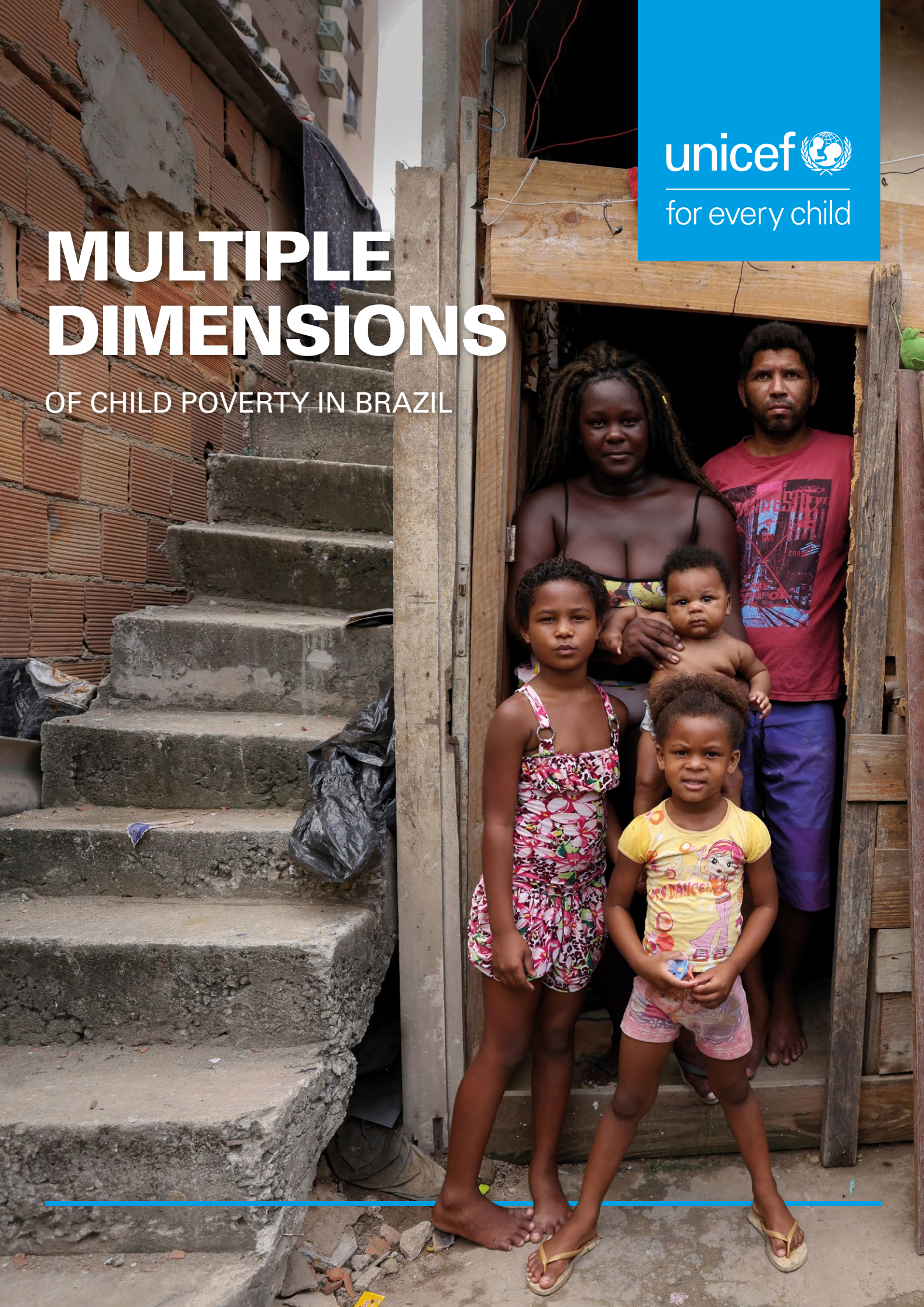

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# MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

## OF CHILD POVERTY IN BRAZIL

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Brasília, 2023

## A REPORT BY unicef


### United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

**Youssouf Abdel-Jelil** – UNICEF Representative in Brazil
**Paola Babos** – UNICEF Deputy Representative in Brazil
**Sonia Yeo** – Chief of Communication and Partnerships, UNICEF Brazil
**Liliana Chopitea** – Chief of Social Policy and Monitoring & Evaluation, UNICEF Brazil

**Editorial Group:** Boris Diechtiareff, Elisa Meirelles Reis, Liliana Chopitea, Santiago Varella, Sonia Yeo, and Willian Wives

**Study Director:** Daniel Vasconcellos Archer Duque, researcher at the Getulio Vargas Foundation's Brazilian Institute of Economics (FGV IBRE)



### Acknowledgements

Several Brazilian and international specialists were interviewed as this publication was prepared. Their exclusive interviews were held between September 2022 and February 2023. We also counted on the support of UNICEF's chiefs, consultants and communication teams, in addition to the help of dozens of professionals, organizations and families, including children and adolescents. We heartfully thank you all for your support.

### UNICEF Team

Judith Léveillée (UNICEF Amazon Territory Coordinator, Belém) and Yldson Macias, UNICEF Social Protection Consultant in Pará; Dennis Christian Larsen, UNICEF Chief of Office, Recife; Julia Ferreira Kacowicz and Kassia Ribeiro, UNICEF Office, Recife; Luciana Phebo, UNICEF Chief of Office, Rio de Janeiro; Cristina Albuquerque, Chief of Health and HIV/AIDS, UNICEF Brazil; Regicely Aline Brandão, Consultant on Nutrition, UNICEF Brazil; Mônica Dias Pinto, Chief of Education, UNICEF Brazil; Gregory Bulit, Rodrigo Resende and Raul Guerrero, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), UNICEF Brazil; Mário Volpi, Chief of Youth and Adolescent Development, UNICEF Brazil; Rosana Vega, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF Brazil; Luana Ribeiro Piotto, Communications Team, UNICEF Brazil; Bruno Viécili, Ida Pietricovsky de Oliveira and Immaculada Prieto, UNICEF Communication Experts in Recife, Belém and Rio de Janeiro, respectively.

### Organizations and Professionals

**In the state of Pará:** Adria Lucia Tavares da Trindade, Secretary of Labor and Social Advancement, Santa Izabel do Pará; Gely Santos and Carla Souza, Social Assistants at the Municipal Secretariat of Labor and Social Advancement, Santa Izabel do Pará; Sonia Elídia Reis Mota, Secretary of the Environment and Tourism, Acará. **In Pernambuco:** Graça Lima, Project Coordinator; Cleide Morais and David Gonzaga, Experts, Association in Defense of Education, Health and Social Assistance (ASSERTE); Pedro Henrique Soares Ribeiro, Project Coordinator of the Technical Team on Advisory, Research and Social Action (ETAPAS); and Joelma Lima, Community Leader and Coordinator, Mário Andrade Community Center. **In Rio de Janeiro:** Andrea Pulici, Coordinator of the Technical Coordination of Special Projects, Pereira Passos Institute (IPP); Bianca Medina, Social Assistant at IPP and Coordinator, Program *Territórios Sociais;* Gabrielle de Assis Garofalo, Marcus Vinicius Moraes Dantas and Núbia Caetano, IPP Field Team Coordinators, Program *Territórios Sociais*; Paulo Fernandes da Silva, President, *Comunidade Chapadinho;* and Jéssica Caetano Rodrigues, Coordinator, Project *Leões de Cristo*/Chapadinho.

### Expert Collaborators

We also express our gratitude to the following collaborators: Luana Siewert Pretto and Aymeê Gurjão, Trata Brasil Institute; Ricardo Henriques, Guilherme França Corrêa and Giedra Fontoura Lopes, UNIBANCO Institute; Edineide Almeida, Joana Saraiva and Luiz Miguel Martins Garcia, National Union of Municipal Education Directors (UNDIME); Marco Natalino, Paulo Meyer Nascimento, Tecris de Souza, Eduardo Saback and Rute Imanishi Rodrigues, Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA); Naercio Menezes Filho, Professor and Director, Brazilian Center for Early Child Development (CPAPI) at INSPER and Professor at the University of São Paulo's School of Economics, Administration, Accounting and Actuarial Science (FEA-USP); Maria Cláudia Falcão and Denise Marinho dos Santos, International Labour Organization (ILO); Léo Heller, Researcher, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ) and United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation 2014-2020; Marcelo Neri, Getulio Vargas Foundation's Social Policy Center (FGV Social) and Márcia Gomes (FGV); Francisco Coullanges Xavier, Ministry of Social Development and Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger; Ricardo Paes de Barros and Laura Almeida Ramos de Abreu, INSPER; Marcelo Pedra, Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ Brasília); Silvia Maria Schor, FEA-USP; Eduardo Rigonati, Institute of Economic Research Foundation (FIPE); Paulo Afonso Garrido de Paula, Public Prosecutor, Public Prosecutions Office of the State of São Paulo (MPSP) and one of the authors of Brazil's Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA); James Heckman and Abigail Schmidt-Brown, University of Chicago.


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## SUPPORTED BY FUNDAÇÃO VALE

### Fundação Vale

*Fundação Vale* has supported UNICEF in its work with the original version of this study: *As Múltiplas Dimensões da Pobreza na Infância e na Adolescência no Brasil.*

Cover Photo: © UNICEF/BRZ/Sérgio Moraes

**Dados Internacionais de Catalogação na Publicação (CIP)**
**(Câmara Brasileira do Livro, SP, Brasil)**

Multiple dimensions of child poverty in Brazil / [coordinators Boris Diechtiareff...[et al.] ; English translation Dermeval de Sena Aires Júnior, George Aune]. -- Brasília, DF : UNICEF, 2023.

Outros coordenadores: Daniel Vasconcellos Archer Duque, Elisa Meirelles Reis, Liliana Chopitea, Santiago Varella, Sonia Yeo, Willian Wives.
Título original: As múltiplas dimensões da pobreza na infância e na adolescência no Brasil.
ISBN 978-65-89933-13-7

1. Desigualdade social 2. Direitos sociais - Brasil 3. Pobreza - Aspectos sociais I. Diechtiareff, Boris. II. Duque, Daniel Vasconcellos Archer. III. Reis, Elisa Meirelles. IV. Chopitea, Liliana. V. Varella, Santiago. VI. Yeo, Sonia. VII. Wives, Willian.

23-167286 CDD-361.25

**Índices para catálogo sistemático:**

1. Pobreza : Política social : Bem-estar social 361.25

Tábata Alves da Silva - Bibliotecária - CRB-8/9253

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**ANVISA** — Brazilian Health Regulatory Agency

**ASSERTE** — Association in Defense of Education, Health and Social Assistance

**BNCC** – National Common Core Curriculum

**CEASA-PE** — Supply and Logistics Center of the State of Pernambuco

**CEASA-RJ** — Supply and Logistics Center of the State of Rio de Janeiro

**CGAN** — General Coordination of Food and Nutrition

**CODEPLAN** — Federal District Planning Company

**CONEVAL** — National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy, Mexico

**Continuous PNAD** — Continuous National Household Sample Survey

**CPAPI** — Brazilian Center for Early Child Development

**CRAS** — Social Assistance Reference Center

**ECA** — Statute of the Child and Adolescent

**ENEM** — National High School Exam

**EPPG-FGV** — Getulio Vargas Foundation's School of Public Policy and Government

**ETAPAS** — Technical Team on Advisory, Research and Social Action

**FEA-USP** — University of São Paulo's School of Economics, Administration, Accounting and Actuarial Science

**FGV EPGE** — Getulio Vargas Foundation's Brazilian School of Economics and Finances

**FGV IBRE** — Getulio Vargas Foundation's Brazilian Institute of Economics

**FGV Social** — Getulio Vargas Foundation's Social Policy Center

**FIOCRUZ** — Oswaldo Cruz Foundation

**FIPE** — Institute of Economic Research Foundation

**FUNAI** — National Indigenous Peoples Foundation

**GDP** — Gross Domestic Product

**GSC&A** — Children's and Adolescents' Budget

**IBGE** — Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

**IDF** — Family Development Index

**IHAC** — Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative – in Brazil, *Iniciativa Hospital Amigo da Criança*

**ILO** — International Labour Organization

**INEP** — National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira

**IPEA** — Institute for Applied Economic Research

**IPEC** — Intelligence in Research and Strategic Consulting

**IPP** — Pereira Passos Institute

**MEC** — Ministry of Education

**MPSP** — Public Prosecutions Office of the State of São Paulo

**MS** — Ministry of Health

**NBCAL** — Brazilian Norm for the Commercialization of Foods for Infants and Children in Early Childhood, Nipples, Pacifiers and Baby Bottles

**PETI** - Child Labor Eradication Program

**PNAE** — National School Feeding Program

**PNAIC** — National Pact for Literacy at Right Age

**PNE** — National Education Plan

**POF** — Consumer Expenditure Survey, IBGE

**PRODASEN** — Secretariat of Information Technology of the Senate of Brazil

**Rede PENSSAN** — Brazilian Research Network on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security

**SAEB** — Basic Education Assessment System

**SGDCA** — Child and Adolescent Rights Guarantee System

**SDGs** — Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations

**SESAI** — Special Secretariat for Indigenous Health

**SIAFI** — Integrated System of Federal Government Financial Administration

**SIGA Brasil** — Advanced Budgetary and Management Information System

**SUAS** — Unified Social Assistance System

**UNDIME** — National Union of Municipal Education Directors

**UNFPA** — United Nations Population Fund

**UN-Habitat** — United Nations Human Settlements Programme

**UNICEF** — United Nations Children's Fund

**WASH** — Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

**WHO** — World Health Organization

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Summary

# A SERIOUS AND PERSISTENT SCENARIO OF DEPRIVATIONS, MARKED BY INEQUALITY

This 2022 UNICEF study entitled *Multiple Dimensions of Child Poverty in Brazil*, the full version of which you are now reading, presents data that demand serious attention on the part of Brazilian society as a whole. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, multidimensional child poverty afflicted six in every ten children up to the age of 17 years in Brazil. In absolute numbers, this amounts to nearly 32 million boys and girls, out of a total of 50.8 million in this cohort, according to UNICEF's assessment based on the 2019 Continuous National Household Sample Survey (Continuous PNAD), a figure equivalent to slightly more than the sum of the populations of Brazil's seven most populous cities.[1]

The multidimensional child poverty to which this figure refers is different from the traditional concept of monetary poverty, and reflects inter-relations among the different types of deprivations, exclusions and vulnerabilities to which boys and girls are exposed. This study is based on official data produced by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). It uses eight indicators, selected in accordance with the availability of data, on the dimensions of education, nutrition, income, child labor, housing, water, sanitation and access to information, to assess multidimensional child poverty in Brazil.

Data related to the dimensions of food, education and income indicate that the number of children deprived of rights increased during the pandemic, further aggravating this scenario.

Between 2020 and 2021, the percentage of boys and girls lacking the income necessary to ensure proper nourishment increased from 16.1% to 25.7%.

Illiteracy rates also rose alongside income deprivation rates. In 2022, the percentage of children undergoing some form of deprivation of their right to literacy doubled in comparison to 2020, rising from 1.9% to 3.8%, according to estimates based on the Quarterly Continuous PNAD assessed in the second quarter of each year.

In 2021, the percentage of families falling below the extreme monetary poverty line also hit a 5-year peak of 16.1%, as compared to 13.8% in 2017.

Except for data on child labor, which is available until 2019, information on the other four dimensions (water, sanitation, housing and information) is available until 2020. It has not been updated, owing to IBGE's data-collection difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic. But even without this update, the situation portrayed is alarming.

Between 2017 and 2020, only the indicator of access to information registered significant improvement. Protection against child labor and access to housing remained relatively stable, but at high levels of deprivation. For access to water and sanitation, advances were modest or insufficient.

[1] According to IBGE estimates based on preliminary data collected until December 2022 by the Census, Brazil's most populous cities are São Paulo (SP), Rio de Janeiro (RJ), Brasília (DF), Salvador (BA), Fortaleza (CE), Belo Horizonte (MG) and Manaus (AM). Their overall population adds to 31,403,951 inhabitants.

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In all dimensions, persistent racial and regional disparities remain a major concern. As with other indicators, the impacts were greatest for the categories black and indigenous, and for populations of the North and Northeast regions.

Such challenges are not new. Retrospective analyses carried out based on Consumer Spending Surveys (POF 2008-2009 & 2017-2018)[2] reveal racial and regional disparities inherent to Brazilian society which, though apparent before the pandemic, were found to have become more accentuated in recent years.

Behind the numbers there are stories. Like that of the family of Inara Macário and Carlos Braga (the cover photo, also reproduced above) and others whose daily lives are marred by multiple deprivations of rights. This publication provides data, broken down by state, color/race[3] and gender, accompanied by an exclusive UNICEF assessment that enables mapping of each of the dimensions of childhood and adolescence poverty in Brazil. In all, 109 specialists from different areas, and also fathers, mothers, children and adolescents were heard when composing this portrayal of multidimensional child poverty in contemporary Brazil.

> “To tackle multidimensional child poverty, Brazil needs to prioritize intersectoral policies and ensure allocation of the necessary resources.”

The current scenario requires urgent measures, the prioritization of intersectoral social policies, and allocation of the necessary public resources from sustainable sources. For Brazil to guarantee each and every boy and girl their basic rights, as prescribed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in Brazil's Statute of the Child and Adolescent and in the 1988 Federal Constitution, it is incumbent upon the Federal, state and municipal authorities, private-sector businesses and civil society to undertake a shared endeavor to tackle multidimensional poverty, thus reiterating Brazil's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while leaving no child behind. Otherwise, the present and future of millions of children will remain in jeopardy.

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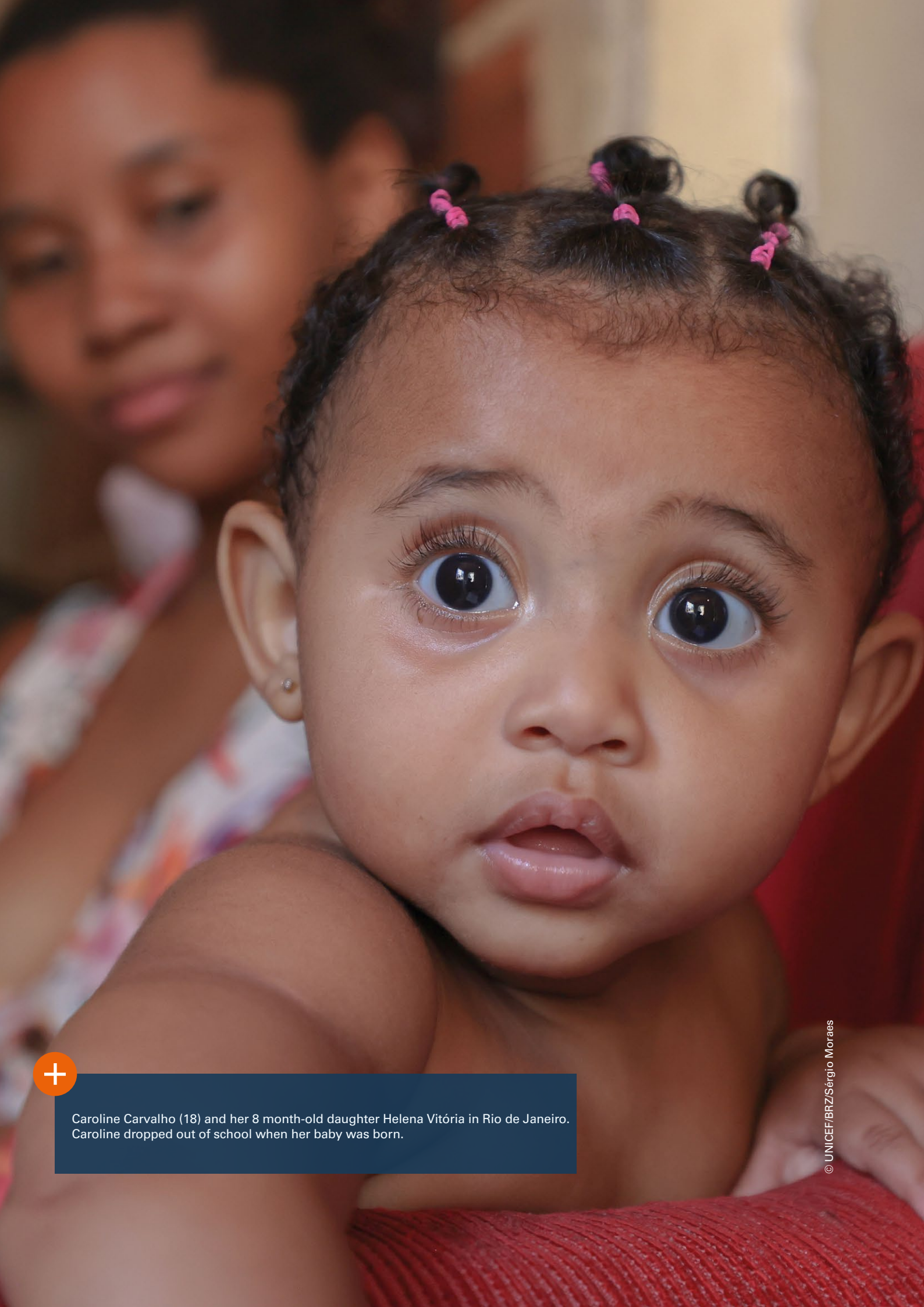
**Youssouf Abdel-Jelil**
UNICEF Representative in Brazil

[2] The POF provides historical perspective of the dimensions examined whereas the Continuous PNAD, though more recent, does not enable the same type of overview. Use of POF data also allows analysis of nutrition, a dimension not systematically covered by the Continuous PNAD.

[3] IBGE asked respondents what race/color they consider themselves to be. The categories are: black, brown, white, indigenous and yellow.



Caroline Carvalho (18) and her 8 month-old daughter Helena Vitória in Rio de Janeiro. Caroline dropped out of school when her baby was born.

# 1 ABOUT THIS STUDY

*In 2018, UNICEF published its first study on multidimensional child poverty in Brazil. Although the same deprivation criteria have been maintained, the study you are now reading incorporates significant methodological changes to facilitate periodic monitoring of data into the future, but which preclude comparisons with the previous study.*

The first UNICEF study on multidimensional child poverty in Brazil was published in 2018, based on data provided by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) from its National Household Sample Surveys (PNAD – 2005 to 2015) This report, entitled *Well-Being and Multiple Deprivations in Childhood and Adolescence in Brazil*,[4] assessed the incomes of families with boys and girls up to the age of 17, and their access to seven basic rights: education, nutrition, water, sanitation, housing, information and protection against child labor.

This new study, while maintaining the same criteria, brings significant methodological changes. The first relates to data sources. Instead of using the PNAD, it draws from the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (Continuous PNAD) for the years 2017-2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, depending on the availability of data for each indicator, as will be explained.

For retrospective analyses on advances and challenges related to the previous decade (2009-2018) or, in specific cases such as the dimension of nutrition, data from IBGE's Consumer Spending Surveys (POF – 2008-2009 & 2017-2018) is used.

After publishing data for 2015, IBGE discontinued the Annual PNAD survey. It was replaced by the Continuous PNAD with an updated methodology that provides more comprehensive territorial coverage and makes information available on a quarterly basis.

Adapting UNICEF's methodology to the Continuous PNAD will facilitate periodic follow up of indicators, while enabling comparison and monitoring of data to identify advances and setbacks, and alert public managers to the need to come up with efficient policies for tackling multidimensional poverty.

However, the methodological and sampling differences between current research data and that used in the report published in 2018 unfortunately preclude comparisons between this new study and the previous one.

## Continuous PNAD

Like its predecessor (the Annual PNAD), the Continuous PNAD provides socio-demographic information on Brazilian families, including data on schooling levels, housing and income, to enable in-depth investigation of the country's socioeconomic development. The Continuous PNAD also enables a con-

[4] UNICEF. *Bem-Estar e Privações Múltiplas na Infância e na Adolescência no Brasil. Brasília, 2018.* Available in English translation at: Well-being-and-multiple-deprivations-in-childhood-and-adolescence-in-brazil.pdf.pdf (unicef.org).

tinued investigation of context indicators related to work and income. Whereas PNAD was published annually in September, the scope of Continuous PNAD is quarterly, with a longitudinal character. Each household is surveyed once every three months over five consecutive periods.

Collection of Continuous PNAD data entails in-person interviews of selected households. Exceptionally, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, between March 2020 and July 2021, interviews were conducted by telephone.

The present study combines information from the first interviews under the Continuous PNAD, comprising data on Brazilian households (on the dimensions information, housing, water and sanitation), with the results of the fifth interview, which includes inputs on child labor. Income and education indicators are present in both interviews. To make sure that the studied households are composed of the same family members, care was taken to ensure that the database reflects only households in which at least one individual with the same date of birth was present in both interviews.

In the dimension of education, the study estimated the percentage of children deprived of any right in 2022 by comparing the results from the second quarter of each year through the Quarterly Continuous PNAD, which records education data.

## The Consumer Expenditure Survey (POF)

The Consumer Spending Survey (POF), in addition to data common to Continuous PNAD, provides information on consumption and nutrition. It is conducted at irregular intervals, between the second half of one year and the first half of the next.

The POF evaluates spending patterns, expenses and earnings, and partial asset variations of families, to profile the population's living conditions by analyzing domestic budgets and spending. In addition to the information directly linked to budget structures, the POF also examines various characteristics of households and families, such as a subjective self-assessment of quality of life and nutrition.

The results also allow investigation of the composition of families' expenses by income-category, as well as regional and urban/rural disparities. The unit of investigation is the household, and selection is carried out by sampling.

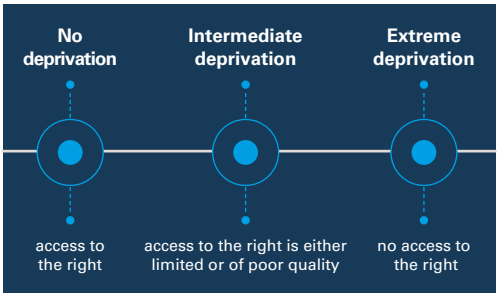
This is the first time POF data for 2008/2009 and 2017/2018 has been used to provide information on multidimensional child poverty.[5] Its coverage of the previous decade enables a more detailed analysis of relevant aspects over a longer period than Continuous PNAD, which covers only a more recent period.

## Interruption of data collection during the pandemic

Owing to restrictions imposed by health authorities during the pandemic, and considering the difficulties of data collection during this period, to preserve statistical integrity, IBGE chose not to disclose certain specific data referent to the Continuous PNAD 2020 & 2021. This interruption in the flow of data impacted research into the effects of the pandemic on multidimensional child poverty, making it possible to update only data on education, nutrition and income.

Consequently, sections of this report on the dimensions of housing, water, sanitation and information are based on data available up until 2020; whereas, for child labor, the available data is from 2019.

## Intensity of deprivations




[5] Brazil's Statute of the Child and Adolescent uses the term 'child' for persons up to the age of 12 years, and 'adolescent' for persons age 13 to 17 years old. The English version of this report uses the terms 'child' and 'children' for human beings below the age of eighteen years old, in accordance with language used in UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Dimensions of child poverty

| DIMENSION | NO DEPRIVATION | INTERMEDIATE DEPRIVATION | EXTREME DEPRIVATION | SOURCE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NUTRITION | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income above that considered sufficient for access to food and a nutrition standard considered adequate. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food, but a nutrition standard considered adequate by the family. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food and nutrition standard considered inadequate by the family. | Continuous PNAD 2018-21 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| INCOME | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income above the monetary poverty line. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below the monetary poverty line.[6] | Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below the extreme monetary poverty line.[7] | Continuous PNAD 2016-21 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| EDUCATION | Child of school age attending an educational institution with no age/grade distortions and who knows how to read and write. | For age/grade distortions, this relates to a child age 9 to 17 attending school, but in a low grade for their age; | For age/grade distortions, this relates to a child age 4 to 17 who is not attending an educational institution; | Continuous PNAD 2016-22 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| | | For literacy, this relates to a non-literate child above the age of 7 attending an educational institution. | For literacy, this relates to a non-literate child above the age of 7 attending an educational institution. | Continuous PNAD 2016-22 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| CHILD LABOR | Child age 5 to 9 who neither worked nor engaged in domestic tasks for up to nine hours per reference week; | Child age 5 to 9 engaged in domestic tasks for 10 to 20 hours per reference week; | Child age 5 to 9 who worked or engaged in domestic tasks for more than 20 hours per reference week; | Continuous PNAD 2016-19 |
| | Child age 10 to 13 who neither worked nor engaged in domestic tasks for over 14 hours per reference week; | Child age 10 to 13 who worked for 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for 15 to 20 hours in the reference week; | Child age 10 to 13 who worked more than 14 hours or engaged in domestic tasks for more than 20 hours in the reference week; | Continuous PNAD 2016-19 |
| | Adolescent age 14 to 17 who either works or engages in domestic tasks for up to 20 hours. | Adolescent age 14 to 17 who worked for 21 to 30 hours or engaged in domestic tasks for 21 to 30 hours during the reference week. | Adolescent age 14 to 17 who worked or performed domestic tasks for more than 30 hours during the reference week. | Continuous PNAD 2016-19 |
| HOUSING | Child up to age 17 living in a household with three or less persons per bedroom, with roof and walls built with adequate materials. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with four persons per bedroom or with walls built with inadequate materials. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with more than four persons per bedroom or with walls and roof built with inadequate materials. | Continuous PNAD 2016-20 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| WATER | Child up to age 17 living in a household with indoor water supplied from a safe source; | Child up to age 17 living in a household with piped water only outdoors or off the property; | Child up to age 17 living in a household with no piped water supply; | Continuous PNAD 2016-20 |
| | Child up to age 17 living in a household with indoor water supplied from water mains. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with indoor water supplied from source such as a well, fountain or spring. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with indoor access to stored rainwater or to water from an unknown source. | POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| SANITATION | Child up to age 17 living in a household with a bathroom and septic tank or connected to a sewage main or storm drain. | Child up to age 17 living in a household sharing a communal bathroom or rudimentary pit latrine. | Child up to age 17 living in a household with no bathroom or by an open sewer. | Continuous PNAD 2016-20 POF 2008/9-17/18 |
| INFORMATION | Child age 9 to 17 who accessed internet in the past year. | Child age 9 to 17 with no access to internet in the past year, but with a television set in the home. | Child age 9 to 17 with no access to internet in the past year, nor a television set in the home. | Continuous PNAD 2016-20 POF 2008/9-17/18 |

[6] Using the poverty line established by the World Bank (5.5 dollars/day).

[7] Using the extreme poverty line defined by the World Bank (1.9 dollars/day).

Children play by an open sewer in Recife. In the State of Pernambuco, 42.1% of children suffer some form of deprivation of sanitation, according to data from Continuous PNAD – 2020.

# A concept born in the 1970s

Interest in measuring poverty with a focus on non-income dimensions emerged in the mid-1970s, as researchers began examining development indicators other than per-capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[8]

This new approach stemmed from the contention that individuals and families should be deemed 'poor' if: they had unmet basic needs; their income was insufficient to ensure access to a basket of basic goods and services; or they suffered both deprivations simultaneously. This contention marked the onset of what later evolved into the concept of multidimensional poverty.

The literature on multidimensional poverty has expanded substantially over the past 20 years. Many countries have recognized the advantages of this new focus since, on the one hand, it enables a clearer more comprehensive approach for assessing the well-being of populations and, on the other, it facilitates identification of gaps in current polices and indicates priorities for filling them.

The first study on multidimensional poverty in Latin America was carried out in 2009.[9] Mexico and Colombia were pioneers in the implementation of measures to tackle multidimensional poverty. In Mexico, introduction of the theme came with enactment of the General Law of Social Development, in January 2004. On the basis of this law, in 2005, Mexico established its National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) which developed a multidimensional measurement methodology. Data produced by CONEVAL for the national and state levels is published at two-year intervals and, for municipalities every five years.[10]

Subsequent initiatives emerged in Costa Rica, Ecuador and El Salvador. In Brazil, the State of Minas Gerais began using multidimensional poverty measurements in 132 municipalities in 2011, in an effort to overcome poverty through its *Travessia* program.

One of the first mentions of a multidimensional approach to poverty in Brazil is the "Family Development Index" (IDF).[11]

[8] An in-depth study on the history of the concept of multidimensional poverty can be found in UNICEF's 2018 publication, Well-Being and Multiple Deprivations in Childhood and Adolescence in Brazil. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/4541/file/Well-being-and-multiple-deprivations-in-childhood-and-adolescence-in-brazil.pdf.pdf.

[9] BATTISTON, D. et al. Income and Beyond: Multidimensional Poverty in Six Latin American Countries. Working Paper n. 17. Oxford: Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI), 2009. Available at: http://www.ophi.org.uk/.

[10] The results are available at: https://www.coneval.org.mx/Medicion/MP/Paginas/Pobreza_2020.aspx.

[11] BARROS, R. P. de; CARVALHO, M. de; FRANCO, S. "*O Índice de Desenvolvimento da Família (IDF)*". *Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada, Texto para Discussão n. 986*, Rio de Janeiro, 2003.

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In recent years, references to multidimensional poverty measurement, whether specifically linked to childhood or to the general population, have become more frequent in many countries.

A report entitled "Multidimensional Child Poverty Measurement in Latin America, the Caribbean and Internationally" (2019) published by UNICEF's regional office for Latin America in Panama,[12, 13] provides a summary of 64 research experiences in this field, covering entire populations or, more specifically, targeted at children. According to this report, at the time of publication, 19 countries or territories in the region had already conducted official, non-official or academic studies that examined poverty from a multidimensional perspective; and that, worldwide, multidimensional poverty data is currently available for 132 countries and territories.

UNICEF participates in many of these efforts and, together with local partners, has produced indicators and reports on multidimensional poverty in a number of countries. Examples include "Children in Angola: A Multidimensional Child Poverty Analysis";[14] "Understanding Child Multidimensional Poverty in Egypt";[15] "Monetary Poverty and Non-Monetary Deprivations in Argentina";[16] and in the case of Brazil, the 2018 document that preceded this publication, entitled *Well-Being and Multiple Deprivations in Childhood and Adolescence in Brazil*.[17]

[12] UNICEF. *Las Mediciones Multidimensionales de Pobreza Infantil en América Latina y el Caribe y a Nivel Internacional*. Panamá, 2019. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/lac/informes/las-mediciones-multidimensionales-de-pobreza-infantil-en-alc-y-a-nivel-internacional.

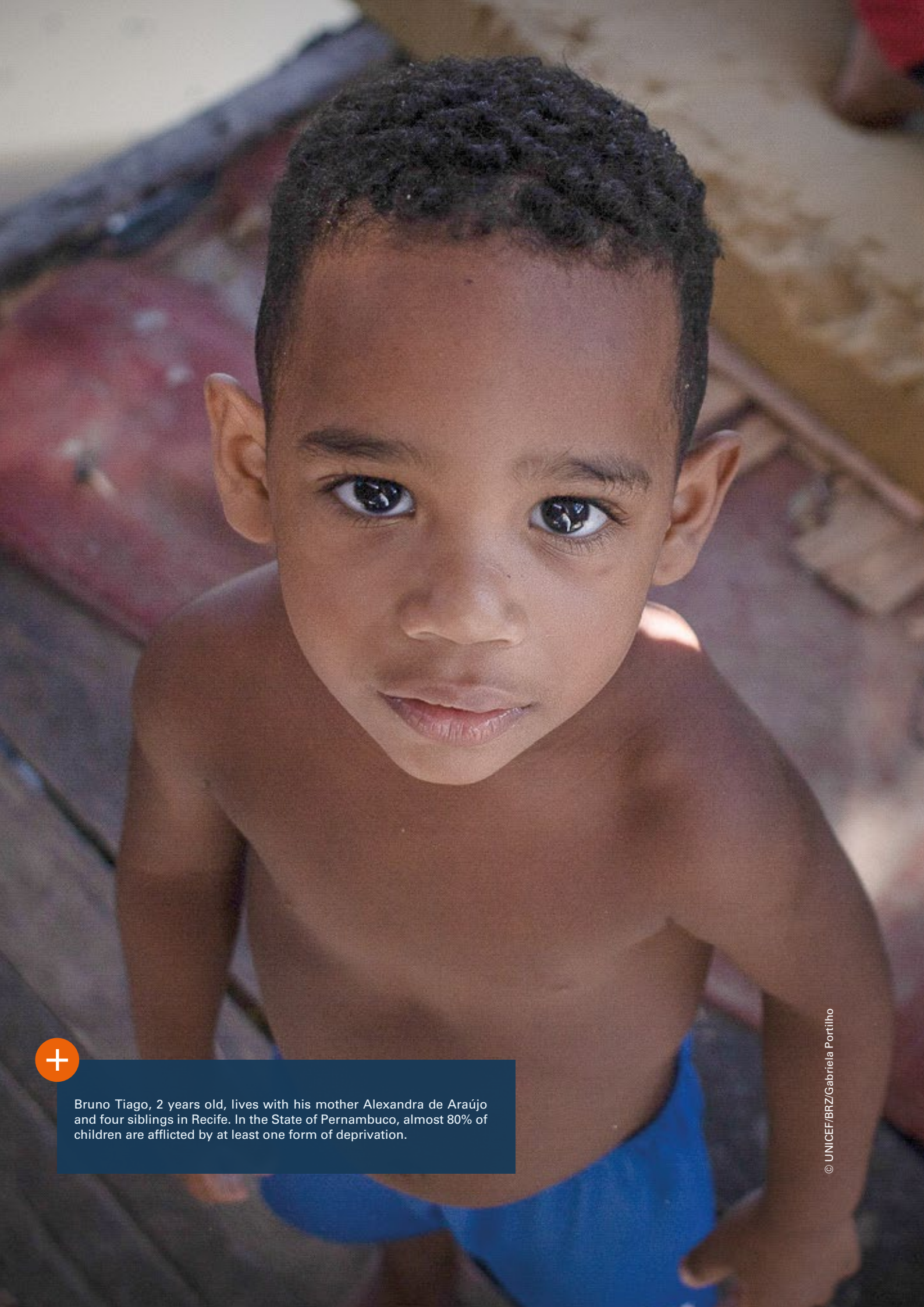
[13] Throughout this report, the titles of publications in languages other than English have been freely translated.

[14] UNICEF. *A Criança em Angola: Uma Análise Multidimensional da Pobreza Infantil*. Angola, 2018. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/angola/relatorios/crian%C3%A7a-em-angola-uma-an%C3%A1lise-multidimensional-da-pobreza-infantil.

[15] UNICEF. *Understanding Child Multidimensional Poverty in Egypt*. Egypt, 2017. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/egypt/media/1336/file/Understanding%20Child%20Multidimensional%20Poverty%20in%20Egypt-EN.pdf.

[16] UNICEF. *Pobreza Monetaria y Privaciones No Monetarias en Argentina*. Argentina, 2021. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/argentina/informes/pobreza-monetaria-privaciones-no-monetarias-argentina.

[17] UNICEF. Well-Being and Multiple Deprivations in Childhood and Adolescence in Brazil. Brazil, 2018. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/4541/file/Well-being-and-multiple-deprivations-in-childhood-and-adolescence-in-brazil.pdf.pdf.



Bruno Tiago, 2 years old, lives with his mother Alexandra de Araújo and four siblings in Recife. In the State of Pernambuco, almost 80% of children are afflicted by at least one form of deprivation.

# 2 MORE THAN 60% OF CHILDREN IN BRAZIL ARE DEPRIVED OF ONE OR MORE RIGHTS

*Levels of Multidimensional poverty were already alarming before the COVID-19 pandemic, and some indicators show they have become even more severe. Earlier trends showing a decline in poverty levels until 2019 have been reversed.*

In terms of guaranteeing the rights of children, the current situation in Brazil is of great concern. This is made evident by the findings of this new UNICEF study on multidimensional poverty, based on data from the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (Continuous PNAD) and Consumer Spending Survey (POF).

Not only have roughly two out of every three Brazilian children experienced deprivation of one or more rights since 2017, but also, according to multidimensional poverty indicators examined by UNICEF, the situation has deteriorated in more recent years.

The key results and findings of this study are presented in the following pages.

## The pandemic aggravates the situation

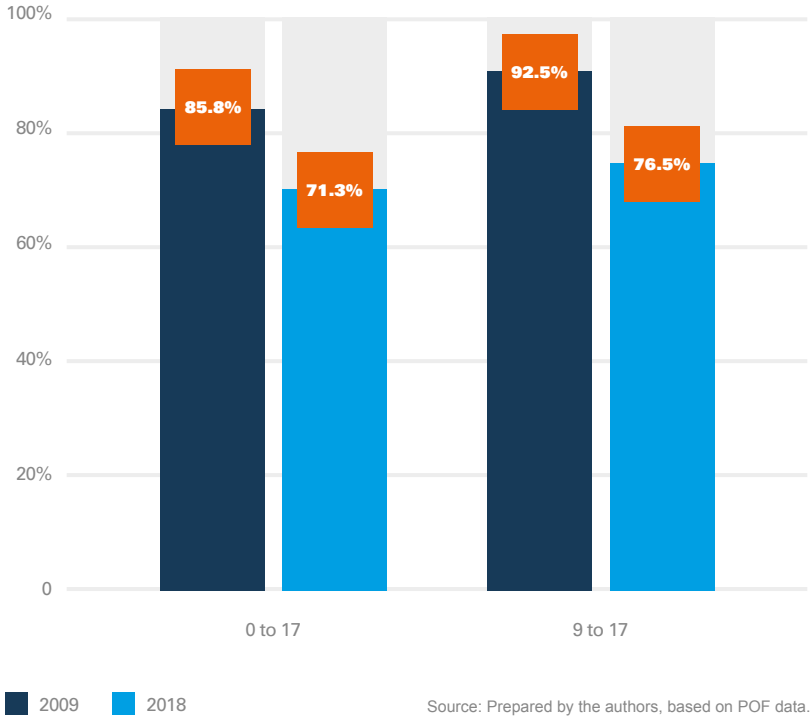
Between 2020 and 2022, multidimensional child poverty in Brazil worsened in three dimensions: nutrition, income and education. Information on other dimensions could not be updated, owing to IBGE's data-collection difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic (*for details on each dimension, see Chapter 3*). However, data gathered on the dimensions of child labor (up to 2019) and of housing (up to 2020) indicate a relative stability; whereas those for water and sanitation (also available only up to 2020) modest or insufficient progress was recorded. Only for the dimension of access to information was significant progress reported between 2017 and 2020.

The evidence thus points to a reversal of the trend of declining multidimensional child poverty observed in Brazil up to 2019. According to POF data, between 2009 and 2018, multidimensional poverty levels declined, from almost 86% to slightly over 71%. The greatest decline, from 92.5% to 76.5%, was for children age 9 to 17 years old;[18] a 16% difference (*see graph on page 16*).

Over this period, the dimensions in which most progress was achieved in terms of reducing the number of children facing one or multiple deprivations were: access to information (34%); to sanitation; (11%) and to income (9%).

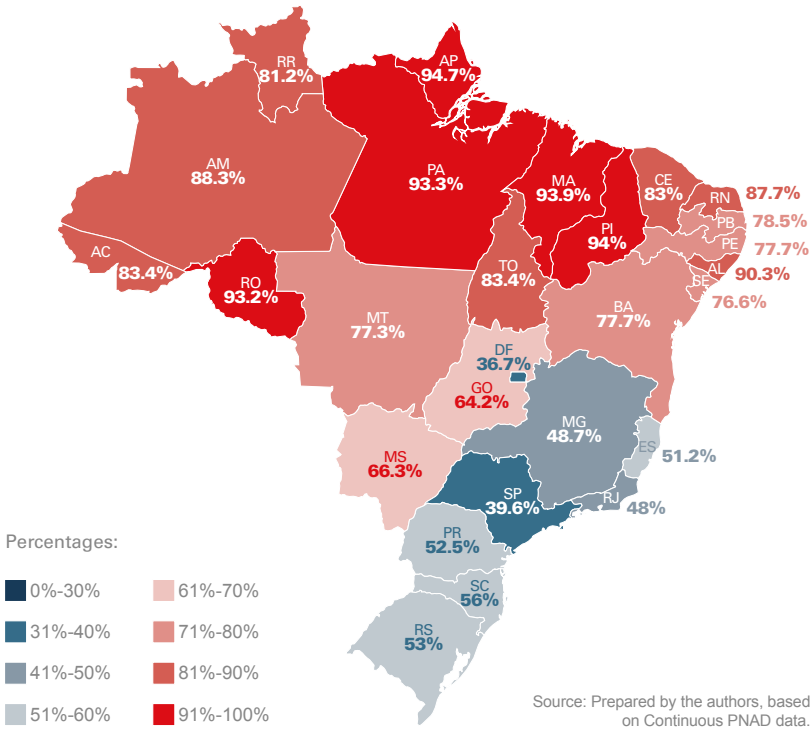
[18] Boys and girls age 9 to 17 are more exposed to all the examined types of deprivation. Chapter 1 provides more information on methodology and criteria.

## Percentage of children experiencing any deprivation, by age group (POF – 2009-2018)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Percentage of children experiencing any deprivation[19] (Continuous PNAD – 2019)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

### Regional, racial and gender disparities

The data reveals marked regional differences in proportions of the population experiencing multidimensional poverty. In 2019, of Brazil's 27 'federative units',[20] in three states in the North region (Amapá, Pará and Rondônia), and three in the Northeast (Alagoas, Maranhão and Piauí) over 90% of children suffered deprivation of at least one fundamental right. On the other hand, in the Federal District and in three states of the Southeast region (Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo) these deprivation rates were below 50%.

To a large extent, rights deprivations reflect prevailing regional economic conditions. Most children living below the monetary poverty line live in the states with the lowest levels of per-capita GDP. However, such regional disparities can also be discerned when only non-monetary deprivations are examined. In three of the states (Amapá, Piauí and Rondônia) levels of such deprivation were higher than 90%, whereas only in the Federal District and the State of São Paulo, they were below 30% (*see map on page 17*).

Regional disparities were observed in all dimensions, but were particularly acute in dimensions most dependent upon large-scale production and infrastructure investments, such as access to information, housing and sanitation.

When examined from a racial perspective, significant disparities of multidimensional poverty levels were revealed. The proportion of black and indigenous children suffering deprivation is almost 25% higher than of white and yellow[21] children. This racial disparity is a constant and persistent feature in almost all dimensions.

[19] The dimension of nutrition is not considered in the calculation of the general level, and thus is not reflected on these maps.

[20] According to the 1988 Federal Constitution, "...the Federative Republic of Brazil comprises the Union, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities...". The 26 states and Federal District are collectively described as the 27 'federative units'. In the English version of this report, the latter term is translated as 'states' and includes the Federal District.

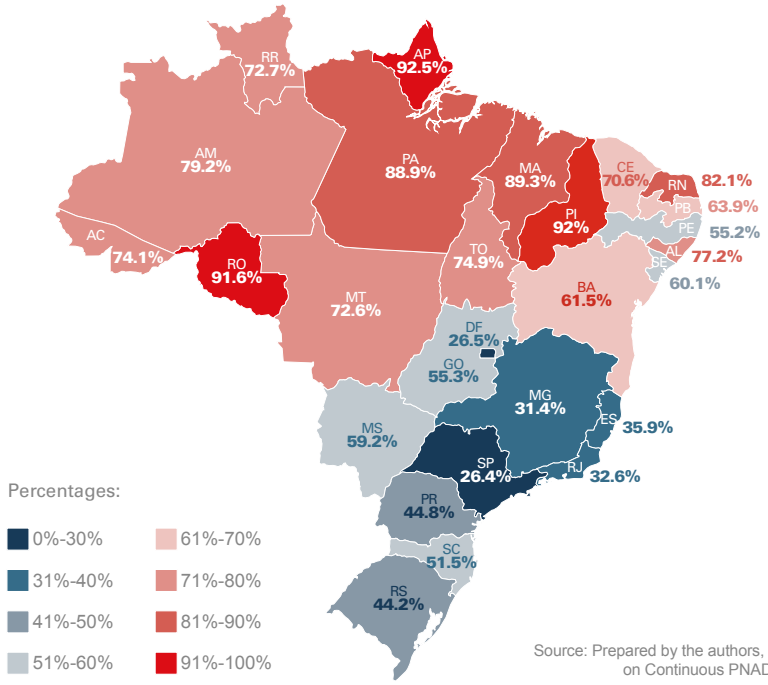
[21] IBGE asked respondents what race/color they consider themselves to be. The categories are: black, brown, white, indigenous and yellow.

According to Ricardo Henriques, Executive Superintendent of Instituto UNIBANCO and former National Secretary for Continuous Education, Literacy and Diversity at the Ministry of Education, the evidence strongly indicates that racism lies at the heart of Brazil's inequalities and, for this reason, that strategies are needed for identifying and tackling violations of rights.

"Even if I had an educational policy capable of fostering improvements for all, the distances between whites and blacks, or between whites and indigenous populations would still remain significant. They may gradually decrease, but the rate of reduction will tend to be quite slow", explains Henriques.

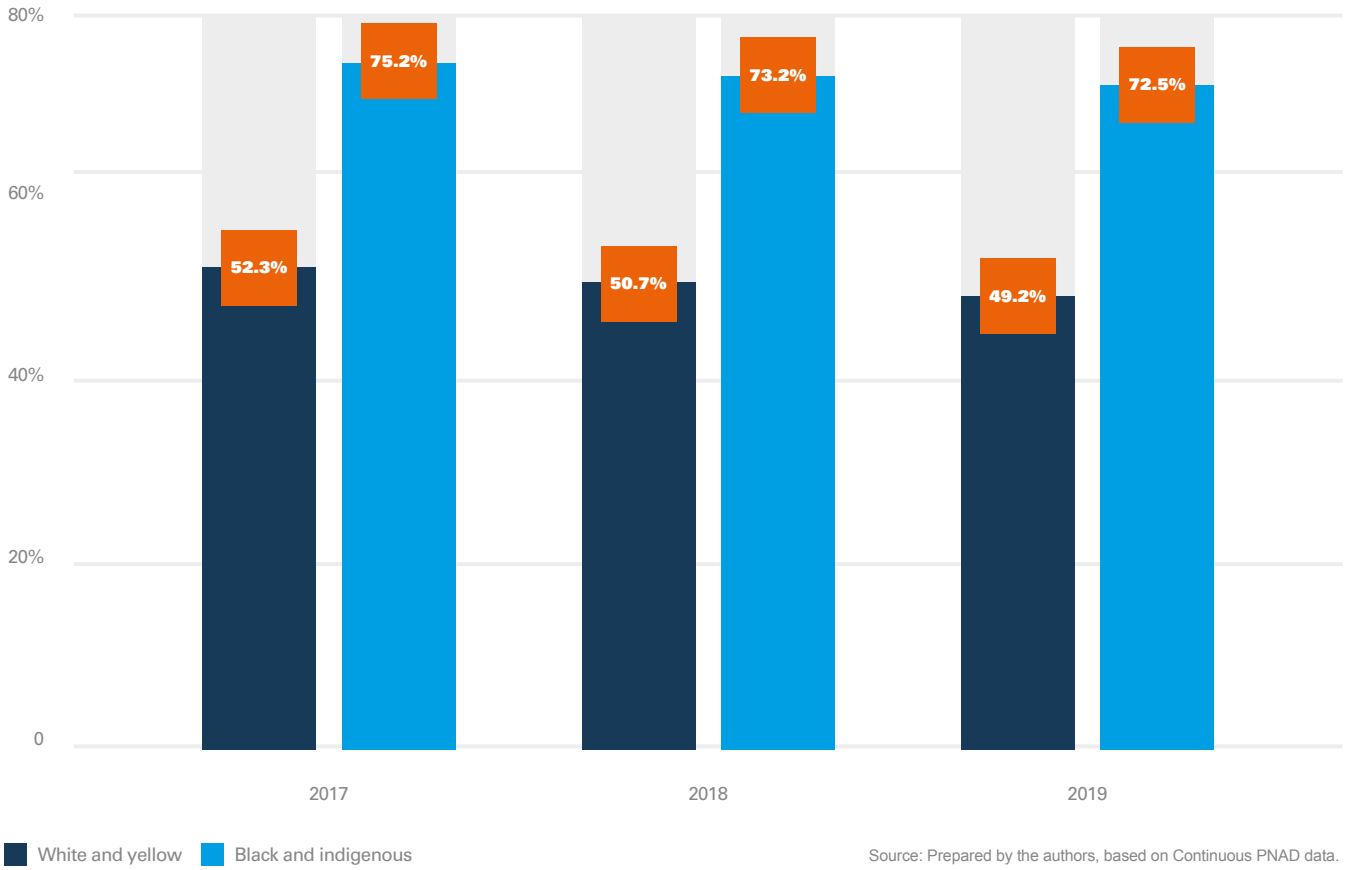
Gender disparities were also observed. Deprivation rates are lower for Brazilian girls than for boys in the dimension of education, but higher in the dimension of child labor. (*For further information on disparities within each dimension, see Chapter 3*).

## Proportion of children experiencing some form of non-monetary deprivation (Continuous PNAD, 2019)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Children experiencing some form of deprivation, by color/race (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Sanitation and income: significant indicators of multidimensional poverty

The last year for which comparable data is available on all dimensions (except nutrition)[22] is 2019. For Brazil as a whole, the dimensions that most characterized multidimensional poverty in 2019 were access to sanitation (33.8%) and income (32.9%).

This means that three in every ten of the deprivations afflicting children up to the age of 17 in Brazil stem from lack of a bathroom or adequate sanitation system.

Three other types of deprivation relate to excessively low income levels, i.e., falling below the poverty or extreme-poverty lines. These are followed by deprivations relating to information, housing and education, with considerably lower percentages: 10%, 7.4% and 6.9%, respectively.

This situation raises concern, particularly since the percentage of sanitation and income deprivations are on the rise as a share of overall deprivations (*see graph*) and in view of their strong impact on other dimensions, such as education and nutrition.

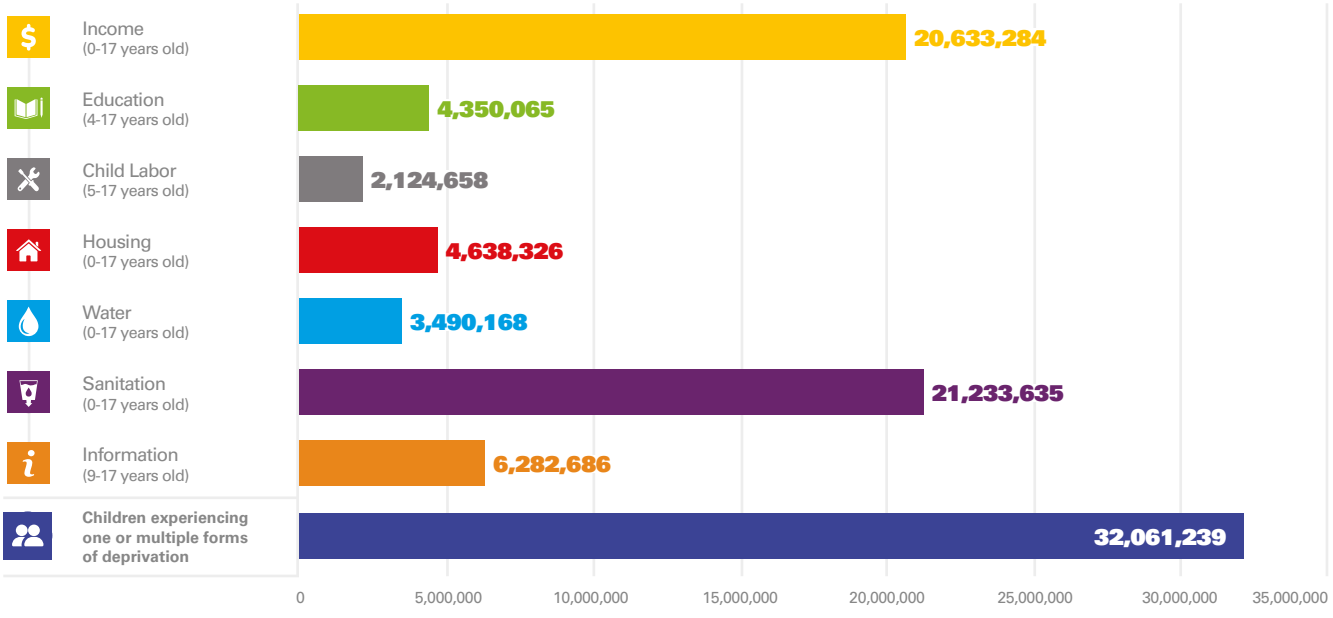
Marcelo Neri, Director of the Social Policy Center and professor at the Brazilian School of Economics and Finances of *Fundação Getulio Vargas* (FGV-EPGE & FGV Social) explains that income-based monetary poverty and food insecurity go together: when one rises, so does the other. And despite minor asymmetries, when monetary poverty rises, food insecurity becomes even worse.

Neri also affirms that lack of sanitation causes serious problems for children. "Water-borne diseases lead to lower physical and mental development levels, inhibiting behaviors associated with accretion of human capital and leading to lower productivity levels in adulthood". According to Neri, provision of water and sewage services significantly improves long-term social indicators.

Similarly to the variation in proportions of children impacted by multiple dimensions of

[22] The dimension of nutrition is not considered in the graph of disaggregated deprivation-data, since its calculations, in addition to the Continuous PNAD, draw from another data source – the POF 2017-2018.

## Children deprived of rights, by dimension (absolute numbers – 2019)



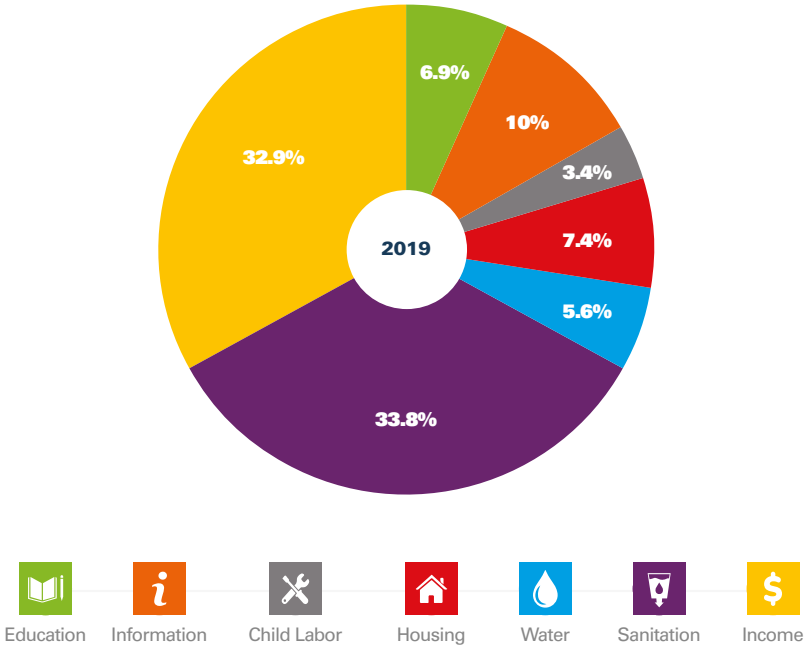

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

poverty, great disparities are apparent among Brazil's states and regions with regard to the weight of each dimension's contribution toward multidimensional poverty.

Even though percentages in the states generally accompany those at the national level (with sanitation and income alternately leading in first place) each state displays its own structure of deprivations. Consequently, public policies and poverty-eradication initiatives in each state must take into account the specific structure of deprivations and prioritize the most pressing local problems (*see graph in the Annex to this publication*).

Thus, whereas in Rondônia, sanitation policy may require most priority when tackling multidimensional poverty, as this dimension accounts for more than half of total deprivations in that state; in the Federal District, income transfers and income generation, alongside sanitation and education policy, may merit highest priority for public investment. In São Paulo, differently to other parts of the country, access to housing may more strongly impact the wellbeing of children than attention to sanitation.

## Overlapping dimensions of deprivation




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Nutrition does not feature in this graph, since calculation of this dimension draws upon data from both Continuous PNAD and POF 2017-2018.

The graph refers to proportionate deprivations in Brazil, and not to the proportion of children afflicted by each deprivation. The same child may be affected by multiple forms of deprivation.

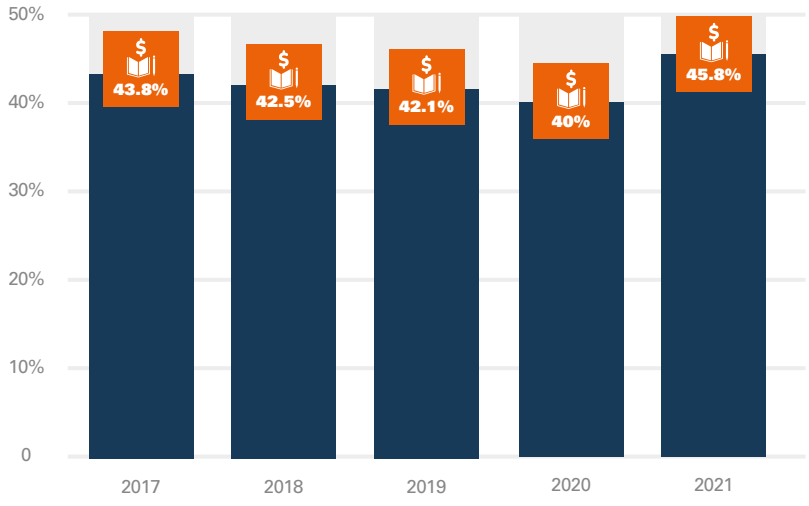
Children play by an open sewer in Recife. In the State of Pernambuco, more than one million children suffered some form of sanitation deprivation in 2019, according to Continuous PNAD data.

## Lack of adequate sanitation is more detrimental for girls

In the dimension of sanitation, prevailing deprivations fall most heavily on girls, in view of menstrual poverty. When girls menstruate and have no access to safe and properly maintained bathrooms or basic sanitation (piped water and sewage networks) at home or in schools, the violation of their rights to quality education, decent housing and health (including sexual and reproductive health) are greater than for adolescent boys. This is a reality revealed in a report entitled "Menstrual Poverty in Brazil: Inequalities and Violations of Rights",[23] published by UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2021.

When girls are deprived of prompt access to adequate bathrooms, to soap and water for washing their hands and bodies, their health, mobility and dignity are in jeopardy. If girls cannot count on such basic amenities during their menstrual periods, they are at greater risk of infections caused by overuse of a 'menstrual hygiene product[24] or by retention of urine over prolonged periods.

## Proportion of children subject to deprivations of education and income (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Menstrual poverty has serious emotional and social repercussions for girls. In addition to causing discomfort, insecurity and stress, it reinforces discrimination and stigmatization. Furthermore, the need to seek bathrooms at a distance from home, in isolated or dimly lit areas or in regions considered dangerous exposes girls to the risk of sexual violence.

## Rising deprivations in education, income and nutrition

As mentioned previously, the multidimensional poverty index presented in this report is based upon data for 2019. For some dimensions, however, data is also available for 2020, 2021 and 2022. Such data reveals that the situation in Brazil, which was already of concern owing to structural challenges, became even more alarming during the pandemic.

Between 2017 and 2020, the percentage of children subject to any deprivation of education and income (*see graph on this page*) remained relatively stable. However, in 2021, both these dimensions underwent a considerable increase as indicators for education and, more specifically illiteracy, deteriorated. Meanwhile, the proportion of Brazilian children deprived of rights to education and income surpassed levels for 2017. In the dimension of nutrition, the same trend was observed. The most current data shows that, in 2021, during the COVID-19 crisis, there was a 25.7% increase in the proportion of children deprived of the income necessary to ensure adequate nutrition, according to the Continuous PNAD. In absolute numbers, this corresponds to a total of 13.7 million boys and girls, or 4 million more than in 2018.

That this deterioration was particularly intense for black and indigenous children becomes evident from examination of data broken down by color/race. The percentage of black and indigenous children afflicted by lack of sufficient per-capita income to ensure adequate nutrition increased, from 25% in 2019, to 31% in 2021; in contrast to 12% and

[23] UNFPA/UNICEF. *Pobreza Menstrual no Brasil: Desigualdades e Violações de Direitos*. Brasília, 2021. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/14456/file/dignidade-menstrual_relatorio-unicef-unfpa_maio2021.pdf.

[24] Disposable absorbent products, reusable pads, disposable or reusable menstrual cups, menstrual underwear, and other products used for absorbing menstrual flows.

In Rio de Janeiro, Thereza Caroline Rodrigues and her 11 year-old son Nycolas lost their home in March 2022, during a storm.

© UNICEF/BRZ/Sérgio Moraes

18%, respectively, for white and yellow boys and girls in the same period (*see Chapter 3*).

To further elucidate the impact of this scenario, in 2019 (before the pandemic) almost 30% of Brazilian indigenous children up to the age of 5 were already afflicted by chronic malnutrition (low height for age). Among the Yanomami people, the figure was 81.2%, according to a UNICEF study conducted in partnership with *Fundação Oswaldo Cruz* (FIOCRUZ), the Special Secretariat for Indigenous Health (SESAI) the General Coordination of Food and Nutrition of the Ministry of Health (CGAN/MS) and the National Indigenous Peoples Foundation (FUNAI).[25]

The increase in income deprivations raises even greater concern in view of results exposing the relationship between monetary and non-monetary poverty. On the one hand, over half of the 49.8% of Brazilian children facing some form of non-monetary deprivation were also afflicted by monetary poverty. On the other hand, more than two thirds of the 38.5% of children with inadequate income levels also suffered some form of non-monetary deprivation.

## Correspondence between monetary and non-monetary child poverty in 2019 (Continuous PNAD)

| | | Non-monetary poverty | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age group of 0 to 17** | | Without deprivations | With deprivations | Total |
| **Monetary poverty** | Not poor | 37.9% | 23.5% | **61.5%** |
| | Poor | 12.2% | 26.3% | **38.5%** |
| | Total | **50.1%** | **49.8%** | **100%** |

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

[25] The research's activities were carried out from bases at Auaris in the State of Roraima and Maturacá in the State of Amazonas. See "*UNICEF Alerta sobre Desnutrição Crônica de Crianças Yanomamis*" ["UNICEF Warns of Chronic Malnutrition among Yanomami Children"]. Brasília, October 28, 2019. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/comunicados-de-imprensa/unicef-alerta-sobre-desnutricao-cronica-de-criancas-ianomamis.

"When we're out of water I fetch it from the stream. That's a problem because my baby is so young. Even for drinking water we rely on the stream", says Kassia da Silva Macedo Lobo (pictured with her infant daughter) who lives in Quilombo of Jacarequara in Santa Izabel do Pará (Pará).

## Impacts of climate change and COVID-19 on rights deprivation

Notwithstanding a lack of data for 2020, 2021 and 2022, all dimensions and indicators assessed for this study indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on the vulnerability of children.

For instance, a joint 2021 ILO/UNICEF study on Child Labor[26] reported that, throughout the world, significant numbers of children suffered deprivations as a consequence of COVID-19 (*see Chapter 3*). Between 2016 and 2020, an additional 8.4 million boys and girls were put to work worldwide, with significant increases in the 5 to 11 age group, which currently accounts for slightly over half of the global total.

Also of concern are the potential impacts of climate change on the child poverty dimensions, such as access to housing, water, sanitation, education and adequate nutrition. It is, after all, the poorest families that, besides limited access to adequate housing, clean water or sewage treatment and greater exposure to violence, are forced to live in the areas most susceptible to disasters, flooding and drought, while lacking the resources necessary to adapt to the environmental, social and economic consequences of climate change.

According to the 2022 UNICEF report entitled "Children, Adolescents and Climate Change in Brazil",[27] 40 million boys and girls (60% of the total) are currently exposed to more than one climate-related or environmental risk. Vulnerabilities inherent to their sensitive stage of development place them especially at risk from such events, which may lead to breaches of bonds of protection, and to violations of their fundamental rights.

[26] ILO/UNICEF. Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward. Geneva and New York: ILO/UNICEF, 2021. Available at: https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward.

[27] UNICEF. *Crianças, Adolescentes e Mudanças Climáticas no Brasil*. Brasília: 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/21346/file/criancas-adolescentes-e-mudancas-climaticas-brasil-2022.pdf.

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UNICEF Brazil's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) officer, Rodrigo Resende stresses that the situation is most critical for the children who already live in situations of vulnerability and deprivation. Most at risk are black and indigenous children, those of *quilombola*[28] communities and other traditional peoples, immigrants and/or refugees, children living in the street, those with disabilities, and especially girls.

Resende maintains that debates and policies targeted at tackling climate change should prioritize such groups. As noted in the report, however, the focus of most public policies and national plans on climate and environmental matters either completely overlooks the specific vulnerabilities of children, and especially those of the most vulnerable groups, or mention them only superficially (*for UNICEF's recommendations see Chapter 4*).

The following summary of the 2022 UNICEF report shows that progress achieved in guaranteeing children's rights in many fields may stagnate or recede over time, particularly in the face of crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

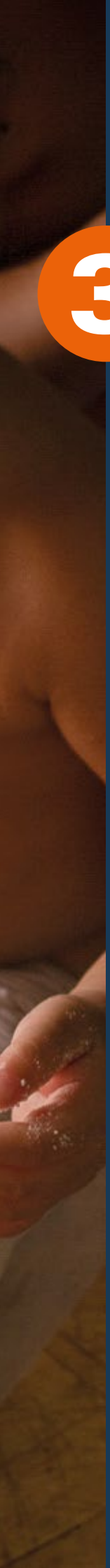
Structural challenges and regional, racial and gender disparities persist in Brazil, notwithstanding efforts undertaken in recent years to improve the wellbeing of boys and girls throughout the country.

In view of the gravity of this situation, simultaneous and interconnected responses are crucial for addressing multidimensional child poverty.

In face of so many challenges, the report aims to serve as a support tool for public managers, to aid them in mapping and confronting problems, by prioritizing dimensions in which deprivations have intensified in recent years, thereby assisting in the planning of programs and policies, and the allocation of appropriate funding.

[28] *Quilombos* are black or former-slave communities. *Quilombola* is the adjective or term used to describe residents of such communities.

Twin sisters Aila and Alice in Recife. In the State of Pernambuco 64.3% of children suffered some form of monetary deprivation in 2021 that adversely affected their right to adequate nutrition.



# 3 NUTRITION, EDUCATION AND INCOME LEVELS DETERIORATED DURING THE PANDEMIC

*Rising deprivation levels over the past three years reveal an alarming scenario with potential to exacerbate persistent regional and racial/ethnic disparities in all dimensions of multidimensional poverty.*

The 2020–2022 data analyzed for this study reveal a deteriorating scenario of deprivation of the rights of boys and girls throughout Brazil, with increasing levels of illiteracy, extreme poverty and hunger, and impacts that fall especially upon the most vulnerable groups and territories.

For a better understanding of the multiple deprivations to which children are exposed, and assessment of the challenges to curbing them, specific analysis was conducted on each dimension of poverty covered by the UNICEF study, namely: nutrition, income, education, child labor, housing, water, sanitation and information.

Although the data for each dimension is presented separately, each of these dimensions represents a human right; and human rights are indivisible. Indivisibility of rights is one of the cornerstones of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under this principle, human rights are interrelated, interdependent and must be collectively safeguarded.

In the following pages, the personal narratives highlighted in the section Scenes that Call for Action illustrate practical interrelations among the multiple dimensions of poverty and their impacts in the lives of boys and girls from three priority areas for UNICEF: the Semi-Arid, Amazon, and Southeast regions.

# NUTRITION

*Over the past decade, significant improvement was recorded in the dimension of access to food, with an 8% decrease in the proportion of children suffering deprivation of their right to food. The pandemic, however, severely curtailed this improvement, and the number of children facing hunger has increased by almost 4 million.*

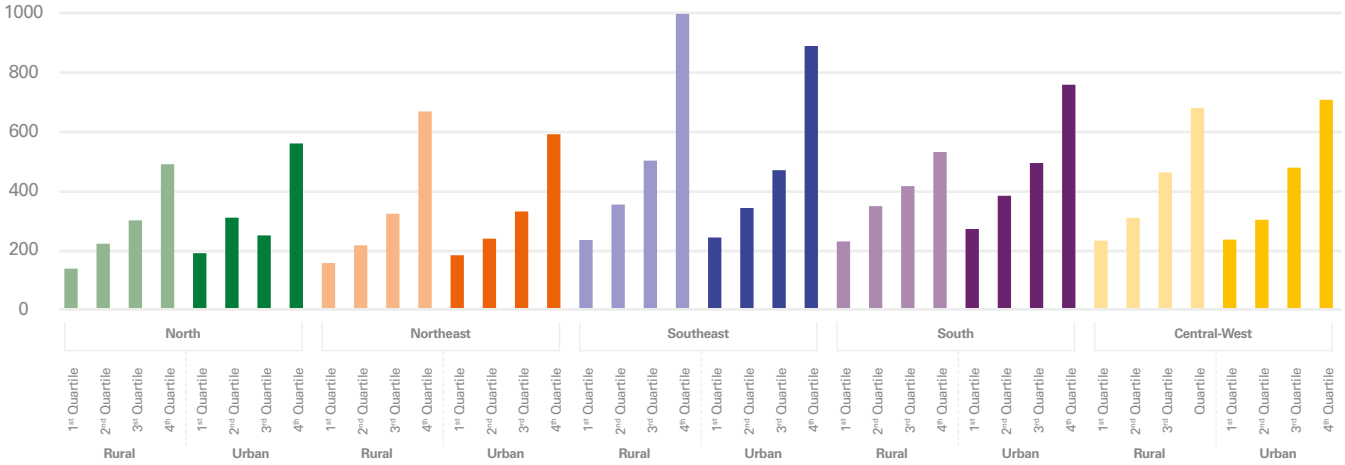
To illustrate developments in the dimension of access to food[29] in recent years, this study analyzes POF 2017-2018 data on the per-capita income families deem necessary to ensure access to adequate food; and also Continuous PNAD data that enables identification of the percentage of children that fall below the income threshold deemed necessary to feed such a family.

POF 2017/2018 brings data on the averages of minimum per capita income necessary for adequate access to food, broken down by three categories:

- Macro-region (North, Northeast, Southeast, South and Central-West);
- Type of area: urban/rural;
- Per-capita monetary family-income quartile (first to fourth quartile).

In this way, the country's data is disaggregated into 40 groups. Each of the 40 groups has its minimum per capita income level required to ensure access to adequate food (*see graph below*).

## Average per-capita monthly income required for access to adequate food (R$ per month, at January 2018 prices — POF)




To measure the access of Brazilian children to adequate food, one factor considered in the UNICEF study is the income a family considers the minimum needed to buy the quantity of quality food that they need each month. This data from the POF questionnaire enables grouping respondent families by region and rural/urban setting. In the UNICEF-study, in addition to these geographical aspects, the data on the families was structured as quartiles (four subgroups with the same size) according to their responses. Families of the first quartile consider that they need less money, per family member, to ensure access to adequate diet; whereas the families of the fourth quartile consider that they need more. The results reveal some striking differences in the perceptions of Brazilian families about the effective sum needed to ensure access to adequate food. Discrepancies are found at the regional and local levels, and even among quartiles in the same location. The most extreme contrast appears between the North and Southeast regions, for families of the fourth quartile living in rural settings. Whereas such families in the North region claim the need to spend slightly over R$500 per month, on average, to buy the food they need; families in the Southeast affirm that they need twice that sum.

Source: Prepared by the authors using POF 2017/2018 data.

[29] No data is available on the effects of ultra-processed food on malnutrition in the material analyzed. Thus, such issues were not addressed in this study.

To gauge deprivations of access in this dimension over the years, the income-data must be periodically readjusted. Since the price of food baskets varies considerably among regions, areas and income quartiles, it was necessary to calculate food-inflation prices for each of the 40 groups (*see the graph on page 26*).

Monitoring of prices rises in relation to January 2018 shows that the average price of food baskets in December 2021 was 18% more expensive for families of the fourth quartile living in urban Central-West areas (lowest variation); and 48% more expensive for families of the fourth quartile living in rural areas of the Southeast (highest variation).

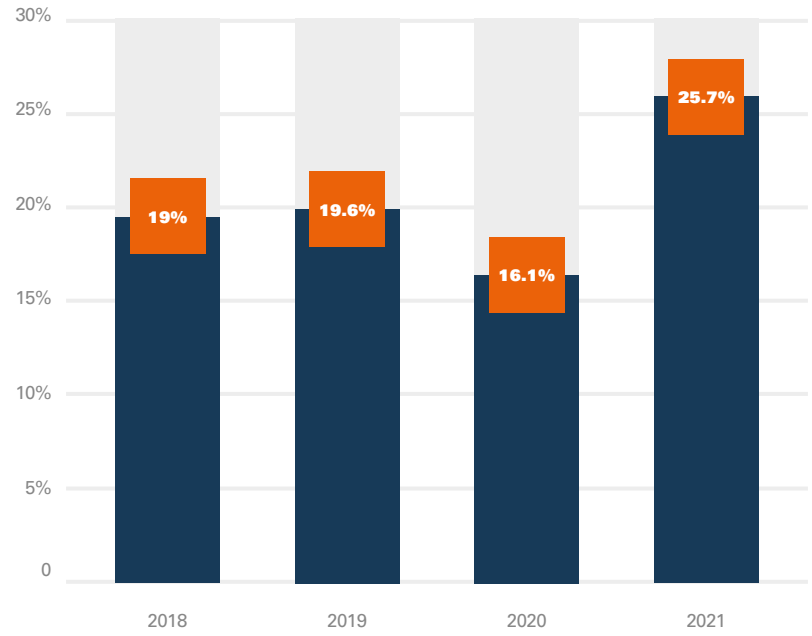
By applying such monitoring of prices to the necessary per-capita income for access to adequate food in each group, the Annual Continuous PNAD data for 2018 and 2019 reveals that the percentage of children experiencing income deprivations remained stable at approximately 19%. In 2020, this percentage fell to 16.1%, possibly as a consequence of a governmental Emergency Benefit. But in the following year, a considerable increase of 25.7% was reported (*see the graph to the right*).

This means that between 2018 and 2021, the number of children deprived of the minimum income required to ensure adequate nourishment rose from 9.8 million to 13.7 million, i.e., by an additional 3.9 million.

The figures reveal marked disparities in the percentage of children deprived of the per capita-income needed to ensure access to adequate food, broken down by color/race. The proportions were approximately 25% for black and indigenous; and 12% for white and yellow boys and girls, in 2018 and 2019. In the years that followed, the percentages increased for both groups, but these increases were much more striking for black and indigenous children (from 19.7% in 2020, to 31.2% in 2021).

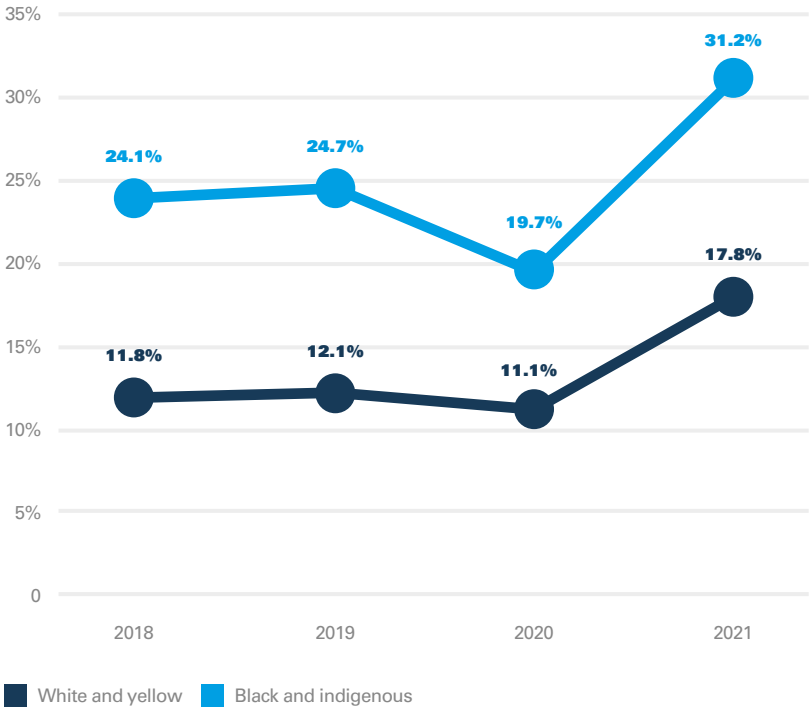
Notably, such increases surpassed those recorded when the focus was solely on per-capita household-income deprivations. This results from the fact that price increases for food items were considerably higher than for a food basket, a finding that reinforces the argument for strategies to guarantee access to food for the poorest families.

## Children deprived of the per-capita family income necessary to ensure access to adequate food (Continuous PNAD)



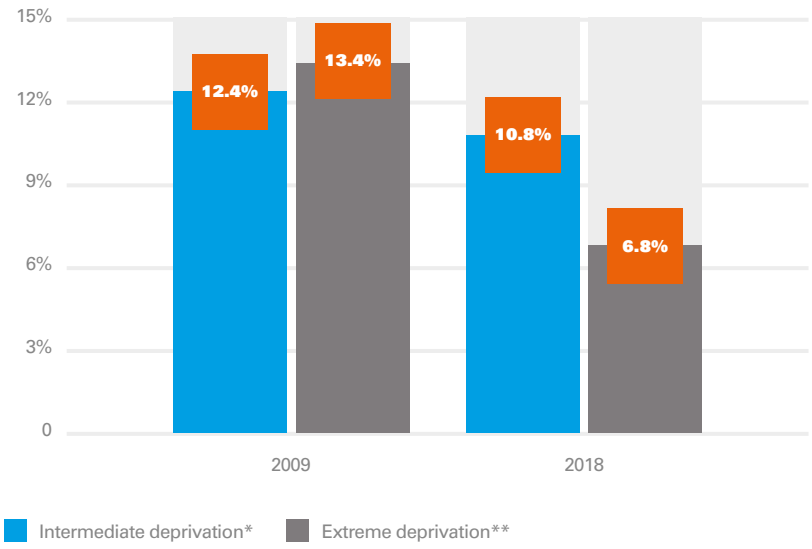

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of per-capita family-income necessary for access to food, by color/race (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of access to food, age 0 to 17 (POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

*Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food, but the nutrition standard is considered adequate by the family.

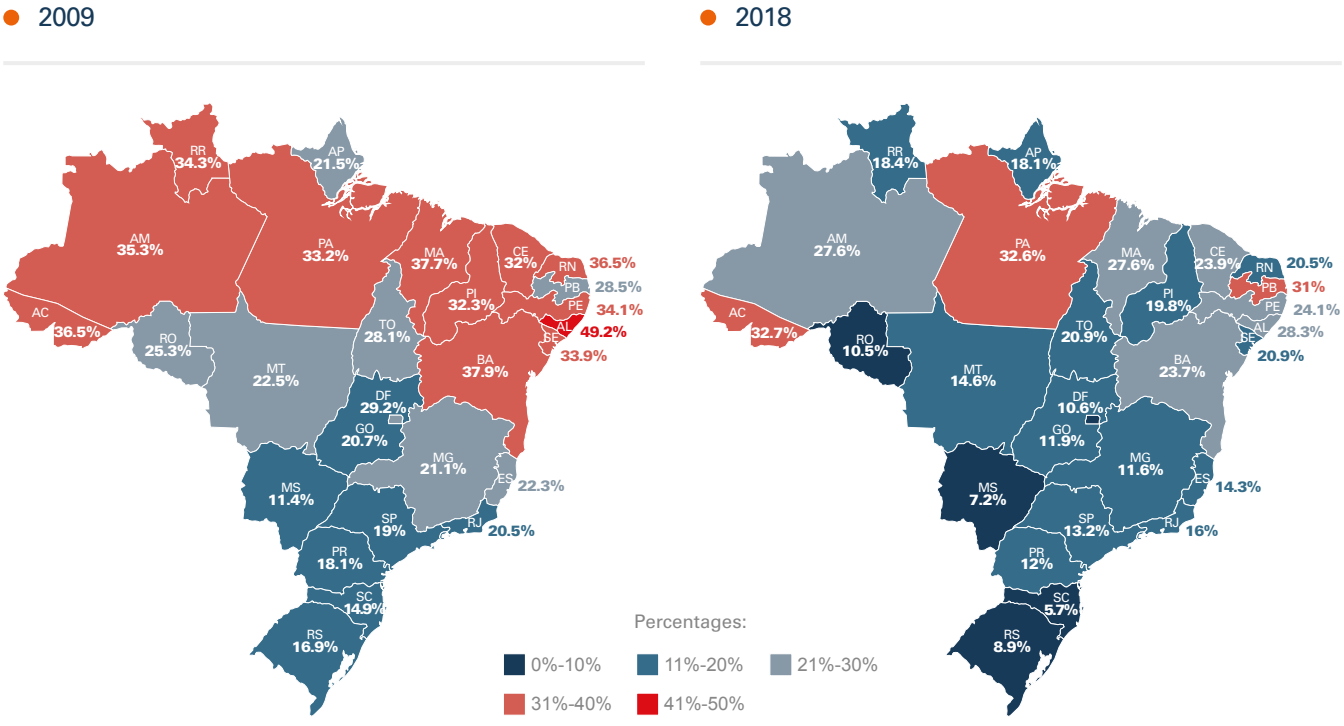
**Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food, and the nutrition standard is considered inadequate by the family.

These results point to a reversal in the improvements observed in the previous decade with regard to access to food. Available data for the period before the COVID-19 pandemic showed a decrease in deprivation of the right to food and, particularly, in extreme deprivation, i.e., living in a household where family-income is below that considered sufficient to ensure access to food, and where the nutrition standard is considered inadequate by the family itself (*see graph on the left*). Between 2009 and 2018, the percentage of children in this situation decreased from 13.4% to 6.8%. The decrease in intermediate deprivation figures was much less: merely 2%.

From a state-level perspective, almost all the states (and the Federal District) show a significant decrease in the number of children with food deprivations between 2009 and 2018 (*see maps below*).

The only exceptions were the States of Pará, where food deprivations decreased by a mere 0.6%, and Paraíba, where an increase from 28.5% to 31% was observed for this indicator.

## Percentage of children up to age 17 with food deprivations (POF – 2009-2018)




Source: Prepared by the authors using POF data.

Marcelo Neri, Director of FGV Social and professor at EPGE-FGV, views the overall improvement of access-to-food indicators in the North and Northeast regions between 2009 and 2018 as being partly due to federal income-transfer policies such as *Bolsa Família*. By focusing on the poorest segments of the population, these policies were especially beneficial for regions with the largest contingents of population living in poverty.

Differences between the states are best explained by what Neri calls the "political pro-activity differential" i.e., competing local and state-level initiatives.

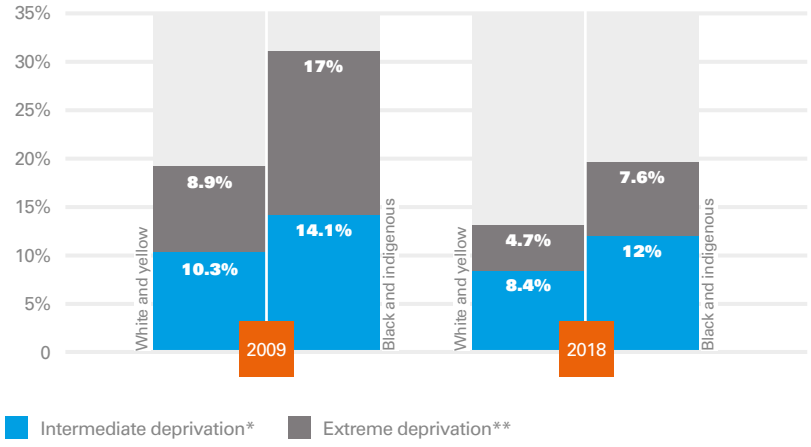
From a race/color perspective, as with other dimensions, notwithstanding a reduction in deprivations relating to the right to food observed between 2009 and 2018, disparities persist. Nonetheless, the decline for black and indigenous children was greater in relation to extreme deprivation, which dropped from 17% to 7.6%, a decrease of almost 10%; whereas for white and yellow children, the decrease was of slightly over 4%.

Neri attributes this sharper drop for black and indigenous children to the impact of programs such as *Bolsa Família* during the period. "Since this policy was targeted at the poorest children, it proved more effective at addressing the needs of black and indigenous children", he explains. This aspect of the program recently underwent evaluation by IPEA with support from UNICEF,[30] and its focus on the poorest children was confirmed.

## The pandemic scenario

Many recent studies have corroborated the worsening trend in the dimension of access to food during the pandemic. One such study is Marcelo Neri's "Food Insecurity in Brazil: the Pandemic, Trends and International Comparisons",[31] published in May 2022. Based on Gallup World Poll data, Neri's investigation

## Deprivation of access to food, up to 17 years old, by color/race (POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors using POF data.

*Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food, but the nutrition standard is considered adequate by the family.

**Child up to age 17 living in a household with family income below that considered sufficient for access to food, and the nutrition standard is considered inadequate by the family.

shows that the portion of the Brazilian population that lacked money to ensure sufficient food for themselves and their families at some point over the past 12 months, rose from 30% in 2019 to 36% in 2021, setting a new record in the series which began in 2006. According to this study, this is the first time since 2006, that Brazilian food insecurity has surpassed the simple world average, a situation which, for a country with abundant agricultural production and reputed to be 'the world's breadbasket', does indeed present a paradox.

The study highlights that the population groups most impacted were also the most vulnerable. During the pandemic, the increase in food insecurity among the poorest 20% of Brazil's population rose by 22%, from 53% in 2019 to 75% in 2021. This is one of the highest levels in the world, placing Brazil almost in the same league as Zimbabwe where food insecurity levels reach 80%. Neri ascribes this

[30] *CONSELHO DE MONITORAMENTO E AVALIAÇÃO DE POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS. Transferência de Renda Diretamente às Famílias em Condição de Pobreza e Extrema Pobreza.* ["Direct Income Transfers to Families in Situation of Poverty and Extreme Poverty"] Brasília, 2020. Available at: https://www.gov.br/economia/pt-br/acesso-a-informacao/participacao-social/conselhos-e-orgaos-colegiados/cmap/politicas/2020/gastos-diretos/relatorio_avaliacao-cmag-2020-pbf.pdf.

[31] NERI, Marcelo C. *Insegurança Alimentar no Brasil: Pandemia, Tendências e Comparações Internacionais.* Rio de Janeiro: FGV Social, 2022. Available at: https://www.cps.fgv.br/cps/bd/docs/Texto-Inseguranca-Alimentar-no-Brasil_Marcelo-Neri_FGV-Social.pdf.

increase to some key 'gaps' in the Brazilian social-protection network or to instability in its deployment, including interruptions in the provision of welfare assistance. Furthermore, according to Neri, recent years have been marred by discontinuities and the defunding of policies aimed at addressing food insecurity.

A publication entitled "Disparities and Impacts of COVID-19 on Provision of Early Childhood Assistance"[32] points out that the indices of extremely underweight children increased by 54.5% between March 2020 and November 2021 (from 1.1% to 1.7%) a statistic that corresponds to nearly 128,000 children under the age of 5 years. Another study on knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to nutrition, conducted among beneficiaries of the *Bolsa Família* program who are parents and/or guardians of children up to the age of 5 years and 11 months, published in 2021 by UNICEF Brazil and coordinated by Plan Eval,[33] revealed that 54% of its 1,343 interviewees affirmed that at least one child in their care had missed a meal or failed to eat a sufficient quantity of food, owing to lack of money to buy food. And that was before the pandemic. With onset of the crisis, this indicator rose to 72%. For 52% of interviewees, the quality of food available in the household dropped as the pandemic gathered force. The worsening situation resulted, in addition to lost income, from loss of the support provided by school meals and other institutional benefits, prompting not only an increase in the incidence of food insecurity, but also a rise in nutrient deficiencies, such as iron and vitamin A. As a consequence, children failed to receive the minimally diversified diet needed to foster growth, learning and development of their full potential.

## Malnutrition

Nearly 80% of the families interviewed for this same UNICEF-Brazil study also reported that their children had consumed ultra-processed food on the day prior to their interview. The most commonly consumed such foods were salty biscuit, sandwich cookies and sugary drinks.

Cristina Albuquerque, Head of UNICEF Brazil's HIV/AIDS Unit, asserts that the main reason given by interviewees for buying ultra-processed foods and drinks was "the belief that they are nutritious, tasty and cheap".

"Hence, the importance of advocating implementation and monitoring of the new front-of-package labeling requirements", says Albuquerque. These new requirements oblige companies to display a symbol on the packaging of products to specify the presence of sugar, fat and salt levels that may pose health hazards. "When a family has limited resources, such labeling enables choice of the most nutritious food items they can afford", she adds.

Consumption of junk food contributes toward the increase in numbers of overweight and chronic non-communicable diseases. According to Ministry of Health estimates,[34] approximately 7.2 million Brazilian children are obese.

In addition to poor quality of food, difficulties of access to food also aggravate the situation of deprivations and have worrying impacts on children's development, particularly in the early years of their lives.

[32] *Fundação Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal/UNICEF/Itaú Social. Desigualdades e Impactos da COVID-19 na Atenção à Primeira Infância*, São Paulo, 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/20221/file/desigualdades-e-impactos-da-covid-19-na-atencao-a-primeira-infancia.pdf.

[33] UNICEF. *Alimentação na Primeira Infância: Conhecimentos, Atitudes e Práticas de Beneficiários do Programa Bolsa Família* ["Nutrition in Early Childhood: Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of *Bolsa Família* Program Beneficiaries"]. A study coordinated by Marília Barreto Pessoa Lima, Pedro Ivo Alcantara, Stephanie Amaral. Brasília: UNICEF, 2021. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/17121/file/alimentacao-na-primeira-infancia_conhecimentos-atitudes-praticas-de-beneficiarios-do-bolsa-Família.pdf.

[34] BRASIL. *"Em Lançamento de Campanha contra Obesidade Infantil, Ministério da Saúde Anuncia 90 Milhões para a Prevenção e Cuidado da Doença"*. ["Ministry of Health Launches a Campaign against Child Obesity and Announces 90 million reais for Prevention and Care"]. *Ministério da Saúde, Secretaria de Atenção Primária à Saúde (SAPS), 10 ago. 2021*. Available at: https://aps.saude.gov.br/noticia/13378.

Érica da Silva, 4 years old, in Recife.

© UNICEF/BRZ/Gabriela Portilho

Data from the 2nd National Survey on Food Insecurity in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Brazil (II VIGISAN), conducted between November 2021 and April 2022 by the Brazilian Research Network on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (PENSSAN), indicates that food insecurity, and particularly its most severe form (i.e., chronic hunger) increased during the period.

This same report reveals that 28% of households experienced uncertainties regarding access to food (not to mention the low nutritional quality of foods which, in itself, is characteristic of 'soft' food insecurity. Quantitative food restrictions were present in 30.1% of households; of these, 15.5% were living in a state of chronic hunger (severe food insecurity). In absolute numbers, these percentages correspond to 125.2 million persons facing food insecurity, and over 33 million people living with chronic hunger.

Also, according to VIGISAN, from a geographic perspective, hunger most strongly afflicts rural households (18.6%) and families living in the North (25.7% of the total) and Northeast (21%) regions. Furthermore, hunger is present in 43% of families whose per-capita income amounts to less than one quarter of the minimum wage; and has greater impacts on families headed by women and/or families where the head of household is black or brown. The survey also indicated that hunger intensified in households with children up to age 10. Between late 2020 and early 2022, the hunger rate nearly doubled, from 9.4% to 18.1%. In Marcelo Neri's view, worsening food insecurity is consistent with recent data on poverty, which show a strong increase in disparities stemming from cuts to social programs in previous years.

UNICEF's Cristina Albuquerque postulates that, facing up to this scenario requires a series of actions, ranging from advocacy of breastfeeding from the first hour of babies' lives, to drafting of laws to foster and strengthen local sustainable food production, and incentives to revive traditional cooking practices.

She also advocates establishment of new street and local markets, subsidized restaurants and community kitchens as measures to promote access to healthy diet, in support of vulnerable communities in their struggle against hunger. Lastly, Albuquerque emphasizes the importance of reinforcing cooperation between the primary-health, social-welfare and education authorities, to identify families with pregnant women facing food insecurity and children at high nutritional risk, so as to adopt the necessary precautionary measures (*see Chapter 4*).



Though they now live next door, Alexandra Araújo's children still play in the ruins of their palafitte home in Recife. Destroyed by flooding, their stilt house now serves as the children's playground.

# RECIFE

*In 2021, 64.3% of children in the State of Pernambuco faced income deprivations, according to a UNICEF study. Many currently face difficulties of access to food or chronic hunger.*

In Recife, at times of extreme need, dozens of people but mostly women, gather at sites where supermarkets discard expired or spoiled products, seeking food for their children.

According to a UNICEF study, in 2019, before the pandemic, almost 60% of children up to the age of 17 years (nearly 1.5 million boys and girls) in the State of Pernambuco, faced income deprivations. By 2021, this proportion had risen to 64.3%.

This implies that four in every ten people in Pernambuco are facing moderate or severe food insecurity. In other words, they are either chronically hungry, or face difficulties in obtaining food, according to the VIGISAN/PENSSAN study covering the period from November 2021 to April 2022.

"We're buying chicken carcass, since it's cheaper; neck, feet and ribs, that's about it" says Isabel Natália da Silva (35). Isabel has five children: Miguel Henrique (16), João Jean (12), Aruna Ariane (3) and twin sisters Aila and Alice (1½). Their only regular income is a R$600 *Bolsa Família* benefit.[1] Isabel's husband Sandro Cavalcante Roque (39) earns on average R$300 per month hauling fruits and vegetables at the State Supply and Logistics Center (CEASA-PE). Isabel earns some loose change selling popcorn and mineral water at traffic lights.

Taking the sum of their fixed and variable income, each family member must survive on less than R$5 per day, i.e., less than half the World Bank's extreme-poverty threshold. "Either I buy medicine, diapers and milk for the girls, or we eat. I choose to care for my girls", she says.

Eating what one likes is a luxury. Aruna loves beans, but rarely gets them, since they are expensive and preparing beans requires cooking gas. "Mom, did you cook my beans?" the girl often asks.

At moments of despair, Isabel resorts either to neighbors or to the Mário Andrade Community Center, a social institution in Ibura, Recife's fifth most populous neighborhood which, according to the local council, has a population of 50,000.

Isabel's neighbor, Laudicéia Maria da Silva (42) also laments not being able to afford food for her two girls, Érica (4) and Camile (17). "There were nights when they'd say: 'Mom, I want to eat' and I'd give them water to assuage their hunger, so they could sleep. When they woke up, they kept asking for food, and I kept giving them water", she says.

Her family survives on government benefits and from an average of R$200 earned by her husband, a bricklayer. Laudicéia also depends on food baskets supplied by the community center.

Cícera Marta da Silva, a 43 year-old gatherer of recyclable materials, shares the same daily anxiety of having nothing to eat. Her hands scarred by many calluses, she puts on her gloves and pulls her cart through the streets in search of cans, glass, plastic, iron, and anything else that might bring in some money. There is a purpose to her sacrifices: "It's sad when a child pleads, 'Mama, I'm hungry', and you have not even a biscuit to give him", she laments.

Cícera lives with her 74 year-old mother and her children ages 11, 13 and 24, in a 40 square-meter unplastered brick house. She receives the R$600 *Bolsa Família* benefit[2] and earns about R$150 per month selling recyclables. She invariably has to appeal to her mother, who receives a minimum-wage pension, for support. But ends still do not meet. "Sometimes, we do not even have an egg", she remarks. "What we generally eat is couscous with eggs, with a little sausage, hamburger or mortadella".

## Education can make dreams come true

Cícera, the gatherer of recyclables, attended school up to 5th grade (corresponding to 4th grade in Brazil's reformed education system). She can read and write a little, but has difficulty with numbers. For this reason, when she has products to sell, she takes along her son Lucas who is in 6th grade of primary

[1] When the interview was conducted, in October 2022, the benefit was named *Auxílio Brasil*.

[2] Idem.


Isabel Natália da Silva and her family.

schooling, so she will not be cheated by intermediaries. "I'm not good at math, but he is", she emphasizes.

Lucas is 11 years old. For now, his dreams extend no farther than a pair of football boots, to avoid stubbing his toes on rocks in the sandy football pitch. He has asked his mother for boots time and time again. "Either I buy the boots or I buy food; I don't have money for both", she explains. "And I plead with him to study hard, so that he may achieve his goal in life, and not end up like me, working with recycling. It's not a good job", she says.

The boy has learned this from his mother. "I need schooling to have a better future. I can't miss class because, if I do, I won't be able to become a good football player", says Lucas.

According to Alexandra Gomes de Araújo (30) education opens a path, not only to a better future, but also to a safer life. "We're not safe, not even in our homes. At school children are safer, as they are studying, and not involved in the stuff that goes on out here", she says.

Alexandra, (currently unemployed) raises her five children between ages 2 and 10, in a stilt house over a bank of the Capibaribe River in Recife. She is concerned about the lack of security. Her neighborhood mirrors the State of Pernambuco where, in the 10-to-19 age bracket, 36.2 violent deaths per 100,000 population were reported in 2020.[3]

"Security here is terrible. They barge into other people's homes for no reason. This is why I prefer my children in school. Even if they're hungry, they still must go to school every day", she emphasizes. But her children are not all in the right grade for their ages. Her son Bruno Miguel (7) is in 1st grade; Samuel (10) is in 4th grade. Both are one year behind in schooling. Aleff (8) is in 3rd grade. Alexandra has not yet found a daycare option for her 2 year-old twins Bruno Tiago and Bruno Emanuel.

Age/grade distortion rates also blight the life of 8 year-old João Felipe. He is now in 3rd grade of the primary schooling, but has difficulty in writing even his name. His mother Mickaelly Bruna dos Santos (33) explains: "I could not afford internet in our home. He fell behind with his schooling owing to lack of internet".

According to the UNICEF study, 14.2% of children in Pernambuco experienced either intermediate or extreme deprivation of internet access in 2020. This helps explain why 14.1% of boys and girls age 4 to 17 were not in the grade appropriate for their age, in 2021.

Such is the case of Miguel Henrique da Silva, now in 8th grade of primary school, but who ought to be in the 2nd year of High School. His ambition is to become a doctor, so as to help his mother, Isabel da Silva. He dreams of buying her a house. The family currently live in a borrowed dwelling, since the palafitte house in which he, his mother, stepfather and four younger siblings used to live was destroyed by the flooding that hit Recife in May 2022.

## Danger inside and outside palafitte-houses

Pernambuco's biggest tragedy of the century left 128 people dead in torrents and landslides caused by heavy rains. Eleven-month old Aila might well have been another of the victims had it not been for heroic action on the part of her mother, Isabel who, upon seeing her baby hanging on to a plank with only her face out of the water, plunged into the torrent. Despite having a nail gouged into her foot, with the help of her neighbors, Isabel managed to rescue her infant daughter.

Their stilt house is in a narrow alleyway where several shacks lean up against each other. It occupies a six-meter gap between the outer walls of the Recife-Guararapes Airport and those of various companies behind it. Floodwater broke through the airport's wall and demolished the shacks. After a spell at a shelter, Isabel, her husband and five children (ages 1½ to 16) were assigned a provisional house, thanks to Joelma Andrade de Lima, Director of the Mário Andrade Community Center.

[3] UNICEF. *Panorama da Violência Letal e Sexual contra Crianças e Adolescentes no Brasil*. Brasília, 2021. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/16421/file/panorama-violencia-letal-sexual-contra-criancas-adolescentes-no-brasil.pdf.

Alexandra Araújo's tiny house was also partially destroyed. She was forced to move to another next-door shack and now must pay R$200 per month in rent.

"Except below the high-tide mark there is nowhere to live", she says. And this moves discussion to another problem: "There are no drains here. Everything goes straight to the stream". The stream water is fetid as it flows carrying all manner of waste below the palafittes. "The kids are always sick; they spend most of their time out on the cold mudflats", says the mother.

After moving next door, the children still have access to the ruins of their former home, which no longer has walls to the stream bank. It has become a playground for Samuel, Aleff, Bruno Miguel, and the twin boys Bruno Tiago and Bruno Emanuel. "Two months ago, one of the twins fell into the stream and almost died. A neighbor saved him from drowning", recalls Alexandra.

In 2019, Pernambuco had a housing-deficit of 246,000 homes; 113,000 of them in Recife and its metropolitan region, according to a survey conducted by *Fundação João Pinheiro*. A UNICEF study revealed that in Pernambuco in 2020, 7% of children up to the age of 17 were living in inadequate housing.

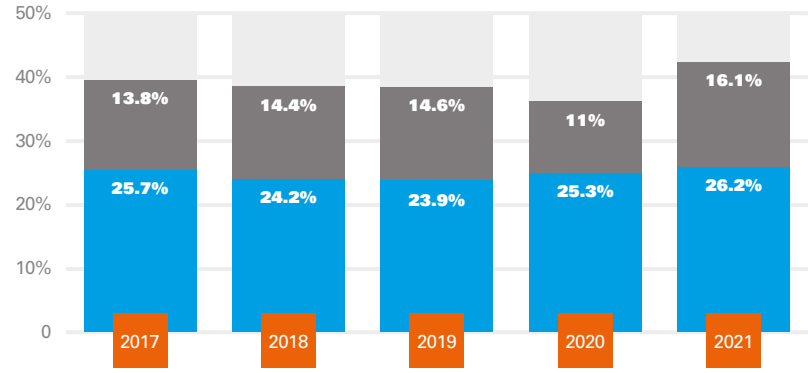
Micaelly Vitória da Silva (13) lives with her mother Cícera Marta da Silva, her siblings and grandmother in Recife.

# INCOME

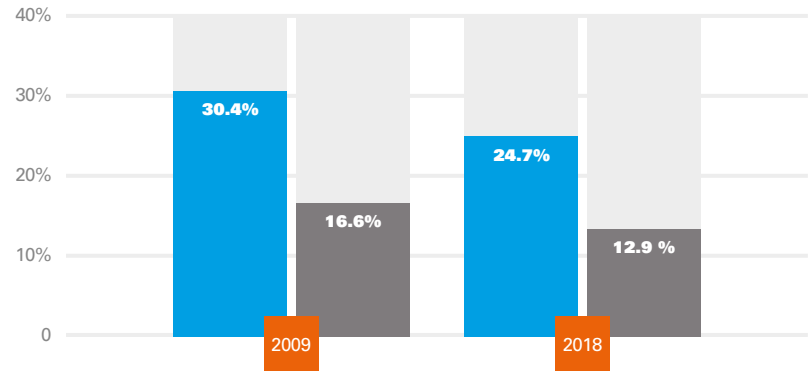
*After achieving a significant reduction in income deprivations for children between 2009 and 2018, Brazil's indicators remained relatively stable until 2020. With the pandemic, the situation rebounded to levels that had been surpassed. This led to deterioration of the situation for more vulnerable groups, in view of the impact of monetary poverty on rights deprivations.*

## Monetary deprivation 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD and POF)

Continuous PNAD




POF




Intermediate deprivation* Extreme deprivation**

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data for the dimension of income is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2021.

*Child age 0 to 17 living in a household whose family income falls below the monetary poverty line.

**Child age 0 to 17 living in a household whose family income falls below the extreme monetary poverty line.

Between 2017 and 2019 (a period for which this study uses Continuous PNAD data) the percentage of children experiencing some form of income deprivation remained relatively stable. In 2020, the figures indicate a small decrease in extreme deprivation rates.[35] However, in 2021, intermediate[36] and extreme deprivation rates peaked at the highest levels for the entire time series (26.2% and 16.1%, respectively) as a consequence of the economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The situation portrayed by POF data represents an alarming setback, vis-à-vis the progress Brazil had achieved in the 2009-2018 period, when a significant 9% drop was recorded in the number of children below the minimum-income level required to meet their basic needs.

As is to be expected for a dimension deriving directly from socio-economic conditions, marked regional disparities can be perceived from the high proportion of children suffering minimum-income deprivations in the North and Northeast regions, where percentages are above 55% in practically all states (*see map on page 37*). The rates are highest in the States of Maranhão (69.3%) and Amazonas (65.4%). Conversely, the lowest rates are for the states of the South region and the Federal District.

Although regional disparities have persisted over the years, examination of state-level data reveals that, at the same time, remarkable progress was achieved in terms of reducing

[35] Using the extreme poverty line defined by the World Bank (1.9 dollars/day).

[36] Using the poverty line established by the World Bank (5.5 dollars/day).

income deprivations in most of Brazil's states between 2009 and 2018, according to the POF (*see maps in the Annex*). Exceptions to this declining trend were the States of Acre in the North region, and Rio de Janeiro in the Southeast, where, at below 3%, the rate of reduction lagged behind the rest of the country.

The findings of the study also reveal a profound racial inequality. The difference between the percentages for white and yellow children on the one hand, and black and indigenous children on the other, was above 10% in all years for which the Continuous PNAD data was used.

The same trend is evidenced by the POF data. In the period between 2009 and 2018, despite a reduction in the proportion of children experiencing income deprivations, racial inequality persistently affected black and indigenous children more intensely (*see the graphs on page 38*).

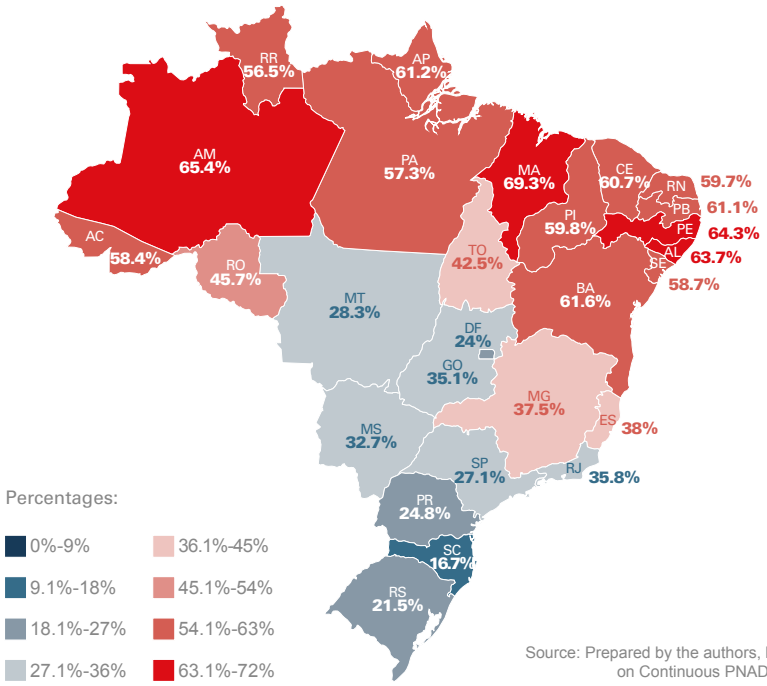
"The public health crisis uncovered the invisibility of a large number of uncounted people who are highly dependent on informality", observed Liliana Chopitea, UNICEF Brazil's Head of the Social Policy and Monitoring & Evaluation Unit.

According to IBGE, the overall number of informal workers, that had amounted to 33.3 million in 2020, rose to 36.6 million in 2021. This implies that the rate of informality climbed from 38.3% in 2020, to 40.1% in 2021.[37]

According to "Monetary Child Poverty in Brazil: Impacts of the Pandemic on the Income of Families with Children"[38], a UNICEF study published in March 2022, 66 million people in Brazil were dependent upon emergency income transfers.

As responses dwindled, deprivation levels began to climb once again. According to UNICEF Brazil's Chief of Social Policies and Monitoring & Evaluation, the study clearly illustrates the repercussions of measures adopted during the public health crisis on monetary child poverty levels.

## Monetary deprivation (Continuous PNAD – 2021)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Up until early 2020 according to the study, the proportions of children living below the monetary poverty line (40%) and in extreme monetary poverty (12%) were practically double those for adults in those situations (20% and 6%, respectively). Black and indigenous boys and girls, and children living in the North and Northeast regions, were generally more severely affected by insufficient income, compared to white and yellow children living in other regions of Brazil.

During the period in which the Emergency Benefit was paid, the proportion of Brazilians living in situations of monetary poverty or of extreme monetary poverty fell significantly. In the second and third quarters of 2020, the percentage of the adult population living in a situation of monetary poverty decreased from 6% to approximately 4%, whereas the percentage for children decreased from 12% to nearly 6%.

[37] IBGE. *Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua – PNAD Contínua. Principais Destaques da Evolução do Mercado de Trabalho no Brasil: 2012-2021* ["Continuous National Household Sample Survey – Continuous PNAD. Highlights of Labor Market Evolution in Brazil: 2012-2021"]. Available at: https://ftp.ibge.gov.br/Trabalho_e_Rendimento/Pesquisa_Nacional_por_Amostra_de_Domicilios_continua/Principais_destaques_PNAD_continua/2012_2021/PNAD_continua_retrospectiva_2012_2021.pdf.

[38] UNICEF. Children in Monetary Poverty in Brazil. Impacts of the Pandemic on the Income of Families with Children. Brasília: UNICEF, 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/18866/file/children-in-monetary-poverty-in-brazil.pdf.

As the sum of the benefit and number of beneficiaries were curtailed at the end of 2020, monetary poverty again rose, reverting to levels similar to those of 2019. For extreme monetary poverty, percentages were slightly below those for the final quarter of 2019 (6.1% in 2020, compared with 7.4% in 2019). Even after being cut by half, the benefit was still providing families with a per-capita income to keep them above the poverty lines. Without the Emergency Benefit, the proportion of persons living below the monetary poverty line would have been 10% higher by the second and third quarters of 2020, affecting 4.4 million children age 0 to 14.

In the first quarter of 2021 the Emergency Benefit was discontinued. Following this, the percentage of monetary poverty was one percentage point higher than in the first quarter of 2020, and the extreme poverty-rate approximately 2.5 points higher. These figures corresponded to more than 440,000 children up to the age of 14 living in monetary poverty, and over 1 million children living in extreme monetary poverty.

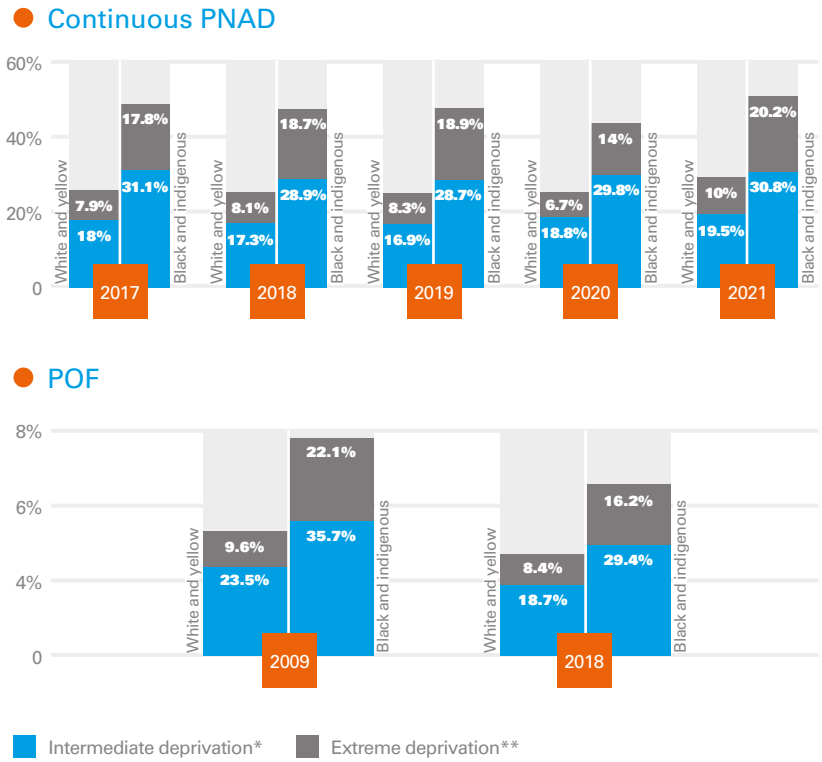
With resumption of the Emergency Benefit in the second and third quarters of 2021 (though cut to one fifth of the sum paid in the previous year) income deprivation levels began to decline again, albeit less intensely than in the previous year. The child monetary poverty-rate dropped to 39.5% (nearly 1% below the rate recorded in the period prior to the pandemic). For its part, extreme child monetary poverty dropped to approximately 10%, i.e., two percentage points below the average rate in 2019.

The UNICEF study thus postulates that, during periods when the Emergency Benefit was in effect, it prevented nearly 1.8 million children up to the age of 14 from falling into poverty or extreme poverty. The benefit also temporarily contributed toward a reduction of monetary poverty among black and indigenous persons, and residents of the North and Northeast regions, even though figures for both these groups remained higher than for white and yellow people and residents of other regions.

"The pandemic brought to light how important it is for income transfer programs to be adapted to economic realities, so they can indeed make a real difference for families", observes UNICEF's Liliana Chopitea. She also suggests that periodic adjustment of benefit levels to inflation would provide families with more resources enabling them, furthermore, to seek additional income sources.

For Chopitea, notwithstanding the importance of programs such as *Bolsa Família*, income is only part of the solution when addressing multidimensional child poverty. "Other rights need to be safeguarded, and this goes beyond income", she affirms. "Social protection must be viewed as a comprehensive guarantee of rights. Social assistance does contribute to the fulfillment of other rights, aside from access to income. But, in parallel, other services must also be strengthened", she asserts.

## Monetary deprivation, up to age 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the income dimension is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD – 2021.

*Child up to 17 in households with family-income below the monetary poverty line.

**Child up to 17 in households with family-income below the extreme monetary poverty line.

According to a report entitled More than a Billion Reasons - the Urgent Need to Build Universal Social Protection for Children, published by ILO and UNICEF in March 2023, the way different countries responded to the social problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic revealed both the potential and shortcomings of social assistance systems.[39]

In summary, systems that already had high levels of coverage and that were able rapidly to extend protection to large numbers of families during the health emergency provided much higher levels of protection and guarantee of rights during the pandemic. For this reason, the report stresses that governments need to expand the capacity of their social welfare systems so as to enable them to respond rapidly to emergencies. It advocates provision of funding to ensure swift allocation of resources for social assistance in response to crisis situations, particularly for children who, all too often, are among the most severely affected by such crises.

For Ricardo Paes de Barros, a researcher and professor at INSPER,[40] rather than generic approaches, reducing poverty and inequality requires more customized and individualized policies targeted at the most vulnerable people, given that the causes of poverty vary considerably from one individual to another. "To reach a child or adolescent living in extreme deprivation, you really need to understand the problem of that child or adolescent. Expanded income transfer policies may even solve the problem of population segments ranging, say, from the poorest 5 to 25 percent. But below this group, are the even poorer 5%, that is, those at the base of the pyramid, living in extreme deprivation. For these, the problem is more complex and will not be solved by generalist policies", he says.

> "Social assistance does contribute to the fulfillment of other rights, aside from access to income. But, in parallel, other services must also be strengthened."
>
> Liliana Chopitea, UNICEF Chief of Social Policies and Monitoring & Evaluation

According to Paes de Barros, Brazil has the ability to execute such individualized assistance policies. However, in recent years, individualized assistance and funding for social welfare have decreased dramatically. "Half of the Unified Registry is outdated; we cannot even use it for statistical purposes toward understanding poverty, and much less at an individual level to research the poor", he affirms. "Nobody exits poverty without opportunities or without income transfers. Economic growth is very important too, but without individualized services, it's no use". He draws the analogy: "It is as if you have a great hospital, but no doctor to determine precisely what medicine is needed".

To achieve this aim, Professor Paes de Barros considers it crucial to reinforce not only the protective, but also the constructive role of Brazil's Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS). "Development needs to be fostered", he says. "One cannot stimulate a child who is being neglected at home or subjected to domestic violence, for instance. But, aside from offering protection, one also wants this child to develop, and wants the family to develop. To achieve this, one needs to know these people and to apply a personalized approach, not unlike a doctor who treats, not only disease at a particular point in time, but also the patient's overall health", he concludes.

[39] ILO/UNICEF. More than a Billion Reasons: The Urgent Need to Build Universal Social Protection for Children. Geneva, 2023. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/media/135211/file/More%20than%20a%20billion%20reasons:%20The%20urgent%20need%20to%20build%20universal%20social%20protection.pdf.

[40] INSPER – *Instituto de Ensino e Pesquisa* a research institute and university in São Paulo.

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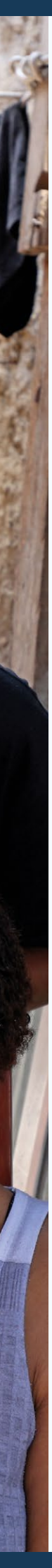
In Rio de Janeiro, Deise dos Santos Braga (49) at the right, used to work as a cleaner and hairdresser. But with the COVID-19 pandemic, she lost her job. Now, to support two children and a granddaughter she sells pies.



# RIO DE JANEIRO

*At the Chapadinho settlement in the Pavuna neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro's north zone, children face multiple deprivations owing to lack of income, as do nearly 1 million boys and girls throughout the State.*

Dirt streets, no trees; extremely precarious houses made of miscellaneous materials such as wood planks and roof tiles; an open sewer drains into a large ditch which overflows on rainy days.

Such is reality at the Chapadinho settlement, located right next to a condominium of lower-middle-class housing in the Pavuna neighborhood of Rio de Janeiro's North Zone.

IBGE's 2010 Census counted 97,350 people living in Pavuna. A survey conducted from 2019 to 2022 by Territórios Sociais, a partnership between the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro and UN Habitat, mapped the living conditions of 176 families living in Pavuna.

Of the 61 families living in the Chapadinho settlement monitored by the program, 41 were found to be at imminent social risk in terms of health, education and living standards.

The survey also revealed that, in Chapadinho, 119 children up to the age of 12, and 48 adolescents up to the age of 18, live in conditions of intermediate and extreme deprivation, as do more than 1 million boys and girls throughout the State of Rio de Janeiro.

This is the plight of Carlos Daniel (14) of Caroline Bianca (18) and her infant daughter Helena Vitória (8 months) who live in Chapadinho with their mother, Deise dos Santos Braga (49).

Their house is made from an assortment of rough bricks, wooden boards and even roof tiles used to form a wall. It has one bathroom and two bedrooms. In Deise's bedroom there is a double mattress on which she and her foster-son sleep. In the other bedroom, her daughter and granddaughter share a single bed.

Deise is a widow. She can barely read and write, and never attended school. "The little I know, I learned at home with my children and in the home of a family where I used to work. I skip many words; I can only read short and easy things, but I know my letters. I try to put them together and sometimes words come out", she explains.

## The pandemic exacerbated deprivations

In the past, Deise had a job as a cleaning woman with a signed work contract. For the past five years, however, she has been unemployed. She claims that the COVID-19 pandemic made the situation worse. To support her family, she started baking pies (*empadas*) and other snacks in her home.

"Sometimes, I make R$40 per week; about R$200 per month", Deise explains. To survive, she must count on help from relatives and from community leaders who donate food baskets. But her earnings are always spent before the month ends, and she has to improvise so she can continue cooking. "Sometimes, I run out of gas before I have enough money to renew the cylinder. So, I set up my little wood stove here on the floor and cook on it", she says.

Her daughter Caroline was in the 1st year of High School, when she gave birth to Helena Vitória and had to drop out. Caroline explains that she failed a grade test two years running, but that the reason she did not go back was that she could not wean her infant daughter. "I quit because of her. Before having her, I wanted to be a pastry cook, but now I just want any work ... to have my money. Any job would be fine for me ... as long as I'm earning, it suits me", she affirms. Caroline helps her mother bake empadas for sale, and goes to the market every day to collect discarded vegetables, greens and fruit for her daughter. "When things are unfit for sale, the market throws them away. That's when we get them; they are good enough to eat. All we've got to do is to cut out the bad parts and eat the rest", she says. "I have no problem with that; now, going hungry ... that's a shame".

Like Caroline, Carlos Daniel is behind schedule at school. He should be in 9th grade of primary school; but is in 6th grade. He likes going to school, but doesn't even dream of going to college. He wants to be a football player, to make money and to have a better life. Carlos dreams: "I want to help my family ... and help people".

Not far from Deise's home in Chapadinho, Marlene da Conceição (51) also faces chronic income deprivation. Her one-room home has only a foam mattress on the floor to accommodate her, her daughters Dandara (29) and Yasmim (24) and 8 year-old grandson Matheus. Marlene's son, Matheus father, died four years ago. Matheus'

Deise dos Santos Braga and her makeshift stove.

© UNICEF/BRZ/Sérgio Moraes

four siblings, a boy and three girls age 9 to 16, live with their mother Elizabete Cristina Santos Ferreira (33) but spend most of their days at their grandmother's house.

Marlene is illiterate and diabetic, and it is she that must sustain her household. She receives the *Bolsa Família*[1] benefit and, to supplement this, washes clothes, and babysits two daughters for a neighbor. Through these activities, she can earn an additional R$220 per month. According to Marlene, lack of money primarily affects the family's capacity to eat. "Some days, we have nothing to eat. Being hungry is the worst thing there is ... I can tell you. It's a horrible sensation. I can take it; but when I see my grandson, who is only 8 years old, wake up in the morning asking for breakfast, and I have nothing to give him... that's heartbreaking", she laments.

Her grandson Marcelo (16) has worked as a supermarket-checkout packager and on building sites as a drywall plasterer. He is currently in the 1st year of high school and is one year behind schedule, because his mother was unable to find a school for him during the pandemic.

Marcelo dreams of being a lawyer or a judge. He wants to go to law school so that he can, as he puts it 'defend innocent blacks who are judged guilty and treated as criminals because of the color of their skin'. "I think it would be cool to be a lawyer or a judge, to defend people. In these times, what the authorities say always counts for more than what you say", he muses.

His sisters are also attending school. Like other children of their community, they attend remedial classes offered by *Projeto Leões de Cristo* ["Lions of Christ"], at the settlement's church hall from 8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday. The project coordinator, Jéssica Caetano Rodrigues, affirms that this initiative results from efforts within the community itself, and that all its teachers are volunteers.

Marcelo's brother Matheus, age 8 and a 2nd grade-student, says smilingly: "I'm going to extra remedial classes; I can read and write. I want to be a teacher, because I love it". His sister Izabel Cristina (11) is in 5th grade of primary schooling. She dreams of becoming a ballerina and a teacher because she wants, "...to help the entire family, have a house and the things I'd like to have in the home".

## No home, no job, no income

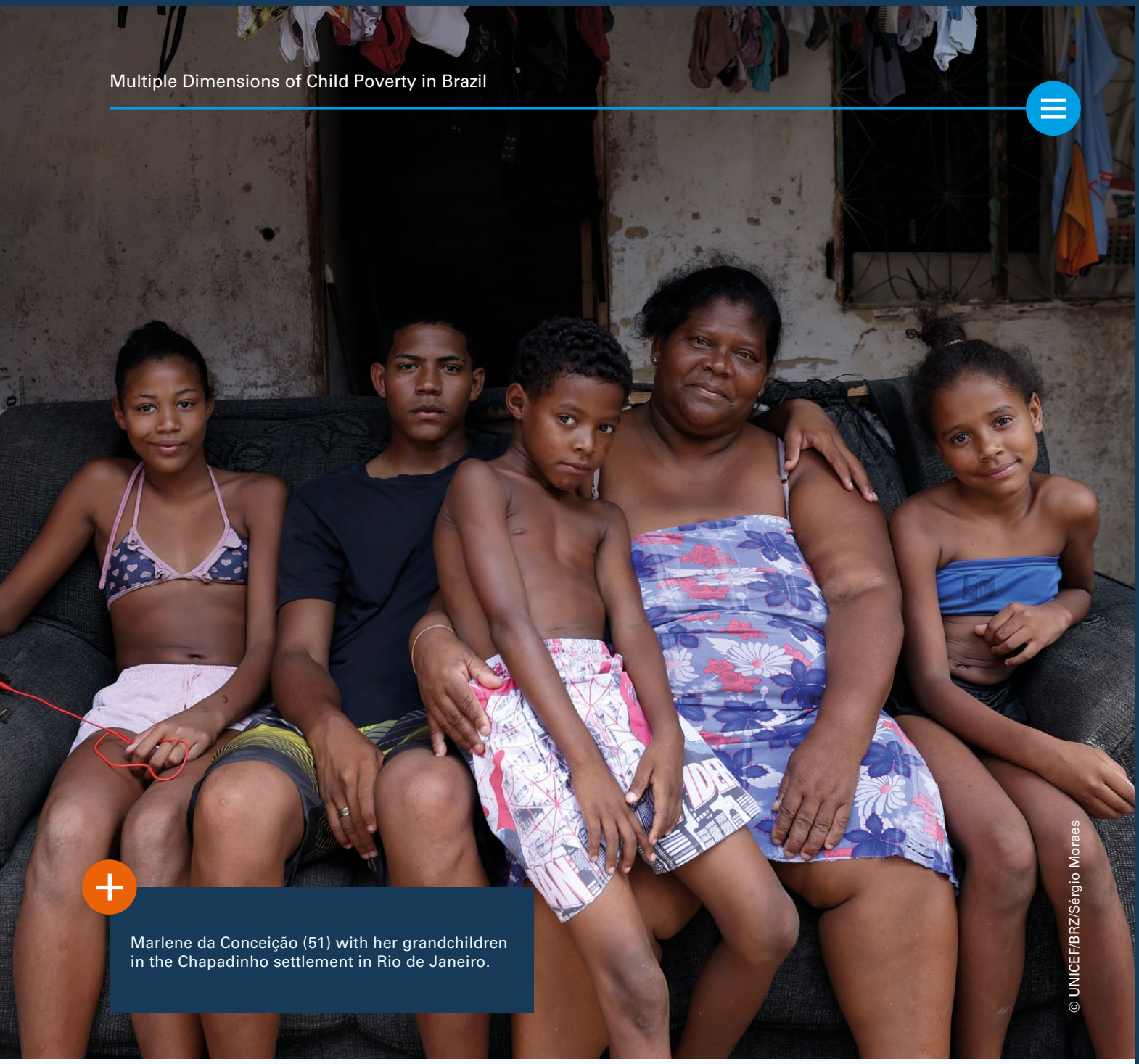
Eleven-year-old Nycolas Caetano Pereira dreams of becoming a football player. As a 7th-grade primary school student, he wants to make money. He confides that his main aim is "to help my mother, and also to buy a house ... and to travel". Nycolas and his mother Thereza Caroline Caetano Rodrigues have been staying in the house of a friend who charges no rent, since March 27, 2022, when a storm knocked down the two-room shack they lived in, in Chapadinho. All that was left next day was a sink, a TV-set and a few other broken things. Thereza recalls with sadness the day it all happened.

"The tile fell off the kitchen roof, almost hitting my son's head. As it hit the sink, I thought; 'I'm not staying in here ... I'll find a corner to hide with my son'. This was on Sunday. The next day I asked some folks to help me gather up my few remaining belongings, and then left for good. I returned to fetch a cupboard, so as to have a place to put groceries, but it was wrecked and wet. The shack was no longer standing; nothing else was left. It pains me to talk about it".

Thereza, 30 years old and separated, has never been employed. She gets no help from Nycolas' father and subsists off the benefit she receives from the federal government. As she tells it, the fact that she attended school only up to 4th grade (equivalent to 5th in the new primary schooling system) makes it difficult for her to find a job. She declares that all her money is spent on food, and that not much is left to rebuild the house. "I keep on saving, little by little, hoping to build at least a small room, large enough for me and for him", she says.

The family of Carlos Rodrigo dos Santos Braga (40) and Inara Regina dos Santos Macário (24) lives next to Thereza's plot. The couple live with their children Mariele (8), Isis (4) and Victor (4 months) in an unfinished

[1] At the time of the interview, in October 2022, the benefit was named *Auxílio Brasil*.



Marlene da Conceição (51) with her grandchildren in the Chapadinho settlement in Rio de Janeiro.



house with serious sanitation deficiencies. It has only one bedroom, and all five sleep on the same mattress. "I wish I could build another floor on top of our home, so that each of our daughters could have her own room", Inara confides.

Carlos learned the alphabet as an adult and can write only his name. Unable to find a formal employment, he does odd jobs to earn some money. "I work as a bricklayer's mate. Whatever comes my way, I accept. Sometimes I earn R$50; sometimes R$40; it depends who hires me to do the work", he says. For her part, Inara studied up to 9th grade of primary schooling. Even so, she has never had a formal job with a signed labor contract. She receives the *Bolsa Família* benefit[2] and receives donated food baskets and diapers.

Inara walks five km per day, gathering scrap metal cans. She leaves Chapadinho at 8 am and arrives at Rio de Janeiro's wholesale market (CEASA-RJ) in Irajá at 11 am. There, she scavenges discarded fruits and vegetables. Her eldest daughter Mariele, who is in 3rd grade of primary school, has the same dreams that Inara once had: she wants to be a singer. Together, they enjoy singing gospel and popular pagode songs. Their favorite song, Vendaval, speaks of a couple building a life together in a castle.

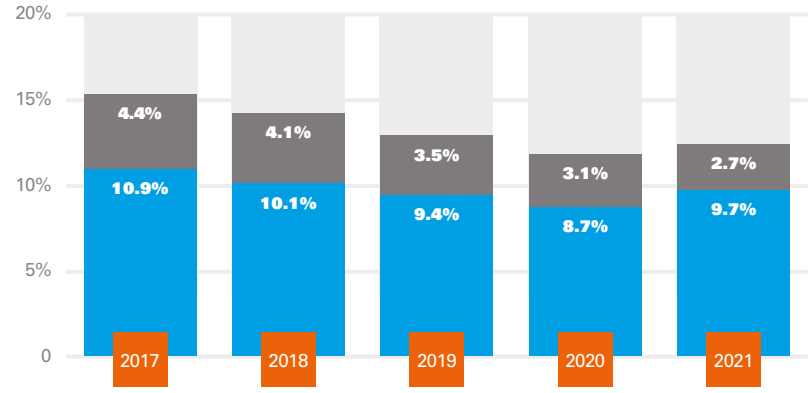
[2] At the time of the interview, in October 2022, the benefit was named *Auxílio Brasil*.

# EDUCATION

*Literacy has long been a challenge in Brazil, but indicators showed a trend of gradual improvement. As of 2020, when schools suspended in-person classes, such progress was interrupted. Based on data from the Quarterly Continuous PNAD, UNICEF has estimated that, between 2020 and 2022, the percentage of Children deprived of their right to literacy doubled.*

## Children age 4 to 17 deprived of education (Continuous PNAD and POF)

Continuous PNAD

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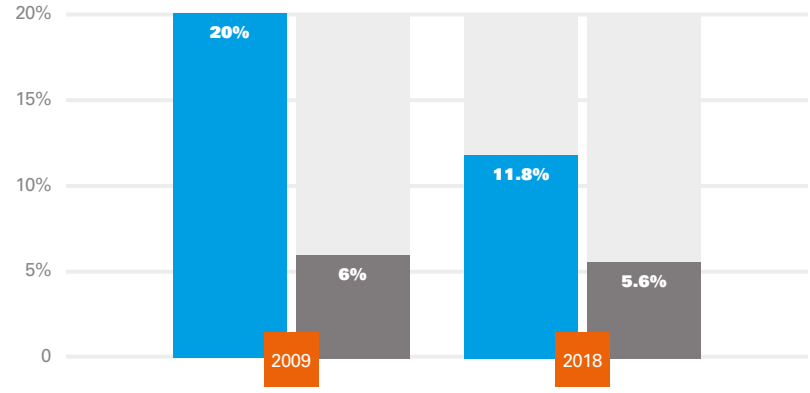



Intermediate deprivation* Extreme deprivation**

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021, which provides the basis for analysis on literacy and access to schooling at the appropriate age. The results consider total figures for children experiencing any form of deprivation in these two aspects.

Taking the dimension of education as a whole, the study shows that, up to 2020, significant progress was observed in relation to intermediate deprivation.[41] Between 2020 and 2021, however an increase from 8.7% to 9.7% was detected. With regard to extreme deprivation, there was an observable, but not statistically significant, decrease[42] (*see graph to the left*).

From a retrospective perspective, data from the POF for 2008-2009 and for 2017-2018, show that there were advances with regard to intermediate deprivation that were not observed in relation to extreme deprivation. While the number of children experiencing intermediate deprivation fell by nearly 8 percentage points, the decrease in the number of children experiencing extreme deprivation was below 0.5 of a percentage point.

For Luiz Miguel Martins Garcia, president of the National Union of Municipal Education Directors (UNDIME) and Director of education of the municipality of Sud Mennucci in the State of São Paulo, the persistence of extreme deprivation levels revealed by the study is linked to the fact that some children live under such precarious family structures that a 'deterministic situation' is produced. Notwithstanding policies implemented over the years, family history poses a hindrance to the child's ability to obtain full access to the right to education. "Changing this reality requires inter-sectoral

[41] For literacy, this relates to non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution. For age/grade distortions, it relates to children age 9 to 17 attending school, but in a low grade for their age.

[42] For literacy, this relates to non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution. For age/grade distortions, it relates to children age 4 to 17 who are not attending an educational institution.

work on the part of each level of government, with help and support, above all, in the fields of social assistance and health", he assesses.

Mônica Pinto, UNICEF's Chief of Education for Brazil agrees with Garcia. In her view, to overcome extreme deprivation, a set of actions are needed that extend beyond the field of education. "As one examines the reasons why children are not in school, other issues emerge. These may include migration or diseases in families, which can be overcome only through other types of policies, so that a child or adolescent may return to and remain in school", she remarks.

With regard to intermediate deprivation, Garcia evaluates that the pandemic was indeed responsible for the worsening of indicators in 2021 in that, besides raising poverty levels, it undermined the very logic of school access and attendance. "It became very hard to guarantee access, transport ... in effect, to provide regular activities", she explains.

## Worsening literacy levels

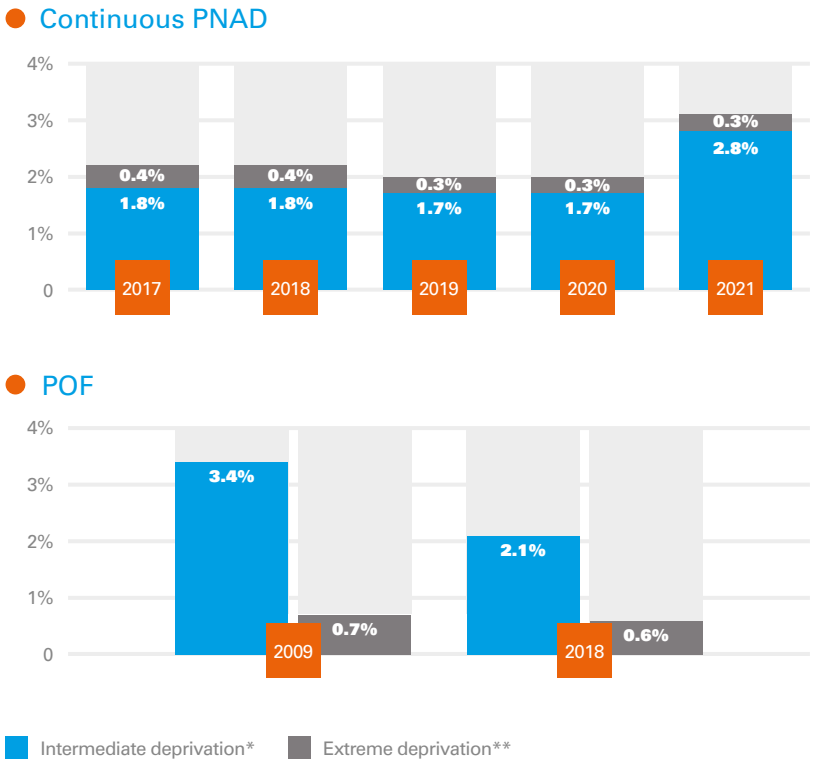
An alarming trend revealed by the study's indicators is the recent rise of illiteracy. Achievements reflected in the 2008-2009 and 2017-2018 POF surveys, and the stability reflected in the 2017 and 2020 Continuous PNAD, were rolled back. Intermediate literacy deprivation (the number of non-literate children older than 7 attending school) increased by approximately one percentage point in 2021, as compared with data from the previous year (from 1.7% to 2.8%). Such results reveal the impact of COVID-19 on education, caused by suspension of in-person activities in schools over this period.

"It is inadmissible that children remain illiterate in the 21st century", says Mônica Pinto, who also stresses the need to reopen the debate on initial and continuous teacher training. "We experienced this pandemic just as the new National Common Core Curriculum was being implemented. We need to review this implementation, based on an assessment of what it was possible to achieve during the period. And at this specific point in time, following the long period during which schools were closed, it is essential that pedagogical teams carry out a multi-year diagnosis of what the students have effectively learned, so as to plan for the following school year", she affirms.

Another relevant challenge, in her view, is designing policies that do not impose an idealized standard model family or child. "What sort of early-childhood schooling do we offer traditional communities; I mean, to rural, quilombola, riverine, and indigenous populations?"

Acknowledging that the contexts, patterns and needs of specific groups, and of urban and rural populations require different approaches is among the major challenges she identifies in relation to provision of high-quality education for all. These are factors that must be taken into account if children are to receive an ideal basic education.

## Illiteracy, 7 to 17 (Continuous PNAD and POF)



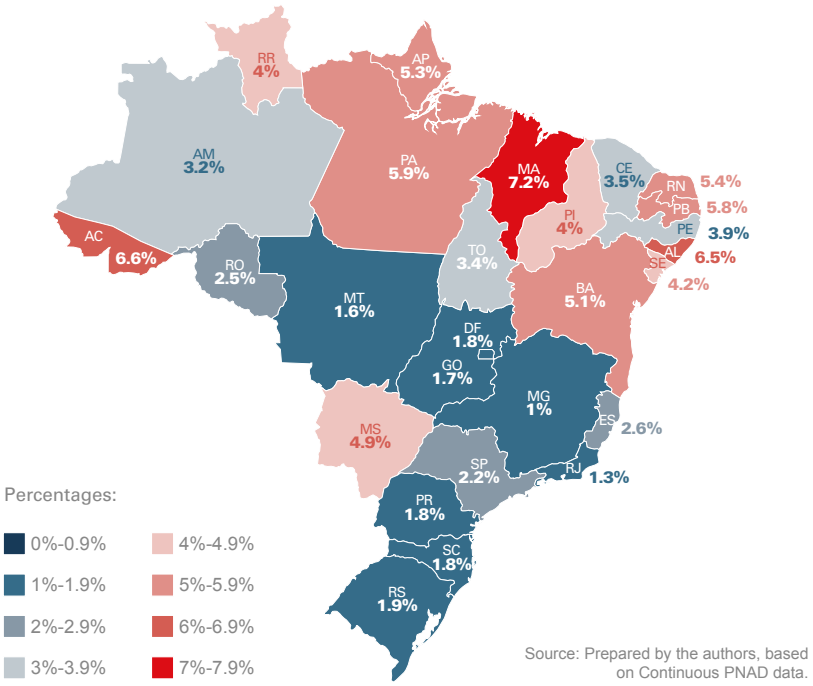

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution.

**Non-literate children above the age of 7 not attending an educational institution.

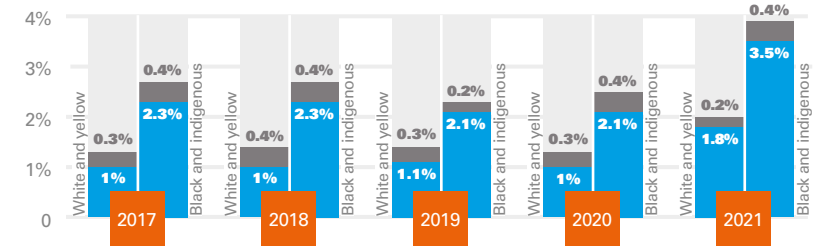
## Illiteracy among children age 7 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2021)



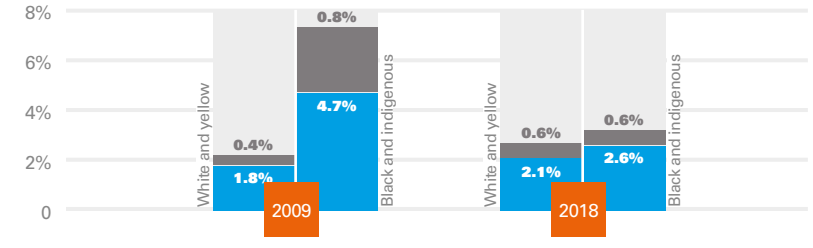

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Illiteracy among children age 7 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)

### Continuous PNAD




### POF




Intermediate deprivation* Extreme deprivation**

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution.

**Non-literate children above the age of 7 not attending an educational institution.

### Regional disparities

When broken down by state, illiteracy data reveals significant regional inequality. In 2021, 7.2% of children in the State of Maranhão faced intermediate or extreme deprivation. The state with the lowest percentage for this indicator was Minas Gerais, where only 1% of children experienced any form of literacy deprivation.

For Brazil as a whole, as well as for the individual states, recent Continuous PNAD data reflect worsening illiteracy levels in 2021 (*see map to the left*) in many states of the North and Northeast, such as Acre, Alagoas and Maranhão; in contrast to the improvement trend shown by POF data from 2009 to 2018 (*see page 93*).

### Racial and gender disparities

With respect to color/race, major discrepancies can be observed in the right to literacy, as can a worsening of the indicators for 2021, which roll back improvements achieved between 2009 and 2018, tracked by the POF.

According to the most recent continuous PNAD data, on average, the proportion of black and indigenous children facing intermediate and extreme deprivation is double that of white and yellow children in the same circumstances. And, whereas illiteracy among black and indigenous children climbed from 2.5% in 2020 to 3.9% in 2021; for white and yellow children the same indicator increased from 1.3% to 2%.

Worsening access to literacy affected boys and girls alike though, in this specific case, girls were found to suffer lesser deprivation levels than boys. Whereas the proportion of girls experiencing intermediate deprivation increased from 1.3% in 2020 to 2.3% in 2021, intermediate deprivation levels for boys rose from 2.1% to 3.3%. These percentages were the highest recorded in the Continuous PNAD series (*see graph on page 47*).

With respect to age/grade distortions, the study's indicators reveal continuous improvement in recent years. Whereas in 2017, 15.2% of children experienced some form of deprivation of their right to schooling in a grade appropriate for their age, by 2021 this percentage had dropped to 11%.

The POF 2009-2018 retrospective series also portrayed the sharp decline in the age/grade distortion indicator. While in 2009 nearly 26% of children suffered some deprivation in this regard, by 2018 this proportion had fallen to 17.4%. Similarly, the indicator for extreme age/grade deprivation[43] that had stood at 6% in 2009, had decreased to 5.6% by 2018.

## Disparities in appropriate age/grade access to schooling

The results also show disparities in access to schooling among Brazil's regions, though the differences are less prominent than for other dimensions. In 2021, however, notwithstanding above-average deprivation rates in states such as Bahia and Sergipe, for most states of the Northeast region results for this indicator were quite similar to those of the more socially and economically developed states. In particular, the State of Ceará stands out, where the proportion of children deprived of appropriate age/grade schooling is below 10%.

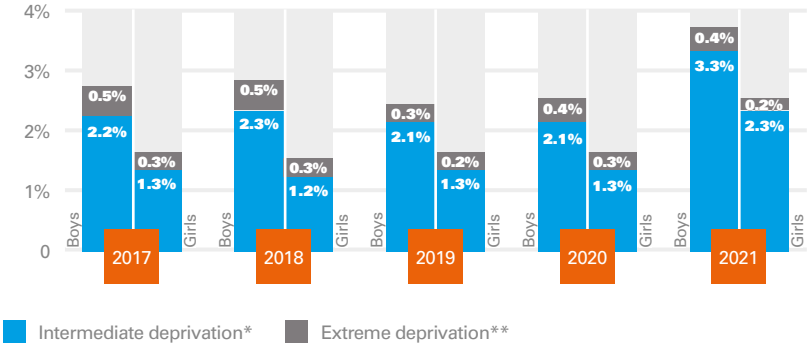
Examination of the POF 2009-2018 retrospective series shows that there was a significant decrease in age/grade distortion rates in all states during that period, except in Amapá, where the proportion remained around 30%.

As with other indicators, significant and persistent disparities are apparent from the color/race perspective. Despite a reduction for all groups over time, POF data reveals that the percentage of black and indigenous children experiencing intermediate and extreme age/grade deprivations in 2018 was higher than it had been for white and yellow children in 2009, almost ten years earlier (*see page 48*).

From a gender perspective, a significant disparity is also apparent. In 2021, the rate of intermediate deprivation for boys was almost 4% higher than for girls (*see graph on page 49*). Nonetheless, in recent years there has been a decline in the proportion of children left behind in a grade that does not reflect their age, which has principally benefited boys.

[43] Children age 4 to 17 years who are not attending an educational institution.

## Illiteracy among children age 7 to 17, by gender (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

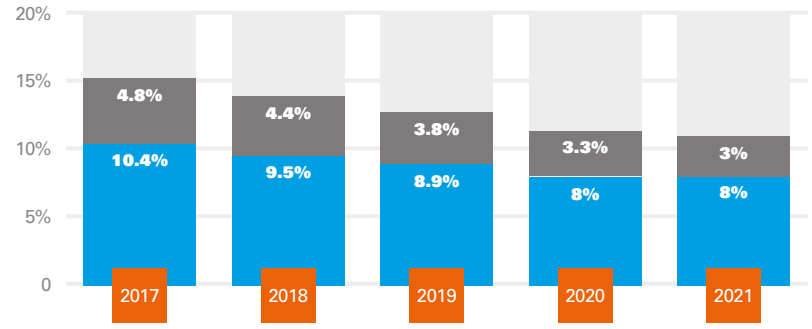
Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution.

**Non-literate children above the age of 7 not attending an educational institution.

## Children age 4 to 17 with age/grade distortions (Continuous PNAD and POF)

Continuous PNAD

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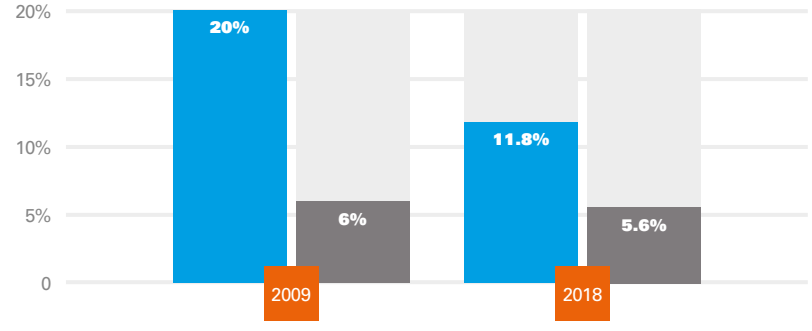


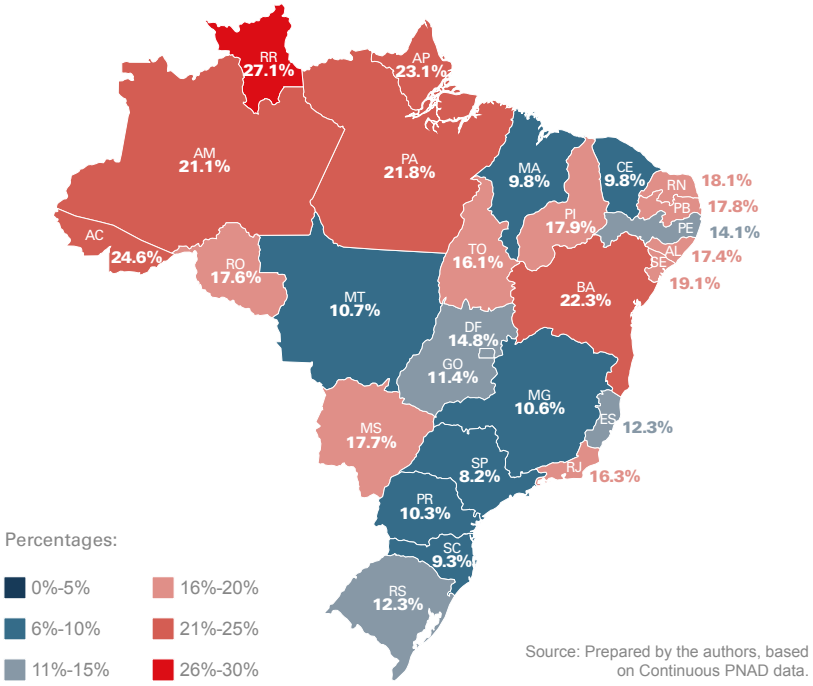

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Children age 9 to 17 attending school in a grade inappropriate for their age.

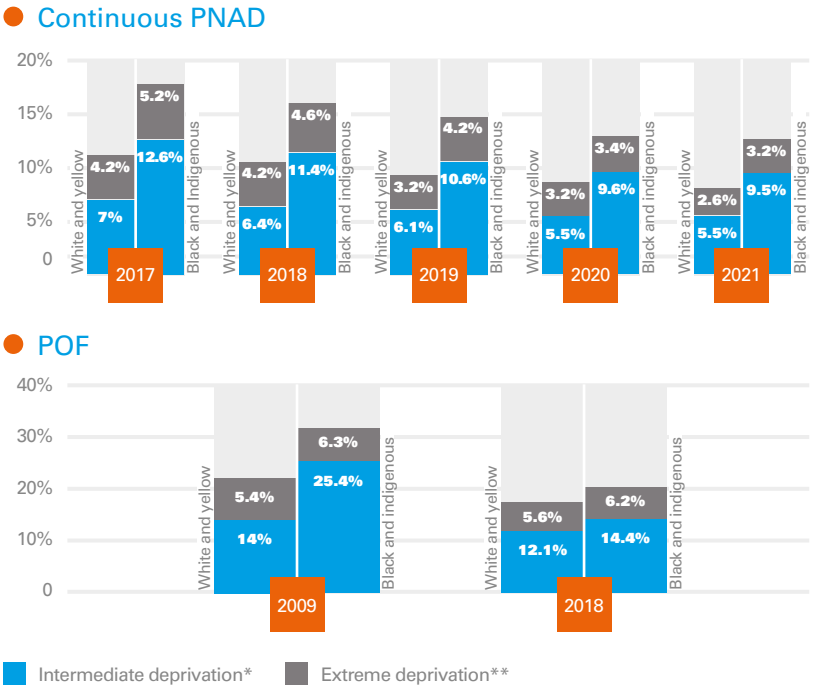
**Children age 4 to 17 not attending an educational institution.

## Children age 4 to 17 in a grade inappropriate for their age (Continuous PNAD – 2021)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Children age 4 to 17 in a grade inappropriate for their age, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Children age 9 to 17 attending school in a grade inappropriate for their age.

**Children age 4 to 17 not attending an educational institution.

The POF data series for the previous decade shows that gender disparities fell, from 9% in 2009 to approximately 5% in 2018.

For Ricardo Henriques, Executive Superintendent of Instituto UNIBANCO, deprivations in education are generally due to social-policy failings. "Policies are failing to ensure that access to schooling, keeping students in school, and fostering the capacity for cognitive and socio-emotional development must take place in a reasonably adequate fashion", he affirms.

In Henriques' opinion, poorly focused education policies are also to blame. "Brazilian education policy has difficulty in setting strategies, especially pedagogical strategies, but also in its approach to inclusiveness and other issues, which could successfully promote acquisition of reading skills at the appropriate age and keep children from more vulnerable segments from dropping out of school", he says.

According to Henriques, these difficulties are linked to two didactic aspects: the cycle structure of education; and a 'culture of grade repetition' prevalent in Brazil. "When education is regarded as a cycle, everything that could, from a cognitive and socio-emotional standpoint, be a part of the process for the child, becomes a standardized rule. The expectation is then, that literacy need be taught only up to the age of 8. This possibility should not be construed as the rule, since literacy acquired at the right age is correlated to the family's social and educational capital and, above all, to that of the mother" he explains. It is not merely a school-based phenomenon".

In his specialist opinion, when the family's social and educational capital level is high, the child becomes literate more quickly. It is for this reason that the idea of equity is of such strategic importance for educational policy, since it seeks redress for this underlying inequality.

With respect to grade repetition, Henriques believes that it is punitive for the most vulnerable students. "Throughout the course of education cycles, the student accumulates age/grade distortions in a way that is totally inadmissible. Some states regularly fail 40% of students at the end of 9th grade, and 60%

in the 1st year of high school. In other words, a culture of grade repetition permeates the educational cycle, and intensifies as students approach the end of primary schooling and entrance to high school", he explains. It is for this reason, in his view, that new pedagogical approaches need to be developed and taught to teachers during their initial training, and reinforced through continuing teacher training, focused upon effective contributions toward reducing inequalities.

For Instituto UNIBANCO's Executive Superintendent, the efforts to address regional disparities identified in the study require customized strategies. He points out that current education policy is almost entirely a construct based on a hegemonic outlook prevalent in the Southeast and South regions. "However well-intentioned, the educational solutions devised since the onset of Brazil's re-democratization, they have typically been artificial and have entailed extremely low levels of engagement on the part of local populations", he affirms.

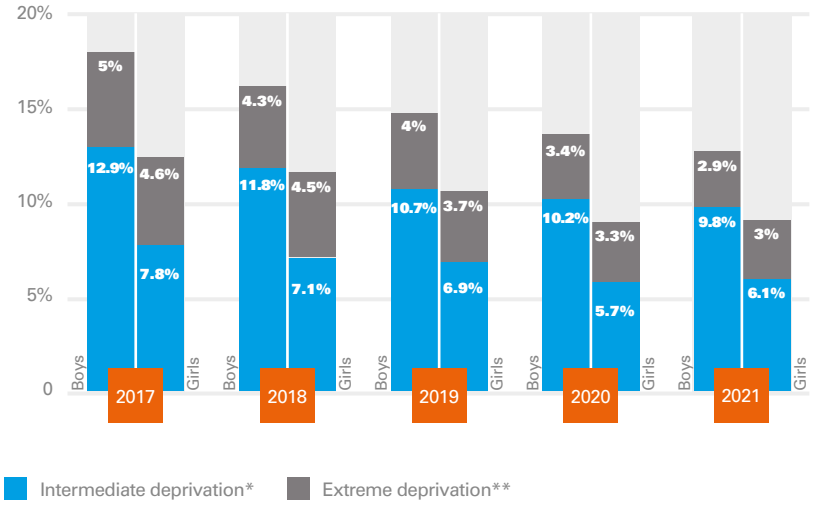
UNICEF's Mônica Pinto considers it important that such customization be clear and well-tailored to the needs of more vulnerable populations and their particularities. "For instance, we have increasingly numerous populations of immigrants, who need to learn literacy in Portuguese and, increasingly, also in their native language. There is no policy for teacher training in place to cope with this reality", she exemplifies. "As long as we continue offering the same starting point to all children throughout Brazilian territory, while ignoring that they live in totally different socio-economic and cultural realities, they will not attain the same rights to learning", she concludes.

## Education estimates in 2022

Since the Quarterly Continuous PNAD collects data on education, the study sought to estimate the percentage of children deprived of some right in this dimension also for 2022 by comparing of the second quarter of each year (*see graph to the right*).

Analysis of the results for each type of deprivation reveals that, despite steady reduction of those related to age/grade distortions over recent years, for access to literacy there was

## Age/grade distortion, 4 to 17, by gender (Continuous PNAD)



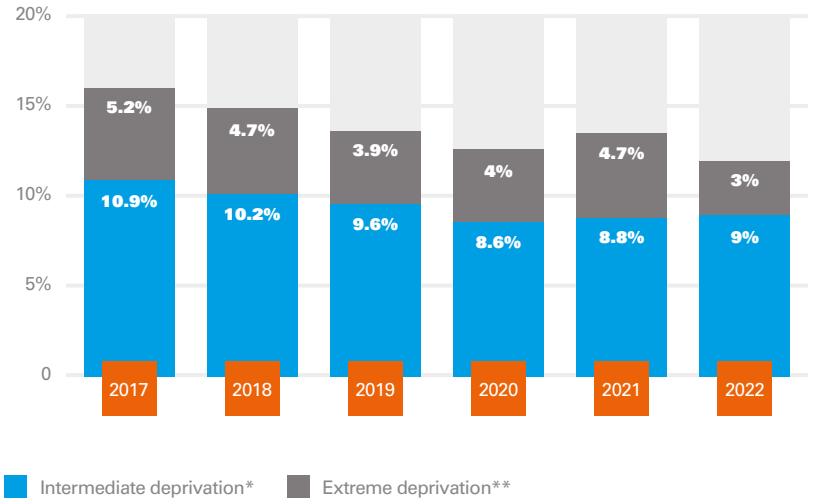

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data on the dimension of education is available from the Annual Continuous PNAD up to 2021.

*Children age 9 to 17 attending school in a grade inappropriate for their age.

**Children age 4 to 17 not attending an educational institution.

## Children age 4 to 17 with some form of deprivation on education (Continuous Quarterly PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Quarterly Continuous PNAD.

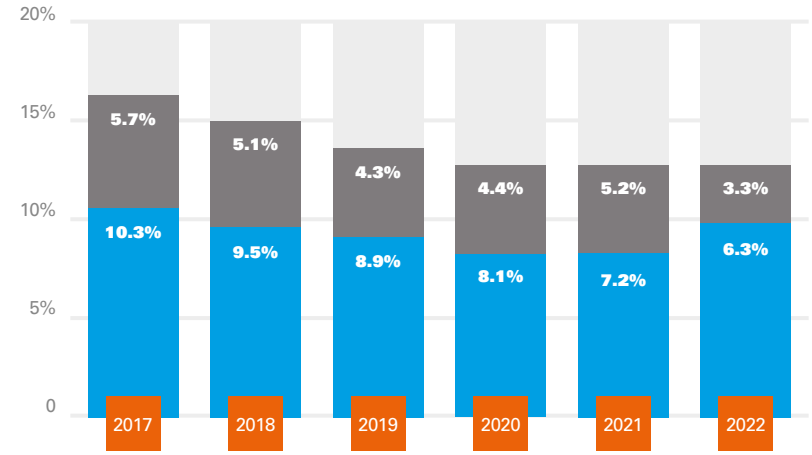
Note: In this dimension, the study analyzes data on literacy and age/grade distortions collected in the second quarter of each year. The results relate to the overall number of children with some form of deprivation in either of these two categories.

*With respect to literacy, this relates to non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution; with regard to age/grade distortions, it relates to children age 9 to 17 who are attending school, but in a grade inappropriate for their age.

**With respect to literacy, this relates to illiterate children over the age of 7 not attending an educational institution; or, with regard to age/grade distortions, it relates to children age 4 to 17 who are not attending an educational institution.

## Children age 4 to 17 with some form of deprivation in education (Continuous Quarterly PNAD)

### Age/grade distortions

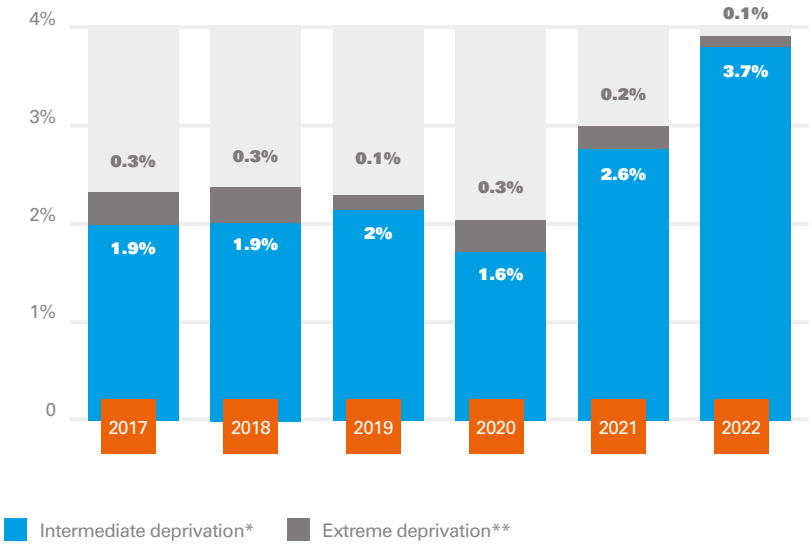



Source: Produced by the authors with data from the Continuous Quarterly PNAD.

*Children age 9 to 17 attending school in a grade inappropriate for their age.

**Children age 4 to 17 who are not attending an educational institution.

### Literacy




Source: Produced by the authors with data from the Continuous Quarterly PNAD.

*Non-literate children above the age of 7 attending an educational institution.

**Non-literate children above the age of 7 not attending an educational institution.

a perceivable deterioration in the category intermediate deprivations. Following a steady decrease between 2017 and 2020, the rate rose from approximately 1.6% in 2020 to 3.7% in 2022; the highest level recorded in the entire series (*see graph*).

For racial disparities related to illiteracy, following a declining trend that lasted up to 2020, there was a rise from the one percentage point difference recorded that year, to a 1.5 point difference in 2022. Considering that the acquisition of literacy takes place in specific age groups, the study's findings also reveal an alarming increase in illiteracy among the youngest children. This worsening trend was most evident among black and indigenous children age 8, 9 and 10 (25%, 12% and 5% respectively) in 2022: and for 8 and 9 year-old white and yellow children (15% and 6%, respectively) in the same year.

These results corroborate what previous studies had shown. According to a survey by the National Campaign for the Right to Education, published in June 2021,[44] Brazil lost ground on the path toward the literacy goals envisaged in its National Education Plan (PNE).

The PNE came into effect in 2014. Its objectives were: that 93.5% of all Brazilians older than 15 would be literate by 2015; that absolute illiteracy would be eradicated; and that functional illiteracy would be reduced by 50% by 2024. However, rather than receding, functional illiteracy increased. According to this survey, it rose from 27% in 2015, to 29% in 2018.

For UNDIME's Luiz Garcia, the problem is that Brazil lacks a policy for overcoming illiteracy. The most recent effort in this regard was the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age (PNAIC) launched in 2012, which lapsed upon a change of administration. In his opinion, "Brazil lacks a policy to encourage, guide and enable advances. Whenever we build [a policy] with this focus, things move forward".

The pandemic merely made this situation worse, in addition to causing substantial loss-

[44] *CAMPANHA NACIONAL PELO DIREITO À EDUCAÇÃO. Balanço do Plano Nacional de Educação. Semana de Ação Mundial* ["Assessment of the National Education Plan. World Action Week"], 2022. Available at: https://media.campanha.org.br/acervo/documentos/00_BalancoPNE_Cartelas2022_ok_1.pdf.

es of learning. UNICEF estimates that only one third of boys and girls age 10 worldwide[45] can read and understand a simple story. Before the pandemic, half the children could.

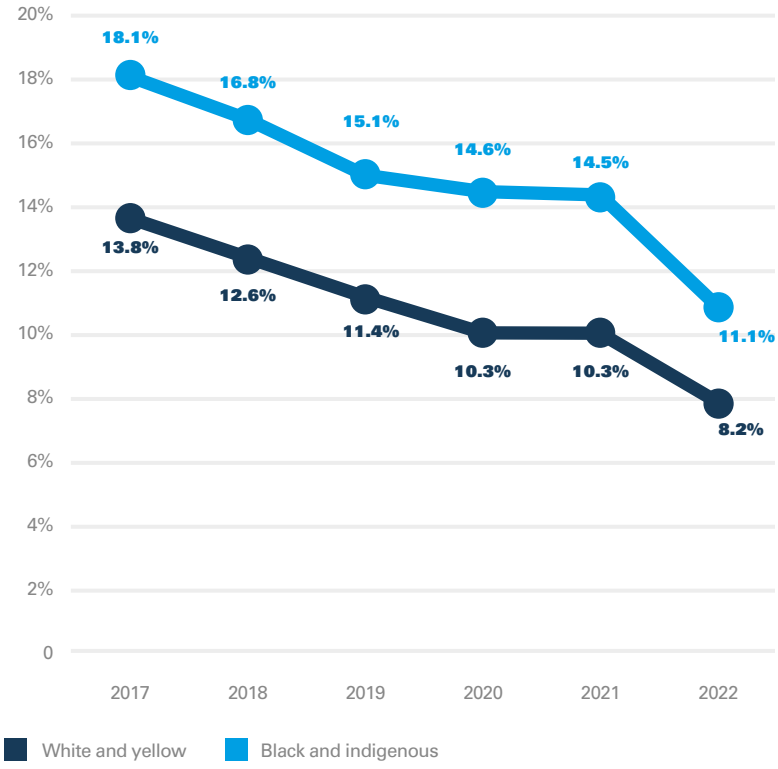
In Brazil, data from the Basic Education Assessment System (SAEB 2021)[46] indicates that there was a significant decrease in learning levels of both public and private-school students in all phases of basic education, after in-person activities were suspended.

The most intense decline, of 11 percentage points, was perceived for math in the 5th year of primary schooling. The average 5th grade math score of 227.88 in 2019, dropped to 216.85 in 2021, representing a retreat to the 2013 level. For Portuguese language, the average 5th grade score dropped by almost 7 percentage points. National average scores dropped from 214.64 to 208.01. However it is considered, this figure is cause for concern, given that an individual's ability to read is a fundamental skill needed for acquisition of other types of knowledge.

## School dropout during the pandemic

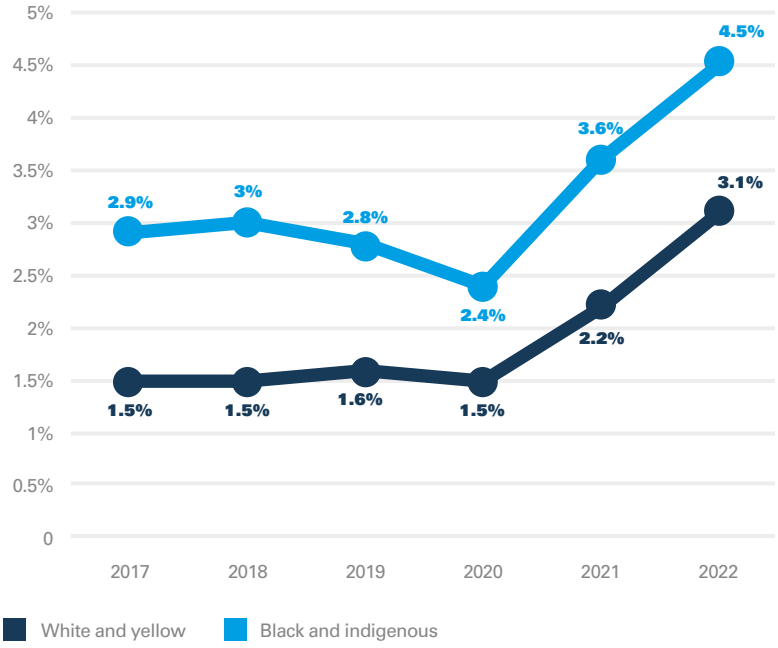
That the pandemic caused many adolescents to drop out of school, was shown by the study "Brazilian Education in 2022: The Voice of the Adolescents",[47] conducted by IPEC for UNICEF. According to this survey, approximately two million Brazilian boys and girls age 11 to 19 who had not completed primary education have dropped out of school since 2020. For social classes A and B, the dropout rate was 4%, whereas for children of classes D and E it reached 17%. Such figures demonstrate that exclusion from school primarily affects the most vulnerable children.

## Age/grade distortions, by color/race (Continuous Quarterly PNAD)




Source: Produced by the authors with data from the Continuous Quarterly PNAD.

## Deprivation of literacy, by color/race (Continuous Quarterly PNAD)




Source: Produced by the authors with data from the Continuous Quarterly PNAD.

[45] UNICEF. "*UNICEF Alerta para Níveis de Aprendizagem Alarmantemente Baixos: Estima-se que Apenas um Terço das Crianças de 10 Anos em Todo o Mundo Seja Capaz de Ler e Entender uma História Simples*" ["UNICEF warns about alarmingly low learning levels: it estimates that only one in three 10 year-olds globally can read and understand a simple story"]. Brasília, 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/comunicados-de-imprensa/unicef-alerta-para-niveis-de-aprendizagem-alarmantemente-baixos-em-todo-o-mundo.

[46] INEP. SAEB. "*Resultados*" ["Results"]. Available at: https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/areas-de-atuacao/avaliacao-e-exames-educacionais/saeb/resultados.

[47] UNICEF/Ipec. *Educação Brasileira em 2022: A Voz de Adolescentes*. UNICEF, 15 set. 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/20186/file/educacao-em-2022_a-voz-de-adolescentes.pdf.

Among the reasons cited by students for dropping out, 48% of respondents claimed the need to work; while 30% affirmed that they had left school because they were unable to accompany explanations and activities. This claim attests to a high rate of children with learning difficulties.

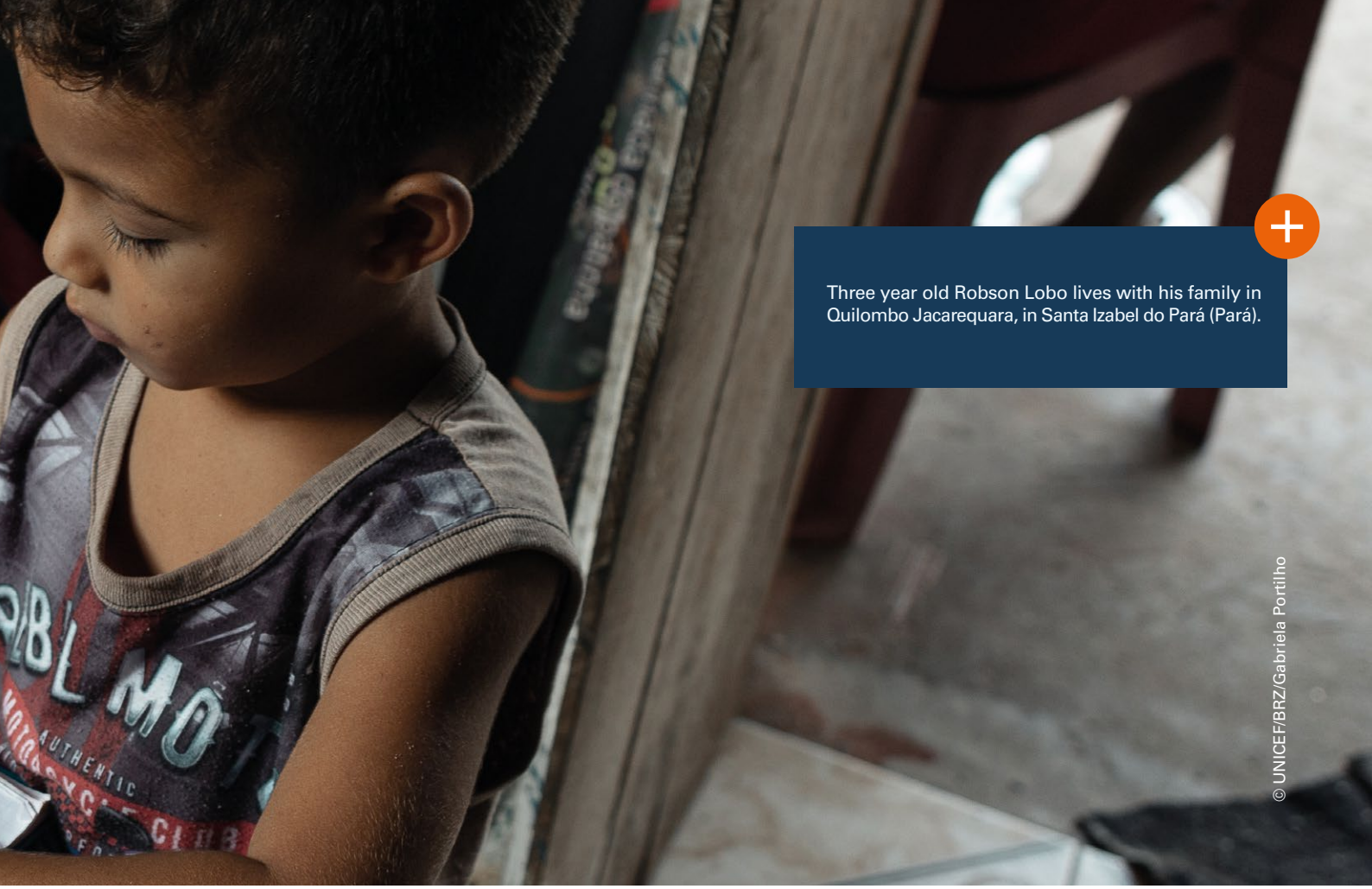
Many other dropouts claimed that they had quit studying because they found school "uninteresting" (27%) and "of little practical use" (18%).

"Such schools make little sense to them. They speak too little of life projects and of skills for the world of work", stresses UNICEF's Mônica Pinto.

The pandemic also had a severe impact on early-childhood education. A study entitled "Inequalities and Impacts of COVID-19 in the Provision of Early Childhood Assistance",[48] published by the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation in partnership with UNICEF and Itaú Social, found that, between 2019 and 2021, the number of children enrolled in day-care fell by 338,000, whereas the number of children enrolled in nursery schools (a compulsory stage of basic education in Brazil) fell by 315,000. Since early-childhood education is essential for progression and transition into primary schooling, this implies that learning opportunities for children were adversely affected. Luiz Garcia warns that declining enrollment figures have consequences, not only in terms of the number of children out of school, but also for resumption of enrollments. "Many teaching networks end up being demobilized, facing difficulties in maintaining the supply of placements in early-childhood education, and in keeping their teachers. Now, they will also face difficulties as they attempt to restructure to serve these children", he says.

According to UNDIME's president, avoiding perpetuation of the poor results of the past three years as a trend will depend on Brazil's capacity to reassess some fundamental

[48] *Fundação Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal/UNICEF/Itaú Social. Desigualdades e Impactos da covid-19 na Atenção à Primeira Infância.* FMCSV, 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/20221/file/desigualdades-e-impactos-da-covid-19-na-atencao-a-primeira-infancia.pdf.



Three year old Robson Lobo lives with his family in Quilombo Jacarequara, in Santa Izabel do Pará (Pará).

© UNICEF/BRZ/Gabriela Portilho

issues, that feature particularly in Brazil's National Education Plan. "However, consistent investments have been postponed, especially those needed to ensure placements for early-childhood education, which is the main bottleneck today", he highlights.

UNICEF's Mônica Pinto claims that in order to breach the cycle of intergenerational poverty, it is essential that investments be made in education for populations in situations of high vulnerability and that their realities and needs be acknowledged.

"The low priority that education receives is exceedingly costly for Brazil", she remarks, citing a study entitled "Consequences of Violation of the Right to Education",[49] published in 2021 by INSPER and *Fundação Roberto Marinho*.

This study estimates, in monetary sums, the direct and indirect costs of school dropout. Brazil annually loses an estimated R$372,000 per adolescent that fails to finish basic education. This is based on the observation that adolescents who conclude the basic education cycle generally spend more of their productive lives in formal higher-paying jobs; and that as a rule, their life expectancy is longer and living standards of higher quality. The study also postulates that the lifespan of an adolescent who finishes basic education will, on average, be four years longer than that of one who fails to conclude this cycle.

The cost of providing basic education (kindergarten, primary and lower secondary) is roughly R$90,000 per student. Brazil loses R$214 billion per year because its adolescents fail to conclude basic education. Thus, the loss caused by truancy and school dropout per youth is four times higher than the cost of providing basic education.

"Public managers must recognize that provision of education for populations with high levels of social vulnerability is an investment in the Nation", says UNICEF Brazil' Chief for Education.

[49] BARROS, R. P. et al. *Consequências da Violação do Direito à Educação. 1. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Autografia, 2021.* Available at: https://www.insper.edu.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Conseque%CC%82ncias-da-Violac%CC%A7a%CC%83o-do-Direito-a%CC%80-Educac%CC%A7a%CC%83o.pdf.

# CHILD LABOR

*In recent years, Brazil's child labor indicators have shown no improvement, having remained fairly stable until 2019. Despite the lack of Continuous PNAD data for the 2020-2022 period, there is a generalized perception that child labor indexes rose with the onset of the pandemic, driven by the drop in family incomes and loss of linkages with schools. According to an IPEC survey commissioned by UNICEF, almost half of the 2 million boys and girls age 11 to 19 who abandoned schooling after 2020 dropped out in order to work.*

As with other dimensions, the intensity of deprivation of the right to protection against child labor ranges from intermediate to extreme,[50] according to the age and number of hours worked or dedicated to domestic tasks per week.

According to the study, between 2017 and 2019, there was no significant improvement in this dimension. Both intermediate and extreme deprivation levels remained relatively stable, at approximately 4% and 1.5% respectively, for children age 5 to 17 years old (*see graph to the left*).

This trend has persisted for the 5 to 9 age group. The percentage of children in this group engaged in child labor is relatively low and stable, and no significant statistical differences were perceived between years.

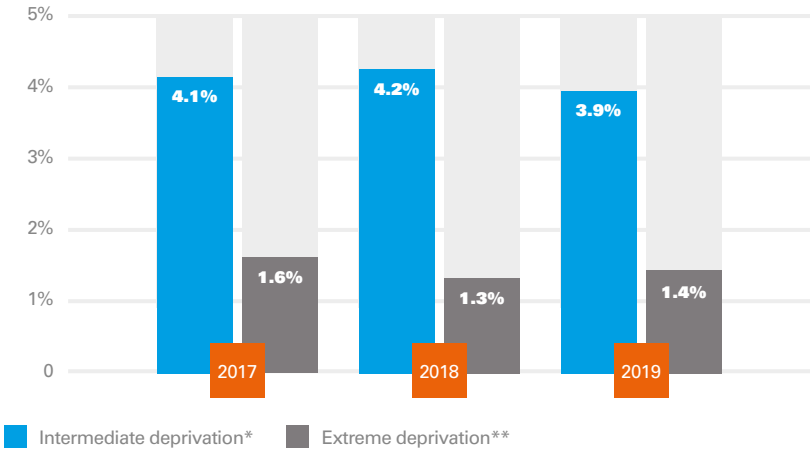
From a regional perspective, more states in Brazil's North region displayed percentages above 5% of children age 5 to 9 experiencing intermediate or extreme deprivation in 2019. In the State of Amapá, this proportion was 10.2%, the highest in the country. At the other end of the spectrum, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul the figure was 0.4% (*see map on page 55*).

From a color/race perspective, although the rates among black and indigenous children were slightly higher than among white and yellow children both in 2017 and 2019, the difference between these groups was not statistically significant.

In terms of gender, child labor percentages tend to be higher for girls experiencing intermediate deprivation, and lower for girls experiencing extreme deprivation. But once again, the differences were not statistically significant in any particular year.

In the 10 to 13 age group, even though rates were lower than for younger cohorts, the

## Child labor, 5 to 17 (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Produced by the authors with Continuous PNAD data. The POF has no indicators for this dimension (*for clarifications on the methodology of this study, see page 8, Chapter 1*).

Note: Data on the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019. In this dimension, the study analyzed the child labor data for three age groups: 5 to 9; 10 to 13; and 14 to 17. This graph considers the total number of children in the three age groups with some degree of deprivation of their right to protection against child labor.

*Children age 5 to 9 who performed domestic tasks for 10 to 20 hours per reference week; Children age 10 to 13 who worked for 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for 15 to 20 hours in the reference week; and adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked for 21 to 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for 21 to 30 hours during the reference week..

**Children age 5 to 9 who performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours per reference week; Children age 10 to 13 who worked more than 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours in the reference week; and adolescents aged 14 to 17 who worked or performed domestic tasks for more than 30 hours during the reference week.

[50] Either remunerated or domestic in one's own home, including the worst forms of child labor. The figure does not consider adolescents officially working as apprentices, known as "Menor aprendiz".

percentages are also low and have remained relatively stable over the years.

When broken down by state, as in the case of younger children, the North region displays the lowest figures for the 10 to 13 age group. In 2019, the lowest percentages were found in the States of Amapá (16.8%), Rondônia (12.5%) and Acre (11.4%). These were followed by Maranhão (10.8%), Paraíba (9.8%) and Minas Gerais (9.6%). The lowest percentage was for Rio de Janeiro (1.8%).

Unlike figures for the youngest children, the racial disparity levels are higher in the 10 to 13 age group. More black and indigenous children experience intermediate deprivation than white and yellow children (*see graph on page 58*).

The same is true with regard to gender: girls experience higher intermediate deprivation rates than boys. This is probably a consequence of gender disparities that begin to emerge at the onset of adolescence, when girls begin taking on responsibilities and domestic chores that are not shared by boys.

In the 14 to 17 age group, the percentages are similar to those of the 10 to 13 age group. The differences between the survey-years are not statistically significant (*see graphs on page 59*).

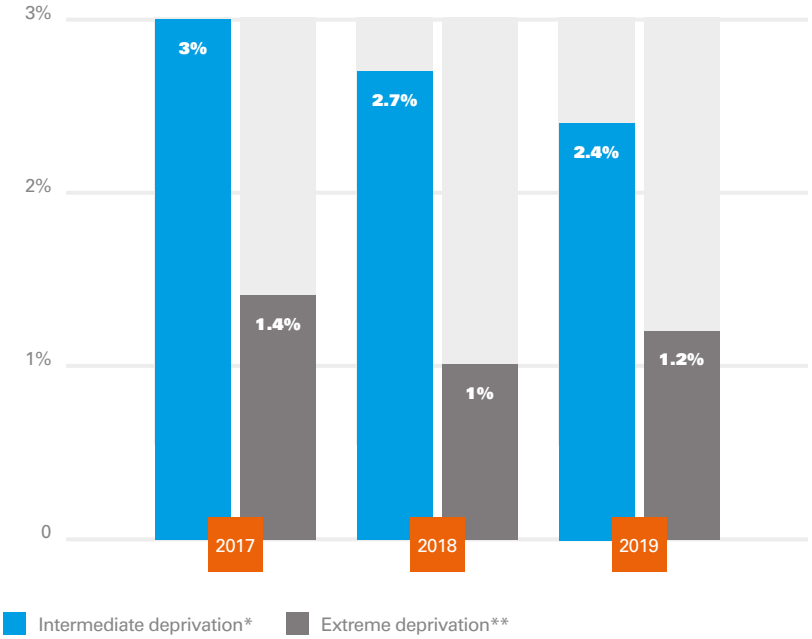
At the state level, in 2019, high percentages of adolescents age 14 to 17 experienced intermediate or extreme deprivation in the North region, particularly in the States of Amapá (8.9%), Rondônia (8.5%) and Pará (8%). Similarly to the previous cohort, the lowest percentage was found in Rio de Janeiro (3.3%).

In this age group, racial disparities become more visible. The percentage of black and indigenous adolescents facing intermediate deprivation is significantly higher than the percentage of white and yellow adolescents in the last two years examined.

According to Francisco Coullanges Xavier, a technical analyst of social policies at the Ministry of Development, Social Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger,[51] such dis-

[51] At the time of the interview in September 2022, it was called Ministry of Citizenship.

## Child labor, 5 to 9 years old (Continuous PNAD)



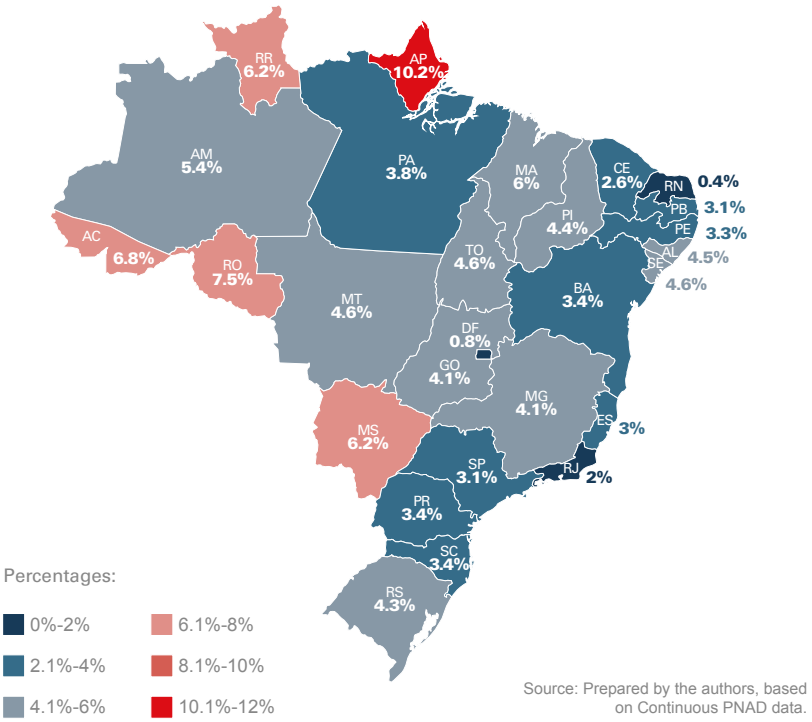

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Child age 5 to 9 who performed domestic tasks for 10 to 20 hours during the reference week.

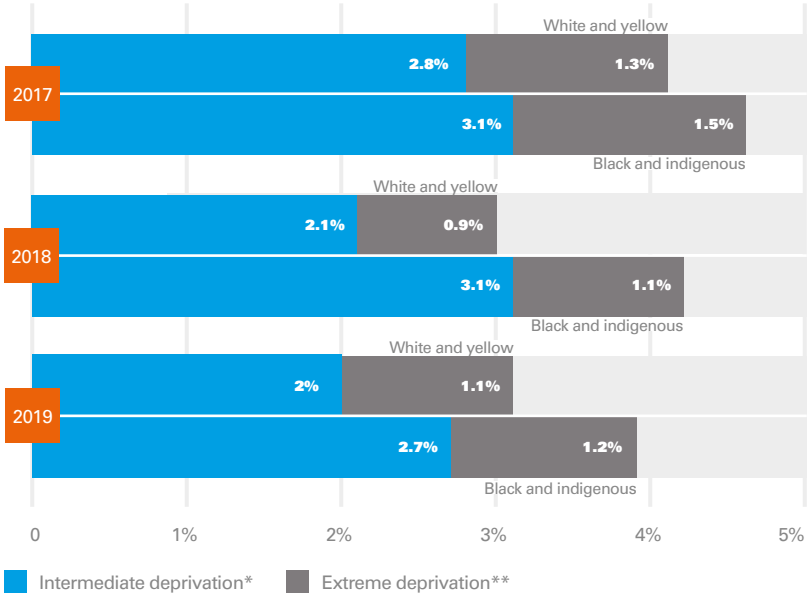
**Child age 5 to 9 who either worked or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 5 to 9 years old (2019) (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Child labor, 5 to 9 years old, by color/race (Continuous PNAD)



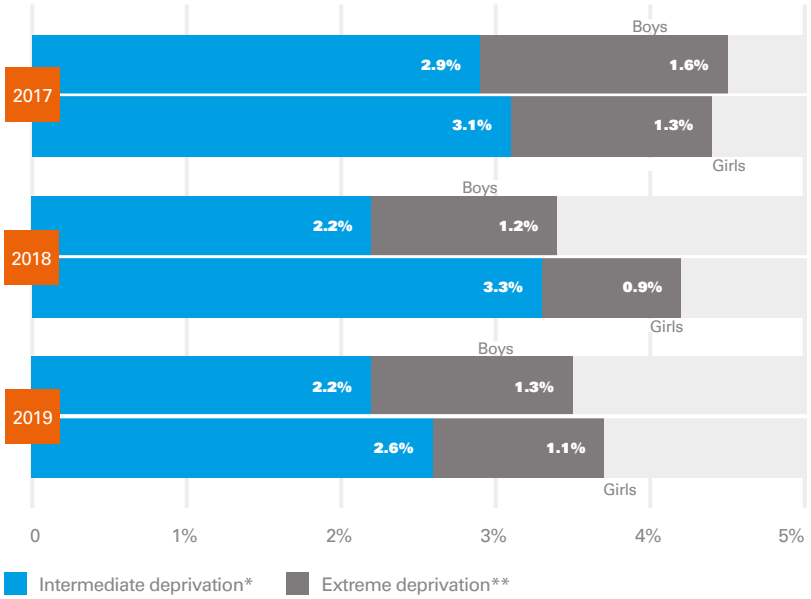

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: The data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Child age 5 to 9 who performed domestic tasks for 10 to 20 hours during the reference week.

**Child age 5 to 9 who either worked or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 5 to 9 years old, by gender (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Child age 5 to 9 who performed domestic tasks for 10 to 20 hours during the reference week.

**Child age 5 to 9 who either worked or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

parities occur because, in Brazil, child labor has particular social-class and race connotations, and is not evenly distributed throughout society. "All discourses that we hear today seeking to legitimize early work are aimed at the poorest, at black and indigenous persons and at people living in the urban fringes. Child labor is one of the mechanisms whereby these class and racial stigma are reproduced and reinforced. It also reinforces gender roles, as girls must work in the home from an early age, where they must play the housewife and must look after their siblings, so that they learn early on the social role they will have to perform in adult life, as wife, mother, and home maker", he affirms.

Indeed, a gender perspective reveals huge disparities to the detriment of girls. In 2019, the percentage of girls age 14 to 17 experiencing intermediate deprivation was roughly 7%; whereas the equivalent rate for boys was 2%. For extreme deprivation, the percentage of girls affected was more than 1% higher than of boys (*see graphs on page 60*).

On the subject of the stagnation of child labor indicators between 2017 and 2019, Maria Cláudia Falcão, Coordinator of the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work Programme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) office in Brazil, points to a set of underlying causes: the economic crisis, poverty (which was already rising before the pandemic) and cultural factors, particularly in rural areas, where a "hard nucleus" of child labor persists.

According to Falcão, progress is needed for protection of the 14 to 17 year-old adolescent population;[52] one of the groups most subjected to child labor. "We cannot merely place them in income-transfer or child-labor eradication programs. We need to conceive protected labor opportunities, enhance professional training options, and cut dropout rates to keep these boys and girls in school", she says.

[52] Starting at the age of 14, adolescents may work in Brazil as apprentices, provided that they are attending school. In cases in which they have not yet finished primary education, enrolment in an apprenticeship program is required. (BRASIL. Law 10.097 dated December 19, 2000. Available at: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/l10097.htm).

Mário Volpi, UNICEF-Brazil's Chief of Youth Development, agrees. He asserts that tackling multidimensional poverty in adolescence requires a positive policy for the transition between education and the world of work. "It is not possible to reduce poverty when an adolescent must drop out of school to work. The statistical elements of multidimensional poverty clearly demonstrate a need for a policy that fosters educational development", he affirms.

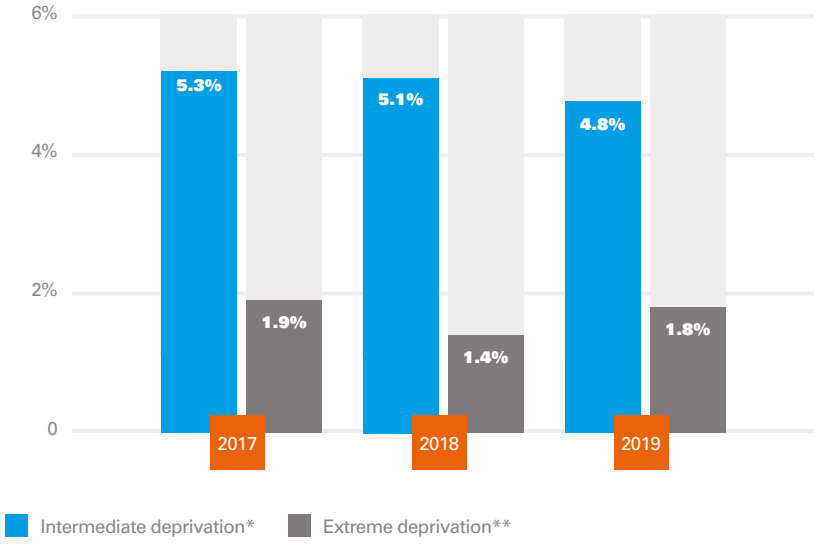
According to Volpi, federal, state and municipal administrations must align their first-job policies with schools; whereas the schools must align themselves to such opportunities. "The responsibility falls on public managers", he says. "Economic development, employment and labor policies need to connect to the schools for this positive transition to take place. This is not a program; it is a policy", he adds.

Maria Cláudia Falcão also stresses the importance of an intersectoral approach, as was reinforced in the 2013 review of the Child Labor Eradication Program (PETI). Social assistance alone will not solve the problem. The present situation calls for increased political support for the program, for continuity of policies to combat poverty and, furthermore, to bring the focus on children back into the discussions, while considering specific policies for each group. "For instance, signing of the work contracts of adolescents who take part in apprenticeship and protected-work programs would already be helpful in cutting a significant portion of child labor statistics", she adds.

Francisco Coullanges Xavier, from the Ministry of Development and Social Assistance, Family and Fight against Hunger, shares her view. Since child labor is a social construct, it may also be deconstructed. "But one must be aware that it can only be eradicated when replaced by intersectoral policies involving, at least, education, health, social assistance and work", he affirms.

Maria Cláudia Falcão asserts that private-sector involvement is also necessary. "By itself, the government will not be able to eradicate child labor. We need the participation of companies and large businesses, since violations usually occur in the first links of the supply chain and in remote areas. With-

## Child labor, 10 to 13 years old (Continuous PNAD)



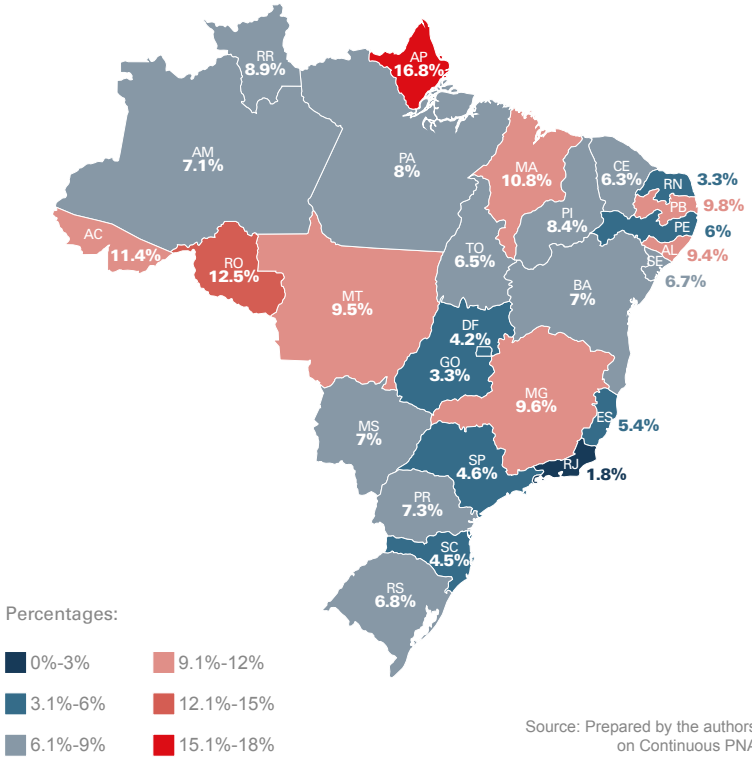

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Children age 10 to 13 who worked 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for 15 to 20 hours during the reference week.

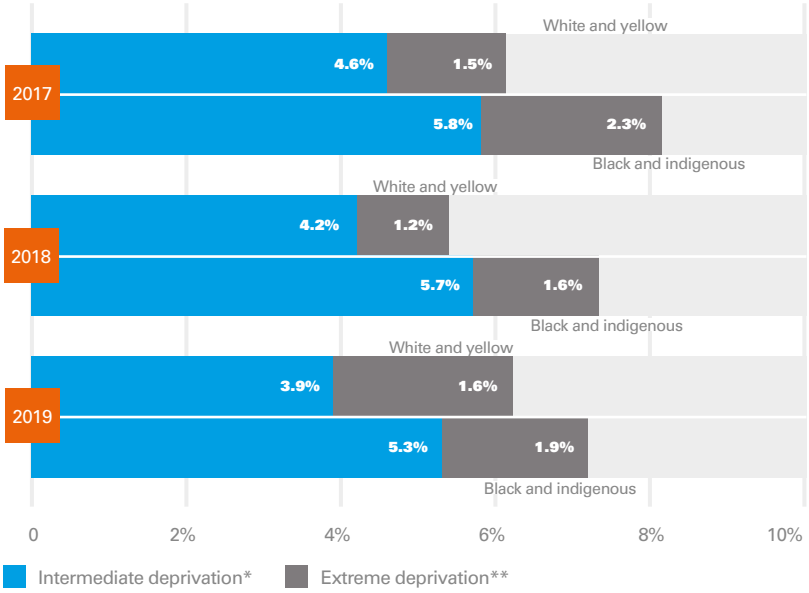
**Children age 10 to 13 who worked more than 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 10 to 13 years old (Continuous PNAD – 2019)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Child labor, 10 to 13 years old, by color/race (Continuous PNAD)



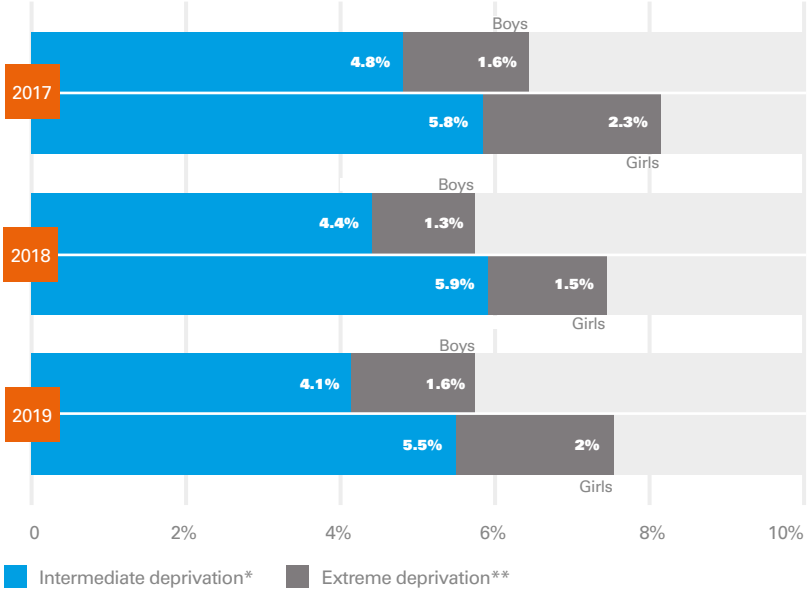

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Children age 10 to 13 who worked 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for 15 to 20 hours during the reference week.

**Children age 10 to 13 who worked more than 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 10 to 13 years old, by gender (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: The data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Children age 10 to 13 who worked 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for 15 to 20 hours during the reference week.

**Children age 10 to 13 who worked more than 14 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 20 hours during the reference week.

out investments by these companies and accountability for their entire supply chains, we are unlikely to succeed in eradicating child labor", she says.

Falcão also points out that, though social protection is an essential element and has positive impacts, it does not reach all children. "A really large contingent of children is not covered by social protection policies, because current programs are not sensitive to this issue. We must consider and prioritize specific social-protection programs for this group", she says.

### Situation during the pandemic

A report entitled Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward, published by ILO[53] and UNICEF in 2021, portrays an alarming situation. According to this publication, progress towards eradication of child labor has stagnated for the first time in two decades, reversing previous gains. Indeed, even though in percentage terms no change has been identified, in absolute numbers an additional 8.4 million boys and girls were subjected to child labor between 2016 and 2020, with a significant increase in the 5 to 11 age group, which now accounts for slightly over half of the overall figure. Moreover, an additional 8.9 million children are at risk of falling into this situation as a consequence of COVID-19.

In Brazil, the situation also raises concern. If in 2019, before the COVID-19 crisis, there were nearly 2 million children subjected to child labor, following the pandemic, despite a lack of updated official data, some studies point to a deterioration of the situation. For example, a UNICEF survey carried out in São Paulo between April and June 2020[54]

[53] ILO/UNICEF. Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends and the Road Forward. Geneva and Nova York: OIT/UNICEF, 2021. Available at: https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/.

[54] UNICEF. "*UNICEF Alerta para Aumento de Incidência do Trabalho Infantil durante a Pandemia em São Paulo*" ["UNICEF Warns about the Incidence of Child Labor During the Pandemic in São Paulo"]. Brasília: UNICEF, 2020. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/comunicados-de-imprensa/unicef-alerta-para-aumento-de-incidencia-do-trabalho-infantil-durante-pandemia-em-sao-paulo.

found that, among households with one or more child, the incidence of child labor rose to 21.2 per thousand in the wake of the pandemic, whereas prior to the crisis it had stood at 17.5 per thousand, which implies a 21% increase.

Francisco Coullanges Xavier affirms that an increase in relation to the previous two years is to be expected, since school-dropout rates, labor-market informality and poverty levels have all increased. These three indicators are key contributors to child labor, he claims: "We are seeing things now that we rarely saw in the recent past, such as a child begging and entire families living in the streets. All this at has returned with a vengeance. In urban areas, we find a prevalence of adolescents, in particular boys, especially age 15 or more, doing informal work, when they should already be in formal employment".

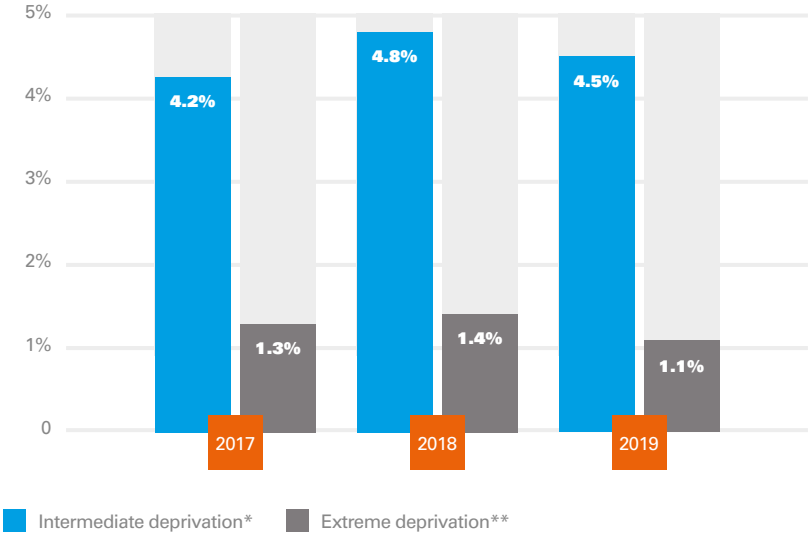
In addition to risks of physical, mental and social harm, child labor undermines education by restricting rights and limiting future opportunities. These, in turn, lead to vicious cycles of intergenerational poverty and child labor. According to the ILO/UNICEF report, over three quarters of children age 5 to 11, and more than one third of adolescents age 12 to 14 subjected to child labor worldwide do not attend school.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter on education, in Brazil, almost half (48%) of the 2 million boys and girls age 11 to 19 who abandoned schooling since 2020 affirmed that they had dropped out owing to the need to work, according to the data of the study carried out by IPEC for UNICEF entitled Brazilian Education in 2022: the Voices of Adolescents.[55]

ILO's Maria Cláudia Falcão postulates that, considering the importance of education in the fight against child labor, it is of great concern to see how the pandemic caused many children to drop out of school to find work. "We must urgently consider strategies to ensure that the children who abandoned school during the pan-

[55] UNICEF/Ipec. *Educação Brasileira em 2022: A Voz de Adolescentes.* UNICEF, September 15, 2022. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/brazil/media/20186/file/educacao-em-2022_a-voz-de-adolescentes.pdf.

## Child labor, 14 to 17 years old (Continuous PNAD)



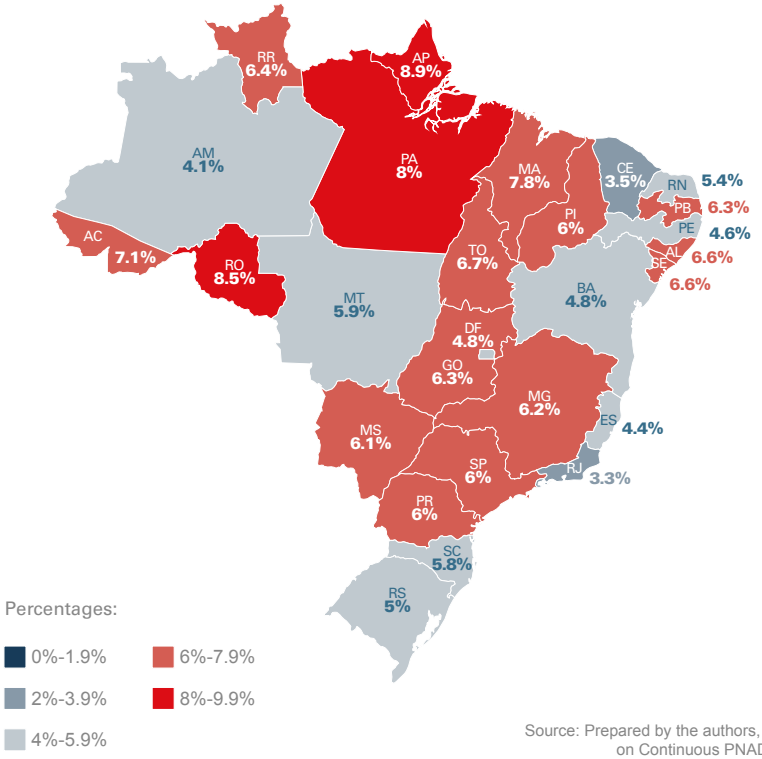

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked 21 to 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for 21 to 30 hours during the reference week.

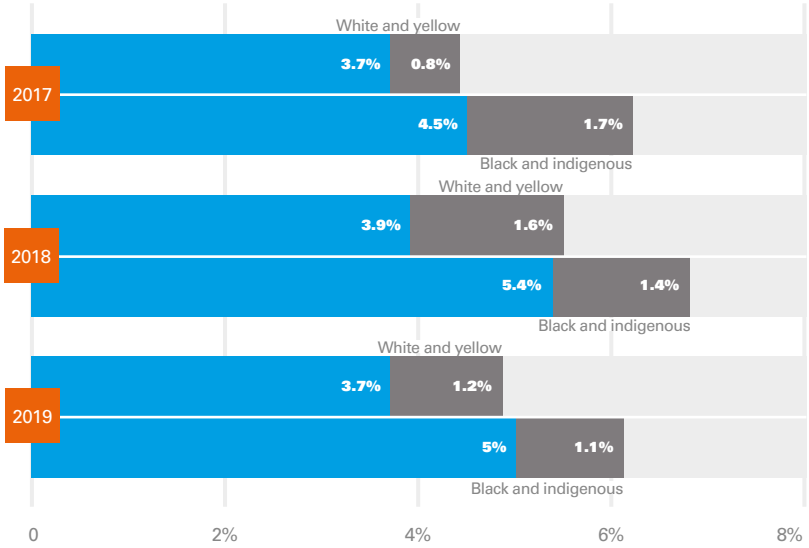
**Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked more than 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 30 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 14 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2019)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Child labor, 14 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD)



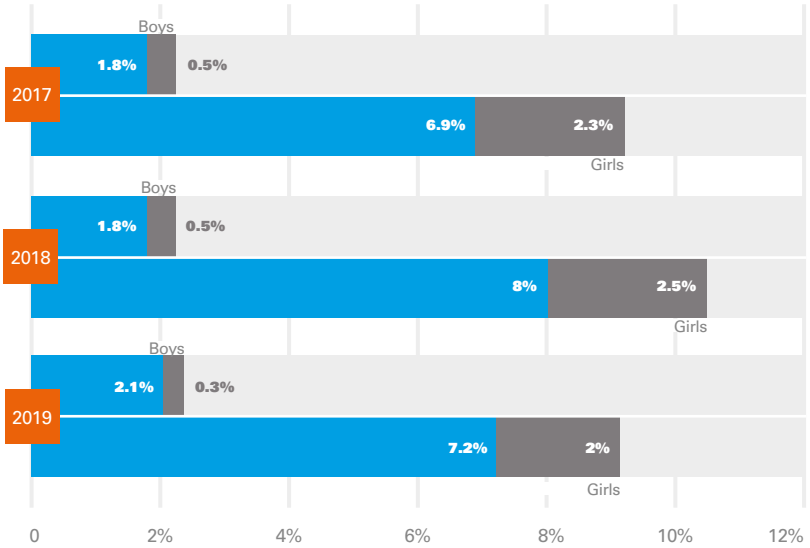

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

*Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked 21 to 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for 21 to 30 hours during the reference week.

**Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked more than 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 30 hours during the reference week.

## Child labor, 14 to 17, by gender (Continuous PNAD)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

Note: Data for the dimension of child labor is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2019.

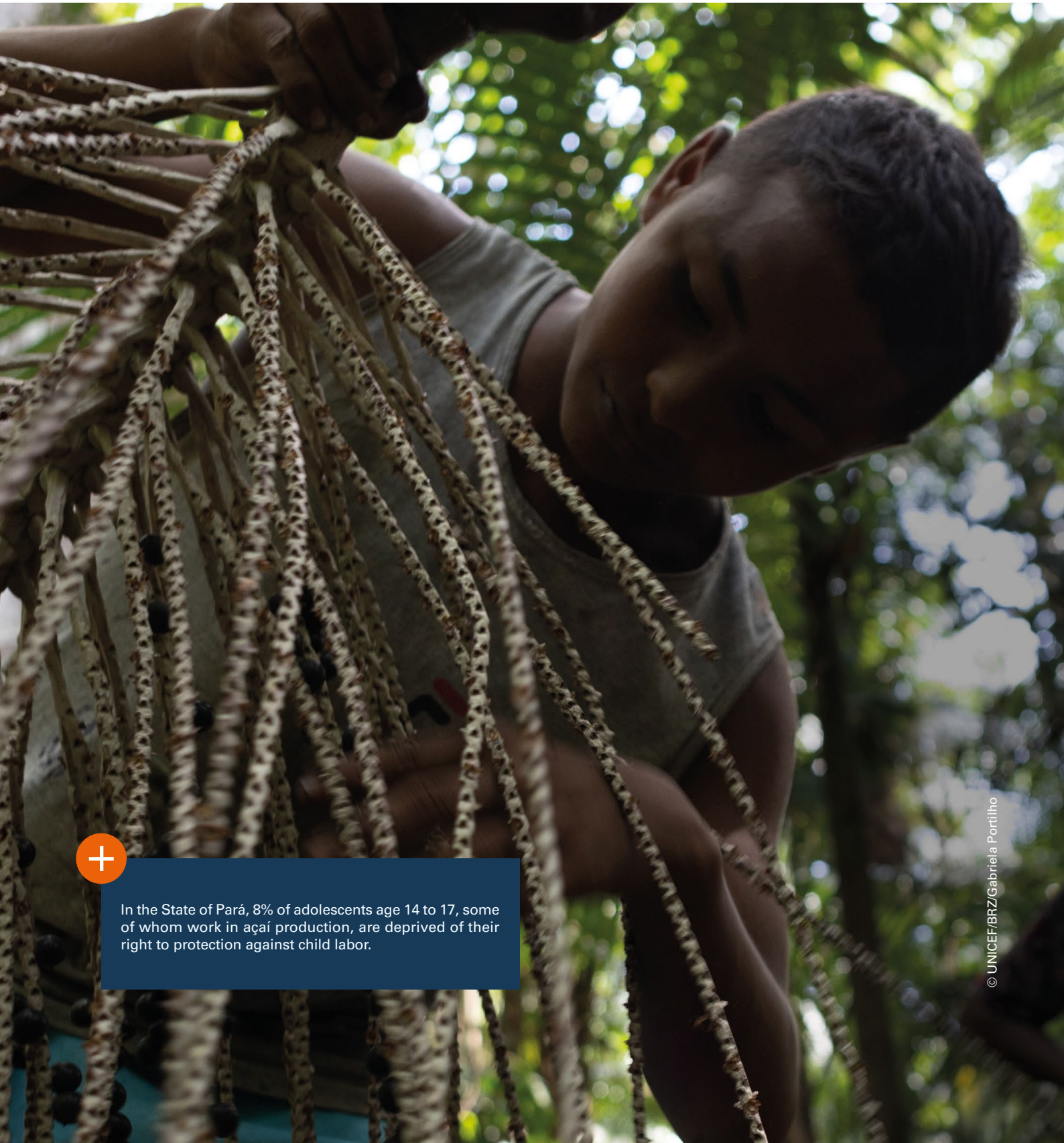
*Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked 21 to 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for 21 to 30 hours during the reference week.

**Adolescents age 14 to 17 who worked more than 30 hours or performed domestic tasks for more than 30 hours during the reference week.

demic can return, and to compensate for educational disparities. The sustainability of child labor-eradication depends upon our guaranteeing quality education for all", she explains.

"We have lost a generation of adolescents by limiting their development to a context of low

schooling, low income and excessive violence", laments Volpi from UNICEF. He asserts that it is essential that opportunities reach adolescents through the schools, by means of a policy that supports and provides these adolescents with complementary training. Volpi also advocates investment in current policies, such as those framed in the Apprenticeship Law and the Internships Law, while adding new initiatives such as a first-job policy. He concludes: "We need to guarantee that adolescents make the transition from education to the world of work without dropping out of school or taking on informal jobs".



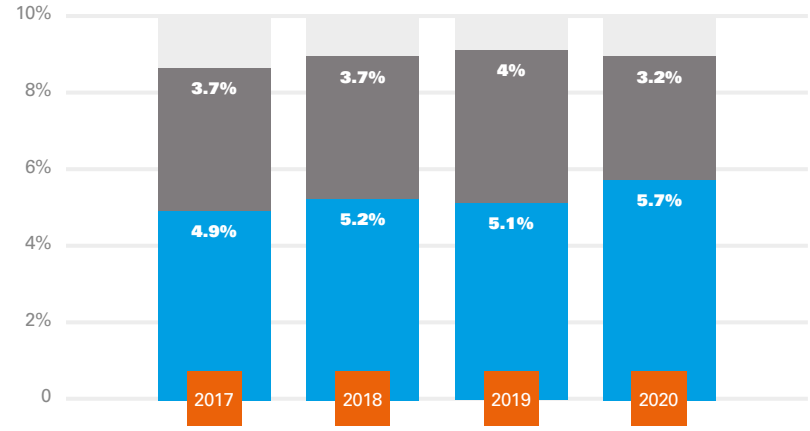
In the State of Pará, 8% of adolescents age 14 to 17, some of whom work in açaí production, are deprived of their right to protection against child labor.

# HOUSING

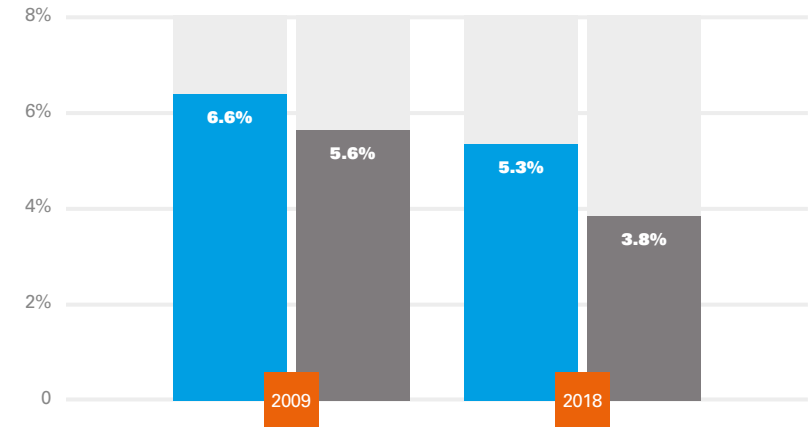
*No significant progress has been reported on reduction of housing deprivations among children. Though indicators have remained relatively stable in recent years, from 2020 on a rising trend of deprivation was observed. This may have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; however, no data is as yet available for 2021 and 2022.*

## Deprivation of adequate housing, age 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD and POF)

Continuous PNAD




POF




Intermediate deprivation* Extreme deprivation**

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: The data on the dimension of housing is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020.

*Child up to the age of 17 living in a household with four persons per bedroom, or where the walls are built with inadequate materials.

**Child up to the age of 17 living in a household with more than four persons per bedroom, or where the walls and ceiling are built with inadequate materials.

The quality and location of a child's house has significant influence on his or her psychosocial development.

In 2019, nearly 5 million boys and girls experienced some form of deprivation in this dimension in Brazil, according to data from the Continuous PNAD of 2019 analyzed for this study.

The level of deprivation in this area is determined by the status of overcrowding and the quality of materials used in walls and roofing of the dwelling.

The IBGE considers a living space overcrowded when 4 persons (intermediate deprivation) or more than 4 persons (extreme deprivation) share the same bedroom.

With respect to building materials, the level of deprivation is determined by the quality of the walls and roofing. Walls built with inadequate materials characterize a state of intermediate deprivation. Extreme deprivation is characterized when roofing and walls are built with inadequate materials, such as reused wood.

Drawing from the POF data, the UNICEF study shows that, over the previous decade between 2009 and 2018, there was a moderate reduction (3%) in the number of children who experienced some form of housing deprivation.[56]

[56] Intermediate deprivation occurs when a child is living in a house where four persons sleep in the same bedroom, or where the walls are built with inadequate materials. Extreme deprivation occurs when a child lives in a house either with more than four persons per bedroom, or where the walls and ceiling are built of inadequate materials.

However, in the most recent years, data from the Continuous PNAD shows an increase in the proportion of children who experienced intermediate deprivation of housing, particularly in 2020, when it peaked at 5.7%, compared with 4.9% in 2017.

In this dimension, big regional disparities are apparent, particularly when comparing the North with the other Brazilian regions. In the State of Roraima, the deprivation-rate is almost 30%; whereas in most states of the Central-West, South and Northeast regions, they do not exceed 10%.

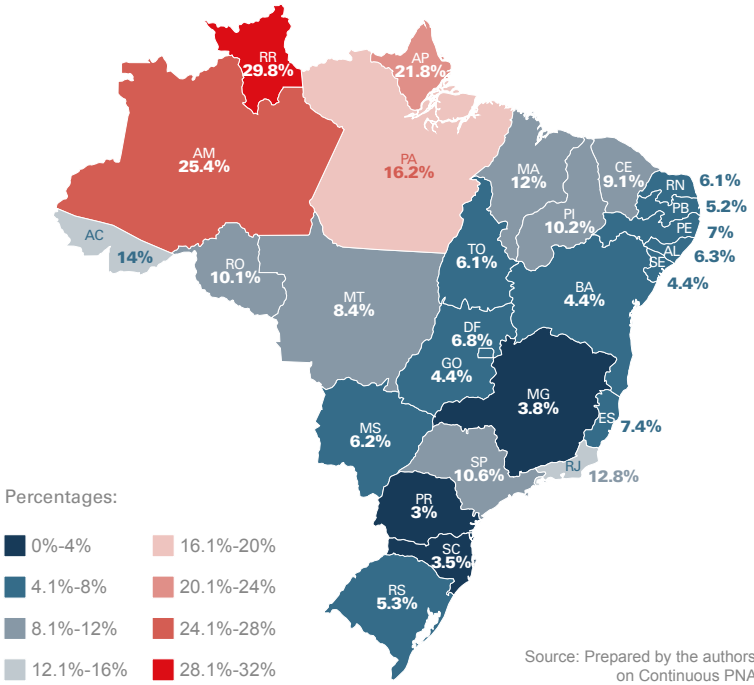
Another negative aspect in this dimension relates to the States of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro where, notwithstanding higher levels of socio-economic development, 10.6% and 12.8% of children, respectively, suffered deprivations of adequate housing conditions in 2020. Furthermore, despite a decreasing trend for these proportions recorded between 2009 and 2018, in Rio de Janeiro the rate remained practically unchanged over this period according to the POF data analyzed for this study (*see maps on page 94*).

With respect to color/race, disparities in this dimension are statistically significant for all years. The indicators on black and indigenous children are nearly 2% higher, both in relation to intermediate and extreme deprivation (*see the graphs on this page*).

For Naercio Menezes Filho, Director of the Brazilian Center for Early Child Development (CPAPI) at INSPER and Professor at FEA-USP who produced a study on vulnerability in households with small children for the International Symposium on Equity in Early Childhood, the context of such deprivations stems from deficiencies with public policies for housing over recent years.

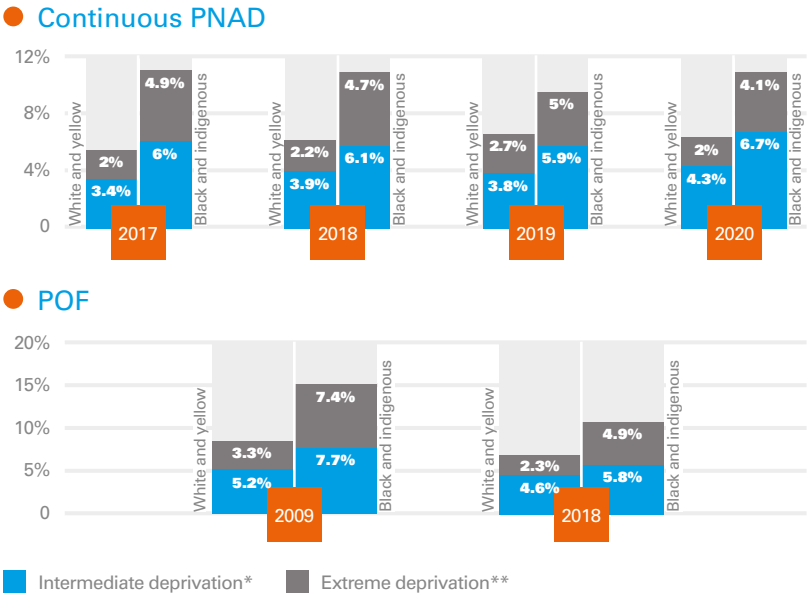
"Insufficient priority was dedicated to housing policies, particularly bearing in mind that there was an economic crisis and a major recession as of 2015, later exacerbated by COVID-19, which hugely affected the income and work prospects of the poorest persons, encumbering their ability to access and remain in adequate housing". Public policies such as *Minha Casa, Minha Vida* [My House, My Life] which, notwithstanding some

## Deprivation of adequate housing, 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2020)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of adequate housing, 0 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: The data on the dimension of housing is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020.

*Child up to the age of 17 living in a household with four persons per bedroom, or where the walls are built with inadequate materials.

**Child up to the age of 17 living in a household with more than four persons per bedroom, or where the walls and ceiling are built with inadequate materials.

problems have helped a large portion of the population to acquire decent housing, were practically suspended, he explains.

Menezes Filho emphasizes that the effects of inadequate housing are most detrimental for young children, since early childhood is when they need a quiet environment, with space to move around, become Famíliar with objects and interact with people. "This training in the first years of life is of utmost importance, because it is through this process that the brain develops cognitive and social-emotional skills", he states.

This view is corroborated by the American economist James Heckman, of the Center for Economics of Human Development at the University of Chicago and winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2000. The environment in which a child lives in his/her first years of life is important because it directly affects health and brain development. By 'environment', he means aspects of both the home and territory in which the child lives, and the quality of interactions between the child and those who live with him or her. Aspects such as violence, housing, sanitation, and food play an important role in this, he explains.

"If children are exposed to violence, obviously that's a threatening environment. And we know from studies on stress that cortisol responses are negative, as they impair child development, even before birth. If the mother is living in a violent, threatening environment, this can have adverse consequences. Cortisol can actually inhibit the development of the fetus, even with a lasting effect on the brain", affirms Heckman.

Specifically relating to housing, he points out that deprivations have very serious consequences for children's health in their early years, and to brain development. "If you have a leaking roof, or no roof at all, then obviously you're at the mercy of the elements [of nature]. And not just to rain and wind, but also to various kinds of infection, such as zika, and to various kinds of flying insects that can spread disease. Chagas disease is another example in which there are substantial risks", he warns (*for more information, see Chapter 1*).

Regarding the regional disparities identified by the study, Naercio Menezes Filho affirms that the fact that indicators for wealthiest states, such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, are similar to those for poorer states, such as Piauí and Maranhão, can be explained by a twofold phenomenon: poverty and inequality. Despite the fact that in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro average family incomes are higher, the cost of living is also higher, and consequently, inequality levels are also higher. So you have a very wealthy segment of the population living alongside another which is utterly excluded from access to descent housing.

For their part, racial disparities in indicators on access to housing display the gaping disparities of opportunity and low social mobility found in Brazil, according to Professor Menezes Filho. "There is a veritable 'lottery of life', in the sense that, at birth, one gets a lottery ticket that determines whether you will more or less easily achieve your objectives. Those born into poor families will most likely continue poor; and those born in very wealthy families will probably remain rich, even without much effort," he affirms.

In his opinion, the solution for racial disparities, in all dimensions, is to focus on the poorest and black families when designing public policies, since income-transfer policies alone, though essential, will not solve Brazil's housing deficit.

Menezes Filho stresses the urgent need to attend to the vast numbers of families that ended up in the streets as a result of the pandemic. "We must act now, urgently, because these children living in the streets are experiencing a state of toxic stress; often enduring intolerable conditions and exposed to all manner of violence and accident risk, which may decisively impact their development and future lives", he warns (*for more information, see page 65*).

# Shacks and tents shelter families in the streets after the pandemic

Shacks assembled from scraps of canvas, cardboard, disposal bags and bits of wood are, today, the visible face of a new phenomenon that studies have revealed throughout the country: families living in 'improvised dwellings' on the streets.

According to Marcelo Pedra, PhD in Collective Health and Researcher at NuPOP[57] at FIOCRUZ in Brasília, one third of this population, particularly in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, went to the streets in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are workers whose situation was precarious before the pandemic and who, during the health crisis, lost their social protection networks and moved to the streets with their children.

Pedra relates that this phenomenon of entire families living in tents and improvised huts on sidewalks can be observed in at least the three urban settings where census surveys have been conducted over the past two years: São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and the Federal District.

In Rio de Janeiro, the census methodology was developed by a Working Group from the Pereira Passos Municipal Institute of Urbanism, the Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance and Human Rights, and the Municipal Secretariat of Health (SMS). The study was conducted in November 2020 and found a total of 7,272 persons living 'in a street situation' in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. Approximately 15% of them began living in the streets after being dismissed from jobs or losing their income. Among them, there were 332 children; nearly 5% of the total.

"The rationale for a tent is having a private space while on the street. This is a contemporary phenomenon, since these people were not previously out on the streets", Pedra explains. Despite the fact that the number of families living in tents and improvised huts was not counted, he points to a telling detail. "At Presidente Vargas Avenue in Rio de Janeiro, I saw people living in the streets with their blankets folded and creased. This is the behavior of people who used to have homes", he observes.

In the Federal District, a survey conducted in June 2022 by the Federal District Planning Company in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund and the Secretariat for Social Development, and others, identified the presence of improvised dwellings in the form of camping tents, shanties of cardboard, paper and other materials, in 29.3% of the 1,915 locations approached.

According to a Census of the Population Living in the Streets, conducted by the Municipal Secretariat of Social Assistance and Development of the city of São Paulo, the number of street shanties increased 330% between 2019 and 2021. Whereas the previous census in 2019 had recorded a total of 2,051 locations with improvised dwellings, in 2021 a total of 6,778 locations were counted.

An increase was also recorded in the number of interviewees reporting that another family member was living with them. In 2019, 20% of the street population made this claim; whereas, in 2021 this proportion had increased to 28.6%.

According to FEA-USP Professor and FIPE Researcher Silvia Maria Schor, both the number of tents and the company of relatives are "strong indications" of an increase in the number of families, and of the number of children up to the age of 6, living in the streets. The 2022 Census of Children in Street Situation, revealed that there were 1,151 boys and girls up to the age of 6 living in the streets of the City of São Paulo; roughly one third of the under-17 street-dwelling population.

"A child is not merely a younger person living in a street situation. The problems and issues associated with the presence of children in the streets require a different set of welfare and referral policies", Schor warns, while regretting the lack of data on families living 'in a street situation': "we need to learn more about this population; to know how many they are, and the composition of these families".

[57] Center for Populations in Situation of Vulnerability and Mental Health in Primary Care – *Núcleo de Populações em Situação de Vulnerabilidade e Saúde Mental na Atenção Básica.*

# WATER AND SANITATION

*In the dimensions of water and of sanitation, progress was achieved in Brazil in recent years, but not enough to reduce the vast numbers of children lacking access to a bathroom or without a treated-sewage connection to their homes. Sanitation remains the dimension in which the largest number of boys and girls are deprived of rights, with serious consequences for their health and development.*

This chapter presents data on the dimensions of water and sanitation (access to bathrooms / sewage treatment) examined in this study. No Continuous PNAD data is available for 2021 and 2022 and thus it was not possible to assess the impacts of the pandemic on these two dimensions, which are more dependent upon investments in infrastructure than other dimensions.

The indicators presented relate only to deprivations in households where children live. The analysis does not encompass the situation in schools and other places frequented by children.

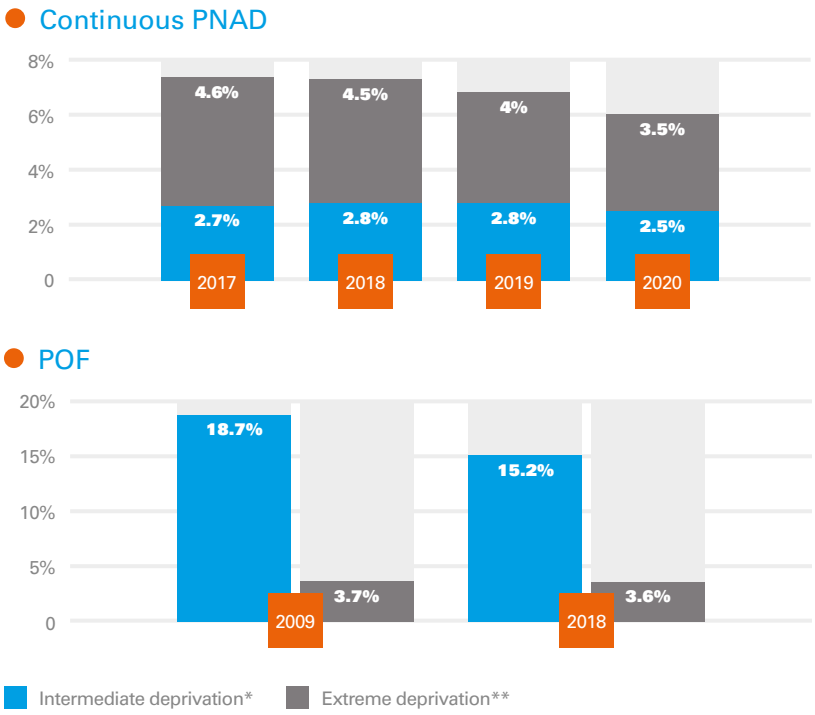
## WATER

With respect to access to water, Continuous PNAD findings show that the percentages of children subject to some form of deprivation remained low and relatively stable between 2017 and 2020, except for cases of extreme deprivation,[58] for which a statistically significant decrease was observed in the final year of the series.

For its part, a retrospective analysis of POF data for the 2009-2018 period revealed a decrease of more than 3 percentage points for intermediate deprivation;[59] whereas for extreme deprivation the figures remained practically unaltered. However, as was mentioned earlier, these results cannot be compared to the findings of Continuous PNAD, since the data collection protocols of the two surveys are different, particularly in relation to intermediate deprivation (*for additional methodological details, see page 8 in Chapter 1*).

As with other dimensions, regional disparities are also visible relating to access to water.

### Deprivation of access to water, 0 to 17 years (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of water is available up until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020. Since this indicator is measured differently by POF and Continuous PNAD surveys, big differences are observed in their findings, particularly, with regard to intermediate deprivation (*for further methodological details, see page 8 in Chapter 1*).

*Child up to age 17 living in a household with piped water only outdoors or off the property, or living in a household with indoor water supplied from a source such as a well, fountain or spring.

**Child up to age 17 living in a household with no piped water, or living in a household with indoor access either to stored rainwater or to water from an unknown source.

[58] Children age 0 to 17 living in households where piped water is not available.

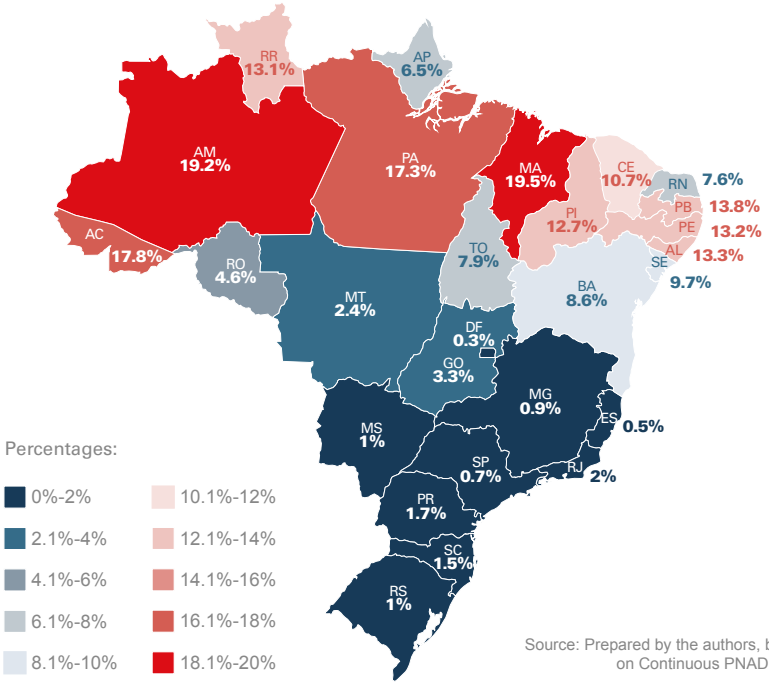
[59] Children age 0 to 17 living in households with indoor access to water from a well, fountain or spring.

The highest deprivation levels in 2020 were found in the North and Northeast regions: 19.5% in Maranhão, and 19.2% in Amazonas. At the other end of the scale, in 2020, three of the four states of the Southeast region had deprivation rates lower than 1%.

Racial disparities are also large in this dimension. In practically all years assessed using Continuous PNAD data, the percentage for black and indigenous children deprived of access to water was much higher than for white and yellow children. Despite decreasing rates over the years, in 2020, 5% of black and indigenous children were subject to extreme deprivation in this dimension; in contrast to only 1.5% of white and yellow children.

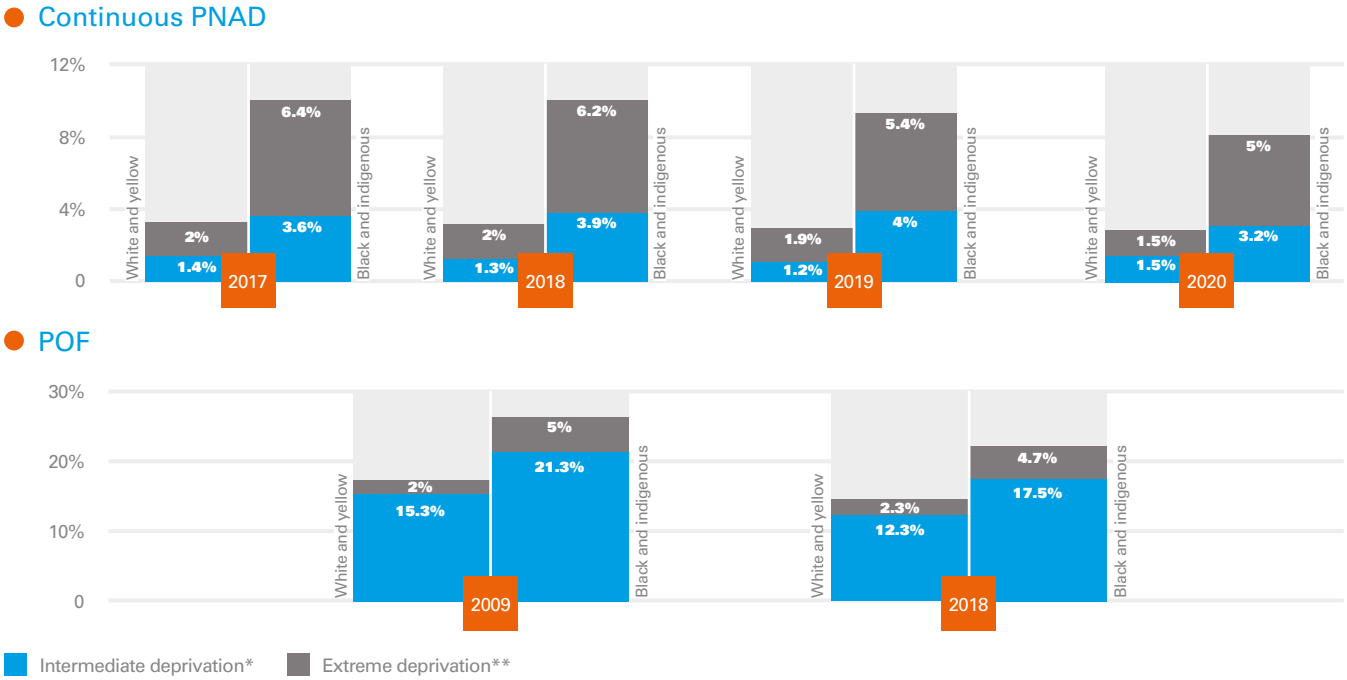
The same trend was reflected by POF data, thereby demonstrating evolution of the indicator between 2009 and 2018 although, as mentioned earlier, the figures are not methodologically comparable (*see the graph below*).

## Deprivation of access to water, 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2020)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of access to water, 0 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of water is available until the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020. Since this indicator is measured differently by the POF and the Continuous PNAD, there are significant differences between the figures obtained in the two surveys, particularly in relation to intermediate deprivations (*for more methodological details, see page 8 in Chapter 1*).

*Child up to age 17 living in a household with piped water only outdoors or off the property, or living in a household with indoor water supplied from a source such as a well, fountain or spring.

**Child up to age 17 living in a household with no piped water, or living in a household with indoor access either to stored rainwater or to water from an unknown source.

# SANITATION

With respect to access to a bathroom and sewage treatment, the study's results show that progress was achieved in recent years in Brazil. Data from the Continuous PNAD show that the percentage of children with no deprivation in this dimension was a statistically-significant 3 percentage points higher in 2020 than it had been in 2017. Progress for the 2009-2018 period reflected by POF data was an even more impressive 11 percentage points.

At the state level, as with access to water, major disparities can be observed in access to sanitation. Moreover, notwithstanding overall progress nationwide, rates of child deprivation of adequate sanitation services are still high in some states. The highest rates appear in the North and Northeast regions: in 2020, the highest peak was recorded in the State of Piauí (91.1%), followed by Amapá (85.6%). Once again, the situation is more favorable in the Southeast region where, in 2020, all the states were below 25%, the lowest rate being in São Paulo: 9.8%.

According to engineer Luana Siewert Pretto, Executive President of Instituto Trata Brasil (ITB) a civil-society organization in the field of basic sanitation, the great regional disparities are due to lack of investment in expansion of coverage of public services. Whereas São Paulo invests, on average, R$126.29 per head of population per year in basic sanitation; average annual investment in the States of Acre and Rondônia amounts to only R$5.13 and R$19.95 per head, respectively.[60]

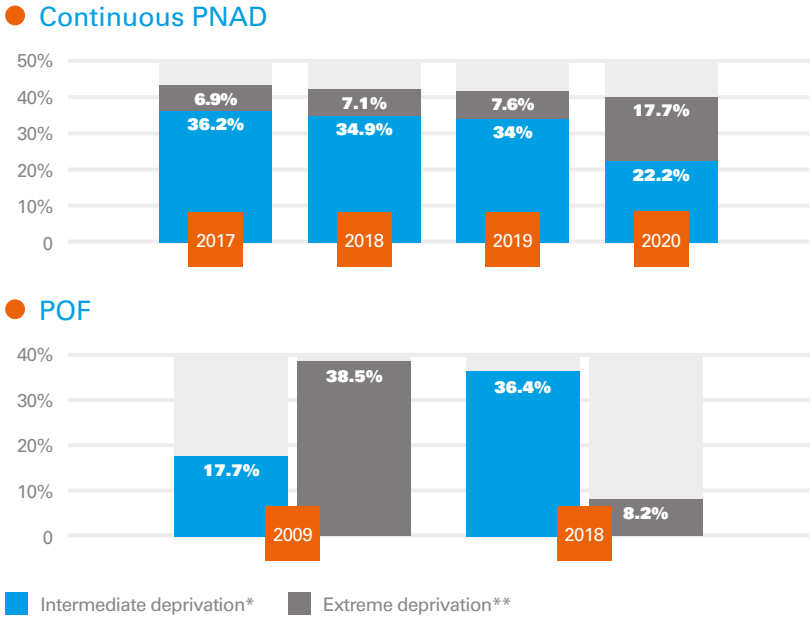
Notwithstanding noticeable improvements in terms of access to sanitation in recent years, race/color disparities also persist in the access to sanitation dimension. In 2020, whereas the percentage of white and yellow children with no deprivation was 70.3%, for black and indigenous children the figure was 53%; a difference of more than 17 percentage points.

For Léo Heller, Researcher at FIOCRUZ and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation, the persistence of Brazil's sanitation deficit is primarily the result of four factors: the instability of public policies; the historical absence of a specific sanitation policy for rural areas, which account for an expressive portion of the nation's sanitation deficit; a lack of clarity as to the respective attributions of federal, state and municipal authorities in the provision of services; and funding.

According to Heller, sanitation is an issue that strongly affects children and has serious impacts on their health. These may include diarrhea, worm infestations and different types of illnesses clearly identified in the specialized literature, especially malnutrition which, in turn, is closely related to diarrhea.

Another problem, according to Heller, is a lack of sanitation services in other settings that could to some extent compensate for household deprivations. "Increasingly, we ought to consider sanitation not as something exclusive to households; it is necessary to provide

## Deprivation of access to bathrooms and sewage network, 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of sanitation is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020. Since new options were included in the Continuous PNAD's questionnaire relating to destination of sewage (toilets or pit latrines) as of the 2019 survey, data on deprivation levels are no longer comparable to those of previous years, even though comparability of findings relating to the percentage of children deprived at any level has remained unchanged (*for more about this methodology, see page 8, Chapter 1*).

*Child up to age 17 who live in a house with shared bathroom or rudimentary pit latrine.

**Child up to age 17 who live in a house with no bathroom or with an open sewer.

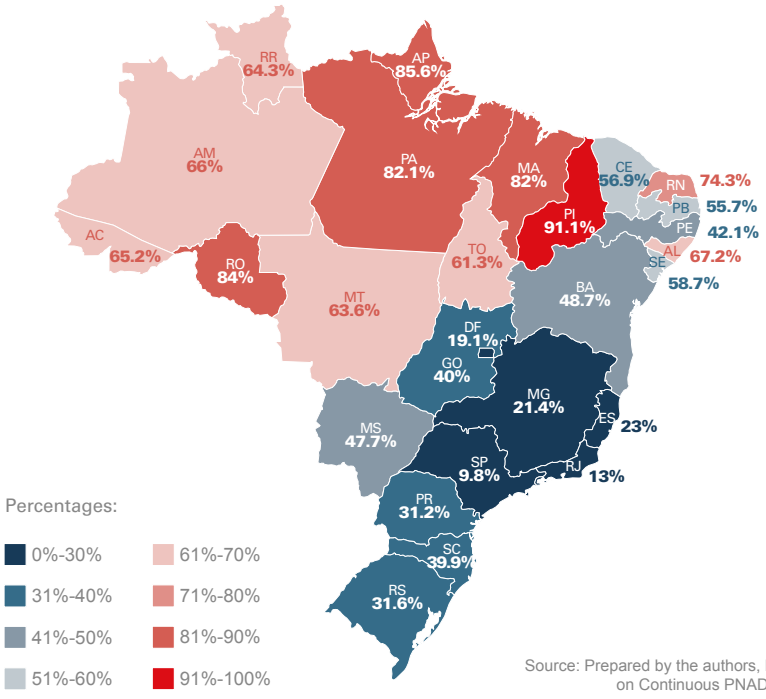
[60] Data from Instituto Trata Brasil, based on the National Sanitation Information System (SNIS) of 2021. Available at: https://www.painelsaneamento.org.br/.

sanitation facilities in other settings, such as workplaces, schools, health stations and public spaces", he affirms.

Absence of bathrooms in schools, for instance, is particularly detrimental for girls. "The problem of menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls is critical. When no facilities, no materials for their hygiene are available, they are subject to aggression, criticism and stigmatization. There is a lack of privacy, of dignity, which are human rights", Heller asserts (*see more on this topic in Chapter 1*).

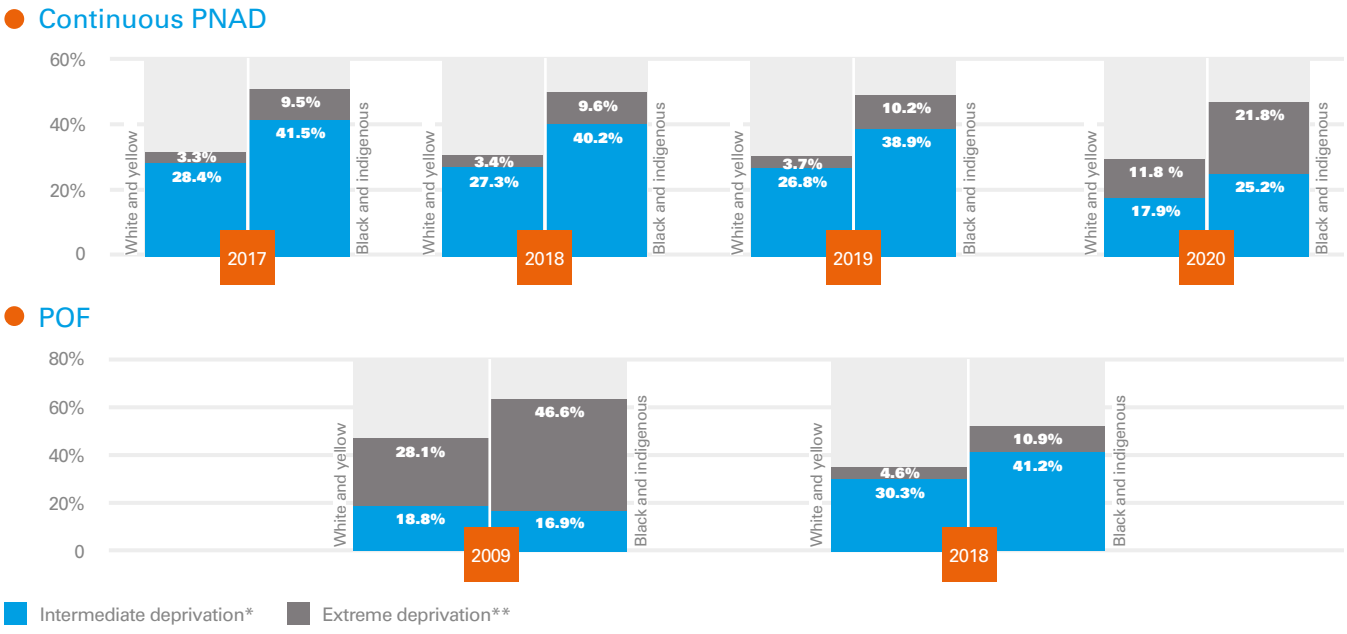
He also highlights the importance of discussing and expanding coverage, and of reducing water-supply and sanitation fees since, in his opinion, there is a "two-way relationship" between sanitation and poverty. "Sanitation is like a two-way street: on the one hand, being poor makes it financially more difficult to have access to sanitation and, on the other, not having sanitation makes you poor. We need to broaden our thinking on the concept of multidimensional poverty", he affirms.

## Deprivation of access to bathrooms and sewage network, 0 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2020)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of access to bathrooms and sewage network, 0 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)

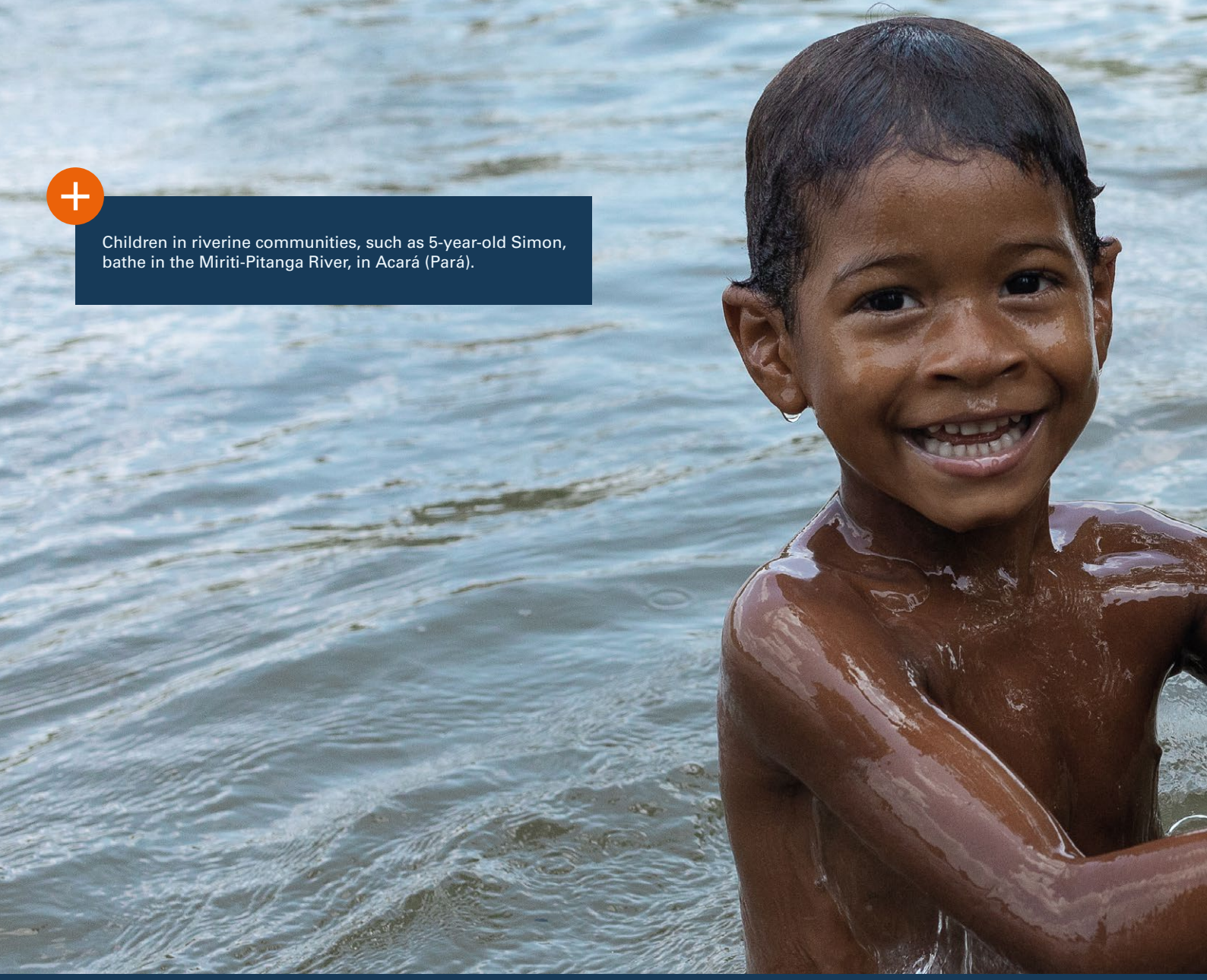



Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of sanitation is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020. Since new options were included in the Continuous PNAD's questionnaire relating to destination of sewage (toilets or pit latrines) as of the 2019 survey, data on deprivation levels are no longer comparable to those of previous years, even though comparability of findings relating to the percentage of children deprived at any level has remained unchanged (*for more about this methodology, see page 8, Chapter 1*).

*Child up to age 17 who live in a house with shared bathroom or rudimentary pit latrine.

**Child up to age 17 who live in a house without a bathroom or with an open sewer.



Children in riverine communities, such as 5-year-old Simon, bathe in the Miriti-Pitanga River, in Acará (Pará).

# Impact of water and sanitation related deprivations

According to Trata Brasil's website *Painel Saneamento Brasil*,[61] lack of access to basic services such as safe drinking water and sewage treatment has significant social, economic and environmental impacts that contribute toward various forms of deprivation in other dimensions.

Health is the dimension most directly affected by the lack of sanitation. According to 2021 data from the Data Processing department of Brazil's Unified Health System (DATASUS) compiled by Painel Saneamento Brasil, hospitalization rates for waterborne diseases are 6.04 per 10,000, which corresponds to 129,000 cases per year, that generate annual expenditures of roughly R$55 million.

When observed from a regional perspective, the data shows that hospitalization rates closely follow disparities of access to sanitation. Whereas the rate of hospitalization for waterborne diseases is 2.32 per 10,000 in the Southeast region, rates in the North and Northeast regions were 13.24 and 10.23 per 10,000, respectively.

In addition to health, education is also significantly impaired by sanitation deficiencies. Analysis of IBGE 2021 census data on sanitation, carried out by Instituto Trata Brasil indicates that, while people living in households with basic sanitation attend school for 9.1 years; those without access to sanitation services attend for only 5.3

[61] Instituto Trata Brasil, website *Painel Saneamento Brasil*: https://www.painelsaneamento.org.br/.


years, on average. For purposes of comparison, Brazil's current compulsory schooling cycle extends for 13 years (from 4 to 17 years of age). Age/grade distortion is another indicator affected by deficient sanitation. On average, the age/grade distortion for children living in households with adequate sanitation is 1.53 years; whereas, for those living in households lacking adequate basic sanitation this distortion is, on average, 2.35 years; i.e., almost 50% higher.

The same source also reveals that lack of access to sanitation also affects students' grades on Brazil's National High School Exam (ENEM). Data published by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP) for 2021, show that the average ENEM score of students who live in households with a bathroom is 535.69; whereas the average score of those whose homes lack a bathroom drops to 468.31.

Luana Siewert Pretto, Executive President of Instituto Trata Brasil, calls attention to another aspect of gender disparity in the dimension of access to water, in addition to menstrual-period poverty. She relates that, since women often assume most domestic chores, whenever they lack access to water they end up having to fetch it from outside the home, which increases their exposure to violence. Moreover, it is generally women who must look after children afflicted by waterborne diseases. "This takes up a major portion of their time. How then, can they be expected to compete in the labor market or seek social advancement, if they must spend time compensating for a lack of basic amenities, like having a tap in the home to provide piped water?", she asks.

© UNICEF/BRZ/Gabriela Portilho

In Pará, 17.3% of the children lacked access to safe drinking water in 2020, according to data from the Continuous PNAD examined for this study.

# PARÁ

*In the municipalities of Santa Izabel do Pará and Acará, children from quilombola and riverine communities face deprivations of water and sanitation. In Pará, as in other states of the North region, deprivation rates in these dimensions are generally higher than for the rest of Brazil.*

José[1] climbs an açaí palm as swiftly as an arrow, with his bare feet cleaving to the trunk aided by a chord of braided palm leaf known as a peçonha. He reaches the top, 15 meters above the ground, in a matter of seconds, then climbs back down, holding a bunch of açaí. José is 15 years old and performs this feat many times every day. Açaí palms are fragile and might break, but he says he has never fallen. In 2016, Instituto Peabiru, a civil-society organization active in the Amazon region, claimed that this is one of the most dangerous activities performed in Brazil's rural areas.

The boy lives with his mother, stepfather and siblings in a simple wooden house, in the municipality of Acará, approximately 100 km from the capital city of Belém.

Too tired to wake at dawn, he has missed school again. The school transport launch docks in front of his house at 6 am, but the daily routine of children like José starts much earlier. Lacking a bathroom or piped water, they must get up between 4 and 5 am, to bathe in the river and get ready for school.

The same river that receives sewage from homes provides water for bathing, and even for drinking. "Everyone has a pit latrine that drains into the river", says açaí-gatherer Sidney de Souza Salgado (43). Sidney and his family also live in Acará, in an unfinished two-story wooden house with four rooms separated only by bed sheets. On the upper floor is their kitchen, and the living room where the couple sleeps on a mattress on the floor. The children sleep in hammocks down below; the three boys on one side, and the two girls on the other.

Similarly, dozens of riverine communities on the banks of the Miriti-Pitanga River live without access to safe drinking water or sanitation. They also complain about a palm oil (dendê) factory allegedly responsible for discharging waste into the river.

"This river is polluted", observes Sidney's oldest child Isilane (16). Isilane dreads suffering the same plight as her cousins, who drank water from the river. "They were in hospital for seven days with vomiting, diarrhea and high fever", she recalls.

"Some people can't afford to buy gasoline every day to fetch water from town, so they drink river water", says Isilane. Riverine populations depend upon motorized canoes, and Sidney makes the half-hour trip to town and back every two days, spending a portion of the family's income on gasoline. He does not always have enough money, and the motor does not always work, so the family ends up drinking water from the river. That brings on further adversities.

His youngest son Simon (5) has recurrent problems stemming from contaminated water. "The nurse said it was ameba", tells his stepmother, Rosimere do Socorro Maciel Pantoja (34). Rosimere herself has also suffered contamination. "After bathing in the river I had itches and spots. I took some tests, which confirmed that the cause was contaminated water", she says.

For the 2-year-old twins Davi and Samuel, danger exudes from the stream behind the 15 square-meter house where they live with their mother, father and 6-year-old brother Antonio Gabriel. The family lives in an informal settlement in Santa Izabel do Pará, 50 km from Belém. It lacks basic sanitation, and the sewage goes straight to the stream, which returns it to the backyard when it overflows on rainy days.

Poor housing conditions exacerbate the dangers. The lower part of their wooden wall is entirely rotten and poses no barrier to vermin coming from the stream. "My children do not deserve to live in a place like this" laments their mother, Camila Caroline Ribeiro de Araújo (29). According to the Continuous PNAD, in 2020, 16.2% of the children in the State of Pará lived in inadequate housing.

Lack of sanitation makes a bad situation even worse. The twins have caught viral diseases several times, and flu is a constant. Davi caught pneumonia as a result of unwholesome conditions, and takes medication donated by a merchant from the street where his father, Antonio Clebson da Conceição Macias, works as a car watcher. Simon has a hearing-disability, which his mother attributes to rainwater from a leaking roof: "There was a leak that dripped right on his ear", she says.

[1] The child's name has been changed to preserve his privacy.


Silan Salgado is a student, in Acará, State of Pará.

## Rust flavored water in the quilombos

Access to water is also a problem in two quilombola communities in Santa Izabel do Pará. Though located by the banks of many streams, the population often lacks safe sources of drinking water. In Quilombo Boa Vista do Itá, the water from a tube well, sunk six years ago, tastes of rust. "There are times when the water looks clean, but the taste is always the same", says quilombola leader Anézia de Deus dos Santos (67). "People are always complaining of stomachache".

The quilombo's second tube well does not produce enough to supply its 72 families. "We're constantly facing power cuts and, when the pump burns out, we must resort to water fetched from shallow wells. We walk one kilometer carrying water in buckets or pans", explains Anézia. Women and children go out, as if in procession, with bottles in their hands and buckets on their heads, toward the streams or the artesian well belonging to a doctor who is friendly to the quilombolas. "The children go along from an early age, to learn to value water", she says.

Just 30 kilometers away, Quilombo Jacarequara is facing a similar drama. Lacking their own water-supply system, its 30 families depend on the water tank at Vila de Jundiaí in the neighboring town of Inhangapi. The quilombolas use rubber hoses to siphon off water; but water is not always available. Electric power is frequently cut and, even when there is water, it only reaches them when their neighbors turn on the pump three times a day: in the morning, in the afternoon and late in the evening.

Their intermittent blackouts last from two to three days, but a water-crisis may persist for up to two weeks, when the suction pump breaks down. In these periods, Kassia da Silva Macedo Lobo (23) walks down to the stream 300 meters from her home to draw water for cooking and to wash her children Robson (3), Kedson (1), and Kyara (3 months). "We have to use the stream, even for drinking water, but it is often dirty", she says.

The streams in which mothers like Kassia bathe their children and draw water for cooking and washing clothes are contaminated by another scourge. "Few homes in the quilombo have septic tanks", says açaí-gatherer Raimundo Nonato Valadares Macedo (46) Kassia's father.

Kassia cites other unmet needs in the quilombo, such as lack of a health clinic, daycare, and a school. Children must wait in the pouring rain for the bus that takes them to school in a neighboring community. "At midday, they face either blazing sun or, in the wet season, torrential rains". She wishes there were a school that would reinforce the community's quilombola identity. "Nowadays, at the other schools, they learn nothing about our culture".

## Remote riverine populations lack access to income and safe water supply

Açaí-gatherer Sidney de Souza Salgado cannot read or write and can barely sign his name. He wants a better future for his five children. Apart from Simon who is only 5 years old, his other children are in school, but none are in the appropriate grade for their age. They are an emblematic portrayal of conditions in the State of Pará where, in 2021, according to UNICEF, 21.8% of children age 4 to 17 were not in the right grade for their age.

Sidney blames the two years during which in-person classes were suspended owing to COVID-19. The children did not have access to a computer or to a mobile phone for online classes, not that these would make a difference, given that no internet signal is available on the banks of the Miriti-Pitanga River. The family's 'prize possession' is a 14-inch TV set.

Also, their food is rationed. "They say, 'I am tired of eating chicken'; but chicken, eggs and mortadella is what we eat most often", says their mother Rosimere do Socorro Maciel Pantoja. Things are not much different at school. "They complain about school meals; all they receive is juice and biscuit", she remarks. "We return home with our stomachs grumbling", confirms Isilane.

Hunger features in the daily saga of getting up before dawn to go to school. "I wake up really early and feel really

sleepy; I even feel like sleeping on the chair", admits Isilane. This wearying routine is the cause of frequent absences from school.

Like José, the boy who climbs palm trees, many children not in school are out harvesting açaí. According to UNICEF, in 2019, 8% of Brazilian adolescents age 14 to 17 were engaged in child labor.

Sidney, the açaí-gatherer, explains that the fruit is available only in summer and that prices are not always favorable. He receives a pension of R$1,200 from his deceased wife, and his current partner, Rosimere, receives a R$600 *Bolsa Família*[2] benefit. Açaí sales supplement their income.

The family's fixed and variable income amounts to roughly R$285 per head for the seven family members, thus placing their children among the 57.3% living below the poverty line in Pará, in 2021.

Also in this group are Camila de Araújo's children, who live on the outskirts of Santa Izabel do Pará, 50 km from Belém.

Camila's income is limited to a R$600 *Bolsa Família* benefit and a R$105 cooking-gas subsidy (Auxílio Gás). Her husband, Clebson, earns another R$150 watching over cars in town. The sum is insufficient to cover the cost of food, milk and diapers.

Often, Camila mixes eggs or mortadella with left-over rice and beans from the fridge. To improve the taste, she adds plenty of garlic and onions, a secret she learned from her grandmother. "This removes the rancid flavor. Eating left-over food is better than letting the children go hungry".

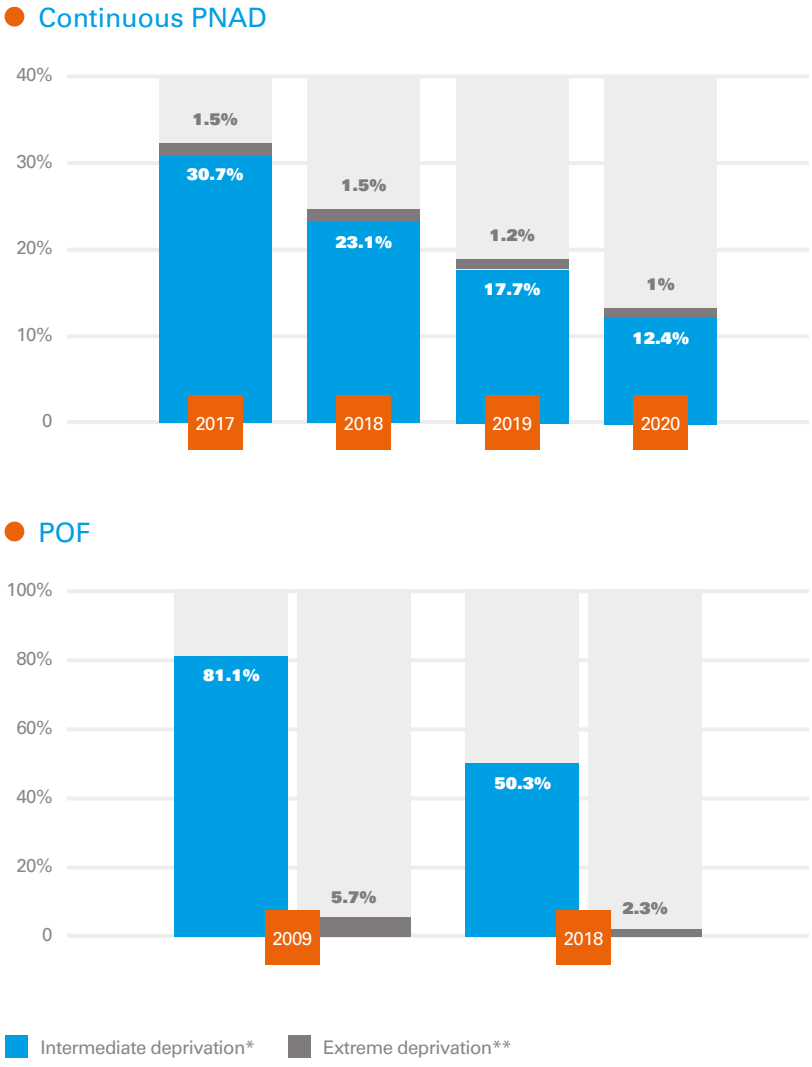
[2] At the time of the interview, in October 2022, the benefit was named *Auxílio Brasil*.

In Pará, children climb palm trees up to 15 meters high to harvest bunches of açaí, in one of the most dangerous activities performed in Brazil's rural areas.

# INFORMATION

*The dimension of information relates to household access to television and internet. Of the dimensions examined, it is the only one for which consistent and significant progress has been achieved. Impacts of the pandemic on this dimension could not be assessed, however, owing to a lack of data for 2021 and 2022.*

## Deprivation of access to internet and television, 9 to 17 years old (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of information is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020 (*for further information on methodology, see page 8 in Chapter 1*).

*Children age 9 to 17 without internet access, but with a television set in the home, in the past year.

**Children age 9 to 17 with neither internet access nor a television set in the home, in the past year.

For the dimension of information, which essentially covers access to internet and television signals, the study registered a significant statistical improvement in the proportion of children with no deprivation, over the four years for which Continuous PNAD data is available. This indicator, which rose from 67.9% in 2017 to 86.6% in 2020, refers to children age 9 to 17 who had access to internet in the home on at least one occasion in the previous year.

For a retrospective perspective, POF data for the 2009-2018 period revealed a 34% decrease in deprivations for this dimension. However, as mentioned previously in Chapter 1, POF and Continuous PNAD data are not comparable, owing to differences in data-collection protocols. What stands out in both surveys is that the greatest improvement has been in availability of access to internet in households.

The results nonetheless reveal marked regional disparities. Continuous PNAD data show that less than 3% of children in São Paulo and the Federal District experienced deprivation of access to information in 2020. In the same year, in Amazonas in the North region, and in two states of the Northeast, Maranhão and Piauí, this proportion was above 20% (*see map on page 77*).

Taking a broader perspective, from POF data, a steady reduction of obstacles to access to information can be perceived for the whole country. Whereas in 2009, more than three quarters of families in all states suffered high rates of deprivation in this dimension; in 2018, rates higher than 70% were observed in only seven states: Acre, Amazonas, Maranhão, Pará, Piauí, Roraima and Tocantins (*see maps on page 96*).

Racial disparities are also highly significant with regard to access to internet and tele-

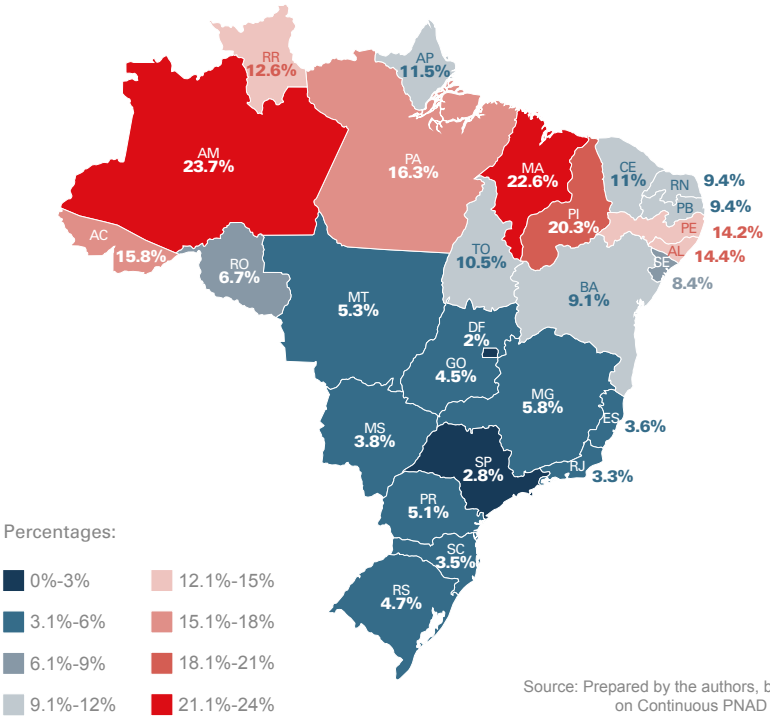
vision (*see the graphs below*). The rate of intermediate and extreme deprivation among black and indigenous children is almost twice as high as it is for white and yellow children, in all years covered by Continuous PNAD.

Retrospective data from POF for the 2009-2018 period reveal disparities between black and indigenous children on the one hand, and white and yellow children on the other, only for extreme deprivation. For intermediate deprivation, in none of the years was the difference between these two groups double or higher, notwithstanding a perceptible increase over time, from 11.6% in 2019 to 18.9% in 2018.

An IPEA-study[62] published in August 2020 in support of the debate on remote teaching at the onset of the pandemic shows that, notwithstanding the advances reported by UNICEF in this study, structural reproduction of inequality also occurs in the virtual world.

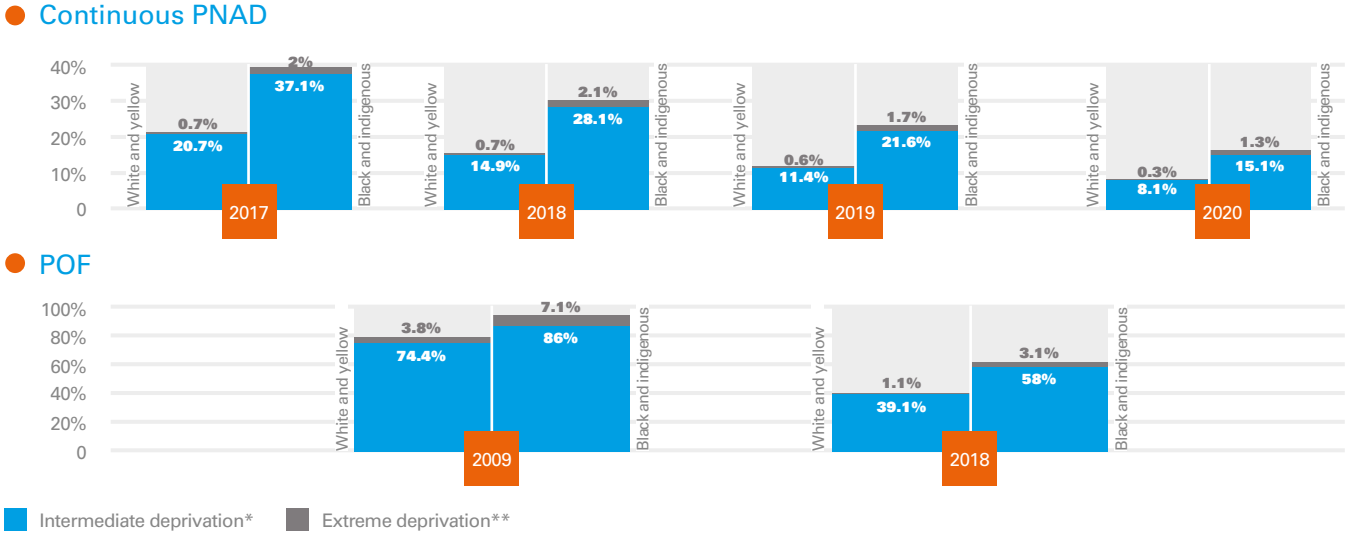
Approximately 6 million students have no access to broadband or mobile internet in the home, including some 4.3 to 4.4 million

## Deprivation of access to internet and television, 9 to 17 (Continuous PNAD – 2020)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Deprivation of access to internet and television, 9 to 17, by color/race (Continuous PNAD and POF)




Source: Prepared by the authors, based on the Continuous PNAD and POF data.

Note: Data on the dimension of information is available up to the Annual Continuous PNAD of 2020.

*Children age 9 to 17 without internet access, but with a television set in the home, in the past year.

**Children age 9 to 17 with neither internet access nor a television set in the home, in the past year.

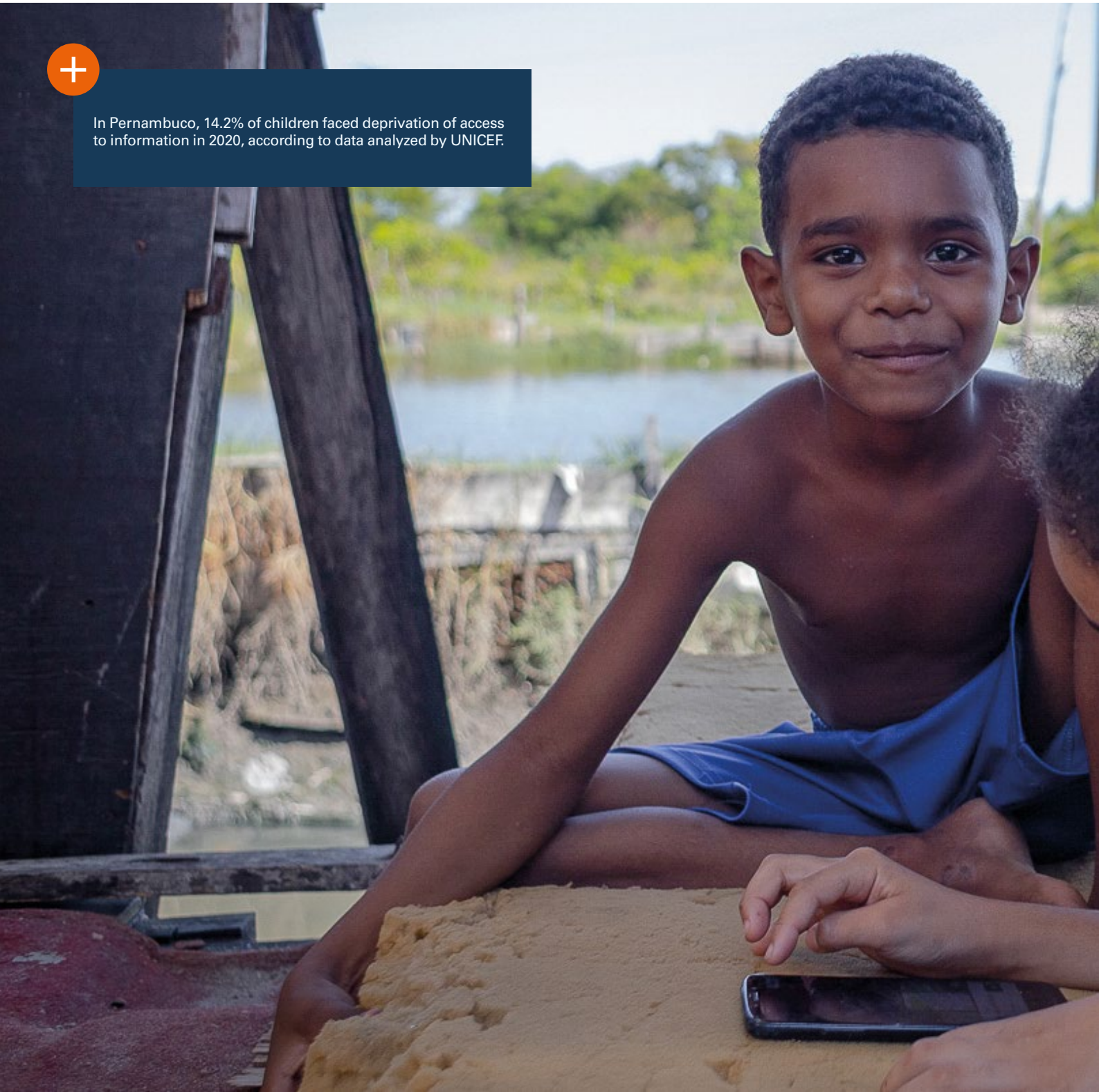
[62] NASCIMENTO, P. M. et al. "*Acesso Domiciliar à Internet e Ensino Remoto durante a Pandemia*". Nota Técnica n. 88 ["Household Internet Access and Remote Teaching during the Pandemic". Technical Note 88]. Brasília: IPEA, 2020.

primary and high-school students. Of this total, nearly 3.2 million had no access to a mobile internet network in the home, and between 250,000 and 300,000 did not have television in the home.

In this area, economic and ethnic/racial disparities are also apparent. According to the survey, 99% of children in public primary schools who lack access to a broadband or 3G/4G internet connection are from low-income families, i.e., families whose per-capita household income is below one and a half minimum wages. Black and indigenous children account for more than 70% of students with no internet-connection; and just over half of all non-connected students live in rural areas.

For Paulo Meyer Nascimento, IPEA Researcher and Professor at *Fundação Getulio Vargas*' School of Public Policy and Government (EPPG-FGV) the solution to the problem involves

In Pernambuco, 14.2% of children faced deprivation of access to information in 2020, according to data analyzed by UNICEF.



socializing network infrastructure, particularly through the ongoing 5G auctions. "It is necessary to include counterpart clauses obliging winning companies to universalize internet access in areas of low commercial interest, in the same way that the telephone companies were obliged to provide universal access by setting up public pay-phones and expanding coverage. The same demands should be made with regard to access to the internet and digital television", he suggests.

In Brazil, approximately 6 million students lack access to a broadband or mobile internet connection in the home, and some 300,000 do not even have a TV set in the home.

Source: *Acesso Domiciliar à Internet e Ensino Remoto durante a Pandemia, IPEA, 2020 ["Household Internet Access and Remote Teaching during the Pandemic"].*

In Rio de Janeiro, 8 year-old Matheus da Conceição is in the second grade of primary school. He can read and write, and dreams of becoming a teacher. In this photo Matheus and his 9 year-old sister Thayla da Conceição are drawing.

# 4 TACKLING MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

*Children can wait no longer. Child poverty, and its repercussions on the lives of millions of Brazilian boys and girls must be brought to an end, before it irreparably harms their human development. For Brazil to reaffirm its commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and leave no child behind, it is essential that the federal, state and municipal authorities join forces with businesses, international agencies and civil-society organizations in this common endeavor.*

Multidimensional child poverty is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon with many intersecting causes. Facing up to it demands an array of policies and strategies that require coordination and entail internal dialogue.

The findings and analyses described in this publication show that advances achieved over the years in many fields, in terms of ensuring the rights of Brazilian children may suffer stagnation or even reverses, particularly in a context of crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. They also underscore that structural challenges and regional, ethnic/racial and gender disparities persist in Brazil, despite all efforts to improve the living conditions of boys and girls throughout the country over recent decades.

Considering the severity of the current situation, policies targeted at children require urgent priority, even in a context of economic crisis, in order for the country to cut deprivation rates and resume its path toward safeguarding children's rights.

Notwithstanding significant initiatives underway throughout Brazil, coordination, effective planning and budgetary allocations are needed to effect comprehensive investments in the diverse fields through which multidimensional poverty is to be tackled. Also requiring special attention are investments in infrastructure, which demand concerted effort on the part of the federal, state and municipal authorities, in coordination with international agencies, businesses and civil society.

Furthermore, it is also necessary to invest in proposals that benefit not only children, but also their mothers, fathers and guardians, especially the most vulnerable.

In 1990, Brazil ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 2015, along with 192 other countries, Brazil signed up to 2030 Agenda with a view to achieving the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Eleven of the 17 SDGs are directly linked to protecting and promoting children's rights.

Thus, guaranteeing a present and a future free from deprivations for all Brazilian children, without exception, is essential for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The UNICEF study that you now are reading aims to serve as a tool in support of public authorities and decision-makers to assist them in taking action to address multidimensional poverty through customized and assertive programs and policies capable of overcoming regional, racial/ethnic and gender disparities.

Swift action is needed, with a focus on tackling multidimensional child poverty at all administrative levels. Taken together, the multiple dimensions of poverty afflicting boys and girls up to the age of 17 in Brazil presented in this study, constitute a comprehensive map of priorities designed to enable identification of the deprivations that most afflict children while, at the same time, providing guidance for social policies.

The following recommendations take into account the data presented by this study, in addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[63] the SDGs and the need for urgent action. Our boys and girls can wait no longer.

## 1 Prioritize investments in social policies

In view of the situation of multidimensional poverty, of funding constraints and of limited fiscal space, the federal, state and municipal governments need to award priority to social policies targeted at meeting the needs of children in their budgetary planning and execution.

Between 2018 and 2022, Brazil earmarked an average of only 4% of federal public funding[64] for policies targeting children, according to studies conducted by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) and by UNICEF[65]. Such funding, on average, amounts to only 1.4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The data on early childhood is even more alarming. Spending on children age 0 to 6 years in 2021 and 2022 is estimated to represent approximately 1.5% of the effective federal-budget expenditures, corresponding to 0.37% of GDP.

To achieve the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda goals, the country will need to redouble its efforts to increase overall investment, while paying particular attention to all the municipal-level structures, equipment and services that sustain programs such as the Unified Database and *Bolsa Família*. The *Bolsa Família* program, notwithstanding excellent recent results achieved especially in 2023, needs further normative guarantees to ensure its budgetary sustainability for the coming years, including continuous readjustments to avoid losses to inflation of its real value and a decrease in the number of beneficiaries.

## 2 Strengthen the SUAS in the municipalities to expand provision of services and benefits to children

It is essential to prioritize investments in the entire social-protection structure on which deployment of the *Bolsa Família* program in the municipalities depends, especially the Social Assistance Reference Centers (CRAS). It is the CRAS that make the Unified Database possible, that provide assistance and monitor families facing multidimensional poverty at the local level, thereby performing front-line services for families and for the territories in which they are located.

Given that addressing the multiple dimensions of poverty also requires multidimensional actions, investment in the CRAS is essential, as they are already structured to encompass all stages of assistance provision and monitoring of vulnerable families.

[63] Brazil ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on September 24, 1990.

[64] This encompasses only effective expenditures. It considers neither debt refinancing nor revenue sharing.

[65] This data is from the study *Gasto Social com Crianças e Adolescentes (GSC&A)* ["Social Spending on Children"] produced using a methodology developed by IPEA and UNICEF. The study is available at the Federal Senate's web portal SIGA Brasil: http://www9.senado.leg.br/painelcidadao.

Allocation of social-assistance funding targeted at strengthening human and technical resources and capacity-building are urgent priorities, bearing in mind that, in recent years, social assistance has been among the areas that received least funding, especially from federal sources.

### 3 Institutionalize the Social Spending on Children and Adolescents (GSC&A) methodology for measuring and monitoring the federal public budget

Assessing and monitoring of the federal and sub-national public budgets is essential for guaranteeing fulfillment of the rights of children, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Federal Constitution and the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA).

As this study shows, it is essential that responses for tackling the challenges of multidimensional child poverty be implemented in a concerted and balanced manner, so that each dimension may count upon effective adequately-funded policies, in order to address the magnitude of their respective challenges. This implies that we need mapping of rights deprivations, such as this study which, in turn, can reflect the ability to map out provision of policy responses. Since the budget is the main instrument for interpretation of public-policy provision, systematic tools are needed for accessing information on budgetary and sectoral funding allocations.

The Children and Adolescents' Budget (GSC&A) methodology[66] developed by IPEA and UNICEF has performed this role in the recent years. Its data is available in real time at the *SIGA Brasil* website,[67] which includes a specific dashboard on early childhood. This is an essential mechanism for improving transparency and monitoring of policies, and for enhancement of investments targeted at children.

Still missing is the incorporation of such tools into budgetary planning, development and monitoring processes, including the marking of each budgetary action so as to facilitate monitoring and follow up for the government and for society.

### 4 Implement measurements and monitoring of different poverty dimensions and their deprivations by means of an official governmental agency

It is important that official measurements be undertaken at regular intervals by a governmental agency. This UNICEF study is a contribution in this sense, but it is essential that governments assume responsibility, not only for producing this type of data, but also for interpreting and monitoring it and, thereupon, proposing public policies.

Thus, Brazil must resume its leadership in the production of high-quality data capable of contributing information on its policies and on public funding allocations for addressing the multiple dimensions of child poverty.

In this respect, there is an urgent need to strengthen official bodies of acknowledged experience and competence, such as IBGE and IPEA, that collect, generate and analyze the country's data.

At the sub-national level, the generation of regionalized evidence and data by state-level research institutes must also be promoted. These bodies at the sub-national level provide a unique opportunity for obtaining

[66] SILVA, E. R. A. da et al. "*Gasto Social com Crianças e Adolescentes: Descrição Metodológica*". Nota Técnica n. 101 ["Social Spending on Children: Methodological Description". Technical Note 101]. Brasília: IPEA and UNICEF, May 2022. Available at: https://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/bitstream/11058/10979/2/NT_101_Disoc_Gasto_Social.pdf.

[67] The Advanced Budgetary and Management Information System (SIGA Brasil) provides information on the federal budget maintained by the Senate's Budget, Inspection and Control Consultancy (CONORF), and by the Senate' Secretariat of Information Technology (PRODASEN). It enables far-reaching and easy access to data of the Federal Government's Integrated Financial Administration System (SIAFI), and other databases on public and budgetary planning (SIGA Brasil. Available at: https://www12.senado.leg.br/orcamento/sigabrasil.)

disaggregated regional, state, municipal and even intra-municipal data (which may facilitate deployment of the actions proposed in this publication) to guide the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of public policies and governmental programs, while taking into account the particular features of each territory.

Implementation of these mechanisms must also take into account the need to update data on situations such as child labor and other types of violations, and to expand the information collected in many areas and on different population groups, such as indigenous and *quilombola* communities, and persons with disabilities, so as to leave no one behind.

Finally, it is important to strengthen support for data disaggregation and integration, for the availability and sharing of administrative records and of the relevant statistical and geo-scientific databases for achieving the SDGs. It is also important to promote the measurement of sustainable-development indicators, while observing current laws on information security.

## 5 Encourage breastfeeding in the first hour after birth

Breastfeeding should be encouraged through application of the legal provisions for its promotion and protection. It should start in the first hour of an infant's life, on an exclusive basis for the first six months, and on a continuous basis up to the age of 2 ½ years or longer, so as to enhance the child's opportunities for healthy nutrition in early life.

Concrete measures to be pursued include inspections and monitoring of compliance with the Brazilian Norm for the Commercialization of Foods for Infants and Children in Early Childhood, Nipples, Pacifiers and Baby Bottles (NBCAL);[68] strengthening of breastfeeding programs in the primary health-care network and early-childhood schools; increasing the number of Baby-Friendly Hospitals (*Hospitais Amigos da Criança*);[69] expanding the human milk banks network, maternity and paternity-leave benefits or parental leave, to guarantee continuity of breastfeeding by working mothers.

## 6 Promote food and nutritional security for pregnant women, children and adolescents, to safeguard their human right to adequate nutrition and reduce the impact of hunger and malnutrition on the most impoverished families

Strategies should take into consideration disparities within regions, municipalities, and especially large urban centers. They should also take into account gender and race/ethnic disparities, and data on the consumption of processed foods and their impact on child obesity.

To achieve this aim, frequent and periodic surveys, such as Continuous PNAD, should include questions on maternal and child nutrition in their questionnaires.

[68] The NBCAL is a set of regulations on the commercial advertising and labeling of food and other products for infants and early childhood, such as infant formulas, milk products, baby food, bottles, pacifiers and artificial nipples. Based on the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), the NBCAL was issued in 1988 as a resolution of the National Health Council and enacted into law in 2006 (Law 11,265, of January 3, 2006).

[69] The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (*Hospital Amigo da Criança – IHAC*) – was launched by WHO and UNICEF in 1991 to promote breastfeeding in institutions that provide maternity, obstetrics, neonatology and pediatric services, with the aim of influencing the practices of health and caregiving professionals. To merit the title of Baby-Friendly Hospital, health centers must achieve a minimum 75% rate of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers upon discharge, comply with the International code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes, implement the Ten Steps for Successful Breastfeeding, and take measures that include training on the topic for professionals, provision of support to mothers and updated information on the advantages and procedures for successful breastfeeding.

### 7 Guarantee a primary health-care, social assistance and education network, to identify families with pregnant women, children at highest risk of food insecurity

Networking in the fields of health, education and social assistance facilitates identification of cases of nutritional risk and enables swifter and more effective action for addressing hunger and food insecurity in general.

### 8 Stimulate local production and establishment of collaborative networks

Measures such as the drafting and strengthening of laws that guarantee and promote local and sustainable food production, while prizing traditional culinary practices and encouraging the establishment of collaborative networks of farmers, technicians and public authorities to foster the consumption of regional food sourced from family-based growers can provide support in the most vulnerable regions for the fight against hunger.

### 9 Establish local markets, low-cost restaurants and community kitchens as part of a national policy to combat hunger and food insecurity

Such measures stimulate healthy eating habits and provide support in the most vulnerable locations for the fight against hunger and food insecurity in general, by fostering consumption of healthier food.

### 10 Strengthen the National School Feeding Program (PNAE)

There is a need to define and implement monitoring and evaluation strategies for the PNAE, and to follow up on compliance with Resolution 6/2020, which incorporates guidance from the Dietary Guidelines for the Brazilian Population, and the Dietary Guidelines for Brazilian Children less than 2 years of Age, which are two relevant references in this field.

Among other provisions, Resolution 6/2020 restricts the purchase of processed and ultra-processed foods, and establishes that at least 75% of school-meal funding be spent on procurement of either, natural and fresh foods, or minimally processed products.

### 11 Promote healthy school environments and nutritional education in schools

The nutritional environment in schools frequently favors consumption of non-healthy food, thereby contributing to poor eating habits and overweight among children. Food and nutritional education needs to be introduced into school curriculums, to promote healthy school environments under the protection of laws that regulate advertising and marketing of ultra-processed foods.

### 12 Encourage implementation of the new front-of-package food labeling model and guarantee its monitoring

Resolution RDC 429 of October 2020, issued by the Brazilian Health Regulatory Agency (ANVISA)[70] obliges companies to add an informative symbol on the front of their products, to simplify and facilitate public access to information on levels of sugar, fat and sodium, which may be hazardous to health.

Private sector commitment is essential for promoting implementation of this measure.

[70] http://antigo.anvisa.gov.br/documents/10181/3882585/RDC_429_2020_.pdf/9dc15f3a-db4c-4d3f-90d8-ef4b80537380.

### 13 Institute taxation to raise the price of sugary drinks, thereby reducing consumption

More than 50 countries worldwide, including Latin American countries such as Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru, have implemented special taxes on sugary drinks. There is evidence that a tax policy that induces higher prices for sugary products reduces consumption, helps raise popular awareness of the importance of healthier nutritional choices and provides a new funding stream to be invested in social and public-utility programs and services, thus optimizing benefits for society.

### 14 Prioritize, at the various administrative levels, a water and sanitation agenda for development and implementation of public policies

Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is crucial for safeguarding the other rights of every child and adolescent. For children under the age of 5, and especially indigenous children, it may be a matter of survival. For this reason, the rights and best interests of children must be at the center of all discussions on how to improve access for excluded and vulnerable populations.

Development and implementation of water-supply and sanitation policies must prioritize groups living in informal settlements, such as villages and slums (*favelas*), rural areas (farm, forest, and riverine populations), small towns and less developed regions, and also immigrants, refugees and persons living 'in street situations'. To attain this aim, the role of each state and municipality in provision of such services must be clearly defined, and funding sources for infrastructure improvements identified.

### 15 Strengthen governance of the water and sanitation agenda from the political and legislative standpoints and in terms of integrated national strategies

Strengthening of governance must include participation of civil society and take into account local and regional particularities. It will also require constant and sustainable funding mechanisms that take into account basic human rights' principles and award priority to the most vulnerable territories and populations, while promoting health and reducing social disparities.

### 16 Take into account climate emergencies in the strategic planning of water-supply, sanitation and housing policies

When contemplating the dimensions of access to water, sanitation and housing, it is essential that the potential effects of climate change and specific vulnerabilities of children be taken into account. Extreme weather events, such as droughts and flooding can have dire effects upon households, especially those located in high-risk areas, and upon the infrastructure for provision of water-supply and sanitation services. Thus, climate emergencies must be a prime consideration when drafting strategic plans for promotion of universal provision of these services, bearing in mind the need to reduce social disparities.

### 17 Strengthen strategies and capacities in local territories, with a view to improving access to safe drinking water in early-childhood assistance and care centers, schools, health centers and other places where public services are provided

Initiatives in this field should include monitoring of the quality of drinking water so as to reduce associated risks and focus upon promotion of child health and development, especially in the most vulnerable areas.

**18**

### Actively pursue policies designed to increase school attendance and attract children back to school, with a special focus on literacy training

Identify each and every one of the thousands of children currently out of school, and apply inter-sectoral measures to encourage initial enrolment or return to schooling. Municipalities and states must treat keeping students in school as a priority. Each public-policy area should, through its activities, promote measures to eliminate truancy and dropout.

**19**

### Invest in high-quality education for each and every child

Provision of high-quality early-childhood education is the essential component for ensuring a strong basis for successful primary schooling. To this end, this phase of schooling ought to be cherished, by making schools more diverse and inclusive, acknowledging the needs of specific groups, such as immigrants, indigenous populations, riverine and *quilombola* communities, and differences between urban and rural contexts.

**20**

### Facing up to age/grade distortions through effective policies

Age/grade distortion rates begin to increase prior to the initial grades of secondary schooling. Besides attention to mental health issues, which became more intense during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is particularly important to focus greater attention to this stage of schooling, through policies targeted at promoting a more welcoming school experience, while fostering 21st century skills and competences, so as better to prepare adolescents for the world of work, enabling them to access better opportunities.

**21**

### Develop education policies that focus attention on previously overlooked groups

The State has a duty to develop customized national education policies to ensure that initial and continuous teacher training provides for the application of diversified teaching methodologies and pedagogical resources that take into account specific characteristics of the most vulnerable groups, including quilombola, immigrant, indigenous, rural and riverine communities.

**22**

### Promote and strengthen opportunities in school environments and during adolescents' transition to the labor market

It is essential that Brazil adopt a policy to foster smooth transition from education to the world of work, drawing from current initiatives such as the Apprenticeship Law and Internship Law, bringing them into line with its first-job policy. Public managers at all levels should assume responsibility for linkages that promote such actions. Managers of economic development, employment and labor policies need to coordinate with schools, so as to ensure that boys and girls are made aware of new employment opportunities. The State also needs to invest in supplementary non-formal education, before or after school hours, to prepare adolescents for these opportunities. Programs targeted at eradication of child labor, such as PETI, and also *Bolsa Família*, could contribute toward this policy by ensuring development of the potential of their adolescent beneficiaries and their reintroduction into the educational system.

**23**

### Strengthen the Child Rights Guarantee System (SGDCA)

The Child Rights Guarantee System (SGDCA) was established to safeguard and facilitate fulfillment of the rights of children, as provided for in the UN Convention and in Brazil's Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA). This system needs to be strengthened through actions encompassing investments in expansion of the network, its social equipment and infrastructure; and capacity-building for network participants (professionals in such fields as health, education, social assistance, law, and others) so as to enable them to engage in integrated and concerted actions.

## 24 Implement protocols for early identification of families at risk of violence, including child labor

With the onset of the pandemic and consequent intensification of poverty, the common perception of experts interviewed for this publication was that there had been an increase in the incidences of child labor. Besides implementation of strategies for identifying vulnerable families, it is necessary to update statistical databases so as to understand the magnitude of the problem and mobilize the resources for facing up to it. It is also important that the State invest in programs such as PETI, which have been demonstrably effective in reducing child labor.

Child labor is only one of the forms of violence against children. This study focuses only this specific form, since it is the only one for which Continuous PNAD data is available.

Thus, in view of the insufficiency of data on other forms of violence against children, it is also imperative to have an information system that covers this theme. It is a dimension that needs to be considered from a broad perspective when plotting poverty indicators.

## 25 Implement connectivity action plans, prioritizing students and teachers of the public education system

According to Law 14,172/2021,[71] students from families registered in the CadÚnico database and enrolled in schools of indigenous and quilombola communities, and primary-school teachers of the public schooling system, are entitled to internet access for educational purposes, ensured through actions such as distribution of chips and mobile devices. So as to ensure that funding transferred by the Ministry of Education reaches the most vulnerable groups, it is essential that the state authorities implement connectivity action plans that take into account the need to act in collaboration with the municipalities.

## 26 Invest in continuous slum urban improvement and affordable housing programs[72]

Inconstancy has been a recurrent feature of housing policies and their funding. To address the housing deficit more assertively, the requisite funding for municipalities to maintain continuity of their housing programs needs to be predictably allocated on an annual basis.

It is also important that funding allocations for such programs, besides encompassing the building of new housing units in slums (favelas) and their surroundings and provision of utility services such as water-supply, sewage-collection, public lighting and roadway infrastructure, also address integrated provision of public health, education, culture, social-assistance, transport and security services for these populations. In this regard, urban renewal in favelas and providing new housing units in town centers where urban infrastructure already exists, has proven to be more effective than developing new housing estates in areas distant from city centers.

## 27 Institute social rent/housing to ease the housing deficit in urban centers

Conversion of vacant public buildings in central urban areas into social rent-controlled housing, by means of social rent/housing programs, would increase the array of available housing options, especially in central urban areas, by providing decent housing in places with easy access not only to employment opportunities, but also to health, education and urban-infrastructure services.

[71] BRASIL. Law 14,172 dated June 10, 2021. Available at: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2019-2022/2021/lei/l14172.htm.

[72] Recommendations 26 and 27 were drafted based on interviews and inputs provided by Rute Imanishi Rodrigues, PhD in economics from the Università degli Studi di Siena in Italy, and researcher on housing and urban policies at IPEA. Among other studies at IPEA, Dr. Rodrigues coordinated the publication *Vida Social e Política nas Favelas: Pesquisa de Campo no Complexo do Alemão* ["Social and Political Life in the Slums: a Field Research at Complexo do Alemão"] Rio de Janeiro: IPEA, 2016. Available at https://repositorio.ipea.gov.br/handle/11058/6410.

# Data for Influencing Public Policies

In addition to producing statistics and analyses as inputs for increasingly well-informed decision making, UNICEF and its partners seek to stimulate debate and draft documents that help place multidimensional child poverty at the center of public-policy decisions.

The bases for such actions are laid down in the United Nations' SDGs. These 17 ambitious and interconnected goals address the principal development challenges faced by people in Brazil and throughout the world. They represent a global call to action to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and climate, and guarantee that people everywhere may enjoy peace and prosperity. In Brazil, the 2030 Agenda establishes objective goals and indicators with a view to stimulating urgent action by all segments of society.[73]

Another global initiative by UNICEF and its partners is the report entitled *Ending Child Poverty: A Policy Agenda*,[74] published by the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty. The Coalition consists of more than 20 entities, including UNICEF. Its objective is to support the UN and work with national, regional and global decision-makers, civil society, global activists, international organizations, and other institutions to eradicate child poverty, as prescribed by the SDGs.

According to the publication, while contexts vary, experience has shown that, for the building of a core agenda of action to address child poverty, it is necessary to:

1. Build support, so that child poverty reduction becomes an explicit priority in national budgets, policies and laws, and guarantee that child poverty is measured and routinely monitored.
2. Expand social protection for children, so that it may serve not only as a direct factor in the reduction of poverty among families, but also provide support for other policies and basic services.
3. Improve access and prioritize funding for decent public services, especially for the poorest children, including access to high-quality healthcare and education services.
4. Promote a decent work and inclusive growth agenda, targeted at poor families, children, and adolescents.

In Brazil, in 2022, with UNICEF support, an advocacy initiative known as Agenda 227 was launched. This initiative brought together some 350 organizations, networks and civil-society coalitions, united by the aim of placing children at the center of efforts to make Brazil a more just, prosperous, inclusive and sustainable nation for all, based on Article 227 of the Federal Constitution, which awards the 'guarantee of absolute priority for the population age 0 to 18.'

In a publication entitled "Action Plan for Childhood and Adolescence",[75] published prior to the 2022 elections, that addresses the overall rights of this segment of the population, without focusing specifically on poverty, the Agenda 227 movement issued the following structural challenges:

- Prioritize children throughout the entire public budget cycle.
- Strengthen intersectoral and federative articulation.
- Recover and expand spaces for social participation.
- Institutionalize the SDGs' 2030 Agenda.

[73] For additional information on the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, visit: https://brasil.un.org/pt-br/sdgs e https://odsbrasil.gov.br.

[74] UNICEF. Ending Child Poverty: A Policy Agenda. Available at: https://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/publications-feed/2022/10/11/briefing-paper.

[75] AGENDA 227. *Plano País para a Infância e a Adolescência* ["Country Plan for Childhood and Adolescence"]. Available at: https://agenda227.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Agenda-227_Plano-Pai%cc%81s_15set2022_web.pdf.

# ANNEX

## Children up to the age of 17 with some form of deprivation (2019) by state and dimension (Continuous PNAD) (x 1000)

| | Education | Information | Child Labor | Housing | Water | Sanitation | Income |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DF | 51.8 | 21.3 | 17.6 | 39.4 | 3.8 | 98.3 | 135.8 |
| GO | 82 | 83.3 | 63.1 | 82.4 | 48.4 | 855.8 | 502.7 |
| MT | 47.3 | 97.9 | 44.6 | 64.3 | 29.6 | 589.8 | 211.9 |
| MS | 57.3 | 39.3 | 33.3 | 36.2 | 7.9 | 356.3 | 174.2 |
| RS | 193 | 170.8 | 96.8 | 150.4 | 6 | 761.4 | 557.6 |
| SC | 74.5 | 81.1 | 52.1 | 43.2 | 13.2 | 697.7 | 202.6 |
| PR | 166.4 | 223.1 | 113.8 | 111.4 | 47.9 | 922.2 | 549.2 |
| SP | 521.1 | 510.9 | 346.1 | 1104.3 | 47.8 | 885.5 | 2336.7 |
| RJ | 245.2 | 159.1 | 62.7 | 451.8 | 37.9 | 469.5 | 1087.1 |
| ES | 65.4 | 64.9 | 30.4 | 62.9 | 5 | 218 | 308.8 |
| MG | 269.1 | 360.8 | 242.3 | 137 | 82.5 | 971.6 | 1535.4 |
| BA | 527.6 | 691.4 | 145.5 | 230.1 | 383.2 | 1839.1 | 2172.8 |
| SE | 86.7 | 80.2 | 28.4 | 23.2 | 46.9 | 304.6 | 350.5 |
| AL | 115.5 | 231.7 | 47 | 55 | 182.4 | 614.3 | 624.4 |
| PE | 214.8 | 346.7 | 87 | 192.1 | 379.6 | 1082.7 | 1459.8 |
| PB | 123 | 155.4 | 49.9 | 52.4 | 155.5 | 549.6 | 574.3 |
| RN | 107.6 | 129.5 | 20.9 | 62.2 | 77.9 | 679.3 | 450 |
| CE | 139.3 | 451.9 | 72.1 | 191 | 291.2 | 1447.8 | 1363.8 |
| PI | 104.2 | 207.4 | 41 | 63.6 | 142.4 | 785.9 | 487.2 |
| MA | 261.7 | 713.8 | 139.8 | 233.4 | 574.4 | 1864.9 | 1509.7 |
| TO | 33.7 | 59.6 | 19.7 | 37.7 | 19.2 | 293.5 | 202.2 |
| AP | 37.1 | 49.7 | 23.5 | 73.8 | 37.3 | 221.8 | 153.5 |
| PA | 375.4 | 608.2 | 133.8 | 447.4 | 455.9 | 2244.7 | 1531.3 |
| RR | 12 | 29.7 | 9.2 | 34.1 | 15 | 107 | 78.3 |
| AM | 136.9 | 313.9 | 51.8 | 329.4 | 212.1 | 905.1 | 803.3 |
| AC | 31.3 | 69.2 | 17.2 | 38.6 | 65.4 | 180 | 153.1 |
| RO | 37.9 | 46.1 | 31.9 | 37.5 | 28.2 | 411.3 | 148.7 |

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

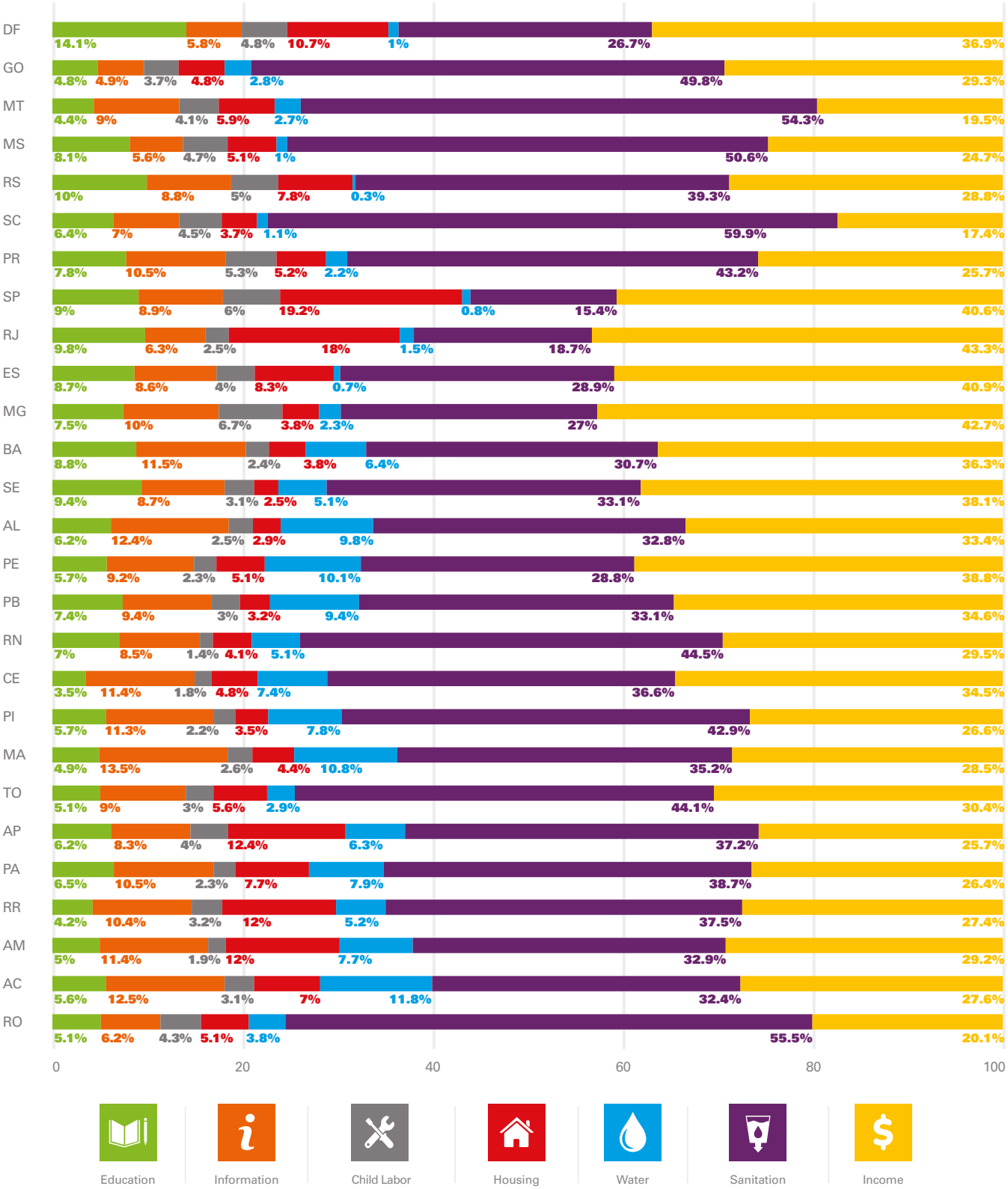
## Percentage of children up to the age of 17 with some form of deprivation (2019) by state and dimension (Continuous PNAD)

| | Education | Information | Child Labor | Housing | Water | Sanitation | Income | Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DF | 7.4% | 3% | 2.5% | 5.6% | 0.5% | 14% | 19.3% | **36.7%** |
| GO | 4.6% | 4.6% | 3.5% | 4.6% | 2.7% | 47.9% | 28.1% | **64.2%** |
| MT | 5.3% | 11.1% | 5% | 7.3% | 3.3% | 67.1% | 24.1% | **77.3%** |
| MS | 8.2% | 5.6% | 4.7% | 5.1% | 1.1% | 51% | 24.9% | **66.3%** |
| RS | 7.9% | 7% | 3.9% | 6.1% | 0.2% | 31.2% | 22.8% | **53%** |
| SC | 4.8% | 5.2% | 3.3% | 2.8% | 0.8% | 45.4% | 13.2% | **56%** |
| PR | 6.1% | 8.2% | 4.2% | 4.1% | 1.7% | 34.1% | 20.3% | **52.5%** |
| SP | 5.1% | 5% | 3.4% | 10.8% | 0.4% | 8.7% | 22.9% | **39.6%** |
| RJ | 7% | 4.5% | 1.8% | 12.9% | 1% | 13.4% | 31.2% | **48%** |
| ES | 6.7% | 6.6% | 3.1% | 6.4% | 0.5% | 22.3% | 31.6% | **51.2%** |
| MG | 5.5% | 7.4% | 4.9% | 2.8% | 1.7% | 20% | 31.6% | **48.7%** |
| BA | 13.8% | 18.1% | 3.8% | 6% | 10% | 48.2% | 57% | **77.8%** |
| SE | 13.9% | 12.9% | 4.6% | 3.7% | 7.5% | 49.1% | 56.5% | **76.6%** |
| AL | 12.6% | 25.3% | 5.1% | 6% | 19.9% | 67.1% | 68.2% | **90.3%** |
| PE | 8.7% | 14% | 3.5% | 7.8% | 15.4% | 44% | 59.3% | **77.7%** |
| PB | 11.8% | 14.9% | 4.8% | 5% | 14.9% | 52.9% | 55.3% | **78.5%** |
| RN | 12.2% | 14.7% | 2.3% | 7% | 8.8% | 77.3% | 51.2% | **87.7%** |
| CE | 5.9% | 19.4% | 3.1% | 8.2% | 12.5% | 62.2% | 58.6% | **83%** |
| PI | 12% | 24% | 4.7% | 7.3% | 16.4% | 90.9% | 56.3% | **94%** |
| MA | 11.8% | 32.4% | 6.3% | 10.6% | 26% | 84.7% | 68.5% | **94%** |
| TO | 7.7% | 13.6% | 4.5% | 8.6% | 4.4% | 67.4% | 46.4% | **83.4%** |
| AP | 14.1% | 18.8% | 8.9% | 28% | 14.2% | 84.4% | 58.3% | **94.7%** |
| PA | 14.2% | 23% | 5% | 16.9% | 17.2% | 85% | 58% | **93.3%** |
| RR | 7.2% | 17.7% | 5.4% | 20.3% | 8.9% | 63.8% | 46.6% | **81.2%** |
| AM | 10.8% | 24.7% | 4% | 26% | 16.7% | 71.4% | 63.4% | **88.3%** |
| AC | 11.6% | 25.7% | 6.3% | 14.3% | 24.3% | 66.8% | 56.8% | **83.4%** |
| RO | 8.1% | 9.9% | 6.8% | 8% | 6% | 88.4% | 31.9% | **93.2%** |

*Children experiencing at least one form of deprivation.

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Types of deprivation, by dimension, by state (Continuous PNAD – 2019)

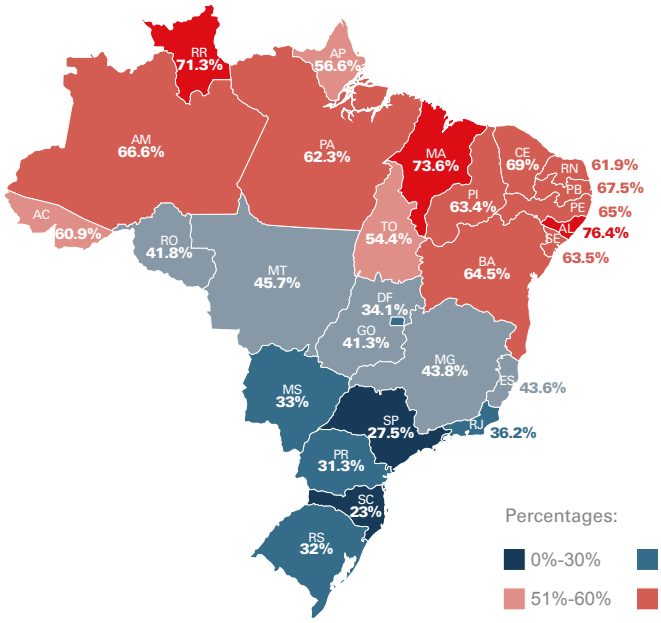



Note: This graph refers to the rate of deprivations per state, and not to the number of children affected by each form of deprivation. The same child may be affected by more than one type of deprivation.

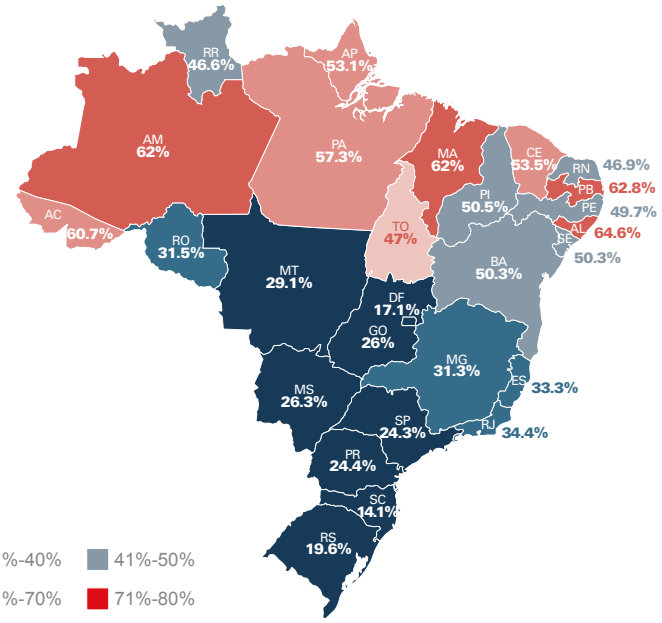
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Continuous PNAD data.

## Monetary deprivation in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

- 2009




- 2018

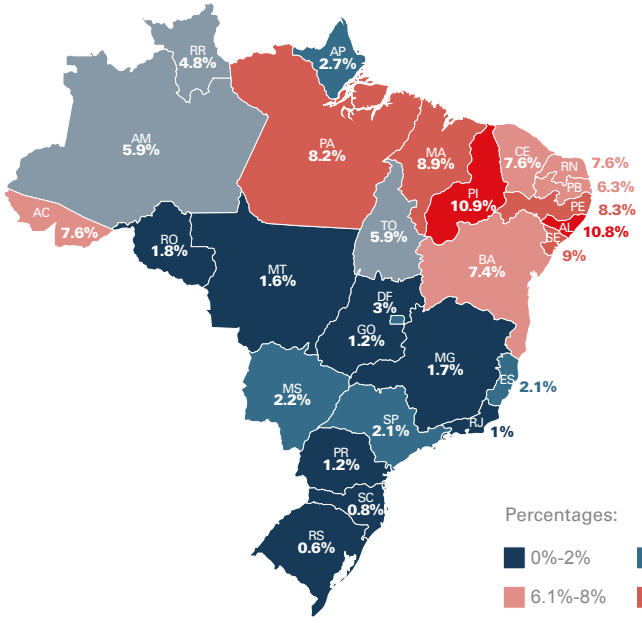



Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

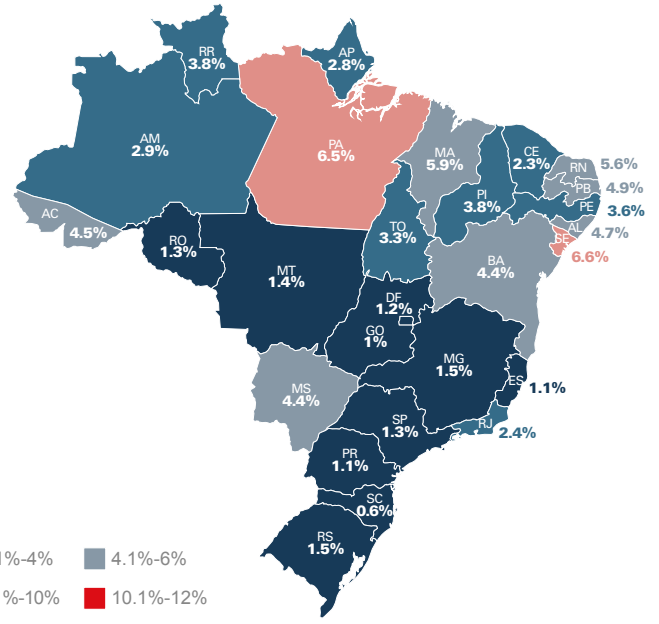
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Illiteracy in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

- 2009




- 2018

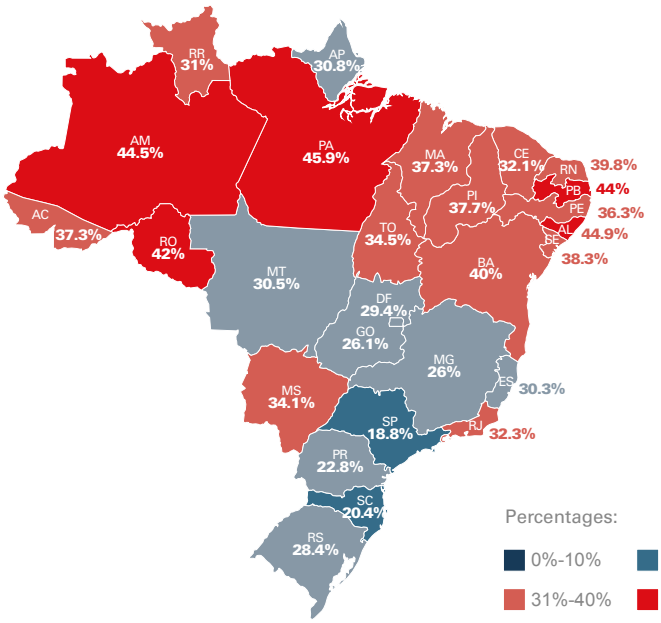



Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

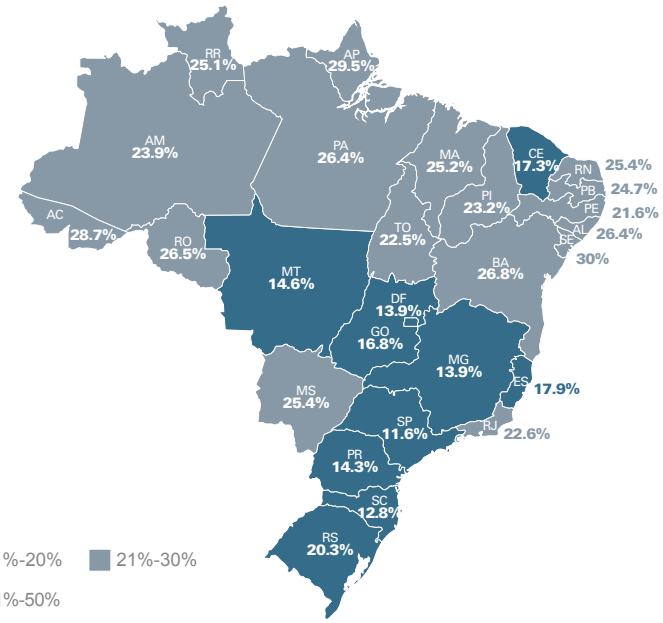
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Deprivation of age/grade distortions in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

● 2009




● 2018

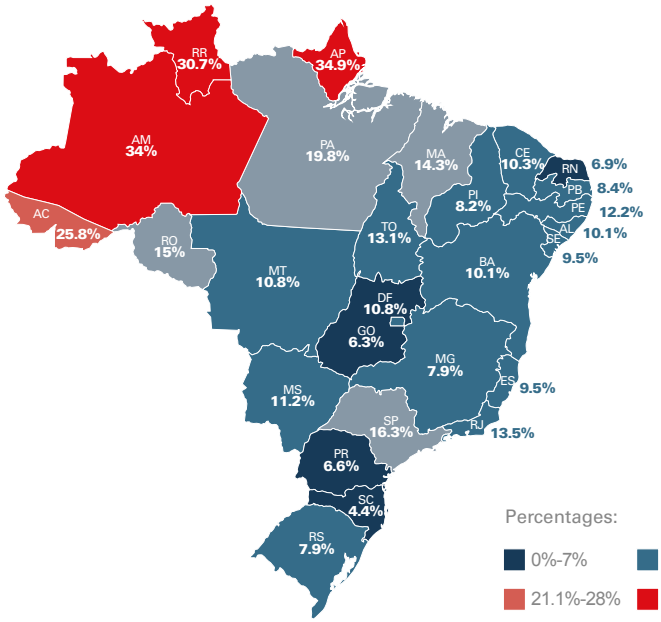



Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

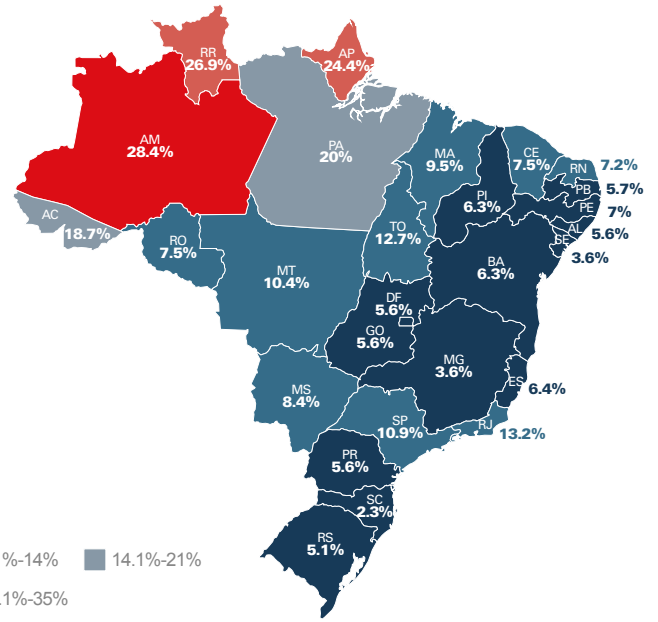
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Deprivation of access to adequate housing in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

● 2009




● 2018

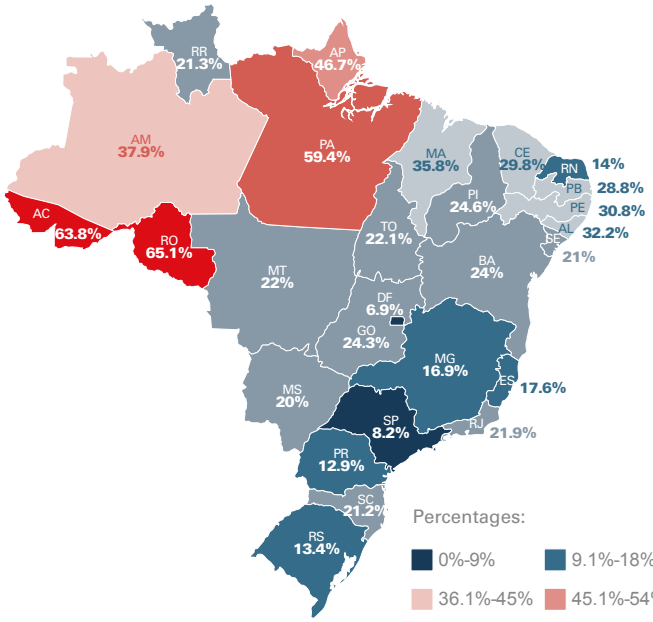



Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

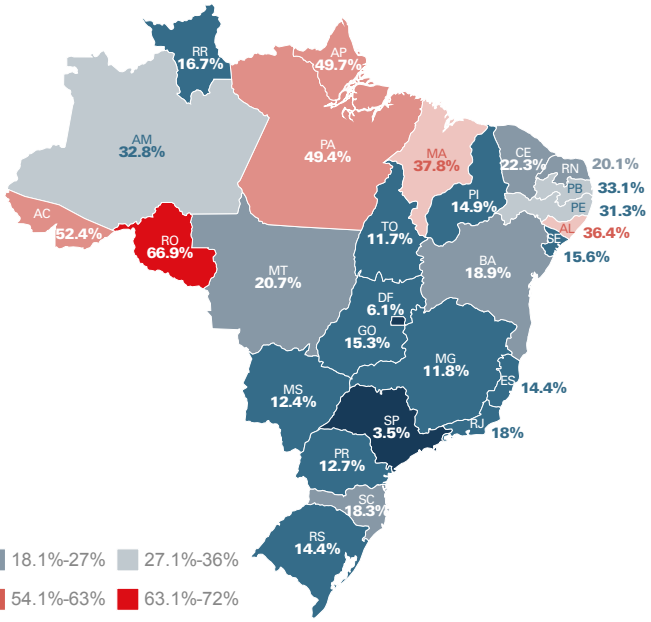
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Deprivation of access to water in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

- 2009




- 2018

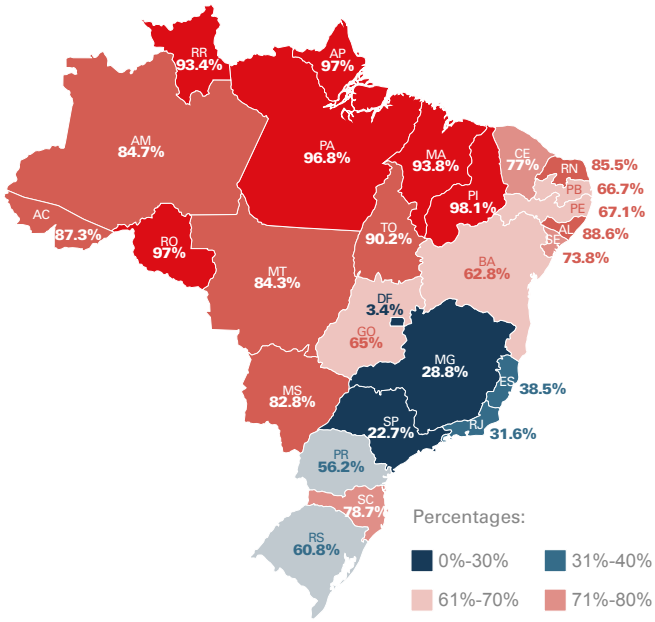



Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

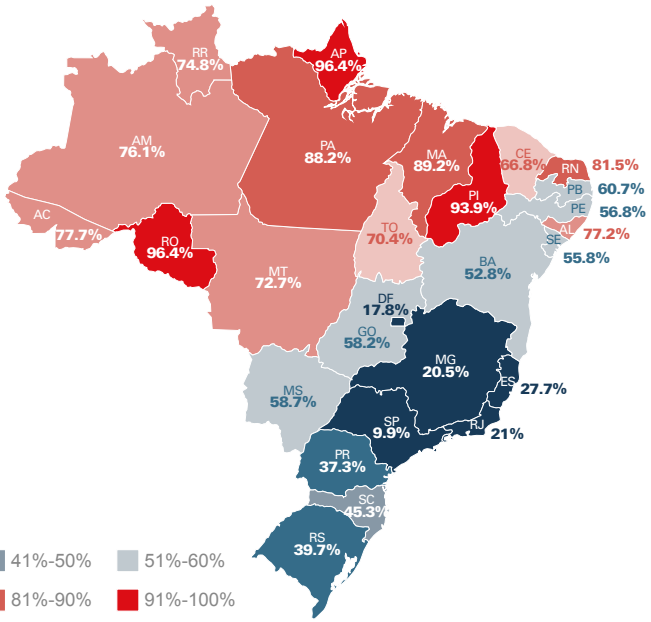
Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Deprivation of access to a bathroom and sewage network in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

- 2009




- 2018



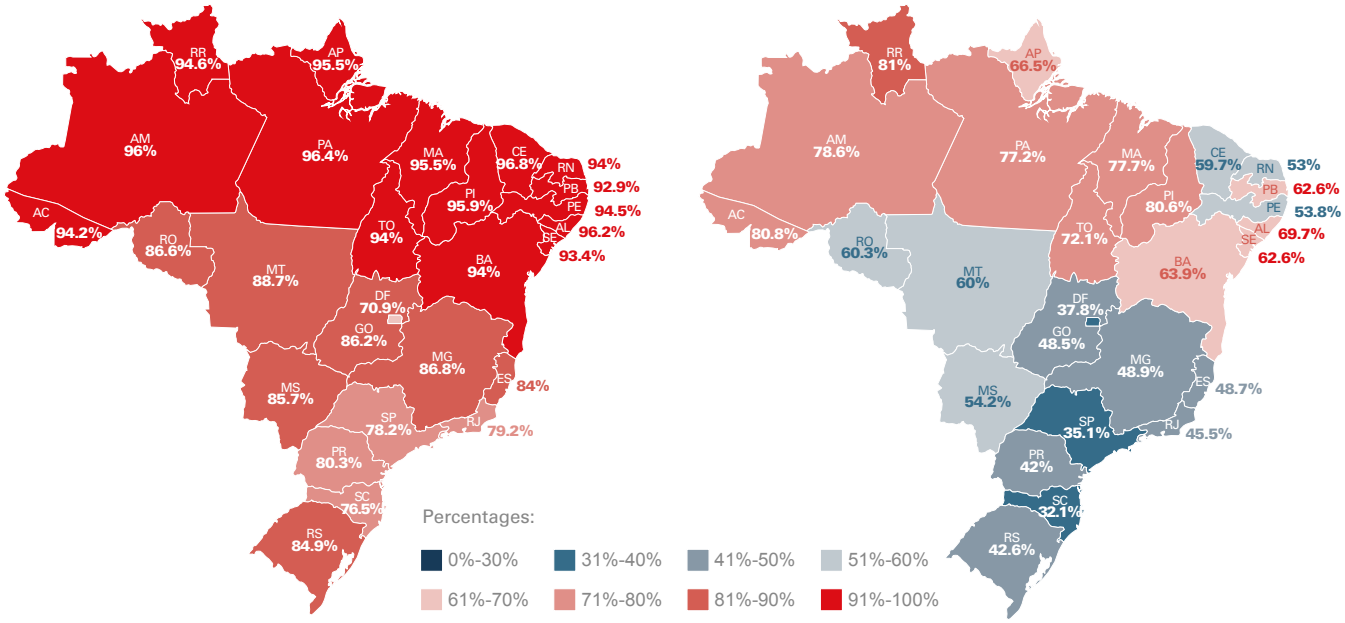

Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.

## Deprivation of access to internet and television in 2009 and 2018 (POF)

2009

2018




Note: POF is IBGE's Consumer Spending Survey.

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on POF data.



This publication, *Multiple Dimensions of Child Poverty in Brazil* presents the findings of a UNICEF study, the summary of which was released in February 2023. In addition to detailed mapping of each dimension and recommendations on approaches for facing up to multidimensional poverty, this report contains updated human depictions of deprivations currently afflicting over 60% of Brazilian boys and girls, based on quantitative analyses and interviews with 109 Brazilian and international experts, fathers, mothers, children and adolescents.

Bringing about change in this scenario is the objective of the 2030 Agenda for achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which needs to be incorporated as a priority into the agendas of governments, businesses and civil society.

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