

INTRODUCTION

This collection of articles is the fruit of a joint project implemented between Brazilian and Australian researchers and professionals committed to the work of gender and family violence prevention and response. With the support of the Australian Embassy in Brazil and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women Brazil Country Office, an innovative project was designed to support research exchange and strengthen academic collaboration, as well as foster a collaborative network of experts and professionals, with the aim to enhance debate on gender and family violence prevention and extract lessons from both countries' policy experiences.

The Brazil-Australia Partnership on Preventing Domestic and Gender-based Violence project included several institutions. Amongst those institutions, it is important to highlight the role played by the Gender Equality Cabinet of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Federal District (MPDFT), along with the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre and the School of Justice of Queensland University of Technology in Australia, in the organization of international conferences and the coordination of this collection.

This initiative also had the active participation of the São Paulo Public Prosecutor's Office (MPSP), the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP), the Research Group on Criminal Policies of the Law Faculty at the University Center of Brasilia (UnICEUB), the Superior School of the Public Prosecutor of the Union (ESMPU), the Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA), the Center for Studies and Research on Women at the University of Brasilia (UnB) and the Gender Observatory of the Brazilian Senate. From the Australian side, the project was financially supported by the Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR), and additionally to the institutions previously mentioned, it also had the participation of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) and RMIT University.

In June 2019, as part of the Project's planning, a delegation of Australian professionals from governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic and justice sectors came to Brazil (Brasilia and São Paulo) to explore the Brazilian policy framework and analyse program cases. Following it, in December 2019, a delegation of Brazilian experts went to Australia (Brisbane and Melbourne) to participate in expert workshops and conferences, as well as visit Australian successful programs for violence prevention.

As a result, the project allowed an in-depth policy dialogue and advanced debates related to measuring the costs of domestic violence, as well as its impact on the economic growth. It also created opportunities to share good practices in gender equality policies, particularly primary prevention approaches, and to promote an integrated approach across the

justice, public security and public health systems. The aim is to establish collaborative arrangements between both countries, contributing to policy development on gender and family violence prevention in Brazil and Australia.

KEY FIGURES

Preventing violence against women is a global priority and one of the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The World Health Organization highlights violence against women as a major global public health concern.

In Brazil, there is an upward trend in cases of femicide in the context of domestic and family violence against women. In 2019, there were 1,326 murders of women in this context, a growth trend of 7.1% compared to the previous year (FBSP, 2020, p. 13). The COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation: in the first half of 2020 there was an increase of 1.9% in femicides in the context of domestic and family violence compared to the same period last year (FBSP, 2020, p. 12). In Australia, one woman per week is killed as a result of intimate partner violence – local NGO Our Watch considers this a national emergency and public safety issue. In Brazil there are an alarming four killings per day. According to the Brazilian “Map of Violence against Women” (WAISELFISZ, 2015), Brazil has the fifth-highest rate of femicide in the world after to El Salvador, Colombia, Guatemala and Russia.

In addition to being a violation of human rights, violence against women generates huge underlying social, health, productive and economic costs. Domestic violence has been experienced by 1.6M Australian women aged 15 and over, and around 150,000 women annually (ABS, 2018). Consulting firm PriceWaterhouse Coopers estimated that the overall cost of domestic violence in Australia is AUD \$21.7 billion annually (PWC et al., 2015).

The PriceWaterhouse Coopers’ study estimated the proportion of women in Australia who have suffered violence in 2014-15 (1,032,835 women) and calculated the costs of: loss of quality of life (pain, suffering or life); healthcare (including psychological treatment for depression and anxiety); loss of productivity; immediate physical harm; psychological harm to children exposed to violence; public security; justice sector; and victim support mechanisms.

In Brazil, according to a prevalence study on domestic violence against women in 9 capitals of the Northeast States 27 per cent of women have experienced psychological intimate partner violence and 17.3 per cent have experienced physical intimate partner violence at some point in their lives (CARVALHO and OLIVEIRA, 2016). The study estimated the economic impact of absenteeism caused by domestic violence to be BRL 975 million yearly. The cost would be even higher if the study considered expenses related to social security, healthcare and public services, such as social support services, legal costs and policing.

Australian research and experience measuring the economic cost of violence against women could contribute to developing a broader methodology to measure the costs of violence against women in Brazil.

INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKS

In Australia, *Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)* was the first legislation to define domestic violence. Since then every state and territory in Australia has introduced laws to address domestic violence. In 2009 the Council of Australian Government launched its first national action plan 2009-2021 to reduce violence against women and children. Following it, state governments have held several inquiries or royal commissions into domestic and family violence and invested almost AUD \$900 million in programs (RCFV, 2016; SPECIAL TASKFORCE ON DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE IN QUEENSLAND, 2015; STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES, 2012). Nevertheless rates of hospitalisation for domestic violence and homicides of female victims by partners or ex-partners remain a huge challenge for Australian jurisdictions (AHIW, 2018). There is much that Australia can learn from other countries to better prevent gender-based violence. This is why the partnership and learning from other countries, such as Brazil, are so important.

The Australian states of Victoria and Queensland are at the forefront of implementing innovative policies to address domestic violence matters through the civil and criminal justice systems. For example, in 2015 Queensland established a specialised domestic violence court in South Port (and soon to be expanded to other cities) which deals exclusively with domestic and family violence matters. It has specialised staff with experience in these matters and coordinates with a network of integrated support services. Victoria has two domestic violence courts, in Ballarat and Heidelberg with a similar model to Queensland. The Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre at Monash University, in Melbourne, is internationally renowned for its excellence in research.

In parallel to Australia's federal and state governments' focus on tackling domestic violence, a strong academic research focus has also emerged providing a growing evidence base for policies aimed at preventing and responding to gendered violence and better understanding its causes. A number of Australian universities are delivering specific undergraduate courses on preventing domestic violence, creating a new academic discipline. This background has generated keen interest from Brazilian professionals seeking to develop their skills in this new field and look for opportunities for academic collaboration.

In this regard, a key recommendation of the Council of Australian Governments Advisory Panel is to "recognise Australian and international best practice in addressing violence against women and their children" and "provide opportunities to identify, develop and share innovative and integrated approaches" (COAG, 2016, p. xviii). However, most Australian

policy-makers and scholars have not considered the innovative approaches from developing and middle-income countries to the prevention of gender-based violence, such as women's police stations and the criminalisation of femicide. In 1985, Brazil was the first country in the world to establish dedicated police stations to receive the victims of gender-based violence. Evidence shows that specialised essential services for women subjected to domestic violence are effective in curbing the growth of femicide rates in Brazil.

Brazil has implemented innovative policies to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence against women, especially following the introduction of the groundbreaking Maria da Penha Law. These innovations include the National Pact to end violence against women launched in 2007, the Houses of Brazilian Women (one-stop centres with specialised services for women subjected to violence), and the Maria da Penha Patrols by the Military Police. Since 2006, Brazil has established courts and prosecutors specialised in addressing cases of domestic violence, with strategies for integrating the justice system with other essential services for women, such as programmes for perpetrators and emergency protective measures. The Maria da Penha Law has also contributed to a growing academic interest to develop research focussed on gender-based violence.

Another Brazilian policy response is the criminalisation of femicide. This is a unique Latin American phenomenon (femicide is also an offence in other 17 countries in the region), which led to innovative practices in Brazil, such as the development of guidelines for justice sector professionals. The National Council of Public Prosecutors created and manages a national database of domestic violence. For these reasons, it is also in Australia's interest to foster institutional collaboration and research networks with Brazilian institutions.

BOOK PRESENTATION

This collection consolidates the results achieved by the exchange project, and systematises the key discussions and lessons learnt from Brazilian and Australian experts and practitioners dedicated to preventing gender-based violence on a daily basis. We hope this initiative fosters a collaborative research network, engaging researchers, practitioners and institutions from both countries, and creates an opportunity to further develop innovative public policies to prevent domestic and gender-based violence.

The articles selected cover a wide range of topics, organized in five sessions. The first section is dedicated to the debate about economic, political and legal frameworks design and implementation of gender-based violence prevention policies. Understanding the organizational culture of each countries' institutions and the basis upon which the debates have been built is essential to assure the success of any new policy or program.

The second section brings in-depth discussion in relation to prevention policies implemented both in Brazil and in Australia. It is organized by thematic areas and reflects the categorisation of policies, as primary, secondary and tertiary prevention policies. The third section is dedicated to exploring intersectionalities of gender and family violence prevention policies, and especially how to nuance its implementation to support racialised and marginalised groups of women. This subject is central to decision-makers who need to adapt a policy to target specific locations or community groups.

The fourth section reflects a growing concern related to virtual violence and the use of technology in gender-based violence. Though requiring further research, the experts contributing to this collection decided to highlight this new form of gender-based violence. The final section analyses best practice gender and family violence prevention policies and programs, which can serve as inspiration for practitioners and decision-makers in their aim of and everyday activities preventing gender-based violence.

This document is produced in two identical versions, in Portuguese and English, in order to maximize the exchange of ideas between Brazil and Australia and, hopefully, inspire positive experiences in other countries as well. We hope that this collection of articles may serve to enrich the debate on gender-based violence, enhance practices adopted in Brazil and in Australia, and further strengthen ties of cooperation in academic and technical fields.

Enjoy the reading!

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