments of Matagalpa, Estelí, Chinandega and Masaya were carried out in order to obtain a more concrete impression of the implementation of the Zero Hunger Program. To back up the monitoring, a number of publications, press articles, webpage of the program and other documents at hand have been collected and studied. However, in view of the large number of benefited families and their vast geographical distribution in the country, this report does not claim to be exhaustive nor representative regarding a full evaluation of the program. Its general aim is to take a first look at the implementation of Zero Hunger, its extent and progress, so that it might be possible to ascertain to what degree the government is complying with its obligation to realize the right to Food by taking progressive steps in Nicaragua.

2. Strategies to Fight Hunger and Poverty in Nicaragua

2.1. Hunger and Poverty in Nicaragua

FIAN in its 2007 report⁸ presented the hunger and poverty situation related to the Right to Food and to Land. Since then, a number of new reports have been published about the hunger situation in Nicaragua with the latest data available.

According to these, Nicaragua continues to be the second poorest country in Latin America after Haiti. The World Bank recognizes that "Even though the poverty index has slightly fallen and various welfare indicators have shown improvements, there persist important challenges and projections show that Nicaragua could only reach half of the millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015."⁹

In Nicaragua, as in many other countries, poverty remains a rural phenomenon and the highest poverty rate is to be found in the Atlantic region amongst the small producers. It is calculated that about 68% of the rural population is poor and that 80% of the extremely poor of all the population of Nicaragua live in rural areas.

POVERTY INDEX BY REGIONS AND AREAS OF RESIDENCE 1993-2005

	Extreme Poverty					General Poverty				
	1993	1998	2001	2005	Change 2001-2005	1993	1998	2001	2005	Change 2001-2005
National	19.4	17.3	15.1	14.9	-0.2	50.3	47.9	45.8	46.2	+0.4
Urban	7.3	7.6	6.2	5.4	-0.8	31.9	30.5	30.1	29.0	-1.1
Rural	36.3	28.9	27.4	26.9	-0.5	76.1	68.5	67.8	67.9	+0.1
Managua	5.1	3.1	2.5	3.4	+0.9	29.9	18.5	20.2	19.2	-1.0
Pacific	16.9	16.8	10.6	9.9	-0.7	45.8	52.9	46.1	45.4	-0.7
Central	35.6	25.9	27.4	24.4	-3.0	71.5	62.4	59.9	60.5	+0.6
Atlantic	19.6	29.4	20.6	23.7	+3.1	60.6	62.2	61.3	62.3	+1.0

Source: EMNV 1993, 1998, 2001 and 2005; INEC.

When asking how poverty is to be measured, there exist different indicators which count income and others which pay more attention to the things the population has to live without. In this way, it is defined which households are poor and which ones are not, which will also be an important point when analyzing the Zero Hunger Program. Taking into account the arguments of Indian economist and philosopher Amartya Kumar Sen,¹⁰ one can say that poverty is "...the situation of those households which do not manage to achieve in a relatively stable way the necessary resources to satisfy the basic necessities of its members."

Obviously, one of the most basic necessities (apart from education, health, access to water and housing) is food and, according to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), food security is a "situation

8 FIAN R 10, El Derecho a la Alimentación y la Situación Agraria en Nicaragua, Informe de la Misión de Investigación de Vía Campesina y FIAN Internacional, 2007

9 World Bank, Nicaragua Report about Poverty 1993-2005, May 2008

10 Amartya Kumar Sen, Recipient of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1998 for his contribution to a welfare economy and his theory for human development.

in which every person, in every moment, has access to nutritious and not contaminated food, in order to maintain a healthy and active life." In Nicaragua, about one third of the population does not enjoy this privilege. The country shows a "vulnerability in the access, availability, consumption and biological use of food necessary for an equitable and safe development of life."¹¹

Regarding alimentary and non-alimentary consumption by the population in Nicaragua, it is found that 50% of the consumption concentrates only on food. This dependency on food "...even increases when the situation of poverty gets more profound: with the non poor it reaches 45%, in those generally poor 59% and with the extremely poor 62%. Also how much is spent on food in the overall consumption depends on the place of residence: in the urban zones it reaches 45%, whereas in the rural ones it is 53%."¹² In this context, the populations most affected by chronic malnutrition are children.

The situation of poverty and vulnerability in Nicaragua has worsened due to constant situations of crisis, which have increased the malnutrition in the affected zones of the country (due to natural and economic disasters). The United Nations in its report "Valoración Común del País" (General Evaluation of the Country)¹³ says that "Part of the multiple reasons for food insecurity and hunger is the access to food, in particular for the population who lives in extreme poverty." The country imports food to complement the basic provisions, which can contribute to the fact that prices for these products are lower than those produced locally due to internal distribution problems. The report continues, "...even under normal conditions the poorest population does not have the capacity to buy and therefore does not have any access to the necessary quantity of food of good quality." Furthermore, there is a series of problems related to the eating habits of the population in Nicaragua, which limits itself to eat mostly grains and other carbohydrates, few proteins and micro-nutrients, and few fresh fruit and vegetables.

The social access to food should also be taken into account, which means knowledge about which foods are healthy and nutritious and how to choose, prepare and preserve them. A vicious cycle of malnutrition, infections and poverty might become established if there are no preventive health services, hygienic management of food and an adequate environmental hygiene. The equal distribution of food in the family also has to be advocated, so that girls and women receive the same share.

The CESCR in its report highlights the fact that poor rural families cover their necessities by saving on food costs. Rural poor families even sell their goods, animals, tools and land, which represents a "...gradual process of decapitalization which shows in the data on poverty and food insecurity..."¹⁴ as already described.

2.2. National Strategies to fight Hunger and Poverty

2.2.1. Prior to the Zero Hunger Program

The HIPC Initiative (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) of the World Bank and Monetary Fund, launched in 1996 to alleviate the external debt of the poorest and most indebted countries, chose Nicaragua to be benefited under the first debt release. This meant that the State had to present plans for the eradication or reduction of poverty and had to invest funds meant for the payment of interest rates into corresponding programs, above all into health and education.

These programs had to fulfill certain objectives: "...a) to strengthen the identification of the strategies to fight against poverty, b) to extend the protection of the most vulnerable groups, c) to improve the coordination between development institutions and d) to concentrate the analysis, assistance and financial resources from the international community in the achievement of objectives to reduce poverty."¹⁵

To comply with the above, a Strategy to Reduce Poverty (ERP) was presented by the Alemán Government in 2000 and then the Consolidated Strategy for Economic Growth and Reduction of Poverty (ERCERP) was presented in 2001, which had as central targets: economic growth, to improve the investment in human capital, to protect the most vulnerable groups and to achieve good governance and institutional development,¹⁶ by which the World Bank's aforementioned demand had been fulfilled.

The Bolaños Government devised a National Development Plan in 2003 and 2004 (PND) which according to Néstor Avendaño, a renowned economist in Nicaragua, was not working well from the start as it did not have the support of economic players nor of the National Assembly, even though it did give an excellent evaluation of the economic and social situation of the country.

According to present statements, neither the ERCERP nor the PND fulfilled the expectations. The major criticism from civil society has been "...the disproportionate importance given to economic growth without taking into account the distribution of resources and income..." and it is even said that the PND "...could worsen the inequalities, above all when one considers that it does not include any kind of affirmative actions towards groups which have been historically excluded from the development processes, like for example women, the indigenous people and afro-descendants, and people with some type of disablement."¹⁷

Furthermore, the HIPC funds which Nicaragua received did not have the expected impact because they were diverted to a large extent from the projects for which

11 World Food Program of the United Nations, October 2005

12 CESCR, Application of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, October 22, 2007, P. 138, Art. 598

13 United Nations: Valoración Común del País (General Evaluation of the Country), First Edition, Managua 2007

14 CESCR, Application..., P.147, Art. 654

15 El Observador Económico, „Colorín, colorado, la ECERP y el PND han fracasado“, Managua April 2007

16 See also Report FIAN 2007, pages 23-26

17 Trocaire, Evaluation made for the International Agrarian Development Fund (FIDA), P.40

they were intended to reduce poverty, to pay the internal debt and mostly to rescue the private banks. The World Bank, acknowledging the efforts made by Nicaragua to reduce poverty and inequality, at the same time demands that State resources which are used to reduce poverty be more pro-poor and states that there is an imperfect focus in many social programs.¹⁸

2.2.2. Since 2007 – Instauration of the Ortega Government

The Ortega Government inherited from its predecessor the National Development Plan, which it rejected. On the other hand, it did confirm a certain continuity with some former policies regarding macroeconomic stability, such as monetary and financial politics, the territorial and municipal focus of the PND, the continuation of CAFTA and other policies meant to create a favorable climate to private national and international investors.

The political change of the new Government for Reconciliation and National Unity refers to a more pro-poor focus in public policies, in particular those related to education and health; a greater focus on replacing a large number of small projects in order to achieve more freedom to invest in development; the end of the privatization agenda of former governments with regard to water, electricity and social security; and a new productive strategy, coordinated with a campaign to reforest and to abolish illiteracy. Moreover, the government has announced a new strategy with regard to international cooperation which will favor a sector approach instead of concentrating on projects.¹⁹

2.2.2.1. Food Security and Sovereignty

Under the new government, the proposed Law for Food and Nutritional Security and Sovereignty, which had passed a special Commission in the past legislative session equipped with important contributions from civil society, was approved in general by the National Assembly in June 2007. However, due to the opposition of liberal deputies seeking to prohibit the import of genetically modified organisms, it was not ratified, and the proposal was sent back to a special commission and the FAO was asked to help strengthen the project. In a seminar organized by the FAO about food and nutritional security and sovereignty in November 2007, a new proposal was presented which was quite different from the project already accepted in general.

The criticism of civil society organizations which contributed to the subject of the new proposal of the FAO was presented by GISSAN (an interest group lobbying for food and nutritional security and sovereignty) and refers to a basic concept of food sovereignty which should include much more the dignity of the people and the local dimension so that this food sovereignty

can really be achieved. Another point of divergence between GISSAN and FAO was the matter of food containing genetically modified organisms which enter the country not only in food assistance programs. This aspect should be treated in the regulation of other laws according to FAO which still have not been approved²⁰ and other parts of the proposal should be included in regulations and not in the very same law.

The main demand from civil society is that the new law "...guarantees the food and nutritional security and sovereignty for the future sustainable development of the country. So that men and women can have access to, dispose of and consume in quantity and quality that which will satisfy their alimentary necessities and their nutritional wellbeing, but in general the law shall guarantee other elements: "...the integrated participation with a focus on gender by the governmental institutions which are in charge of developing agricultural, livestock, fishing and forestry policies, of health, nutrition, education, agro-industrial, credit, technical and financial policies, to mention a few, with the objective to harmonize between all ministries all actions and measures for an integrated policy for food and nutritional security and sovereignty."²¹ Up to this date, there is still no result regarding the process of consultation of the special commission with the FAO.

As part of its alimentary security policy, the Ortega Government signed a number of agreements: the Treaty on Food Security and Sovereignty between the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Republic of Cuba, and the Republic of Bolivia in the framework of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) which was ratified by the National Assembly on April 24, 2008.

This treaty intends to establish the institutional framework for the development of technical, financial and scientific cooperation between the members with the objective to achieve food security and sovereignty for their populations, in the context of ALBA, by formulating and executing joint programs. One of the planned activities is the interchange of food products and national agricultural input. Another bi-national agreement between the Republic of Nicaragua and the Republic of Venezuela refers to providing the Venezuelan market with beef, black beans and other cereals, as well as powdered milk. Venezuela proposed to Nicaragua to work on "twin" projects which will allow Venezuela to buy Nicaraguan products in exchange for financial assistance to develop those productive sectors in particular.²² With regard to this agreement Nicaraguan producers have already pointed out that "Nicaragua is incapable of complying with the alimentary agreement with Venezuela,"²³ in particular with regard to the

20 Giorgio Trucchi, „Nicaragua: la soberanía alimentaria es una definición política estratégica, y no una especulación tecnocrática, November 19, 2007

21 El Nuevo Diario, Ernesto Aburto: "Articular esfuerzos contra el hambre y garantizar la seguridad alimentaria", 14-02-2008.

22 El Nuevo Diario: „Nicaragua colocará alimentos en Venezuela", April 9, 2008.

23 Diario de las Américas, „Nicaragua es incapaz de cumplir acuerdo alimenticio

18 World Bank, Nicaragua Report about Poverty 1993-2005, Art. 18-22

19 SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), "At last poverty?", Evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies in Latin America – 2007, Executive Summary, pages 7 and 8.

delivery of corn, beans and other grains, if one takes into account that there is a shortage of beans in the national market and that foods like rice, corn and beans have to be imported.

Considering this panorama, one can understand that the government of Nicaragua emphasizes that production has to concentrate on agriculture and that the productive agricultural sectors of the rural communities have to be strengthened.²⁴

A tool inherited from the former government to tackle the question of tending to poor rural families and attacking the problems of alimentary security, PRORURAL had been devised in 2003,²⁵ which is a policy and strategy for productive rural development, which intends to coordinate the agendas of the different donating/financing agencies and governments and all the efforts made by governmental institutions (SPAR).²⁶ At the end of 2007, PRORURAL was evaluated and it was found that the new government had been dealing in a better way with the alimentary security problem, even though there were certain lapses in specific policies: there was no transparent process and a follow-up monitoring component was missing, as well as a dialogue and a strengthening of the capacities of the implementing entities and of the beneficiaries.²⁷

2.2.2.2. The New Development Plans

The National Human Development Plan 2008-2012

As the new government discarded the old National Development Plan, it wrote its own National Human Development Plan 2008-2012, which has been distributed as a draft proposal for discussion in April 2008.

The main objective of this plan is to overcome poverty with more equal development and a new more democratic power structure. It completely discards the politics of former governments as a neoliberal model which has caused poverty and the destruction of the environment, and proposes to change the model to one called "Citizen Power." In this context, Nicaragua intends to reintroduce the economic, social and cultural rights.²⁸ Another principal objective is to transform the structures "...to overcome exclusion and liberate the human development potential of the excluded, including poor people, women, young people, indigenous people, the disabled ones, amongst others. The criteria for success is growth overcoming poverty and the elimination of

hunger, also the conditions of self-realization of all people of Nicaragua in a sovereign and independent country, united with the Central American, Caribbean and Latin American brothers."²⁹

In order to reinstall the right to food and the protection against hunger which is a State obligation not only enshrined in the CDESCR but also in the Constitution of Nicaragua, the Human Development Plan guarantees that all people in Nicaragua "...will have access to safe and nutritious food at just prices in order to lead a healthy and active life."³⁰

This alimentary security will be guaranteed by increasing food production, "...creating job opportunities, ensuring financing, stock-keeping and distribution at fair prices and with the help of the Citizen Power. This will be achieved through the following programs:

- Strengthening of the Citizen Power
- Program of School Lunch
- Program Zero Hunger
- Program Zero Usury
- Seed Program
- Program to assist medium-sized and small enterprises for job creation
- Functioning of the Development Bank for Production (PRODUZCAMOS)
- Strengthening of ENABAS (Nicaraguan Enterprise of Staple Food) for financing, stock-keeping and distribution at fair prices, with the help of the Citizen Power
- Distribution networks for foodstuffs with the help of the Citizen Power
- Programs in the ALBA framework: gas stoves and bottles at low prices for poor families."³¹

The National Constitution guarantees a protection of equality for all people of Nicaragua³² which is reflected in Art. 45 of the Human Development Plan which says that "The integral reconciliation which includes nature so that the biodiversity of our ancestors can be recuperated, as well as the reconciliation based on common and national interests of the people of Nicaragua in the fight against poverty, without discrimination due to race, belief, gender, religion and political conviction, forges reconciliation and unity."³³

Article 47 of the same plan speaks of gender equity and the rights of children and young people and Art. 48 assesses and promotes the participation of

con Venezuela", January 29, 2008 (Nicaragua is incapable of fulfilling the alimentary agreement with Venezuela)

24 Giorgio Trucchi speaking with Wálmaro Gutiérrez, "Queremos enfocar los escasos recursos que tenemos hacia el agro" ("We want to concentrate the little funds we have on agriculture"), April 21, 2008

25 PRORURAL (Sector Program for Sustainable Productive Rural Development)

26 SPAR – Rural Agricultural Public Sector, includes all public institutions which work on the implementation and follow up of the PRORURAL program in coordination with the cooperating agencies that have donated.

27 Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, Informe de Avance, October-December 2007.

28 Government for Reconciliation and National Unity, National Human Development Plan 2008-2012, Draft Proposal, April 2008.

29 Ibid, P.14

30 Ibid, P.22

31 Ibid, P.22

32 Political Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua, Art. 27, 1987: "All personas are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection. There is no discrimination because of place of birth, nationality, political conviction, race, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, economical position or social condition."

33 Human Development Plan, Draft, April 2008, P.22

women "...as actors who impel changes and generate development....Therefore, it is of utmost importance to give incentives to and promote women's participation in all political, economic and social development processes in the country, generated by State institutions and civil society in general, as well as to promote and make visible the leadership of women in all realms of life." Art. 50 also defines that "the priority of the Government for Reconciliation and National unity is to guarantee that all human rights of women will be reflected in the main programs of the Government for Reconciliation and National Unity, as there are "Zero Hunger" and "Zero Usury", in which all the beneficiaries are women, and the literacy program "Yes I Can" which gives priority to women."³⁴

In general, the plan is written in a quite flexible terminology which leaves the strategies open so that they can be interpreted in different ways. Where they are more concise depicting particular programs is with regard to alimentary security as described on page 10 of this report.

The Five-Year-Plan 2008-2012 – The Revolution in the Agricultural, Forestry and Rural System – Agricultural and Rural Sector, February 2008

This document elaborated by the Government for Reconciliation and National Unity describes a "Strategy of Revolution in the System of the Agricultural and Rural Sector (ERSAR) with a sector approach", and the Agricultural and Forestry Ministry (MAGFOR) coordinates all institutions which form part of the Agricultural, Forestry and Rural Public Sector (SPAR). At the same time it plays an important part in the new structure of the Councils and Cabinets of Citizen Power, installed in a parallel way to the existing system of the Law for Citizen Participation No. 475. The objective is "...a direct demonstration of democracy in the homeland, targeting to define a strategy for the Rural Productive Development in departments and regions."³⁵ This document will carry even more weight when the incorporation of decisions made by representatives of the Councils of Citizen Power is planned on all levels of action of the public sector.³⁶

The plan defines clearly that "The elimination of poverty is our main mission, and will be achieved with the help of social policies in the framework of an economic strategy for rural families. In this sense, the Zero Hunger Program is the principal instrument for capitalization, an economic growth with justice and equity and the formation of an inclusive, social, sovereign and active State. This implies the adoption of our measures to impel changes regarding the inequalities of income, safeguarding the availability of foodstuffs first for internal consumption and for export in the second

place."³⁷ With regard to the Zero Hunger context, the plan goes on to assess production and organization with projected numbers up to 2012.

The plan also includes the subject of organic agriculture, the regularization of land with equity, a program of access to productive land by giving credit to those without land, and the "promotion of association of small and medium-sized male and female producers" with the "objective to speed up mechanisms of capitalization in rural areas," which also refers to the beneficiaries of the Zero Hunger Program with the objective that "governmental assistance will help to carry out productive sustainable activities."³⁸

Even though this Five Year Plan defines more in detail the strategic frameworks of the different focal issues in the agricultural sector and its strategic actions, it is criticized for intending to tie up the complete production chain under the execution of the government from seed production to commercialization of agricultural products. Furthermore, the associative farm organizations, which have been working with producers for many years, are suspicious of the overriding role of the Councils of Citizen Power with their ample participation in the National, Departmental and Municipal Agrarian Councils.

It remains to be seen which of the many described strategies in this Five Year Plan will really contribute to the elimination of poverty in the country and whether the Zero Hunger Program, which only because of its name causes a lot of expectations, can in fact fulfill the obligation of the government of Nicaragua that every Nicaraguan man, woman and child have access at any time to adequate food or to means to procure it.

3. The Zero Hunger Program

3.1. Background

The Zero Hunger Program was originally an idea of Orlando Nuñez Soto and was implemented by the NGO CIPRES (Center for Promotion, Investigation and Rural and Social Development). Orlando Nuñez is at present presidential advisor to the Ortega Government and declares himself to be a "militant of the revolutionary project, independent from the government and the FSLN (Sandinista Front for National Liberation)."³⁹ Originally, the project carried the name "Productive Alimentary Project (PPA)," but now it is mainly extended and promoted by the government under the name Zero Hunger.

The PPA of CIPRES took shape after the Hurricane Mitch emergency and had a number of very concise short-term objectives: it aspired "...that every Nicaraguan family should have on the table the same products which can be found on the tables of the developed countries, that

³⁴ Ibid, P.23

³⁵ Five Year Plan 2008-2012, The Revolution in the Agricultural, Forestry and Rural System, Agricultural and Rural Public Sector, February 2008, P.4

³⁶ Ibid, P.6

³⁷ Ibid, P.5

³⁸ Ibid, Pages 21-22

³⁹ 7 Días on Line: Orlando Nuñez: Corrupción y leyes conspiran contra "Hambre Zero", 28-02-2008

includes milk, meat, eggs, fruit, vegetables and cereals.”⁴⁰ The general objective of the program was “...a proposal of capitalization and assistance in technologies of an agro-ecological kind to the main producer of food in the country, that is to the peasant production, and to accompany at the same time the organization, integration and participation of the rural population in the private and public management of all affairs related to them.”

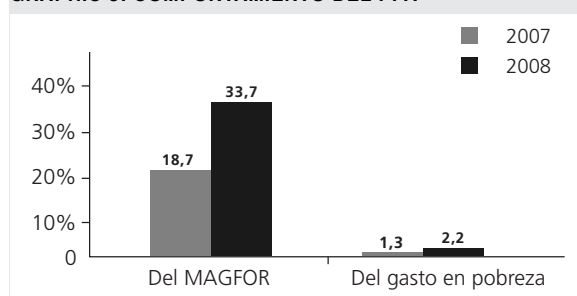
Until the publication of this document, CIPRES had assisted about 5,000 poor peasant families, “...providing 50% of these with a productive alimentary parcel valued at 1,500 US dollars per family, with satisfactory and tangible results.”

The CIPRES experience, which was carried out in different communities in the country, is generally considered to be a success which to a large extent is due to “...the democratization of the access to information, the transparency of its rules and the universal inclusion achieved through this program.”⁴¹ Based on this experience, CIPRES proposed a national strategy to assist at least 50,000 peasant families, at a cost of 15 million dollars per year. This proposal was integrated into the election campaign of the FSLN party and became the banner-bearing program of the present Government of Nicaragua, aiming at handing over the Productive Package – a parcel of items (goods, services and animals) – to 75,000 families in five years at a total cost of US \$150 million.

According to the IEEPP (Institute for Strategic Studies and Public Policies) in 2007 185 million Córdobas were included in the budget to assist 5,000 families. The money came from the State Budget/Relief (BID) and made up 18.7% of the total budget of MAGFOR and just 1.3% of the total spending on poverty.⁴² In 2008, the budget was increased in such a way that the spending on poverty rose to 2.2%. This means, that the government investment in this program cannot fulfill the objective to eliminate hunger and poverty. The IEEPP points out that the raise of the Zero Hunger budget has mainly been achieved through loans and donations negotiated with FIDA and the European Union. The Institute elaborated the following diagrams using the General Budget of the Republic, 2008, Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (MHCP):

Situation of the PPA in relation to the total budget of MAGFOR and the spending on poverty 2007-2008. The Graphic 3 shows the relationship of the total budget of the MAGFOR Ministry to the spending for poverty 2007-2008

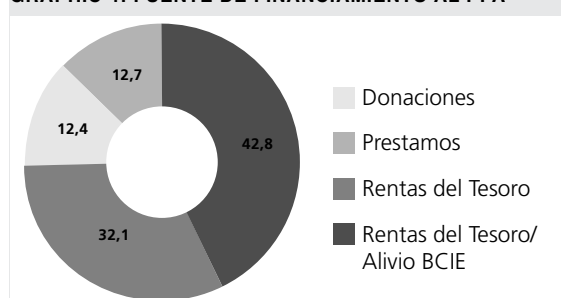
GRAPHIC 3: COMPORTAMIENTO DEL PPA



Source: Elaborated using the General Budget of the Republic 2007 and 2008. Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (MHCP).

Graphic 4: Sources of financing for the PPA (2008): 1) donations, 2) loans, 3) money from the State Budget, 4) money from the State Budget/Relief

GRAPHIC 4: FUENTE DE FINANCIAMIENTO AL PPA



Source: Elaboration using the General Budget of the Republic 2008. Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (MHCP).

A recurring problem during the research has been the availability of official documents regarding the Zero Hunger Program:

- There is a program description by CIPRES (3rd edition), but there is not an evaluation nor any monitoring published and available for civil society organizations.
- At the beginning of 2008, there was still an unsigned version on the Internet called “Program to fight poverty and achieve alimentary security and sovereignty” without a date, which has disappeared since then. This document was a plain extrapolation of the PPA program of CIPRES to the national level in Nicaragua.
- What is being handed around in the country is a version called “Productive Alimentary Program (PPA-MAGFOR) 2007,” which does not have an official letter-head.
- The only authorized source from the government side is therefore the website⁴³ of MAGFOR and the presentation of the Zero Hunger Director, Ing. Gustavo Moreno.⁴⁴

40 CIPRES, Alimentary Productive Program, Publication of CIPRES No. 28, 3rd edition. Managua, Nicaragua 2007, p.8

41 El Nuevo Diario, 14-02-2008: Los vacíos de „Hambre 0” y „Usura 0”

42 IEEPP Presupuesto Ciudadano, Boletín Year 2, no.3, Zero Hunger, Pages 8-12

43 www.magfor.gob.ni

44 Government of Reconciliation and National Unity, Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Alimentary Productive Program, Power Point Presentation, no date (23-06-2008).

3.2. Concepts of alimentary and nutritional security and sovereignty

Starting on the supposition that the aforementioned documents can serve as data reference for the evaluation of Zero Hunger, one can say that this program is the banner-bearing strategy of the Ortega Government to exercise the Right to Food in Nicaragua. MAGFOR is the governmental institution in charge of implementing this strategy for alimentary and nutritional security and sovereignty; the funds for this program come in part from State Budget resources and also partly from International Cooperation.

BUDGET OF THE PPA ACCORDING TO FINANCING SOURCES, 2008⁴⁵

Sources of Financing	Córdobas
FIDA (Loan)	34,250,927.00
European Union (Donation)	32,147,556.00
PMA (Donation)	84,141,000.00
Entity to be negotiated (Loan)	12,701,517.00
State Budget	47,977,000.00
State Budget/Relief BCIE	161,771,000.00
TOTAL	377,989,000.00

Due to the fact that Nicaragua is constantly producing less food and does import more each year, the main focus of the program is to promote the production of food in such a way that it is profitable, competitive, economically and ecologically sustainable and that it can also contribute to reducing food imports.

The strategy in document (c) of alimentary security and sovereignty "...consists of achieving in a short term (one year) that impoverished peasant families, whose land holding is between 1 and 3 manzanas (1 manzana = 0.7 hectares), will be producing food from animal and vegetable origin which they need to feed themselves, as well as products for livestock fodder, shade trees, medicines and ornamental plants." The long-term goal will be that the peasant families will produce a surplus and will sell food to urban and foreign markets, thus contributing to improving the food situation of the nation on a whole. Therefore, the ulterior objective of the program would be "...to eliminate extreme poverty and hunger in the rural area, and to reduce by half between 1990 and 2015 the percentage of persons with an income lower than one dollar and/or who suffer from hunger. It is hoped for that 75000 impoverished peasant families with landholding of one to three manzanas will surpass the poverty line and improve their alimentary security levels."

Therefore, the program does not only aspire to improve the self-alimentation of the benefited families, but also to develop "...a diversified economy of extended reproduction which will generate and reinvest the output and will industrialize itself and improve the level of life year by year, contributing in this way to an improvement of the national economy."

The analysis in the CIPRES report (a) comes to the conclusion that to stimulate the internal market "... means to improve payment to the farm workers and producers in the most disadvantaged regions due to the centralizing and excluding logic of the system." The main goal should be to produce "...at least 80% of those products which can be produced under the agricultural conditions of our country..." and to reach food security. With reference to food sovereignty "...this means guaranteeing the production of basic foodstuffs, thus facilitating and improving the access to food by those parts of the national sectors which do not produce. Thereby we will recuperate our principal resources: land, water, sun, climate and productive culture."

At present "...MAGFOR has planned to develop in the rural productive sector steps directed to improve the food security and sovereignty, to improve food productivity through the promotion of seeds of good quality, to guarantee the agricultural heritage and a sufficient production of healthy food of animal and vegetable origin and the promotion of getting organized among producers. Likewise, in order to contribute to the alimentary security of the families benefiting from the Alimentary Productive Parcel, MAGFOR will put at disposal 5,000 quintales⁴⁶ of local seeds of beans, corn, rice and sorghum, so that small land plots can be cultivated which will produce the necessary basic grains to complement the diet."⁴⁷

3.3. Special Focus of the Program

3.3.1. Gender

In all documents appears a focus on gender geared toward property (Productive Parcel) as a condition for the women who will receive the package of goods. Report (c) also speaks about the new role of peasant women and the shared compromise of the family who will be beneficiary "...for a change of social behavior of men in the household as a training ground for a new social behavior." Report (b) carries the argument as follows: "The fact that the goods will be property of the women, and that they will join in cooperatives to manage these goods, converts this program into one that will empower women."⁴⁸

The website of the PPA of MAGFOR describes this focus as follows: "In 2008, MAGFOR intends to hand over 14,537 parcels to women who are household heads and will ask for the same preconditions, which are that women possess one manzana (= 0.7 hectares) of land, that they do not own any of the goods included in the package, that they themselves compromise to make good usage of the latter, that they attend the corresponding trainings and repay 20% of the cost." In other publications, the government declares that the

⁴⁶ 1 quintal = about 49 kg

⁴⁷ Radio La Primerísimo, Managua, 15-04-2008: "Government gives priority to small producers and female household heads."

⁴⁸ Program to fight poverty and fulfill alimentary security and sovereignty, P. 4

⁴⁵ IEPPP Presupuesto Ciudadano, Boletín Year 2, No.3, Zero Hunger, Pages 8-12

PPA is part of the politics to combat poverty which has a "...clear focus on gender...to promote the participation of women in equal opportunities, to restore their rights as social and economic actors."⁴⁹

The CIPRES report is the most detailed with regard to this subject and speaks about the "Democratization of Gender Relations versus Male Behavior and Aggressiveness" and about a transformation of gender relations. This means empowering women in an ideological, political, sexual, economic and cultural sense. CIPRES has adopted in this context a leading role, as the organization also expresses the objective to work with men to find a new masculinity and also wants to take this matter and its solution to the public attention of the peasant economy. As an indicator of the successful empowerment of women, CIPRES points to their participation in organizations, above all in cooperatives. CIPRES says that the membership of women in the cooperatives reached 54%, and in the region of León it reached even up to 72% of the total number of members. As an example of particular success, CIPRES stresses that of these women "...the majority did not give signs of wishing to migrate, neither to the city nor abroad."

Regarding the fulfillment of the Right to Food in the proposal of the Zero Hunger Program of MAGFOR, one can say, in view of the aforementioned criteria, that the Zero Hunger Program is a strategy of the government especially devised for a vulnerable group, that is the impoverished rural women, as requested by the FAO in the Voluntary Guideline No. 13 on the Right to Food.⁵⁰ However, taking into account the strategic objectives as stipulated by the FAO,⁵¹ there exists a lack of actions regarding access and control of productive resources like land property, and of promoting actions which contribute to reducing the work-load of rural women, as we will see later on in the section on implementation of the program.

3.3.2. Sustainable Production

In the context of the Zero Hunger Program, it is intended to reach sustainability of food production with regard to management of natural resources like water, land, saving of firewood, applying ecological technologies, for example biological fertilizer, use of earthworms, sanitation of plants, bio-digesters, recycling on the plot, harvesting water and, cultivating vegetables (document c). In document (b), there still appear "Values and focus which will guarantee the sustainable reproduction and welfare of the peasant economy."

The CIPRES report gives the most details with regard to an "economy of peasant welfare," as opposed to the export model. Here, food production means

diversification to guarantee the diet of the family and "...above all to avoid monocultures, because of its bad effect in ecological and economic terms." In order to achieve this objective, CIPRES promoted a model which combines agriculture and cattle raising, "...devised to function in an intensive way using family workforce," and which "...stimulates the rational use of the land, the diversification and complementing of vegetable species and animals, as well as the recycling of products, sub-products and bio-degradable waste-products."

The PPA website (document d) which – considering the vehemence with which the Ortega Government is pushing the Zero Hunger Program – practically demonstrates a poor "Cinderella" aspect – reduces the aspect of sustainable production to "converting the family plots in integrative peasant farms...with emphasis on agriculture/forestry and animal grazing, under a system of recycling, worked in an intensive way to produce milk, meat, eggs, fruit, vegetables and grains; and to market them." In the power-point presentation of the program's director Ing. Gustavo Moreno, the bio-digesters only appear as a reference to the aforementioned subject.

3.3.3. Participation and Association

The government considers the PPA as a "Proposal to accompany the organization, integration and participation of the rural population" and wants to promote the Zero Hunger Program through the creation of communal networks of social and economic organizations starting from the farm family and building up to Councils of Communal Development and Welfare. In this sense, they see the productive parcel as "One instrument which will guarantee the citizen participation in all sectors which are represented in communities and municipalities such as mayors, Local Development Committees, civil, social, religious and academic NGOs, state institutions like MAGFOR...the police and the army." (PPA website)

Document (c) accounts for the coordination on a departmental and municipal level of the PPA – additionally applying to the governmental institutions of the SPAR sector⁵² - the regional social and representative organizations which should connect with the councils for citizen participation and communal councils of Citizen Power. It also highlights that on the Caribbean Coast, the proceedings will be carried out "...in accordance with the autonomous rights of the indigenous peoples and ethnic communities."

The presentation of Ing. Gustavo Moreno made quite clear that the government expects that the benefited families will organize in productive units of 50 families (or women) each, from which leading associative bodies will emerge. It is hoped that these bodies will form

49 El Pueblo Presidente (The People as President). Successful experiences and how to get a financial education. Women do show progress with the Zero Hunger Program. 2-01-2008

50 FIAN; Monitoring the State Action against Hunger. How to use the Voluntary Guidelines regarding the Right to Food for monitoring public policies. P.49

51 FAO Action Plan for Gender and Development (2002-2007)

52 SPAR – Rural Agricultural Public Sector, comprises all public institutions dedicated to the implementation and follow-up of the PRORURAL program in cooperation with donors.

small-scale enterprises (food production, stock-keeping, milk products etc.) and that through this the local economy will be revitalized (providers, transport etc.). The basic units will be the solidarity group which will pay their savings into the revolving fund, which is part of the agreement.

4. The implementation of the Zero Hunger Program

President Ortega launched the program in June 2007, accompanied by an intensive and extensive publicity campaign in the press which attracted the attention not only of civil society organizations, but also of the population of Nicaragua as a whole due to its spectacular name, Zero Hunger, which roused many expectations for its name alone.

4.1. The Productive Parcel⁵³

When one speaks about Zero Hunger what is meant is the Productive Parcel: a package of goods, animals and services handed over to the benefited family and which goes to the woman. According to Ing. Gustavo Moreno, the director of the program, the parcel includes 32 parts according to a menu which is different in each territory. In 2007, the parcel included apart from poultry, cows, pigs, rabbits, sheep, goats, also fruit trees, summer fodder, seeds for vegetables and local seeds for corn and beans. Furthermore, construction material was handed over, also irrigation components, facilities for water storage and stock-keeping, and tools. The handing out of the parcel is done by technicians of MAGFOR in a pre-established process:

- Selection of the families and technicians
- Selection of the providers
- Employment of technicians and of necessary utensils
- Training of technicians
- Verification of families and their incorporation into the system
- Assembly of the agricultural parcel
- Handing over of goods (a. construction material, b. seeds, c. animals. The animals have to be pregnant.)

This preparatory process takes about 4-5 months. According to Ing. Gustavo Moreno, there must be an integral situation on the family's farm. The animals have to be fed and are therefore the last to be handed over.

⁵³ The information in this chapter regarding the implementation by MAGFOR refers above all to the power point presentation of Ing. Gustavo Moreno, director of the Zero Hunger Program, during the workshop held by FIAN on July 24, 2008, in the offices of CENIDH about the Right to Food.

4.2. Conditions for Access and Nomination of Beneficiaries

In order to receive a parcel, a woman must have land of 1-5 manzanas.⁵⁴ The land does not have to be her property, but can also be owned by another member of the family. It has to be in her possession for at least one year and it is also necessary that the family does not already own what is offered in the parcel. Furthermore, the family should show need, capacity and compromise. The woman signs a contract in which she agrees to participate in training workshops, not to sell the animals which she will receive, to get organized and to pay back 20% of the value received to create a rural savings bank. The parcel she is to receive has to be agreed upon with her. If she does not comply with the pre-conditions stated by MAGFOR, she has to give back what she received. In the document "PPA-MAGFOR 2007," one of the basic pre-conditions was still that "Each family commits to send their children to school, gives priority to maternal breast-feeding and will consult the health centers," but this was not mentioned any more in the Director's presentation of the program.

As to the question of who determines the selection of the beneficiaries, Ing. Moreno answered that "...there is an agreed upon selection process in each region of the country by departmental, municipal and regional institutions, representative bodies and NGOs, as also by the corresponding units of different ministries which are directly related to the Program."⁵⁵ MAGFOR only supervises if the family does not comply with the conditions to receive the parcel.

In the context of selection, many questions have arisen within civil society organizations, as there do not exist any universal and transparent criteria for the country as a whole. At the beginning of the program, the government still used the participative structure as established by the Citizen Participation Law, but then changed to the structure of the new Councils of Citizen Power which are closely linked to the FSLN Party and which have also adopted a decisive role in the Zero Hunger Program.

There were complaints from some rural women that they had to hand over a letter of acknowledgement from the new Councils of Citizen Power to be nominated beneficiaries of the Productive Parcel. As the Councils of Citizen Power also play an important part in the Development Plans (see chapter 2.2.2.2), there is a growing concern that a new type of political favoritism is emerging. Therefore, it depends a lot on local leaders and on their personal ethical position how the nomination of beneficiaries is being done, if there is equity in the context of political affiliation and also if families without any political ties can benefit under the program or not. The director of the Zero Hunger Program confirmed that political criteria should not influence the program.

⁵⁴ 1 manzana = 0,7 hectares (it differs in some countries)

⁵⁵ 23-03-2008, Interview with Ing. Gustavo Moreno

The Law for Citizen Participation Nr. 475 and the Citizen Power Councils

The former laws which referred to citizen participation on a local level were included in the Law for Administering the Municipal Budget and the Law for Municipal Transfers which at last were channeled into Law 475, Law for Citizen Participation, ratified at the end of 2003. This law which showed certain voids and weaknesses, but also strong parts, became operative three years ago. However, President Ortega dismissed it and started to install his own project of Citizen Power Councils.⁵⁶

“The Citizen Power Councils have to organize themselves with all persons living in a community notwithstanding their political, religious or any other adherence,” only to organize them with members of the Sandinista Front, “I think that is not correct,” said the Sandinista mayor of Jinotega, Eugenio Ángel López, to the newspaper LA PRENSA.

President Ortega repeated that the Citizen Power Councils will not only control the budgets of the town halls and ministries, but also the General Budget of the Republic.

Therefore Ortega decreed in November 2007 the incorporation of the cabinet of Citizen Power Councils into the National Council for Economic and Social Planning (CONPES), an entity which has constitutional standing and is a consultative institution of civil society concerning the most important public policies.⁵⁷ Ortega presides over this structure and the coordinator is his wife Rosario Murillo.⁵⁸

Those benefiting from the Zero Hunger Program are the impoverished peasant families. However, there is a large number of very poor persons and others living in extreme poverty who do not fulfill the pre-conditions of the program. As the State of Nicaragua has to adopt progressive means with regard to its obligation to the CESC (Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and the Right to Food for the whole of the Nicaraguan population as enshrined in this international covenant, there remained the question to the director of the Zero Hunger Program: What measures are planned by MAGFOR and/or the government in this sense? Mr. Moreno said that for persons who have less than one manzana of land, it is planned to introduce the “Small Parcel” or “Backyard Parcel,” which implies handing over only some goods and small animals like poultry or sheep/goats.

Regarding another vulnerable group like the indigenous people in the Autonomous Regions on the Caribbean coast, Zero Hunger will be implemented at a higher cost due to the longer transportation distances. However, according to Ing. Moreno, the program cannot benefit the entire populace suffering from poverty. Therefore he does not know of any type of strategy which might assist the poorest and most vulnerable groups in the rural areas.

4.3. Coverage and advances

The data collected in this chapter is based on the information provided by the director of the program during his presentation on July 24, 2008.

Since its launch in June 2007, the Zero Hunger Program has tended to benefited families as shown in the following chart:

CHART 1: WE HAVE THE OBJECTIVE TO BENEFIT 15,000 FAMILIES A YEAR. ON DECEMBER 2008 (2 YEARS), WE WILL HAVE REACHED 27,496 FAMILIES, HANDING OVER AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF PARCELS AT A TOTAL COST OF 825 MILLION CÓRDOBAS AT 30,000 CÓRDOBAS PER PARCEL.

Goods	Planned	Executed	To be executed	% of execution
Cows	22,346	12,349	9,949	55.26
Pigs	21,997	6,952	15,045	31.6
Goats, female	4,500	0	4,500	0.0
Goats, male	1,500	0	1,500	0.0
Sheep, female	12,000	0	12,000	0.0
Poultry	231,790	207,730	24,060	89.62
Construction	27,496	14,302	13,194	83.7
Mat. Prefab				
Fruit plants	132,735	51,080	81,655	38.49
Trees	132,735	32,270	100,465	24.31
Vegetables (10)	20,197	9,265	10,932	45.87
Plants for fodder	15,547	15,547	0	100.00
Concentrate QQ	52,094	20,766	31,328	39.86
Bio-digesters	559	198	361	35.42

Source: Power Point Presentation Ing. Moreno, p. 5

Each parcel was valued at 30,000 Córdobas (US \$536,60) and the total cost of the program in two years would be 825 million Córdobas (US \$42,258.150). This cost per parcel includes the cost for training and technical assistance calculated at US \$500. A certain operational cost will be covered by the budget of MAGFOR. It is expected that 27,496 families will be tended to in December 2008 with an equal number of parcels.

From the two following charts, one can see the percentage of execution in 2007 and 2008 up to June 24, 2008:

CHART 2: PARCELS HANDED OVER IN 2007

Goods	Planned	Executed	To be executed	% of execution
Cows	12,720	11,949	771	93.94
Pigs	7,000	6,754	246	96.49
Poultry	76,320	72,270	4,050	94.59
Construction	11,000	9,576	1,424	87.05
Mat. Prefab				
Fruit plants	55,000	28,810	26,190	52.38
Trees	55,000	9,135	45,865	16.61
Vegetables (10)	4,650	4,650	0	100.00
Concentrate QQ	21,000	20,262	738	96.49
Bio-digesters	198	198	0	100.00

Source: Power Point Presentation, Ing. Moreno, p. 3

56 Revista Envío, no. 309, December 2007

57 See CONPES, “Acción ciudadana para el próximo quinquenio 2007-2012” is the result of a process of concertation in 2006.

58 La Jornada, 30-11-07

CHART 3: PARCELS HANDED OVER IN 2008

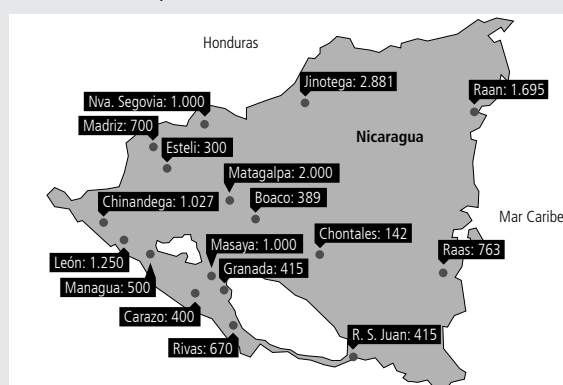
Goods	Planned	Executed	To be executed	% of execution
Cows	10,883	357	10,526	3.28
Pigs	12,438	204	12,240	1.59
Goats female	4,665	0	4,665	0.00
Goats male	1,555	0	1,555	0.00
Sheep female	12,436	0	12,436	0.00
Sheep male	3,109	0	3,109	0.00
Poultry	155,470	135,460	20,010	
Construction	15,547	4,726	10,821	30.40
Mat. Prefab				
Fruit plants	77,735	22,270	55,465	28.65
Trees	77,735	23,135	54,600	29.76
Vegetables (10)	15,547	4,615	10,932	29.68
Concentrate QQ	31,094	504	30,694	1.29
Bio-digesters	361	0	361	0.00

Source: Power Point Presentation, Ing. Moreno, p.5

All goods were bought by MAGFOR, but there was an insufficient offer of animals, for example only 12 cows out of 100 turned out to be pregnant. There were also not enough pigs to cover the program. Concerning the cost of the parcel, it was higher due to transportation costs. For example, to take livestock to the Rio Coco indigenous territory, they had to be transported via Honduras which made the parcel quite expensive for this region.

The following map shows the geographic distribution of the families who were benefited with the parcel as of July 2008:

BENEFICIARIES 2008 (DISTRIBUTION OF PARCELS BY DEPARTMENTS)



Source: Power Point Presentation, Ing. Moreno, p.10

A problem discussed by Ing. Moreno was the lack of technicians to cover the whole planned and necessary training for the Zero Hunger Program. As MAGFOR does not employ the capacities of the NGOs working in the rural agricultural sector, it relies solely on its own resources and therefore also hires technicians recently graduated from universities. This aspect does not comply with the objective that the technicians should give appropriate assistance and counsel because they know the region, soils, economic, social and cultural particularities of the region.

NGOs which are working in similar projects of sustainable development criticized MAGFOR that it is monopolizing the market for products and animals in such a way that they have problems satisfying their demands, and moreover, the Ministry is trying to lure professionals away from the NGOs for the Zero Hunger Program.

The answer to the question of why MAGFOR does not extend the implementation of Zero Hunger by incorporating NGOs in order to avail itself of their capacities and knowledge, was that they could work in the productive sphere as there is a big demand by the program (i.e. to deliver animals, fodder, etc.).

4.4. Expectations and impact

With reference to the productive and organizational expectations for the Zero Hunger Program, Ing. Moreno offered the following statistic:

PRODUCTIVE RESULTS 23/6/2008

Cows delivered 12,349	Cows with calves 4,857	% 9.33	Liters of milk 845,244
Pigs delivered 6,402	Pigs with piglets 1,117	% 17.45	Live Piglets 8,877
Poultry delivered 135,466	Eggs produced 1,951,077		Chicks reproduced 74,284

Source: Power Point Presentation, Ing. Gustavo Moreno, p.6

As a result of organization, Mr. Moreno presented the following numbers:

Number of Women Associates 9,927	Number of Nuclear Units 242	Number of Directive Councils 242
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The results presented by MAGFOR have been criticized by agricultural experts because a simple extrapolation does not result in true numbers, if there is not an independent monitoring and evaluation system during the implementation of Zero Hunger using a transparent methodology. However, the director of the program said that for this type of work they do not have any financial resources, neither are any resources planned so far.

5. Field visits

Taking into account the magnitude of the Zero Hunger Program with regard to the number of benefited families and their geographical distribution in the whole national territory, the field visits undertaken by FIAN accompanied by CENIDH from July 28 to August 4, 2008, can also be considered in terms of a first probing into the program.

Nevertheless, the visits offered an excellent opportunity to verify if the Zero Hunger Program fulfills its principal general objectives which are:

- To assist impoverished peasant families
- That families do not already own the goods which are part of the productive parcel
- That there is no kind of discrimination in the nomination
- That the program will empower women.

There was also a chance to see if the Zero Hunger Program does in some way contribute to "...a situation in which all persons have in any moment access to nutritious and healthy food, to lead a healthy and active life." (FAO)

The field visits were carried out in the departments of Matagalpa, Estelí, Chinandega and Masaya.⁵⁹ The visits were done with or without company of a female or male technician from MAGFOR for the benefited families, but interviews were also conducted with persons who were not benefited.

There was also the opportunity to observe Zero Hunger in its different stages of implementation, that is with families who had already received the complete parcel and with others who had only received part of it. Furthermore, the visits to a variety of national departments with different geographical, economic and social structures provided an insight into the program in a less theoretical way and also opened up some opportunity for opinions and recommendations from the persons interviewed.

5.1. The nominations of the beneficiaries

Taking into account the objectives of the Zero Hunger Program as mentioned above, in reality the aspect of nomination represents a wide variety of what is being practiced by "the communities" or "the male/female leaders" or other authorities: this means that there is no universal and valid parameter to determine who are "the impoverished peasant families" and therefore can be beneficiaries of the program. The forms of nomination seem almost to have been born by capricious whims.

59 Dept.: Matagalpa: Fila Grande, Río Blanco; Municipality San Dionisio (3 communities); Dept. Estelí: Municipality La Trinidad, communities: Las Tablas, Las Limas, La Concepción; Municipality San Nicolás; Municipality Palacaguina, communities: La Calera, Los Arados; Municipio Pueblo Nuevo, community: Casmalí, Municipality San Juan de Limay: community Las Tranqueras; Dept. Chinandega: Municipality Realejo; Dept. Masaya: Municipality La Concepción, communities Cruz de Mayo y 19 de Julio.

A few examples: One is the selection of 100 women who under the former government were part of a program called "Backyard Economy" and who – in order to show equity – are 50% Sandinista and 50% from other parties. Other examples include community leaders making a nomination list and handing out a parcel to themselves or to a family member; the mayor setting up the list; the directing board of a cooperative selecting three women members to receive the parcel, with no reason why these three women were selected and not others of the 70 members of the cooperative who all have the same amount of land. In other cases, the technician of MAGFOR participated in the nomination, or in another case, the community leader called the people and they distributed the parcels by voting, or they held a lottery. In a large number of cases, the Citizen Power Councils or the Political Secretary made the lists and decisions.

The pre-condition that families do not have any items which are included in the parcel was not a criteria of nomination either: there were families who already had cows, pigs or poultry. Criteria such as the following did not seem to play a decisive part either: type of housing, other sources of income, for example fruit and/or vegetable gardens or members of the family working somewhere else, quantity of land owned, if there was the possibility to lease land to feed the cow, if the family receives payments from abroad, how many persons live in the household, if there are other adults who might help with the animals or if there are small children who need attention.

Another aspect mentioned by Ing. Moreno was that the families may not be beneficiaries of other programs which did not seem to be of importance either. There were complete groups benefited by other programs like "Backyard Economy," "Pound for pound," "Goal Millennium Count" and "Peasant to peasant," and other groups who had already received seed to cultivate vegetables and trees under the Bolaños Government, just to give a few examples.

Regarding the criteria of non-discrimination in the nomination, it can be said as already mentioned above that the Citizen Power Councils wield influence in a decisive way and determine the lists. However, one has to acknowledge that there are also community leaders who did their best to maintain some political equity or who applied criteria not tinged by ideologies when assigning the parcels.

5.2. The Productive Parcels and their execution

The families (not in all cases were the women present during the interviews) expressed their satisfaction to have become beneficiaries of the Zero Hunger Program. They had already participated – in concordance with the date of their incorporation into the program – in the training, and had received the materials for constructing the stables and the necessary tools. Seeds to sow grass had been delivered and animals as well, so a few families had milk on the table.

Voices of women benefited by the Zero Hunger Program

Doña Maria: They handed over the cows in October. Only two have calved. Instead of a cow, one could also get money or material to mend the house. The cows give 3 to 4 liters of milk. Therefore we are a bit better off, but the hens do not lay eggs.

Doña Petrona: I had to walk home 8 kilometers with the cow from the place where they were unloaded.

Doña Rosario: We have 15 people in the family. My husband has built a nice chicken coop, but the cow has turned out to be aggressive.

Doña Tanislada: I already have sorghum on my plate and have received the cow.

Doña Máxima: I already have little chicks. I give them Purina to eat.

Doña Josefa: The hens are a problem. The cock is no good. They don't lay any eggs. I already borrowed a local cock, but I had to give him back.

Doña Felicitas: The pig eats 6 pounds of concentrate every day.⁶⁰

Doña Argentina: We have 16 people living on the plot. Some have income from somewhere else. I want to save money for a water pump for irrigation for planting.

The parcels are handed over in different combinations of animals: cow/pig, cow/sheep, pig/goat. The chicken/cock are always part of the parcel. However, as there are not enough cows, MAGFOR tries to promote the acceptance of goats, which is not easy as they are considered to be depredators and the wire fence is not sufficient to build a big enclosure.

There was only one case where a functioning biogas digester could be observed. This family already had quite a noticeable standard of living. In this community, the parcels had already been handed over in July 2007 and since February 2008 the women are already saving the 20% (a monthly contribution of 300 Córdoba), which the woman leading the group retains. Though even these women said that they prefer to work on their own: they do not want to be a collective.

There was also criticism saying that a cow needs more than 1 manzana (0.7 hectares) of land to graze. Therefore the woman needs to have sufficient land. There must be no competition between growing food for the family and food for the animals. If there is not sufficient land, the family has to search for fodder wherever it can, which leads to an extra workload for the woman (or the family which supposedly should help). Therefore, there were already cases in which the parcel had been returned.

According to information by technicians, the women benefited have to save 20% of the value of the parcel (about 5,500 Córdoba). There is an 18 months period without obligation, and after that repayment should be

done in 24 months. 50 women are supposed to form a nucleus and elect a directive board. This board will receive the savings and the nucleus will administer the money. As a second step of the program, with these savings, a small enterprise of the 50 beneficiaries should be founded, a pig raising farm for example, and for this the nucleus will receive further training in administration.

About this matter of the "revolving fund" of the Zero Hunger Program, there seems to exist little clarity among the benefited women, each one seems to have different information. They did not receive a copy of the agreement either, which they had to sign to receive the productive parcel. All parcels remain property of the State until the beneficiaries have saved 20% of the value.

The most persistent criticisms expressed by the interviewed persons were as follows:

- a. **Lack of promoting people of extreme poverty:** There is no program which assists persons without land or very little land or who are without work. Sometimes there are some who lease land at a price.
- b. **Improve the selection of the animals:** There were quite a number of complaints about the quality of the animals. The cows do not give milk as expected, hardly 3-4 liters. Many of them have not calved up to date. The chicken are from big breeding farms and do not lay eggs and in general do not resist. They do not adapt to the area. The pigs were handed over, but not the concentrate to feed them, so it had to be bought.
- c. **The money which has to be saved should be for a common purpose and not only for those who are already beneficiaries**
- d. **Assist in buying land, in particular for women:** The majority of the benefited women were not owners of the land. The simple deed of handing over animals as property of the women is not sufficient. It bestows some status, but the access to land would mean real empowerment. The State however favors the demobilized (ex-combatants).

The proper handling of the parcel and the training before as well as the follow-up after delivering the animals depends a lot on good management of MAGFOR and on the quality of experience of its female/male technicians. In all this, it is also vital if the technicians are capable of transferring certain values in order to generate acceptance of the agricultural methods with regard to the handling of the animals, and to develop a sense of togetherness to organize themselves as planned by the creators of the program to achieve the desired production levels. In this context, there were also comments which criticized the quality of the assistance and the lack of continuous monitoring. This was even more difficult due to the lack of vehicles and/or of funds for gasoline to be able to visit the families.

⁶⁰ One pound of concentrate costs 4.5 Córdoba = 27 Caórdoba a day.

Moreover, there was a general deficit of experienced agricultural professionals, which is why MAGFOR has to engage male and female technicians just graduated from the corresponding universities and to place them in working areas removed from their place of origin. In order to attend to this problem, MAGFOR is training local promoters who are supposed to assist in the Zero Hunger program, but it was deplored that not even the transport costs for these persons were paid, just a meal during the training workshop.

6. Evaluation of the Zero Hunger Program

The field visits confirmed a number of observations and conclusions already collected during a bottom-up analysis of the Zero Hunger Program after the presentation by Ing. Gustavo Moreno, director of the program. The analysis was done by civil society organizations of Nicaragua that contributed their experiences from their point of view; and also from interviews with other NGOs (indigenous, women's rights promoters, human rights promoters), international institutions and personal talks with agricultural experts. As the officially published data-base is very limited, certain additional information could be gathered from newspaper articles and reports of agencies and organizations in which Zero Hunger appears as part of other subjects.

It is still too early to capture what impact this program will have on the productive level and on the local market, if these 15,000 families (in five years there should be 75,000 which gives a total number of about 500,000 persons) really will produce and can then accumulate for their future. (MAGFOR expects such impact for the year 2009.) Perhaps the benefited families will solve their food problem with this program that is so diverse and has so many objectives that are difficult to fulfill. Possibly there will also be a certain benefit for neighboring families.

It remains to be seen if MAGFOR will manage to hand over the parcel to 15,000 families a year, as there are certain signs that the initial speed of implementation cannot be maintained due to a number of obstacles already mentioned – lack of animals, lack of technicians, lack of training, insufficient funds for operating the program - but also due to a certain opposition to how this program is being implemented.

To conclude, there remain quite a number of challenges to be tackled of which just a few will be mentioned as follows:

1. How will the Right to Food be fulfilled for persons who do not have land, who do not have access to resources to feed themselves, who do not have a job and cannot buy food because of the high prices?
2. What is the impact in the indigenous territories where there are still communal forms of ownership, where people are not used to keeping animals in enclosures. How will the dietary habits of indigenous people be changed to consume cow's milk which historically is not part of their traditional diet?

3. If one cow already needs 1 manzana (=0,7 hectares) land for grazing, how much land does one family really need to feed themselves and the cow? It cannot be just 1 manzana.
4. How can the loss of 10% of the animals be justified due to bad handling and theft, which in a productive animal husbandry project would not be cost efficient?
5. How can the negative effects of the program be mitigated, for example the increase in prices for animals and other input due to the massive purchases of MAGFOR?
6. How can the new divisions in the communities, which are due to the handing over of parcels with a political bias, be counterbalanced?
7. How can an acceptance of integrated production methods be achieved, in order to secure sustainable development?
8. How can the integration of the whole family be achieved and the subject of gender be treated in such a short time?
9. Is there an institution for presenting grievances and/or demands if there are problems?
10. How is the social and cultural training being done so that it will achieve a sustainable effect?
11. How should the categorical distinction expressed by Ing. Moreno between "State" and "Government" be interpreted to justify implementation problems of the program?⁶¹

That is to say, in addition to the critics heard during the field visits, there are a number of demands not only from the agricultural but also from the social professional sector which for many years has been working to mitigate hunger and fight poverty in the rural areas of Nicaragua.

The most scrutinized points, apart from the professional questioning, were the lack of monitoring and evaluation of the Zero Hunger Program, the small amount of transparency in the execution of the program, the non-existent integration of the different organized civil society actors in its implementation and the lack of articulation with other NGO projects which were not openly affiliated with the Sandinista party,⁶² and – last but not least – as one of the most decisive factors for Zero Hunger, the role of the new Citizen Power Councils created by the Ortega Government.

⁶¹ Ing. Moreno: "Clash between a government with a focus and the State with a different focus. The State does not respond to what the government wishes to do. Therefore the technical endowment presents a problem." "The State was surprised by the Program. There are problems with so many authorities." "There are still so many employed from the 16 years of past governments. The law does not allow the dismissal of persons who are working and do not comply with the program."

⁶² Comment of Ing. Moreno: "We are coordinating with some NGOs, which have better relations with the government. If there is no relationship, we do not work with them."

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

One has to appreciate the value of the political decision of the Nicaraguan Government to follow a strategy to reduce hunger and poverty and to focus on measures streamlined toward pro-poor programs. The priorities are the sectors for energy, drinking water/black water and re-strengthening of the economy, health and education. In this context, the most conspicuous and publicized measure during the first year of the Ortega Government was the Zero Hunger Program with which it wishes to improve the food and income situation of up to 75,000 families in 5 years.

However, in consideration of the observations and verifications gleaned in the present report, there remain certain doubts about the sustainability of Zero Hunger as the program, besides handing over goods and animals as gifts to the benefited families,⁶³ shows strong weaknesses with regard to the selection of families, their training and follow-up services, in addition to different more critical aspects mentioned in preceding chapters.

Therefore the following is recommended:

Short term:

- The government should use the utmost participation and transparency possible in the design and implementation of public policies with regard to the right to food, land and rural development.
- It is recommended to establish an independent committee of monitoring and evaluation carried out by civil society to allow for problem solving and improvements related to the Zero Hunger Program and thus safeguard its success and sustainability. This committee should also include some unit to which grievances can be presented by the population with reference to the program.
- To eliminate any kind of discrimination in the implementation of Zero Hunger as established in the Constitution of Nicaragua, the Universal Human Rights Declaration and the other International Covenants ratified by the country. The original project of CIPRES proved that tolerance as strategy has had an important impact, as the necessity to feed oneself and to overcome poverty became priorities and the families abandoned political and biased antagonism and joined the organizations of the PPA.⁶⁴
- To establish clear and transparent criteria to determine who can be the nominated women and who not. The simple notion of "impoverished" is not sufficient to favor the poorest persons.
- The political pressure to implement the program to the point of handing over 15,000 parcels a year should not forbid the delivery of animals of good quality, the thorough preparation of families to receive them, and an integrated training in all designated subjects, in particular when one takes into account that the program includes one third of the cost for this type of work (US \$500).

Midterm:

- It is recommended that during the implementation of Zero Hunger, one should avail oneself of the knowledge of those organizations experienced in agricultural and organizational work to guarantee success and sustainable development for the benefited families.
- The Zero Hunger Program only considers families who have more than 1 manzana of land. A "Backyard Parcel" was mentioned for families who have less land. It would be highly recommended to give priority to this measure instead of handing over cows, so that the poorest families might be beneficiaries.
- To empower women, it is not sufficient to hand over animals as their property. It is recommended to take a holistic approach to the gender subject by training the whole family to be successful. In this context, attention has to be paid to a possible side effect which is that the handing over of the parcel will not mean an additional workload for the benefited women.
- It is recommended to develop a strategy in the Zero Hunger Program to promote the notion that women will become at least co-owners of the land or owners of the plot the house stands on to truly empower them.

Longer term:

- So that the State of Nicaragua will fulfill its obligation to the Right to Food for all women and men within the population of Nicaragua, it is necessary to develop a progressive strategy, beyond the Zero Hunger Program, to fight and eliminate hunger, in view of a highly marginal population who lives in extreme poverty.
- The government should adopt policies, norms and projects to guarantee and fulfill the right to food, which includes certain measures like land reform, access to water resources and job creation, in particular for the vulnerable marginal groups.
- The subject of land property has still to be resolved. The government should readopt a land policy in an agrarian reform framework, into which women also have to be integrated, as they are only owners of about 10% of the land and receive less than 10% of rural credits.
- The justiciability of the Right to Food must be assured by the State of Nicaragua, which means that individual persons can demand this right if necessary in the courts. Therefore, the government should take the necessary steps that the Law for Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty be adopted with mutual consent by the National Assembly and that the Zero Hunger Program includes mechanisms of justiciability to protect the Right to Food.

⁶³ See also country report from BMZ (German Ministry for Cooperation) Dec. 2007

⁶⁴ Martínez, C., Navas, N.: External evaluation report, Strategic Plan Cipres, 2004-2006, January 2007

Abbreviations:

ALBA Alternativa Bolivariana para nuestros Pueblos de las Américas	PIDESC Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales
CAFTA Central America Free Trade Agreement	PMA Programa Mundial de Alimentación
CDESC Comité de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales	PND Plan Nacional de Desarrollo
CENIDH Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos	PPA Programa Productivo Alimentario
CIPRES Centro para la Promoción, la Investigación y el Desarrollo Rural y Social	RAA Región Autónoma del Atlántico
CPC Consejo de Poder Ciudadano	Sida Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
CONPES Consejo Nacional de Planificación Económica y Social	SPAR Sector Público Agropecuario Rural
EMNV Encuesta de Hogares Medición del Nivel de Vida	Trocaire Irish Development Agency
ERCERP Estrategia Reforzada de Crecimiento Económico y Reducción de la Pobreza	
ERP Estrategia de Reducción de Pobreza	
FAO Food and Agriculture Organization	
FIAN FoodFirst Information and Action Network	
FIDA Fondo Internacional de Desarrollo Agrícola	
GISSAN Grupo de Interés por la Soberanía y la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional	
HIPC Heavily Indebted Poor Countries	
IEEPP Instituto de Estudios Estratégicos y Políticas Públicas	
INEC Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos	
MAGFOR Ministerio Agropecuario y Forestal	
MDG Millenium Development Goals	
OGM Organismos Genéticamente Modificados	

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