



Issue Profile: Brazil

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Brazil is in South America. It is the 5th biggest country in the world. Nearly 200 million people live there. Brazil is famous for its beautiful beaches, football, carnival and samba music. The weather is warm but there's also lots of rain!

Brazil is a country of big contrasts. It has deserts, rainforests, and one of the longest rivers in the world, the Amazon. Brazil is a modern country but also has ancient cultures, like the Yanomami Indians who live in the rainforest. The cities are huge with skyscrapers, luxury flats, and private schools right next door to slums, called favelas, where poor people live.

Brazil is made up of native Indians and people who have come from Africa, Europe and Asia.

Facts

- Brasilia is the capital of Brazil.
- Most people speak Portuguese, as well as Spanish, English and other languages.

FAMILY LIFE

Life is very tough for people living in Brazil's favelas. A lot of grown ups can't read or write and don't work. For those who do, it's hard to find work that pays well. A lot of people travel out of the favelas to find work, like cleaning jobs or working at the docks.

A mum or dad has to look after their family, feed them, pay rent on their house and buy clothes with very little money. Imagine going hungry or not having new clothes because your family couldn't afford it?

For some families, things are so tough that they live on rubbish tips. Because of the rubbish, there are lots of flies, cats, and rats. You can imagine the smell! Often children in these families don't go to school. Instead they collect bottles and cans on the rubbish tip for recycling to get a little extra money for their family.

Facts

- At least 43,000 children play, eat, work and sleep on rubbish tips in Brazil.
- People living in the North East, where Recife is, are among the poorest in the country.

EDUCATION

A lot of grown-ups in Brazil can't read and write. This means they can't get good jobs, they don't earn a lot of money, and so their families are poor. Many people in the favelas don't send their children to school because they can't fill out the forms, don't think school is important, or can't afford the shoes, bags and other stuff.

In Brazil uniforms, books, pens and school meals are free. But in Recife lots of children still don't go to school. Going to school can give children a brighter future. It's also where you meet and make loads of friends. If children do not get an education, it makes it very difficult for them to lift themselves out of poverty.

Facts

- In Brazil children between the ages of 7 and 14 are expected to go to school.
- About 100, 000 young people in and around Recife are not in school (they would all fit into the world famous football stadium, Estádio do Maracanã in Rio de Janeiro).
- Many schools have two or three shifts a day so children can attend at a time that suits them, especially if they also work.