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Human Rights and Multilevel Governance**



**PUBLIC POLICIES AS A TOOL FOR PREVENTION
OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE ROLE OF
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION IN BRAZIL**

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ACRONYMS

UN Women	The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women
IBGE	Instituto Brasileiro de geografia e estatística
ONU	Organização das Nações Unidas
WHO	World Health Organization
SPM	Special Secretariat for Women's Policies
NGO	Non-governmental organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
ABSP	Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública
FBSP	Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública
IPEA	Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada
MPU	Medidas Protetivas de Urgência
UF	Unidade da Federação
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
PNPM	National Plan of Policies for Women
DEAM	Delegacias Especializadas de Atendimento à Mulher
MERCOSUR	Mercado comum do sul
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
LGBTQI+	Lesbians, gays, bissexual, transgender, queer, intersex..
CNDM	National Council for Women's Rights
PNEVM	Política Nacional de Enfrentamento de Violência contra à mulher
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
DEAM	Specialized Police Stations for Attending to Women
SAMVVIS	Service for Attendance to Women Victims of Sexual Violence
IBOPE	Instituto Brasileiro de Opinião Pública e Estatística
CLDF	Legislative Chamber of the Federal District
MMFDH	Ministério da mulher, família e direitos humanos
IACHR	Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

ABSTRACT

Violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon that affects women of all social groups. Women have only been able to access rights after much feminist mobilization, which to this day demands women's rights and gender equality. Brazil is a country that since the 80s has been working to build public policies and specialized services for women. However, even with many existing public policies, the number of women who suffer violence is still very high. The lack of information about existing public policies or the difficulty in accessing this information can be an obstacle to women having knowledge about the public policies and accessing their rights. This study aims to investigate how access to information can be a tool to prevent violence against women in Brazil. It will analyze the way different media outlets communicate the different public policies for the prevention of violence against women that already exist in Brazil. The result of this research informed which are the existing public policies in Brazil for the prevention of violence against women. The study also showed that the places that receive women find it difficult to disseminate information so that more women can use this service and the independent tools of feminist communication also find it difficult to do their job. The official communication made by the government needs to be clearer, with more accessible language and be transmitted through different communication tools so that it reaches more people and they have information to access their rights.

Keywords: Violence against women, information, communication, prevention

Introduction

Gender is an element of social interaction that results in the attribution significance to power relations (Scott 1986)¹. These power relations had established a superiority of the male gender since the 18th century with the Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens in Europe. In Brazil, the principles of patriarchy arrived with the European colonizers, gaining form after colonization.

Modern feminism had its origin with the discussions about women political rights in the 19th century, being the United Kingdom, France and United States the countries precursors of the feminist movement (Rendall 1985 p.2). In Brazil, in turn, the first manifestations of the feminist movement took place at the end of the century, extending until the first three decades of the 20th century (Pinto, 2003 p. 63). The feminist movements were formed by women that organized themselves to fight and claim their rights, and they have faced many hardships and barriers to achieve rights and voice in society. Although women have rights guaranteed by law, in practice, women continue to experience sexism and misogyny.

Gender-based violence is a reality around the world and it happens regardless of race, age or social class, and it can be perpetrated against women, men, children and adolescents, but women are the victims in the vast majority of cases. This fact highlights the clear historical origin of these occurrences. Gender-Based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based only on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms.²

Even though the feminist movement started in the 18th and 19th centuries, the first conference to discuss women rights and policies to protect women was held in 1975 by the UN and only in 1995 the conference generated a document considered to be marked a significant turning point for women's rights by creating the key global policy document on gender equality and addressing the issues of violence against women.³

1

² UN Women (1995). The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. *Platform for Action: Violence Against Women*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm>

³ UN Women (1995). *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/Beijing%20full%20report%20E.pdf>

In Brazil, the access to laws protecting women took many years after the conference to be created. After many struggles, in 2006, the foremost law to curb domestic and family violence against women was created, the Maria da Penha Law n. 11,340. The law was named after Mrs. Maria da Penha who, after suffering domestic violence and homicide attempts, sought international support due to Brazil's neglect. Nowadays, the Maria da Penha Law is the best known law in Brazil, with 99% of the female population knowing about its existence.⁴

Despite the wide dissemination of the Law and it being considered the third best law in the world for protecting women,⁵ Brazil was the first country in absolute number of femicides in Latin America and Caribbean⁶. The tolerance of gender-based violence, as well as, women are still being affected by sexism, discrimination and patriarchy, fuels the number of femicides in the country.

In spite of the Law on paper being well structured, it became faulty and frequently ineffective. The problems range from the sexist behavior of some judges and delegates, the insufficient number of police stations and specialized courts to the fear of reprisals, embarrassment, or the impunity of the aggressors.

Another important public policy in Brazil is the National Policy to Confront Violence against Women, that intends to prevent, combat, assist and guarantee women's rights,⁷ but, similarly to the Law, the public policies created to protect women do not guarantee their safety. Among all the obstacles associated with combating gender-based violence, the inaccessibility to the rights ensured by public policies is a relevant hurdle.

There are few studies on the effectiveness of such policies, and the reports created are of little help in identifying which precise aspects warrant further improvement in effectiveness. Therefore, this lack of engagement to public policies might be related to

⁴ DataSenado (March, 2013). *Violência Doméstica e Familiar Contra a Mulher*. Retrieved from https://www.senado.gov.br/senado/datasenado/pdf/datasenado/DataSenado-Pesquisa-Violencia_Domestica_contra_a_Mulher_2013.pdf

⁵ Brasil, Câmara dos Deputados (September, 2013). *Os avanços e os desafios da Lei Maria da Penha*. Retrieved from <https://www.camara.leg.br/radio/programas/413523-os-avancos-e-os-desafios-da-lei-maria-da-penha/>

⁶ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (2021). *Femicide or femicide*. Retrieved from <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-femicide>

⁷ SPM (2011). *Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência Contra as Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

several factors, including women's failure to fully comprehend how these policies work and what they secure, thereby, the diffusion of information and the means of communication requires attention.

The primary aim is to give an overview about the scenario of violence against women and importance of information and communication to confront the problem and to gather theoretical and methodological inputs from previous research to investigate and analyze the public policies created to confront the violence against women in Brazil. Next, this research intends to analyze the documents produced by international conventions that Brazil is a party State and to investigate how the information and communication are used to confront the violence against women.

Finally, this research has the objective of investigating how access to information can be a tool to prevent violence against women in Brazil.

Chapter 1- Overview about violence against women and the role of information and communication in Brazil

1.1. Violence against women and feminist theory

Gender is a social construction of behavior, preferences and performance that refers to one's biological sex at birth. Scott in 1986 defined the term as follows:

"Gender is a constitutive element of social relations based on perceived differences between the sexes... gender is a primary way of giving meaning to power relations." (Scott, 1986).

Within the definitions of gender, it was established that the male gender was superior, and the female gender was not even considered to be citizens, as can be seen in the title in the Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens⁸, from 1789, the rights described there were not directed to women. This represents the patriarchy that began to take shape in Brazil after colonization, with the arrival of European and African women, and their interaction with indigenous people. Women were underrated and the men who had possessions and were the patriarchs of the families had control of everything, including women (Vale et al. 2021).

After understanding about the definition of gender, one can also start to define gender inequality, which is when men and women do not access resources, places and rights the same way. And since power relations between men and women that we have been documented since the biblical stories, gender injustice and inequality has been perpetuated for over 2000 years.

A survey conducted in Brazil by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)⁹ in 2020 shows that women spend an average of 21,4 hours a week on domestic chores and men an average of 11 hours¹⁰. Following the genders disparities is

⁸ National Assembly of France (1789). *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789*. Retrieved from: https://constitutionnet.org/sites/default/files/declaration_of_the_rights_of_man_1789.pdf

⁹ Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

¹⁰ IBGE (2020). *Em média, mulheres dedicam 10,4 horas por semana a mais que os homens aos afazeres domésticos ou ao cuidado de pessoas*. Retrieved from: <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-sala-de-imprensa/2013-agencia-de-noticias/releases/27877-em-media-mulheres-dedicam-10-4-horas-por-semana-a-mais-que-os-homens-aos-afazeres-domesticos-ou-ao-cuidado-de-pessoas>

the country, in 2021 the salary gap between men and women increased 1,3% when compared to the previous year, resulting in women receiving salaries 22% lower than men¹¹. So the legacy of inequality continues until today, even though society has modernized and revised some concepts, the traditional division of role and responsibilities expected from women continues to be a reality in Brazilian society, thus women spend twice as much time doing domestic chores and men still earn more, showing the existing difference based on gender.

Gender had many definitions during the years, but for this work it is important to comprehend the gender concept for the feminist movements. According to Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex*,¹² no one is born a woman, they become one, precisely because of the impositions and performances that are expected as a woman considering the place and period in which she was born.

Feminism is a movement that is now in its fourth wave¹³ and exists precisely to fight against gender inequality. Women have always suffered hardship and were considered inferior, but after many years of claiming and creating organized movements, they have won the right to vote, sexual freedom and autonomy to decide about their lives.

The first wave of feminism originated at the end of the nineteenth century in England and had as its main driver the fight for rights and the more evident victory in this wave was the achievement of the right to vote in 1918 (Pinto, 2010). Women's suffrage originated during this first wave and the participants of this movement. As Soihet (2015) portrays, "Feminists, literati and all those who escaped the traditional female stereotype are presented, contradictorily, as ugly, women's supreme sin, masculinized, coarse and tormentors of their husbands".

The second wave of the feminist movement happened in the 60s of the twentieth century amid important historical events such as the emergence of the hippie movement and major political tensions in the United States and Europe (Pinto, 2010). The important milestones of the second wave were the issues of sexual freedom and women's bodies. In 1960 the first contraceptive pill was created from the feminist ideals of Margaret Sanger and Katherine McCormick investment. The following year it arrived in Europe and

¹¹ IBGE (2021). *Síntese de indicadores sociais: Uma análise das condições de vida da população brasileira*. Retrieved from: <https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/livros/liv101892.pdf>

¹² De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. Random House, 1997.

¹³ Chamberlain, Prudence. *The Feminist Fourth Wave: Affective Temporality*. Springer, 2017.

became popular because it was affordable and gave women freedom of control over their bodies¹⁴. Also in this wave, the idea that women differ from each other and that the movement needed to consider the political, geographical and economic diversity of women, also because inequalities are somehow related, began to be discussed.¹⁵

In the mid-1980s, the third wave of the feminist movement began and was marked by the debate on the role of women in society, focusing on the breaking of stereotypes and the deconstruction of the sexualized, pejorative image and fragility that was constantly shared in the media. The premise of this moment was the abandonment of the ideology of "victims", addressed during the 60s, focusing on the neoliberal individualism present in the works of great thinkers such as Gloria Steinem, Naomi Wolf and Natasha Walter, who advocate the empowerment of women as a key to their emancipation (Collective Não Me Kahlo, 2016)¹⁶: "the insistence on pointing out the oppression suffered by women would be the real responsible for the inequalities that still endure (...). For Wolf, the main obstacle for women, therefore, is not in structural oppression or macho culture, but in the fear of female power" (Collective Não Me Kahlo, 2016, p. 63).

And from the third wave on women began to live feminism as an individual struggle to detach themselves from ideas of traditional feminism that had much the question of emancipation from the capitalist machine and the "inner revolution"(Fraser, 2009).

Nowadays, the fourth wave of feminism is taking place, which is configured through digital activism in which the media are important tools to share discussions and ideologies, but also to protest, denounce and claim rights (Munro, 2013) The gender issue has been discussed and claimed for a long time, but unfortunately gender violence in the world still affects many people.

Gender appears as the precursor to much violence, and this is the bias we will look at during this study. Gender-Based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based only on their gender, most often being directed to women. It is rooted in

¹⁴ National Geographic. Delivering "The Pill" Wasn't Easy. (2014). Retrieved from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/article/141218-birth-control-pill-contraception-science-medicine-ngbooktalk>

¹⁵ Friedan, B. *Mística Feminina*. Petrópolis, RJ: Editora Vozes Limitada. 1963

¹⁶ Coletivo Não Me Kahlo (2016). *#Meuamigosecreto - Feminismo Além Das Redes*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Edições de Janeiro, pp. 63.

gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms.¹⁷ . The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women which is a document made by the United Nations in 1993, defines the violence against women in its first article as “ any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”.¹⁸

Violence against women is, unfortunately, a phenomenon that has always been present in contemporary society and has been studied and defined by many bodies for over 40 years.

In the world, it is estimated that about one-third of all women have suffered some type of violence, but this number may be even higher when we think that the daily violence that happens inside homes is impossible to measure (Gomes *et al.*, 2014).

In the Brazilian context, the sexism and the roles that women should play in society are intrinsically cultural, so there are many barriers to confront violence against women, even women themselves who suffer violence cannot understand and bring to individual reflection how much their existence is violated. An important Brazilian actress named Monica Martelli, said in an interview in 2022¹⁹ that she understood at the age of 50 that her first sexual relationship, which happened during her adolescence, was a rape. This is the reality of many Brazilian women because access to information and tools to prevent violence are still very limited. The incidence of violence against women is so high in Brazil that, according to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2015 the country ranked fifth in the world²⁰ in femicide. The rate of femicide is 4.8 per 100,000 women²¹.

¹⁷ UN Women (1995). The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. *Platform for Action: Violence Against Women*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/violence.htm>

¹⁸ UN (1993). *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women Proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993*. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.21_declaration%20elimination%20vaw.pdf

¹⁹ Folha de S. Paulo (2023). *Mônica Martelli diz ter sido estuprada na adolescência: 'Era uma luta corporal'*. Retrieved from <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/ilustrada/2023/01/monica-martelli-diz-ter-sido-estuprada-na-adolescencia-era-uma-luta-corporal.shtml>

²⁰ Universidade Federal de São Paulo (2016). *Brasil é o 5º país que mais mata mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www.unifesp.br/reitoria/dci/publicacoes/entreteses/item/2589-brasil-e-o-5-pais-que-mais-mata-mulheres>

²¹ ONU mulheres (2015). *Mapa da Violência 2015: Homicídio de Mulheres no Brasil*. Retrieved from http://www.onumulheres.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/MapaViolencia_2015_mulheres.pdf

The data on violence against women in Brazil and in the world show that the path to combat this type of violence is still very difficult. Even though public policies have been created at all levels of government since the first declaration against discrimination and violence against women, many people still do not access these public policies and suffer daily violations. Brazil is a country that is slowly advancing in the fight against violence, but the way society in general sees the problem does not help to solve it.

To solve the problem of gender violence it is necessary to invest a lot in education to change the mentality that exists a relation of superiority between men and women and how this gives men the power to control relationships and the existence of women to this day. In Brazil macho culture and sexism impacts even on the construction of public policies for women to access their basic rights because women do not occupy political spaces proportionally to the number of women we have in Brazil, so many decisions in this regard still rely on men's opinion.

1.2. State of the art on public policy and violence against women

Before starting to discuss the role of information and communication in the use of public policies as a tool to assist in the prevention of violence against women, it is convenient to present previous research on public policies in Brazil in order to establish the state of the art of this theme.

With the strengthening of the feminist movement in Brazil in the late 1970s, the area of gender studies was consolidated in the country. The country ratified the CEDAW in 1984²², aiming to combat the evident problem faced by the country in relation to violence against women, which is mainly based on discrimination and the culture of women's inferiority. However, as it is explained by (Camargo & Aquino, 2003), since the time of the ratification of the CEDAW, the actions of the government were limited basically to the police protection and to the legal forwarding of the cases, aiming at the punishment of the aggressor and repairing to the victim", demonstrating the insufficiency of these actions for an intervention of impact on the problem.

²² CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

In one of the first Brazilian studies approaching public politics, (Farah 2004) argues that the incorporation of the perspective of gender for public politics was scarce explored and that although some public politics resulted in impacts in the women, they had focus in other subjects, as it was the case of the programs of generation of job and income, that aimed primarily at the combat to the poverty, but resulted in the autonomy of the women. The author also discusses the initiatives aimed at combating violence against women, which reflected the demands of women's organizations and feminist movements, but mostly included only health care and education, with emphasis on the training of women assisted, aiming at their social reintegration (Farah, 2004).

Later, some advances in relation to public policies were discussed, discussing the creation of the Police Stations for Attending to Women as of the 1980s, first implemented in São Paulo and then being expanded to the rest of Brazil. Although most of the police stations were located in the State of São Paulo and the service was almost restricted to the capital cities, the number of police occurrence registrations increased throughout the country. The authors explain that the policies consisted of services focused on the issue of violence, mainly physical and sexual violence committed by women's partners and ex-partners (Grossi, Tavares, and Oliveira 2008).

Research on public policies aimed at women in Brazil, especially those aimed at combating violence against women, were few and far between a little over a decade ago. This was because the creation of the policies themselves had a time gap of a few years between them. In the discussions elaborated by the author (Santos, 2010) the pressure from feminist organizations and legal entities participating in the Courses of Popular Legal Promoters, promoted by the Women's Union of São Paulo, led to the creation of the Special Criminal Family Court by the Court of Justice of São Paulo.

The author exposed the triviality with which violence against women was treated, being considered within the category of criminal offenses of less offensive potential, with a penalty of less than two years of detention. And the importance of the appearance of the Special Criminal Courts in the mid-1990s, as these increased the penalties for offenses of bodily harm (of a light nature) and threats, which directly impacted women in situations of violence, although they were not designed to deal with the problem of domestic violence against women. In addition, this study was one of the first to discuss the implementation of Law 11.340 of 2006 and its monitoring (Santos 2010).

In 2003, the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies (SPM) was created to collaborate in the formulation, coordination, and articulation of policies for women, to design and implement educational and non-discriminatory campaigns on gender and to promote gender equality. It was also the Secretariat's role to cooperate with international, public and private entities, to implement and monitor affirmative action legislation to comply with agreements, conventions and action plans signed by Brazil on gender equality.

De Tilio (2012) addressed the role of this Secretariat in his work, as well as the expansion of public policies for confronting violence against women, which left the hitherto usual strategies of creating specialized services and training professionals in the network of care for women in situations of violence aside, going on to elaborate norms and standards of care, improve legislation, encourage the establishment of networks of services, support educational and cultural projects for the prevention of violence and increase women's access to justice and public safety services.

In addition, the author analyzed the main national and international legal frameworks for combating violence against women, highlighting the reports produced at the 3rd National Conference on Policies for Women, held in late 2011, which should guide the construction of a new national plan for women's policy that establishes new guidelines, objectives, goals and actions (De Tilio 2012).

In 2014, public policies to combat violence against women gained more attention and several authors published research on the subject. Some advances had been observed, such as the expansion of services, which, when compared to the beginning of the decade, showed an unquestionable increase, as Lima and Deslandes (2014) demonstrated in their work. The authors discussed that, despite this increase, several issues still needed to be raised and challenges to be overcome, such as the concentration of services in capital cities, the volume of women who suffered violence, but could not access their rights, the slowness of the processes, the lack of preparation of the professionals responsible for the care of these women, highlighting the importance of preparing specialists for this type of care.

Other difficulties pointed for the authors were the posture of the government entities that for religious influences had retroceded in relation to some politics, as the obstacles faced for the women who had right to the legal abortion, and the high maternal

mortality resultant of the attempt of interruption of the pregnancy. There was also the instability of services due to the concern of local managers with the votes in the election period or in losing the support of conservative sectors of society, even the funding for states and municipalities to organize their services had been a highlight at the time. The authors also discuss, the policies aimed at health who have suffered sexual violence, with a focus on sexually transmitted infections and AIDS and the construction of intersectoral pacts and efforts to implement international agreements and conventions (De Lima and Deslandes 2014).

In the same period, Lisboa (2014) sought to discuss the importance of professionals, managers, public agents and jurists, and the incorporation of the gender perspective in the conduct of public policies. As the pressure organized by the feminist movements played a fundamental role throughout the process of drafting laws and proposals for public policies to combat violence against women, civil society played a fundamental role in the implementation of new policies and the integration of a perspective based on gender equity, to combat the relations of inequality between genders that configure an overlapping domination over women (Lisboa, 2014).

Monteiro (2014) sought to highlight in his work first the long period in which violence against women was restricted to the intimacy of the home, so the author stated that it was a " complex and controversial issue that involves moral concepts, power/affect dynamics, subordination/domination, therefore "private" and difficult to approach". The author discussed the phenomenon, addressing the economic, social, and health costs generated by it, in addition to issues related to domination/submission involving gender relations.

The statistics presented by the author in his study already considered physical violence, psychological violence, moral violence, patrimonial violence, sexual violence, private captivity, and human trafficking. Before these studies, the theme of violence against women was treated mainly as sexual violence and mostly committed by the partner or ex-partner, called domestic violence in Brazil.

In terms of public policies, Monteiro highlights some policies previously discussed, however addresses the Call Center for Women through Ligue 180, where women can call to report and that was considered the main gateway to services that integrate the National Network to Combat Violence Against Women and that began as a

channel for guidance on rights and public services directed to the female population across the country and from the Law No. 13. 025/2014, it began to perform the reception and guidance, directing the complaints to the competent bodies for the investigation, with the consent of the battered woman. According to the author, there were many government efforts to address violence against women, however, the effectiveness of these public policies needed better coordination with the assistance and legal network, training of health professionals to recognize this violence and adequacy of services to perform more humanized care (Monteiro 2014).

The intersectoral articulation and services provided to address violence against women were further discussed by Menezes et al. in 2014. The authors pointed out the need for coordination between services and the training of their professionals as a strategy for addressing violence against women. The issue of the lack of ability of the services to deal with the situation of violence and the women's lack of knowledge about the existence of the services were addressed.

Thus, the authors emphasized the need for greater dissemination of these services, to guarantee that women's needs are met, and the support of the various services, such as legal, police, social, generation and income, housing, and health services, in order to guarantee the visibility of the issues that hinder the process of attention to women (Menezes et al. 2014).

The Maria da Penha Law is a legislative milestone for confronting violence against women, but its creation introduced important institutions in the Brazilian Judiciary scenario, such as the Courts for Domestic and Family Violence against Women, but Brandão et al. (2015) discussed the use of this law as a pretext to exhaust policy actions in favor of gender guarantees and deal with the issue in a superficial way. He proposed that, in addition to the law, it was necessary to improve the justice mechanisms, provide more humanized care in health services, and welcome the victims so that they could understand that they are the holders of their rights, since the social context in which gender violence occurs often leads the victims to feel co-responsible for the aggressions suffered (Brandão et al. 2015).

The implementation of policies to address violence against women was discussed by another author. (C. H. de Campos, 2015) highlighted the advances in public policies, especially the Maria da Penha Law, but questioned the effectiveness of the law. The

author pointed out that the effectiveness of the law depended on the solidification of this policy and the overcoming of old legal paradigms, stressing that the various powers could facilitate the path to maximum effectiveness of the law and women's rights (Campos 2015).

The Maria da Penha Law continued to be discussed in subsequent works, continuing to be discussed as a legislative framework to address domestic and family violence against women in Brazil. Suxberger and Ferreira (2016) state that the incidence of multidisciplinary actions, are quite relevant, and can overcome the importance of the criminal response itself for the phenomenon of violence against women. Arguing that the successful intervention in the phenomenon of violence against women must keep a broader perspective to hold the aggressor accountable, to address not only the woman in a situation of violence but also the aggressor to ensure an effective response regarding the prevention of new episodes of violence (Suxberger and Ferreira, 2016).

Some decades ago, Brazil took the first steps towards the State's response to violence against women: at the end of the dictatorship, State Councils for Women's Rights were created, followed by Specialized Police Stations and the National Council for Women's Rights, the Secretariat for Women's Policies in 2003 (Miguel; Biroli, 2014), the enactment of Law 11.340/06 (Maria da Penha Law), and the current situation. All these measures are part of a context - which includes several international treaties ratified by Brazil - of commitment by the public authorities to address and reduce inequality and the various types of violence to which women are subjected, promoting public policies and affirmative actions to ensure women's representativeness in the public sphere.

The advances and achievements were quite significant in this field, with the articulation of the confrontation network, centralized and driven by the Maria da Penha Law, which provided more effective instruments of support and empowerment to women in situations of violence, enabling them to self-determine and break the cycle of which they are victims. The recognition by the law that the violence against women addressed in its context is part of a gender power structure was of fundamental importance. The problem was raised to a sociopolitical level, demanding a commitment to new alternatives to confront women, within a structure that allows them to move between public and private spaces without compromising their bonds, career, routine, and leisure. In the same

way, the institution of the same law revealed new demands and deficiencies that persist in the scope of the assistance network.

Despite the recognition of the importance of these measures, however, it is also necessary to point out the problems that persist, such as the failures that still exist in the performance and articulation of the network; the lack of public resources to put the policies into practice; the mismatch between some public policies and the real needs of women, among others. In this direction, sheltering public politics - indispensable to make to cease the violent circle, also needs adequacy to the reality of each specific case of the violence. The more they meet women's needs, the more they will enable the choices made to be supported by effective protection mechanisms and the more they will promote gender equality.

As mentioned, despite the importance of the shelters, they are insufficient to attend to all the particularities resulting from violence against women, so that many cases remain unattended because they do not fit the required formalities.

Fortunately, the proposals of the Halfway House and the Brazilian Women's House show to be a viable and efficient alternative, extending and improving the shelter service so that it covers all women in situations of violence who need to make use of it; it is, therefore, up to the public power, the urgent implementation of these measures, ensuring the physical and psychological integrity of these women, without losing sight of the demand of the Maria da Penha Law so that the proposals of confrontation reestablish new models of gender relations, in which the women are not stagnated in a position of victim (Lopes, Machado, Lessa and Venâncio, 2016).

Two other papers discussed the efficiency of the Maria da Penha Law, since violence against women in the country still presented alarming numbers. Amancio, Fraga and Rodrigues (2016), identified in their study that although the numbers were worrying, they were still considered inaccurate due to the underreporting rates of violence. They analyzed the efficiency of the Law, which is considered complete and the third best law in the world in dealing with violence against women and concluded that women feel protected by the apparatus imposed by the Law, since the number of reports had been increasing, however the number of cases is still worrying. The authors reinforced what has been discussed by other authors about the involvement of civil society and more efficient political action (Amancio, Fraga, and Rodrigues 2016)

Another study pointed out the obstacles faced by the Maria da Penha Law, reiterating the fact that the law is one of the most advanced on the subject, and yet several studies have shown that the rates of violence against women have not decreased. Carvalho (2017) talks about the gaps that the service network has, after all, many professionals working in the network have a discriminatory and sexist view, trivializing violence against women and giving little importance to the resolution of cases. The author highlights that in many cases, the woman cannot access all the equipment she needs, and her case ends either in the emergency room or at the police station. Therefore, the phenomenon must be treated as a complex phenomenon that involves social, political and cultural issues, and that the legal norm is insufficient if the principles that govern it are not internalized individually and collectively by a society (Carvalho 2017).

Pereira (2018) also talks about the gaps in the reception of women in situations of violence and the strategies to combat the gender-equal relationship, in addition the author proposes that listening to professionals who have direct contact with these women to better develop policies and practices to welcome women (Signorelli, Taft, and Pereira 2018).

When we consider violence against women in a country of continental proportions such as Brazil, which has a mixed population and the levels of social inequality present in this country. There is a need to cut corners when addressing the rights of different groups of women, taking into account the specific needs of different groups of women such as black, indigenous or rural women, because minorities often face violence with different characteristics. Thus, Borth *et al.* (2017), discussed in their article the network services to address violence against rural women and identified that there was a difficulty on the part of service professionals to approach these women, obstacles that ranged from lack of knowledge about the actions/routes to be taken after the identification of situations of violence, fear of seeing and notifying these situations, to the difficulty of access of rural women to services (Borth *et al.* 2018).

As the involvement of civil society always drives the creation of public policies in Brazil. Campos and Brasil (2017) talk about rural women's movements that had been seeking the construction and recognition of their collective identities and the achievement of rights that would meet their specific demands. They emphasize that despite the existing obstacles that prevent the visibility of violence against rural women, a dialogue had been

opened, even though significant absorption and translation of their demands by the State could not be evidenced. The author also discusses the political scenario of the time, saying that in previous years there had been an interaction between rural women, as collective actors, and the State, so that there were possibilities of structuring the necessary transformations in terms of public policies aimed at the needs of rural women, but that the change in the political scenario (post-impeachment of President Dilma) demonstrated a change where the new measures established had been threatening popular rights and achievements until that moment (Campos and Brasil 2017).

Martins (2018) also discussed the impact of the changing political landscape on the achievement of rights and social demands. He highlights that during the rise of progressive governments, not only in Brazil, but in other Latin American countries led to positive political opportunity structures, increasing the democratization of the public space itself, expanding women's participation in power. This has led to the visualization of various women-oriented whores. Conversely, the advance of conservatism led to significant changes in the context of social struggles, and a consequent reining in issues of gender, and sexuality (Martins 2018).

In the article by Sardemberg (2018), the author provides a synthesis of the construction of public policies since the resumption of the feminist movements in the 1970s until 2018. It is shown that the greatest advances occurred from 2003 onwards, such as the creation of the Special Secretariat of Policies for Women, discussed in previous articles, as well as the formulation of the Maria da Penha Law, an example for other countries. At the beginning of President Lula's government, the Secretariat of Policies for Women was given Ministry status and it was proposed the creation of gender committees in all ministries, with ministerial ordinances, professionals from specific ministries to monitor whether policies had a gender perspective, as well as assistance programs to meet women's needs. Moreover, the creation of the program Women Live without Violence, the bureaucratization of the process of denunciation and access to services of assistance to women decreased.

Other public policies created to promote gender equality in the fields of labor, science, education and health are discussed at this point. Like the authors cited above, the change in the political scenario after the 2016 coup against President Dilma Rousseff and the seizure of power by Vice-President Michel Temer represented a major misogynist

coup against women's policies, highlighting the structural changes and drastic budget cuts in the agencies responsible for implementing public policies aimed at women, using the term "dismantling of political policies" to refer to what happened (Sardenderg 2018)

In their integrative review, Bezerra, Lara, Nascimento and Barbieri (2018), also reached the conclusion of the moments of advances and setbacks experienced by the services of care to women in situations of violence. Evidencing the issue already exhaustively discussed about the need for better training of care professionals, showing the dissatisfaction of users of these services with neglect at various levels of assistance, from public safety to health services, as they suffer with the judgment regarding abortion and rape It was also highlighted the technical-scientific support for the improvement of services, but the authors also talk about the lack of guidance and information on policies and ignorance of women's rights by health professionals (Bezerra et al. 2018)

Even in research that aimed to discuss the access to justice of women who suffer violence, Silva and Krohling (2019), also demonstrated the same issue discussed several times, related to the lack of preparation of state agents who deal with domestic and sexual violence against women, lack of empathy and welcoming, so that the woman is welcomed and respected in the crisis situation. Besides the absence of a specialized service, the author also discusses the structural precariousness of the women's police stations, which besides being scarce for the number of municipalities in Brazil, those that exist are understaffed, badly located and have precarious installations. The author concludes that the women's police station will only be efficient if it acts in conjunction with a series of public measures aimed at ending the culture that subjugates women (Silva and Krohling 2019)

The year 2020 was marked by several studies on public policies for combating violence against women. Lazzari, Carlos and Accorssi (2020) in their article on women's rights in Brazil stated that women are still excluded, discriminated against in the labor market and suffer violence of various kinds, and that this prevents them from achieving full social recognition, since their rights are not fully exercised and respected. The authors reiterated the problem presented for more than a decade in research on the theme of lack of preparation of professionals but focused on the magistrates in charge of the courts, who undervalue the problem and treat it as something small, as well as blaming the women for the violence suffered. Even with the creation of various public policies, services aimed at

combating violence against women and the Maria da Penha Law, many women still die, even under protective measures and discrimination against women occurs at all levels of education and social class. The dissemination of existing policies is also discussed by the authors, who state that in addition to being scarce, the services are unknown to a large part of the population ((Lazzari, Carlos, and Accorssi 2020)

Moreover, because they are disruptive policies, which propose the renunciation of the old organizational structures of the traditional model, their implementation is more difficult. Avelino and Barbosa (2020) demonstrate that due to the bureaucracy involved in the application of these public policies and the diffusion or absence of evaluation and monitoring processes, the implementation of public policies is at the mercy of state action by values, wills and behavioral patterns of those who effectively implement the public program (Avelino and Barbosa 2020)

Blanco and Silva (2020) also discuss the setbacks of public policies in recent years, highlighting the judicial invisibility, the embarrassment of reporting, the neglect of the authorities and the little social legitimacy attributed to them. They use for the first time the term taboo to describe the behaviors that permeate the treatment of the issue. Discussing the issues of gender and power relations, not only in the violence suffered by women, but also in the attitudes of state agents and reinforces once again the need to change the mentality of the social and cultural structure about the seriousness of this type of crime, and the perception of the social role of women in order to reduce cases of violence against women (Blanco and Silva 2020)

Within the theme of humanized care, already discussed by several researchers, the health services have been addressed in recent years, but these services refer mainly to the reception and care to the victim of sexual violence, highlighting the primary care network, the hospital interventions and the legal medical bodies to prove the violence, as pointed out by Costa and Silva (2020). However, the authors present in their study the psychology services, which have not been addressed in other studies, and their importance for minimizing the consequences for the victims (Costa and Silva, 2020).

Just like the psychology services, the economic autonomy of women who suffer violence was not much addressed in previous research, perhaps due to the precariousness of primary public policies aimed at protecting women and punishing the aggressor. Miranda, Loreto and Carmo (2020) reflect on the economic autonomy of women and

discuss the Thousand Women Program, a public policy aimed at minimizing the social exclusion of women, promoting the improvement of the level of education, access to the labor market and mitigation of violence against women. The authors conclude that the program is potentially inductive, motivational, and promotes the self-worth of women, which can instill in participants the desire, motivation and hope to take control of the protagonist of their lives (Miranda 2020)

During the pandemic, it resulted in an aggravation of violence against women. Thus, Stuker, Matias and Alencar (2020) analyzed the public policies applied during this period to assist women in situations of violence. The article emphasized the role of the Women's Policy Bodies, which despite creating measures, were palliative measures and were insufficient to adequately address violence. The actions were taken at state and local level, creating measures such as remote denunciation, preparation of institutions to prevent the spread of the virus and to receive women, home visits without entering the houses, and the intensification of campaigns. Even so, the authors affirm that advances still need to be made in the field of public policies for women, including or not related to the pandemic context and that the political period shows changes in priorities and the restructuring of public policies infrastructure to confront violence against women (Stuker *et al.*, 2020).

With the prolongation of the pandemic in subsequent years and the consequent increase in cases of violence during the years of restrictive measures and social distancing. Pacheco, Santos and Campos (2022) emphasized the need to strengthen the existing measures but highlighted the need to support victims in a broad way, to increase campaigns to encourage denunciations, emphasizing the specialized public support network to meet these demands and strengthen existing public policies (Pacheco, Santos, and Campos 2021).

In 2021, a question was raised by Lamartine and Henriques, about gender political violence, a term not much discussed and that in Brazil had an important example with the case of former President Dilma Rousseff who was attacked not only through readers' comments on the internet, but also in the speeches that preceded such digital campaigns, showing hate attacks characterized by threats, intimidation, offenses and humiliation, which should be better analyzed in relation to the media, journalists and other opinion makers. Despite the existing affirmative actions to foster women's political participation,

which impacts the search for gender equality and the implementation of public policies aimed at women, since they are mostly created by women in politics (Lamartine and Henriques 2021)

Finally, we discuss the influence of the decisions made and measures adopted by the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights on the development of public policies in Brazil. Ribeiro (2022) states that the Inter-American System contributes significantly to the enforcement of rights related to gender at the national level. It may be due to the condemnation of the Brazilian State before international bodies, as in the case of the Maria da Penha Law, or a voluntary process of adequacy of Brazilian norms considering the decisions involving other countries. Even so, the history of Brazil demonstrates that, despite international treaties imposing explicit obligations to establish legal frameworks, institutions, and specific policies to promote women's rights and prevent and protect them from violence, there is negligence on the part of the State, as occurs in other countries (Ribeiro 2022)

Therefore, the state of the art of public policies for combating violence against women has had many advances in recent years, however, the political scenario in which the country is inserted influences the implementation of existing policies and the creation of new policies. Moreover, a major obstacle to be faced is the implementation of policies and the change of mentality by the population and the agents of the State, because many of the problems presented in the articles are related to their behaviors and attitudes.

1.3. Information and communication: why focus on violence against women

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Right talks about information as a pillar of equality and guarantee of rights. The article says that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”.²³

Looking at this article present in a universal document is important to debate how much people are really accessing information and consequently their rights.

²³ UN (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

When the focus is placed on how gender violence is being communicated and how this communication can be an agent of prevention, it is necessary to understand if all people are having access to this information and if not, what are the reasons for this and what can be done so that the information reaches everyone. Not working to make information accessible is a daily violation of human rights.

In Brazil, gender equality is not a topic discussed in schools, and people generally access information through television soap operas, newspapers, and social networks. Even though mass media vehicles take information to many people and different cities in Brazil and the country has created different public policies for the prevention of violence against women, there is still a big gap between the number of public policies promoting the access to human rights for women and the number of women who access these rights and prevent themselves from suffering violence.

If the progress was already painfully hard, in recent years, such programs have suffered from a lack of investment and the dismantling of the policy due to the restructuring of the Secretariat of Policies for Women at the federal level. The current context is especially worrying when it is noted that, despite an increase in knowledge about the Maria da Penha Law and awareness of what domestic and family violence against women, the percentage of women who say they "did nothing" when asked about "what was their attitude towards the last aggression", referring to authorities and State agents, grew from 15% (in 2013) to 29% (in 2017)²⁴. The frustration of women's expectations regarding their needs and what they effectively get from the public policies offered may explain such numbers.

There are few studies on the effectiveness of such policies. Reports prepared by those who implement the policies themselves are usually limited to extolling their positive aspects, without incorporating independent criticism aimed at monitoring and improving them. It is necessary to assess whether the projected policies are being effectively implemented and, when effectively implemented, the effectiveness of such interventions. To this end, impact evaluation methodologies make it possible to measure results and propose improvements in policies, projects, and actions.

²⁴ DataSenado (2018). *Aprofundando o Olhar sobre o Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/datasenado/arquivos/conhecer-direitos-e-ter-rede-de-apoio-sao-pontos-de-partida-para-denunciar-agressao-e-interromper-ciclo-de-violencia>

The history of violence against women is very long and has been through many conquests over the past 150 years, and this collective struggle has been very important so that today's women can access rights that were once very distant from us, such as the right to vote, freedom of expression and sexual freedom. Even if this is not yet the reality for all women in the world, little by little women are dignifying their existence on the planet.

A personal work experience led me to want to study deeper to understand what can be done so that information reaches more women, and they can access their rights. I work in a Brazilian NGO called Bauhinia Eco Social and most of the work done is in the city of São Paulo. Since 2018 we have been doing workshops on various topics in women's citizenship centers which are also spaces for coexistence and learning. In 2021 we started a project to publicize the services and public policies that already exist in the city of São Paulo to maximize access to them. We realized that most of the women we talked to in train and metro stations, schools and other organizations did not know the basics about how to prevent violence and what are the paths and rights women have.

So, I proposed to write the present work in order to systematize which are the information flows about women's rights, which public policies already exist in Brazil and which are the tools used to prevent violence against women through access to information.

1.4. Research question and methodology

The research method used in this work was the qualitative method, once it was used the interpretation of the researcher to analyze text, papers, interviews and documents (Bauer, Gaskell, Allum, 2002). The work has an interdisciplinary approach between women's rights and communication because "interdisciplinarity has the benefit of a greater flexibility in the research" (Andreassen, Sano, and McInerney-Lankford 2018 p.63).

To achieve the objective of establishing the state of the art about public policies for the combat of violence against women, it was adopted the research technique of bibliographic research (Stumpf, 2005). Using the key words "public policies", "violence against women" and "domestic violence", on the database Periódicos CAPES. The

inclusion criteria adopted were journal articles from 2004 to 2022, in English, Spanish or Portuguese, excluding thesis, congress annals and documents.

The documental analysis, where we have method and technique concurrently, it designates "the identification, verification, and assessment of documents for a certain purpose" (Moreira, 2005, p. 271), the data were collected from Brazilian government databases, from the official documents of the UN, from the human rights reports delivered by Brazil and from documents generated by the media in Brazil.

Besides the literature review, I have appealed to interviews with people that work with the reception of women in violence situations in São Paulo, Brazil and with a person that works on a platform created to disseminate information about women's rights and public policies available in Brazil. The interviews were semi-structured interviews, whereas "within each topic, the interviewer is free to conduct the conversation as one think fit, to ask the questions one deems appropriate" (Corbetta, 2003 p. 270).

The goal with the people that work with reception was to understand how the day-to-day work functions, how they organize the flow of information so that more women have access to public policies for the protection of women's rights, taking into account the particularities of each region of the city and its social characteristics. And the aim of the interview with the person that works diffusing information was to understand how they organize the information, which are the media most accessed by women, what is the reach of their publications and how they see communication and access to information so that women in São Paulo can access public policies for women.

This study aims to investigate how access to information can be a tool to prevent violence against women in Brazil. It will analyze the way different media outlets communicate the different public policies for the prevention of violence against women that already exist in Brazil. I will also present a perspective from the point of view of people who work at the women's citizenship centers, which is a service provided by the municipality of Sao Paulo that welcomes women in vulnerable situations and those who have suffered violence. In this way, the work seeks to open a dialogue with those who are already working so that information and shelter can reach even more women.

Chapter 2- Public policies for combating the violence against women

2.1. Gender based violence in Brazil

In 1979 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Since then, many countries around the world have been mobilizing to eliminate violence against women. It is known that the term gender violence encompasses violence committed against men, children, and adolescents as well. But women victims represent 96% of the total number of occurrences.

Violence happens in different ways and contexts, but the endorsement it has for being practiced comes from a very clear historical root. The patriarchal system establishes social roles for the different individuals in society. The patriarch, a role exercised by men, holds the power to control the other people who are part of the social system. As holders of power within the patriarchal system, men exercise a role of domination, and the woman occupies the role of dominated, that is, it is considered normal within the patriarchal system for the woman to be exploited and the man to exploit. Due to this power relation, it is considered normal for the man to use violence against women as a form of punishment or to maintain their authority. , if he deems it necessary (Saffioti, 2001).

For many years, women saw themselves within this system and took it for granted. So this discrimination against women, who occupied a role of inferiority, was a feature of the patriarchal culture and everyone accepted as commonplace, therefore female consent is a perverse product of male domination (Colling, 2004) Many generations of women have never been able to have contact with life in which they were not exploited by the prevailing social system and with this humanity lost the opportunity to evolve in many aspects. Because women as human beings could have enjoyed a more dignified life and contributed much more to science and human development in general. It is a very sad situation to think about and study, because living for thousands of years believing that it was okay to be exploited has directly impacted the life of millions of women around the world and this heritage is unfortunately very present in the current configuration of many cultures around the world.

Simone de Beauvoir stated that "thus, the woman does not claim herself as a subject, because she does not possess the concrete means to do so, because she feels the necessary bond that ties her to the man without claiming reciprocity from him, and because she often takes pleasure in her role as Other" (De Beauvoir, 1956 p.).

In Brazil, patriarchy arrived together with colonization, so male domination began to affect many people, who in that context were inferior to the patriarchs and this domination was based on gender, ethnicity and social class.

The Convention of Belém do Pará (1996)²⁵ defined violence against women as "any action or conduct, based on gender, that causes death, harm, or physical, sexual, or psychological suffering to women, whether occurring in the public or private sphere" (Art. 1)³. This elaboration understands that violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence and can occur within the family, domestic unit, in the community, and perpetrated or tolerated by the State or its agents.

The history of the fight for the elimination of violence against women begins in Brazil with the action of some feminists who worked insistently for years, until their voices were heard, even if in a very small way.

In Brazil we had some milestones of achievements for women, in 1985, the first women's police station was created in Brazil, in São Paulo in the neighborhood of Cambuci²⁶, and from 1988, with the new constitution,²⁷ women have the same rights as men in the federal constitution In 2015, the Brazilian Women's House²⁸ was created to receive women who are victims of violence. From 2021 to 2022 the demand for this service increased by 30%

Many other achievements have been made over the years and women continue to work to ensure that their rights are guaranteed.

²⁵Inter-American convention to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women , adopted in Belém do Pará, Brazil, on June 9, 1994, at the twenty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly Retrieved from <http://www.cidh.org/basicos/portugues/m.belem.do.para.htm>

²⁶ G1 (2011). *Primeira Delegacia da Defesa da Mulher muda da endereço em SP*. Retrieved from <https://g1.globo.com/sp/sao-paulo/noticia/2019/11/11/primeira-delegacia-da-defesa-da-mulher-muda-da-endereco-em-sp.ghtml>

²⁷ Brazil (1988). *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil*. Retrieved from https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm

²⁸Civil Cabinet (2015). *Primeira Casa da Mulher Brasileira do País é inaugurada no MS*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/casacivil/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2015/fevereiro/primeira-casa-da-mulher-brasileira-do-pais-e-inaugurada-no-ms>

When thinking about the protection of women's rights and the elimination of violence it is very important to consider the multi-level governance that is fundamental for the implementation, maintenance and monitoring of measures to end the problem. When we look at the multi-level perspective we can analyze three main levels of combating gender-based violence: global level, national level and local level.

At the global level, there is CEDAW²⁹ which since 1979, regulates how each country needs to look at this problem and what are the requirements that each government has to comply with. This body is also responsible for monitoring through of the reports that are delivered by the countries every 5 years.

The Latin American and Caribbean organization³⁰ has been developing for many years an excellent work in the fight against discrimination and violence against girls and women in the 35 countries of the region.

In 1994, the convention of Belém do Pará³¹ brought international parameters for the creation of local public policies for the protection of women and their access to human rights.

Many Brazilian women were already involved in the cause of gender violence prevention and the general protection of women's human rights when Brazil ratified the convention of Belém do Pará. This convention was very important for other audiences in Brazil to see the importance of the work that feminist activists and a minority of government officials had been doing together.

Some isolated studies were made in Brazil before the 2000's and they were extremely important to record data and encourage change, even if it was still very slow. The first woman to publish on gender violence in Brazil was Azevedo who did a study on the police reports filed by women victims of violence in 1982 and 1983 in São Paulo (Saffioti,2001). Other studies were made in the nineties in Brazil with Silvia Pimentel, Flávia Piovesan who analyzed general data on violence through the SIN data collection. Since the convention of Belém do Pará, Brazil has had an active presence in the

²⁹ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

³⁰ It is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement, which includes permanently thirty-two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved from <https://celacinternational.org/#:~:text=THE%20COMMUNITY%20OF%20LATIN%20AMERICAN,Am%20and%20the%20Caribbean%20countries>.

³¹ Inter-American convention to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women , adopted in Belém do Pará, Brazil, on June 9, 1994, at the twenty-fourth regular session of the General Assembly Retrieved from <http://www.cidh.org/basicos/portugues/m.belem.do.para.htm>

commissions on women's rights and the elimination of gender violence among the states of the OAS.

Brazil ratified the CEDAW convention in 1996 and the Belém do Pará convention in 1994, so that almost 30 years ago Brazil committed itself to create and implement public policies for the elimination of discrimination and violence against women in the country. When these treaties were ratified, Brazil was in a moment of economic growth and with the real plan the government is open to evolve also in the social and human rights field. The first report delivered by Brazil to show how CEDAW recommendations were being implemented was in the year 2002 and was built in cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the State Secretariat for Women's Rights, the National Council for Women's Rights and feminist groups.³² This effort gave visibility to the actions undertaken by Brazil in compliance with the CEDAW, as well as, in a transparent manner, acknowledged the permanence of the various forms of discrimination against women, including gender violence.

So, when we look at the world scenario, Brazil has been developing along these 20 years, but there is still a lot to be done so that women can really feel in their daily life that the Brazilian government is creating effective public policies and directly impacting in the care of these women to access a life with dignity and without violence.

In the Inter-American scenario, Brazil has an active participation in the discussions and creation of monitoring methodologies. For many years we held a position in the council that monitors the 35 countries and we also served as inspiration for some countries that are still trying to organize themselves to create policies to eliminate violence against women. The Inter-American Court has judged two cases in the last 20 years that were very important to show how the work is being done and to serve as jurisprudence for future events.

The first was in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, where many women workers died for years, and the country was condemned to pay compensation to the families and to create protection and prevention measures to eradicate this problem. So, the country had to create laws and public policies to eradicate gender-based violence in the country (De Paula, 2018).

³² UN Women (2011). *O Progresso das Mulheres no Brasil*. Retrieved from https://onumulheres.org.br/wp-content/themes/vibecom_onu/pdfs/progresso.pdf

A similar case in Latin America is the case of Maria da Penha, a Brazilian woman who denounced the state to the Inter-American Court for negligence and Brazil was condemned to arrest the aggressor and create measures so that this would not happen to another woman. And in 2006 the Maria da Penha law was created, late, but it brought a lot of hope to people who work hard for this to happen and to the millions of women who are welcomed by the law.

The Maria da Penha law is very popular in Brazil, 98%³³ of people know that it exists, and the process of its creation was very democratic and participatory. Groups of women activists, institutions, jurists, and government officials got together to write the bill, held public consultations throughout Brazil and worked for over two full years to build it all. But unfortunately, the occurrences of violence against women and femicide still have a high number of victims, a worrying lack of data and affect a large number of women in the country.

2.1.1 Types of violence: a glance over the phenomenon

The Convention of Belém do Pará (1996)³⁴ defined violence against women as "any action or conduct, based on gender, that causes death, harm, or physical, sexual, or psychological suffering to women, whether occurring in the public or private sphere" (Art. 1). This elaboration understands that violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence and can occur within the family, domestic unit, in the community, and perpetrated or tolerated by the State or its agents.

The first law that was created in Brazil with the objective of combating and punishing violence against women was the Maria da Penha law,³⁵ sanctioned in 2006, which provides for the typification of violence based on the definitions described by the Pará Convention, plus a few more terms. With 46 articles distributed in seven titles, it creates mechanisms to prevent and restrain the domestic and familiar violence against the

³³ DataSenado (2011). *Violência Doméstica e Familiar Contra a Mulher: Pesquisa de opinião pública nacional*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/datasenado/arquivos/mulheres-acham-que-violencia-domestica-cresceu.-e-a-protecao-legal-tambem>

³⁴ It is an intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political agreement, which includes permanently thirty-two countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Retrieved from <https://celacinternational.org/#:~:text=THE%20COMMUNITY%20OF%20LATIN%20AMERICAN,America%20and%20the%20Caribbean%20countries.>

³⁵ Law No. 11.340, of August 7, 2006

woman in conformity with the Federal Constitution (art. 226, § 8º) and the international treaties ratified by the Brazilian State (Convention of Belém of Pará, Pact of San Jose of Costa Rica, American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).³⁶

Defining in a deeper way the types of violence is very important to foster a change in culture, since until then, people saw violence as something physical and that left visible marks on the victim, such as rape, punches and death. The description of domestic or family violence present in the text of the law has 5 types of violence, their definition, and examples.³⁷

Physical Violence: Understood as any conduct that offends the integrity or bodily health of the woman.

- Beating
- Throwing objects, shaking and squeezing the arms
- Strangulation or suffocation
- Injuries with Sharp Objects
- Injuries Caused by Burns or Firearms
- Torture

Psychological violence: This is considered to be any conduct that causes emotional damage and diminishes self-esteem; harms and disturbs the full development of the woman; or aims to degrade or control her actions, behaviors, beliefs and decisions.

- Threats
- Embarrassment
- Humiliation
- Manipulation
- Isolation (prohibition to study, travel or talk to friends and relatives)
- Constant Surveillance
- Persecution
- Insults
- Blackmail
- Exploitation

³⁶ Maria da Penha Institute (2010). Retrieved from <https://www.institutomariadapenha.org.br/quem-e-maria-da-penha.html>

³⁷ Law No. 11.340, of August 7, 2006

- Limitation of the Right to Come and Go
- Ridicule
- Taking Away Freedom Of Belief
- Distorting and Omitting Facts to Leave Women in Doubt of Her Memory and Sanity (Gaslighting)

Sexual Violence: Any conduct that coerces a woman into witnessing, maintaining, or participating in unwanted sexual intercourse by means of intimidation, threat, coercion, or force.

- Rape
- Forcing a Woman to Perform Sexual Acts that Cause Discomfort or Repulsion
- Impeding the Use of Contraceptives or Forcing a Woman to Abort
- Forcing Marriage, Pregnancy or Prostitution by Coercion, Blackmail, Bribery or Manipulation
- Limiting or Annulling the Exercise of Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Assets Violence: This is understood as any conduct that constitutes retention, subtraction, partial or total destruction of objects, work instruments, personal documents, assets, values and rights or economic resources, including those destined to satisfy one's needs.

- Controlling Money
- Failure to Pay Alimony
- Destroying Personal Documents
- Theft, Extortion or Damage
- Depriving of Property, valuables or economic resources
- Deliberate Damage to a Woman's Property or Property She Loves

Moral Violence: It is considered any conduct that represents slander, defamation or injury.

- Accusing a Woman of Treason
- Making Moral Judgments About Her Conduct
- Making Lying Criticisms
- Exposing Intimate Life

- Demeaning a Woman by Bad Mouthing Her Character
- Depreciate The Victim by The Way She Dresses

These 5 types of violence that were mentioned above are mostly committed in the domestic and family environment. But violence against women also appears in other places and can be committed institutionally and from the government.

Cases of governments that create public policies to combat violence, or neglect services that have already been created, is also violence. An example of this is the case of a 10 year old girl who was raped in Brazil and the judge denied her the right to have an abortion,³⁸ even though the abortion law in Brazil states that people under 14 years of age have the right to have an abortion because any sexual relation with people under 14 years of age is already configured as a crime of sexual abuse.³⁹ Therefore, the State denying a right guaranteed by law since the 1940s is a form of violence, showing how women have been neglected.

Cases like these are not uncommon in Brazil because the conservative “macho” culture of some judges and people who are in power make setbacks like these and violations of women's rights culturally accepted by people. Even in another case of rape of a child in Brazil in the year 2021, religious people held activist demonstrations outside the hospital accusing the doctor who was going to perform the abortion of being a murderer and also insulting the family of the pregnant child, the child and the lawyers and judges who tried the case and authorized the abortion.

The year 2022 is a presidential election year in Brazil, and the issue of violence against women is present in the discussions this year, mainly because the current government has done very little to defend women in the last 4 years. The magazine AzMina, which is an important feminist channel of information in Brazil, carried out a study on the political violence suffered by women and the data shows that the government has failed, and the population reflects in its words and actions hatred and discrimination against women, since these are actions "socially accepted" by the current government.

³⁸ UOL (2020). *Menina de 10 anos grávida tem aborto negado no ES e vai a outro estado*. Retrieved from <https://noticias.uol.com.br/cotidiano/ultimas-noticias/2020/08/16/menina-de-10-anos-gravida-tem-aborto-negado-no-es-e-vai-a-outro-estado.htm?cmpid=copiaecola>

³⁹ Decree-Law No. 2.848, of December 7, 1940

The institutional violence against gender parity, for example, is a type of violence that appears without the need for words or direct actions to say that politics, for example, is no place for women. Making it impossible for a woman to run for political office is also a form of institutional violence. It was necessary to create a law to oblige at least 30% of the parties' candidacies to be women,⁴⁰ but even so inequality and violence are present, since the parties do not invest in the political campaigns of these women, so it is very difficult for them to be elected.

Political violence appears both inside and outside the official spaces of politics. To give an idea of how violent the political space is for women and how difficult it is to access, only one of the 27 states in Brazil is governed by a woman, Rio Grande do Norte. After being elected, in the legislative houses, for example, women MPs suffer psychological abuse on a daily basis, such as threats and intimidation from their political colleagues, sexual violence, as was the case of São Paulo state MP Isa Penna who was raped inside the plenary by former deputy Fernando Cury in 2020, or physical violence that led to the death of councilor Marilene Franco in 2019.⁴¹

Political violence is not only committed against women who occupy or run for political office, it happens all the time against women in general. Women journalists, activists, mothers, women with disabilities and all other types of women when they are prevented from accessing their rights and are attacked, even virtually when they are trying to live in dignity.⁴²

2.2. General data on violence against women in Brazil

The overall data on violence against women in Brazil is scandalous. In 2021, on average, a woman was a victim of femicide every 7 hours. The total number of rapes of female victims in the country was 61,531 in 2019, rising to 54,116 in 2020, and to 56,098 in 2021.⁴³

⁴⁰ Law No. 14.192, of August 4, 2021

⁴¹ CNN Brazil (2020). *Me sinto exposta e violada, diz deputada vítima de abuso na Alesp*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnnbrasil.com.br/politica/entrevista-isa-penna-assedio-alesp/>

⁴² AZMINA (2022). *Como a violência política de gênero acontece na prática*. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/reportagens/como-acontece-violencia-politica-de-genero-exemplos/>

⁴³ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2021). *Violência contra mulheres em 2021*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/violencia-contra-mulher-2021-v5.pdf>

Many public policies on gender equality have been created in recent years and Brazil has had great development in this aspect, but the numbers of violence against women are alarming and Brazil needs to evolve a lot in this area.⁴⁴ The Maria da Penha Law brought a new guideline on how the Brazilian government should work to ensure that all women are protected and live in dignity through access to freedom, safety, well-being and justice. But the protection of human dignity of all people is already provided for in the Brazilian constitution since 1988, the State is constitutionally obliged to make all necessary efforts to prevent acts and behaviors of violence in the domestic and family environment and the government has always looked at this demand in a sexist way, thus neglecting the right to life and freedom of many women.

Looking at the current reality of violence in Brazil forces the authorities to implement mechanisms to protect women from violence, since the prevention and elimination of violence is still not giving results and many women suffer violence on a daily basis. One of the measures that have been implemented are called MPUs, which are protective measures, after a woman suffers some violence, reports it and it is known that she runs the risk of suffering violence again, the state grants this protection that has the basic purpose of avoiding the escalation and progression of acts of violence against women, which tend to begin with verbal aggression, moving on to physical aggression and may even reach femicide.⁴⁵

The collection of data on gender-based violence in Brazil has been carried out by different institutions and also by the government and it is very important to observe how this data is communicated.

The Brazilian Public Security Yearbook 2022 (ABSP) is a report created by the Brazilian public security forum to present data annually. This document has a chapter dedicated to the presentation and analysis of data on violence against women in all the states of Brazil.

The Atlas of Violence⁴⁶ is a portal that gathers, organizes and makes available information on violence in Brazil, as well as brings together IPEA publications on

⁴⁴ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

⁴⁵ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

⁴⁶ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

violence and public security. It was created in 2016 and is managed by the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) with the collaboration of the Brazilian Forum for Public Security. This is within the government's website.

According to the Brazilian Yearbook of Public Safety 2022,⁴⁷ the number of femicides in Brazil has fallen compared to the cases that occurred in 2020 and 2021. This data on the decrease in the number of femicides is also presented by the atlas of violence 2021, which also brings this comparison by varying the place where this crime occurs. The crimes committed outside the victim's residence had a fall of 28.1% while the femicide committed inside the victim's residence increased by 6.1%. Even though femicide has decreased in the last year, the overall situation is still very worrying because women continue to suffer violence and the number of women who suffer violence has increased in recent years. According to this data raised by IPEA, between 2016 and 2021, there was a growth of almost 45% in the number of new cases of domestic violence per 100,000 women.

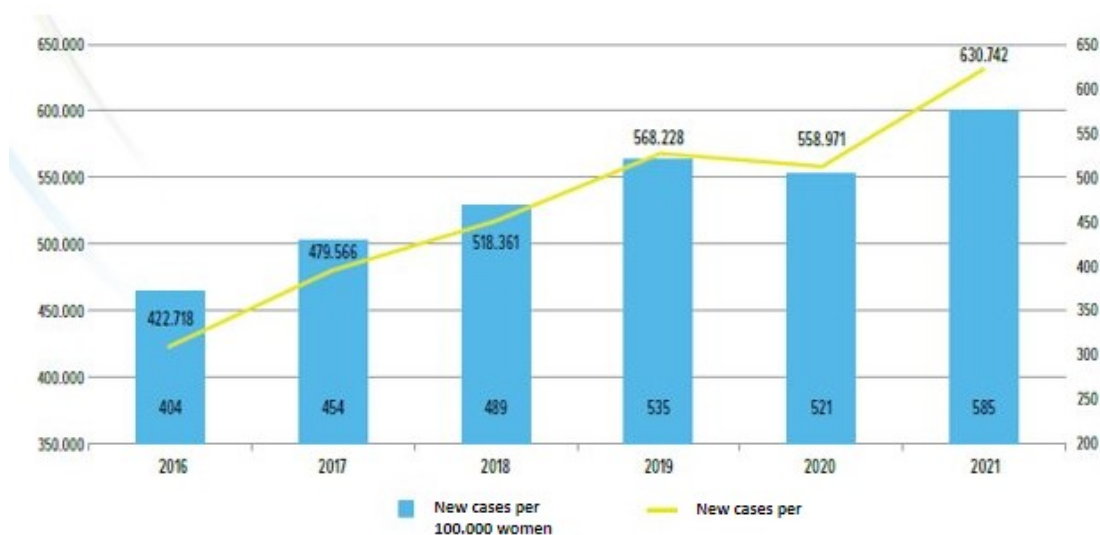


Figure 1. Number of new cases of violence against women in the Brazilian National Council of Justice from 2016 to 2021 (ABSP, 2022)⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

⁴⁸ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

This long-term growth presents two important pieces of information, the first is that it is still very difficult to contain and reduce the cases and the second is that violence has not decreased, deaths have decreased in the last year, but women continue to be violated and have their rights disrespected.

During the years 2009 to 2019 50,056 women were murdered in Brazil.⁴⁹ So even if the number of femicides has decreased in recent years, the number of women who have been murdered is still very high. The discrimination of gender, race and social class are factors that leave women even more vulnerable. Here I see the presence and urgency of the study of intersectionality brought by (Crenshaw, 1989) with the presentation of the double discrimination of black women.

The same study analyzes gender-based violence in an intersectional manner. Race and gender are categories that justify discrimination and subalternity, historically constructed and that produce inequalities, used as justifications for social asymmetries, which explain that black women are in a situation of greater vulnerability in all social spheres (CARNEIRO, 2017, p. 19). According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 54% of the Brazilian population is black,⁵⁰ this reflects in the large amount of violence against black women in Brazil. Black women represent 67% of murdered women in Brazil.⁵¹ This is a colonial and patriarchal heritage that affects a lot of black women in Brazil. The fight against violence must happen in an integrated way, the guidelines of the feminist struggle and the anti-racist struggle are the search for dignity and access to human rights equally for all human beings, so it is important that the fight against violence against women includes the anti-racist fight, people with disabilities, LGBTQIAP people, for example. (CURIEL 2021).

It can be seen that the culture of violence against women and the culture of rape are present, since the annual report on public safety points out that there has been a great increase in the number of requests for protective measures requested by women who have suffered violence. Even with the advances in the creation of laws and policies to combat

⁴⁹ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

⁵⁰ Jornal da USP (2020). *Dados do IBGE mostram que 54% da população brasileira é negra*. Retrieved from <https://jornal.usp.br/radio-usp/dados-do-ibge-mostram-que-54-da-populacao-brasileira-e-negra/>

⁵¹ O Globo (2022). *Sete em cada 10 feminicídios no Brasil são de mulheres negras*. Retrieved from <https://oglobo.globo.com/brasil/noticia/2022/11/mulheres-negras-sao-vitimas-de-quase-7-em-cada-10-feminicidios-no-brasil.ghtml>

violence against women, in 2020, 323,570 MPUs were granted, totally or partially, while in 2021, this number jumped to 370,209 MPUs granted.⁵²

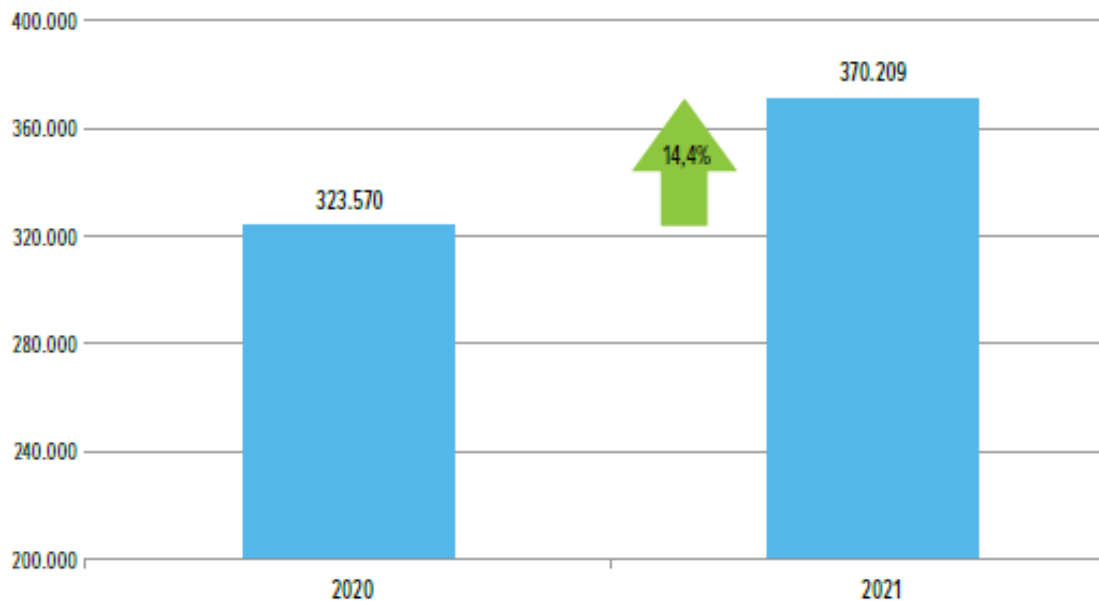


Figure 2. Number Urgent Protection Measures granted between 2020 and 2021(ABSP, 2022).⁵³

It is important to note that the cases of femicide decreased, but the cases of homicides of women without determined cause increased of which had an increase of 35.2% from 2018 to 2019, a total of 16,648 cases in the last year.⁵⁴ The highest rates of homicide of women in 2019 were recorded in 3 states in the northern region of Brazil; Roraima (12.5), Acre (7.5) and Amazonas (5.7), even though the three UFs showed reduction in this indicator between 2018 and 2019. The states with the lowest rates of homicides of women in 2019, meanwhile, were São Paulo (1.7), Minas Gerais (2.7) and Rio de Janeiro (2.5). As Graph 5.3 indicates, Rio de Janeiro presented an expressive drop in women's deaths between 2018 and 2019, with a reduction of 43.1%, but it is also the UF in which deaths of undetermined cause grew the most (231.6%).⁵⁵ What causes states

⁵² Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

⁵⁵ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

in the same region to be ranked among the most violent states? This can be explained by the culture and economic condition of each state.

Some feminist scholars and institutions that combat violence against women calculate that less than 40% of women who suffer violence denounce it and seek help. So, the data published by the studies made by the secretariat of public security, IPEA are based on the numbers from the database of complaints and occurrences registered in the official organs of the government. The minister of women in Brazil recognizes that the lack of access to information on public policies is a big problem in the country because the number of complaints is still very small compared to the number of actual occurrences.

We want more and more information to reach women who still don't know about our channels for denunciation. We know that about 70% of women who are victims of femicide in Brazil have never been to the protection network. That is why we reiterate that our Ligue 180 works 24 hours a day, including through WhatsApp (Minister of Women, Family and Human Rights, Cristiane Britto 2022).⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2022/eleicoes-2022-periodo-eleitoral/brasil-tem-mais-de-31-mil-denuncias-violencia-contra-as-mulheres-no-contexto-de-violencia-domestica-ou-familiar>



Figure 3. Number Urgent Protection Measures (Ministry of Women, 2022)⁵⁷

This presents another major problem with regard to violence against women in Brazil, the fear of denouncing it and the lack of information on the rights and programs that exist to welcome these people.

⁵⁷ Ministry of women (2022). *Brasil tem mais de 31 mil denúncias de violência doméstica ou familiar contra as mulheres até julho de 2022*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/assuntos/noticias/2022/eleicoes-2022-periodo-eleitoral/brasil-tem-mais-de-31-mil-denuncias-violencia-contra-as-mulheres-no-contexto-de-violencia-domestica-ou-familiar#:~:text=AGOSTO%20LIL%3%81S-,Brasil%20tem%20mais%20de%2031%20mil%20den%C3%BAncias%20de%20viol%C3%AAncia%20dom%C3%A9stica,mulheres%20at%C3%A9%20julho%20de%202022>

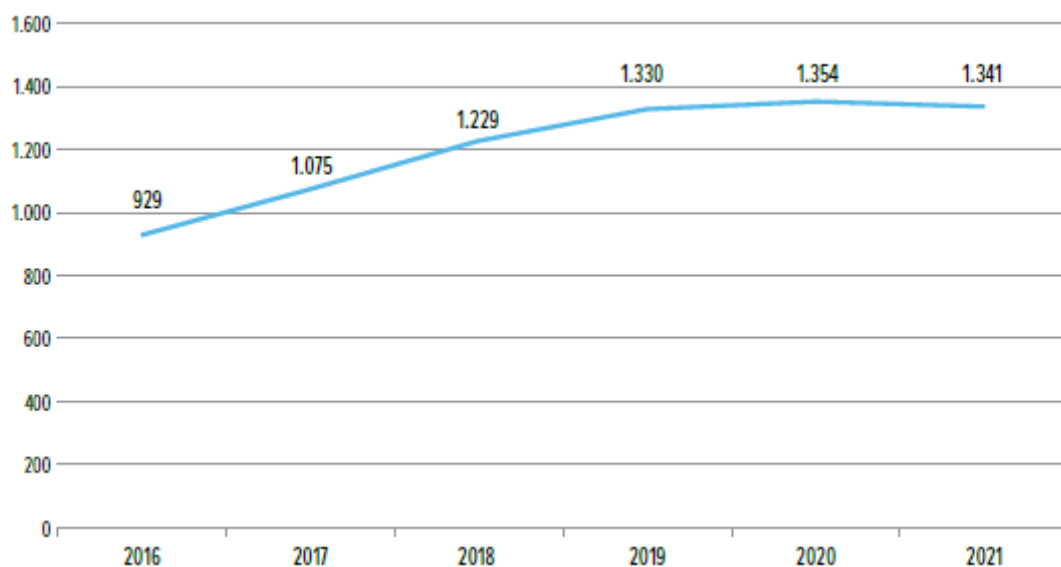


Figure 4. Number of femicides in Brazil from 2016 to 2021 (ABSP, 2022).⁵⁸

Many cultural factors get in the way of actually eliminating violence against women, the religious issue is one that greatly hinders this process, since women want to maintain an appearance of family as provided for in their beliefs and this causes these women to tolerate violence for many years. Another factor that is very important and that has been enhanced during the government of Jair Bolsonaro is the instrument that is used to practice violence, this also distinguishes the violence that is practiced inside and outside the home. It is more common for firearms to be used in homicides outside of the home 54.2% of the time, and those that occur in the home are more commonly used with bladed weapons and blows, and occurrences with firearms inside the home represent 37.5% of the occurrences.⁵⁹ In light of these facts, it is worrisome that the government of Jair Bolsonaro is working to make access to firearms more flexible for ordinary citizens by changing the law, increasing the limit on the purchase of weapons, the number of cartridges and reloads, and encouraging people to have weapons in the home.⁶⁰ This irresponsible attitude and this "guarantee" that the president gives people to be violent,

⁵⁸ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2022). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://forumseguranca.org.br/anuario-brasileiro-seguranca-publica/>

⁵⁹ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

⁶⁰ Brazilian Public Security Forum (2020). *Anuário Brasileiro de Segurança Pública*. Retrieved from <https://dossies.agenciapatriciagalvao.org.br/dados-e-fontes/pesquisa/14-anuario-brasileiro-de-seguranca-publica-fbsp-2020/>

aggravates the domestic violence scenario, since it could make even more lethal tools available to aggressors.

With this irresponsible posture of President Jair Bolsonaro to disrespect people and tolerate violence, Brazil has very high numbers of political violence also committed against women inside and outside politics. In this year's elections, MonitorA, which counts the participation of the Journalism Nucleus in 2022, identified that in the first week of the electoral campaign alone, almost 4,500 attacks or insults were directed to 97 female candidates on Twitter. Whether through insults or attacks, what is at stake is the disqualification of the candidates: animalization, inferiorization, moral offenses are some of the ways of trying to reach them.⁶¹

In general, gender violence in Brazil is present in different environments and it is common that the general population sees it as normalized. So, a lot still needs to be done for Brazil to really be a safe place for women to live and while this is being worked on by women's advocacy groups, existing public policies and the creation of support networks by the population itself, the current government is going in the opposite direction of what has been done before. Only 5% of the budget destined to the elimination of violence against women was used last year.

2.3 Reports and recommendation from multi-level governances to Brazil

2.3.1 Universal Periodic Review concerns and recommendations

The Universal Periodic Review UPR is a mechanism for assessing the human rights situation in 193 UN member states. The human rights council was established in 2006 during a UN General Assembly resolution and where the UPR was also established.

The UN human rights council is responsible for: resolving human rights violations, preventing human rights abuses, and reviewing human rights reports that are submitted by our members through the UPR. This council is an intergovernmental body and consists of 47 members. The UPR aims to monitor and propose improvements in the

⁶¹ AZMINA (2022). *Louca, doida, maluca: misoginia domina ofensas a candidatas nessas eleições*. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/reportagens/monitora-2022-misoginia-ofensas-candidatas/>

human rights situation in all countries. This mechanism was created precisely to care for, guide, and increasingly promote the guaranteeing of rights.

The countries submit reports every four and a half years to be evaluated by the UPR. The analysis of these reports aims to understand the current human rights situation in each country, to promote assistance for change, to help the state to apply more efficiently the articles and international conventions proposed by the UN on the subject of human rights, and to share good practices of countries that are managing to effectively take care of human rights.

Brazil has participated in all the delivery cycles to date, so it has already delivered 4 reports: First cycle (until 2007),⁶² Second cycle (2008-2011);⁶³ Third cycle (2012-2016),⁶⁴ Fourth cycle (2017-2021 [2022]);⁶⁵

The reports submitted aim to share all the public policies and actions that have been developed by the states in the field of human rights, and Brazil has worked a lot in the last few years on the topic of the protection of women's human rights, so I am going to make an analysis of the deliveries that Brazil has made on this topic in its reports and the recommendations made by other countries on this topic. This is all in order to understand the evolution of Brazil during this period.

In the first report⁶⁶ delivered by Brazil in 2008, it was presented how the issue of women's rights was seen in Brazil until then, taking into account the cultural and patriarchal issue and that the government was willing to start changing this basis of inequality between men and women and was already working on the creation of public policies.

⁶² UN(2008). *National Report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15(a) of the annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/117/01/PDF/G0811701.pdf?OpenElement>

⁶³ UN(2012). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/116/18/PDF/G1211618.pdf?OpenElement>

⁶⁴ UN(2017). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/046/89/PDF/G1704689.pdf?OpenElement>

⁶⁵ UN(2022). *National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/476/12/PDF/G2247612.pdf?OpenElement>

⁶⁶ UN(2012). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/116/18/PDF/G1211618.pdf?OpenElement>

20. Brazilian society was historically organized under the sign of patriarchy. As a constitutive feature of national formation, its social reproduction has been reflected in the constitution of social dynamics, political institutions, economic practices and cultural representations characterized by the perspective of gender inequality. To transform this picture, the promotion of women's rights in Brazil has, in the last two decades, produced a necessary approximation between government and civil society, opening the way for changes in Brazilian legislation and the formulation of new public policies in this area.⁶⁷

Brazil presented the Special Secretariat of Policies for Women - SPM, created in 2003, which coordinates women's rights issues at the federal level following the guidelines of the I National Plan of Policies for Women (PNPM). In 2006, the Maria da Penha law was created, which is a law about violence against women and domestic violence, and in the same report Brazil points out that even though the law was already in effect, it was still necessary to raise awareness and train legal professionals to effectively put the law into practice.

Also presented in the Brazilian report was the situation regarding the access to jobs for men and women and the existing salary differences, as well as the low presence of women in leadership positions in companies, which was approximately 11% in 2007. And another crucial point presented was the low number of women in political positions, at that time, despite having a higher average educational standard than men, women still occupy less than 9% of the seats in the House of Representatives and 12% in the Federal Senate.

With the launch of the I National Plan of Policies for Women, Brazil began to put pressure on itself to create more policies at the national level to combat violence against women, combat sexual exploitation, and promote women's sexual rights. The PNPM's actions are based on 4 guidelines: 1) autonomy and equality in work and citizenship; 2) inclusive and non-sexist education; 3) women's health, sexual rights, and reproductive rights; and 4) confronting violence against women.

After the delivery of this report Brazil received the following recommendations and questions from the states parties:⁶⁸ “Continue its positive initiatives, invest more rigor

⁶⁷ UN(2008). *National Report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15(a) of the annex to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/117/01/PDF/G0811701.pdf?OpenElement>

⁶⁸ UN(2008). *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review Brazil*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/136/68/PDF/G0813668.pdf?OpenElement>

in evaluating the results of planned activities in much violence against women and other human rights areas (United Kingdom). Integrate gender perspectives in the follow-up process of the UPR review (Slovenia).”

For women's rights and gender, Brazil received few recommendations in this first report, but as Brazil ratified the CEDAW convention in 1984, the country had already been working strongly on this issue. “The Committee is further concerned that violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual violence, is not being sufficiently addressed owing to the lack of information and data”.⁶⁹

In the second report⁷⁰ Brazil brings the issue of violence against women as a priority for the creation of public policies, because at that time 34% of Brazilian women reported having already suffered some form of physical violence. “Between 2007 and 2011, the number of state and municipal women's policy bodies increased from 155 to over 300.103 However, challenges remain in the effort to deconstruct gender roles and promote a real transition to gender equality in Brazil”.⁷¹

One advance that was cited in the report was the increase in women's police stations in Brazil, the first of which was created in 1985 and the purpose of the DEAM is to investigate crimes against women victims of domestic, family and sexual violence, and to safeguard their rights through qualified assistance and awareness raising. Brazil reports that by the year 2010, there were 475 women's police stations in the country. Another important channel for denunciation created in 2005 was dial 180, which is a helpline for women that soon had to be restructured in 2009 because it received too many demands and then was expanded to also be a channel to combat violence against women. By December 2011, 2.3 million calls were received.

The Maria da Penha law was presented again as the most important instrument to combat violence against women and Brazil had an important achievement, which was to solve a debate on the interpretation of the law.

Brazil has received many recommendations on this issue:⁷²

⁶⁹ CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

⁷⁰ UN(2012).*National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21* . Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/116/18/PDF/G1211618.pdf?OpenElement>

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² UN(2012).*Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review* . Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/151/15/PDF/G1215115.pdf?OpenElement>

Table 1. Recommendations given to Brazil on the second report.

Recommendations	Country
119.2. Take more steps towards full implementation of CEDAW recommendations;	Egypt
119.10. Ratify the ILO conventions No. 189 and 87 regarding, respectively, decent conditions of work for female and male domestic workers and freedom of association and protection of the right to organize;	Chad
Continue in its effort to eliminate extreme poverty and include in its social policies those who are most vulnerable, especially women, children, Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, the elderly and persons with disabilities;	Ecuador
119.43. Adoption of the principle of equal pay for equal work, regardless of any differences;	Iraq
119.44. Intensify efforts to enhance the participation of women in socioeconomic activities;	Nepal
119.45. Continue its efforts to guarantee full equality, opportunities and treatment for women and continue implementing national development plans;	Palestine
119.46. Continue its efforts to consolidate greater representation of women in decision-making positions, both in public administration and the private sector (Peru);	Peru
119.47. Continue to promote gender equality in all fields;	Qatar
119.48. Consider the possibility of implementing affirmative action policies in order to achieve a larger representation of women in the executive, legislative and judiciary branches;	Ecuador
119.49. Continue to prioritize policy aimed at promoting equality and repairing social distortions and disparities;	South Africa

119.50. Follow up on the recommendation of ILO to continue efforts to ensure full equality of opportunity and treatment for women, persons of African Descent and indigenous persons;	Turkey
119.51. Continue combating inequalities in access to employment and in working conditions based on gender and race as noted by CESCR;	Turkey
119.67. Make further efforts to improve conditions in detention facilities according to international standards, especially including developing gender-sensitive policies and programmes for women;	Republic of Korea
119.68. Take action to improve prison conditions, in particular to improve the conditions of women's detention facilities in accordance with international standards, and ensure protection of human rights of all detainees, including guarantees of due process and protection against cruel and inhumane treatment;	Slovenia
119.76. Pay extra attention to the special needs of women prisoners by considering implementing the Bangkok rules;	Thailand
119.77. Make more efforts to improve the situation in detention facilities especially in women's prisons;	Greece
119.90. Provide systematic training to judges, prosecutors and lawyers on women's rights and violence against women, including on the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law on domestic and family violence against women;	Canada
119.92. Continue fighting violence against women;	Senegal
119.93. Continue its efforts to implement policies to enhance the protection of women against violence;	Singapore
119.94. Take effective steps to ensure gender equality and counteract violence against women;	Uzbekistan
119.95. Take further steps in order to promote gender equality and eliminate domestic and family violence in the country;	Azerbaijan
119.96. Take legal and practical measures to eliminate violence and	Iran

discrimination against women particularly in the rural and remote areas of Brazil;	
119.98. Strengthen domestic cooperation between relevant actors, as well as international cooperation, in order to combat both internal and A/HRC/21/11 21 international trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children;	Sweden
119.140. Continue its favorable policies with concrete initiatives aimed at the most vulnerable groups such as women, children and minorities;	Viet Nam

Source: Universal Periodical Review-Brazil, 2012⁷³

Another issue that is not about women's rights, but is pertinent to this work, is the creation of the access to information law of 2011 that was disclosed in Brazil's report. The goal is to increase transparency in public management so that citizens can follow government actions, and a system will be developed to provide citizens with guidance on their right to access information. It is important to bring this issue to the debate because Brazil, even with this law in force since 2011, has many gaps in access to information that directly affects women to access their rights.

The report on Brazil's third cycle⁷⁴ presented information on many recommendations that were made in the evaluation of the second report. In 2012, the VII Report was submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In response to the recommendations made about gender equality, Brazil presented the National Plan for Women's Policies 2013-2015 (PNPM), which addresses issues such as gender equality in the labor market, poverty eradication, and women's participation in the country's development. The report also states that inequality in wages, access to the labor market, and access to education have decreased in the period and that women are more present in undergraduate and graduate courses than men. Social assistance programs were created for women farmers, for female heads of households, and an expansion of labor rights for domestic workers.

⁷³ UN(2012). *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/151/15/PDF/G1215115.pdf?OpenElement>

⁷⁴ UN(2017). *National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/046/89/PDF/G1704689.pdf?OpenElement>

The observatory for gender equality was also created to analyze and publish data on this issue.

There was also an increase in female participation in politics with women candidates in the 2014 elections which were (8,120 women or 31% of candidates) compared to the 2010 elections (5,056 women candidates or 22.43% of candidates), according to data provided by the Superior Electoral Court (TSE).

The topic of violence against women received many recommendations in the second cycle report, so Brazil started by presenting two new laws that were created: Law 12,845/2013 regulated the mandatory and comprehensive treatment of people who have suffered sexual assault, and Law 13,104/2015, which defines the crime of femicide as a heinous crime. In addition, new guidelines and rules were created for health professionals to better serve victims of sexual violence and on criteria for collecting evidence of sexual violence. This report also attests to the creation of two important documents: Dossier Femicides and the National Guidelines to Investigate, Prosecute and Try from a Gender Perspective Those Responsible for Violent Deaths of Women - Femicide.

Still on the topic of violence against women, the "Women Without Violence" program was created in 2013 to provide more assistance to women, raise awareness campaigns, create mobile units to assist women who have suffered violence, among other actions. And to conclude the gender violence themes, national and international awareness campaigns were made between 2013 and 2015, such as: the MERCOSUR Campaign Free from Trafficking in Women; the Commitment and Attitude Campaign in favor of the Maria da Penha Law - Law is Stronger; the Women, Living without Violence Program Campaign.

Brazil also presented some information on the prison system and health that involved general audiences but were also linked to women's rights. I cite here as an example Brazil implementing policies to improve the conditions of women in the prison and criminal system, as well as actions dedicated to pregnancy and maternity in prisons. And unfortunately, on the health theme, the number of pregnant women and adolescents infected with HIA/AIDS increases in this period in Brazil and the country warns that measures will be taken to solve this problem.

Based on this report, Brazil received the following recommendations on issues involving women's rights and gender equality:⁷⁵

Table 2. Recommendations given to Brazil on the third report

Recommendations	Country
136.36 Carry out specific legislative reform to strengthen measures against discrimination on the basis of gender and ethnicity ;	Uganda
136.46 Strengthen measures to prevent and punish racism, discrimination and violence against indigenous peoples and people of African descent and violence against women and girls;	Rwanda
136.49 Continue taking active measures aimed at eradicating discrimination against Afro-Brazilian women based on their gender and ethnicity;	Namibia
136.90 Ensure conditions at detention centers comply with international and Brazilian law and that particular attention is given to conditions faced by vulnerable prisoners including pregnant women, children, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; and provide human rights training to officials in the legal and judicial system;	Ireland
136.94 Incorporate the Bangkok Rules into public policies to protect female inmates and adopt bill 5654/2016 that prohibits the use of handcuffs before, during and after childbirth on women deprived of liberty;	Denmark
136.95 Improve prison conditions, particularly addressing overcrowding and violence, including in prisons for women;	Australia
136.119 Take further efforts in combating violence against women such as enhancing the trust in the judicial system, measures to prevent violence, and promoting services and networks for women in rural	Spain

⁷⁵ UN(2017). *Informe nacional presentado con arreglo al párrafo 5 del anexo de la resolución 16/21 del Consejo de Derechos Humanos*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/046/94/PDF/G1704694.pdf?OpenElement>

areas ;	
136.127 Develop a national strategy to tackle modern slavery, including ratification of the 2014 ILO protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, and increased efforts to protect rural workers and women at risk of trafficking;	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
136.133 Redouble efforts to further reduce the income gap between the Afro-Brazilians, especially Afro-Brazilian women, and the general population;	Pakistan
136.140 Continue measures to combat poverty and social inequality by implementing rural development plans covering vulnerable groups, in particular rural women;	Sri Lanka
136.150 Strengthen policies on the elimination of inequalities in the access to employment on the grounds of gender or racial origin;	Colombia
136.156 Widen health care to vulnerable groups, in particular women of minority groups;	Republic of Korea
136.158 Ensure access to reproductive health care, including high-quality prenatal care, and information on sexual and reproductive health, contraception and emergency contraception, and safe abortion to all women without discrimination;	Switzerland
136.176 Continue to implement new policies and expand the coverage and scope of existing ones, to better promote gender equality, in particular for women in the countryside and low-income families;	Singapore
136.177 Adopt a law to protect vulnerable women, particularly low-income housewives;	United Arab Emirates
136.178 Continue the efforts to implement the “Women Living without Violence” programme launched in 2013;	Russian Federation
136.179 Pursue efforts to combat violence against women and promote the rights of women Sudan;	Sudan

136.180 Continue efforts to combat violence, particularly against women ;	Tunisia
136.181 Take measures to stop violence that has cost the lives of more than five thousand women, and caused more than 500,000 rapes in the last year;	Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela
136.182 Strengthen efforts to reduce gender inequalities including to prevent death resulting from violence against women, and to encourage increased reporting of cases of rape ;	Bahamas
136.183 Extend the “Women Living without Violence” programme, with particular attention to women and girls living in the countryside and to women and girls of Afro-Brazilian descent ;	Belgium
136.184 Continue its efforts to combat violence against women and girls;	Egypt
136.185 Combat domestic violence and high maternal mortality rates suffered by women, in compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;	Estonia
136.186 Strengthen measures to eliminate violence and discrimination against women and girls, particularly in rural and remote areas;	Islamic Republic of Iran
6.187 Take measures to combat violence against women and children;	Iraq
136.188 Continue to adopt and implement effective measures to fight violence against women;	Italy
136.189 Strengthen its capacity-building programmes for judges and legal personnel on women’s rights and violence against women;	Thailand
136.191 Further strengthen mechanisms fostering prosecution of all perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence;	Slovakia
136.192 Take measures to reduce the number of cases of violence against women and bring the perpetrators to justice;	Togo

136.193 Follow up on the infrastructure of safe houses for abused women and make sure the legal framework is widely implemented and reaches women's reality;	Austria
136.194 Increase its focus on policy implementation to combat family violence, and in particular violence against women and children;	Australia
136.195 Strengthen policies and programmes to address violence against women and combat child prostitution;	Indonesia
136.196 Ensure the effective implementation of measures to prevent, punish and eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons;	Mexico
136.197 Further promote the participation of women in politics and government;	Timor-Leste
136.198 Put effective measures in place in order to increase the number of women at all levels of the decision-making process;	Belgium
136.214 Continue its efforts on further strengthening the rights of women, children and persons with disabilities;	Mongolia

Source: Universal Periodical Review-Brazil, 2017⁷⁶

The report regarding the fourth cycle,⁷⁷ Brazil reinforced that the femicide law was created in 2005 Law no. 13.104, and that in the year 2021 the National Plan against Femicide was created under Decree No. 10.906 of December 20, 2021, which aims to encourage people to report any kind of violence against women. It is also noted that from 2007 to 2022 many laws were enacted to amend the Maria da Penha Law as urgent measures of protection that can be decided by the police chief and no longer have to wait for the judiciary.

⁷⁶ UN(2017). *Informe nacional presentado con arreglo al párrafo 5 del anexo de la resolución 16/21 del Consejo de Derechos Humanos*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/046/94/PDF/G1704694.pdf?OpenElement>

⁷⁷ UN(2022). *National report submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 16/21*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/476/12/PDF/G2247612.pdf?OpenElement>

Policies have been created to value the rural work of women and women who were working in places that were analogous to slavery are being rescued and assisted by the government. These are also ways to reduce and fight against violence against women.

Brazil has also expanded the "Brazilian Women's House", which is a space that receives victims of violence and provides social, psychological, and legal assistance.

For this fourth cycle report, Brazil had as a national priority policy to guarantee essential rights for the most vulnerable populations, and women are included in this list. Due to the historical moment of the pandemic, a contingency plan was created to deal with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This plan adopted several measures that looked after the safety of children, access to food, and one of the items worked on was "(iii) dissemination of accessible channels for reporting human rights violations and domestic violence", this issue was very important to be addressed because the number of cases of violence against women increased during the pandemic. In the report it is stated that the homicide rate fell in Brazil including the homicide of women.

Finally, it should be mentioned that Brazil signed the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women's Health and Strengthening the Family. Many recommendations were made for this report submitted by Brazil for the fourth cycle and I have listed below those that include women's rights and gender equality:⁷⁸

Table 3. Recommendations given to Brazil on the fourth report

Recommendations	Country
149.16 Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) ;	France
149.33 Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to address structural racism, discrimination, inequality, lack of access to justice and other root causes that contribute to the disproportionate representation of people of African descent, including Afrodescendent women, in incarceration;	Bahamas

⁷⁸ UN(2022).*Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/611/60/PDF/G2261160.pdf?OpenElement>

149.77 Implement previous recommendations with a view to reducing the level of violence and discrimination against Indigenous Peoples, traditional communities and persons in vulnerable situations, including children, women and persons with disabilities;	Romania
149.78 Continue to implement programmes and endeavours aimed at the protection of people of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, women and children in order to ensure equal opportunities for all segments of the population;	Türkiye
149.79 Continue efforts to ensure fundamental rights and provide assistance to women, children and adolescents, older persons, members of Indigenous Peoples and communities, as well as persons with disabilities;	Belarus
149.83 Promote institutional policies that counteract discourses that incite violence for discriminatory reasons, with special emphasis on women, LGBTI people, Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendants;	Chile
149.125 Adopt additional measures to improve the protection of women and girls in all their diversity, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTIQ+ persons, journalists, human rights defenders, including environmental defenders, Afro-Brazilians, trade unionists, religious minorities and persons with disabilities from violence and reprisal for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion or belief;	United States of America
149.130 Set the absolute minimum age of marriage for both boys and girls at 18 years;	Croatia
149.140 Allocate resources and funding to combat forced labour, child labour and the exploitation of women in rural areas;	Viet Nam
149.174 Provide universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services for all groups, including women and girls and the LGBTI community, without prejudice;	Canada

149.186 Continue to take measures that will guarantee the right to education, especially for the girl child in rural áreas;	Uganda
149.206 Take further measures to promote the participation of women in economic activities and to prioritize primary health care, particularly regarding women’s health issues and maternal mortality;	Sri Lanka
149.207 Reduce barriers to access to justice by women and girls and develop appropriate protocols to respond to specific needs and cases;	Paraguay
149.208 Take additional measures to increase the participation of women in all spheres of society, including their participation in politics;	Spain
149.209 Consider the development of strategies to ensure greater participation of women in politics and the judiciary;	Serbia
149.210 Continue efforts to promote the participation of women in senior positions of power and decision-making at the federal, state and local levels;	Bulgaria
149.211 Increase meaningful participation by civil society in public affairs, especially for the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and women in decision-making processes;	Austria
149.212 Continue taking active measures aimed at improving gender equality in employment, participation in public affairs, and access to health care;	Viet Nam
149.213 Expand rural development programmes, including those aimed at supporting rural women and their economic empowerment;	Syrian Arab Republic
149.214 Support programmes and measures taken to empower rural women and enhance their role in production and self-sufficiency;	United Arab Emirates
149.215 Continue legislative efforts to support vulnerable groups of women, including housewives, women of low income, and rural women;	Algeria

149.216 Strengthen measures and programmes aimed at addressing the needs of women, particularly women facing various forms of discrimination, such as girls, Indigenous women, Afrodescendent women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, and those belonging to the LGTBIQ+ community and other vulnerable groups;	Colombia
149.217 Continue efforts towards strengthening the legal framework on gender-based violence;	Serbia
149.218 Continue efforts to combat violence against women and girls;	Egypt
149.219 Redouble efforts to promote gender equality and combat gender-based violence;	Timor-Leste
149.220 Strengthen efforts to combat violence against women and girls;	Cyprus
149.221 Strengthen public policies aimed at guaranteeing legal protection against all forms of violence, particularly sexual and gender-based violence in the educational sphere;	Ecuador
149.222 Address violence against women in politics;	Zambia
149.223 Fully implement comprehensive strategies to prevent violence against women, including femicides, and support victims and survivors of such violence;	Israel
149.224 Strengthen efforts to prevent and combat sexual and gender-based violence and provide support and services for women and girls who are victims of violence;	Italy
149.225 Strengthen mechanisms to prevent and combat violence against women in order to protect victims and provide them with justice and rehabilitation and all other forms of assistance;	Djibouti
149.226 Better protect victims of domestic violence, including by expanding and improving access to the network of the House of the Brazilian Woman;	Czechia
149.227 Consider introducing legal protection mechanisms for victims	Eswatini

and survivors of domestic violence;	
149.228 Remove systemic obstacles to the investigation and prosecution of femicides with a gender perspective;	Liechtenstein
149.229 Introduce a comprehensive legal framework on gender-based violence and reduce systemic obstacles to the effective investigation and prosecution of femicides;	Austria
149.230 Take urgent measures to prevent, investigate and prosecute the high number of femicides, especially against Afro-Brazilian women;	Belgium
149.231 Adopt adequate measures to ensure the reduction of violence against women and girls;	Jordan
149.232 Take all the necessary measures, both in law and in practice, to combat violence against women and girls, and domestic violence;	Latvia
149.233 Provide legal protection for children against all forms of violence, particularly gender-based, sexual and psychological violence in education settings;	Lithuania
149.234 Strengthen measures to protect women against gender-based violence;	Mauritius
149.235 Strengthen efforts towards the prevention of all kinds of violence against women, children and adolescents;	Nepal
149.236 Provide the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights with the necessary resources to implement effective public policies that promote women's rights and to combat gender-based violence;	Peru
149.237 Take the necessary measures to ensure the human rights of vulnerable groups to protection from all forms of violence, especially women and children;	Uzbekistan
149.238 Address gender-based violence, improve maternal health and women's access to education, and increase women's participation in development activities by adopting effective policies;	Bangladesh

149.239 Continue fighting against gender-based and domestic violence, by training law-enforcement and court officials on the handling of these cases and by improving women's and girls' access to justice;	Estonia
149.240 Continue policy and legislative measures to combat gender-based violence, including by ensuring access to safe reproductive health services;	India
149.242 Continue to take measures to strengthen mechanisms guaranteeing better protection of the rights of children, women and Indigenous Peoples;	Pakistan
149.244 Continue and step up efforts to prevent violence and exploitation of women and children;	Samoa
149.251 Continue its effective efforts to combat violence against children and adolescents, in particular women;	Islamic Republic of Iran
149.279 Strengthen and implement existing policies to eliminate violence and discrimination against women and girls, human rights defenders and LGBTIQI+ communities, including through police protocols to address LGBTIQI+-phobic violence;	New Zealand
149.284 Include women and girls and LGBTIQI+ communities in planning for the 2023 conference on freedom of religion or belief;	United Kingdom
150.12 Ensure the right to education and to health, securing an age-appropriate curriculum on gender and sexual education in schools, aimed at preventing sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies as well as gender-based violence and inequality;	Denmark
150.15 Ensure that the right of women to freely access safe and legal abortions is guaranteed, without bureaucratic obstacles or discrimination, and in conditions that meet the need for privacy, respect and support;	Australia

Source: Universal Periodical Review- Brazil, 2022⁷⁹

2.3.2 Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Concerns and recommendations

The convention consists of 30 articles that dictate how countries should look at the issue of gender equality and how they should base public policy on this issue within the constitution that governs laws at the local level.

Brazil has been part of CEDAW since its official opening in 1984, during the women's decade. Brazil ratified this convention during the third wave of feminism in Brazil, which was also very important for the insertion of equal rights for men and women in the Brazilian constitution that was created in 1988 and is still the same today.

In 2002, Brazil joined the optional protocol and delivered its first report to the CEDAW committee, a report combining the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth periodic reports of the participating states. The report submission is monitored by the committee to evaluate the work and progress being made in each state on the issue of women's rights and gender equality. In addition to the official report submission by the government, civil society associations independent of the government can also submit their own reports. CEDAW publishes the main areas of concern and recommendations for the country based on the official government report and the reports provided by civil society. In addition to the recommendations, CEDAW also publishes a list of issues and questions to be considered before publishing the next report.

Brazil has already made the submission of 9 reports over the past years, with the last one being submitted in December 2021 as a combined report of the eighth and ninth periodic reports of the participating states. This report was made after the publication of the List of issues and questions prior to the submission of the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Brazil by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2020, but CEDAW has not yet published the areas of concern and recommendations for this report.

⁷⁹ UN(2022).*Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/611/60/PDF/G2261160.pdf?OpenElement>

The first report⁸⁰ delivered in 2002, covered 17 years, from 1985 to 2002, since Brazil ratified CEDAW in 1984, but only delivered its first report in 2002. The delivery of the first report was the result of a collective effort of women's organizations and human rights specialists in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice, through the National Council of Women's Rights (CNDM).

The recommendations made by the commission refer to all government activities presented in the report, so the commission evaluates the report submitted by all states parties and makes recommendations on the actions, creation of laws, public policies, and the way the state has been working on the agenda proposed by the convention.

In the report delivered in 2002, recommendations were made that predominantly focused on specific areas such as: 1- Ensuring women's rights; 2- Education; 3- Access of women to political positions; 4- Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution; 5- Employment, 6- Health and 7- Violence against women, especially minorities such as black and indigenous women and girls.

The commission began by highlighting concern about the lack of guarantee of women's rights, not only from the failure to implement the Convention and the need for changes in the constitution to promote equality, but also from law enforcement officials who fail to enforce existing laws and public policies. The various gaps were mentioned that extend from the clauses of the Brazilian penal code that promotes discrimination against women, to the behavior of the judiciary that still fails to apply the law to defend the honor of male aggressors, to the persistence of the stereotypical and conservative view of the role of women in society.

Among the recommendations offered by the commission are changes to the criminal code regarding provisions discriminating against women, as well as legislative reform to ensure de jure equality for men and women. The commission also recommended the implementation of awareness and sensitization programs for the judiciary, including judges, prosecutors, members of the legal profession, and other law enforcement officials, to act in accordance with the convention during legal proceedings.

The recommendation to better prepare judges, lawyers and prosecutors primarily addresses the issue of violence against women, with the indication to propose training on

⁸⁰ CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

women's law and violence against women so that they are prepared to ensure women's access to justice. The committee also recommends increasing the number of specialized courts on the subject and training on the Maria da Penha Law, as well as developing mechanisms to collect data and evaluate the impact of this law. The Mariana Ferrer case is an example of women's lack of access to justice that has gained national fame. Mariana reported a rape in 2018 and the accused was unanimously acquitted. In addition to having to go through the trial, she was attacked by the general population for speaking out in relation to the case, in addition to being publicly humiliated by the lawyer of the accused⁸¹.

Even though these concerns and recommendations were presented in 2003, these problems still extend in a worrisome way today. In 2020, an 11-year-old girl pregnant due to rape was denied a legal abortion by the judge in charge of the case⁸². Despite the legislation guaranteeing the right to abortion in case of rape and especially for a child of 11 years old, the judiciary denied this right to children, causing controversy throughout the country and highlighting once again the need to implement the recommendations of CEDAW.

The committee also showed its concern for marginalized women in the country, especially black, indigenous, and family-headed women, who have even less access to their rights and need policies directed especially to their needs.

In the 2002 report, Brazil presented the special secretariat for women's policies, which was of great relevance to work on the issue and was positively recognized by the CEDAW committee. Even so, the committee showed its concern with the persistence of violence against women and the lack of information and data on the subject. It is noticeable that the issue of violence against women is a theme that draws attention in Brazil since this report was delivered in 2002. Today, more than 20 years later, Brazilian women suffer violence on a daily basis in different areas of life, including within the home.

⁸¹ Correio Braziliense (2021). *Caso Mari Ferrer: Justiça confirma absolvição de André Aranha*. Retrieved from <https://www.correiobraziliense.com.br/brasil/2021/10/4954081-caso-mari-ferrer-justica-confirma-absolvicao-de-andre-aranha.html>

⁸² El País (2020). *Menina de 10 anos violentada faz aborto legal, sob alarde de conservadores à porta do hospital*. Retrieved from <https://brasil.elpais.com/brasil/2020-08-16/menina-de-10-anos-violentada-fara-aborto-legal-sob-alarde-de-conservadores-a-porta-do-hospital.html>

The issue of sexual violence against indigenous women by military units and miners on indigenous lands was addressed in the report and the commission recommended measures to combat this violence. During the Temer and Bolsonaro administrations, from 2016 to 2022, there was an exorbitant 787% expansion of mining in protected reserve areas⁸³ and a consequent increase in the number of rapes of indigenous women and girls, therefore, this is still a subject that needs a lot of attention from the government and there is a need to create public policies aimed at this segment of the population⁸⁴.

For the topic of education, the commission highlighted the importance of investing in changes to decrease the inequality of access to education for girls and women, due to high illiteracy rates and low rates of women with education beyond primary education. On the issue of education, marginalized groups need differentiated attention, as socioeconomic issues and ethnic backgrounds are factors that exacerbate the lack of access for these groups. The committee also recommends that the government encourage girls and women to seek professional training in fields of study that traditionally are not chosen by or opportunities for them, such as technology.

On the topic of labor, the committee recommended the creation of a law that protects women from discrimination in the workplace, promotes equal pay and equal working conditions. In addition, it recommended the creation of measures that protect women from any kind of harassment in the workplace. Measures that ensure that women in informal work situations can also access rights are fundamental.

Regarding trafficking in persons, the committee was very concerned that Brazil has not adopted any law or global treaty on this issue to combat trafficking in persons and recommended that Brazil implement the National Policy to Combat Trafficking in Persons. Besides implementing article 6 of the convention and ensuring that people who commit this crime are punished and the victims are protected.

⁸³ G1 (2023). *Garimpo aumentou 787% em terras indígenas entre 2016 e 2022, aponta Inpe*. Retrieved from <https://g1.globo.com/meio-ambiente/noticia/2023/02/11/garimpo-aumenta-787percent-em-terras-indigenas-entre-2016-e-2022-aponta-inpe-infografico.ghtml>

⁸⁴ Veja (2023). *Ianomâmis: gravidez de menores de idade por garimpeiros preocupa o governo*. Retrieved from <https://veja.abril.com.br/coluna/maquiavel/ianomamis-gravidez-de-menores-de-idade-por-garimpeiros-preocupa-o-governo/>

The issue of access to health care was also a concern of the commission. Measures to reduce the high mortality rates, especially in rural and isolated areas, were recommended, as well as the creation of services and the dissemination of information about health care, especially sexual and reproductive health. In the report, Brazil was asked for clearer information about the measures that have been adopted to combat unsafe abortions and discrimination against women and adolescents who are victims of violence with judgments of cultural and conservative standards when they go to health centers with abortions. Information was also requested on how they are combating forced sterilization and the growth of female HIV/AIDS.

The under-representation of women in political decision-making and high-ranking work positions was also addressed by the commission, bringing attention to the need to adopt strategies to accelerate the participation of women in these instances, such as implementing special policies aimed at increasing the number of women in these positions.

The theme National Gender Mechanisms was highly questioned. The committee wanted to understand more about the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies (SPM) and how its governance works at the federal level and if there is any entity with the authority and capacity to coordinate its actions. It also requested information about the National Women's Policy Plan that was made in 2004. The committee requested information about the mandates of women in the national congress and the results obtained on the advancement of women's rights in Brazil. Finally, the committee requested clarification on the structure created to implement the National Pact to combat violence against women at the federal, state, and municipal levels.

The sixth report⁸⁵ was delivered to the committee in August 2005 and covered the period from 2001 to 2005. The report was prepared by a group established under the coordination of the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM) and the Ministry of External Relations/Department of Human Rights and Social Issues.

The concerns and recommendations of the commission based on the sixth report begin by highlighting the need for better preparation of the judiciary, as recommended in previous reports. The most vulnerable groups were of particular concern, as the difficulty

⁸⁵ CEDAW (2007). Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Brazil. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

of access to justice for these groups is accentuated by regional, economic, and social disparities. The commission highlighted the difficulty of implementing the Convention at all levels, especially at regional and local levels.

Despite the creation of the Maria da Penha Law during the period covered by the report, attitudes and practices that keep women in a position of inferiority are widely accepted in society and this is reflected in the judiciary, which still fails to implement laws and public policies aimed at reducing inequality between men and women, besides making it impossible for these women to access their rights.

One concern of the commission was the lack of invocation of the provisions of the Convention in court, demonstrating a lack of knowledge and information about the Convention and the rights that women have under it, as well as the rights guaranteed by national legislation. This lack of information was already being addressed in 2007 and continues to be an issue today. Although there are laws and public policies that guarantee women's rights and combat gender inequality, misinformation leads to ignorance on the part of the population and prevents access to these rights.

The commission strongly recommended the prioritization of measures for the elimination of all forms of violence against women, emphasizing the adoption of effective measures for the full implementation of the Maria da Penha Law, created in 2004. The creation of special police stations and courts, the involvement of relevant actors, the systematic monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the legislation, and the creation of awareness campaigns on violence against women were recommended.

Concern about human trafficking, especially of women and children, was demonstrated again, as even though measures had been taken, the services provided were insufficient both in number and quality. Recommendations included the application of more efficient measures, stricter legislation to punish those responsible, and the provision of protection and support for victims.

On the issue of women's political participation, it was pointed out that the measures taken were ineffective and did almost nothing to increase the number of women participating in decision-making positions. And the creation of measures to ensure the increased representation of women in high-ranking positions and public and political positions was encouraged, including the adoption of temporary special measures. In addition to filling these positions, it was recommended that policies be adopted to

accelerate the closing of the wage gap between men and women, as well as to ensure equal opportunities in the labor market.

It was noted that measures were taken regarding women's health, with the creation of the National Policy for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, the National Pact for the Reduction of Maternal Mortality and the Integrated Plan for Fighting the Feminization of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases. However, mortality rates remained high and the commission encouraged increased efforts to ensure access to women's health, including measures for the prevention of unintended pregnancy, ranging from access to information to contraceptive methods and family planning. Other recommendations were education about pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, particularly HIV/AIDS, and the decriminalization of abortion.

Efforts in relation to rural women were recognized, but considered insufficient, as the scope of poverty, inequalities, and lack of access to education and health for these women was of great concern. Strengthening efforts to implement programs for these women was recommended.

The commission ends its recommendations by highlighting the lack of data on women from marginalized groups, such as black and indigenous women. The lack of information on these women makes it difficult to form an accurate picture of their situation and hinders the understanding of the impact of public policies on them. The commission's recommendation was to improve data collection on these groups, including collecting data on the impacts that legislation and policies already created have on these groups.

The seventh report⁸⁶ was delivered in August 2010 and referred to the period from 2006 to 2009. During this time the special secretariat for women's policy ceased to be considered "special" and became part of the structure of the Presidency of the Republic as an "essential organ". The commission recommended strengthening the capacities of the secretariat, as well as ensuring the allocation of funds and extending women's policies to the 27 states and the Federal District.

⁸⁶ CEDAW (2010). Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

And the commission begins by stating that it is the responsibility of the National Congress to implement the obligations of the state parties to the Convention.

The recommendations regarding domestic workers focus on guaranteeing the rights of domestic workers, measures to protect the rights of especially Afro-descendant domestic workers, and to eliminate multiple forms of discrimination. Regarding employment in general, the recommendations are to prioritize the adoption of the Equality in the Workplace Bill, effective measures in the formal labor market, with emphasis on eliminating occupational segregation, the creation of laws and measures to protect women from sexual harassment at work.

On temporary measures, such as race-based quotas, the recommendations that these measures take a step forward and broaden the understanding of their concepts.

Regarding violence against women, the commission recommends training judges, prosecutors, and lawyers in women's rights and violence against women, as well as in the Maria da Penha Law, strengthening the judicial system, especially minorities. In addition, it recommends improving the system of data analysis and collection and providing technical, human and financial resources for the implementation of the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women.

The commission also made recommendations on human trafficking and prostitution, for the adoption of comprehensive laws against human trafficking, the establishment of unified national mechanisms to combat and prevent trafficking, the creation of strategies to combat and prevent the exploitation of prostitution and sex tourism, strengthen international, regional, and bilateral cooperation efforts, as well as ensure the monitoring and evaluation of data collection on these issues.

The commission also made recommendations to increase women's participation in political life, to combat inequalities in access to education, and to create measures to improve illiteracy rates.

On the issue of health, the commission recommended continuing efforts to improve women's access to health care and maintaining the Stork Network program, which has reduced maternal mortality primarily in disadvantaged groups. It suggested revising abortion legislation to remove the punitive provisions for women, which had been recommended earlier.

In the case of rural women, the recommendations were to ensure that these women, especially heads of households, participate in decision-making processes, improve access to health, education, clean water, sanitation services, among others, and create measures to ensure the participation of rural women in the design and implementation of local development projects.

The committee made recommendations about women in detention, a subject that has not been addressed before. Measures to decrease the number of women in conflict with the law, to address the situation of women and girls in detention through gender-sensitive policies, the creation of strategies and programs to facilitate access to justice, especially for indigenous women, and the improvement of prison conditions were recommended. Finally, the commission made recommendations for improvement in data collection.

2.4. Main public policies for combating the violence against women

Gender-Based violence can target both genders, but men and women are differently affected by violence. Firstly, women are the victims in most of the cases, with over 30% of women worldwide had suffer physical or sexual violence,⁸⁷ and in second place, the manner in which violence is carried out differs since men usually are victims of a violence committed in public spaces, whereas women undergo on a daily basis with violence that manifests itself inside their own homes, most of the time practiced by their partners and family members.⁸⁸

Globally, 27% of women aged between 15 and 49 years in a relationship had experience physical or sexual violence by their intimate partner and around 38% of femicides are committed by intimate patterns. Only 6% of women had suffered the same type of violence from non-partners,⁸⁹ which shows a phenomenon in gender-based violence. Women are more likely to suffer violence from people with whom they have

⁸⁷ WHO (2021). *Violence against women*. . Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

⁸⁸ Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres (SPM).(2011). Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

⁸⁹ WHO (2018). *Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>

intimacy and trust, surrounding the violence with fear, justification and making the event even more traumatic while creating a greater tolerance of gender-based violence.

Violence against women is one of the main forms of human rights violations, showing itself persistent and devastating worldwide, not only for affecting the women's rights to life, health, and physical integrity, but also for remaining largely unreported due to impunity, silence, stigma, and shame involving it.⁹⁰ The continued high rates of violence against women stems from the unequal construction of the place of women and men in various societies. Therefore, gender inequality is the basis from which all forms of violence and deprivation against women are structured, legitimized, and perpetuated.

The Brazilian scenery is similar to the rest of the world. Despite gender-based violence being admittedly present in the lives of millions of Brazilian women, there are no systematic and official statistics that point to the magnitude of this issue precisely. But, due to pressure from feminist organizations and the necessity of data for the creation of public policies by the Brazilian government, the collection of quantitative data has improved significantly in the last few years.⁹¹

There are several types of violence against women, such as domestic, psychological, physical, moral, patrimonial, sexual, women trafficking, sexual harassment, and others, and it is a problem that affects women from different social classes, backgrounds, age, marital status, education level, race, and even sexual orientation. Hence, the creation of public policies must be accessible to all women, and encompass the different modalities through which violence is expressed.

The first World Women's Conference was held in 1975 in Mexico City, coinciding with International Women's Year. The World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Years was established with guidelines for the advancement of women until 1985. Five years later, the conference was held in Copenhagen and it had the objective of implementing the goals from 1975, focusing on

⁹⁰ UN. International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 25 November. *UNiTE! Activism to End Violence against Women & Girls!* (2022). Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/observances/ending-violence-against-women-day?gclid=CjwKCAiA0JKfBhBIEiwAPhZXDy-GHzHxfz4Z-qBN_5YLG1Kn8whSfegTAOnNXN2u7kRdkk9ew0ya-hoCotYQAvD_BwE

⁹¹ Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA). (2016). *A violência contra a mulher*. Retrieve from https://www.ipea.gov.br/retrato/pdf/190215_tema_d_a_violencia_contra_mulher.pdf

employment, health and education and protecting women's rights to inheritance, child custody and nationality.⁹²

In 1985, the conference reviewed the achievements until the date and established tangible measures to overcome barriers to the realization of the objectives. The strategies outlined in the conference aimed at gender equality. It was only in Beijing in 1995 that the global agenda for gender equality marked a significant watershed event as 189 countries unanimously adopted the agenda for women's empowerment.⁹³

Strategic goals and actions were set in 12 crucial areas:

- Women and poverty
- Education and training of women
- Women and health
- Violence against women
- Women and armed conflict
- Women and the economy
- Women in power and decision-making
- Institutional mechanism for the advancement of women
- Human rights of women
- Women and the media
- Women and the environment
- The girl-child

Violence against women became a critical area of attention and among the action to be taken by the governments there were to condemn violence against women, to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, to provide women who are subjected to violence with access to the mechanisms of justice inter alia.⁹⁴ Since then, countries have also been developing their own public policies, taking into consideration the needs of each country and its cultures.

⁹² UN Women. *World Conferences on Women*. Retrieve from https://www.ipea.gov.br/retrato/pdf/190215_tema_d_a_violencia_contra_mulher.pdf

⁹³ UN Women. *World Conferences on Women*. Retrieve from https://www.ipea.gov.br/retrato/pdf/190215_tema_d_a_violencia_contra_mulher.pdf

⁹⁴ UN (1995). *The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/Beijing%20full%20report%20E.pdf>

In the historical context of public policies aimed at combating gender violence, the assurance of women's rights throughout history is what has allowed the construction, design, and articulation of policies. During the trajectory of public policies in Brazil, the expansion of the debates and the recognition of invisible themes were fundamental for the creation of affirmative actions that took into consideration relations of inequality, violence, and the involvement of the feminist movement to press for measures.

The Government must support society's interests and, through public policies, seek to meet the demands made by society. Thus, public policies are understood as the "State in action", understanding them as the government's obligations (Gobert and Muller, 1987 *apud* Höfling, 2001). As declared by Höfling (2001) public policies are understood here as those that are the responsibility of the state - as to implementation and maintenance from a decision-making process that involves public agencies and different bodies and agents of society related to the policy implemented. In this sense, public policies cannot be reduced to state policies" (Höfling, 2001 p.31).

In Brazil, the public policies of affirmative action, directly related to aspects of violence against women come from the recognition of a discriminatory and violent distress suffered by them, leading to a type of violence structured in a gender hierarchy, coined along the lines of patriarchy. The inferiorization of women and the deprivation of their rights has led to discrimination and inequality of rights in the Brazilian constitution. Due to this context, the public policies came from the claim of social movements determined to pressure the government to position itself against social ills.

The first step towards gender equality in Brazil started in the Divorce Law No.6,515/1977 that opened a new possibility of separation . which reflected positively for women in situations of violence (Piovesan & Pimentel, n.d.)The Federal Constitution of 1988 was a historical landmark for the creation of women's rights, bringing several provisions regarding the principle of equality between men and women in all fields of social life (art. 5, I), in married life (art. 226, V), and also and also the government's commitment to address issues of violence against women ((art. 226, VIII).

In the penal domain, discriminatory laws were gradually changed or excluded from the legal system, such as, the crime of adultery, written in all Brazilian penal codes and only removed definitively, by Law 11,106 of 2005.

Women's and feminist movements, popular movements and the National Council for Women's Rights (CNDM), organized themselves in an intense mobilization with the purpose of defending women of the most varied classes, ages, and races. With the democratization process in Brazil, the feminist and women's movements conquered a dialogue with the Government, initiating the recognition that discrimination and inequalities in gender relations are issues to be faced by means of legislation and public policies (Vigano & Laffin, 2019).

In 2006, the Maria da Penha Law n.11.304 was created and named after Mrs. Maria da Penha who, after suffering domestic violence, murder attempts and being neglected by Brazilian authorities, looked for international help. The Law creates mechanisms to prevent domestic and family violence against women, in accordance with the Federal Constitution (art. 226, VIII), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women.

The Law also describes all types of violence that are foreseen in the code, adopting the definition of violence against women used at the Belém do Pará Convention, provides for the creation of the Courts for Domestic and Family Violence against Women; amends the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Criminal Code, and the Law of Criminal Execution; and makes other provisions like classifying domestic violence as a human rights violation.

In May 2016, the bill 07/2016 was introduced to Maria da Penha Law, adding three new articles. As described by Pasinato (2016), the first two articles include directives regarding specialized police and expert assistance for the necessary physical space adaptations and to gather evidence with a humanized approach that is required to avoid further victimizing women. The third article modifies the legislative text to allow the application of immediate and urgent protective measures by the police as soon as any present or imminent risk to the physical or mental health of the victim or her dependents is identified.

The Secretariat for Women's Policies of the Presidency of the Republic (SPM), firstly called The Special Secretariat for Women's Policies was created by President Luiz Inácio Lula Da Silva - Lula in 2003 and it has as its principal goal promote equality between men and women and combat all forms of prejudice and discrimination rooted in a patriarchal and excluding society. The SPM has three main lines of action: (i) Labor

Policies and Women's Economic Autonomy; (ii) Confronting Violence Against Women; and (iii) Programs and Actions in the areas of Health, Education, Culture, Political Participation, Gender Equality and Diversity.⁹⁵

The SPM together with the National Council for Women's Rights (CNDM), were responsible for the I National Conference on Women's Policies called by President Lula in 2004. The main goal of the Conference was to propose guidelines and propositions for the foundation of the I National Plan for Women's Policies (PNPM). The PNPM initiatives were based on four lines of action: Autonomy, equality in the world of work and citizenship, Inclusive and non-sexist education, Women's health, sexual rights and reproductive rights, and Combating violence against women. The last line of action foresaw the implementation of a National Policy to Confront Violence against Women.⁹⁶

The PNPM comprises care and protection to women in situations of violence, and the struggle against the impunity of aggressors, complying with one of the central goals. The implementation occurs through services networks, with the significant participation of civil society institutions and NGOs, the training of professionals, the creation of norms and standards of care, the improvement of legislation, and initiatives that interfere with the sexist and patriarchal culture in Brazil.⁹⁷

Maria da Penha Law was sanctioned only after the creation of the first Plan, so the II National Plan of Women's Policies, approved at the II National Conference on Women's Policies, in 2007, had as one of its priorities to ensure the implementation of the Law, and to consolidate the Maria da Penha Law Observatory.⁹⁸

Underneath the line of action for confronting violence against women lies the National Secretariat for Confronting Violence against Women, and from it, the Network for Confronting Violence against Women. In 2011, Brazil's then President Dilma Rousseff sanctioned the National Policy to Confront Violence Against Women (PNEVM) proposed by the National Secretariat for Confronting Violence against Women.

⁹⁵ Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship (2019). *Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres - SPM*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/navegue-por-temas/politicas-para-mulheres/arquivo/arquivos-diversos/sobre/spm>

⁹⁶ SPM (2005). *Plano Nacional de Políticas para Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/navegue-por-temas/politicas-para-mulheres/arquivo/assuntos/pnpm/pnpm-relatorio.pdf>

⁹⁷ SPM (2005). *Plano Nacional de Políticas para Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.br/mdh/pt-br/navegue-por-temas/politicas-para-mulheres/arquivo/assuntos/pnpm/pnpm-relatorio.pdf>

⁹⁸ SPM (2007). *II Plano Nacional de Políticas para Mulheres*. Retrieved from https://www.ipea.gov.br/participacao/images/pdfs/conferencias/Mulheres_III/texto_base_3_conferencia_mulheres.pdf

The PNEVM is guided by principles proposed in the I and II National Plan of Women's Policies in the following fundamental points:⁹⁹

- Equality and respect for diversity
- Equity
- Autonomy for women
- Secularism of the State
- Universality of policies
- Social justice
- Transparency of public acts
- Participation and social control

Besides the fundamental points, the Plan created guidelines to fight violence against women, being them:¹⁰⁰

- Ensure compliance with international treaties, agreements, and conventions signed and ratified by the Brazilian government regarding the fight against violence against women.
- Recognize gender, race, and ethnic violence as structural and historical violence that expresses the oppression of women and needs to be treated as a security, justice, education, social assistance, and public health issue.
- Combat the different forms of appropriation and mercantile exploitation of women's bodies and lives, such as sexual exploitation and trafficking in women.
- Implement preventive measures in public policies, in an integrated and intersectoral manner in the areas of health education, assistance, tourism, communication, culture, human rights, and rights, and justice.
- Encourage the formation and training of professionals to deal with violence against the confrontation of violence against women, especially in the area of assistance.
- Structure the network of assistance to women in situations of violence in of violence in the States, Municipalities, and Federal District.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ SPM (2011). Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

¹⁰⁰ SPM (2011). Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

¹⁰¹ SPM (2011). Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

The law Lei nº 13.104/15, sanctioned by President Dilma Rousseff, includes femicide in the list of heinous crimes, with higher sentences, from 12 to 30 years. The femicide is considered when the murder involves domestic and family violence, contempt or discrimination of the victim's condition as a woman in 2021, Brazil was the country in Latino America and the Caribbean with the highest absolute number of femicides,¹⁰² showing that femicides are a constant problem that need urgent attention in the country. Although these numbers are high, they do not accurately reflect the scenario in Brazil, since there is a lack of quality data.

Brazil has more than 40 federal laws that are aimed at protecting the human rights of women. Most of these laws are very recent and new ones are being created according to events and pressure from a very strong network of activists and academics. Unfortunately, Brazilian justice is still very flawed, and many people place culture and religion as the fundamental basis for decisions.

The Maria da Penha law is the best known because it was the first and it had a very big international repercussion, it is a milestone in the history of Brazil. It was created in 2006, but the Brazilian government, in general, lacks preparation to practice it.

The number of police stations specialized in women is very low and the services for welcoming people after an aggression are still rare and difficult to access.

Brazil has only 404 precincts that serve women, according to the IBGE. According to IBGE research, only 7.3% of the 5,560 Brazilian municipalities have Specialized Police Stations to Assist Women. But there are other services and apparatus for welcoming women and seeking their rights. The bureaucracy makes many women give up on seeking help and continue in the cycle of violence.

¹⁰² Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (2021). *Femicide or feminicide*. Retrieved from <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide>



Figure 5. Map of women reception services in Brazil (AzMina, 2022).¹⁰³

¹⁰³ AzMina (2022). *Mapa das Delegacias da Mulher*. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/projetos/delegacia-da-mulher/>

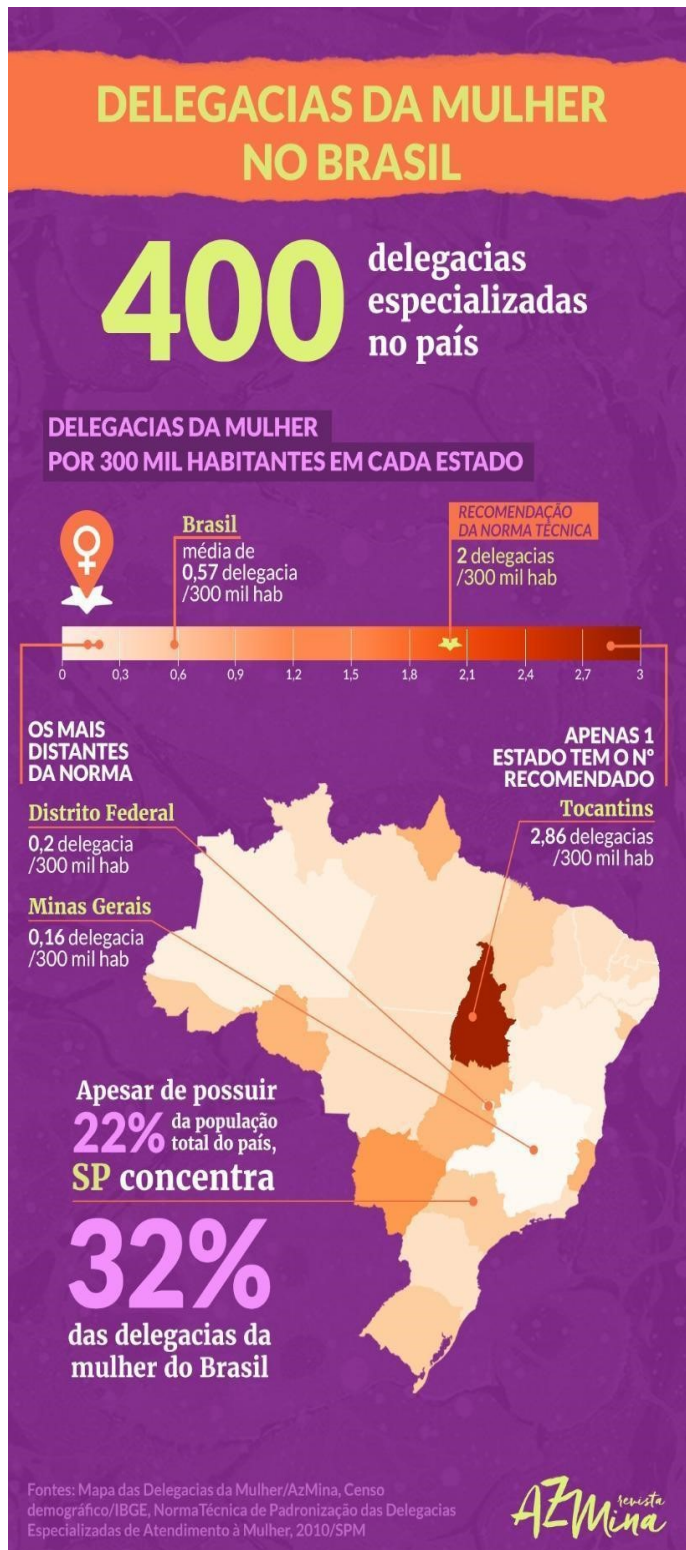


Figure 6. Women's police stations in Brazil (AzMina, 2022).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ AzMina (2022). *Só 7% das cidades brasileiras contam com delegacia da mulher*. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/reportagens/so-7-das-cidades-brasileiras-contam-com-delegacia-da-mulher/>

The main laws were passed in the beginning of the 20th century, when Brazil went through a federal government that was open to discuss and develop measures to combat violence against women.¹⁰⁵

Table 4. Laws and services to protect women victims of gender violence

Name	Number	What it establishes
Maria da Penha Law	11.340/2006	Creates mechanisms to curb domestic and family violence against women and establishes measures for assistance and protection.
Carolina Dieckmann Law	12.737/2012	Made it a crime to hack into electronic devices to obtain private data.
Next Minute Law	12.845/2013	Provides guarantees to victims of sexual violence, such as immediate care by SUS, medical, psychological and social support, preventive examinations and information about their rights.
Joana Maranhão Law	12.650/2015	Changed the deadlines regarding the prescription of crimes of sexual abuse of children and adolescents. The statute of limitations began to apply after the victim turned 18 years old, and the time limit for denunciation was increased to 20 years.
Femicide Law	13.104/2015	Provides for femicide as a qualifying circumstance for the crime of homicide, that is, when a crime is committed against a woman because of her condition as a female

Source: Plataforma mulher Segura, 2021¹⁰⁶

Legislation to protect women's rights has led to concrete actions being taken and they present themselves through public policies, service networks and government

¹⁰⁵ Plataforma Mulher Segura (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.mulhersegura.org/>

¹⁰⁶ Plataforma Mulher Segura (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.mulhersegura.org/direitos-das-mulheres/voce-nao-esta-sozinha/quais-leis-e-servicos-protectem-mulheres-vitimas-de-violencia-de-genero>

apparatus for the care of women. There have been changes since the constituent process of 1988, with the massive participation of feminist organizations, following the 1990s, marked by the creation of specific secretariats for women, culminating in a new policy secretariat, with ministry status, in the first half of the 2000s.¹⁰⁷

The main Networks and services:¹⁰⁸

- Specialized Police Stations for Attending to Women (DEAM): The specialized units of the Civil Police have prepared and trained professionals who carry out actions of prevention, protection and investigation of crimes of domestic violence and sexual violence against women, among others.
- The Brazilian Women's house: This is an innovation in the humanized care of women, but the federal government initiative is not yet available in all capitals. In just one space, different specialized services are offered, such as Reception and Screening; Psychosocial Support; Police Station; Specialized Court on Domestic and Family Violence against Women; Public Ministry, Public Defender's Office; Service for the Promotion of Economic Autonomy; Childcare space - Toy library; Accommodation for Passengers and Transport Centre.
- Reference Center for Women Victims of Violence: It is part of the network of equipment to confront violence against women and offers reception and interdisciplinary follow-up (social, psychological, pedagogical and legal orientation).
- Court for Domestic and Family Violence against Women: Ordinary Justice bodies with civil and criminal competence, may be created by the Union, in the Federal District and the Territories, and by the States, for the process, trial and execution of causes arising from the practice of domestic and family violence against women.
- The Service for Attendance to Women Victims of Sexual Violence (SAMVVIS): The service offers comprehensive care to victims of rape, completely free of charge, through the SUS. Among the procedures are the prophylaxis of sexually transmitted diseases, on-site examination of the body of the crime and prevention of unwanted pregnancy (up to 72 hours after the rape), in addition to the interruption of pregnancy in cases provided by law (legal abortion) and continued psychosocial monitoring.
- Care centers for women victims of violence (state public defender's offices): They offer legal guidance, promotion of human rights and defense of individual and collective rights at all levels (judicial and extrajudicial), fully and free of charge.
- Centers for the Support of Women Who are Victims of Violence (state Public Prosecutor's Offices): Responsible for bringing public criminal action, requesting investigations from the Civil Police and demanding urgent protective measures

¹⁰⁷ Plataforma Mulher Segura (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.mulhersegura.org/>

¹⁰⁸ Federal Senate (2022). *Serviços Especializados de Atendimento à Mulher*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/acoes-contra-violencia/servicos-especializados-de-atendimento-a-mulher>

from the judiciary, in addition to inspecting public and private establishments that provide assistance to victims.¹⁰⁹

It is important to highlight that each and every police station is able to receive reports of violence, but not all Brazilian cities have specialized police stations. According to AzMina magazine, an important feminist vehicle of information, only 7% of the cities in Brazil have a women's police station. This data is very concerning and shows how far Brazil is from creating a safe environment for women to denounce the abuses they suffer. Another important point to highlight is that only 15% of the women's police stations are open 24 hours a day, and most of the femicide cases in Brazil happen at night.¹¹⁰ This data reflects directly in the percentage of cases of violence against women that are effectively registered, since it is estimated that only 40% of women who suffer violence in Brazil denounce it.

The Brazilian Women's House is an interesting program, but with low reach in Brazil, since there are only 7 units of this apparatus in the whole country. The capitals that have a Brazilian Women's House are São Paulo, Curitiba, Brasília, Boa Vista, São Luiz and Fortaleza (Simon, 2011)

The existence of all these services is a great advance for the care of women, but the data of access to these services is still very low. If we think that in the year 2021 56,098 cases of rape were registered in Brazil and a very low number of women access a shelter service. This number gets even greater when we think that not all women report and seek help, further decreasing the actual amount of women who need to use these services from those who actually use them.

Some sheltering mechanisms were also created during the COVID Pandemic, since the number of women who suffered violence also increased during this period. The channels for denunciation became more accessible, and it is even possible to denounce through WhatsApp, which is the main communication tool used by the most vulnerable populations in Brazil.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Federal Senate (2022). *Serviços Especializados de Atendimento à Mulher*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/acoes-contra-violencia/servicos-especializados-de-atendimento-a-mulher>

¹¹⁰ AZMINA (2021). *Só 7% das cidades brasileiras contam com delegacia da mulher*. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/reportagens/so-7-das-cidades-brasileiras-contam-com-delegacia-da-mulher/>

¹¹¹ Plataforma Mulher Segura (2021). Retrieved from <https://www.mulhersegura.org/>

Thinking about how to make information reach all women is the main way to really facilitate the access of these women to these services. Education in schools is an excellent measure accompanied by education and welcoming in religious institutions, since the majority of women in Brazil declare themselves to be Christians and follow some religion. These people frequent a common space, and it would be an excellent opportunity to talk about their rights and what public policies exist. While in schools the history of women's struggle and everything that has been conquered by them needs to be taught and valued so that culturally the children begin to see gender equality as natural and gradually eliminate discrimination against women and consequently face violence as something unacceptable.

Chapter 3 - Information and communications to confront violence against women

3.1. Information and Communication in Brazil

The right to information is closely linked to the realization of other human rights: with it we can demand and exercise our rights. Access to information is an instrumental right in combating gender inequality, especially in terms of promoting a life free from violence and discrimination.

The creation of public policies is not enough to fight against gender violence, the knowledge about the existence of these policies and the access to them is essential to change the reality of the victims.

The Brazilian government has several channels to distribute information to the citizens, but the audience and access to these channels are not enough. In addition, there are flaws not only in the transmission of information, but also the construction of the messages with social purposes, since many times the channels transmit campaigns created to defend social causes per se instead of informing the target audience (Balonas, 2018).

Law 11.340/2006 creates mechanisms to curb and prevent domestic and family violence against women and because it has the character of Affirmative Action, that is, distributive or compensatory legal actions for a minority group, the use of institutional advertising is an approach often used, also because it is in the law of access to information (Sousa, 2019). This type of advertising is characterized by all advertising that involves the absence of profit, having a social nature and educational function, it can be promoted by the government or by a company. Being promoted by a public body, it is important to emphasize the principle of impersonality, which should govern all public contracts, Article 37 of the Federal Constitution addresses this. In item 1 of this article, it is emphasized that all advertising must have an "educational, informative or social orientation" character.¹¹²

As the fight against violence is provided for by law and domestic violence against women is a public health problem, it is the duty of the State to promote informational of Law 11.340/2006, as well as the role of the State to produce statistical research, lectures

¹¹² Brazil (1988). *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988*. Retrieved from https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm

in schools and universities, and the promotion of research related to the study of gender (Sousa, 2019). However, much important information about services that the government has created for women is present on very specific websites and with a language that is not accessible, so most women in Brazil do not know how to access the services that are offered for them and what public policies the federal government has already created for the prevention of violence against women in the country.

The main means of access to information in Brazil are television and the internet. According to data from the 2021 IBGE survey, the internet is the main means of access to information in the country and is present in 8 out of 10 households, meaning that 90% of national households have internet access, showing an increase of 7.3% points compared to 2020. Most of these households are in urban areas of the country as shown in the graph below:

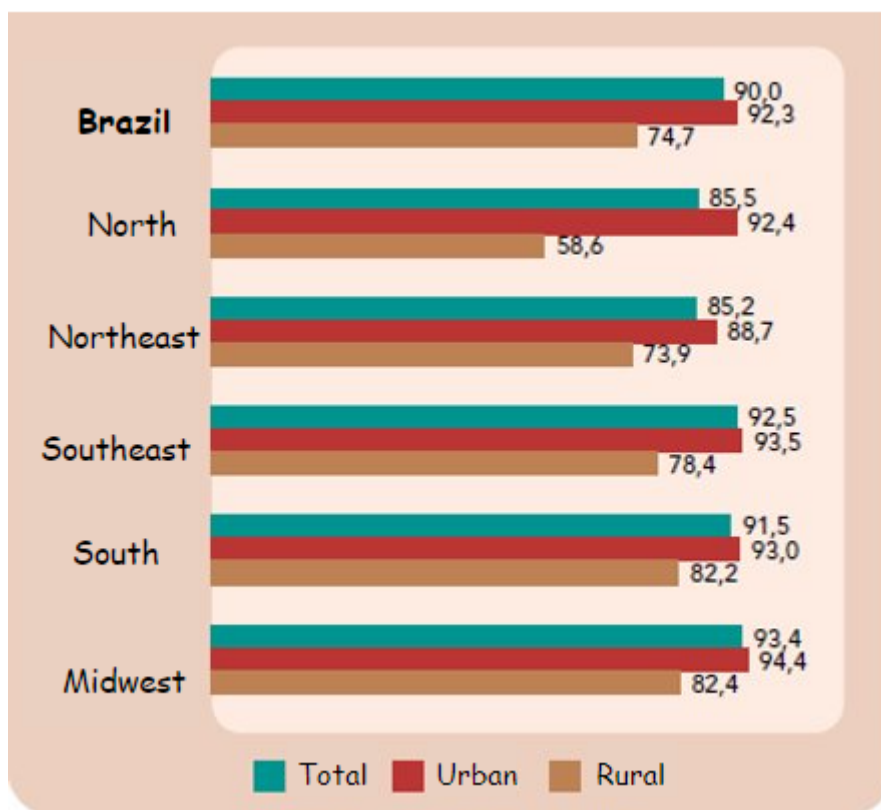


Figure 7. Households where there was Internet use by residence status in percentage (PNDA, 2021).¹¹³

¹¹³ PNDA (2021). *Acesso à Internet e à televisão e posse de telefone móvel celular para uso pessoal 2021*. Retrieved from https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/livros/liv101963_informativo.pdf

People in Brazil use the internet and mobile phones mainly to exchange messages, but it is also used to search consuming content, sending email, searching the news and for financial transactions.

According to research by PoderData (2021),¹¹⁴ the second most used means of information is television. The survey carried out by the research company, 43% of the Brazilian population is informed through the Internet, 22% through social networks and 21% through websites and portals; and 40% uses television as an information source. Besides these media, 7% of those interviewed use the radio and 8% prefer other means of communication.

Globally, the age group of women who suffer the most violence is between 15 and 49 years.¹¹⁵ Considering this age group, the most used means of access to information by women between 16 and 24 years are social networks with a percentage of 35%, while women between 25 and 44 years access more websites and portals (32%). As for women between 25 and 49 years old, 43% use television as their main source of information.¹¹⁶

Looking at the main means of access to information and where information on violence prevention against women is destroyed by the government, it is clear that women are not accessing this information. For the age group that uses television as the main means of communication, open television is more accessible, but the programming distributed in the open television channels in Brazil deal with the subject of gender violence in a superficial manner and do not effectively connect with the reality of these women. The soap opera *Pantanal*, for example, which was audience champion in Brazil in the year 2022 (IBOPE, 2022) reported the case of a woman victim of domestic violence, many women identified with the character, but unfortunately this does not help women to better understand how to seek help, what their rights are and get out of the cycle of violence.

¹¹⁴ PoderData (2021). *Internet é principal meio de informação para 43%; TV é mais usada por 40%*. Retrieved from <https://www.poder360.com.br/midia/internet-e-principal-meio-de-informacao-para-43-tv-e-preferida-de-40/>

¹¹⁵ WHO (2018). *Violence Against Women Prevalence Estimates, 2018*. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240022256>

¹¹⁶ PoderData (2021). *Internet é principal meio de informação para 43%; TV é mais usada por 40%*. Retrieved from <https://www.poder360.com.br/midia/internet-e-principal-meio-de-informacao-para-43-tv-e-preferida-de-40/>

In the case of women between 16 and 24 years old, the problems faced in obtaining information from social networks are also different. Besides the fact that the official social networks share superficial information, the government media also shares superficial information, but there is another barrier. Even though people access social networks, the amount of people who directly access government social networks is very low, as people prefer to consume content from singers and artists. A clear example is the number of followers that the Brazilian singer Anitta has, it is 40 million and the Instagram of the Ministry of Women and Human Rights @mdhbrasil¹¹⁷ has 140 thousand followers in Brazil.

This problem in the distribution and access to information generates expressive consequences for women who suffer violence and need help. According to Law 12.527/2011, in the 6th article, the fundamental right of access to information must be ensured and it is the responsibility of public authorities to manage information transparently, providing broad access to it and its dissemination. Thus, it is the government's role to ensure that information about the law reaches citizens.

The institutional publicity created by the government in recent years, focuses on disseminating how to identify violence against women and encouraging the reporting of the aggressor. In 2019, the campaign created by the Special Prosecutor for Women of the CLDF (Legislative Chamber of the Federal District), called "Femicide: Your silence can be fatal", focused on demonstrating the signs that a woman is suffering violence and ended with "Denounce: Call 180", the emergency number for the Women's Call Centre, which is responsible for registering reports of violations against women, forwarding them to the competent bodies and carrying out their monitoring.¹¹⁸ This type of publicity, common throughout the country, encourages the reporting of the aggressor, but does not inform the victim of her rights and what public policies exist to support her and how these can be accessed. But the strategies that are being used by the federal government of Brazil are insufficient.

3.2. Main channels of access to information for women in Brazil

¹¹⁷ Retrieved from <https://www.instagram.com/mdhcbrasil/?hl=de>

¹¹⁸ Legislative Chamber of the Federal District (2019). *Feminicídio: seu silêncio pode ser fatal*. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=914377055576847&set=a.110205619327332>

Access to information is empowering because it allows women to know their rights in depth and to exercise them widely. At the same time, access to information enables women to make more informed and effective decisions related to their rights, in areas such as education, health, work, sexual and reproductive rights. Access to information is also crucial for women to be able to exercise their citizenship, participate more actively in public life and monitor government work. Economic empowerment is another benefit of the right to information. As a result of a limited number of educational opportunities and well-paid work, most people most of the people living below the poverty line are women poverty line are women, through the promotion of genuine access to information, these women can become aware of new opportunities that enable their economic empowerment.

Every year, the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) publishes the map of violence, a series of studies on homicide and violence data in Brazil, divided into categories. According to the 2021 map of violence,¹¹⁹ violence against women in Brazil affects women of different age groups.

Young women access information through social media and are also already more used to reading information on websites, digital primers and through videos. Even though these women access information through the internet, going to the government website to get information is still not a habit. Information needs to reach them in a more organic way.

When we think about older women, we find a very interesting fact that is also linked to religion, and this makes it a little difficult to prevent violence in these cases. The studies that link violence against women and the religion followed by them are very recent in Brazil, but it is possible to verify that the majority of women who suffer violence in Brazil are Christians. According to data from the IBGE (2010),¹²⁰ Christians are 86.8% of Brazil; Catholics fall to 64.6%; Evangelicals are already 22.2%. There is an indication of a growing number of self-declared evangelical women who seek care services reporting the most different types of violence perpetrated by their partners (Souza and

¹¹⁹ FBSP/IPEA (2021). *Atlas da Violência 2021*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/arquivos/artigos/5141-atlasdaviolencia2021completo.pdf>

¹²⁰ Veja (2012). *O IBGE e a religião — Cristãos são 86,8% do Brasil; católicos caem para 64,6%; evangélicos já são 22,2%*. Retrieved from <https://veja.abril.com.br/coluna/reinaldo/o-ibge-e-a-religiao-cristaos-sao-86-8-do-brasil-catolicos-caem-para-64-6-evangelicos-ja-sao-22-2/>

Oshiro, 2018). In 2017, in the first semester alone, the Loreta Valadares Women's Care Reference Center in Salvador-BA assisted 112 women, 37 of whom declared themselves evangelicals (Borges, 2017). Considering that the evangelical population in Salvador does not reach 20% of the population, these data are quite revealing. In Campina Grande-PB, in 2013, the services provided to evangelical women by the State Center for Women's Reference Fátima Lopes, reached 26% of the public attended (Cortes, 2014). In Vitória-ES, an extensive survey was conducted in 2014 (Leite *et al.*, 2017) with 991 women in situations of violence who made use of the municipality's health units. Of these, no less than 48.4% were evangelicals. In São Paulo-SP, Sonia Regina Maurelli, founder of the Casa de Isabel, a support center for women, children and adolescents who are victims of domestic violence and at risk, already stated in 2006 that about 90% of the women assisted in this institution were evangelicals. These women are informed mainly through television and friends and family, so information about the prevention of violence hardly reaches them.

Very religious women tend to accept domestic violence as natural, since their religious leaders and the social environment they frequent preach that it is necessary to maintain the family. Looking at this challenge, one more point becomes clear, religion often does not protect women's rights, conservatism makes religious leaders make women believe that marriage with violence is normal and that it is necessary for her to be submissive to her husband who in a certain way agrees with macho and violent attitudes on the part of his partner, even if this is very bad for them.

How can information reach these women? How can we help break the cycle of violence in a space where gender violence is institutionalized?

Analyzing the way in which information is distributed and accessed in Brazil, much can still be done so that more women have access to the public policies of protection that were created for them and that is their right.

The distribution of information can be done by different channels in Brazil. Television is a means of communication that reached more than 200 million people in 2021.¹²¹ On open TV there are religious channels that broadcast evangelical services and mass. The other popular channels broadcast telenovelas on themes of Brazilian life,

¹²¹ G1 (2022). *TV aberta e por assinatura são responsáveis por 79% do tempo de consumo dentro de casa*. Retrieved from <https://g1.globo.com/pop-arte/tv-e-series/noticia/2022/05/19/tv-aberta-e-por-assinatura-sao-responsaveis-por-79percent-do-tempo-de-consumo-dentro-de-casa.ghtml>

couple relationships and violence appear in some soap operas, but not in an informative way so that women are helped by this content. Television news often reports crimes of violence against women, but also does not instruct on how to seek help and prevent violence. The numbers of violence against women are very high in Brazil, so news of violence is common.

In Brazil, 22% of the population use social media to get informed.¹²² Official government bodies have social networks and share content to inform women about services. These media are present in all levels of government because there are specific laws and public policies in each city. On Instagram for example, people access information in journalistic profiles and through public influencers, so the path of hiring ambassadors of the social networks would help a lot to multiply the distribution of information.

The digital influencer became a means of communication in the digital era. Brazilians spend more than 5 hours in their cellphones daily and in this period invested in their phone, 7 out of 10 minutes were used in social media and photo and video applications¹²³. Apps such as TikTok and Instagram are a huge success and the digital influencers are admired, being the idols of this period. As the fourth wave of feminism (Munro, 2013) is presented at the mobilization in digital, these are good channels to diffuse information and digital influencers have the potential to be great allies to communicate and distribute information.

Youtube Channel is a tool widely used for sharing content through longer and more explanatory videos, it is also common to open classes, lectures and documentaries on varied topics. And in 2022, Youtube took the lead in Brazilians' preference for access information.¹²⁴ Many professors and scholars share information about gender violence prevention through this network, but the reach is still very low, and the content is passed

¹²² Poder360 (2022). Internet é principal meio de informação para 43%; TV é mais usada por 40%. Retrieved from <https://www.poder360.com.br/midia/internet-e-principal-meio-de-informacao-para-43-tv-e-preferida-de-40/>

¹²³ Poder360 (2022). Brasileiros usaram o celular mais de 5 horas por dia em 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.poder360.com.br/brasil/brasileiros-usaram-o-celular-mais-de-5-horas-por-dia-em-2021/>

¹²⁴ UOL (2022). *YouTube desbanca WhatsApp e Facebook como preferido dos brasileiros para acessar notícias*. Retrieved from <https://mediatalks.uol.com.br/2022/06/25/youtube-desbanca-whatsapp-e-facebook-como-fonte-de-noticias-no-brasil/>

in a way that is not clearly understandable by the main portion of women who suffer violence in Brazil. It can be better explored, for sure.

Schools and universities have the potential to be a great means to diffuse information. Unfortunately, education in Brazil is very flawed when it comes to distribution of information about human rights and public policies. However, I believe that this would be an excellent channel for the transmission of information, since the majority of Brazilian students' study in public schools, meaning that the government has the power to control the programming of the information distributed. Nowadays, this control is already happening, only on the negative side.

The gender issue at school is still a super taboo. Brazil is a secular country, but many of the government's actions are conservative and to bring up the themes of domestic violence, gender and sexuality is a big challenge for the teachers and many of them prefer not to do it for fear of reprisals. In São Paulo there is a program that was created and is financially supported by the government called "Open Government"¹²⁵ which is a new vision of Public Administration that places the citizen as a priority for public policies. Under this pillar, it promotes projects and actions aimed at: increasing transparency, fighting corruption, encouraging social participation and innovation. One of the initiatives of this form of government in São Paulo was the creation of a large informal education network that is made by ordinary citizens and aimed at all citizens of the city.

The Agents of Open Government project works in the form of workshops on the themes of open government, environment, odds and human rights. These workshops take place in public spaces, schools, and online environments. In 2022 I was one of the teachers and took to the school environment a workshop on access to human rights and how the school can be an inclusive environment and access to information on human rights. The theme of gender and challenges to women's access to human rights was discussed with more than 400 teenage students during the more than 20 meetings that took place in 2022. It was very important to see how much people, even within schools, still don't access information about human rights and often suffer daily for something that there is already a solution and a policy created by the government. When I talked about women's rights

¹²⁵ Open Government is a new vision of Public Administration that places the citizen as a priority for public policies. Retrieved from <https://cge.sc.gov.br/governo-aberto/#:~:text=O%20QUE%20%C3%89%20GOVERNO%20ABERTO,aumento%20da%20transpar%C3%AAncia>

and the history of struggle for these rights, many students were very interested in the topic and were willing to be agents that multiply the information.

It is interesting to observe that the government of São Paulo has been mobilizing itself little by little so that information education reaches more people, but, unfortunately, the efforts are still few for the amount of people in the city and the amount of people who actually access this information and consequently are assisted by public policies.

As previously mentioned, in Brazilian culture, women who follow religions usually take into consideration the teachings and speeches made by religious leaders, so the leaders could also be a way to disseminate information. It is necessary to pay attention to this channel of information because it reaches many people, but unfortunately it is not helping women to prevent violence.

3.3. Overview and challenges of feminist communication in Brazil

In addition to the mass and official government channels, there are smaller media outlets that have distributed quality information in accessible language aimed at respecting and protecting women. But this service is fraught with many challenges as the information disseminated by the government needs to be found, processed and recreated in a way that ordinary women can understand and that is attractive for them to pay attention to.

The care of the body, women's health and sexuality are subjects that are still seen as taboo in Brazil and the media that talks about these issues are the same ones that also share very important information about women's rights, public policies and work hard to prevent violence. An example of this is the Brazilian digital influencer Marcela McGowan,¹²⁶ she is a gynecologist and speaks openly in her social networks and publicity videos about female sexuality and health and combines it with violence prevention and feminist education. Even though she accesses many people, the main reason women access her content is more related to entertainment and not to the access and assimilation of information.

A major difficulty for information to reach even more women is precisely the lack of financial resources. The mass media have large sponsors who choose how the content

¹²⁶ Retrieved from <https://www.instagram.com/marcelamcgowan/?hl=pt-br>

will be shared. The independent vehicles, on the other hand, survive on grants and donations from individuals. This is the case of the academic extension project "S.O.S. vamos revelar"¹²⁷ which lost the opportunity to share information in underground stations in São Paulo where millions of people circulate daily because they did not have the financial resources to make the posters and banners that would be displayed.

The independent feminist magazines and newspapers also have the challenge of accessing resources to make their work possible, so many times people work voluntarily and without money it is even more difficult to spread information. AzMina magazine¹²⁸ is the largest feminist journalistic vehicle in Brazil, they make incredible material and work to make information accessible to the greatest number of people taking into account the diversity of tools that different groups of women access, so they have content by email, website, Instagram, twitter, short videos, long videos, podcasts and participation in events and lectures.

The women's shelters have difficulties in communicating and disseminating information. Many of the spaces are also living centers and offer courses and a variety of activities for any woman who wants to participate. This is a way for more women to know that the space also exists for the welcoming of women who have suffered violence and that they can bring friends and family members to participate as well.

One of the women interviewed reported that they try different channels to disseminate information: "We put a notice on the door of the service for public knowledge, we advertise in WhatsApp groups the workshops that already exist and a good part of them indicate who already participates." But, unfortunately, a small portion of the region's population receives this information.

It is necessary to make partnerships and events with other projects so that communication reaches more people. One of the interviewees suggested that campaigns should be conducted within schools to raise awareness and educate children and young people against gender violence and show them the paths to be followed to prevent, report and fight against it.

¹²⁷ University Extension Project from the Federal University of São Paulo that has the objective to give care for the victim of sexual assault.

¹²⁸ AzMina Magazine is a journalistic vehicle focused on the coverage of diverse themes with a gender focus. Retrieved from <https://azmina.com.br/revista-azmina/>

3.4. Main communication and information agents

Article 19 of the universal declaration of human rights talks about information as a pillar of equality and guarantee of rights.¹²⁹ So it is crucial to work to ensure that information reaches all people to prevent violence and to access their rights.

Violence against women is a very popular subject in Brazil, people talk about it and, unfortunately, live with this situation in their families and communities on a daily basis. Even though it is a daily subject, it is approached with much taboo and caution by the communication channels because macho culture in Brazil is very present, so the themes that are divulged in the mass media do not tend to go against the popular macho culture.

The soap operas are a very present entertainment in the routine of Brazilians and reach millions of people every day. The plot of the stories of the soap operas usually bring portraits of the reality of Brazilians, so human relationships experienced in the socio-economic contexts of Brazil are very present. These relationships involve a lot of macho culture and often violate human rights. It is necessary to alert people that, many times, the reality in which they live is toxic and that there is a way out.

Brazilian governmental bodies have been working for many years to build guidelines and strategies to eliminate violence against women, but this issue is still not clearly addressed by the mass media.

Another important point is that the way in which public policies for the prevention of violence against women and women's access to their human rights are presented in the official information vehicles of the Brazilian government. The interviewee reported that it is neither clear nor easy to access the content available on the government's website. The work team of the project “S.O.S. vamos revelar”¹³⁰ seeks information daily to create clear and palatable content for women from different classes and age groups. The interviewee also pointed out that many times the path to information is very complicated, that it is necessary to click on many buttons within the site to find the desired information and that this causes many women to give up searching for information.

¹²⁹ UN (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

¹³⁰ University Extension Project from the Federal University of São Paulo that has the objective to give care for the victim of sexual assault.

For her, it is important that women have easy access to information that protects their physical integrity and informs them of their basic rights, and this is what the extension project at the Federal University of São Paulo aims to do. They produce content and disseminate it on different digital platforms so that women can have easy access and that it is possible for women themselves to also share and be agents of information sharing for their network of women.

A US foundation called The Carter Center created a campaign in 2021 called 'Inform women, transform lives'. While access to information is a fundamental right, for many people, especially women, it is more a dream than a reality.¹³¹ (The Carter Center, 2021). The main idea of the campaign is to make women access their rights and get information about the public policies that already exist in their cities that are directed to them.

Moreover, the governments could promote specific campaigns and projects that would make women participate even more in the construction of policies that include them and that take care of their rights even more. In São Paulo, the project started with a public call to find out what women would like the project's actions to be based on and what type of information they would like to have more access to or find difficult to access. The first action of the São Paulo City Hall was a webinar (still in pandemic) with the following theme: Information and gender equality. The goal was to show the women who were watching that access to information is an important tool for the gender equality debate.

The informed woman can transform her reality Women are strong agents within the different networks they participate in, the main one for them is involuntarily the family, but when a woman is informed and knows how to access her rights and take care of her network of people, she transforms the life of this whole network. It is very important to reach all the spaces where women are to bring information and to count on them so that the information reaches even more people. This is to guarantee that these people have access to their rights.

During the time in which the project "Inform women, transform lives" has taken place in São Paulo, many actions have been taken throughout the city to publicize the

¹³¹ The Carter Center (2021). *Inform women, transform lives*. Retrieved from <https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/ati/info4women.html#:~:text=Inform%20Women%2C%20Transform%20Lives%20seeks,families%2C%20and%20the%20wider%20community>.

services of the municipality which have been created to welcome women and encourage women to learn about their rights and access them. According to the São Paulo City Hall, more than 5000 people were reached by the actions taken during the campaign which consisted of the creation of a website, podcast, panels, webinars and face-to-face workshops.

A local NGO was also contracted to carry out parallel actions to further enhance the work that was already being done by the São Paulo City Hall. Therefore, interventions were made in the underground stations of São Paulo in the month that is celebrated Women's Day to draw the attention of women to the theme of access to information about their rights and which public policies of the government already exist to welcome women in situations of violence or who are socially vulnerable.

More than 600 women received from other women a booklet with information, a packet of tea planted by women farmers of the city and a kit with gifts to distribute to other women who know and further enhance the information received. In addition to these interventions Bauhinia Eco+ Social, an NGO from the region which has also worked on the campaign " Inform women, transform lives", has promoted workshops in women's citizenship centers and other public spaces such as schools and other NGO's headquarters on the following themes 1 - "How to access the services available in São Paulo for women"; 2 - "Human rights and women: a historical review and overview of women's struggle today"; 3 - " Management and forms of financial autonomy;- " interpersonal communication and the use of tools for information sharing. ". The workshops were an invitation for women to attend more women's citizenship centers and all online and offline actions carried out for the municipality of São Paulo and by Bauhinia Eco+Social were fundamental to boost the number of women who accessed the women's citizenship centers. According to data released by the municipality of São Paulo, this number grew 86% from 2020 to 2021, from 1108 women in 2020 to 1898 women in 2021.¹³²

Table 5. Number of women assisted at the five Women’s Citizenship Centers (CCM), considering the start of the campaign.

	July	August	September	October	November	December
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¹³² Bauhinia Eco+social (2022). *Jardim das Cores*. Retrieved from <https://www.bauhinia.com.br/jardimdascores>

CCM Itaquera	30	28	9	17	44	14
CCM Parelheiros	31	40	29	36	32	32
CCM Santo Amaro	26	40	28	36	15	19
CCM Capela	20	19	13	27	13	13
CCM Perus	12	8	7	9	20	16

Source: Inform women, transform lives report, São Paulo, 2022¹³³

¹³³ The Carter Center (2021). *Inform women, transform lives*. Retrieved from <https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/ati/info4women.html#:~:text=Inform%20Women%2C%20Transform%20Lives%20seeks,families%2C%20and%20the%20wider%20community.>

Chapter 4 - Data analysis and information as a tool to prevent violence

4.1 How the issue of violence against women is communicated in the traditional media

Long before television, other media outlets such as newspapers and radio narrated the so-called honor crimes, so common and practiced by men all over the country, murdering their wives, partners and lovers. To wash their honor, men saw - sometimes still see - women as their property and understood that their property and understood that their lives and bodies were worthless if they did not belong to them, thus, killing was justified (Silva, 2011). Before the 1988 Constitution¹³⁴, this type of crimes was legitimized due the fault principle as the foundation of liability, being considered legitimate defense of honor (Hermes & Silva, 2018).

From women, society has always demanded their righteousness, an excellent moral, the representation of the role of zealous and careful mother, attentive wife in marriage and careful mother with her family. Therefore, women have been expected to take care of the house, the children and the husband, and always be totally submissive to him (Follador, 2009) Married or single, it is up to the woman not to corrupt herself, not to degenerate so as not to "fall into disgrace". If she makes a mistake, she must repair it, so as to become a normal and dignified woman in social coexistence. The view of violence perpetrated against women transcended a moral value on their conduct (Silva, 2011).

According to Silva (2011), in the 1960s, cases of killings and rapes were prominently in the printed media and on the television news. However, the first female to discuss the issue of violence against women was the "TV Mulher" in the early 1980s. It was in this decade that the feminist movement articulated and fought to intercept the deaths of women. They denounced the disregard for police treatment that women who had been raped suffered at police stations. The complaints were about the police and legal assistance. Routinely, police officers looked down on these women and did not want to file a police report.

Therefore, it was necessary to change the mentality of these police officers, but also to have a space with differentiated assistance. Measures in terms of social policies

¹³⁴ Brazil (1988). *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988*. Retrieved from https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm

were implemented in 1985 with the creation of the First Police Station for the Defense of Women, with a team composed solely of women, under the leadership of Rosemary Corrêa¹³⁵. The repercussions in the media were immediate. On the first day, the police station was covered in newspapers and television news as they interviewed women and the delegate Corrêa. From then on, the visibility of the media began to confront violence against women.

Despite the dissemination of the Specialized Police Stations for Attendance to Women (DEAM) throughout the country, and also the diffusion of the Law 11.340/2006, known as Maria da Penha and the Law 13.104/2015, called the Femicide Law, as well as a whole set of social policies and legislation with the premise of protecting women from any type of violence and the dimension that violence have going in current media, the rise in reports of violence against women do not cease.

Current research shows an increase in violence against women. According to the Atlas of Violence 2019¹³⁶, organized and published by the Institute for Applied Economic Research - IPEA and the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety, there has been an "expressive growth of 30.7% in the number of homicides of women in the country during the decade under analysis (2007-2017), as well as in the last year of the series, which registered increase of 6.3% in relation to the previous one" (IPEA/FBSP, 2019, p. 35).

Another point highlighted by the Atlas of Violence 2019, refers to racial inequality. The data prove that black women are more violated than other women and this disparity is also seen in the lethal violence, where the proportion of black women among the victims is high, them being 66% of all women murdered in the country in 2017. The number of black women murdered compared to non-black women highlights "the enormous difficulty that the Brazilian State has to guarantee the universality of its public policies"(IPEA/FBSP, 2019). The major newspapers such as "Folha de São Paulo", "O Estado de São Paulo" and portals like G1¹³⁷, disclose this data in their articles, but this is not expressed in variety and sensationalist programs.

¹³⁵ Brazilian police delegate and politician. She helped to implement the first Station for the Defense of Women and she was a State Representative of São Paulo from 1990 to 2006. Retrieved from <https://www.al.sp.gov.br/deputado/?matricula=300246>

¹³⁶ IPEA/FBSP (2019). *Atlas da Violência 2019*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipea.gov.br/atlasviolencia/download/19/atlas-da-violencia-2019>

¹³⁷ G1 is Globo's news portal and is the audience leader in digital journalism in Brazil. Retrieved from <https://g1.globo.com/institucional/sobre-o-g1.ghtml>

The program “Encontro com Fátima Bernardes¹³⁸” in the last two years has dealt with the sexual harassment and violence against women three times. In the program aired on 19 February 2019 the presenter calls on her guests and the "people of good" to discuss and reflect on femicide. On the sofa, in addition to artists invited, a prosecutor was present, who gave a speech ranting about the need to have "an anti-crimes package on violence against women", Fátima Bernardes¹³⁹ had called on society to protect women, to denounce the aggressors so that justice can be done.

While it was not a frame within the program “Encontro com Fátima Bernardes”, the morning program “Bem Estar¹⁴⁰” took advantage of the day 08 March 2019, also known as International Women's Day, to discuss violence against women, having as its motto to guide the viewer "how each of us can act to end violence against women" and thus called on everyone to help and report violence. Both programs reiterate the investment in conformist education and conformist awareness present in the society of control.

In the case of sensationalist programs linked to the police theme, presented by men who claim to be polemic and strong-minded, they start in the afternoon and go into the night, are intended for family, citizens and good workers who watch, comment and assimilate jargons disseminated by TV hosts. Interaction can be done in real time via WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. However, a program may want to be popular, to have a greater reach, but does not want the label of sensationalist or cheap appeal, however may present crude stories (Bucci, 2011).

¹³⁸ A variety TV program aired from Monday to Friday in the morning, since 2012.

¹³⁹ Brazilian journalist and television presenter associated with TV Globo, a Brazilian commercial open television network, that is the second largest commercial television network in the world, behind only the American Broadcasting Company (ABC). Retrieved from <https://natelinha.uol.com.br/televisao/2022/11/21/no-dia-da-televisao-quais-as-10-maiores-emissoras-do-mundo-190210.php>

¹⁴⁰ A TV program about health aired from Monday to Friday in the morning, from 2011 to 2019..

Programs like “Brasil Urgente”¹⁴¹, Rede Bandeirantes de Televisão¹⁴² and “Cidade Alerta”¹⁴³, RecordTV¹⁴⁴, call themselves conductors of public functions to promote justice, of citizenship and care for the population (Passetti, 2018). Both Luiz Bacci, host of “Cidade Alerta” and José Luiz Datena, host of “Brasil Urgente”, use sensationalist language, to present themselves as enforcers of the laws and protectors against injustices, but they shout, swear, and scream during the programs words like "pedophiles", "scoundrels", "rapists", using a discourse of indignation and hatred, which generates uneasiness in the population, thus leading the population to become angry and take the law into their own hands, instead of encouraging the population to seek their rights and access justice.

In the name of "public safety" and "service provision" with the viewer-citizen, in the last two years such police programs have invested in the publicity and visibility of violence against women and, especially, in articles that deal with femicide. Women of good character, with unblemished conduct, workers, students, businesswomen and housewives, are presented to the public as victims of their tormentors - which is still real - afterwards, the rapist or murderer is already "judged" in the media sphere. Thus, the monster must be severely punished, preferably "more and better" (Passetti, 2018).

However, if a raped or murdered woman is depicted with a deviant behavior, she may be "judged" for not corresponding to a dignified conduct, since the "electronic judge" invests in the moralizing discourse of behavior as a two-way street. The publicity and media visibility is now different as a result of the coupling with the Internet. Several journalistic or entertainment television programs have been taking advantage and dividends when they refer to violence against women. Life is exposed in the sequence of these programs: the police investigation, the court and the provision of services. The idea of these programs is to care for the population, to guarantee public morality for the promotion of the state.

¹⁴¹ Program of news, with focus in investigative and police news, aired from Monday to Saturday in the late afternoon, since 1997.

¹⁴² Brazilian commercial open television network, the fourth largest in the country. Retrieved from <https://www.uol.com.br/splash/noticias/ooops/2022/02/04/veja-o-ranking-de-ibope-da-tv-aberta-redetv-ja-ronda-o-traco.htm>

¹⁴³ Program of news, with focus in investigative and police news, aired from Monday to Saturday in the late afternoon, since 1996.

¹⁴⁴ Brazilian commercial open television network, that is the fifth largest commercial television network in the world. Retrieved from <https://natelinha.uol.com.br/televisao/2022/11/21/no-dia-da-televisao-quais-as-10-maiores-emissoras-do-mundo-190210.php>

Violence against women is a very popular subject in Brazil, people talk about it and, unfortunately, live with this situation in their families and communities on a daily basis. Even though it is a daily subject, it is approached with much taboo and caution by the channels of communication because macho culture and sexism in Brazil is very present, so the themes that are divulged in the mass media do not tend to go against the popular macho culture.

The soap operas are a very important entertainment in the routine of Brazilians and reach millions of people every day. The plot of the stories of the soap operas usually bring portraits of the reality of Brazilians, so human relationships experienced in the socio-economic contexts of Brazil are very present. These relationships involve a lot of macho culture and often violate human rights. It is necessary to alert people that, many times, the reality in which they live is toxic and that there is a way out.

Over the years, several soap operas addressed the issue of violence against women, portraying from psychological abuse to physical abuse, having even a famous scene where a woman being beaten with a tennis racket by her husband in one of them. In 2022, a soap opera called “Pantanal” talked about the types of violence against women that exist, portraying a character that suffered several types of violence, but no physical violence. Other soap operas that portrayed violence against women are: “Amor de mãe” (2019), “O outro lado do paraíso” (2017), “A regra do jogo” (2015), “Fina estampa” (2011), “Insensato coração” (2011), “A favorita” (2008), “O profeta” (2006), “Senhora do destino” (2004), “Mulheres apaixonadas” (2003) e “O rei do gado” (1997).¹⁴⁵

The soap operas are a entertainment media accessed by millions of Brazilians daily, for this very reason they would be an excellent means to disseminate information about social problems in general and the policies that are created by the government to solve them. But without the correct approach, the same social problems can be normalized, causing a desensitization in the general population. The case of violence against women, when it is not addressed as an issue that needs solution, principally in soap operas that frequently portrays the day-to-day lives of Brazilian people, can cause the effect that violence against women is a common and normal event that occurs in women's life. And because in many of these soap operas, the offender character dies, this

¹⁴⁵ Observatório da TV (2017). Assim como Clara em O Outro Lado do Paraíso, relembre personagens que apanhavam dos maridos em novelas. Retrieved from <https://observatoriodatv.uol.com.br/noticias/assim-como-clara-em-o-outro-lado-do-paraíso-relembre-personagens-que-apanhavam-dos-maridos-em-novelas>

could build the mentality that the final solution to the violence is the aggressor death and other than that, there is no means to prevent and combat the violence.

The biggest Brazilian television broadcaster is “Globo”¹⁴⁶, and it streams four soap operas daily at three different times of day. Considering that the theme of violence is present in a soap opera every 2 years on average, we see that the potential for information through this channel can be greatly increased. Together with the scenes of violence against women, the existing ways to report, or how the public policies for women's shelters work in Brazil should be advertised. So, although they bring up the issue of violence, they don't provide effective communication that helps ordinary women get out of the cycle of violence in their lives.

Brazilian governmental bodies have been working for many years to build guidelines and strategies to eliminate violence against women, but this issue is still not clearly addressed by the mass media. From the opening of the first Special Police Station for Women, the publicities and campaign to disseminate information about the public policies to confront violence against women were not efficient or really provide a lot of information to the population as can be notice in the follow:

Another important point is the way in which public policies for the prevention of violence against women and women's access to their human rights are presented in the official information vehicles of the Brazilian government. Examining the issue by interpreting the interviews made with women that work with reception of women in violence situations, quite specific information was obtained regarding available information about violence against women.

The interviewee reported that it is neither clear nor easy to access the content available on the government's website. The work team of the project “S.O.S. vamos revelar”¹⁴⁷ seeks information daily to create clear and palatable content for women from different classes and age groups. The interviewee also pointed out that many times the path to information is very complicated, as for example it is necessary to click on many buttons within the site to find the desired information and this causes many women to give up searching for information.

¹⁴⁶ Media Ownership Monitor Brasil (2017). *Banco de Dados - TV*. Retrieved from <http://brazil.mom-gmr.org/br/midia/tv/>

¹⁴⁷ University Extension Project from the Federal University of São Paulo that has the objective to give care for the victim of sexual assault.

For her, it is important that women have easy access to information that protects their physical integrity and informs them of their basic rights, and this is what the extension project (“S.O.S. vamos revelar”¹⁴⁸) at the Federal University of São Paulo aims to do. They produce content and disseminate it on different digital platforms so that women can have easy access, so it is possible for women themselves to also share and be information sharing agents for their network of women.

Women in Brazil experience violence on a daily basis, so when they see that there is a way out, they want more and more women to be able to leave this cycle of violence. This is the case of one of the women interviewed who works with shelters for women. She used to work in another area, but when she saw that there were shelters and government services for the reception of women that had suffered violence, she applied to work in these spaces with the aim of helping women to learn more about their rights and leave the cycle of violence.

The women's shelters have difficulties in communicating and disseminating information, which prevents them from reaching the audience they would like to. Many of the spaces are also living centers and offer courses and a variety of activities for any woman who wants to participate. This is a way for more women to know that the space also exists for the welcoming of women who have suffered violence and that they can bring friends and family members to participate as well.

4.2 Analysis of the map of violence against women in Brazil and the access to information according to the public achieved by media.

All people should have the same opportunities to exercise their right to information, but gender inequality creates distortions in the realization of this right. Women, as well as other vulnerable and marginalized social groups are disproportionately affected by lack of information. The Special Rapporteurs on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, have stated that women's right to information is being particularly threatened.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ University Extension Project from the Federal University of São Paulo that has the objective to give care for the victim of sexual assault.

¹⁴⁹ UN (2021). *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan*. Retrieved from <https://documents-dds-n.y.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N21/212/16/PDF/N2121216.pdf?OpenElement>

Discriminatory practices in our society have made it difficult for women to seek and demand public information. Problems such as lack of access to education, low levels of economic empowerment, restrictions on access to technology, as well as other social barriers hinder the exercise of women's right to freely obtain information. Many women do not even know that they can seek and demand information of public interest, and where this information would be available. At the same time, we realize that information related to women's rights is often not produced, and/or made available spontaneously by the public power.

Women's health, for example, is one of the most harmed by the lack of access to information. A population that does not have the necessary information cannot make informed decisions about their health. Another serious example is that in Brazil, many women who become pregnant after having been victims of sexual violence sexual violence are not able to be treated in hospitals to perform legal abortions, because there is no public list of hospitals that perform the procedure and many of the staff at these facilities are not aware of the legislation that allows the procedure to be carried out and performed.

In recent years, we have seen a considerable increase in the number of research and studies on how to achieve equality, but rarely is access to information identified as a key piece, being approached almost restrictively in academic research and studies, and the work of women's rights organizations. Information is an essential tool for women's empowerment and the consolidation of women's rights. Lack of information on women's rights can lead to the creation of inadequate or deficient public policies in the area, thus, it is important that governments ensure that the right to information is widely diffused and accessed.

One of the women interviewed reported that they try different channels to disseminate information: "We put a notice on the door of the service for public knowledge, we advertise in WhatsApp groups the workshops that already exist and a good part of them indicate who already participates." But, unfortunately, a small portion of the region's population receives this information.

It is necessary to make partnerships and events with other projects so that communication reaches more people. One of the interviewees suggested that campaigns should be run in schools to raise awareness and educate children and young people against

gender violence and show them the paths to be followed to prevent, report and fight against it.

The map below represents the incidence of violence against women in Brazil. The data were extracted from the database "Mapa da violência de gênero"¹⁵⁰ which is a Brazilian tool that is free and independent from the government.



Figure 8. Map of violence against women (GN¹⁵¹, 2022).¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰GN (2022). *Mapa da violência de gênero*. Retrieved from <https://mapadaviolenciadegenero.com.br/>

¹⁵¹ Gender and Number (GN) is an association that produces and distributes data-driven journalism and information and analysis on pressing issues of gender and race, aiming to qualify debates towards equity. Retrieved from <https://www.generonumero.media/sobre/>

¹⁵² GN (2022). *Mapa da violência de gênero*. Retrieved from <https://mapadaviolenciadegenero.com.br/>



Figure 9. Map of the Radio station in Brazil (National Network of Radio, 2023).¹⁵³

¹⁵³ National Network of Radio (2023). *Mapa de Rádios Parceiras - Rede Nacional de Rádio*. Retrieved from <https://redenacionalderadio.etc.com.br/rede/rádios-parceiras>

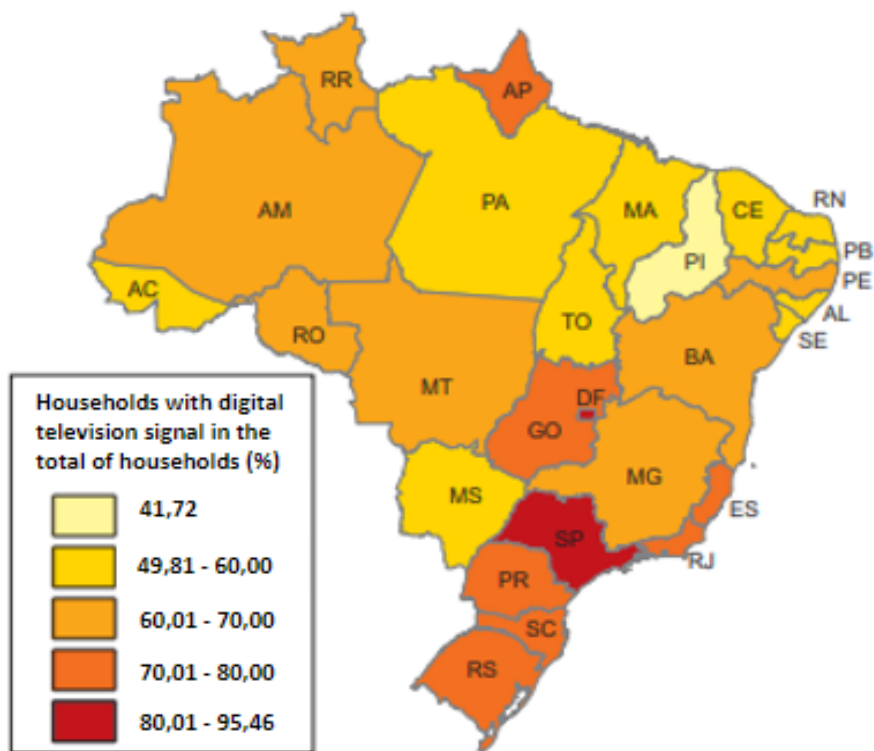


Figure 10. Map of the household with digital television signal, the opened and free television network in Brazil (IBGE¹⁵⁴, 2016).¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics

¹⁵⁵ IBGE (2016). *Meios de comunicação - 2016*. Retrieved from https://atlascolar.ibge.gov.br/images/atlas/mapas_brasil/brasil_meios_de_comunicacao.pdf

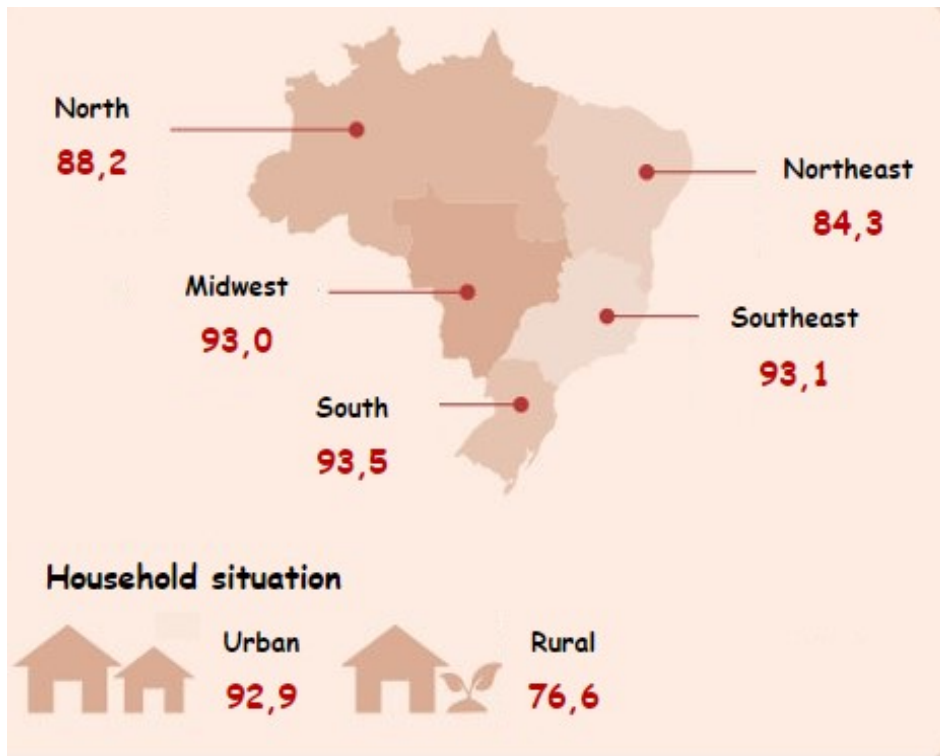


Figure 11. Map of household with television (modified from PNDA¹⁵⁶, 2021).¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ National Sample Survey of Households

¹⁵⁷ PNDA (2021). *Acesso à Internet e à televisão e posse de telefone móvel celular para uso pessoal 2021*. Retrieved from https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/livros/liv101963_informativo.pdf

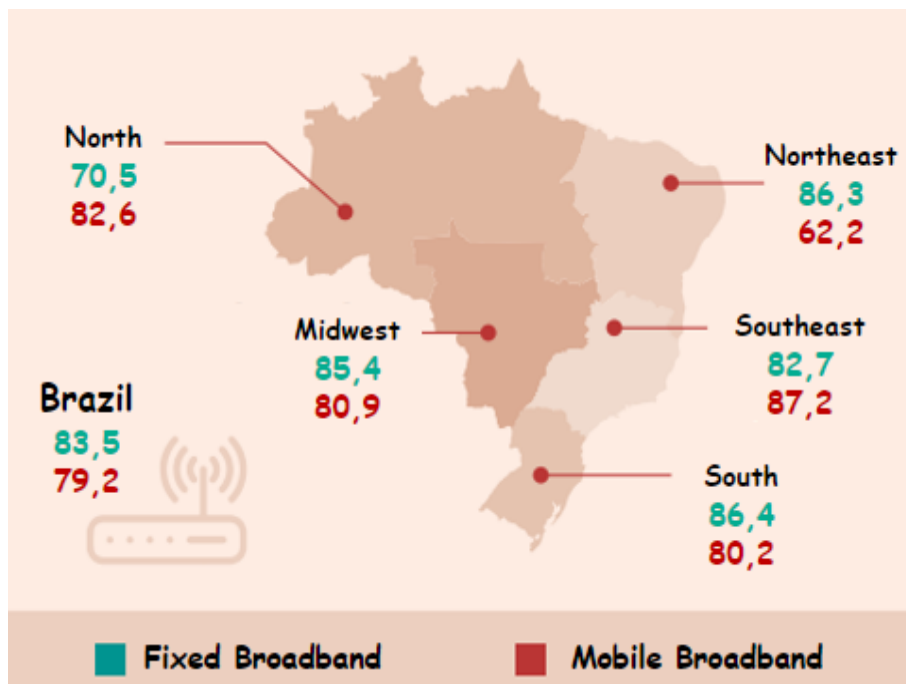


Figure 12. Map of the households with broadband connection Internet use, by type of broadband (%) (PNDA, 2021).¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ PNDA (2021). *Acesso à Internet e à televisão e posse de telefone móvel celular para uso pessoal 2021*. Retrieved from https://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/livros/liv101963_informativo.pdf

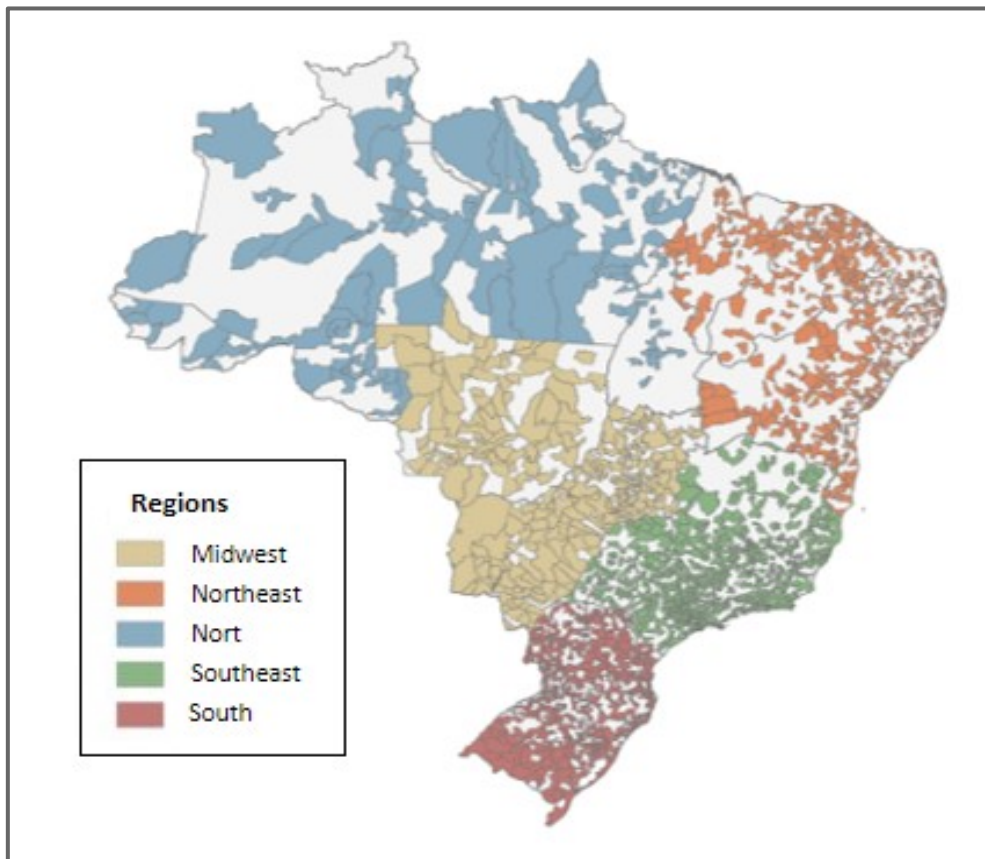


Figure 13. The desert of news, cities with at least one news vehicle registered (Atlas of News, 2019).¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ Projor (2019). *Atlas of News*. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vTepNyScKNhwHzXo_eMIDyZQ_J0NxsdoLhgPz2QIxivW6gC6U92oO6l58ztEDa8QDxsTxfpGrYIw7n/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&ref=atlas-da-noticia&slide=id.p17

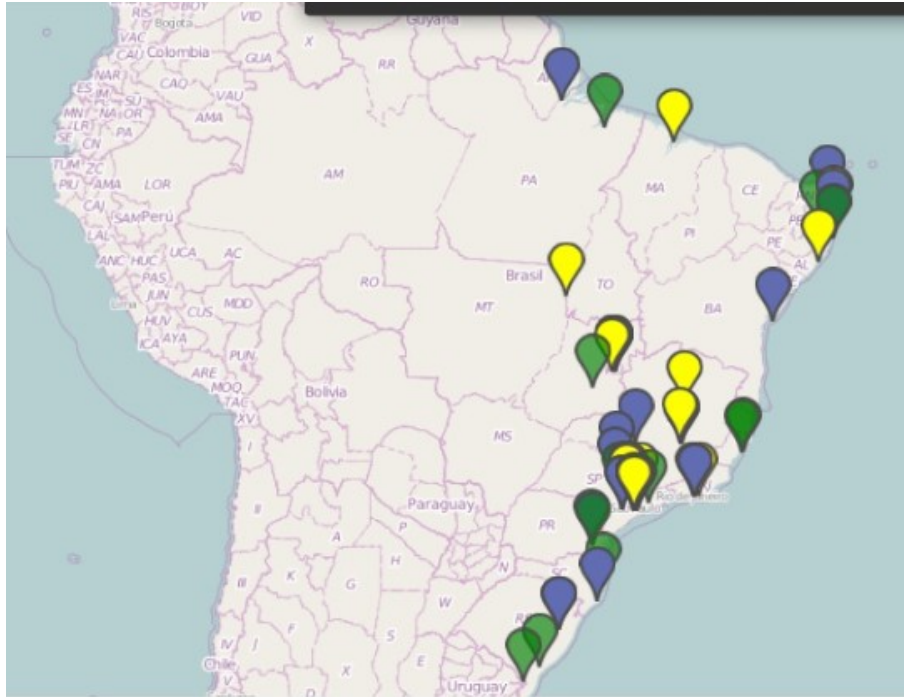


Figure 14. Map of the feminist collectives in Brazil (Free Feminist University/MAMU¹⁶⁰, 2022).¹⁶¹

When we compare the maps, near the Brazilian coast, we have most of the states more developed¹⁶², and consequently is where most state capitals are localized in the country. São Paulo is for example the most developed state¹⁶³ and with the biggest city of Latina America as capital¹⁶⁴, it had received the first Police Stations for Attending to Women¹⁶⁵ in 1985. Because the most developed capitals are near the coast, we also have a bigger concentration of communication vehicles (Figure 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) feminist collectives (Figure 14) by the coast, as we can see by the maps. The women from these states have more access to communication channels such as radio stations, television programs, internet in general, as well as, feminist collectives, that have a key role in the

¹⁶⁰ MAMU - map of women's collectives

¹⁶¹ Free Feminist University/MAMU (2022). *Map of Women's Collectives*. Retrieved from <https://feminismo.org.br/movimentos/>

¹⁶² IBGE (2022). *Produto Interno Bruto - PIB*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibge.gov.br/explica/pib.php>

¹⁶³ DataSenado (2018). *Aprofundando o Olhar sobre o Enfrentamento à Violência contra as Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/datasenado/arquivos/conhecer-direitos-e-ter-rede-de-apoio-sao-pontos-de-partida-para-denunciar-agressao-e-interromper-ciclo-de-violencia>

¹⁶⁴ IBGE (2022). *Produto Interno Bruto - PIB*. Retrieved from <https://www.ibge.gov.br/explica/pib.php>

¹⁶⁵ G1 (2021). *São Paulo, a maior cidade da América Latina, comemora 467 anos*. Retrieved from <https://g1.globo.com/jornal-nacional/noticia/2021/01/25/sao-paulo-a-maior-cidade-da-america-latina-comemora-467-anos.ghtml>

discussion of the topic, creation of public policies and diffusion of information, as previously discussed in this work.

Most estates and capital in the interior of Brazil present the so-called desert of news (Figure 13), having only one or two news vehicles¹⁶⁶, but this does not indicate that there are lower levels of violence against women in these places. Most probably, in these cities, the reporting rates of violence are diminished as well as the knowledge and awareness about women's rights and the access to public policies to combat them.

These states and cities are also known for maintaining a more conservative point of view towards the behavior and role of women in society, just as persistent stereotypes of the responsibilities of women and men, mainly when it comes to terms of family, children, education, and work. This reinforces the women's inferiority status in every aspect of their lives.

The lack of data to have the information about the precise numbers of case of violence against women had been discussed in several official documents¹⁶⁷ as a problem that needs urgent attention of the government. And at the same time, these documents show concerns for marginalized groups, like indigenous women and rural women, and their disadvantaged position with respect to access to public policies. This makes evident that the empty space in Figure 14 is a reflection of the absence of reports and data, and not due to a reduced number of cases of violence against women.

The reception map (Figure 5), that shows centers to reception women that suffered violence in the country present the same characteristics as the other maps presented in this chapter, having a higher number of centers near the coast and notably in the most developed areas of Brazil. These centers have an important role providing data about violence against women, so places that these centers are missing, the data and information

¹⁶⁶ Atlas de Notícias (2022). *Digital reduz deserto de notícias: migração crescente para o digital e redução dos desertos de notícia*. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vR-f5IMNo-MDPTZtQGLEmienJCFkAxmqpRuL6lpg5o_g6vE9WnMuEu94wn0DeDspft7BGQNPxlvToC/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000&ref=atlas-da-noticia&slide=id.p1

¹⁶⁷ CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en
CEDAW (2007). Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Brazil. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en
CEDAW (2010). Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

on violence against women are not computed, further aggravating the situation of women living in these places.

This conclusion can also be shown in numbers, as presented in chapter 2. Although the number of rapes and cases of violence against women in big cities such as São Paulo are very high, the number of center of reception of women, shelters, police stations dedicate to women and feminist collectives are also very high, leading us to the conclude that the number of cases of violence is really the number of women that reported the violence, and these women are the ones that are conscious that what they are suffering is violence, are aware of their rights, and know the how to report and seek help. In short, the women that report and seek the public policies, are informed about their existence.

4.3 Analysis the outcome and output of the relation between access to information and violence against women

The access to information could be essential for decision-making, especially decisions related to human rights and social rights for women in violence situations. Also, people that are less informed, generally, question less, problematize less and consequently have difficulties becoming subjects that transform their reality (Andrade & Lima, 2015).

Taking into consideration the data that we collected during the execution of this work, it was possible to identify some important points to understand how access to information interferes with access to human rights.

The cultural factor interferes in how the Brazilian population sees women and their role in society. Patriarchy still rules many things in Brazil and the conservative view of the "family" and gender roles makes the daily life of Brazilians full of violent behavior against women and that this is seen as "normal".

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹⁶⁸ states that access to information is a human right, and Brazil has already created some public policies to disseminate information and democratize access to it through, for example, the Law of Access to Information No. 12.527/2011. The Brazilian governmental bodies have been

¹⁶⁸ UN (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

working for many years to build guidelines and strategies to eliminate violence against women, but this issue is still not clearly addressed by the mass media.

Both the historical-cultural roots that reinforce conservative stereotypes and gender inequality in Brazil and the lack of information and data about the violence against women have been addressed in official documents of international and national entities.

The CEDAW recommendations for the first to fifth¹⁶⁹, sixth¹⁷⁰ and seventh¹⁷¹ Brazilian reports approach both issues. Firstly, it recommends action on the discrimination against women and the disadvantaged position that marginalized groups of women are with respect to access to information, the lack of sufficient information and statistics to form a comprehensive picture of the violence against women in all Brazilian regions. National Policy to Confront Violence against Women,¹⁷² also discuss the patriarchal culture in Brazil and it has as a priority to create actions that aim to produce and systemize data and information about violence against women. But none of the documents focus on how to disseminate information about the existing policies to the women in need of them.

Another important point is how public policies for the prevention of violence against women and for women's access to their human rights are presented in the official information vehicles of the Brazilian government. The interviewee reported that it is neither clear nor easy to access the content available on the government website. The “S.O.S. vamos revelar”¹⁷³ the project work team goes to reveal daily searches for information to create clear and palatable content for women of different classes and age groups. The interviewee also pointed out that often the path to information is very

¹⁶⁹ CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

¹⁷⁰ CEDAW (2007). Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Brazil. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

¹⁷¹ CEDAW (2010). Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from

¹⁷² Secretary of Policies for Women (2011). National Policy to Confront Violence against Women. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres#:~:text=A%20Pol%C3%ADtica%20Nacional%20de%20Enfrentamento,viol%C3%A2ncia%20conforme%20normas%20e%20instrumentos>

¹⁷³ University Extension Project from the Federal University of São Paulo that has the objective to give care for the victim of sexual assault.

complicated, that it is necessary to click on many buttons within the site to find the desired information, and that this causes many women to give up looking for information.

From the interviews we can conclude that people who work with the reception of women in violence situations, being or not related to the government, frequently have difficulty sharing and disseminating information that the state provides. There is a lack of clarity in the information that they administer, as well as, the use of a complex language, which creates a barrier in making the information accessible to everyone. The deficiency of campaigns, actions, interventions along with the use of public space that can access a high number of women to be information centers, such as health centers, schools, and in the case of Brazil, a country with a conservative Christian bias, churches. Another tool that can be used, are the women that once suffered violence or know someone that does. Engage these women to become allies in the communication and dissemination of the information about the theme.

For the interviewee, it is important that women have easy access to information that protects their physical integrity and informs them about their basic rights, and this is what the extension project of the Federal University of São Paulo aims to do. They produce content and disseminate it on different digital platforms so that women can have easy access and so that it is possible for women themselves to also share and be agents of information sharing for their network of women.

Some projects and initiatives with the focus in the diffusion of the information to combat violence against women, for specific states or cities in Brazil, have been created in the last years and have shown encouraging results in the numbers of women who receive the information. Besides, the “S.O.S. vamos revelar” previously cited, the project “Desperta Mulher!” in Tocantins state is one of them. The project broadcast information contents on 96 FM Radio, with the objective of informing, educating/preventing violence against women, promoting Human Rights education with 1-minute, easy-to-understand programs (Soares et al., 2021)

The discussion about the cultural aspects that normalize and often encourage violence against women should be the first step taken by the government to address this issue, and the debates should be made in several public spaces, starting from a young age. But the path to a efficient communication, must address several points, these being: education for gender equality in schools and companies, more investment in

communication, such as putting commercials on Globo¹⁷⁴, talking in all books in schools, in parents' meetings, on Youtube calls, investing in social networks, making partnerships with famous people to create ambassadors, as in Women UN, addressing the rights and policies that already exist in entertainment means, as the soap operas; hire professional to write very clearly on the government's site and networks and to create campaigns.

Efficient communication that allows the dissemination of information to women all over the country, allied with the creation of more laws and public policies to combat violence against women and the training of judges and all the agents who deal with women in violence situations, can guarantee to Brazilian women the access to their rights.

¹⁷⁴ Brazilian commercial open television network.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to understand the relationship between access to information about public policies for women and the prevention of violence against women with a focus on Brazil.

Violence against women is a global problem that affects people around the world in different ways, but variables such as age, race, country culture, and socioeconomic inequality make this problem even more acute in certain places. The United Nations promotes the confrontation of violence against women on a global scale, creating conventions, treaties, and guidelines.

The Brazilian feminist movement was present in very important historical moments and was fundamental for the vindication of rights and gender equality in the country. After the redemocratization period, in the mid 80's of the 20th century, Brazil assumed international commitments with the women's rights agenda. And these commitments, such as the ratification of the CEDAW in 1984¹⁷⁵, were precursors to the insertion of women's rights in the Brazilian constitution of 1988¹⁷⁶, and from then on there was the creation of essential public policies such as the women's police station in 1985 and the Special Secretary of Policies for Women in 2003 and the Special Secretary for the Promotion of Human Rights¹⁷⁷.

The Maria da Penha law in 2006 brought a lot of attention to the issue of violence against women and became a very popular law. Even though Brazilians know that this law exists, they are culturally unaccustomed to claiming rights and understand in depth how the law can protect them.

The religious conservative culture and some traces of the patriarchy heritage make Brazilians normalize violence against women and expose a large number of women to different types of violence on a daily basis.

¹⁷⁵ CEDAW (2003). Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Retrieved from https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en

¹⁷⁶ Brazil (1988). Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil. Retrieved from https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm

¹⁷⁷ SPM (2011). *Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Violência Contra as Mulheres*. Retrieved from <https://www12.senado.leg.br/institucional/omv/entenda-a-violencia/pdfs/politica-nacional-de-enfrentamento-a-violencia-contra-as-mulheres>

So, even if there are many public policies for the sheltering of women and prevention of violence against women, these policies are not reaching all the people who need them. The numbers of violence against women in Brazil are alarming and what is also very worrying is the number of women who die as a result of this violence. As violence is embedded in the daily lives of these women, access to information is very important to break the cycle of violence, because women who are murdered suffer violence for a long time and in different ways before their lives are interrupted.

Access to information is an essential right because it influences people's access to other rights, so if they don't know that you have the right to employment and housing, for example, they won't claim them. The same happens with women that most of the time don't know that there are many public policies in Brazil such as laws, shelters, professionalizing courses, police stations that can help them not to enter the cycle of violence and can also shelter women that have already been through it.

Both women who work with specialized shelters and were interviewed for this study claim that many more women could be assisted by them, but that the information barrier makes these shelters unknown. For them, it is necessary to invest in the promotion of these spaces and also in the basic education of the population so that people denormalize violence against women and that the whole society is prepared to work to prevent and eliminate violence.

Access to information is a present guideline in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹⁷⁸ which brings in its article 19 that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. So access to information is essential for anyone to be able to exercise their citizenship, including participating in public life and electing their representatives in government.

The Access to Information Law (n° 12.527/2011) regulates the right to information guaranteed by the Federal Constitution, obliging public bodies to consider publicity as the rule and secrecy as the exception. And when it comes to violence against women, some laws talk about information production: “2003: The Law of Compulsory

¹⁷⁸ UN (1948). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Retrived from <https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2021/03/udhr.pdf>

Notification of cases of violence against women seen in public or private health services is enacted. The compulsory notification consists in the communication to the State (SES) and Municipal Health Secretariats (SMS)¹⁷⁹.

2006: Maria da Penha Law - Law 11340, of August 7, 2006, known as Maria da Penha Law, created mechanisms to curb domestic and family violence against women. Among the various measures that should be taken by the authorities is the creation of a unified information system that could provide nationwide data on the number of cases¹⁸⁰.

For the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), access to information, as an instrumental right for the realization of women's rights to live free from discrimination and violence, presupposes the observance of three main obligations: the obligation to collect and produce information on the subject; the obligation of active transparency, and the obligation to respond adequately to requests for information, guaranteeing effective resources for the satisfaction of the right¹⁸¹.

An important piece of data collected with one of the people interviewed who participates in an extension group at the University to democratize access to information to prevent violence, told that even for people who are always in contact with more complex texts, it is very difficult to find information in a clear and simple way on the official government websites, that they do this work on social media because they know that the information is not found in a clear way. Even during the research carried out to collect information for this thesis, I found it difficult to find official Brazilian documents about the management of human rights in the country.

Feminist collectives, NGOs, independent newspapers and magazines work tirelessly so that information about public policies for women reaches them. Videos, articles, documentaries, articles, and posts are produced, but unfortunately the reach is very low. The financial factor is a major impediment to the development of these communication networks. An interesting case was the campaign "inform women,

¹⁷⁹ Brazil. Law n° 10.778/2003. Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/LEIS/2003/L10.778.htm

¹⁸⁰ Brazil. Law n° 11.340/2006. Retrieved from http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2004-2006/2006/lei/111340.htm

¹⁸¹ IACHR (2015). *Access to Information, Violence against Women, and the Administration of Justice in the Americas*. Retrieved from <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/Access-information.pdf>

transform lives¹⁸²” that was financed by a US foundation and promoted the dissemination of information by governments and by local NGOs. In the city of São Paulo the project had a great repercussion and increased the number of women assisted by the services and seeking their rights.

The way to eradicate violence and discrimination against women is for the governments to invest in education on this theme, train judges, democratize even more the access to information and gender equality so that it generates a gradual change in culture as well, so that violence against women is also combated by all citizens.

¹⁸² Project financed by Carter Foundation in 12 cities around the world, that seeks to raise awareness about women’s right to information, to significantly increase the number of women accessing key information from municipal governments, and to demonstrate the transformative impact that information has on individual women, their families, and the wider community. Retrieved from <https://www.cartercenter.org/peace/ati/info4women.html>

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