

## SCOPING REVIEW ON QUILOMBOLA COMMUNITIES IN BRAZIL'S CENTRAL-WEST REGION: HEALTH AND CULTURE IN FOCUS

Yasmim Francisca O. Marques; Yasmim Jamilly C. Silva;  
Isabella Gomes de Oliveira Karnikowski; Emmanuely Nunes Costa;  
Kerolyn Ramos Garcia; Margô Gomes de Oliveira

### Abstract

**Background:** Quilombola communities in Brazil are recognized as ethnically and culturally distinct groups with historical ties to African ancestry and strong territorial identity. Despite advances in recognition, these populations remain exposed to multiple health, social, and environmental vulnerabilities, especially in the Central-West region. **Purpose:** This study aimed to map recent scientific literature (2015–2025) on quilombola communities in Brazil's Central-West region, identifying trends, knowledge gaps, and social determinants of health affecting these populations. **Methods:** A scoping review was conducted using the SciELO, PubMed, LILACS, and BVS databases. Descriptors included “quilombolas,” “quilombo,” “Brazil,” and “Central-West.” Twenty studies were selected based on relevance to themes such as health, culture, sanitation, food security, and public policies. Data were synthesized thematically. **Results:** Five major thematic axes emerged: (1) High prevalence of chronic diseases and limited access to primary care; (2) Inadequate sanitation, including untreated water and insufficient sewage systems; (3) Cultural and traditional knowledge, including the use of medicinal plants and community-based child care practices; (4) Socioeconomic vulnerability, with low income and limited schooling, particularly among women and children; and (5) Difficulties in accessing public services due to poor infrastructure and administrative neglect. Key gaps identified included the lack of studies on mental health, climate change impacts, and effectiveness of specific public policies. **Conclusion:** The review highlights significant structural challenges faced by quilombola communities, including health inequities and limited access to basic services. It also emphasizes the persistence of social exclusion despite legal recognition and community resilience through traditional practices. **Implications:** Findings reinforce the urgent need for intersectoral public policies tailored to the realities of quilombola populations, focusing not only on vulnerability mitigation but also on enhancing their cultural and organizational strengths. This knowledge may inform healthcare strategies, public planning, and future research on ethnic equity and territorial justice in aging and long-lived populations.

**Keywords:** Quilombola communities; Public health; Social determinants.