

## Brazil Wants to Help 2.2 Million Illiterate Teens and Adults

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Around 2.2 million Brazilian youngsters and adults are expected to be served by the Literate Brazil program in 2005.

The Ministry of Education is already receiving literacy instruction projects from city halls and state departments of education interested in participating in this year's program.

The challenge assumed by the program in 2005 is to get all of Brazil's 5,563 municipalities to participate in Literate Brazil.

The Secretariat of Ongoing Education, Literacy, and Diversity (Secad) has set a target for each municipality, based on data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics' (IBGE) 2000 Census.

Secretary Ricardo Henriques, head of the Secad, says that, besides literacy instruction, the concern is with educational continuity.

"Literacy represents the beginning, the entryway, that mobilizes youngsters and adults who were excluded from the educational system to embark on the process of literacy training and then continue their studies in the 1st to 4th grades of fundamental education and later in the 5th to 8th grades, with vocational training contents, above all. This is of the utmost importance," he points out.

According to the IBGE's 2000 Census, Brazil has 16 million illiterates. In its two years of existence, the Literate Brazil program has already provided instruction to around 3.5 million people over the age of 15.

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