



ASA

Brazilian
Semi-Arid
Articulation

Brazilian Semi-Arid:

Where climate solutions

already thrive



Articulação Semiárido Brasileiro (ASA – Brazilian Semi-Arid Articulation) is a civil society network that began weaving its history in 1999. Recognizing the Brazilian Semi-Arid as a territory of possibilities, ASA contributes to the formulation, defense, and implementation of public policies grounded in the paradigm of Living with the Semi-Arid, in contrast to false solutions based on “combating drought”.

From this perspective, ASA’s actions draw upon the lived experiences of the peoples of the Semi-Arid, who teach us how to live with a climate characterized by irregular rainfall concentrated in just a few months of the year. These experiences stem from their ability to observe and engage in dialogue with local fauna and flora, understanding natural resources as common goods. Through this listening, ASA shapes its strategies to ensure universal access to water, land, and seeds.

As a network, ASA places the sharing of knowledge at the heart of its work, as a pathway for collectively building ways of living with and within these territories. In doing so, ASA contributes to promoting climate and social justice and strengthening democracy across the Brazilian Semi-Arid.



ASA, which brings together over 3,000 civil society organizations across all states of Northeastern Brazil and Northern Minas Gerais, was conceived at the 3rd Conference of the Parties (COP3) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), held in Recife (PE), Brazil, in 1998.





The Brazilian Semi-Arid

The Brazilian Semi-Arid is a living, ecologically diverse territory rich in cultural heritage, covering about 15% of Brazil and home to over 30 million people. On this land, Indigenous peoples, Quilombola communities, family farmers, agrarian reform settlers, riverine populations, and other traditional groups coexist, keeping the forests of the Cerrado and Caatinga standing through their ancestral knowledge and practices. Despite being the rainiest semi-arid region in the world, the region was long stigmatized by water scarcity and portrayed as a territory of poverty. This narrative, coupled with exclusionary, paternalistic, and wealth-concentrating

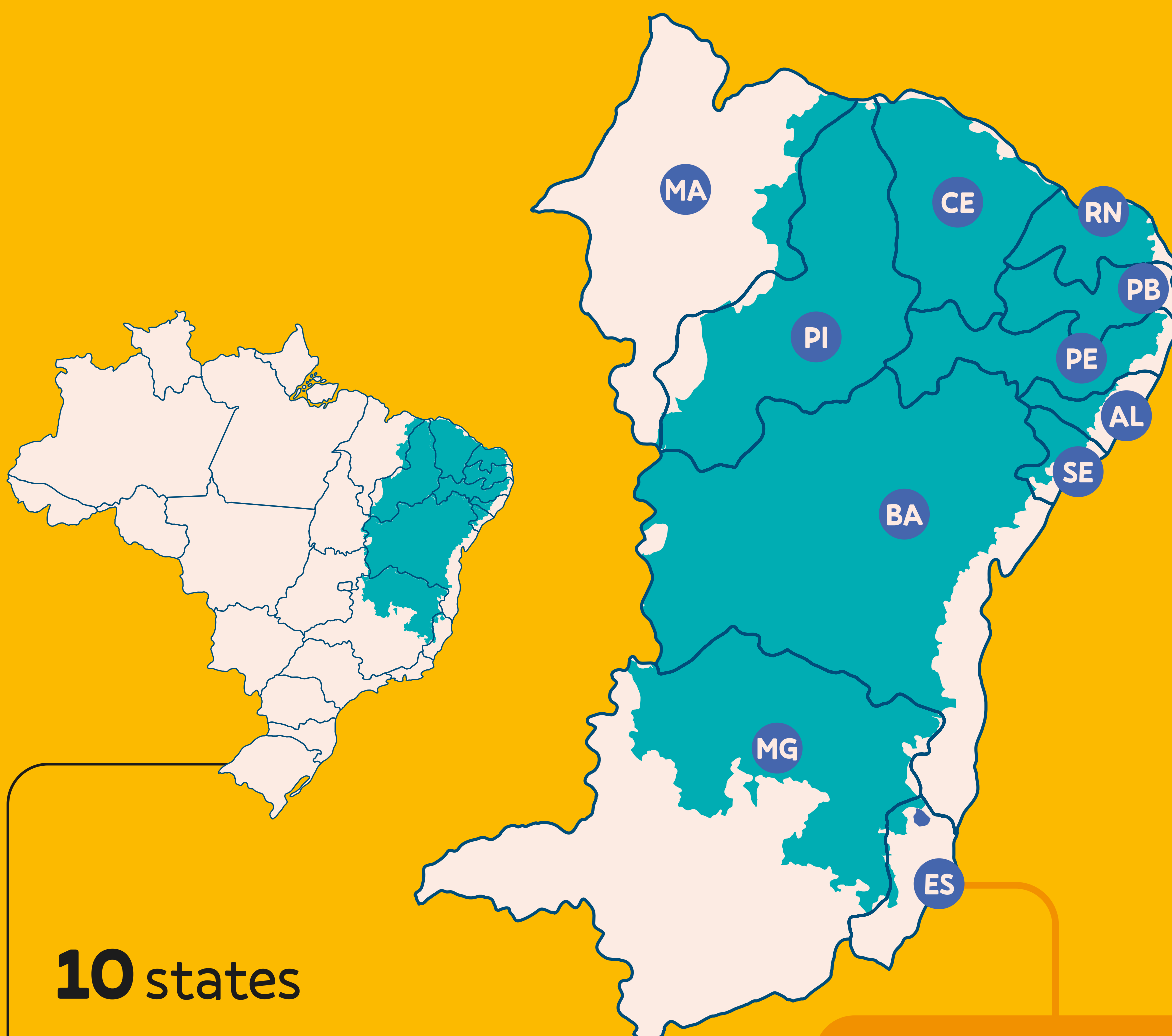
policies, fostered the political and economic exploitation of the poorest, deepening social inequalities.

The response to this reductionist narrative of the Semi-Arid came from the peoples of the territory themselves, who chose to tell their own story. Thus, the Semi-Arid emerged as it truly is: a space of innovation in social technologies and forms of self-organization toward Bem Viver. This shift stems from grassroots communication processes and collective work that value diversity, culture, the biomes, and ways of building resilience to the climate.

This agency of those who inhabit the Semi-Arid has brought significant progress in securing rights. The territory, however, faces new threats. Large-scale renewable energy projects, mining, data centers, and agribusiness are advancing without respecting local communities, threatening local ways of life, common goods, and ecological balance.



Brazilian Semi-Arid



10 states

1.477 municipalities

1.335.298 km²

15,3% of Brazilian territory

31.035.363 de pessoas

• **9,665,777** rural (31%)

• **21,369,586** urban (69%)

15% of the total Brazilian population

* Although legally part of the official Semi-Arid region, ASA is not yet operational in Espírito Santo (ES).

Source: IBGE, Sudene, ASA.



Our Contributions

Co-construction, analysis, and refinement of public policies

Creation and refinement of public policies that guarantee rights and strengthen Living with the Semi-Arid.

Capacity Building for Citizens and Organizations

Conducting education and training processes that strengthen families, communities, and local organizations.

Civic Mobilization and Engagement

Fostering the participation of the peoples of the Semi-Arid in decisions that affect their lives, expanding democracy and social agency.

Advocacy and Human Rights Defense

Championing access to water, land, healthy food, contextualized education, gender equality, as well as social and climate justice.

Social Mobilization

Coordinating campaigns and collective initiatives that unite communities, organizations, and networks around shared causes.





Grassroots Communication

Strengthening communication built by the people for the people, informing, empowering, and mobilizing people in support of citizenship.

Solidarity Economy and Local Market Strengthening

Supporting family farming, agroecological production, and local trade as foundations for just and sustainable development in the region.



Our Core Thematic Areas

Water

Grassroots Communication

South-South Cooperation

Contextualized Education

Just Energy Transition

Youth

Women

Fair Division of Domestic Labor

Agroecological Production

Rural Sanitation

Native and Traditional Seeds

Access to Land

Climate Emergency

Small-Scale Livestock Raising



KEY INITIATIVES

Projects & Programs

Built and carried out through collaborative networks, our actions stem from the systematization of practices historically used and validated by the peoples of the Semi-Arid, passed down and adapted across territories. The goal of systematizing these experiences is to scale up these actions and turn them into public policies.

One Million Cisterns Program (P1MC)

Through the installation of cement–slab cisterns with a storage capacity of 16,000 liters, the program provides safe drinking water for drinking and cooking, ensuring dignity and health for millions of people across the Semi–Arid.

One Land and Two Waters Program (P1+2)

A suite of social technologies for water harvesting (such as cisterns with paved catchment areas, runoff cisterns, trench reservoirs, underground dams, and stone tanks) expands access to water for healthy food production and livestock raising, strengthening family farming, food security, and food sovereignty.

Cisterns in Schools Program

School cisterns with a 52,000–liter storage capacity are built in educational centers to improve the quality of education and well–being of children and adolescents, encouraging them to remain in school and in rural communities.



Semi-Arid Seed Program

This program brings together several initiatives dedicated to the conservation and preservation of local and traditional seed varieties. Key actions include training seed guardians, establishing and managing community seed banks and houses, and supporting seed multiplication fields and plant nurseries. Currently, the initiative is implemented through the Cisterns Program, in partnership with Brazil's Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and Fight Against Hunger (MDS), and the Agrobiodiversity Program, in partnership with Embrapa.



Networks for Conservation Project

The project aims to reduce deforestation, strengthen sustainable land-use practices, and build climate resilience. Key actions carried out by the ASA, Ecovida, and Rede Cerrado networks include technical support and training, the implementation of social technologies and climate-adapted productive systems, the creation and strengthening of territorial conservation areas, and environmental monitoring.

Sertão Vivo Program

Aimed at promoting climate and productive resilience for family farmers in the Brazilian Semi-Arid, the program integrates public policies, local knowledge, and scientific research. Implemented by state governments with methodological guidance from ASA, the initiative directly benefits approximately 430,000 farming families across the states of Bahia, Ceará, Paraíba, Piauí, and Sergipe.



One Million Solar Roofs Program (P1MTS)

Aimed at democratizing and universalizing access to clean and renewable energy across the Semi-Arid by training family farmers and establishing factory-schools, the program promotes energy sovereignty in rural communities.

Mapear Initiative

The project aims to monitor and evaluate the impacts of the Ecoforte Program across the agroecology networks supported by this public policy. At its core, Mapear is a policy advocacy initiative that, alongside ASA, involves the National Articulation for Agroecology (ANA), national social participation councils, research institutions, ministries, and funding partners.



**“Bring me a glass of water, I am thirsty
And this thirst could be the end of me
My throat asks for a drop of water
And my eyes ask for your gaze”**

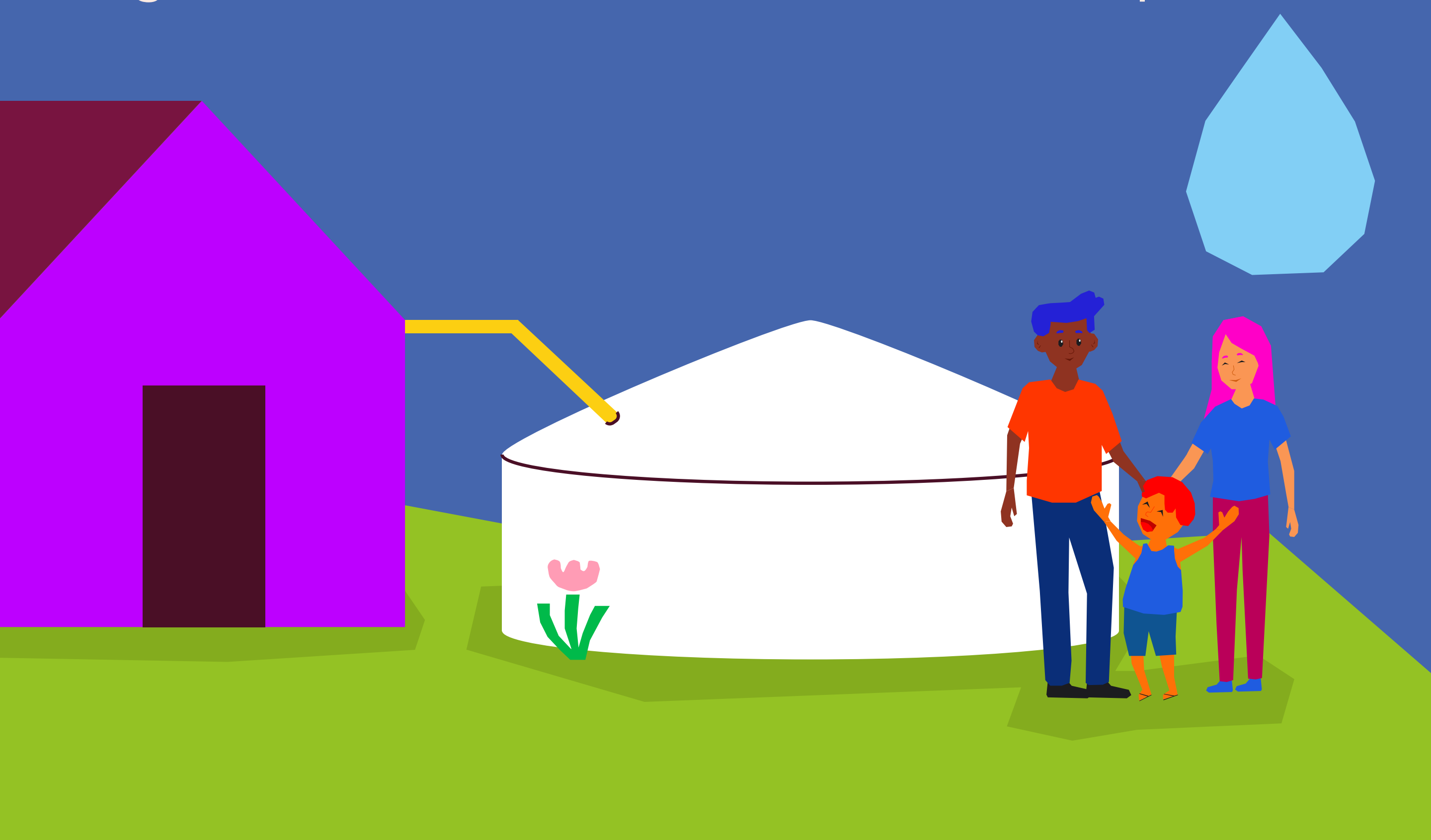
— Anastácia e Dominginhos



Tenho Sede Campaign

In the Semi-Arid, water is more than a resource: it is life, dignity, and a future.

The Tenho Sede Campaign seeks to mobilize people around the democratization of this fundamental right, ensuring that no family has to walk miles in search of water and that families have greater access to health, time, and hope.





Donations directly fund the construction of 16,000-liter cisterns. Combined with the social technologies of the P1MC (One Million Cisterns Program), these efforts aim to accelerate universal access to safe drinking water across the Semi-Arid.

Donate. Share. Support.

Website: tenhosedede.org.br

To Learn More

The social transformations driving the Semi-Arid stem from the struggles of its peoples, communities, and organizations working to build a more just, free, and equal society. This history has been documented and is narrated in the publication “Brazilian Semi-Arid Articulation: Systematization of Experiences in Living with the Semi-Arid”, available on our website.



**Access the ASA Systematization
publication here:**





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