

Country Handbook: Brazil



Introduction

Travelling to see the work of Compassion and our local church partners firsthand is an unforgettable experience. On this trip, you'll see for yourself how children are known, loved and protected by their church communities and are being released from poverty in Jesus' name.

This Country Handbook is designed to start preparing you for your trip to Brazil. Please read it before you depart, and we'd also recommend that you keep it handy for easy reference.

We pray that God will bless your time in Brazil!



Country Information



Brazil is the world's fifth largest country. Brazilians have a vibrant and energetic passion for life, and they take much pride in their origin, culture and traditions. Brazilians have an inherent passion for soccer and the country's national team have won the World Cup five times. It's normal to see children using makeshift props for goals and balls as they play in the streets.

Main languages:

Portuguese

Climate:

Mostly tropical, but temperate in the south (hot temperatures year-round)

Main religions:

Roman Catholic (50%),
Evangelical (31%), Spiritist (3%)

Currency:

Brazilian Real (R\$)



Compassion in Brazil

Compassion has been working to release children from poverty in Jesus' name in Brazil since 1975. 4.4 per cent of people live below the poverty line.

Compassion's Child Sponsorship Program is tailored to be age-appropriate for each child.

Children **AGED 1 TO 3** receive home-based care.

Children **AGED 3 AND OLDER** attend their local Compassion centre before or after school.



For more information on Brazil, scan the QR code or visit:
compassion.com.au/where-we-work/brazil

Compassion assisted children in Brazil typically attend program activities at their local child development centres. Here is an example of what a typical program day looks like:

Devotional time - Children are taught to pray.

Spiritual lessons - Children sing songs and learn Bible stories. Compassion Brazil gives age-appropriate Bibles to children when they are 6 and 10, and when they graduate from the Child Sponsorship Program.

Break and snack time - Children can play in a safe environment and develop friendships. A snack often consists of an egg sandwich with tea, fruit shake and crackers, fruit salad, or bread.

Social-emotional lessons - Children learn conflict resolution skills and how to develop healthy self-esteem and a godly character. Children often come from challenging home environments and are taught social and personal skills.

Lunch and social time - Children generally receive a meal such as pasta, rice, vegetables and/or meat.

Health lessons - Children are taught practical health and hygiene tips..

Letter writing and career planning - Older children work with local staff to identify their strengths and interests, setting realistic goals for their future.

In addition to Compassion's curriculum, children have opportunities to participate in activities such as sports tournaments, camps, dance performances and job fairs, as well as excursions to parks, museums, zoos and local companies. Older students are typically involved in skills workshops such as hairdressing, information technology and office skills.



Language

- Useful Portuguese phrases:

Hello: Oi/Olá

Thank you: Obrigado/a

Please: Por favor

Excuse me: Com licença

How are you? Como está?

I'm good, thank you: Estou bem, obrigado/a

I don't understand: Não entendo

I'm sorry: Sinto muito

Yes: Sim

No: Não

Greetings

- Depending on the region and level of familiarity, it's common to greet one another with a kiss on the cheek and a hug.
- Brazilians are typically open and friendly people who chat in an animated and engaged manner. Brazilians are easy to approach, and anybody will talk to you on the streets despite the language barrier.
- Please be aware that Brazilians do not perceive themselves as Hispanic and, in some cases, will take offence if they are addressed in Spanish.

Security

- Please ask permission before you photograph any local people. This can include photos taken from a moving vehicle, so be sure to check with your driver or Trips and Visits Specialist first.

Emergency contact information:

Local emergency number: 190

Compassion Brazil office: +55 85 3048-4343

Australian Embassy: +55 61 3226 3111

Body language

- Physical contact, such as touching arms, elbows and backs, is very common and acceptable in Brazil.
- The OK sign (making a circle with your thumb and index finger) is considered rude; the thumbs up gesture is instead used to indicate approval.
- Clicking the tongue and shaking the head indicates disagreement or disapproval.

Clothing

- **Men:** Casual clothing such as shorts and t-shirts are acceptable in most contexts, but please wear long pants when visiting local church partners or attending services.
- **Women:** Jeans, long pants and knee-length shorts are acceptable in most contexts. Some local church partners expect women to wear skirts or long dresses when visiting.
- Layered clothing is recommended as temperatures can change significantly throughout the day.
- It is best to wear closed-in shoes when visiting local church partners or children.

Eating and drinking

- Eating and drinking in Brazil is counted as much a social activity as a daily necessity. Lengthy meals (two hours or more for lunch) are common.
- A standard diet typically consists of beans, rice, meat or fish and a selection of salad and vegetables. Lunch is often followed by a simple dessert such as pudim (like a flan) and almost always by a shot of espresso with plenty of sugar.
- Brazilians always wash their hands before eating and rarely touch food with their hands. It's common to use a knife and fork for everything, even fruit.
- Brazilians often tend to eat quietly. Making noises with plates and cutlery is considered poor etiquette.



Key Challenges and Prayer Points

Providing children in poverty with access to healthcare is a key priority for our local church partners in Brazil. Please pray that this work would continue to expand so more children receive vital care and access to medicine.

Brazil faces high crime rates, with many young girls vulnerable to abuse and sexual exploitation. Please pray for an end to this violence and ask God to give our local church partners wisdom as they work to protect children.

Helping children develop basic literacy and numeracy skills is a key way that Compassion is working to protect children from abuse and exploitation. Please pray for the local church and child development centre staff as they invest in educating the next generation.

Despite millions of people lifted out of poverty over the last decades, Brazil still faces a deeply ingrained issue of social inequality between the country's richest and the rest of the population. Pray that God would provide economic stability as parents and caregivers seek to provide for their families.



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