

Brazil's First Job Program Includes Youths from Quilombos

Contributed by Marcela Rebelo
Thursday, 05 January 2006

For the first time youths who reside in Quilombos will be included in the government's Youth Social Consortium which puts young people in the job market. [Quilombos are settlements originally started by runaway slaves well over a hundred years ago]

This year the program will enroll 500 youths from Quilombos in the city of Alcântara, state of Maranhão, with emphasis on economic solidarity, food security and the proper use of natural resources.

"We will establish cooperatives and then let the young people set up their own businesses," explains Luciana Tannus, who coordinates the program at the Ministry of Labor.

In 2006 a total of 15 Youth Social Consortiums will be in action around the country operating under a budget of US\$ 19 million. The consortiums are part of a larger program, First Job (Programa Nacional de Estímulo ao Primeiro Emprego), which is aimed at preparing youths between the ages of 16 and 24 from very low income families for the job market.

In 2005 First Job trained 18,000 youths (7,000 of them got jobs). This year the number of trainees should rise to 23,000. The program pays each youth US\$ 64 per month in return for services that might lead to permanent employment.

Agência Brasil