



PROJETO  
DOM HELDER  
CÂMARA

TECHNICAL FILE

FIELD EXPERIENCES

AREA: QUIXERAMOBIM (CE)



PROJETO  
MONITORA



# Technical file field experiences: area Quixeramobim (CE)

**Projeto Dom Hélder Câmara (PDHC II)**

**Realization:**

Coordenação Geral de Inclusão Produtiva  
Departamento de Estruturação Produtiva  
Secretaria de Agricultura Familiar e Cooperativismo  
Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento

**Organization:**

Termo de Execução Descentralizada nº 07/2017  
Centro de Gestão e Inovação para a agricultura  
Familiar (CEGAFI)  
www.cegafi.com

**Visual Communication:**

Agência Cajuí

**Financing:**

Fundo Internacional de Desenvolvimento Agrícola  
(FIDA)

**CATALOG CARD**

P964t Projeto Monitora.

Technical file field experiences: area Quixeramobim  
(CE) / Projeto Monitora. – Brasília: self-editing, 2022.

10 p. : il. color.

Includes graphic, photos and QR Code.

1. Family farming. 2. Rural technical assistance. 3.  
Rural extension. 4. Sustainable agriculture. 5. Small  
producers. 6. Local development. I. Title.

CDU 631.115.11

Sara Alencar Magalhães – Librarian – CRB 3367

**AUGUST 2022**

# AREA: QUIXERAMOBIM (CE)

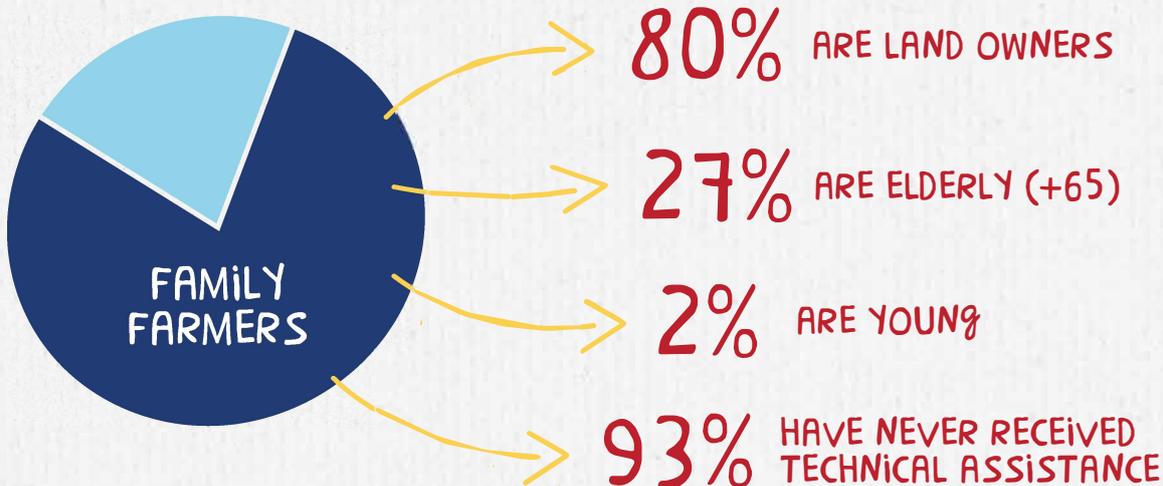


## The context of the experience

The central sertão region of Ceará is home to a population of more than 250,000 inhabitants (IBGE, 2010). The municipalities of Quixadá and Quixeramobim account for more than half of this total.

In Quixeramobim, 80% of the establishments are owned by family farmers - and yet 93% of them have never received technical assistance. Among these workers, 27% are elderly (over 65 years old) and only 2% are young (IBGE, 2017). It's the case of Claudemir and Charliane.

The couple lives with their son Josué and Claudemir's family in the community of Mearim, municipality of Quixeramobim, in the Central Sertão of Ceará. It was there that they welcomed us to tell us their stories.



TO ACCESS  
THE VIDEO  
CLICK HERE  
OR READ THE  
QR CODE

### KEYWORDS

Gender, food security, productive backyards, reception and markets, sociotechnical innovation advisory, technique with an agroecological network perspective, resilience, adaptive strategy

# THE YOUNG COUPLE DOES NOT MISS THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT PDHC OFFERS IN THE SERTÃO OF CEARÁ

They met each other at church, at an event for young Christians. They dated, became engaged, got married and started a family. Claudemir was a school instructor in the computer area when Charliane started to work at the same institution, in the Mais Educação project. They worked together for approximately three years as teachers/instructors, but when she got pregnant, Charliane chose to leave the school and Claudemir was fired around the same time.

In 2015, the opportunity came for them to work in the field - and they were encouraged to do so by Charliane's parents. The initial idea was to devote themselves to vegetable gardening. It was then that the couple began to make a living selling tomatoes and vegetables, both at the market and by going door to door. With what they earned, they were able to ensure the family's livelihood.



From the vegetable garden, they decided to move on to raising chickens. They decided to take advantage of what was available in their own backyard. What was left over from the garden, they used to feed the chickens. The poultry raising worked out well, and the two activities were consorted.

Around this time, the couple started supplying vegetables to some schools in Quixeramobim (thanks to PNAE, which represented a great opportunity). With the vegetable garden, they also accessed first and second water cistern projects in 2016. In that year, everything went forward in the area of agriculture.

They established themselves in PNAE delivering parsley to schools and started to attend local family farming fairs in Quixeramobim. Claudemir started to sell increasingly more vegetables and chickens. The profit grew and stability came. New activities were incorporated, and the couple then had the idea of planting fruit trees around the vegetable beds. They invested in banana and papaya. They also farmed fish. Now they sell to the city government and the community.

But with the new activities, the need for water has also increased.

*"The necessity of more water arose, but because of the difficult soil and water with too much salt, the production of vegetables was harmed. The fruit didn't bear it either, and the cost of raising free-range chickens then became too expensive,"* says Charliane.

Faced with this dead end, and with reduced purchases from PNAE, the couple once again found an innovative solution: Claudemir took a course in beekeeping; Charliane, in baking. They started to raise bees to produce honey and to make breads and cookies. Today these are the two main activities that sustain the family.

On beekeeping, Claudemir recounts that he started working with ten boxes he had borrowed from a neighbor, without any background knowledge. After a Senar training course, he deepened his understanding of beekeeping.

*"I didn't know how to manage it correctly, then Senar's course happened and I learned. I realized it was an opportunity."*

# PNAE

Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar

The National School Meals Program (PNAE) consists in the transfer of financial resources from the federal government to states, Federal District, and municipalities for the purchase of food supplies for school meals, 30% of which must be used to purchase food from family farms.

"THE BEE IS A SUSTAINABLE ANIMAL, YOU DON'T NEED ENERGY, YOU DON'T NEED A FENCE, IT FLIES AROUND IN NATURE AND YOU JUST HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF IT AND HARVEST THE HONEY. TODAY WE HAVE 20 BOXES AND WE HAVE A CENTRIFUGE, A TABLE, AND A DECANter. THE HONEY PRODUCED HERE IS AGROECOLOGICAL, ORGANIC, AND WILD, BECAUSE THE BEES GET IT FROM THE DIFFERENT PLANTS, AND IN THIS REGION THERE ARE NO AGROTOXICS YET. THANK GOD PEOPLE HERE DON'T USE AGROTOXICS, SO I HAVE A HIGHER QUALITY OF HONEY."





Claudemir recalls that PDHC was brought to the family by Cetra and the network of farmers from Sertão Central. From then on, he had access to the family agriculture fair and to the assistance programs.

With the covid-19 pandemic, the family farming fair stopped. Then came the proposal of a virtual fair, in which the couple would start delivering to the community different varieties of bread and honey.

The experience of the virtual fairs and the solidarity rotating funds, and the combinations of agro-ecological technical innovations accumulated by Cetra's

**"CETRA CAPACITATED US, THEY BROUGHT US PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS, AND THEIR SUPPORT WAS ESSENTIAL TO ENABLE THEM IN THE ACTIVITIES THEY DO TODAY."**

---

1 Centro Sabiá and Cetra use the mechanism of the Solidarity Revolving Fund (FRS) as a way of building, together with farming families, mechanisms to support the agroecological transition, aiming at sustainability in the countryside and the mitigation of climate change. According to Centro Sabiá (2020), the Solidarity Revolving Fund is an amount for investment in activities that families themselves already develop, with a view to improving their systems, so that they are increasingly sustainable for both families as for the environment. These resources can be delivered in cash, materials or animals. The word rotary has as its main objective to effectively promote the rotation of these resources, also covering other subjects in the community, municipality or region, mainly guaranteeing opportunities for women and young people, a way of giving visibility to these subjects who are of extreme importance in the family farming. When talking about solidarity, a new sense of society is given, with style and values conceived and appropriated locally, but open to interaction with other groups and ideas and that opposes the excluding political and economic relations. Available at: <https://centrosabia.org.br/2020/01/10/fundo-rotativo-so-lidario-contribui-para-transformacao-de-vidas-de-familias/>. Accessed on August 30, 2022.

assistance were crucial for the couple to ensure food and income for their family, while keeping themselves in the market.

The challenge of PDHC II in this context was to bring quality assistance, with strong ties of belonging and identity with the territory. With Cetra's support, they got a biodigester, which was of great help to the couple's personal and professional life, since cooking gas is very expensive.



Today, they work on both AG's trade fairs - in person and virtually. "When we grew vegetables, we sold them to PNAE through a cooperative. Today we sell at the virtual and in-person fairs. A part of the honey goes to the Mombasa Cooperative, which even exports the product", Claudemir says.

The Regional Cooperative of Settled Apiculture Workers of Agrarian Reform (Coopermel) is a regional cooperative. It is located in the municipality of Mombaça, in the sertão of Ceará, and is affiliated with the Central Cooperative of the Agrarian Reform Areas of Ceará (CCA) - both advised by the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST). In 2020, the Popular Financing Movement (Finapop) supported the expansion of the cooperative's projects in the Northeast.

The city of Quixeramobim has its own beekeepers' association. Together they produce 10 000 kg of honey per year, but the production is still small. According to Claudemir, only for school meals, 25 000 kg of honey per year would be necessary. He dreams of increasing his production and already teaches the activity to other farmers. *"Last year I spent every 15 days advising a boy from a community 40 km away from here on how to produce. Today he is already independent in beekeeping."*

## LEARNINGS

*"When you start, people do not really believe in your work, even if you have taken the courses. Today, everyone who tastes our product finds it very good. I make zero lactose bread, milk bread, coconut bread, whole wheat bread, a variety. I saw this need to increase my 'portfolio' of products. I gradually adapted to making several types of cookies. Today, the experience helps our household income".* This is what Charliane tells us while showing us the kitchen of the house and the stove fueled with biogas.

The couple is among the finalists of the São José project of the state government (with support from FIDA), which supports young innovators in agriculture. They competed with other 3000 young people and were among the 300 who will receive a non-refundable grant of R\$15,000 each to be invested in activities with technical support (see video).

In Charliane's words, this is the message she seeks to leave her son with every day, through her example:

**"WE LIVE WELL AND BELIEVE THAT IN THE SEMI-ARID REGION OF CEARÁ, IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, IN THE LAND THAT PROVIDES FOR THE FAMILY'S SUSTENANCE, JOSUÉ, HIS LITTLE BOY, WANTS TO CONTINUE HIS ACTIVITIES, BECAUSE, AFTER ALL, WHERE THEY LIVE IT IS, YES, POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE OFF THE LAND".**

## O Cetra

Associated with the Articulação Semiárido Brasileiro (ASA), with the Rede Ater Nordeste, with the National Human Rights Movement and the Women's Movement, CETRA is an organization that has known the Dom Helder Câmara Project since its first movements in the 2000s.

In the partnership with PDHC, Cetra has executed 7,396 activities of the 8,584 planned (86% of the total) in nine municipalities of the Territory of Sertão Central in Ceará. According to SGA data (2022), Cetra has assisted 962 Family Units of Agrarian Production (UFPA) from the 1,018 planned, achieving 95% of implementation. Of the 3,626 individual Ater services planned, 2,806 (77%) were carried out, involving 32 professionals, for a total contract value of R\$1,421,828.73 (SGA, 2022).

Agro-ecology and living with the semi-arid region are basic principles of Cetra's work, as the experience of the couple Claudemir and Charliane demonstrates. The affection and care expressed in the relationship with the young farmers - a commitment favored by PDHC - ensured the presence of technicians with the families before, during and after the pandemic.

---

### REFERENCES

REDE PENSSAN. **VIGISAN**: Inquérito Nacional sobre Insegurança Alimentar no Contexto da Pandemia da Covid-19 no Brasil. Rio de Janeiro: Rede PENSSAN, 2021. Disponível em: [http://olheparaafome.com.br/VIGISAN\\_Inseguranca\\_alimentar.pdf](http://olheparaafome.com.br/VIGISAN_Inseguranca_alimentar.pdf). Acesso em: 25 abr. 2022.

IBGE. Censo Agropecuário 2017. Disponível em: <https://censoagro2017.ibge.gov.br>. Acesso em: 15 abr. 2022.