

Women in Violent Cities: A Policy Overview



171

homicides per 100,000
in most violent city



1 in 3 women
have experienced physical
or sexual violence



Urban violence

In a world in which more than half of the population lives in cities, rising urban violence has emerged as a huge concern of policy makers, especially as it is a major challenge to development in the Global South. The most marginalized—the urban poor—suffer more as violence is concentrated in their living spaces. This creates zones of insecurity and results in limiting mobility and access to essential services.

Violence Against Women

There exist clear differences by gender in how violence is experienced. Women tend to suffer from higher rates of sexual violence and are more affected by domestic violence than men. Women also experience a greater fear of violence, impacting their confidence in negotiating public spaces. Issues surrounding data collection make sex-disaggregated data on violence difficult to obtain and this lack of information poses a challenge to designing and implementing policies that effectively address the issue.

Women in the City: Our Research

- ❖ *Gap:* Substantial lack of an integrated view of gender dimensions in violent urban contexts
- ❖ *Methodology:* Review of government policies or interventions in select violent urban contexts in the Global South.

What are the gender dimensions of policy interventions addressing urban violence in the Global South?

A look at the policy environment in 6 violent cities in 3 countries:



Colombia

➤ Bogotá | Cali

- ❖ Colombia possesses a legal framework with major potential to address VAW
- ❖ Main focus remains on domestic violence and violence by (ex)partners
- ❖ Programs to address the VAW situation in the city have been established with the support of international organizations, but no evaluation is available yet



Brazil

➤ Rio de Janeiro | Sao Paulo

- ❖ Policy framework in Brazil focuses on domestic violence
- ❖ Most of the interventions that address VAW in public spaces are being pushed by civil society and/or international organizations



South Africa

➤ Cape Town | Johannesburg

- ❖ Several policies exist at the national, provincial and municipal levels of government in South Africa focusing on crime prevention and fostering safer communities
- ❖ Despite the incorporation of gender into some of these policies, to date the impacts on tackling VAW appear to be limited



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