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# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS): History And Core Features

Brazil's Social Protection Policy and Legislation Experience

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# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



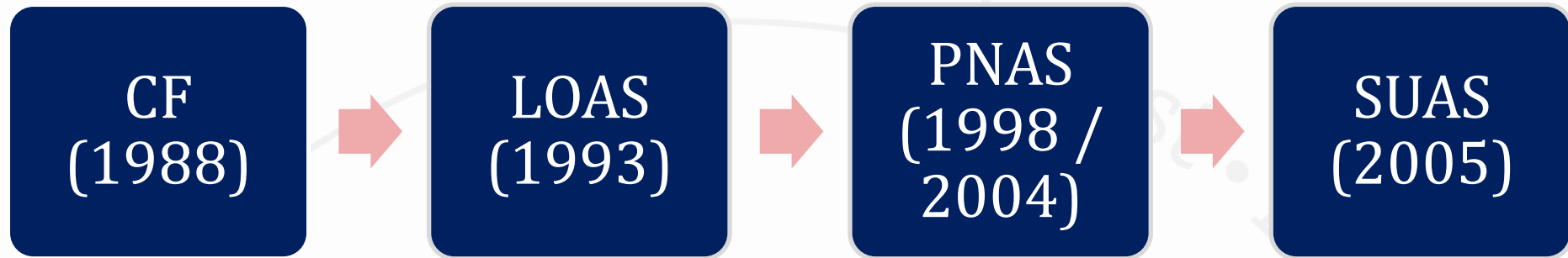
- Since 2005 Brazil has a system that integrates all of its administrative units, with space to the participation of the civil society, on the decentralized delivery of social assistance benefits and services.

# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System

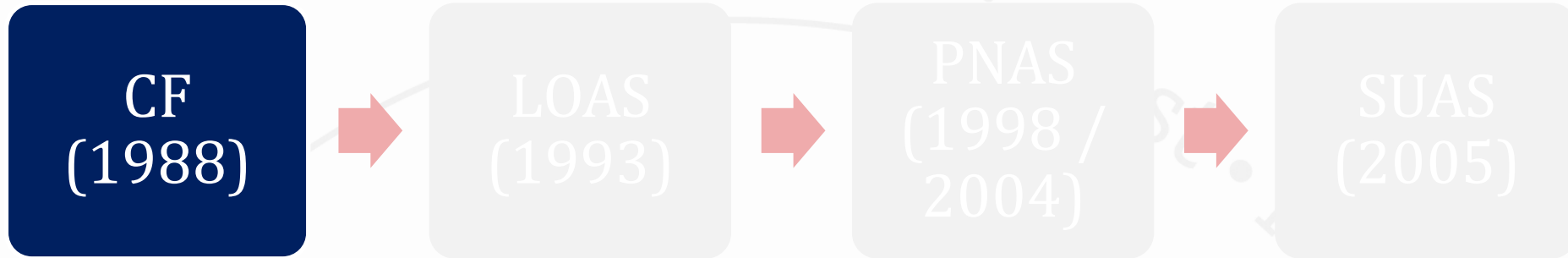


- The system is considered a global reference of its kind because:
  - It defines criteria of participation on its operational, deliberative and consultative stances;
  - It provides instruments for jointly delivering, at the territorial level, benefits and services provided by all the administrative units (central, state and municipal governments);
  - It defines funding sources and shares across the three administrative levels, and provides clear guidance for a joint management of such resources;
  - It defines a list of services and benefits to be offered according to specific vulnerability criteria, while also pointing out which institutions should handle each case accordingly;
  - It sets a structure for monitoring the social assistance activities

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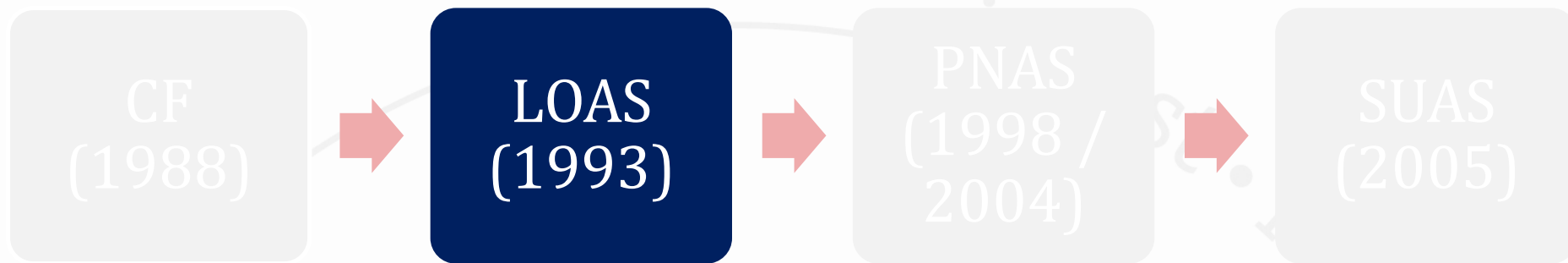


# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- **Article 6** defines the State's obligation to provide social security including social security (contributory), health and social assistance (non contributory)
- **Article 194** defines the universality of the coverage and the selectivity of the services and benefits
- **Article 203** defines the following goals:
  - To protect families, pregnant women, the children, adolescents and elders, including destituted children and adolescents;
  - To integrate people to markets and labour-markets;
  - To rehabilitate disabled persons;
  - To guarantee a monthly minimum income to disabled persons and elders that prove not having means to afford for themselves and for their families.

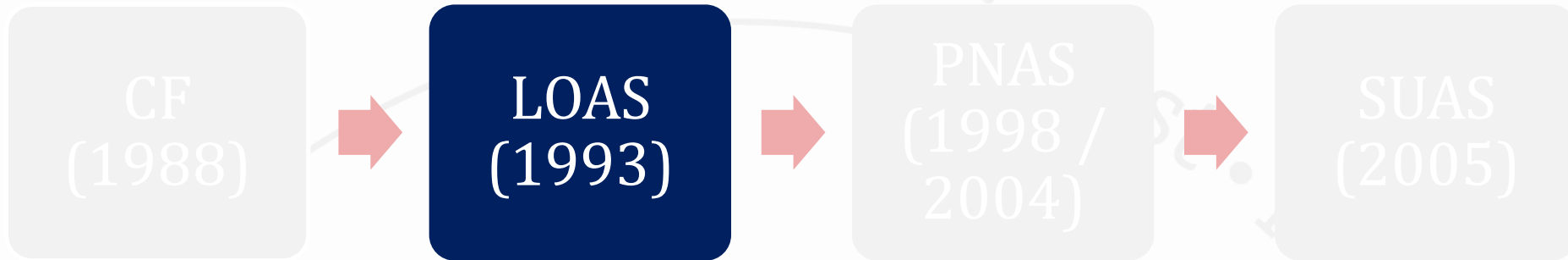
# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



In 42 articles, LOAS defines core organizational aspects for the social assistance sector, including:

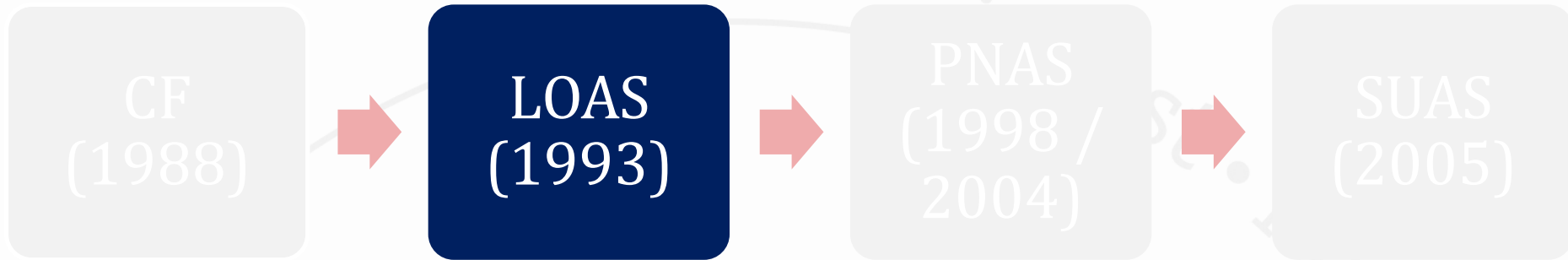
- I. **Its core principles and guidelines** (the same as those brought by the 1988 Constitution)
- II. **The format for organizing and managing actions: State's primary responsibility on the operation of social assistance actions at each government level.**
- III. **The responsibility of each government level:** efforts to develop a National Social Assistance Policy (PNAS). It also lays norms for the functioning of social assistance entities and organizations.

# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- IV. The nature and composition of deliberative social assistance councils;
- V. The establishment and duties of a **National Council of Social Assistance (CNAS)**;
- VI. The roles and responsibilities of the national organ coordinating the elaboration of the **National Social Assistance Policy**;
- VII. The concept of benefits, services, programmes and projects: including the creation of a non contributive pension (1 minimum wage) for elders and disabled whose family members earn less than 1/4th of the minimum wage, the **Continuous Cash Benefit Programme (BPC)**.
- VIII. The funding of the politics and its programmes **National Fund for Social Assistance (FNAS)** - to be run under the oversight of the CNAS.

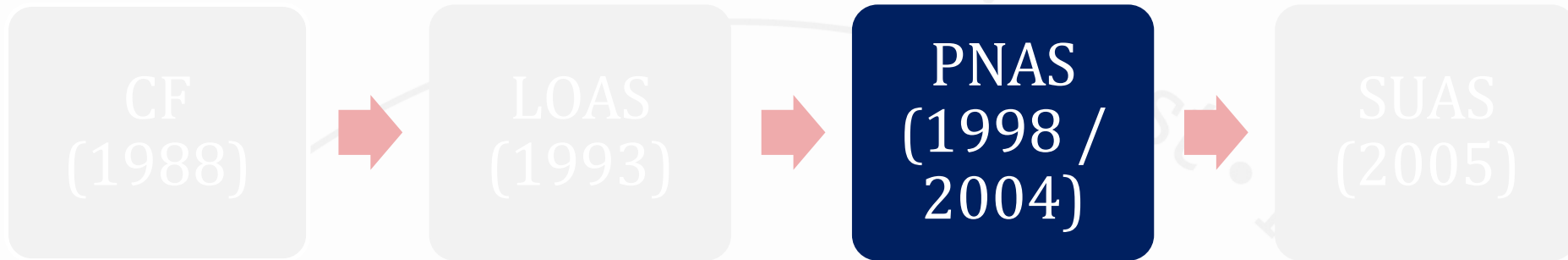
# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- **LOAS was the outcome of intense political struggle carried by the civil society:** The government after the CF 88 (Fernando Collor de Melo) had no interest on realizing this pillar of the social security. The other two pillars of the social security were realized by specific laws in 1990 and 1991, respectively
- From 1994 onwards the liberal government of FHC distorts the LOAS and implements a social assistance politics strongly based on outsourcing these services to NGOs

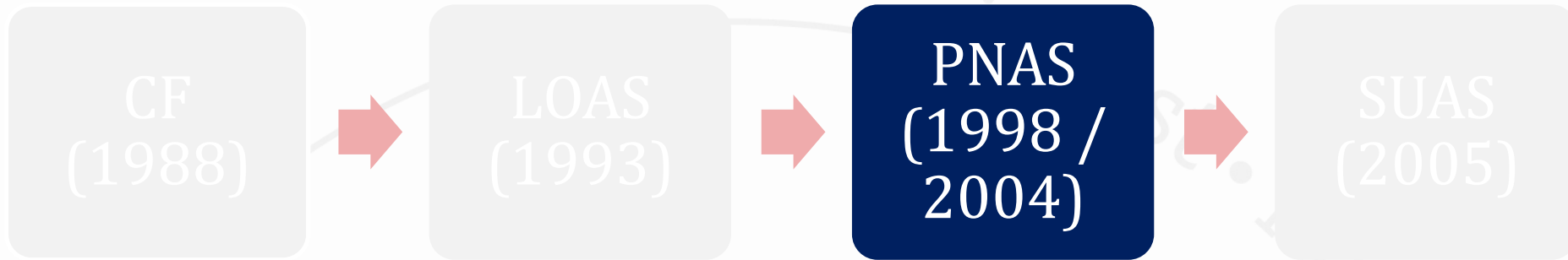


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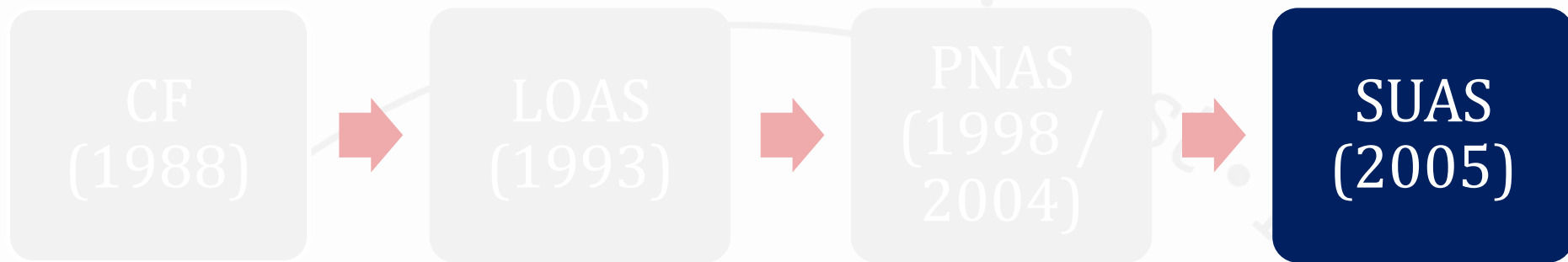
- One of the core goals of the LOAS was to get the CNAS to approve a PNAS. Given the governance challenges faced by the CNAS on its early days, as well as the lack of government support to public involvement with social assistance actions, the PNAS was only approved in 1998 – along with the first **Basic Operational Norm of the Social Assistance (NO/ AS 1998)** meant to operationalize the policy.

# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- **Already in 2004, under President Lula's rule, a new PNAS** was approved, with a focus towards operationalizing the SUAS, through means of the **Operational Norm of the SUAS (NO/ SUAS 2004)**.

# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- BASIC SOCIAL PROTECTION

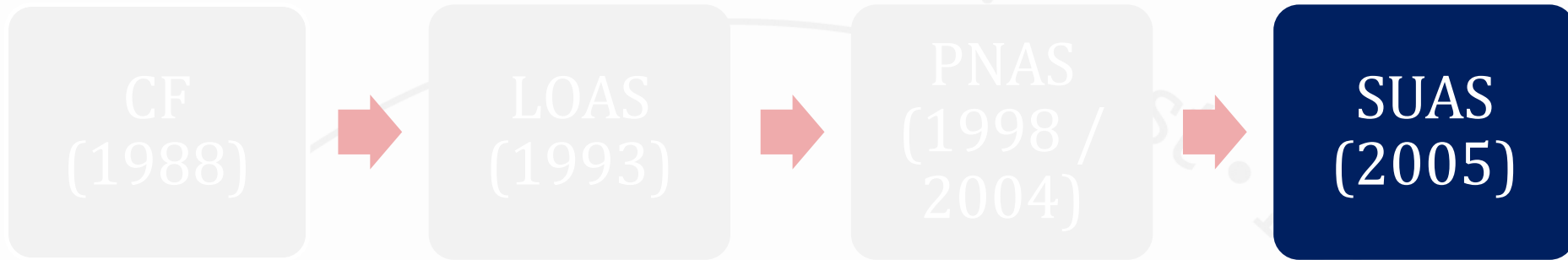
- Is destined to the population facing vulnerabilities due to **poverty and destitution** (absence of income, precarious or no access to public services) and/or **fragilization of affective links** (discrimination based on age, ethnicity, gender, disability).

- SPECIAL SOCIAL PROTECTION

- It is destined to families and individuals in risk of personal and /or social vulnerability due to **abandonment, physical or psychological harm, sexual assault, drug abuse, socio-educative and corrective measures, homeless, child-labour, etc.**



# Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System



- Putting to practice the PNAS 2004, by 2005 the core institutions that structure the SUAS start operating: the Center of Reference for Social Support (C.R.A.S) and the Center of Reference for Specialized Social Support (C.R.E.A.S.)
- C.R.A.S. are responsible for the Basic Social Protection, and the C.R.E.A.S are responsible for the Special Social Protection (composed of medium and high complexity cases)



## CONCLUSIONS: main advances due to the SUAS

- Although the CF 88 and LOAS had already defined the State's obligation to promote public and noncontributive social assistance, there were great advances due to the implementation of the SUAS, including:
  - Higher budget and coverage, both in aggregate and programme specific levels;
  - Establishment of public institutions C.R.A.S e C.R.E.A.S through which the State can directly provide the services, instead of merely outsourcing this to NGOs;



## CONCLUSIONS: main advances due to the SUAS

- Although the CF 88 and LOAS had already defined the State's obligation to promote public and noncontributive social assistance, there were great advances due to the implementation of the SUAS, including:
  - More efficiency of deliberative and consultive organs based on popular participation;
  - Clear definition of the kind of vulnerabilities and the services and benefits meant to tackle them



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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

