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Six mln Brazilians lifted out of poverty in 2006

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Six million Brazilians were lifted above the poverty line in 2006, said the Getulio Vargas Foundation (FGV) in a study released on Wednesday.

The number of Brazilian citizens living below the poverty line dropped by 15 percent in 2006 compared with 2005. The FGV stressed that it was the best result since the entity started carrying out the study in 1992.

The result reflected the government's policies implemented over the past few years, such as the "Family Scholarship" aimed at helping families keep their children in schools by providing financial aid, among other targets, said the report.

The subsequent minimum wage rises were also mentioned as a key factor.

"I think that the drop in 2006 will be repeated in 2007. Once economic growth is good, there is a good prospect of employment growth and there is also continuity in the government's social programs," said FGV economist Marcelo Neri, who is in charge of the study.

This is the first time the population living in extreme poverty represented less than 20 percent of the country's population.

Neri also stressed that the incomes of the country's poorest 10percent of citizens rose by 57.4 percent in the period, while those of the wealthiest 10 percent increased by 6.8 percent, which helped attenuate income distribution inequalities.

The FGV has analyzed income distribution and poverty over the past 15 years based on data provided

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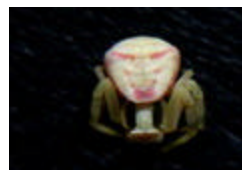
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