

*Brazilian study reveals that 60%
of the population suffers from
food insecurity*

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Brasilia, June 12 (RHC)-- 60% of Brazilians, about 125 million people, suffer food insecurity due to the economic situation, while 33 million, 15%, are daily victims of hunger, in a scenario that went back to 1993 records, according to the second study on food and nutrition conducted by the specialized entity Penssan.

The Brazilian Network of Research in Food Sovereignty and Security (Penssan) has launched the second national study on food insecurity in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, the largest Latin American economy and the second country in deaths after the United States as a result of the new coronavirus disease.

The study indicated that six out of 10 Brazilians live with some level of food insecurity as a consequence of their economic, income and employment reality. They are 125.2 million people in this situation, representing an increase of 7.2 percent from 2020 and 60 percent compared to 2018.

In 2018, before the inauguration of President Jair Bolsonaro, 5.8% of Brazilians were hungry, while in 2020 this figure increased to 9% and in 2022 to 15.5%.

Brazil returned to the UN Hunger Map after the FAO removed the country from this scenario in 2014. Of this universe of people with food insecurity of some kind due to lack of money or access to food, 33 million go hungry every day, according to the Penssan survey conducted by the consulting firm Vox Populi and published by the country's main media.

The fight against hunger is one of the electoral banners of former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Lula is the favorite to defeat President Jair Bolsonaro in the October 2 elections, especially because his previous government was marked by a situation of urgency with plans such as Zero Hunger.

In 1993 there were 32 million hungry people when Brazil's population was 35% smaller than now, reported the director of Ação de Cidadania, Kiko Afonso, one of the members of the Penssan network.

"We went back 30 years in the fight against hunger, it's scary. But the current indignant movement is far from the indignation of 1993 with 32 million hungry people. We are inert as a society," he said.

According to the survey, in 2022 one in three Brazilians did some action that caused them shame, sadness or regret to obtain some food.

The structural racism of the Brazilian economy was also manifested in the survey: among the 41% who have stable access to food of adequate quantity and quality, the index is higher among the white minority (53.2%) and lower among Afro-descendants (35%).

The regions with the highest levels of hunger are the northern Amazon, the northeast, rural areas and households where the head of household is a woman.

The former president of the governmental Food Security Council between 2004 and 2007, Francisco Menezes, said that the causes of the increase in hunger are the impoverishment of the population, the end of structural social supply policies and the climate crisis.

Menezes criticized the abandonment of the food stock regulation policy by Bolsonaro's administration, especially in view of the food inflation registered since the pandemic and the Russian-Ukrainian war.

The entities that are part of the Penssan network are Ação da Cidadania, ActionAid Brasil, Friedrich Ebert Foundation Brasil, Ibirapitanga, Oxfam Brasil and Sesc.

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