

Poverty on the Rise in Latin America



Mexico City, January 4 (RHC)-- The levels of poverty and extreme poverty rose in Latin America in 2015 and 2016, after more than a decade of decline in the majority of countries in the region, according to a report by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

While in 2014, 28.5 percent of the region’s population was in poverty — 168 million people — that number jumped to 29.8 percent in 2015, then 30.7 percent in 2016.

Extreme poverty, on the other hand, rose from 8.2 percent in 2014 (48 million people) to 10 percent in 2016 (61 million people).

Despite these figures, a medium-term perspective leads to a positive balance overall in terms of poverty reduction, since it shrank by 15.2 percentage points between 2002 and 2016, according to the report *Social Panorama of Latin America 2017*, presented Wednesday by Alicia Barcena, ECLAC’s Executive Secretary, at a press conference in the organization’s offices in Mexico City.

“...This growth has clearly been fostered by countries’ distributive and redistributive policies, such as tax reforms, minimum wages, pensions and transfers linked to poverty reduction strategies and to the expansion of social protection systems,” Barcena said.

Honduras and Paraguay are among the countries that have seen these rising levels of poverty.



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