

39 Million or 20% of Brazilians Live on Government Charity

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A report just released by Brazil's government statistical bureau (IBGE), "Education and Access to Transfer of Income Social Programs" has found that one in every five Brazilians receive money from the government to buy food.

This represents a total of almost 39 million people in 2004, most of them residing in homes where the monthly income was up to one minimum wage (US\$ 139). In order to receive the government handouts the families getting the money have to keep their children in school.

The IBGE report presents a socioeconomic profile of households that get financial benefits from government social assistance programs. The report was based on a survey that consisted of interviews with almost 400,000 people and visits to 139,100 households.

The report shows that besides being low-income, a large number of the families surveyed were bigger, younger and less educated than families which did not receive similar government assistance.

Many of the households did not have durable goods, such as television or refrigerators; 42.4% did not have sewage disposal; 70% did not have running water.

On the other hand, 92.9% had electricity; 88.3% had garbage collection. And 43.7% of the families that received government social program benefits were farm workers.

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