

Food insecurity hits Brazil's election race

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In Brazil this year, the ghost of hunger hangs over the presidential race. Large-scale inflation and the impact of the pandemic pushed food insecurity to unrecognizable levels nearly a decade ago. One in three Brazilians say they have recently struggled to feed their family. Eager to fall behind in elections and provide relief, President Jair Bolsonaro broke budget rules to increase Brazil's main social protection program by 50% by the end of the year. But she has so far failed to move the needle. Opinion polls show their support among the poorest Brazilians has been stable or falling since more generous payments began. Luciana Messias dos Santos, 29, poses for a photo in front of her empty fridge at her home in the Estrutal favela in Brasília (Reuters) Thawani eats lunch of rice, beans and eggs at his family's Arco Iris Favela (Reuters) Welfare recipients in half a dozen states polled by Reuters were reluctant to credit Bolsonaro with the termination of election-year benefits. Most said they were shooting for their leftist rival, former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who during his presidency from 2003 to 2010 alleviated hunger and extreme poverty thanks to the materials boom raw. In the slums of Brazilian cities, families struggle to feed themselves as hunger grows in the mighty food exporter. "We forgot. There is no lunch today," says Donna Monica in a "favela" called Arco Iris (rainbow) on a river that smells of sewage and urine in the city of Recife, northeast, where dengue fever is rampant. Carla Marquez, 36, six months pregnant, cries as she talks about gas and food prices in the room where she and her family live in So Paulo (Reuters) Luciana stands with her son as she cooks with firewood outside their home (Reuters) In the center of So Paulo, Brazil's largest city, Carla Marquez lives in a room paid for by the church with her husband Carlos Henrique Mendes, 25, and their five-year-old daughter. "We haven't bought food for centuries. The prices are absurdly high. I have nothing to offer her," the 36-year-old mother said in tears. United Nations Hunger Map Brazil's election appears to be another case of rising global food inflation, but hunger appears to be returning to Latin America's largest economy for the better part of a decade. Exactly eight years ago, Brazil achieved its UN goal of prematurely eliminating widespread malnutrition. Since then, the share of Brazilians who say they cannot provide for their families has more than doubled to 36% in the past 12 months, according to the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) think tank. The result is a consensus within Brazil's political establishment that the country needs a stronger social safety net. Nearly every major party and candidate has approved an "emergency" cash grant to 20 million families, benefiting one in four people in Brazil, making it one of the most extensive social programs in the world. Elvira de Fatima Saraiva, 57, prepares dinner in Porto Alegre, the only family meal of the day (Reuters) A view of the Brasília Teimosa favela is seen below residential buildings in the Boa Viagem district of Recife (Reuters) FGV's Marcelo Neri says he has never seen such a central appetite for an electoral debate. "The whole political spectrum is talking about food insecurity, the focus is everywhere," he said. Bolsonaro and Lula both promise they will work to expand or even expand this year's more liberal welfare package. Neither have said how they will fund it – but analysts believe it will mean the end of a constitutional spending cap that has defined fiscal policy for the past six years. Lula in the lead Voters' opinion polls showed Bolsonaro managed to pare Lula's gains earlier this year by increasing Oxilio Brasil and working to cut fuel costs, but Lula has backed off again in the past two weeks. had started doing. Lula got 48.4% of the vote in last Sunday's first round, while Bolsonaro got 43.2% of the vote, meaning Lula didn't score an outright victory. The results of the election will be decided in the second round of voting in three weeks. Maria Jose Arco Iris holds her lunch, a bowl of rice in front of her house in the favela (Reuters) Luciana feeds her 10-month-old child as she sits on the lap of her husband Felipe dos Santos, 26, at their home (Reuters) "The aid did not produce the effect hoped for by the government. The escalation is seen by the people as an electoral maneuver and they reject this decision," pollster Felipe Nunes of Quest Pesquisa e Consultoria told Reuters. FGV economist Mr Neri agreed that Lula's credibility was high among Brazil's poor because Bolsonaro's social protection measures were uncertain. The government cut and then suspended emergency aid after the Covid-19 pandemic, and it was at a lower price when welfare was restored, he said. Meanwhile, food prices rose steadily and rose 9.83% over the year due to fuel and transport costs. "People say Bolsonaro helps. But he gives and then takes back. With Lula it was much better," 29-year-old Luciana Messias dos Santos said. Carla dos Santos Feliciano, 38, pushes a buggy containing fruits and vegetables donated by traders to the CEASA supply center in Rio de Janeiro (Reuters) At the CEASA Supply Center, Carla sorts through discarded food to find food items to cook (Reuters) In his wooden shack in Astrutal, the largest favela in Brasília, he had to adapt his stove to cook with wood as fuel because gas is too expensive. Bolsonaro denied that hunger has become serious in Brazil, angered by its prominence in the campaign. "Hunger in Brazil? It does not exist as it is told," he said in August. Last week, his economy minister, Paulo Guedes, conducted a Penson Network survey that found 33 million people were at risk of starvation. This is a lie. This is a lie. These are not numbers," he said. In Rio de Janeiro, Carla Feliciano, a 38-year-old welfare recipient, says she makes a living picking fruits and vegetables from dumpsters outside a municipal market. He said life became very difficult after the pandemic under the Bolsonaro government. "Kalyan or no welfare doesn't matter. I vote for Lula. I will die as a supporter of Lula," she said. Welfare as an electoral ploy The average income of poor Brazilians has fallen to levels of 10 years ago, increasing the country's social inequalities. Bolsonaro is focused on securing his vote, that he must be re-elected – a daunting task against Lula, whose Bolsa Familia conditional cash transfer program has lifted millions out of poverty for its mandate. Gave. Carla sort through food that has been thrown away to find food items to cook (Reuters) Isabella, 2, eats food prepared from food found in a trash can by her mother Carla (Reuters) Bolsonaro changed the name of the program to Oxilio Brasil to end social ties with Lula, but it did not yield the electoral gains he had hoped for. "Bolsonaro tried to play this card, but it won't help him," said Carla's husband Carlos. He said he would vote for Lula and his Workers' Party. His wife wasn't so sure. Adeline Alves, who lives in a tent with her children and grandchildren just 800 meters from the presidency in Brasília, says she is watching Bolsonaro's movements. The mistrust of Bolsonaro's intentions, held by Carlos and Adeline, has been echoed by low-income Brazilians from Porto Alegre in the deep south to Salvador and Recife in the northeast. "They think we are stupid. Wellbeing increases by 400 [£70] When supermarket prices have gone up so much, 600 reais doesn't help," said the migrant from poor northeast Brazil. "People are going to starve." Similar Posts:

