

SDG realities for Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent in Brazil

Civil Society Shadow Report Brazil 2026 Voluntary National Review

Who are CDWD?

Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent – in Brazil, principally the Quilombola (descendants of enslaved Africans who formed autonomous territories) and Romani (Cigano) populations. Brazil was the world's largest destination for enslaved Africans and the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery (1888).

Institutional racism remains a structural element of Brazilian society, and the “myth of racial democracy” conceals a rigid stratification in which these communities remain the “poorest of the poor”. The Quilombola population was counted in the national census for the first time only in 2022; the Romani population is still absent from official statistics.^{1,2}

Read the report here:
<https://shorturl.at/ZwjOS>



BRAZIL'S SDG GAP AT A GLANCE

8,441

Quilombola localities counted in 2022 — the first census ever to include them



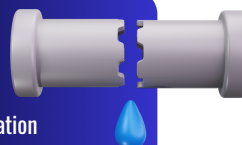
2,7 X

Quilombola illiteracy rate vs the national average



79%

of the Quilombola population faces water supply and sewage problems



83%

of rescued workers self-identified as Black or brown — heavily overrepresented



46

murders of Quilombola leaders & defenders, 2019–2024 (CONAQ)



12.66%

of Quilombolas live in officially delimited territories



The central message of this report: no Voluntary National Review can credibly claim progress on the 2030 Agenda while CDWD remain statistically invisible, territorially insecure and exposed to violence. The evidence below, drawn from civil society research and official IBGE data, reviews the six goals where the gap is most acute.^{1,2}

1 NO POVERTY



SDG 1 — NO POVERTY

Structural racism keeps CDWD in economic vulnerability. Black and brown Brazilians make up **64.2% of the unemployed**; Quilombola women and girls sit at the **bottom of the socio-economic pyramid**. Only 12.66% of Quilombolas live in delimited territories, leaving most exposed to land grabbing and food insecurity, while itinerant Romani communities are excluded from public services that demand proof of residence. Community leaders describe a state budget “administered by white hands” that rarely reaches the quilombos — even as women-led cooperatives in Bahia sustain entire communities without any public policy support.^{1,2}

13.6%

unemployment among black and brown workers — vs 9.2% for white workers (2019)



47.3%

of black and brown workers are in informal work — vs 34.6% of white workers



2X

black women's unemployment rate compared with non-black men



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SDG 3 – GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The Unified Health System (SUS) is universal on paper, but **11.9% of black and 11.4% of mixed-race individuals report discrimination** within it; black women are the primary victims of obstetric violence and maternal mortality. A National Policy for Romani Health Services (Portaria 4384/2018) exists but lacks indicators and implementation. CONAQ's health collectives and the Permanent Forum of Quilombola Women are pressing for a comprehensive Quilombola health policy. It should be noted, however, that much of the available data refers to the Black population in general rather than to Quilombola communities specifically.

The Ministry of Health has recently launched a dedicated Quilombola health panel, drawing on the 2022 Census together with sanitation, education and Primary Health Care records; its very recency, however, signals that the consolidation of national health indicators specific to the Quilombola population remains under development. This lack of fully disaggregated data should itself be understood as an expression of the statistical and institutional invisibility that has historically affected these communities.

These inequities are compounded by environmental racism: the 2019 Brumadinho dam collapse and the ongoing bauxite mining in the Quilombola territories of Oriximiná have devastated the physical and mental health of the predominantly Black and Quilombola populations in their path.^{1,2}

11.9%

of black individuals report feeling discriminated against in SUS services



2018

Romani health policy adopted — still without specific health indicators



2024

first telehealth point in a quilombo (Boa Vista, Pará)



4 QUALITY EDUCATION



SDG 4 – QUALITY EDUCATION

Quilombola illiteracy is **2.7 times the national average**. Women's literacy (82.89%) slightly exceeds men's (79.11%), yet structural barriers — distance to urban centres, absence of student permanence policies — keep higher education out of reach. The Quilombola Movement demands “**Quilombola School Education**”: schooling within the territories that preserves ancestral knowledge.²

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

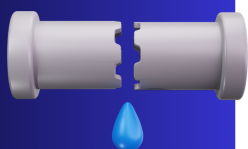


SDG 6 – CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Environmental racism in infrastructure affects **1,047,779 Quilombola people**. While only 2.3% of Brazilians lack tap water, the figure is 13% among Quilombolas – rising to 18.2% inside delimited territories. The lack of private toilets and clean water directly violates the **menstrual dignity** of women and girls, and 65.4% of Quilombolas must burn their rubbish for want of collection services. Dam collapses and agribusiness pollution further contaminate the water sources communities depend on.^{1,2}

79%

face water supply and sewage problems



227,667

Quilombola people live in households with no toilet at all



24.7%

of residents in delimited territories lack an exclusive bathroom (41,493 people)



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG 8 – DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Slavery's legacy persists in the labour market. In 2024, official labour inspections rescued **2,004 people from conditions analogous to slavery in 2024**; an earlier survey of rescued workers found that 83% self-identified as Black or brown. Brazil's monitoring systems, however, do not record whether rescued workers belong to Quilombola communities, so while the Black population is heavily overrepresented there are no disaggregated data with which to measure the incidence of contemporary slavery among Quilombola CDWD specifically.

In the fashion industry, 1.1 million women work informally – 80% with no social security. Child labour complaints rose 65% between 2020 and 2022, and civil society documents girls from Quilombola communities being pushed into domestic servitude. Vulnerability is driven by the same root causes throughout: no income policies, no transport, no land regularisation.^{1,2,4}

2,004

people rescued from slavery-like conditions in 2024; Black and brown workers heavily overrepresented



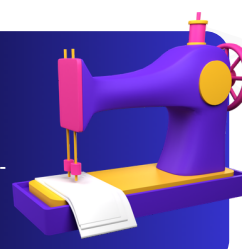
+233%

rise in agricultural slave labour, 2020–2022



1.1M

women in informal fashion-industry work; 80% lack social security



16
PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



SDG 16 – PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

For CDWD the state often acts as an agent of violence rather than a guarantor of rights. CONAQ's report *Vidas Interrompidas*, which compiles killings, threats, and other violence against Quilombola people between 2009 and 2024, documents **46 murders of Quilombola leaders and territorial-rights defenders between 2019 and 2024**, with land conflict among the principal factors behind the recorded deaths and threats. The report gives particular attention to violence against Quilombola women, which is structural and frequently seeks to silence those who lead the defence of territories, collective rights, and traditional ways of life; among murdered Quilombola women, 44.4% were killed by firearms, and torture has been used “to send a message”. Most cases go unsolved. Article 68 of the 1988 Constitution guarantees Quilombola land rights, but titling is paralysed – and the 2019 transfer of Incra to the agribusiness-aligned Ministry of Agriculture set the state against Quilombola interests.^{1,2,3}



August 2023 — Mãe Bernadete, 72-year-old priestess and national coordinator of CONAQ, was shot more than 12 times in her home, with her grandchildren present, after months of reported threats linked to agrarian conflicts. **2021** — **Vitória da Conquista, Bahia**: a retaliatory police operation killed seven members of a single Romani family in an act of “collective revenge”.^{1,2}

RECOMMENDATIONS — AHEAD OF THE 2026 VNR

We call on the Brazilian state to:

- 1 Title Quilombola lands.** Accelerate titling under Article 68, restore Incra's independence, and protect territories from land grabbing and mega-projects.
- 2 End statistical invisibility.** Sustain Quilombola census collection, include the Romani population, and disaggregate all SDG indicators.
- 3 Deliver water and sanitation** to the 79% of Quilombolas facing deficits, prioritising menstrual dignity.
- 4 Implement existing health policies** — Romani Health Services (2018) and a comprehensive Quilombola health policy — with budgets, indicators and telehealth.
- 5 Guarantee Quilombola School Education** in the territories, plus student permanence policies for higher education.

- 6** **Eradicate contemporary slavery and child labour**, pairing enforcement with income, transport and land-regularisation policies.
- 7** **Protect community leaders.** Investigate and prosecute murders of Quilombola leaders — including Mãe Bernadete — and end retaliatory police violence against Romani communities.
- 8** **Fund community economies:** women-led cooperatives and Quilombola family farming, with credit and logistics.

To the international community and the High-Level Political Forum: assess Brazil's 2026 VNR against the situation of CDWD and insist on the guaranteed participation of Quilombola and Romani organisations — including CONAQ and the Permanent Forum of Quilombola Women — in the VNR process.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE — SCOPE OF CDWD IN BRAZIL

In the Brazilian context, the category **Communities Discriminated on Work and Descent (CDWD)** covers principally two groups: **Quilombola communities and Romani (Cigano) communities**. According to the 2022 Demographic Census, Brazil has 1,327,802 Quilombola people, approximately 0.65% of the national population. Where this report draws on data for the broader Black Brazilian population — 92.1 million brown (pardos) and 20.6 million Black (pretos) people, together more than 112 million, over half the country — it does so because structural racism rooted in descent shapes the conditions of that population as a whole. Such figures are identified as referring to the Black population in general and are distinguished throughout from data referring specifically to Quilombola communities; where disaggregated Quilombola data do not yet exist, the report states this rather than inferring Quilombola-specific figures from aggregate Black-population data.⁵

REFERENCES

1. *Regional Report — Latin America and the Caribbean: People Discriminated on Work and Descent in Latin America and the Caribbean, Brazil chapter, 2024.*
2. Santos, Amanda Oliveira; Bomfim, Andréa Souza; Valadares, Samilly. *Discrimination and violence against Quilombola women and girls in access to rights and livelihood guarantees (CDWD Women Report Brazil).*
3. CONAQ — National Coordination for the Articulation of Black Rural Quilombola Communities. *Vidas Interrompidas: killings, threats and violence against Quilombola people, 2009–2024 (Resistência Quilombola project), 2025.*
4. Ministry of Labour and Employment (MTE), Brazil. *Data on workers rescued from conditions analogous to slavery, 2024.*
5. Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). *2022 Demographic Census — Quilombola population and population by colour or race.*
6. Ministry of Health, Brazil. *Quilombola Health Panel (national health dashboard for the Quilombola population).*

Statistics cited from these sources include data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) 2022 Census and official labour inspection records. Superscript numbers throughout the report indicate the source(s) of each section.

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