

National Pact reaffirms Brazil's commitment to 13 million children in impoverished areas



© UNICEF Brazil/2007/ Bezerra

Children from Apuiarés in Ceará State celebrate receiving the UNICEF Municipal Seal of Approval, an award affiliated with Brazil's National Pact.

BRASILIA, Brazil, 27 June 2007 – The lives of 13 million children living in Brazil's impoverished semi-arid region were the focus yesterday during the signing of the second National Pact entitled, 'A world fit for children and adolescents in the Brazilian semi-arid'.

The National Pact, which was originally launched in 2004, combines the efforts of both governmental and civil organizations in order to have a positive impact on the lives of children.

"Our aim is to create a joint effort to transform the lives of children and their families in the semi-arid region," said UNICEF Representative in Brazil Marie-Pierre Poirier. "We are working together with our partners to address the social inequalities that exist in Brazil."

Nevertheless, Brazil still faces challenges to ensuring children's rights in the semi-arid region. Social indicators show that infant mortality rates are higher than the rest of the country and 60 per cent of municipalities with low levels of education are situated here.

Despite these disparities, the Brazilian semi-arid region is rich in resources and culture. By combining the efforts of government and civil society, the National Pact hopes to bring to these qualities to the forefront.