

SECTION 3 FOCUS ON BRAZIL
GeoActivity

3.2 SÃO PAULO

Analyze a Government Program

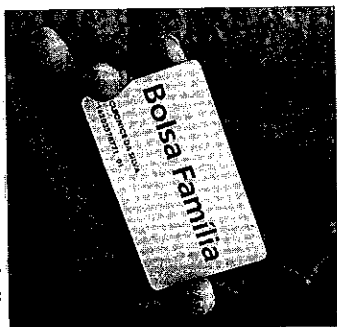
Many of São Paulo's poorest citizens live in large slums known as favelas. Read about what the Brazilian government is doing to help lift these people out of poverty and to lessen the country's inequality between its wealthiest and poorest citizens.

Brazil's Bolsa Familia Program

Between 2003 and 2008, the percentage of Brazilians living in poverty fell from 35 percent to 24.1 percent of the total population. Extreme poverty fell from 13.7 percent to 6.6 percent. Some of this progress was the result of Brazil's Bolsa Familia (family grant) program. Started in 2003, this program provides money for poor families, so that people with the fewest resources can meet their basic needs.

The aid is offered with certain conditions. Families receiving it must commit to keeping their children in school. If a student in the program misses more than 15 percent of his or her classes, the family will lose the assistance. Young children must also receive vaccinations for dangerous diseases and receive regular medical care. By enforcing these conditions, the government hopes to lessen the immediate hardship of poverty and help avoid the causes of poverty for future generations.

The program also provides additional benefits. Payment is made through bank accounts, which means that many families have access to financial services. They might also receive loans or insurance for the first time. As of 2009, Bolsa Familia was credited with helping 20 million people rise out of poverty. In fact, the program has been so successful that officials from New York City to Cairo, Egypt, are putting similar programs into practice.



The Bolsa Familia debit card allows program recipients to easily gain access to their payments.

Use with South America Today, Section 3.2, in your textbook.
 Go to Interactive Whiteboard GeoActivities at myNcconnect.com to complete this activity online.



1. **Create Charts** In the left column, list features of the Bolsa Familia program. For each, list benefits for recipients in the right column.

FEATURES OF BOLSA FAMILIA	SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS

2. **Make Predictions** If current trends continue, will Brazil need to provide financial assistance for as many people in 30 years?

3. **Identify Problems and Solutions** What other types of programs could Brazil's government put in place to fight the long-term causes of poverty?