

# "THIS ISN'T THE LIFE FOR YOU":

MASCULINITIES AND NONVIOLENCE  
IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL









**IDRC | CRDI**

International Development Research Centre  
Centre de recherches pour le développement international

Canada



Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)  
with a focus on urban violence

Prepared for Safe and Inclusive Cities, an initiative of Canada's International  
Development Research Centre and the United Kingdom's Department  
for International Development

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**GRAPHIC DESIGN:**

Mórula Oficina de Ideias

**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

Taylor, A.Y., Moura, T., Scabio, J.L., Borde, E., Afonso, J.S., e Barker, G.  
*This isn't the life for you: Masculinities and nonviolence in Rio de Janeiro,  
Brazil. Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey  
(IMAGES) with a focus on urban violence.* Washington, DC and  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Promundo, 2016.

THIS REPORT REFLECTS THE FINDINGS OF THIS RESEARCH AND THE VIEWS  
OF THE AUTHORS. IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF CANADA'S IDRC  
AND THE UNITED KINGDOM'S DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

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# "THIS ISN'T THE LIFE FOR YOU"

The title comes from the story of a community activist from a favela in Rio de Janeiro who participated briefly in drug trafficking. He remembers that a peer within the trafficking group, watching him relate to a child, said "that life" (trafficking) was not for him. Soon after, he left trafficking and ultimately became an activist. This report describes how many men and their partners and family members build nonviolent alternatives, resisting daily to systems, groups and practices that promote violence within the city.



## ABOUT IMAGES

The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is a comprehensive, multi-country study on men's realities, practices, and attitudes toward gender norms, gender equality policies, household dynamics, caregiving and involvement as fathers, intimate partner violence, sexual diversity, and health and economic stress, among other topics. Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) created IMAGES and have coordinated its use in 16 countries as of 2016. Additional partner studies inspired by IMAGES have been carried out in Asia by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This study adapted IMAGES to focus on the dynamics of gender, masculinities, violence, and nonviolence amidst settings of urban violence.

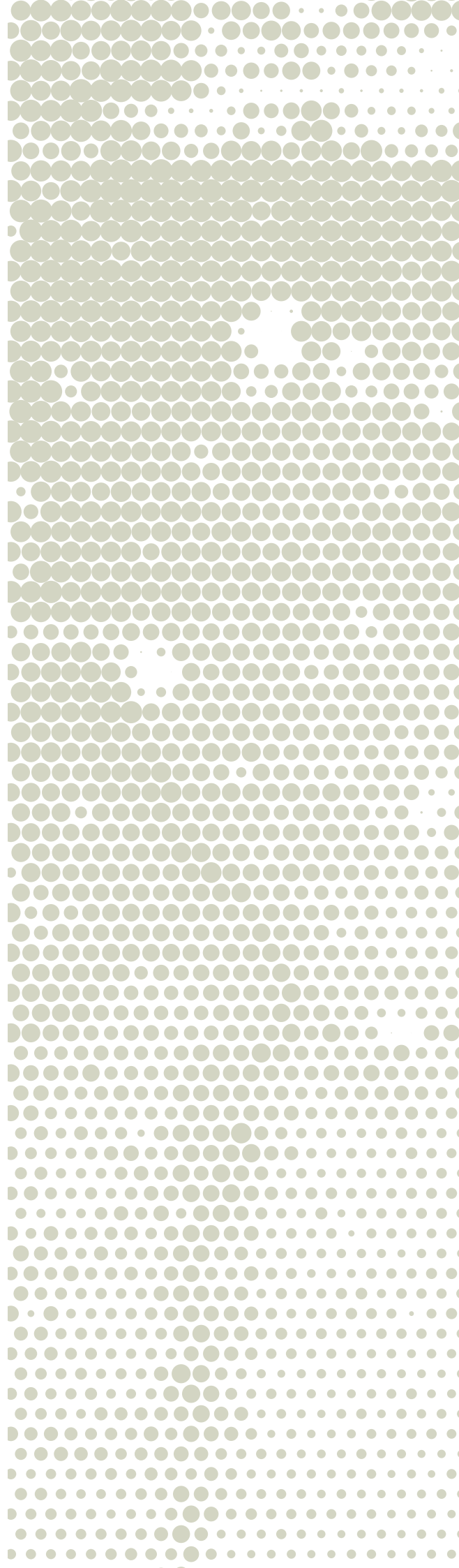
The survey includes both women and men respondents aged 18 to 59. Women are asked both about their own realities and about their male partners. In keeping with World Health Organization recommendations for survey research about sexual and gender-based violence, the survey engages men and women in the same communities but not in the same households. All ethical procedures are followed. The survey is carried out together with qualitative research to map masculinities, contextualize the survey results, and provide detailed life histories that illuminate quantitative key findings. In conflict and post-conflict settings and settings of high urban violence, the IMAGES questionnaire includes additional questions on the effects of conflict, urban violence, and displacement on gender relations.

1. For more information on IMAGES, see Barker, et al. (2011). *Evolving Men: Initial Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)*. Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Promundo. Available at: <http://www.promundo.org.br/en/activities/activities-posts/international-men-and-gender-equality-survey-images-3/>.
2. For more information on the studies inspired by IMAGES in Asia, see: <http://www.partners4prevention.org/>.



# PROMUNDO

Founded in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1997, Promundo works to promote caring, nonviolent, and equitable masculinities and equitable gender relations internationally. Promundo's independently registered organizations in the United States (Promundo-US), Brazil (Instituto Promundo), Portugal (Promundo-Europe), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Living Peace Institute) collaborate to achieve this mission by conducting applied research that builds the knowledge base on masculinities and gender equality; developing, evaluating, and scaling-up gender-transformative interventions and programs; and carrying out national and international advocacy to achieve gender equality and social justice.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND AUTHORSHIP

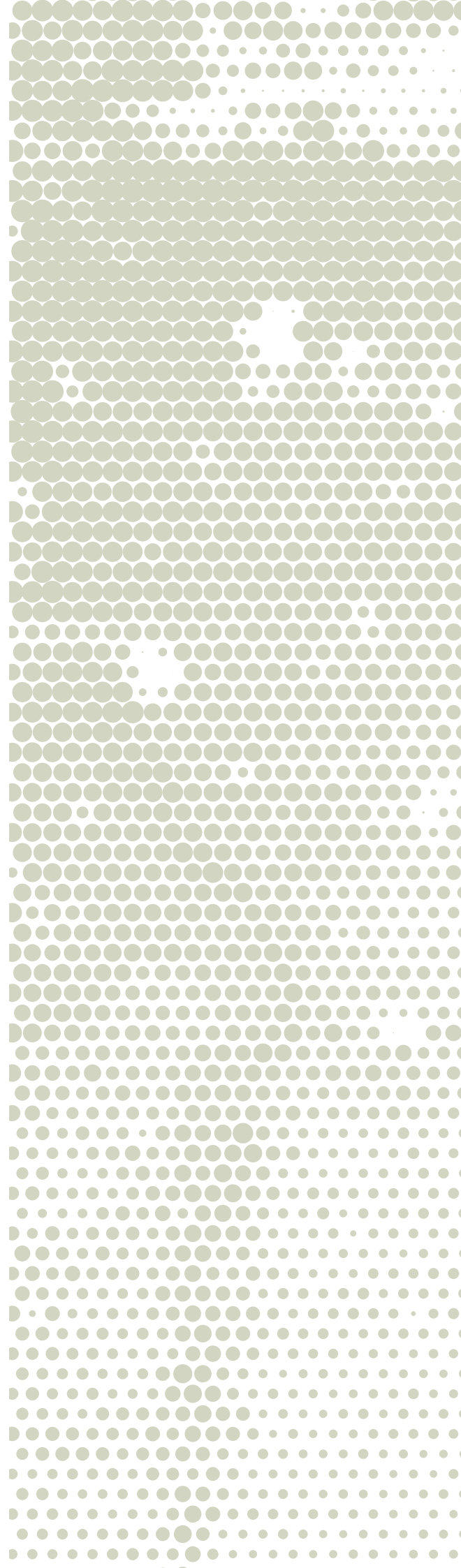
Promundo's offices in Brazil and the United States coordinated the research, which was conducted through Safe Cities and Inclusive Cities (SAIC), an initiative of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development.

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The IMAGES research team would like to thank the 48 local quantitative researchers and four qualitative researchers, and all Promundo staff members and consultants who have supported the process since 2011, including Ceiça Alcoforado, Daniel Duque, Nina Ford, Barbara Guimarães, Amanda Guimarães, Alexa Hassink, Giovanna Lauro, Ruti Levto, Raquel Gomes, Marco Aurélio Martins, Victoria Page, Barbara Pires, Leticia Serafim, Esther Spindler and Mohara Valle. Many thanks to Carlos Casanova, Laurie Denyer and Marina Motta for their support in research, design and survey development and fieldwork during the initial phase.

Funding for the study was provided through Safe Cities and Inclusive Cities (SAIC), an initiative of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. Thanks to Jennifer Salahub and Markus Gottsbacher from IDRC for their support since the project's inception and Rose Orth and Manon Therien for their financial coordination from Promundo-Brazil and IDRC. Thank you to Susan Guthridge-Gould and Cindy Hill of Beyond Jargon LLC, for editing.

The research team would also like to thank the Brazilian research experts and stakeholders for their input on the research, including Ignacio Cano, Dorian Borges, Thais Duarte and Eduardo Ribeiro at the Laboratory of Analysis on Violence (LAV) at the Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ); Elizabete Albernaz; Raphael Calazans; Fátima Cecchetto; Carolina Cooper; Renata Giannini; Henrique Gomes; Barbara Mourão; Silvia Ramos; André Rodrigues; Jailson de Sousa e Silva; Juliana Tibau; Raquel Willadino; and others who participated in events and discussions or contributed otherwise to the fieldwork or analysis.





# DEDICATION

Thais de Souza Santos was killed on January 5, 2016, in an exchange of gunfire between police and drug traffickers in her home neighborhood, Morro dos Prazeres, in Rio de Janeiro. The freedom to be outside, to be free, to forge the life she wanted was cut short tragically in the ongoing struggle – and lack of adequate public security – in Rio de Janeiro. We mourn together with Thais' family and we celebrate the cause and inspiration she affirmed for us at Promundo. We will not forget her, nor her cause and our cause. This report is dedicated to Thais and the young black men who died during the writing of this report, when we heard incessant crossfire among drug factions, and between drug factions and police. This report is a form of protest. It reminds us that nonviolence is possible and is an imperative for agendas prioritizing safe, inclusive, and equal cities – not for some, but for all.



# TERMINOLOGY

**NORTH** • The first of two sites in which quantitative household surveys are applied: n=902 (n=451 men and n=451 women). “North” corresponds to IPSA 9, the Integrated Public Security Area (IPSA) ranked with the second-highest homicide rate in the greater metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro, which covers primarily the Northern Zone of the city. The northern area is farther from the city center and income levels are generally lower. It also has fewer interventions from the government in terms of public security and services as compared with the Southern Zone of the city.

**SOUTH** • The second of two sites in which quantitative household surveys are applied: n=249 (n=121 men and n=128 women). “South” corresponds to IPSA 23, ranked with the second lowest homicide rate in the greater metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro, which covers primarily the Southern Zone of the city. The southern area includes both low-income areas (favelas) and one of the highest-income middle/upper-middle class neighborhoods in the city. It has also been subject to more public security efforts. The neighborhoods covered in the study are listed in Table 2.

**EXPOSURE TO URBAN VIOLENCE** • This is measured using an objective population level indicator (homicide rates) and with subjective individual-level measures.

**GENDER** • Gender is understood as the social construction of the differences between men and women. Gender differences are defined by socially ascribed assumptions and not by biologically determined differences between men and women. Gender includes masculinity (male roles) and femininity (female roles).

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)** • Gender-based violence is violence that targets people on the basis of their gender (the roles associated with males and females), along with unequal power relationships between the two genders. Women, girls, men, and boys can be victims of gender-based violence; however, most victims are female.

**IMAGES–URBAN VIOLENCE** • The adapted IMAGES questionnaire with a focus on urban violence.

**INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV)** • IPV is assessed according to the World Health Organization definition (WHO, 2012) considering any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship. In the questionnaire, it is assessed with questions on different degrees of violence toward an intimate partner in a married, cohabitating, or intimate/romantic relationship including physical and verbal violence, humiliation, and sexual abuse.

**MASCULINITY** • Perceptions of men and women about the roles, attitudes, and behaviors of men in society. Perceptions are social expectations and are not determined by biological characteristics.

**PHYSICAL URBAN VIOLENCE** • This includes participation in fights as adults and juvenile/ rival group fights, use of firearms in exchanges of crossfire and against a person, beatings, armed robbery, sexual abuse of a woman other than the intimate partner, and group sexual abuse of a woman other than an intimate partner.

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE** • Sexual abuse of a woman other than their intimate partner, and group sexual abuse and group sexual abuse of a woman other than an intimate partner.

**SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS (SES)** • SES is measured as a composite of three variables: employment status, nature of employment, and income. This is done in order to recognize the importance of factors other than monetary in the definition of socioeconomic conditions. The currency is the Brazilian Real. Its sign is R\$ and its currency code is BRL. We differentiate among several categories: (1) unemployed without income; (2) formally or informally employed or state subsidized with monthly income from R\$0 to R\$1759 = low SES; (3) formally or informally employed or state subsidized with monthly income from R\$1760 to R\$3520 = medium SES and (4) formally or informally employed with monthly income above R\$3521 = high SES. The values are defined in relation to the minimum national wage (approximately R\$880 per month) in relation to the location, Rio de Janeiro, with the lowest SES category representing up to two minimum wages.

**VERBAL VIOLENCE** • Use of insults and death threats.

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)** • VAW is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It is a form of gender-based violence. VAW is defined as any manifestation of physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence occurring in the family and in the general community, including battering, sexual abuse of children, rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-partner violence, and violence related to exploitation.

## ACRONYMS

**GEM SCALE** • Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale (see Pulerwitz & Barker, 2008) developed and tested in Brazil by Promundo and the Population Council

**IMAGES** • International Men and Gender Equality Survey

**IPSA** • Integrated Public Security Area (an administrative division in Rio de Janeiro)

**IPV** • Intimate partner violence

**PMRJ** • Military Police of Rio de Janeiro

**UPP** • Police Pacification Unit (community policing model adopted in some favelas of Rio de Janeiro, from the Portuguese name: Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora)

**UV** • Urban violence

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homicide and other forms of violence persist at high levels in Rio de Janeiro. This violence overwhelmingly affects low-income, young black men. Past research has rarely examined the relationship of this violence to gender norms nor has it focused on the interplay between urban violence and family and intimate partner violence (IPV). While most studies focus on pathways into violence, only a few studies examine at factors that encourage nonviolence.

In favelas<sup>3</sup> and other low-income, marginalized neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro, boys are exposed from an early age to multiple forms of violence in the household and in their communities. At critical points in life, boys and young men who lack attractive economic opportunities are invited to participate in drug trafficking and, oftentimes, encouraged to use arms or use violence in everyday life.

Amidst high levels of urban violence, how do many men adopt and sustain nonviolence in their lives? **This research led by Promundo seeks to address two key questions:**

3. While there is debate on the appropriate translation of *favelas*, they are often described as low-income “squatter” communities with informal land rights and less access to government services compared to services available in the more privileged parts of the city. Favelas are highly heterogeneous and vary in size as well as levels of poverty and levels of violence related to drug trafficking, the police, and militia groups.

1. What factors support groups of men who are surrounded by social and economic inequality, high exposure to violence, and incentives to use violence (e.g., members of drug gangs and the police) in avoiding, abandoning, or lessening their use of violence in complex urban settings?
2. How does higher and lower exposure to urban violence (defined by homicide rates) influence construction of masculinities, experiences of violence during childhood, attitudes and self-reported behaviors about gender among the broader population?



Promundo examines these questions in “IMAGES–Urban Violence”, a study that adapts IMAGES, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey, to focus on gender and urban violence and the interactions between violence in the public and private spheres in Rio de Janeiro. IMAGES is a comprehensive, multi-country study on men’s practices and attitudes toward gender norms, gender equality policies, household dynamics, caregiving and involvement as fathers, intimate partner violence, sexual diversity, and health and economic stress. Promundo’s offices in Brazil and the United States coordinated the study, which was part of Safe and Inclusive Cities (SAIC), an initiative of Canada’s International Development Research Centre and the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development.

## IMAGES STUDY ON URBAN VIOLENCE IN RIO DE JANEIRO

- **1,151 household surveys** were conducted with adult men and women in two sites: “South,” in the city’s southern zone where homicide rates are lower, and “North,” predominately in the city’s northern zone where homicide rates are high. The sample was drawn using public security administrative areas.
- **14 key informant interviews and 45 in-depth life history interviews** were carried out. The in-depth interviews sought to capture factors that promote men’s trajectories away from the use of violence in complex urban settings. Former drug traffickers, members of the police force, and local activists were invited to participate because these groups of men play crucial roles in using and experiencing of violence and nonviolence in the city. Female partners and family members were also interviewed.

## KEY FINDINGS

Throughout the analysis, the research seeks to understand the relationship between exposure to “public” forms of urban violence and forms of violence in “private” spheres such as between intimate partners and among family members. Survey results from the quantitative component of the research are further informed by interviews in the qualitative component of the research. Results offer multiple implications for inclusive citizen security policies and programming aimed at reducing urban violence in Brazil and other Latin American cities facing chronic urban violence.

1. **Fear of urban violence as well as childhood experiences of violence** both contribute to the use of violence and create trauma at individual, family, and collective levels. Such trauma is more prevalent in neighborhoods where homicide rates are higher. Both fear and childhood experiences of violence are associated in the survey with family and IPV.

2. **Exposure to urban violence before age 18** is strongly linked to perpetration of violence as an adult. An average of 82.8 percent of men in the total quantitative sample experienced or witnessed at least two of the following before age 18: aggravated assault, violent treatment by the police, battering, exchange of gunfire, house or workplace hit by bullets, death threats, or being shot by a firearm – all of which increase the likelihood that they will perpetrate violence.
3. **Exposure to violence outside the home** is highly related to violence in the home. Individuals in neighborhoods with higher rates of homicides overall (in the North of Rio) consistently report higher rates of use of nearly every kind of violence – public and private. They also have higher rates of fear of violence than those living in areas with overall lower homicide rates (in the South of Rio).
4. **Exposure to domestic violence against one’s mother during childhood** is linked to perpetration of violence during adulthood, and this link is clearly seen in both the qualitative and quantitative results.
5. **Use of intimate partner violence**, use of sexual violence, and use of public violence are higher in neighborhoods with higher rates of homicide.
6. **Fear of the police** is reported by more than half of all survey respondents (59 percent from the city’s North and 53 percent from the South). Survey findings suggest that individuals residing in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and other low-income neighborhoods fear the police almost as much as they fear the militia, thieves or criminals, and drug dealers.
7. **More equitable gender norms** are associated with lower exposure to urban violence. Both men and women demonstrate less gender-equitable attitudes where exposure to urban violence is high (North) compared with the area with less exposure to urban violence (South) – suggesting that chronic fear of violence contributes to more adversarial or inequitable norms related to gender.
8. **Economic stress related to lack of work and income** is highly prevalent among participants in the study and is associated with entrance into drug trafficking, as well as use of violence in general.
9. **Gun ownership and use** is viewed favorably by nearly 95 percent of men surveyed, though a relatively small proportion of individuals report that they own or have ever used firearms; women have less favorable attitudes. Men who favor gun use/ownership are more likely to have used some sort of violence in their lives.

- 10. Urban violence shapes and interacts with violent constructions of masculinities** and creates family stress and individual trauma that likely contribute to the social reproduction of violence in the public and private spheres. The constant “transfer” of violence from public spaces to the family and intimate partner relationships suggests the need for integrated prevention efforts that combine citizen security approaches with psychological support in the form of trauma therapy, in addition to community-based prevention initiatives to reduce gender-based and other forms of family violence. Such efforts must be accompanied by approaches that seek to change social norms about manhood from supporting “being tough” and playing with guns to promoting caregiving and nonviolence.

## FACTORS THAT REDUCE VIOLENCE

Former traffickers, police, and activists as well as their spouses and family members employ remarkable strategies to overcome violence or avoid using it in the first place. The qualitative interviews focused on men who showed evidence of having nonviolent trajectories.

Fatherhood is a central factor in moving a man’s life trajectory away from violence and toward nonviolence, according to both household surveys and interviews. Factors associated with nonviolent trajectories include: (1) fatherhood; (2) men’s participation in domestic tasks; (3) connection to social support circles; (4) men’s educational attainment; (5) employing mechanisms to “cool down” and step away from conflict; (6) widening life perspectives and gaining urban mobility in the city; (7) individual traits such as emotional and pro-social skills, resilience, and motivation; and (8) rejection of masculine norms tied to violence and adoption of more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors.

By group, men can identify key factors associated with promoting nonviolence in their lives. Former traffickers cite four factors: (1) assistance in leaving drug trafficking provided by nongovernmental organizations; (2) family pressure or support in leaving; (3) exit because of traumatic events and risks, such as the death of friends and being shot; and (4) rejection of masculine norms tied to violence and trafficking along with a redefinition of what it means to be a “real man.” Police emphasize the need to prevent transfer of stress from work to home, and some reinforce the importance of seeking the underutilized psychological services within the military police force (PMRJ). According to activists who promote peace, their life trajectories show early rejection of violence, having nonviolent peer groups, and urban mobility (i.e., the ability to access resources and opportunities outside favelas and other low-income areas).

## CONCLUSIONS

### STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE NONVIOLENCE SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF A NEW AGENDA FOR PUBLIC SECURITY AND FOR SAFER AND MORE INCLUSIVE CITIES

• This agenda should focus on promoting nonviolent, equitable, and caring versions of manhood. It should also focus on boys and girls, employing strategies to promote nonviolence and mitigate the effects of violence. Strategies to promote nonviolence must also reflect shifting patterns in urban violence in Rio de Janeiro related to the failure of the Police Pacification Units,<sup>4</sup> the changing nature of drug factions, mega-events held in the city (e.g., 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games), and repressive public security policies that continue to take a disproportionate toll on the lives of low-income, young black men.

New programs and policies are needed to carry out the new agenda. In their design, decision makers must move beyond a repressive model of policing, which is responsible for many of the city's homicides. Decision makers must also move beyond the blaming of individuals, in light of our finding that exposure to urban violence promotes violent trajectories for boys, whether through personal experience of violence or by simply living in areas with high homicide rates.

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Prioritize evidence-based programming to prevent gender-based violence and urban violence and transform gender norms;
- Offer spaces for youth to receive psychological support for addressing violence they have witnessed or experienced throughout childhood (including specific services to meet immediate needs such as healthcare) located in schools and other spaces youth frequent, in order to prevent intergenerational transfers of violence;
- Offer evidence-based interventions for adult men who have used or may use intimate-partner violence and sexual violence;
- Adopt integrated strategies that support nonviolent trajectories within settings of urban violence, including investing in civil disarmament efforts and programs that support and sustain young men to exit out of drug trafficking;
- Address practical employment concerns so that economic necessity does not push men toward entry into drug trafficking;
- Adopt approaches that recognize intersecting forms of vulnerabilities, i.e., interventions that reflect participants' age, race, childhood experiences, and aspirations (rather than replicate uniform approaches targeting youth);
- Address police violence committed primarily against low-income, young black men including via comprehensive police reform with transparency and reporting mechanisms;

4. Community policing model adopted in some favelas of Rio de Janeiro, from the Portuguese name: Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora.

- Promote mediation training for young adolescents and adults to equip them with skills for nonviolent conflict resolution in communities and within their relationships and families;
- Foster caregiving, involved fatherhood, and role models who are positive and nonviolent; and
- Address the interplay between violence in the public and private spheres as a matter of urban violence by implementing integrated prevention of public violence and gender-based violence and other forms of intra-family violence. More information about these strategies is available in the full report.

Few studies address the gendered aspects of urban violence. By applying this perspective in more than a thousand surveys and interviews across varied settings and groups related to urban violence in Rio de Janeiro, this study seeks to contribute to a more nuanced dialogue and facilitate the start of new efforts to develop more integrated approaches that look at gender – specifically masculinities – and the interplay between public and private violence. Urban violence is likely to decrease when improvements are made in the welfare of youth including opportunities in education, employment, social equality, and income equality.

IMAGES–Urban Violence (UV) highlights the importance of bringing gender, and particularly masculinities, to the table when developing solutions to urban violence and public security. Responses can be more effective when policymakers understand that masculinities are shaped by urban violence, especially given the statistics on homicides in cities like Rio de Janeiro. Advancing gender equality and promoting nonviolent masculinities from boyhood onward are actions linked to lower levels of violence in both public and private spheres, and as such suggest directions for future initiatives in Rio de Janeiro and other Latin American cities that are becoming increasingly insecure.



# SITUATION AND RESEARCH



## INTRODUCTION

**THE PROBLEM** • Men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of lethal armed violence in Rio de Janeiro and other cities in Latin America with high levels of chronic urban violence; they are also its main victims, making up the vast majority of homicide victims and direct victims of other armed violence. Hyper-masculine<sup>5</sup> norms that encourage violence are a shared characteristic of armed groups in Brazil including drug trafficking gangs,<sup>6</sup> militia, and police forces. These dominant norms are constructed during the socialization of boys and are reinforced when young men are exposed to armed violence and intersecting vulnerabilities. Understanding these norms and their impact on the trajectory of men's lives offers insight into strategies for reducing urban violence.

Globally, social norms shape what it means to be a "real man." These notions often reinforce and encourage violent attitudes and behaviors. The gendered socialization of boys and men produces vulnerabilities with multiple consequences for women, children, and for men themselves (as perpetrators and victims of violence). Women, for example, often face the burden of loss from the death of family members as well as the burden of caregiving from their injury, and may face violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence, sometimes at gunpoint. Violence interacts between the public sphere and the intimate or family sphere to multiply risks.

What causes some members of drug gangs or the police force to lessen or end their use of violence and, in so doing, subvert and challenge hypermasculine norms? What factors promote men's adoption of nonviolent trajectories, and what roles do their family members play in this choice? How do men overcome vulnerabilities that perpetuate intergenerational and public-private cycles of urban violence?

5. "Hypermasculinity" refers to exaggerated male stereotypical behavior that emphasizes physical strength, aggression or violence, and sexuality. Mosher and Sirkin (1984) were some of the earliest researchers to use the term, defining hypermasculinity or the "macho personality" as including "callous sexual attitudes toward women," "the belief that violence is manly," and "the experience of danger as exciting."

6. The drug trade in Rio de Janeiro is dominated by three historic major factions: Comando Vermelho (CV), Terceiro Comando and Terceiro Comando Puro (TC/P), and Amigos dos Amigos (ADA) that trade primarily marijuana, cocaine, and crack cocaine (this varies by territory) and vie for territorial control.

**THE RESEARCH** • Promundo conducted a mixed-methods field research project in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 2013 to 2016. The methodology was adapted from IMAGES, the International Men and Gender Equality Survey to settings with high rates of urban violence. IMAGES was initially developed by Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women in 2008. Promundo's offices in Brazil and the United States coordinated the study, which was part of Safe and Inclusive Cities (SAIC), an initiative of Canada's International Development Research Centre and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development. SAIC has funded 15 global research projects examining urban violence, poverty, and inequalities. In parallel to the Rio de Janeiro research featured in the present report, a separate but related study on urban, post-conflict settings was conducted in Maputo and Matola, Mozambique.

In Rio de Janeiro, the Promundo research team conducted 1,151 household surveys with men and women in areas of higher and lower exposure to urban violence, roughly corresponding to public security administrative areas in Rio's North and South zones. The objective of this research is to enhance our understanding of how higher and lower exposure to urban violence (defined by homicide rates) influence construction of masculinities, experiences of violence during childhood, gender attitudes, and self-reported behaviors. It adds a nuanced, gendered lens to examining risk and protection factors within settings of urban violence. In particular, it explores how masculinities and factors related to gendered socialization, attitudes, and behaviors influence the perpetration of violence.

To complement the quantitative surveys, the research team conducted 45 in-depth life history interviews. The objective of this qualitative component is to enhance our understanding of factors that support men (e.g., members of drug gangs and the police) who are surrounded by inequalities, high exposure to violence, and incentives to use violence in avoiding, abandoning, or lessening their use of violence in complex urban settings. Central to the analysis is the interaction between "public" forms of violence, and the violence experienced by women and family members related to and in intimate relationships with men.

**UNDERSTANDING GENDERED FORMS OF URBAN VIOLENCE AND NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES HOLDS MULTIPLE IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMING AIMED AT REDUCING URBAN VIOLENCE IN BRAZIL AND OTHER LATIN AMERICAN CITIES** • Research on cities, poverty, and violence has focused on multiple risk factors such as urbanization, population density, poverty, inequality, theories around youth bulges and unemployment among young males, the effects of conflict, and the lack of governance or weakness of the state (Muggah, 2012). Generally, however, such research omits consideration of how the social construction of masculinities and power dynamics fundamentally affect and enhance our understanding of each of these factors. Mainstream "gender-neutral" concepts of urban violence prevail in research on cities, poverty, and violence. Meanwhile, social and spatial



divisions produce gender-related experiences in urban settings (see Hume, 2008; Wilding 2012, for example), and vulnerabilities largely remain invisible (Moura 2007; Moura and Roque, 2009) and are silenced (Hume, 2009; Wilding, 2010).

## URBAN VIOLENCE IN RIO DE JANEIRO

**DESPITE A DECLINE IN HOMICIDE RATES IN THE CITY OF RIO DE JANEIRO, HOMICIDES ARE MORE CONCENTRATED THAN EVER BEFORE IN FAVELAS AND AMONG LOW-INCOME, YOUNG BLACK MEN.**

Major Brazilian cities have experienced an intensification of violence since 1980, and rates have declined in some of these cities. Brazil, however, continues to have one of the highest absolute numbers of homicides worldwide (per capita homicide rates are higher in other Latin American countries). In 2012, there were 56,337 registered homicides in Brazil, with a homicide rate of 29 deaths per 100,000 people (Mapa da Violência, 2014).<sup>7</sup> This represents ten percent of all global homicides, according to a 2016 study by Ipea and Forum da Segurança Pública. These data should be considered in relation to limitations in registering homicides, both past and present.<sup>8</sup>

Globally, Brazil ranks within the top 16 countries with violent deaths per 100,000 population. Four of the countries with per capita violent deaths higher than Brazil in 2012 were emerging from or experiencing armed conflict (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015). Between 1980 and 2012, the annual registered number of homicides in the country increased by 143 percent, with the greatest rise occurring between 1980 and 1997.

The state of Rio de Janeiro is ranked eighth in the country in terms of firearm deaths, with 26.4 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants (Mapa da Violência, 2013). These data are often attributed to a combination of inequality, police violence, organized criminal groups in the drug trade, and militia groups, which are community-defense groups that often include off-duty or former police officers.

This trend is not new, yet global attention to violence in Brazil is growing, as highlighted in recent reports on police violence (see Amnesty International, 2015). Policies, programs, and strategies to reduce violence in Brazil, however, do not sufficiently respond to the reality of homicide rates skewed toward low-income, young black men.

### THE FACE OF INSECURITY IN BRAZIL: "YOUNG/BLACK/MALE" AT RISK:

Race, age, sex, and socioeconomic status overwhelmingly influence homicide risk in Brazil:

- 90 percent of homicide victims are men;
- 77 percent are of black/African descent<sup>9</sup>;
- 54 percent are between the ages of 15 and 29.<sup>10</sup>

7. A homicide rate is defined by number of homicides per 100,000 inhabitants; a rate above ten is considered an epidemic according to the World Health Organization.
8. Data in this section must be considered in the context of limitations in the past and present in the reporting of homicides. The most recent Global Burden of Armed Violence (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015) reports Brazil as an example of a country that does not disaggregate by mechanisms used to perpetrate killings (within public health data). Data are collected by the police and given to the Instituto de Segurança Pública (ISP), which may lead to underreporting relying on police reports of deaths. Police in Brazil also likely over-report the homicides they carry out which they claim to be in self-defense. Researchers have also calculated estimated homicide rates that are higher than actual figures (Murray et al., 2013), but even these estimates have their limitations accounting for barriers to reporting each death including lack of access to the justice system and formal institutional mechanisms among low-income residents; the historical problem of *Autos de Resistência* (deaths registered by police as "resisting arrest"); and lack of routine investigation (Misse et al., 2013; Amnesty International, 2015).
9. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) classifies race/color according to the following groups: white, black (*preta*), brown (*parda*), "yellow", and indigenous. The category "negra" (person or population) corresponds to the combination of the statistical categories "preto" + "pardo."
10. The percentages (age 15 to 29) increase even more when considering deaths by police, according to public data from 2010 to 2013.

- **Men:** In Brazil and several other Latin American countries,<sup>11</sup> men are 10 times more likely than women to die from homicide (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011). Globally, homicide among women (femicide) represents about 16 percent of deaths and is more likely to be committed by a man known to the female victim (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2015). Men worldwide are three to six times more likely than women to perpetrate homicide (Krause et al., 2011).<sup>12</sup>
- **Black men:** Homicide rates in Brazil have not declined for black men, in contrast to the overall decrease in some Brazilian cities. Black men are killed at a rate two and a half times greater than their white counterparts, according to 2012 figures (Mapa da Violência, 2015). Black Brazilians face discrimination and structural violence, including limited access to education, health services, work, and adequate housing. Men of African descent are far more likely to be imprisoned than white men in Brazil, in a trend similar to the United States.
- **Young black men:** Homicide is increasingly concentrated among young people. Between 1980 and 2012, the homicide rate increased from 19.6 to 57.6 deaths per 100,000 people aged 15 to 29; at the same time, it rose from 8.5 to 18.5 among non-youth. In 2012, people aged 15 to 29 represented 26.9 percent of Brazil's total population more than half (53.4 percent) of all homicide victims (Mapa da Violência, 2014). If current trends continue, an estimated 42,000 youth will be killed in Brazil from 2013 to 2019 in municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. This analysis from the Adolescent Homicide Index, or IHA according to its Portuguese acronym, also confirms that boys are almost 12 times more likely to be murdered than girls (Borges & Cano, 2014).
- **Young black men who reside in favelas and other marginalized low-income urban areas:** Homicide rates for the middle and upper class have declined, but drug gangs and police continue to vie for control over territories and pose risks to residents of low-income communities. Though social policies have led to an unprecedented reduction of social inequality in the past 15 years, the ongoing high homicide rates for the urban poor are a troubling indicator of the uneven nature of this progress. Stereotypes about youth, especially young black men, living in favelas and other marginalized areas contribute to the trivialization and “naturalization” of violence against this population (Amnesty International, 2015).

11. The countries with high male homicides (in comparison to a more evenly distributed male and female ratio) are Brazil, Colombia, Puerto Rico and Venezuela according to the Global Burden of Armed Violence, 2011.

12. Men also represent the vast majority of the incarcerated population: Brazil is the country with the fourth highest prison population with 581,000 persons in prison.





**GUN VIOLENCE IN RIO DE JANEIRO REPRESENTS AN EXAMPLE OF “NEWEST WARS”:  
CHRONIC VIOLENCE CARRIED OUT BY ORGANIZED GROUPS OF ARMED MEN IN SET-  
TINGS WHERE THE STATE IS ABSENT OR VIOLENT** •

Considering the public security scenario in a global context, the ongoing high levels of gun violence committed primarily against low-income, young black men in Rio de Janeiro constitute a kind of new, undeclared war. These ‘newest wars’ take place largely in urban landscapes and their peripheries, which are marked by socioeconomic disparities; hypermasculine gender ideologies; and small arms use, misuse, and possession (Moura 2007, 2010). These wars also tend to be chronic, rather than characterized by a particular episode of conflict with a declared beginning and end. Wars in “times of formal peace” are among the most devastating conflicts on an international level. Globally, nine out of ten deaths take place outside of settings of formal state or intra-state conflict (Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011). Chronic urban violence of this kind is increasingly problematic in cities in Brazil and other parts of Latin America.

Urban violence in Rio de Janeiro is associated with limited employment opportunities, an increase in the circulation of arms, and domination by armed, organized criminal groups operating on the basis of territorial control. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, public security policy in Rio de Janeiro and other Brazilian cities was characterized by sporadic police operations to repress the drug trade in marginalized urban communities. Still today, lack of regulation on the use of heavy weapons and armored vehicles in densely populated urban areas increases risks to local populations (Amnesty International, 2015). These dynamics of sustained inequality and repressive policing are used to legitimate what is often described as a “metaphor of war” in the sense that rival groups refer to each other as enemies and dispute territory in ways that mimic war even absent formal declaration of zones of armed conflict (Leite, 2014).

The connection between having a gun or other weapon and the power that guns represent among young men who perceive themselves to be powerless represents a significant risk factor for gang participation, especially when combined with other vulnerabilities and inequalities such as lack of employment, lack of other sources of identity, and limited ties to social institutions, among others (Barker, 2010). Gang participation is also related to competition for reputation – recognition, honor, and prestige among potential female partners – among young men who have few other pathways by which to achieve a sense of socially recognized manhood (Barker, 2005).

Rio de Janeiro experienced an unprecedented disarmament initiative via a national gun buy-back program in 2004 and 2005 through which more than 500,000 weapons were turned in (Ministério da Justiça, 2014). These declines in gun ownership, even before the gun buy-back program, are calculated to have averted 160,000 gun homicides in Brazil, predominantly among youth (Mapa da Violência, 2015). The disarmament initiative and other measures, however, have not been followed by consistent, sustained programs at the government level to address the needs of men who leave drug trafficking gangs. A handful of mostly short-term,

grant-based projects in NGOs over the years (i.e., those in Observatório das Favelas, Luta Pela Paz, Afroreggae, and others that indirectly support youth alternatives to drug trafficking) are noteworthy but have been insufficient to sustain nonviolent trajectories among young people in large numbers. These programs benefit from small investments in comparison to more prioritized policing initiatives (without sustainable police reform).

## ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH POLICE PRESENCE IN RIO'S FAVELAS

The most recent policy attempt to curb urban violence in Rio de Janeiro is a state “pacification” program launched in 2008 that establishes a police presence in favela communities. Thirty-eight Police Pacification Units (UPP) were operating as of 2015. The aim is to replace intermittent police actions with a proximity and daily policing model physically based in favelas to regain control of communities from armed traffickers. Evaluations showed that homicide rates fell in the first few years of UPP operation in some favelas. Diminished crossfire of bullets and reduced display of arms and drugs were welcomed improvements for most residents, giving rise to initial praise of the model. However, reports of non-lethal violence previously regulated by traffickers’ local rule of law, such as robberies and violence against women, increased (Cano, 2012).

By 2013 and 2014, homicide reports had reached pre-UPP rates in several favelas and even increased as much as 55 percent in some communities (Instituto da Segurança Pública, 2015). A series of human rights abuses including torture by police officers damaged confidence in the program. Police violence, including incidents involving Police Pacification Units, is highly militarized and marked by excessive displays of force, impunity, and violent, hypermasculine patterns of behavior. Police kill suspects without routine and adequate investigation (Misse *et al.*, 2013). Extrajudicial killings continue to be justified by the term “*resistance followed by death*” (*autos de resistência*) on the grounds of self-defense. According to Amnesty International, only one case out of 220 between 2011 and 2015 in Rio resulted in a police officer being charged. As of April 2015, 183 investigations remained open.

### IN RIO DE JANEIRO, GREATER POLICE PRESENCE INITIALLY REDUCED HOMICIDES IN SOME FAVELA COMMUNITIES BUT OVER TIME CONTRIBUTED TO HEIGHTENED HOMICIDE RATES IN OTHERS, AND ALSO INCREASED OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE •

Overall, the many transformations occurring in the city are generating new conflicts related to territorial domination and exacerbated inequality, and involve shifts and reconfigurations in criminality and violence (Rodriguez, 2013; Viera da Cunha & Santis Veltran, 2013; Wacquant, 2008, 2009). Hosting mega-events like the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games adds to the complexity and greatly affects the provision and distribution of security in Rio de Janeiro, where planning has included forced evictions.<sup>13</sup> In 2013, a surge of unprecedented protests swept the

13. Decisions for construction related to the major events as well as UPP installations have demonstrated unequal class interests and enhanced structural inequalities and violence rather than accurately addressing areas with the most acute security or urban planning needs.



country, resulting in the arrest of and violence toward protestors, namely those who were protesting the use of government funds and the displacement of communities caused by large construction projects related to these major sporting events (Amnesty International, 2013).

Variations in violence among favelas are also evident in spatial analyses research (Barcellos & Zaluar, 2014). Barcellos and Zaluar show how homicide rates vary according to community domination by different drug factions or militia, and conclude that the presence of drug trafficking increases the risk of homicide *in areas around the favelas* rather than inside the favelas themselves. These homicides are related to the availability of arms and to armed conflicts between dealers from different factions, between drug factions and the police, or between drug traffickers and militia forces. Interestingly, homicide rates in favelas are about the same or slightly lower than in the rest of the city, but they are considerably higher in areas surrounding the favelas, especially where there is conflict between armed rival gangs.<sup>14</sup>

In favelas, shifting security dynamics with the police have also affected relations between residents and traffickers, and between residents and police. Interviews for this study suggest, for example, that in the past drug lords “ruled over” and had strong ties to one community. Today, however, traffickers have stronger alliances to larger drug trafficking factions (sometimes across several communities) and thus are less rooted in given communities and in some cases less able or willing to mitigate the effects of local violence (from police or traffickers) on residents.

Furthermore, the lack of rule of law and limited state presence are ongoing and pervasive: “In poor areas, the lack of access to justice means it is easier for the private security agents to become tyrants or negotiators who impose extralegal or illegal decisions on residents due to the power derived from their use of firearms, forcing robbers and drug dealers to leave the area” (Barcellos & Zaluar, 2014).

#### THOUGH DEPLOYED TO REDUCE VIOLENCE, POLICE ARE THE SOURCE OF MUCH OF THE VIOLENCE IN FAVELAS AND OTHER MARGINALIZED URBAN AREAS •

Among key informant interviews, participants most often cited police violence and lack of dialogue as primary challenges to addressing urban violence in Rio de Janeiro. In the city, homicides committed by the military police (PMRJ) represented 15.6 percent of all homicides in 2014. The number dropped in 2011 but then rose again by 39.4 percent between 2013 and 2014. Police have killed 1,519 residents in the past five years in the city of Rio de Janeiro (Amnesty International, 2015). Police in Rio de Janeiro have contributed to the perpetuation of feelings of mistrust and a style of “engagement” that erodes rule of law and institutes “a separate, localized, order” (Arias, 2006). Stray bullets that hit children and other civilians are another problem. Often in the context of police crackdowns on criminal gangs or confrontations between gangs, these stray bullets cause many deaths every year in this city and others.

The police culture is often warlike and involves “destroying enemies” rather than following a guiding philosophy of public security or citizen protection. In this notion, police may use force arbitrarily and excessively to kill, and favela residents

14. This trend also must be understood within the limitations of urban violence research. The authors attribute high homicide rates found in the areas immediately adjacent to favelas to two possible causes: (1) Since locating residence addresses inside favelas is difficult, residents provide addresses from nearby areas, such as the resident association, stores, and other points of reference. Information systems thus artificially reflect risk for these areas; (2) Conflicts have expanded beyond favela borders and drug traffickers’ prohibit robbery inside the favela. Furthermore, police and/or traffickers may leave bodies and/or report them outside of the favela.

can be killed, reinforcing the notion that some individuals are more “expendable” than others, particularly if they are classified as “enemies.” Official police records reflect the blaming of victims according to socioeconomic and racial lines.

One fundamental problem with the military police model is that it gives power to individual police officers to decide with whom they should use violence or not, to exercise justice with their own hands, as politician and human rights defender Marcelo Freixo has described. This model of “individual judgment” for use of violence allows for corruption and a disproportionate burden of the consequences to fall on one group –young black men who are poor – with a concomitant absence of consequences or accountability for police. In addition, social norms within the police force heavily reinforce acceptance of violence. Police themselves perceive a lack of preparedness and training (Mourão *et al.*, 2015). Police also lack psychological support to meet the scale of exposure to urban violence in which they are engaged.<sup>15</sup> The context is thus defined by a combination of challenges: a model that limits accountability for police violence, social norms among police that support use of excessive force, and a lack of available police training and counseling services.

What does masculinity have to do with it? One central element in common between the police and drug trafficking groups is a “warrior ethos”<sup>16</sup> version of masculinity. In interviews for this study, participants describe violence-inducing rites of passage within the police force, hierarchical structures, and a culture of war.

Considerable research has documented the factors associated with homicide and violence in Brazil. Less attention has been paid to the factors that promote violent versus nonviolent pathways, in other words, to the resistance and resilience of young men in the face of violence in their lives. This focus constitutes the core conceptual framework of this research.

15. See: <http://oglobo.globo.com/rio/quase-um-terco-do-efetivo-de-ups-tem-disturbios-psicologicos-18077062>

16. As coined by Norbert Elias in the 1990s and widely by the leading Brazilian scholar on masculinities and urban violence, Alba Zaluar.



## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study focuses on factors that support groups of men who are surrounded by social and economic inequality, high exposure to violence, and incentives to use violence (e.g., members of drug gangs and the police) in *avoiding, abandoning, or lessening their use of violence*. It also examines *how higher and lower exposure to urban violence* (defined by homicide rates) influence construction of masculinities, experiences of violence during childhood, attitudes and self-reported behaviors about gender. These notions guide the study’s conceptual framework in two ways: through examination of (1) masculinities and (2) nonviolent trajectories.

### MASCULINITIES

#### URBAN VIOLENCE AMONG MEN IS SHAPED BY NOTIONS OF MASCULINITY PRODUCED AND LIVED AMONG MEN AND BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN •

As described by Greig (2009) and others, much of the policy discourse surrounding young men and gender characterize young men as “troublesome” and part of the problem. Masculinities are fundamentally complex and heterogeneous in terms of age, class, education, employment, marital status, and urban geography. They are socially constructed, fluid over time and in different settings, dynamic (meaning they may shift over time), and include a range of attitudes and behaviors from equitable to partially equitable to inequitable and violent to nonviolent. Finally, masculinities are part of a relational notion of gender (Greene and Levack, 2010) in which they are not isolated from, but rather interact with, femininities and the “gender order” (Connell, 2005).

Research into masculinities examines experiences and exposure to violence during childhood and adolescence, and how these events affect or are carried into adult life. This research helps us identify and understand which factors influence the intergenerational transfer of violence, and builds upon findings from the initial IMAGES research (Barker et al., 2011). The key point is that **versions of masculinities, created and reinforced by both men and women, can produce insecurities and vulnerabilities in the lives of others and men themselves, and they can also promote nonviolence.**

#### URBAN VIOLENCE AMONG MEN IN PUBLIC SPACES ALSO INFLUENCES (AND IS INFLUENCED BY) MEN’S USE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND OTHER FORMS OF INTRA-FAMILY VIOLENCE •

Traditional concepts of “urban violence” generally place little attention on violence beyond the public sphere. The fields of gender-based violence and men’s use of violence against women are often treated as separate from urban violence. This research seeks to explore linkages between these multiple forms of violence.

## TRAJECTORIES FROM SOCIALIZATION TO CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITIES, VIOLENCE, AND NONVIOLENCE

Processes of socialization to construction occur in several discrete phases:

- **Childhood:** Beginning in childhood, the socialization of boys starts to generate vulnerabilities related to expectations of manhood that are reinforced throughout life. Boys are often given toys such as plastic guns that normalize the use of arms, and are told to “be tough” and not to cry, as our research and the research of others has shown. Compared to their female siblings, they are more likely to be encouraged to go outside to play and to fight with peers on the street; they are also discouraged to engage in caregiving and household tasks. Boys become eligible from a young age to start doing the small tasks that initiate involvement as “child soldiers,” in the lowest ranks of a drug trafficking group.
- **Adolescence:** Socialization and reinforcement of harmful social norms is continued in adolescence, when boys are further applauded for being tough or fighting to resolve a dispute. Adolescence is a formative period in which young men have their first (or greater) exposures and invitations to join armed groups that were likely visible since childhood. Their exposure to and participation in social groups with notions of “manhood” that favor violence becomes more prominent.
- **Adulthood:** During adulthood, there is reinforcement of gender relations in which specific groups of adult men have dominant social position compared to other groups of men (hegemonic masculinities versus subordinate masculinities) (Connell, 2005). In order to assert this power, and when it is threatened, men may use violence to resolve conflicts. Men then continue to be more susceptible to experiencing violence at the hands of other men. Notions of manhood also influence men to engage in risky behavior, such as avoidance of seeking health services, excessive alcohol use, and unsafe sex.
- **Resilience to violence (childhood through adulthood):** Men’s resilience, or resistance to violent influences and experiences, can be understood as stemming in part from widening conceptions around masculinities. This shift can be understood as departing from a more singular view of what it means to be a “real man” toward a concept of multiple masculinities, understanding of complex power dynamics between groups of men, and an emphasis on change and fluidity (Connell, 2005). An emphasis on *change* and the diversity of masculinities, help pave the way for increased attention to alternatives to hegemonic masculinity and hypermasculine norms, and for an explicit focus on nonviolent trajectories.





## NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES

Researchers and practitioners in Brazil have taken important steps forward in understanding the concept covered in this report: nonviolent trajectories. Many men’s lives follow nonviolent trajectories; others do not. In the title of his first book, Jailson de Souza e Silva asked, “*Why some and not others?*” As the founder of a non-governmental organization (NGO) in the Maré favela complex in Rio de Janeiro, he and colleagues developed programming to support transitions out of drug trafficking, and to offer youth alternatives to using violence as a means of constructing their masculinities – an approach also used by other NGOs. Insight also comes from researchers and practitioners who have advanced frameworks and strategies offering pathways out of drug trafficking to children and young men in Rio de Janeiro (Dowdney, 2005; Rodriguez, 2013) and away from crime in other contexts (Roque, 2012).

Globally, a handful of programs and studies have also begun to address resistance and nonviolent pathways of men. Work involving men in relation to the women, peace and security agenda has made headway in recent years (Vess *et al.*, 2013). An example of this work is Promundo’s Living Peace groups in the Democratic Republic of Congo and other countries. The purpose of these groups and the community activism that accompanies them is to encourage men to overcome psychosocial trauma, support men’s abilities to sustain peace, and reduce men’s use of violence against women – objectives carried out in conflict-affected settings through educational groups and campaigns.

Studies on positive deviance by Promundo have also provided a foundation to this research. They have explored ways in which young men question and counter harmful prevailing norms that can contribute to violent behavior. While delinquency and gun ownership may provide a sense of power, these studies have identified numerous factors that serve to counter men’s participation in gang or other delinquent activity (Barker, 1998, 2005; Barker & Ricardo, 2006). The studies feature in-depth interviews with male youth in Chicago and Rio de Janeiro (Barker 1998, 2005) and with multiple groups of men worldwide who discuss their non-traditional caregiving roles (Barker *et al.*, 2012).

## THE COMPLEXITIES OF STUDYING LIFE TRAJECTORIES AND VIOLENCE

It is important to consider several final points that guide research on masculinities, violence, and trajectories out of violence.

### **VIOLENCE(S) OVERLAP AND ARE NON-LINEAR**

A critical research finding is that definitions of violence vary. Many forms of violence are not considered as such by the participants. Furthermore, use of violence is not synonymous with criminality and participation in an armed group. Participation in trafficking, however, requires a willingness to use violence and supports what Zaluar (2005) describes as a logic of territorial control related to the affirmation of masculinities. A nonviolent trajectory in the case of traffickers, therefore, is strongly supported by an exit from criminality.

“Violent” or “nonviolent” do not comprise fixed categories; rather they are pathways marked by adoption of attitudes and behaviors that are predominate but can vary in different spheres. It is these nuanced and complex pathways that make the analytical focus of the research.

Abandoning the use of violence is not linear. It often involves multiple endings and a return to the use of violence. There are great amounts of overlap among actors and the types of violence they use, witness and experience, and their nonviolent trajectories – such as peace activists previously engaged in drug trafficking, spouses of police who are also police officers, and men who use IPV engaged in violence on the streets with other men. In the present IMAGES–Urban Violence study, male participants across all groups used IPV, even when they had “abandoned” their use of violence in another group.

### **NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES DO NOT DEPEND ON INDIVIDUALS AND INDIVIDUAL CHOICE ALONE**

The onus is not on any individual man to adopt a nonviolent trajectory. It is not solely a matter of personal impetus. Rather, men’s experiences and choices are embedded in urban societies with structural violence and chronic poverty, inequalities, and violence. The onus should therefore be on – but is not fully addressed by – government and non-government institutions, and society at large.

Violence is tolerated, accepted, and rewarded within groups of men living amidst urban violence – especially among traffickers or police. When we speak of vulnerabilities and men, we are not victimizing men, nor are we removing men’s individual responsibility for violence they commit or for vulnerabilities they reproduce in the lives of those they interact with. We seek to deconstruct some of the vulnerabilities associated with men, masculinities, and socialization by understanding masculinities not as static but dynamic, diverse, and relational to femininities. Overcoming incentives to use violence therefore depends on a complex set of factors and, of course, gender norms and masculinities are not the only factors that influence urban violence.



The linkages between urban violence and household violence are particularly compelling. While some studies have examined the effects of violence in childhood, fewer have focused on these effects as related to exposure to urban violence in addition to household violence. By capturing the experiences of family members and spouses, this research approach expands the scope of actors traditionally considered significant in addressing urban violence. It also departs from the norm of treating urban violence as separate or unrelated from gendered causes and consequences. Examining the differences and similarities within how groups of men and women experience and use violence, however, offers insights for reducing urban violence.

Men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of physical violence in public spaces; they are also most likely to be its victims. Yet evidence from multiple settings consistently shows that men and boys who exhibit higher rates of criminal, violent, and delinquent behavior are not driven to do so because of their biology. Lethal violence is not part of men’s or women’s “nature” (DeWaal, 2010; Hrdy, 2011). Rather, enormous effort goes into training men (or women) to kill. Studies on biological (genetic) components of violent behavior find only a small contribution of biology to aggressive behavior, which is distinct from violent behavior (see Barker, 2010; Kimmel, 2000).

Men’s violence is part of a deliberate reinforcement of power structures between groups of men with more power (or representing more powerful groups) against less powerful men (Barker, 2015). Extreme trauma, humiliation, and shaming are nearly always part of the making of men who kill (Gillian, 1997; Enloe, 2007). In Rio de Janeiro specifically, Barcellos and Zaluar (2014) attribute higher homicide rates in areas near favelas to a concentration of guns where impoverished young men live, rather than “any natural inclination towards violence.”

Arguments that violence is inherent or that only blame individual men do not account for structural inequalities. Nor do they consider contextual factors such as family and community that interact with gender-specific socialization and gender identity formation. Individual and family factors, such as men’s use of violence after exposure to violence during childhood or adolescence, interact with patriarchy and gender (Barker, 2015). Risk and vulnerability, rather than resilience, is often a starting point; yet to understand how to promote nonviolent trajectories through programs and policies, attention must also be paid to resistance and resilience. Accordingly, this study focuses on **examining men’s resistance and resilience within contexts of violence, and nonviolent trajectories specifically.**

## METHODOLOGY

This research used a mixed-methods design and adapted the IMAGES questionnaire to focus on understanding the dynamics of gender, masculinities, violence, and nonviolence in contexts of urban marginalization.

### QUALITATIVE METHODS

The research began with **14 key informant interviews** with experts in urban violence, public security, gender and violence, and programs designed for supporting youth to leave drug trafficking gangs or to prevent IPV. Subsequently, **45 in-depth life history interviews** were conducted with a focus on trajectories toward abandoning or lessening the use of violence or involvement in an armed group. In order to understand these trajectories, several groups were identified for the qualitative fieldwork sample (Table 1).

Through these in-depth life history interviews, we sought to understand childhood and adolescent experiences and to focus on gender dynamics related to the construction of violent versus nonviolent masculinities. Analysis of the interviews focused on answering the question, “What factors enable men who are surrounded by violence and inequality to abandon or lessen their use of violence, or adopt nonviolent attitudes and behaviors in these complex urban settings?” The analysis focused on the interviews with men. It also focused on former drug traffickers, since their trajectories offer important insights into what makes it possible to abandon a violent version of manhood for a nonviolent or less violent one.



TABLE 1 | NUMBER OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO GAVE INTERVIEWS, BY CATEGORY

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS – RIO DE JANEIRO	NUMBER
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS	14
IN-DEPTH LIFE HISTORY INTERVIEWS	45
<b>MEN</b>	
<b>MEN FORMERLY INVOLVED IN DRUG TRAFFICKING GANGS.</b> This group included older and recent generation drug gang leaders (those in the highest positions) and younger “soldiers” (aged 18 to 51).	13
<b>ACTIVISTS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS WHO PROMOTE PEACE/NONVIOLENT ALTERNATIVES.</b> Interviewees were from and working in the same or similar communities as those of former traffickers (two also fell into the former trafficker category).	7
<b>MEN WHO PARTICIPATED IN A GROUP EDUCATION INTERVENTION FOR MEN WHO HAVE USED IPV.</b> This group allowed us to examine the issue of IPV, but was not central to the analysis of this report compared to the other groups.	4
<b>MALE POLICE OFFICERS.</b> Half came from the higher ranks and half from the lower ranks of the police force. They were selected because, at least in their public discourses, they promoted nonviolent techniques such as mediation and conflict resolution over excessive use of force. Most had been raised in favelas or low-to middle-income suburbs of Rio slightly above the socioeconomic status of former traffickers and activists living in favelas.	6
<b>WOMEN</b>	
<b>WOMEN WHO ARE OR WERE PREVIOUSLY IN AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH MEN IN DRUG TRAFFICKING GANGS (WHO HAVE SINCE LEFT THE GANG).</b> One woman had been a drug lord ( <i>dona do morro</i> ); another heavily supported the role of her drug lord husband in and out of prison; one became a “mule” after the death of her husband who was involved in trafficking; and two women aimed to stay far from trafficking.	5
<b>WOMEN FORMERLY INVOLVED IN DRUG TRAFFICKING.</b> This group included one female drug lord and one “mule.”	2
<b>WOMEN POLICE OFFICERS.</b> One woman was a high-level UPP Commander and one was a lower-ranked officer. Both promoted nonviolent techniques such as mediation and conflict resolution over use of excessive force and were married to male police officers.	2
<b>WOMEN MARRIED TO POLICE OFFICERS.</b> One was a practicing psychologist within the police and the other was not in the police force.	2
<b>FAMILY MEMBERS</b>	
<b>CHILDREN OF POLICE OFFICERS AND THE MOTHERS OF FORMER DRUG TRAFFICKERS.</b>	4

## QUANTITATIVE METHODS

Through the quantitative component of this research, we sought to further understand violent and nonviolent masculinities in two contexts shaped by urban violence: (1) the relationship between exposure to urban violence; and (2) perpetration of and victimization by violence, that is, the transmission of violence between public/urban and private/domestic spheres as well as between generations.

A total of 1,151 household surveys were completed in two sample areas selected to objectively assess the exposure to urban violence. The first site, n=902 (n=451 men and n=451 women) corresponded to the Integrated Public Security Area (IPSA) ranked with the second-highest homicide rate in the greater metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro (IPSA 9), referred to as “North” throughout this report (it covers primarily the Northern Zone of the city). The second site, n=249 (n=121 men and n=128 women) corresponds to IPSA 23, with the second-lowest homicide rate in the city, referred to as “South” throughout this report (it covers primarily the Southern Zone of the city). The neighborhoods covered in this report are listed in Table 2.

17. Based on “Resumo Mensal por AISP” and “Dossiê Mulher”, referring to the period between 2008–2012, published by the Instituto de Segurança Pública – ISP, Government of Rio de Janeiro. In the ranking, 1 is the most violent, 15 is the least violent.

TABLE 2 | RANKING OF URBAN VIOLENCE IN THE TWO AREAS STUDIED, IPSA, RIO DE JANEIRO<sup>16</sup>

IPSA	NEIGHBORHOODS	POPULATION	RANKING		
			COMBINED	VIOLENT CRIME	CRIME AGAINST WOMEN
9	<b>NORTH:</b> ACARI, ANCHIETA, BARROS FILHO, BENTO RIBEIRO, CAMPINHO, CASCADURA, CAVALCANTI, COELHO NETO, COLÉGIO (PART), COSTA BARROS, ENGENHEIRO LEAL, GUADALUPE E PARQUE ANCHIETA, HONÓRIO GURGEL, IRAJÁ, MADUREIRA, MARECHAL HERMES, OSWALDO CRUZ, PARQUE COLUMBIA, PAVUNA, PRAÇA SECA, QUINTINO BOCAIÚVA, RICARDO DE ALBUQUERQUE, ROCHA MIRANDA, TURIAÇU E VAZ LOBO, VICENTE DE CARVALHO, VILA COSMOS, VILA DA PENHA, VILA VALQUEIRE, VISTA ALEGRE	1,063,026	2	3	5
23	<b>SOUTH:</b> GÁVEA, IPANEMA, JARDIM BOTÂNICO, LAGOA, LEBLON, ROCINHA, SÃO CONRADO, VIDIGAL	242,599	14	12	15





The household survey employed a stratified design to identify a representative sample of women and men aged 18 to 59 of the respective sample sites. Households within the sampled areas were enumerated; also, in an effort to ensure the safety and confidentiality of respondents, only one eligible person per household was randomly selected to take part in the interview.

Integrated Public Security Areas (IPSA) cover large areas and are heterogeneous, especially those corresponding to areas where diverse urban spaces coexist. Middle-class neighborhoods are sometimes referred to as “asphalt” (*asfalto*) and lower-income neighborhoods are called “favelas” and are often referred to by their location on hills (*morro*). This distinction particularly applies to the South (IPSA 23), including neighborhoods as dissimilar as Rocinha (a large favela) and Leblon (one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro).

In an effort to homogenize the sample population and pragmatically respond to traditionally low response rates in wealthier neighborhoods of the city’s South Zone, the questionnaire was not applied in non-favela communities in the South.

The following favela communities were included in the South sample: Babilônia, Benjamin Constant, Cantagalo, Chapeu Mangueira, Fazenda Catete, Guaraapes, Horto, Morro Azul, Morro da Conceição, Morro da Saudade, Morro de Humaita, Pavão/Pavãozinho, Rocinha, Santa Marta, Tabajara, Vidigal, Vila Canoas, and Vila Pereira.

## MEASURES

The following measures were used in the quantitative research (also see Terminology above).

**EXPOSURE TO URBAN VIOLENCE** • Exposure to urban violence was measured using an objective, community-level indicator, namely residence in the IPSA with the second-highest or the second-lowest homicide rate reported for Rio de Janeiro (2012). It was also measured with subjective individual-level measures on exposure to urban violence. Exposure to urban violence was assessed with questions on the following items referring to the last year and/or up to the age of 18: witnessed an aggravated assault, was a victim of an aggravated assault, witnessed someone being violently approached by the police, was violently approached by the police, witnessed someone being battered, was battered, witnessed or heard exchange of crossfire/shooting, house or place of work was hit by bullets, witnessed or heard someone receiving death threats, received death threats, witnessed someone being shot by a firearm, or has been shot by a firearm. The affirmation of at least two items was considered as exposure to urban violence.<sup>18</sup> For women, exposure to or victimization by sexual violence was measured using a question on whether the woman had been forced or pressured to engage in an intimate way or have sex with someone (excluding their intimate partner) prior to the age of 18 in the context of the school or neighborhood.

18. The researchers decided to work with two instead of only one affirmation of items because hearing shootings/crossfire is very common in Rio de Janeiro. While it is an indicator of urban violence, it can be considered to have an impact similar to media reports on violence. This measure is not necessarily the case for all contexts but seems valid for Rio de Janeiro.

**PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE** • Perpetration of violence was assessed according to the self-reported use of physical and verbal violence in urban/public spheres, sexual violence in the public sphere, and intimate partner violence (see Terminology). Physical violence was assessed with questions on participation in fights including juvenile rival group fights, use of firearms in exchanges of crossfire and against a person, beatings, armed robbery, and individual and group sexual abuse of a woman other than the intimate partner. Verbal violence was assessed with questions on the use of insults and death threats.

**FEMALE VICTIMIZATION FROM VIOLENCE** • Women were asked standard questions used by the World Health Organization (2002) and others on their experiences of violence from a male partner, both in their lifetime and in the past year. These victimization questions included the same items as in the male sample with the exception of the questions relating to sexual violence, which were incorporated in the composed variable on victimization of violence including questions on different degrees of IPV such as whether the woman had been insulted by her partner; whether documents or clothes had been destroyed by her partner; and whether she had been slapped, smacked, or punched by her partner. Each woman was asked whether her partner had ever had a fight with her using an object that could hurt her, whether she had been threatened with an object that could potentially hurt her, whether she had been threatened with a firearm by a partner, or whether she had ever been forced or pressured to have sex with her partner.

**CHILDHOOD EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE** • Childhood exposure to domestic violence or IPV between parents or caregivers was assessed with questions regarding whether the child had witnessed verbal and physical violence perpetrated by parents or other family members.



**GENDER NORMS** • Gender norms were assessed using part of the original Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale (Barker, 2000),<sup>19</sup> which uses attitude questions around a set of core norms that generally make up hegemonic views about masculinities (e.g., home-domestic relationships, homosexuality/homophobia and relations with other men, sexual and reproductive health and sexuality issues, and violence) to quantify the extent of how “equitable” or “inequitable” men’s and women’s views are regarding gender (Pulerwitz and Barker, 2008).

**A detailed discussion of the qualitative and quantitative methodology including the sample, questionnaire, and statistical analysis can be found in Annex 1. Annex 1 also includes ethical considerations and limitations of this study.**

19. “Gender equitable” can be understood as applying to men who in the context of heterosexual relations show the following characteristics: (1) Are respectful in their relationships with young women and currently seek relationships based on equality and intimacy rather than sexual conquest and believe that men and women have equal rights, and that women have as much sexual desire and “right” to sexual agency as do men; (2) Seek to be involved fathers, for those who are already fathers, meaning that they believe that they should take financial and at least some caregiving responsibility for their children. They have shown this involvement by providing at least some childcare, showing concern for providing financially for the child, and/or taking an active role in caring for their child’s health; (3) Assume some responsibility for reproductive health issues. This includes taking the initiative to discuss reproductive health concerns with their partner, and using condoms or assisting their partner in acquiring or using a contraceptive method; (4) They do not use violence against women in their intimate relationships, are opposed to violence against women, and do not condone this behavior by other men.

# FINDINGS



## SUMMARY OF KEY RESULTS

The findings of the IMAGES-Urban Violence study strongly suggest an association between exposure to urban violence (individually experienced as well as indicated by officially reported homicide rates) and perpetration of violence in public and private spheres. They do not, of course, definitively prove this association. IPV, sexual violence, and urban violence were higher in neighborhoods with higher rates of homicide. In addition (using multiple measures), fear of violence, experience of urban violence, and other forms of exposure to violence outside the home were highly related to use of violence in the home. Qualitative findings give additional support to the finding that violence in the public sphere shapes and interacts with violent masculinities and creates family stress and individual trauma that likely contribute to the social reproduction of violence in the public and private sphere. More research (and a larger sample size with additional measures of violence) is needed to understand these interactions. The results of our study affirm that experiences of fear and violence clearly contribute to the use of violence and create trauma that is both individual, family, and collective, and that such trauma - which is associated with family and intimate partner violence - is **more prevalent** in neighborhoods where homicide rates are higher.



## SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SURVEY SAMPLE

The sample comprises 1,151 interviews in total, including 572 men and 579 women between 18 and 59 years of age, distributed in almost equal proportions according to the following age groups: 18 to 29, 30 to 49, and 50 to 59. A total of 902 reside in the area with the second-highest exposure to urban violence as measured by the homicide rate (North/IPSA 9) and 248 reside in the area with the second-lowest exposure to urban violence as measured by the homicide rate (South/IPSA 23). Key socio-demographic characteristics are summarized in Table 3.

TABLE 3 | KEY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

PARAMETER	MEN		WOMEN	
	SOUTH (N=121)	NORTH (N=451)	SOUTH (N=128)	NORTH (N=451)
<b>EDUCATION LEVEL (PERCENT)</b>				
NO EDUCATION	0.8	1.5	2.4	0.2
AT LEAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	42.5	31.6	41.7	26.1
AT LEAST HIGH SCHOOL	44.2	55.8	43.3	54.0
AT LEAST HIGHER EDUCATION	10.8	10.8	12.6	18.0
OTHER	1.7	0.2	-	1.6
<b>AGE GROUP (PERCENT)</b>				
18 TO 24	19.0	20.0	14.2	19.7
25 TO 34	25.6	25.8	26.8	28.6
35 TO 49	32.2	34.6	30.7	33.0
50 OR OLDER	23.1	19.6	28.3	18.6

## COLOR AND RACE

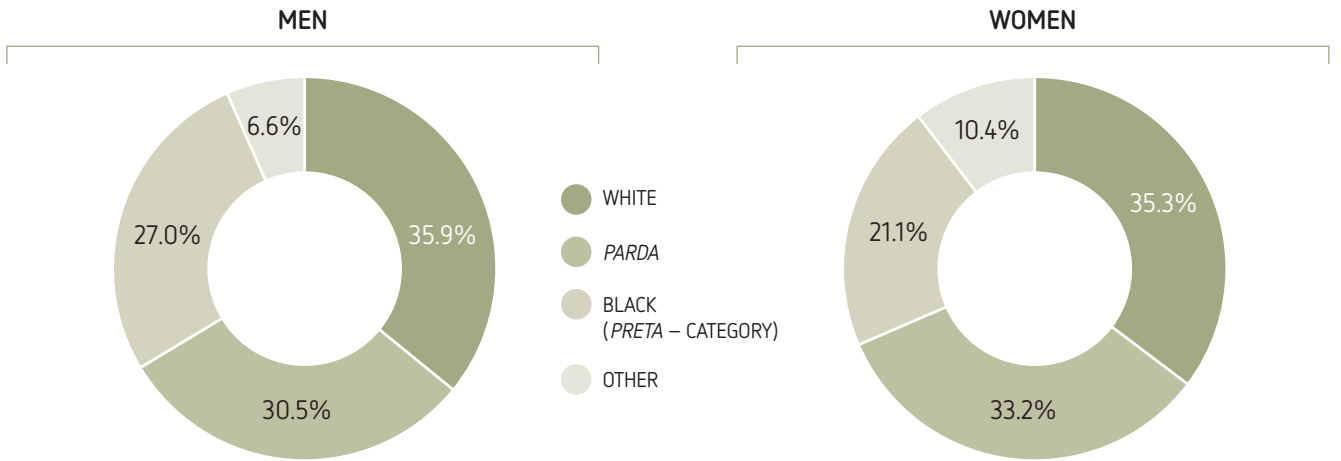
The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) has classified race/color according to the following groups: white (*branca*), black (*preta*), brown (*parda*), yellow, and indigenous. The category “negra” (person or population) corresponds to the combination of the statistical categories “preta” + “parda.” Of 572 men, 28.9 percent (South) and 37.7 percent (North) self-declare to be white/branca, 38 percent (South) and 28.5 percent (North) to be brown/parda, 28.9 percent (South) and 26.5 percent (North) to be black/preta, and 4.1 percent (South) and 7.3 percent (North) self-declare another color/race (Figure 1).

For women, the profile is slightly different. Some 26 percent (South) and 37.9 percent (North) self-declare to be white/branca, 37.8 percent (South) and 31.9 percent (North) to be brown/parda, 18.9 percent (South) and 21.9 percent (North) to be black/preta, and 17.3 percent (South) and 8.4 percent (North) self-declare another color/race (Figure 1).





FIGURE 1 | COLOR/RACE – MEN AND WOMEN



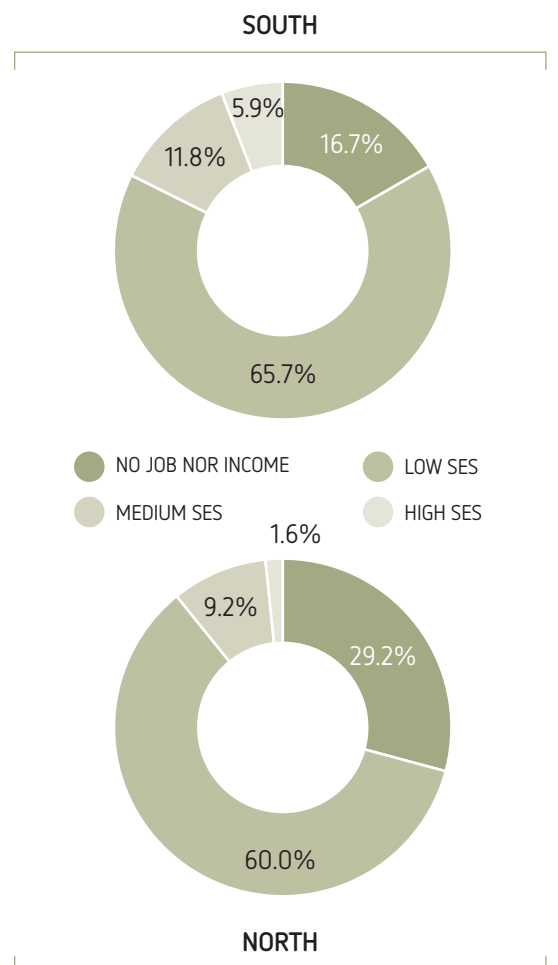
### EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

Combining the two areas of North and South (n=572 men), 83.4 percent of men report having some kind of employment (formal or informal) and 16.6 percent are unemployed. The situation is worse for women. Combining the two areas (n=579 women), 50.5 percent of women report having some kind of employment (formal or informal) and 49.5 percent report being unemployed. Socioeconomic status (SES) is measured as a composite of three variables: employment status, nature of employment, and income (see definition in Terminology).

**WOMEN'S SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS** • Of the women surveyed (n=579 women), 3.75 percent have income and employment status equivalent to high socioeconomic status, 10.5 percent to medium socioeconomic status, 62.85 percent to low socioeconomic status, and 22.95 percent have neither job nor income and are accordingly separated from the low socioeconomic status category. Notable differences between the North and South can be seen in Figure 2. In the northern area of the city women are less privileged than women in the southern area: 89.2 percent of women in the North are in the two less-privileged categories, having neither job nor income and/or low socioeconomic status.

**MEN'S SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS** • Men have slightly better socioeconomic indicators. Of the men surveyed (n=572), 5.15 percent have income and employment status equivalent to high socioeconomic status, 31.85 percent to medium socioeconomic status, 53.45 percent to low socioeconomic status, and 9.5 percent have neither job nor

FIGURE 2 | SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS – WOMEN

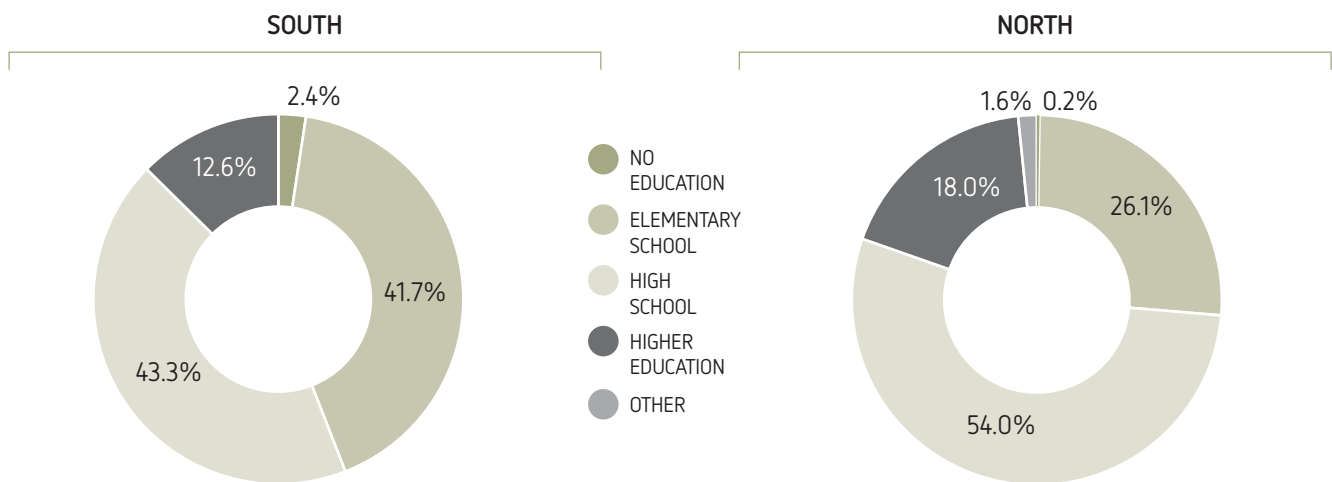


income. Notable differences between the North and South can be observed. Men in the northern area of the city are less privileged than men in the southern area.

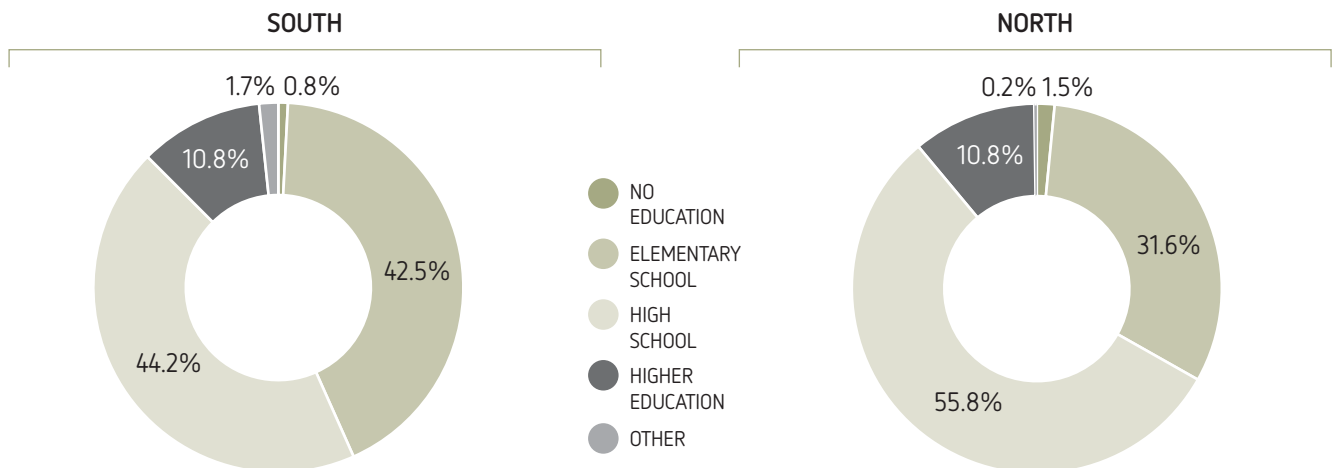
Among all participants interviewed, and 85.8 percent of the women and 62.95 percent of the men have less than the Rio de Janeiro average monthly income of R\$2,364.80 (IBGE, 2015).

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT** • In the South, educational levels for men and women are roughly the same. In the North, some differences are seen, with more men having only an elementary school education and more women reaching some level of higher education. About 10 percent more men and women complete high school in the North than in the South. In both the North and South, few men or women have any education pursued beyond the high school level (higher, tertiary, or post-secondary). Figures 3 and 4 show educational attainment for men and women in both areas of the city.

●●●●● FIGURE 3 | EDUCATIONAL LEVEL – WOMEN



●●●●● FIGURE 4 | EDUCATIONAL LEVEL – MEN





## THE VIOLENT SOCIALIZATION OF BOYS AND EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE

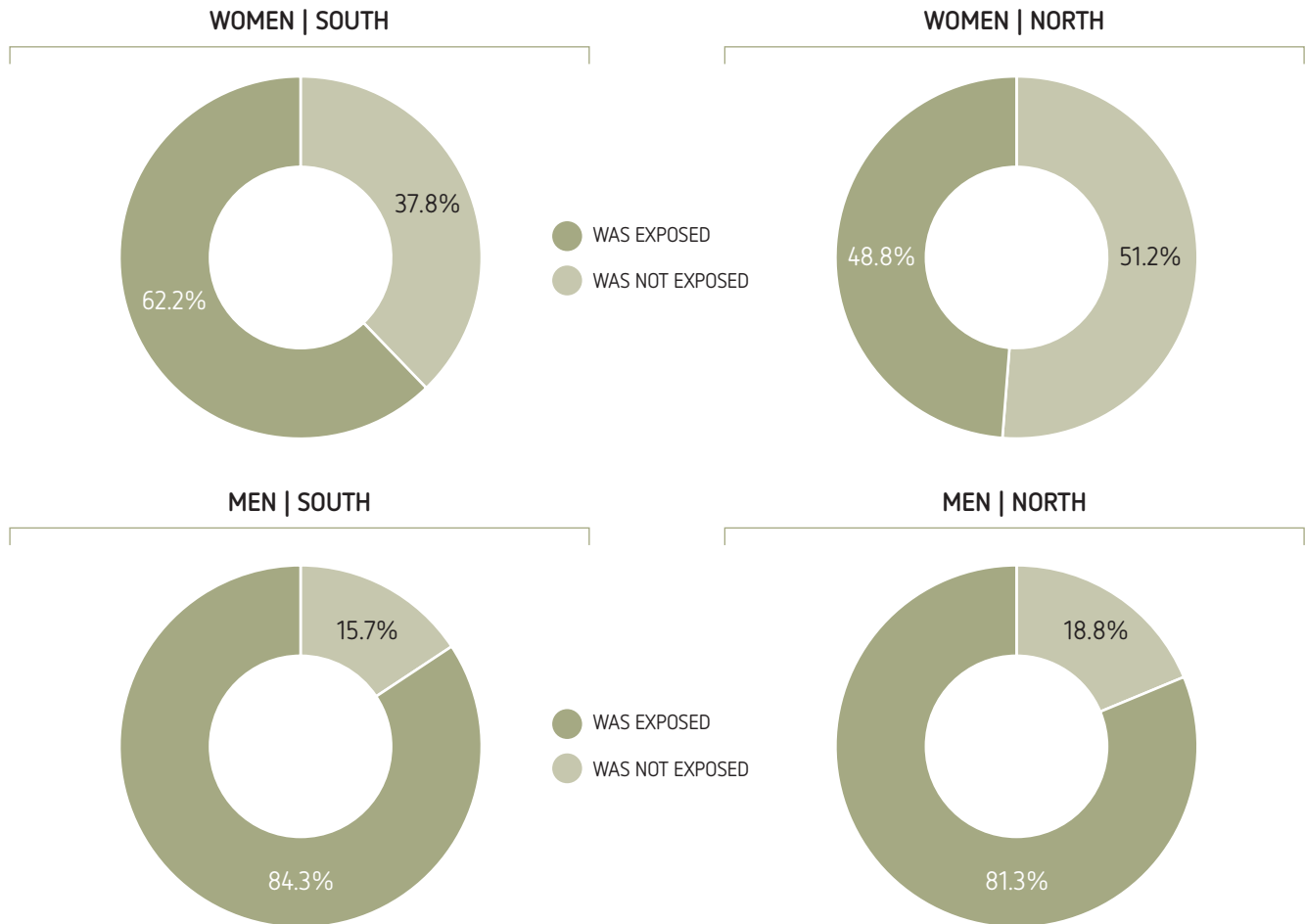
Among all participants interviewed, violence in low-income neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro is highly present in childhood. Such violence includes witnessing cross-fire in the neighborhood; walking by drug traffickers’ headquarters (*boca*), which is often the selling point; having drug trafficking at one’s doorstep (i.e., seeing trafficker’s attractive motorcycles, wives, girlfriends, and money, as well as seeing and/or participating in fights with other children); and experiencing violence in the household. Fights among children and in the family are considered a normal part of growing up. All groups of men in the qualitative interviews, not only former drug traffickers, have seen or engaged in violence or fights on the street as boys.

### EXPOSURE TO URBAN VIOLENCE BEFORE AGE 18

Several researchers address the role of identity formation in the context of urban violence (Astorga, 2002; Reicher, 2004), including what Machado da Silva (2004) calls “violent sociability” in contemporary criminality in Rio de Janeiro. Largely, this analysis does not acknowledge the gendered dimensions of socialization or violent and nonviolent reconstructions of masculinities.

The majority of participants interviewed describe a “militarized” childhood with daily, widespread exposure to guns and weaponry. Crossfire among drug factions and police was common. Prior to the installation of Police Pacification Units (UPP), drug traffickers controlled communities and police made intermittent raids. Heavy “war” machinery including helicopters and armored urban combat vehicles (*caveirão* tanks) were present. In many communities similar situations continues today. In a “militarized” childhood, boys and girls are exposed to power hierarchies and confrontational approaches to security and governance. **Power may shift from drug lords to police and vice versa but power overwhelmingly lies with those who have weapons and are willing to use them.** The logic of both groups discourages children and adults from questioning authority. In interactions between police and traffickers, bribes are a common currency. International research suggests that children and adolescents exposed to these and other forms of violence frequently come to regard violence as an acceptable means of resolving problems (Krug et al, 2002; Fagan & Browne, 1994; Widom, 1989).

●●●● FIGURE 5 | EXPOSURE TO URBAN VIOLENCE BEFORE THE AGE OF 18



Additionally, in the total sample, 84.55 percent of men (n=572 men) and 55.5 percent of women (n=579 women) experienced or witnessed at least two of the following in their lifetime: aggravated assault, violent treatment by the police, battering, exchange of gunfire, house or workplace hit by bullets, death threats, or being shot by a firearm. The gender differences may be explained by the gendered spatiality (Kim, 2007) that tends to confine girls and women to domestic spaces and in this particular case functions as a protective factor for girls. The quantitative data support the qualitative findings.

**The data further point to a clear and statistically significant association between exposure to urban violence during childhood and perpetration of different types of violence in adulthood.** Statistically significant associations are found in the male sample from the North (n=451 men) among indicators listed in Table 4.



TABLE 4 | EXPOSURE TO URBAN VIOLENCE BEFORE AGE 18 IS LINKED TO PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE AS ADULT

MEN WHO WERE EXPOSED TO URBAN VIOLENCE UP TO AGE 18 ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE...	P-VALUE*
EVER USED SOME SORT OF VIOLENCE	0.000
EVER USED PHYSICAL PUBLIC/URBAN VIOLENCE	0.000
USED URBAN VIOLENCE BEFORE AGE OF 18	0.020
EVER USED SEXUAL VIOLENCE	0.004
EVER PERPETRATED IPV	0.000
EVER PERPETRATED VERBAL VIOLENCE/THREATS	0.000

\*LEVEL OF STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE AT  $P < 0.05$ .

In the male sample from the North (n=451 men), men exposed to urban violence before the age of 18 are more likely to have ever used some sort of violence (p=0.000), including intimate partner violence (p=0.000).

A similar pattern is evident in the female sample from the South (n=128 women), where statistically significant associations are found between exposure to urban violence before the age of 18 and lifetime perpetration of any type of violence (p=0.000); to any lifetime use of urban violence (p=0.012); and to the use of urban violence before the age of 18 (p=0.001). In the female sample from the North, the same associations are confirmed and an additional association is found between exposure to urban violence before the age of 18 and the perpetration of verbal violence or threats (namely the use of insults and death threats) (p=0.001). In addition, women who experience urban violence before the age of 18 and reside in neighborhoods in the North of Rio de Janeiro are significantly more likely to have ever been victims of IPV.

## BOYHOOD FIGHTS

Men in all groups interviewed describe the fights they engaged in as boys, with former drug traffickers reporting the highest rates of involvement in fights. The results suggest that boys who are exposed to and enter trafficking begin to see guns as tools to achieve status and to demonstrate power and control over other men and women. All of the interviewees recall the streets as a space that reproduces violent values and behaviors through violent child’s play. For example, former traffickers A. and H. describe fights as common between peers during their childhood and adolescence. While for A. these fights occur outside criminal groups, H.’s child and teenage conflicts appear as disputes between criminal factions:

Today many of us still have scars, knife cuts from the more vicious kids... This also marked many kids today: building up rage toward a guy he's never seen, just because he's on the other side. 'Hey, the Alemão did this to our friend, the Alemão killed someone's brother.' • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

Boyhood fights are not, however, unique to former drug traffickers; activists also describe fights as part of growing up:

The boys liked to fight and argue. There wasn't much talking for me. If I would get told to 'go to fucking hell' for example I would just attack you and I had so much hate that I never lost a fight. I had a lot of rage. I wasn't scared of hitting; I was scared of killing someone with a blow. This is something that's very characteristic [*of growing up as a boy in a favela*].  
• ACTIVIST, 53, MARÉ COMPLEX

Underlying men's descriptions of boyhood fights are early phases or progressions in these fights - "practice," as one of the former drug traffickers describes them - that continue later in adolescence and adult life. Beginning in boyhood, attitudes prevail such as "nobody will get in my way" and boys provoke (*mexer*) other boys by calling them "chicken" as an emasculating insult.

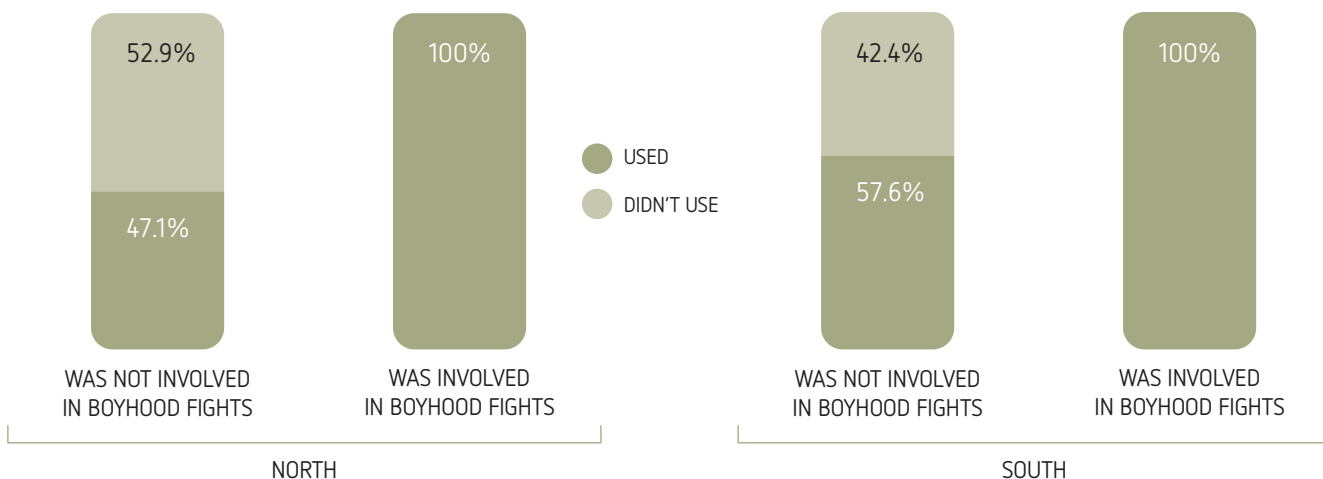
Boys learn to assert themselves through violence or its potential use, imposing themselves over others, and avoiding or questioning insults. They are expected to begin asserting their *willingness* to fight from early childhood. Beyond fighting, men across interview groups say that hypermasculine symbols related to guns, cars, and virility also begin to appear in boyhood.

Quantitative data show that almost half of the men surveyed (n=572 men) participated in boyhood fights and suggest that men who were involved in boyhood fights are much more likely to have used some sort of violence at least once in their lifetime (p=0.000). This applies to men living in areas characterized by high exposure to urban violence (North) and to areas less exposed to urban violence (South) and is summarized in Figure 6. **Quantitative results support the qualitative findings and demonstrate how violent male trajectories are systematically constructed in contexts of childhood socialization shaped by gender norms, power relations, and exposure to violence.**





FIGURE 6 | PARTICIPATION IN BOYHOOD FIGHTS AND THE USE OF ANY TYPE OF VIOLENCE IN ADULT LIFE



### HOUSEHOLD VIOLENCE DURING CHILDHOOD

In addition to witnessing and experiencing violence in their neighborhoods, all groups of men and women interviewed in the qualitative research experienced or witnessed household or intra-family violence. Previous IMAGES data has shown links between childhood experiences of violence and adult criminal behaviors. According to 2009 data on Brazil (Rio de Janeiro and Recife), 29 percent of adult men who were victims of household violence (psychological or physical) had ever participated in fights or robbery. Of adult men who had witnessed IPV against their mothers, 42 percent had ever participated in fights or robbery (Conteras et al., 2012: 20).<sup>20</sup>

In the area with higher homicide rates (North, n=451 men), **men who witnessed their mother suffering IPV** during childhood are more likely to have used IPV (p=0.039), an association found in all other countries where IMAGES has been carried out. (This association is not found in the South sample, where homicide rates are lower.) A strong association is also found in relation to exposure to domestic violence, as seen in responses to questions on the experience of verbal and physical violence perpetrated by parents or other family members during childhood. Further, strong associations are found in men's perpetration of different forms of violence. In the male sample from the North (n=451 men), exposure to domestic violence during childhood and adolescence is shown to be significantly associated with the physical use of urban violence ever (p=0.000), the perpetration of sexual violence (p=0.000), the perpetration of IPV (p=0.000), and the use of verbal violence/threats ever (p=0.000) (Table 5 and Figure 7).

20. This association is also statistically significant in each of the six countries surveyed.

TABLE 5 | EXPOSURE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING CHILDHOOD AND PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE DURING ADULTHOOD

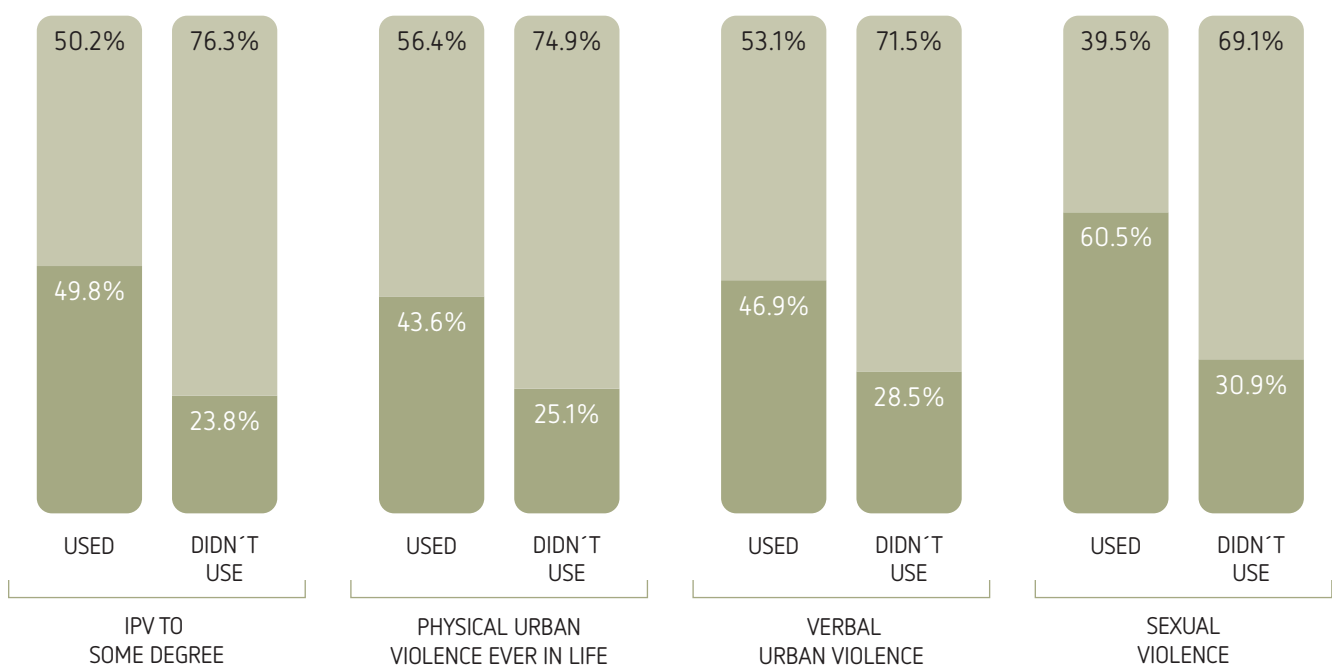
MEN LIVING IN CONTEXTS SHAPED BY HIGH LEVELS OF URBAN VIOLENCE (N=451 MEN) WHO WERE EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE ...	P-VALUE (< 0.05)
EVER USED PHYSICAL PUBLIC/URBAN VIOLENCE	0.000
EVER USED SEXUAL VIOLENCE	0.000
EVER PERPETRATED IPV	0.000
EVER PERPETRATED VERBAL VIOLENCE/THREATS	0.000

In addition, in the area with higher homicide rates (North, n=451 men), **exposure to domestic violence during childhood is shown to be significantly associated with the physical use of urban violence ever** (p=0.000), the perpetration of sexual violence (p=0.000), the perpetration of IPV (p=0.000), and the use of verbal violence/threats ever (p=0.000) (Table 5 and Figure 7).

Figure 7 shows that those who were exposed to domestic violence during childhood consistently use more violence as adults. The same pattern applies to women. In the female sample from the North (n=451 women), the area with higher homicide rates, **women who were exposed to domestic violence are significantly more likely to use physical and verbal violence/threats ever in life** (p=0.002 and p=0.000, respectively).

FIGURE 7 | EXPOSURE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING CHILDHOOD AND THE USE OF VIOLENCE IN ADULT LIFE (NORTH)

● WAS EXPOSED ● WAS NOT EXPOSED





Many men are aware that violence during childhood has an influence on their use of violence to resolve conflicts as adults. Among men interviewed, police officers and traffickers most often describe transfers of violence or stress from the public to private space. This interviewee emphasizes how violence at home during childhood is associated with using violence in school and, ultimately, on the street:

Because when you hit a child, even with the intention of correcting their behavior and repressing a behavior that you consider undesired, at the same time, you’re telling them: ‘Look, if someone does something that you don’t want, it’s legitimately OK to hit.’ So that child learns to place in his or her repertoire the possibility of hitting when he or she is contradicted. So he gets to school, the friend didn’t lend him the pencil, and he is going to hit the child, going to hit the friend. • **ACTIVIST, 51, NORTH ZONE**

Men in all groups interviewed had witnessed their fathers using violence against their mothers, as noted above. In the case of a police officer, this violence is a reciprocal exchange of provocations. His mother responds to his father’s yelling at her by wielding a gun in a “test” of his masculinity, which the boy mimics. This is an example of how women can reinforce violent gender norms, and an example of the way interviewees present situations as “joking” interactions rather than violence:

My father yelled at my mother. My mother put her hand on the revolver and pointed to him saying, ‘Yell at me,’ and we laughed. We were laughing that day, my brother and I, ‘Yell at me if you’re macho, yell!’ My mother is about 1.5 meters tall, and my father was 1.9 meters: ‘You’re not macho. Yell at me. Who do you think you are?’ We laughed, that day we were laughing, you understand? We never saw anything violent between them no, never, not even during arguments. • **MALE OFFICER (SOLDIER), 35, PMRJ, CERRO-CORÁ**

Mothers, fathers, and grandmothers regularly use violence to discipline children, according to interviews. Corporal punishment is largely seen as education rather than violence. These forms of violence are common among interviewees (to varying degrees of intensity), but especially among former drug traffickers. Most often, men recall their mothers using violence against them. They frequently associate their mother’s use of violence with abandonment by her husband, at which point mothers are expected to fully care for the children.

## CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS ABOUT VIOLENCE, POVERTY, AND INEQUALITY: “HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS”

Across the qualitative interviews, participants among all groups reflect on poverty, inequality, violence and note the limited access to nonviolent alternatives. For example, former traffickers (and their mothers) say that while children may worry less about “having little,” young men experience profound frustration during adolescence as they realize that they are not able to buy name brand clothing, a crucial marker of social status among youth in Rio de Janeiro. For many men, the combination of frustrated desires to have specific things, plus the need for money, leads them to enter the formal workforce or seek other means of income at relatively young ages. For some, this need for income is compounded by early, often unintentional, fatherhood:

I was a father very early and there’s this side, too, right? I had all the characteristics of a youth from the favela: I was a father at 17, and I stopped studying at age 15 because I had to help around the house. When I was 15 years old I collected bus fare on the Nova Iguaçu – Austin bus line, over there in Nova Iguaçu. Afterwards I was a busboy, waiter, I worked making copies... I became a father at 17 and again at 21. I went back to study at 22 to complete high school. So until I turned 20 my trajectory was the standard of the majority of youth on the periphery. • **ACTIVIST, 44, ALEMÃO COMPLEX**

Interviewees in all groups who lived in favelas also describe awareness of being from a peripheral neighborhood or a favela, including the stigma of being a “favelado” – a favela resident. Former traffickers suggest that this label influences young men before and after exiting drug trafficking and can be a barrier when applying for work.

From adolescence throughout adulthood, interview participants can track how they became aware of “how the system works.” D., a former trafficker from Vidigal, describes how this system pits the poor against each other:

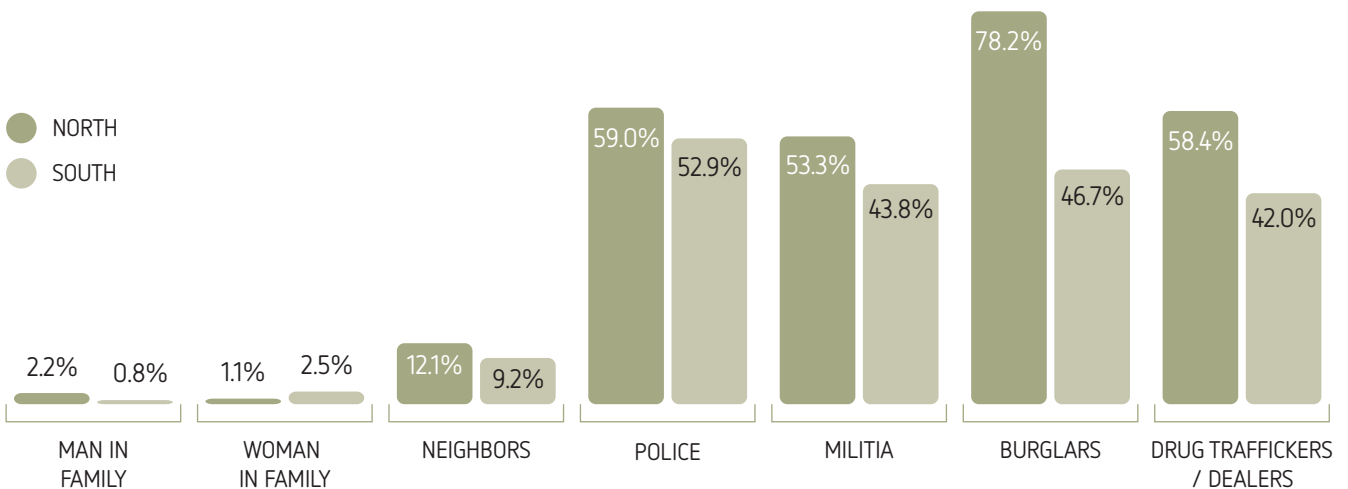
Another thing, you make a ton of enemies: the police, the mother of a friend you had to kill. That lady is no longer your friend. As soon as she can she may kill you or hand you over to the police. You and her, and her son that died by your hands: all victims. But that’s what the system does, puts all of us against each other. ‘There, kill yourselves, poor people.’ • **D., 31, FORMER TRAFFICKER FROM VIDIGAL**



## FEAR AND PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE

Survey findings suggest that individuals residing in Rio de Janeiro’s favelas and other low-income settings **fear the police** almost as much as they fear the militia, thieves/criminals, and drug dealers, with as much as 59 percent (North) and 52.9 percent (South) of the respondents reporting fear of the police (Figure 8).

FIGURE 8 | PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS REPORTING FEAR



It is important to note that despite the previously described pattern of police violence in Rio de Janeiro, no statistically significant association is found between color/race and fear of police. While fear of police has a particular role in the configuration of violent trajectories, fear of any social actor generates feelings of powerlessness, which have been found to foster violent behaviors, especially when combined with male identity crisis. These associations are confirmed by IMAGES–Urban Violence data. In the male sample from the North (n=451 men), **men residing in areas characterized by high levels of urban violence who fear any social actor are more likely to have ever used sexual violence (p=0.001) and to have ever used IPV (p=0.001)** (Table 6).

TABLE 6 | PERCENTAGE OF MEN REPORTING HAVING USED IPV AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

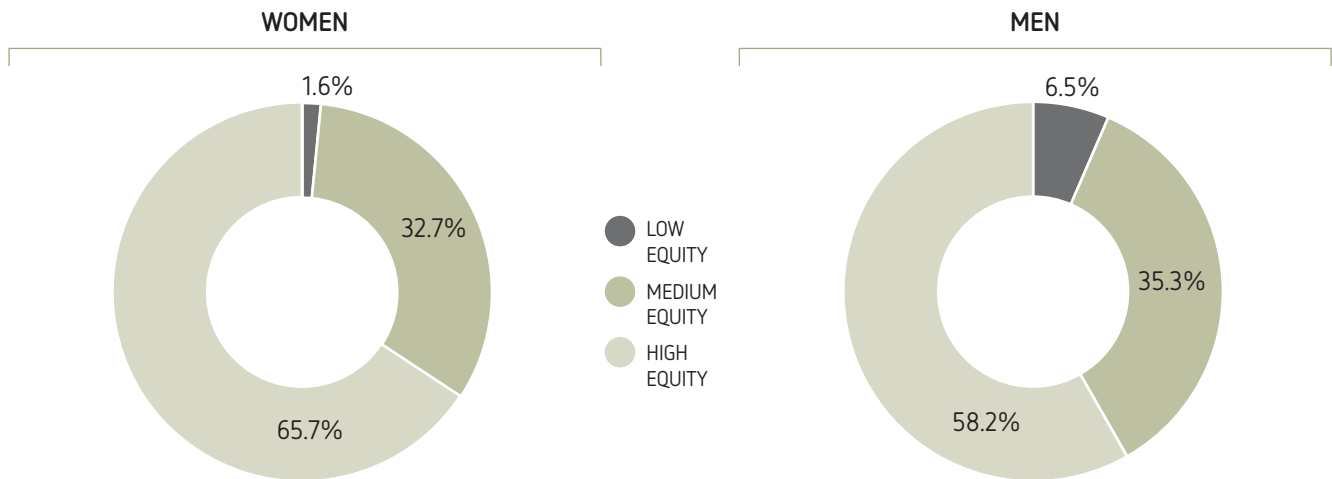
		PERCENT REPORTING HAVING USED...	
		IPV	SEXUAL VIOLENCE
NORTH	NO FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	28.8	4.2
	FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	49.7	19.9
SOUTH	NO FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	35	12.5
	FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	41	7.7
TOTAL	NO FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	31	7.2
	FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTOR	48.2	17.8
P-VALUE OF THE OBSERVED DIFFERENCES	NORTH	0.001	0.001
	SOUTH	0.525	0.404
	TOTAL	0.001	0.06

## GENDER NORMS

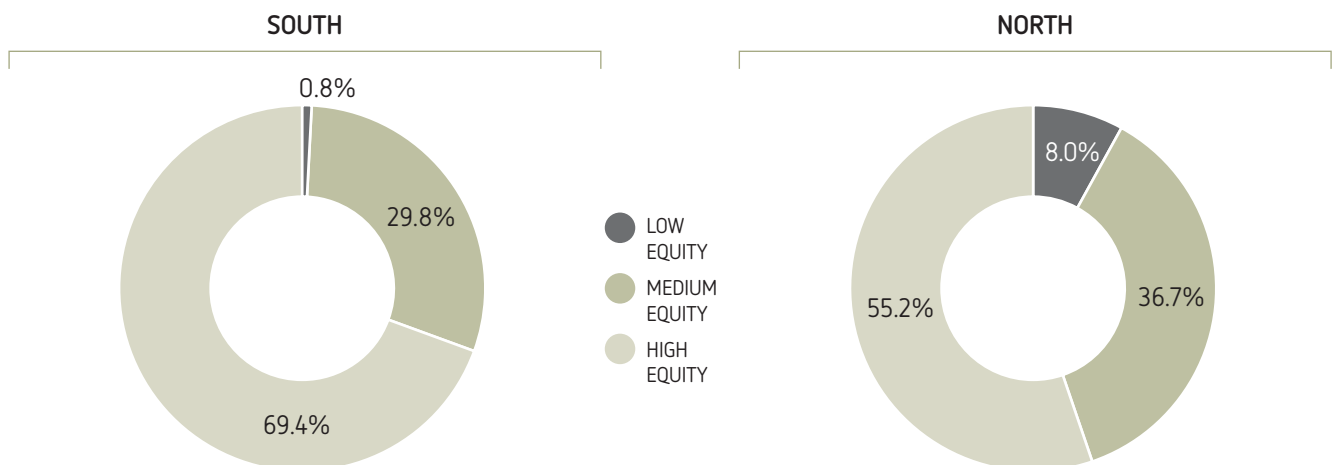
### IMPACT OF EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE ON ATTITUDES TOWARD EQUITY

Men and women present a mixture of equitable attitudes, including large percentages who show medium or low scores for equitable attitudes as measured by the Gender-Equitable Men (GEM) Scale. Women’s gender-related attitudes were slightly more equitable than men’s. Both men and women surveyed in the area with lower exposure to urban violence (South) have more gender-equitable attitudes compared to those surveyed in the area with higher exposure to urban violence (North). These findings are presented in Figure 10.

●●●●● FIGURE 9 | GEM SCALE – MALE AND FEMALE



●●●●● FIGURE 10 | GEM SCALE – MEN







The survey finds significant associations between highly-equitable GEM Scale scores and nonviolent male trajectories. In the male sample from the North (n=451 men), the area with higher homicide rates, men exposed to high levels of urban violence who report highly equitable gender norms are significantly less likely to have ever:

- Used physical urban violence (p=0.000)
- Perpetrated sexual violence (p=0.000)
- Perpetrated IPV (p=0.000)
- Used threats/insults (p=0.000)

In the female sample from the North (n=451 women), a significant association was found between gender norms and victimization by IPV, suggesting that **women with highly equitable gender norms are less likely to have been a victim of IPV (p=0.014). This result suggests that more gender equitable attitudes may protect women against IPV.**

## WORK-RELATED STRESS AND VIOLENCE

As noted earlier, economic stress or lack of work and income is highly prevalent in these settings and associated with entrance into drug trafficking, as well as use of violence in general. Numerous studies affirm how men’s sense of self – and their social status and recognition – is highly tied to their employment and income, an issue exacerbated in low-income contexts. This finding recurs in the qualitative findings and also in the survey results. **Among men in the South (n=121), a statistically significant association is found between economic or work-related stress and the perpetration of violence, suggesting that men in this area who experience some sort of work-related stress are more likely to have used some sort of violence in their lives (p=0.047).**



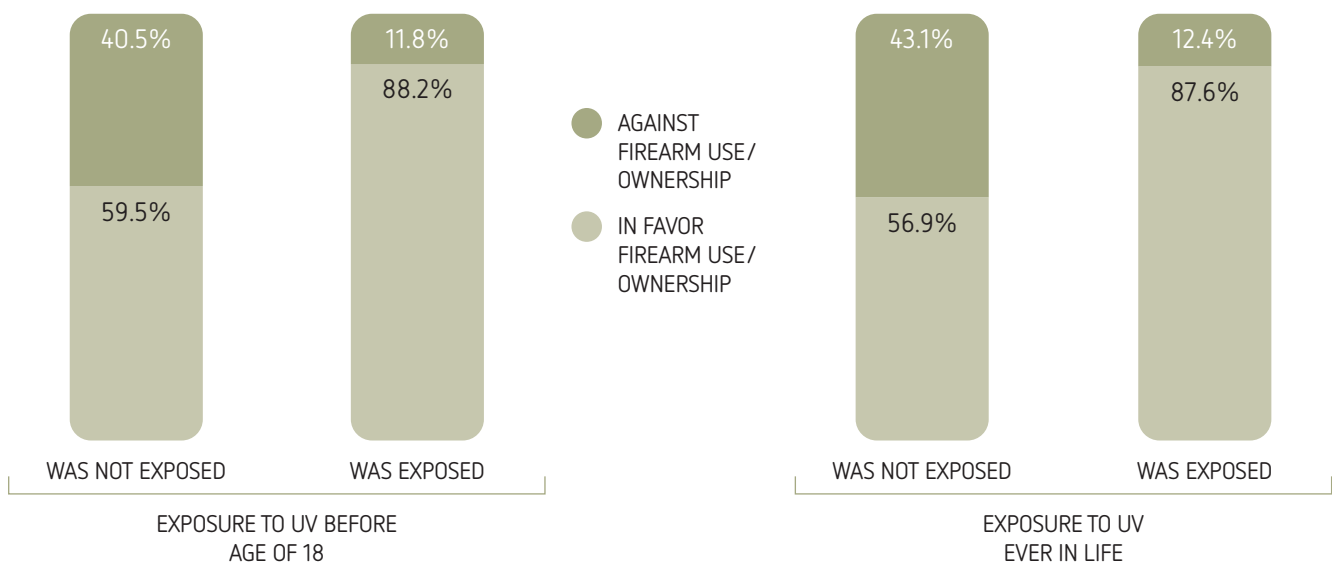


**SURVEY RESULTS SUGGEST THAT WHILE A RELATIVELY SMALL PROPORTION OF INDIVIDUALS POSSESS OR HAVE EVER USED FIREARMS, A HIGH NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS HAVE FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEM** • Favorable attitudes toward gun ownership and use are expressed by 95.7 percent of men in the North and 93.4 percent of men in the South. Women are less likely to support guns: 70.9 percent of women in the North and 73.4 percent of women in the South supported gun ownership and use.

**SOME 12.1 PERCENT OF MEN AND 5.15 PERCENT OF WOMEN OWN OR HAVE USED A FIREARM** • A difference between the two areas of the city is notable, especially among men. As many as 10.4 percent of men residing in the North and only 1.7 percent of men residing in the South report possessing or having used a firearm.

**REGARDING FIREARM-RELATED ATTITUDES AND PERPETRATION OF VIOLENCE, RESULTS SUGGEST THAT MEN WHO ARE IN FAVOR OF GUN USE/OWNERSHIP ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE USED SOME SORT OF VIOLENCE IN THEIR LIVES** • This association is found for both areas and is statistically significant at  $p=0.026$ ). The survey results further suggest that men who are in favor of gun use/ownership are more likely to have been exposed to urban violence ever in life or to have been exposed to urban violence before the age of 18 (Figure 13).

●●●●●●●● **FIGURE 13 | EXPOSURE TO PHYSICAL URBAN VIOLENCE AND ATTITUDE TOWARD FIREARM USE/OWNERSHIP (NORTH)**





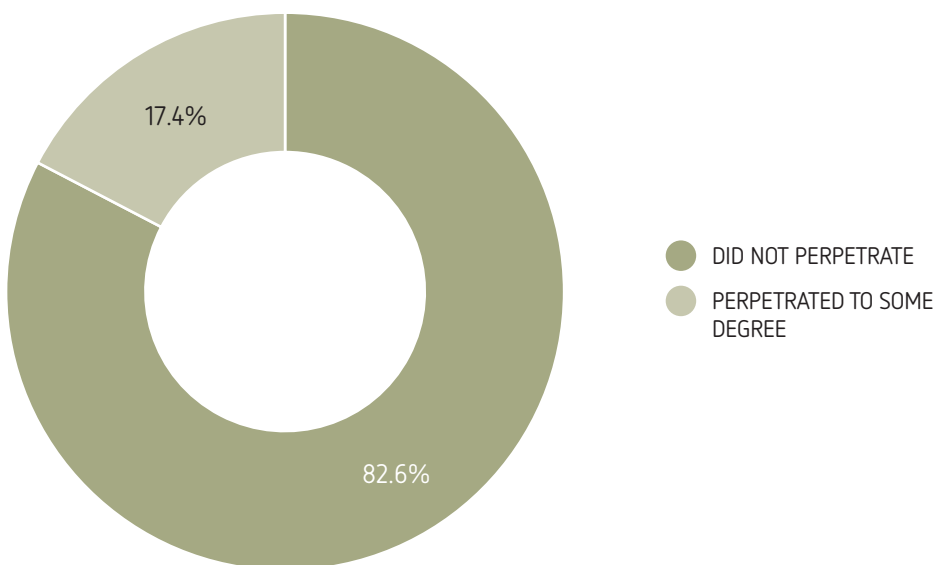
## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

This section begins with quantitative (survey) findings on associations between exposure to urban and childhood violence and IPV, followed by qualitative (interview) findings. Some 46.3 percent (North) and 38.7 percent (South) of men report having used intimate partner violence (IPV). In the North, women’s reports of IPV are in percentages similar to those of men, with 43.5 percent of women having been victims of IPV. In the South, the difference is greater, at 51.6 percent of women. **In the area characterized by high urban violence (North), men who witnessed IPV as children are more likely to report using IPV during adulthood (p=0.039).** (This association was not found to be significantly associated in the sample corresponding to the South.)

**As in the case of IPV, sexual violence is higher in the area with higher homicide rates:** 17.4 percent of men in the North and 9.2 percent of men in the South report having perpetrated sexual violence against a woman other than their partner (Figure 14).

Women are less likely to report having been victims of sexual violence than men are to report using sexual violence. In the sample of women from the North (n=451), only 6 percent report experiencing sexual violence and in the South (n=128), only 5.5 percent of women. This divergence may be related to limitations discussed in the methodology section.

FIGURE 14 | PERPETRATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE – MEN ●●●●●●●●



## DRUG TRAFFICKING, URBAN VIOLENCE, AND MEN'S VIOLENCE AND CONTROL OF FEMALE PARTNERS

An increase in both private and public aggression in the favelas is attributed to the occupation of the Police Pacification Units (UPP), including a perceived increase in IPV, according to the majority of activists interviewed. Drug traffickers have traditionally played a pivotal role in mediating fights between individuals at public events, and prohibiting at least to some degree, men's use of IPV within the community. In some favelas with UPP, a vacuum has been created in terms of conflict mediation spaces and actors, with a consequent increase in domestic conflicts and fights at public events. Activists describe "rules" around IPV as governed by drug traffickers:

If the woman cheats on the husband, the traffickers would authorize the husband to beat the woman but only if he went to speak with the traffickers first. If he hit beforehand, the two (husband and wife) would be in deep shit with the traffickers, one because she betrayed and two because he beat the woman without speaking to the traffickers first. He didn't ask permission. Because they don't want any surprises... it's another problem for the traffickers to manage. So, various issues changed when traffic was reconfigured [*due to UPP occupation*]. The result was that he [*the drug trafficker*] was removed ... in the mediation of internal social relations.

• ACTIVIST, 44, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

Former traffickers underline the influence of the criminal lifestyle in which using IPV is so normal that it is not questioned:

The guy knows, 'I'm in power, I'm at the peak. You gonna try me? Gonna fight?' There're guys who beat their women, not only lowlifes. How many situations do you see all around you, the woman is at home, being beaten to a pulp? Right, but in the life of crime it happens more often.... It's **natural of man**, it's a natural evil instinct of the human being.... Both in crime and the family environment, the home life, the guy has a tendency toward that. • C., 33, CERRO-CORÁ

The qualitative findings suggest that the normalization of psychological IPV, especially controlling behaviors and jealousy, can increase partners' exposure to violence. A 36-year-old woman married to a drug lord for 18 years says his control over her extended through his time in prison. She describes seeing many other partners of traffickers willingly visiting their partners in jail, entering the intimate visit cell (*ratão*), and being beaten by their partners. In this same cell, she became pregnant when visiting him despite her desire not to have children.

Wives and girlfriends of traffickers are expected to "stand by their man," regardless of whether they are actively engaged in trafficking tasks. Several interviews with men demonstrate a desire for their wives to remain loyal to them throughout their involvement, including while they slept with other women. Male traffickers' desire for, or expectation of, loyalty of women is exerted with control – and threats:

He always said to me that if I wanted to stay by his side, I had to be with him wherever he went. • WOMAN, 25, MARRIED TO A MAN FORMERLY INVOLVED IN TRAFFICKING IN THE ALEMÃO COMPLEX





She was a major influence on me to leave this life [*traffic*]. She never liked it, but I said, ‘I’m not gonna leave this life.’ And she’d say, ‘Then I’ll break up with you.’ I’d say, ‘You’re not going to do that. Are you crazy, woman?’ Life of crime, I was an outlaw... ‘If you break up with me, if I catch you with someone, I’ll cut your hair, leave you bald’ [*a common punishment of male traffickers to women who ‘misbehave’*]. So I’d say that and she’d never break up. • I., 18, MESQUITA

For former traffickers, using violence against women is justified when women complain, are disobedient, or when men are jealous. “Daily” acts of violence show that a man dominates; these acts are not counted as violence, but rather “reinforce” (*dar satisfação*) the relationship.

Themes of jealousy – among both women and men – are overwhelmingly the most common triggers for men’s use of IPV:

There’s something in the outlaw’s mind that his woman, the one he thinks is his actual woman, she must always be in the home, and she can only go out with him or with a relative of mine or hers. And there were situations of new girls who I would have to say, ‘you have to respect me’... It may sound prejudiced, but some young girls, you’re walking around and suddenly you see her in the baile. Hold on a minute. And you take her by the hair and beat her ass all the way home. • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

Women’s jealousy is often met with retaliation:

There were situations where a girl... I’m walking down the street and she [*my girlfriend*] thinks I’m flirting because women would hit

on me. I explained otherwise and she told me to fuck off. So I called her inside and beat her ass. **We’re the man of the house**; from the moment you let your woman speak louder than you she’ll want to boss you around. So you have to be what you are, **you can’t bow your head down**. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

This quote also contains recurring themes: that men are encouraged not to “back down” from violence, to use violence to exert power, and to follow traditional gender stereotypes of a male head of household.

In another example, a man who has left trafficking uses “returning to crime” as a threat when the couple argues, and this is a major cause of tension. He continues to use verbal and physical violence against the woman (at the time of the interview her face was bruised because he had recently thrown something at her). Yet she blames herself for this violence: *she* irritates him, *she* did not get out of the way when he threw something at her. Her parents play a major role by talking to him and calming him down; they promote nonviolence in the relationship and support his staying out of trafficking.

The Maria da Penha law of 2006 increases criminal accountability for men’s use of IPV against women. It is important to note that while it has promoted punitive action for physical violence, neither policymakers focused on IPV nor public security policymakers have addressed other forms of violence (e.g., verbal, psychological, and other forms that escalate to physical IPV) as a priority for prevention in the context of urban violence. This indifference is largely due to the normalization of intimate partner violence as a private issue to be kept inside the household sphere.

## MEN'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN IN SETTINGS OF HIGH URBAN VIOLENCE

### INTERPLAY BETWEEN IPV AND URBAN VIOLENCE

The interplay of violence between the public/urban violence on the street and private/domestic violence in the home or in intimate partner or family relationships is highlighted in many interviews. For former traffickers in particular, women are symbols of status:

You may be the ugliest guy, but if you have a rifle on you women find you pretty. They say, 'He's hot... I'd tap that, make a kid with him, then take all that money for me.' Money would go away like water. 'What do you want to eat? Drink? You want to snort? Smoke? What do you want to do? Here, take it.'... So it wasn't a question of wanting... I'd put on my cologne, smell good, do my nails... And if women see you're a handsome guy they'll hit on you, especially with the life we lead, outlaws. I was always powerful, handsome – I've always been vain as hell: new clothes every day, different hat. So word got around and women said, 'That guy there is good looking and all.' One [woman] says something to another, and I got to be known without even trying. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

There is a clear distinction between two types of women as intimate partners in the lives of traffickers: (1) the main woman (*mulher principal, de fé*) who is the wife or girlfriend and who is typically the mother of the man's children) and (2) many "other women" with whom men have sex upon entering illegal traffic in drugs. Often traffickers' wives and girlfriends are with them before they enter trafficking, and have seen them struggle with poverty while growing up with their families.

Young men involved in trafficking follow a logic that there are certain times when a woman must suffer violence. In interviews, former traffickers describe using violence more commonly with the women they had sex with or met at the *baile*, rather than with their own wives, yet they also recalled many occasions of beating their own wives. A young man formerly active in trafficking in Rio's suburbs, for example, looks down on beating a girlfriend but justifies it for other women: "I wouldn't beat my girl, only a 'lesser' guy beats his girl. No, you beat the sluts (*piranhas*) you meet on the street and sleep with."

A main female partner (*mulher principal*) may face numerous vulnerabilities, explains a 41-year-old woman married to a former trafficker (as did other women): they are threatened by the police when they come to search the house; threatened by the chance of their husband's death; "kept captive" at home (for fear of jealousy of meeting someone else if they go out or even go to school); and they suffer domestic violence. She attributes women's reduced mobility to traffickers' wanting to avoid



the chance of them finding other men, which is likely out of jealousy and a desire for control since it is known that traffickers have sex with many other women.

Women also “withstand” or enable the use of violence against them: in only one interview did a woman complain about her boyfriend beating her during his involvement with trafficking. Far more commonly, women are expected to tolerate involvement and all that comes with it, including greater likelihood of being beaten. When they experience physical violence, wives and girlfriends of traffickers do not necessarily hide marks from a beating because it is so normalized. Some stay home when they have marks so as to avoid attention from the police.

## PUNISHING WOMEN FOR HUMILIATING MEN

A key theme among police and former traffickers is that women who show a lack of respect for men, are disobedient (sometimes described as “being a fool”), or somehow disrespect men in front of other men will consistently suffer violence. This violence serves to re-establish the order of power in front of other men. To illustrate how this order is imposed, it often starts with a complaint of a woman causing “drama” or acting out (*arrumando confusão*) in public. A woman’s “acting out of line” demands that men assert their position of greater power over women. That position is often imposed by a threat, punishment (shaving a woman’s head), or a violent response. One man put a woman “back in line” in this way: *“I beat her, all over the house.”*

Men pressure other men to use violence, and this reinforces use of IPV. A former trafficker explains how his “nonviolent” strategy of taking his wife home when they’d fight in public provoked questioning among his peers:

My woman and I would fight all the time, [I] couldn’t speak to another woman. .... Sometimes at the *bailes* I’d take her home under a beating .... Everyone’s there in a *baile*. The girls are dancing. I have my gun, backpack -- looking good. Women flirt with me. She’d see it and become upset and stir up confusion (*arrumando confusão*), so I’d take her home to not have any problems... Other guys would say, ‘What’s up man? You going soft? Take care of that girl.’ • G., 26, MARÉ COMPLEX

In another example, a police officer tells his wife to never again question him in front of his subordinates (this was at the height of his stress as a captain in the force). In interviews, the son and daughter of this policeman say they heard their father describe his use of physical violence (the only act that they knew of), against his wife at the time. For men like the officer and the young man who punishes his wife for being jealous at the *bailes*, the point of resorting to physical violence comes when a man is fundamentally threatened by loss of respect and power over his subordinates or others with whom he wishes to maintain status. Violence then is used to restore power temporarily lost. Avoiding use of violence makes one “less of a man” in front of other men and thus vulnerable.

Wives of policemen and of former traffickers alike describe how their partners use psychological forms of violence to degrade them. For a woman married to a highly-ranked drug lord, leaving was tied to withstanding the difficulty of earning less, which her husband considered an insult and reason for humiliating her. A female psychologist in the military police of Rio de Janeiro (PMRJ), also married to a police officer, describes a consistent lack of support on the part of her husband. She tells the story of the day she got into a doctorate program and he barely took notice. She attributes this type of behavior and lack of support to the demoralization of police officers generally as well as her husband's jealousy of her higher position.

## WOMEN'S ROLES IN TRAFFIC: USING OR SUPPORTING VIOLENCE

Most women in intimate relationships with traffickers ultimately become involved in trafficking, but their roles vary in intensity. The qualitative interviews identify three profiles of women involved in trafficking:

1. **WOMEN MARRIED TO TRAFFICKERS (*MULHERES DA FÉ*)** • who take on roles in supporting their husbands in high positions in trafficking, from warning their trafficker husbands and storing arms, to delivering messages and being accountants;
2. **WOMEN WHO JOIN TRAFFICKING AS INFLUENCED BY A BOYFRIEND, BUT RISE TO A HIGH POSITION ON THEIR OWN ACCORD** • (Two women interviewed were highly-ranked drug lords who also dated traffickers throughout their lives); and
3. **WOMEN WHO BECOME INVOLVED WITHOUT THE INFLUENCE OF A BOYFRIEND (OR WITH LESS EXPLICIT INFLUENCE)** • but hold a lower-ranked role in trafficking. (Two women who participated in qualitative interviews were recruited as mules to transport arms and drugs between Rio de Janeiro and the state of Paraná at the Paraguay border).

Similar to the case of men, most of the women say they did not want to become involved with trafficking. The two important exceptions are the two women who became drug lords: they had ambitions to enter crime from early ages.

All but one of the women interviewed in the qualitative research began relationships with men after the men were already involved in drug trafficking. The exception is a wife from Alemão Complex who says she always encouraged her husband to leave and wanted nothing to do with trafficking. Her husband had joined the year their first child was born and stayed in for ten years. She attributes his entrance into trafficking as taking the "easy way out." She describes his parents as always fighting and not being supportive. On the other hand, her parents encourage him to leave.



Another example of a woman’s role in trafficking involves a woman married to a trafficker. Her husband does everything he can to keep it at a distance from her, and she believes he is not “cut out” for it, describing how he would come home and vomit after seeing someone killed. She says she was never interested in trafficking while he was involved. After he died, however, she became involved in trafficking through the influence of a friend, to make and save money for her son. Previous interviews with women have also shown their involvement following a husband’s death is not uncommon (Moura, 2007).

At the most basic level, wives are expected to help warn traffickers of the police and other enemies. A former trafficker describes how it works:

I had to teach the codes of the favela to my wife, so she could be on the wire and I wouldn’t be surprised by the police. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

Many examples point to critical yet overlooked ways in which risks and violence can pass from public (involvement in a trafficking gang) to private (through a relationship with an intimate partner); and from masculine to feminine. Women’s involvement in drug trafficking gangs should not be underestimated in regard to how it can reinforce urban violence. Once women are involved, they are expected to “act more like men” in both drug trafficking and in the police force, suggest findings from interviews with female drug traffickers (especially those with roles independent of their husband’s involvement) as well as female police officers. In other words, women are expected to live up to violent masculine stereotypes.

**MARRIED TO THE *DONO*:  
FROM DATING "THE GUY WITH THE MOTORCYCLE " TO A LIFETIME OF RISKS**

A 36-year-old woman formerly married to a drug lord (*dono*) describes the day her older boyfriend picked her up from school on a motorcycle. Excitement and status at the start of their relationship gave way to increasing involvement in his business, incarceration, and an inability to leave even when she wanted to. Her story exemplifies many of the themes arising throughout interviews with women married to and dating traffickers.

She describes a trajectory from lack of awareness to gradually becoming involved. Only when she was arrested did she become fully aware of her role: the police had tapped six months of phone calls. She claims to only have delivered her husband's messages but realized that her actions resulted in violence; some messages were orders for people to be killed. She delivered messages while he was imprisoned and administered the money, including putting it in her name and in fictitious accounts. Whereas society accepts that men use violence or are involved in crime, she observes, society is shocked by and stigmatizes women who do so.

Her husband was incarcerated for 12 of their 18 years of marriage, and was in jail at the time of the interview. They are no longer together, but she does not date other men for fear he will find out and send someone to kill her. Her fear is justified. During their marriage, her husband never used physical violence against her, but used his gun – owned for his 'urban violence' role as a trafficker – to threaten his wife every day. She always carried his gun in her purse when they were together. She recalls her constant fear that he was "a ticking bomb that could explode at any minute." He was constantly paranoid about her cheating or losing money, a paranoia influenced by his drug use.

Her story speaks to the enormous power of threats – and to the power of guns. Intimate relationships tied to involvement in legal or illegal armed groups are accompanied by greater access to and threat of firearms. Arms generate fear for women even when physical violence is not used, and have real power in controlling women and inhibiting their freedom. The fear of his retaliation made this woman stay in the relationship. She knew he would never leave trafficking because his whole family was involved in it. After a few times suggesting it, she had stayed quiet and advised him on managing the business and how to run fewer risks.

Several factors supported her leaving the relationship and her involvement in trafficking. The first was fear: she was afraid of returning to prison and being far from her son again. It was her mother who convinced her to leave. Ultimately, she wanted to find a job and study to make up for what she had lost.





## FAMILY MEMBERS MOURN MEN’S TRAJECTORIES INTO VIOLENCE

A number of women – principally wives, mothers, and grandmothers – do not or did not accept men’s involvement in trafficking. Whether women become involved or not, their lives are affected greatly. Several women and men with whom we spoke described mothers’ and wives’ key roles in persuading men to leave trafficking.

Women living with drug traffickers describe numerous fears and vulnerabilities. The most common impact wives describe is living with the constant fear of having their houses searched: searches doubly expose partners and family members to violence, since interviewees often describe the aggressiveness or violence police use when searching houses. A woman from Alemão recounts officers hitting her young son, a witness to several aggressive police searches; her reaction is to not let him leave the house. Overall, any type of relationship with a trafficker poses enormous risks to a woman’s safety, freedom of movement, and health (risks include unwanted pregnancy and contracting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections). In terms of promoting more equitable power relationships, work in deconstructing violent forms of masculinities will also entail initiatives that work with both men and women.

Nearly all mothers interviewed want their sons to work rather than enter crime or trafficking. One exception is a woman who became a drug lord after her mother incentivized her to steal. More common is the mother who suffers a heart condition and other physical consequences of her son’s involvement in trafficking, along with deep worry given the family’s humble background and their efforts to raise him for a better life. They can only afford to live in a place with higher exposure to trafficking and violence:

We raise them to “be someone,” to live, to be a person we raised with care, to be equal to us – or even better than us. Because we’re ignorant – we didn’t have the right education, our parents didn’t have conditions. I didn’t either: my mother had nine children... We didn’t have everything that life could offer but no one did anything wrong. And then when we have a son who does things like that... We become, well, it seems it cuts us all up inside, takes the force away from our legs. It brings us down like that.

• MOTHER OF A FORMER TRAFFICKER

For this mother, there is hope: the son who entered trafficking has left with the strong support of the entire family. In interviews, family members describe risks, deception, isolation, and loneliness. A significant yet underreported consequence in the life of women married to traffickers is their lack of social network, often due to men’s jealousy or control:

I always had few friends. I was never one to have many friends. Even because I didn't have much time. So, I had a few friends when I was studying.

• WOMAN, 41, MARRIED TO A FORMER TRAFFICKER IN MARÉ COMPLEX

Other wives describe temporarily having friends but say that in times of imprisonment or leaving trafficking, they all disappear. Women also relate accounts of family members and other friends abandoning them while they were in trafficking.

## TRAJECTORIES INTO VIOLENCE

This section describes the factors leading into trafficking, organized into somewhat overlapping “push” and “pull” factors – *push* referring to individual or family factors that pushed men toward joining, and *pull* referring to the attractions and peer networks that served to make drug trafficking compelling to them.

### “ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER”: MEN *PUSHED* INTO TRAFFICKING

It happened with me like it happened with most people. I lost my mother... This motivated me, yeah... but that's not quite it: the person who says, 'Oh, I went into crime because I lost a relative.' No, that's a lie, that doesn't exist. One thing leads to another.” • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

According to most research participants – all former drug traffickers and two police officers interviewed – men enter trafficking and the police force primarily for economic reasons. These findings point to the inseparable ties between inequality and violence. Economic motivations, however, are always tied to other incentives.

Men highlight the following “push” factors in interviews:

- **Economic necessity:** A job in the local favela van transportation, for example, is insufficient. In some cases, repaying debts to traffickers through short-term “services” escalates to involvement;
- **Traumatic event during childhood or early adolescence:** The death of a family member evokes betrayal, deception, and despair;
- **Ongoing abuse, poverty, and neglect:** Such forces push young men out of the house and into trafficking, and promote high-risk decision-making early in life similar to the case of child marriage, coupled with the lack of caregiving figures;
- **Social isolation:** Young men who join are sometimes isolated from groups having masculinities. In other words, they are not identified as the “best soccer player,” “guy who gets the most women,” or “guy with the most-fit body.” Rather, they form an identity as a “rebel.”



## WHEN FAMILY LIFE PUSHES YOUNG MEN INTO TRAFFICKING

Formers traffickers insist that vulnerability and precariousness in their childhoods as well as in situations of violence they suffered are key elements that explain their entrance into trafficking. To varying extremes, these vulnerabilities include poverty, a lack of caregiving figures, and conflicts within families (especially with the father figure). Men say such factors push them into crime or make them perceive crime as their only option. Such experiences may have a direct influence on men’s entrance into crime and/or mark their personal development, making them prone to crime as a life alternative.

Due to its vulnerability, the family presence fails to fully establish itself and is thus unable to accomplish its protective functions. Socioeconomic precariousness reflects and establishes familial vulnerabilities, marking the respondents’ childhood, adolescence, and youth with a feeling of deprivation. It also forces parents to work excessively, leaving them without time to look after their children. Vulnerabilities, conflicts, and socioeconomic precariousness are explicitly stated as causes of involvement in accounts from E., F., G., H., and A., and are also found in accounts from R. and B., though not as main variables.

Several activists describe men who joined trafficking as “rebels,” but one activist points out that those rebels have often endured violence and abuse at home, which pushed them into trafficking:

They were always the rebels, right? This guy that died, sometimes he would get home and wouldn’t give money to his mother. He said that he didn’t make any, and his mother would check him over. He was sort of a rascal and she would see that he had money, and he would fly down the hallway. The hallway is about 60 meters from my house until the gate. So his mother was always a good shot; she would take a rock and she would aim just right... [laughs] She would hit him in the head, and he was already sitting in the hallway crying like hell. We called him coconut head because his head was already sort of oval from taking so many hits from rocks. Then time went by and he got older, he didn’t have a way to study really.

• ACTIVIST, 24, MARÉ COMPLEX

Among men interviewed, many describe the families of their childhood as “un-structured” (*desestruturados familiares*), using a nuclear family model as universal. This report does not aim to characterize families, rather, it recognizes a broad range of “healthy” or “problematic” family structures and relations. *My family has always been very poor, we never had much,* A. says, describing what he calls “family dysfunction.”

A. counters that characterization of his family life, saying, *“Sometimes your father gives you a whole life structure, but when you slant toward something, you...”* B. and I. grew up in environments they describe as healthy: close and peaceful relationships with parents, and a socioeconomic level sufficient to provide them a minimum of wellbeing and avoid a feeling of deprivation. They provide the following explanation for their entry in crime. It started out as “kids’ stuff,” one man recalls, *“kids’ stuff – going out to steal, riding the car or bike with the girls at the time, then shit inevitably happened. I can’t say I lacked chances in life. I had chances, but I was bad.”* The other man says where he lived was a factor in his entry into crime: *“The influence of the streets, when you start to live on the streets it’s rough. People always come and say, ‘Come here kid, come here.’ But my father gave me everything.”*

Extreme socioeconomic vulnerability marks F’s childhood:

My family had always been very poor, I had a lot of siblings, never much money. But this was no excuse to steal. When we’re born and raised in the favela we see this kind of stuff. It’s not everyone, but we always end up getting involved and some of our friends didn’t go to school. I went to school at least... I was afraid, but I took a liking over time. Stealing is addictive, it’s a kind of drug, too. You do it once, it’s over, and you do it again because you know you can get some there. • F, 36, MARÉ COMPLEX



## "NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE": FAMILY TRAUMA AND INDEPENDENCE

Entry into crime also represents a space for independence for some respondents: a refusal to submit themselves to the rules of the adult world and of their parents and relatives. They achieve adult status – implicit in their claim for independence – through a route that places them in direct conflict with the world that their parents and relatives desired and prepared for them. Some young men assert independence by joining trafficking after a family trauma. They lack what could curb entry: a family situation able to provide adequate living conditions. A young man may reason he “has nothing left to lose,” as H. says. Such was the situation for G.:

I lost my mother when I was 11 years old. When I was 14 or 15, I lost my father, and from there on I got to know the drug trade. There was an influence already from pot. I smoked pot and hung around with ‘certain friends’, so to speak. Then my father died and so on, and so on, and before I knew it I was already involved. Without a father, without a mother, without work, the solution was drug traffic. • G., 26, MARÉ COMPLEX

In most cases, however, independence stands in direct conflict with parents or guardians. This is striking in the trajectories of D. and H. Before entering crime, both men had alternatives – jobs they later abandoned because they did not pay enough and because the young men could not adjust to the discipline required. In this example, D. hides his participation in crime from his mother, eventually informs her of his decision, asserts his independence, and later laments the suffering he caused:

My mother heard it from me first, because I said: ‘Look, I’m in traffic now.’ My mother: ‘What is this son? You weren’t born for this!’... *[I insist]* ‘It’s my life, I get to decide.’ I now see it as one of the worst scenes I’ve witnessed in my life, her sadness, her suffering. • D., FORMER TRAFFICKER, VIDIGAL

In H.’s family, working is regarded as better than involvement in drug trafficking. Once close to his grandmother, trafficking causes distance from the family:

There was a time when we argued, me and my grandma... and I love my grandma. I argued with her and I felt bad afterwards. The only words that I used were: ‘I need to live my life, I need to help my brother and sisters.’ And she said, ‘But like this?’... Family gradually abandons you, and when there is no longer the need for money it’s more about showing your family that you don’t depend on them, and then you sink in deeper and deeper. • H., FORMER TRAFFICKER, MARÉ COMPLEX

## MEN PULLED INTO TRAFFICKING

The following pathways or factors can be described as those that “pull” young men into drug trafficking. These factors make trafficking attractive:

- **THE SPOILS OR BENEFITS OF CRIME** • As adolescents and young adults, men may come into more contact with the traffickers and drug lord whom they have seen since childhood, heightening the allure of the spoils of crime, and increasing motivation to join. They are drawn by quick money, and often view crime as the only accessible high-paying job, one that come with access to women, displays of virility and arms in the *baile funk*, and the ability to buy name brand clothing – which is a very strong theme especially among the younger traffickers, for whom status and power are otherwise seen as unattainable.
- **THEY ARE “BAD COMPANY” BUT THEY ARE MY FRIENDS** • Friends influence entry. In some cases, family members encourage young men to enter, as when a brother or father involves a young man in trafficking or a mother says “go steal” to support the household.
- **FOR LOVE** • For women, having a spouse involved in trafficking was a strong pull toward involvement, whether in small supporting roles or major roles. Marriage is thus posed as an entrance into violence (this theme is described under the section on women’s roles in trafficking).

### “You can keep the change”: the seduction of crime

For many men, feeling the allure of trafficking starts in childhood. The desire to enter crime, together with the presence of “bad company” places boys and young men in direct contact with the criminal world in a gradual process of seduction:

There was traffic and, of course, the drug dealers’ sons. So when we played with marbles, not just me and my brother, but also the other kids who didn’t have relatives or friends in traffic: damn. We could have ten marble balls [*then*] we had to borrow marbles for a week to play and win more marbles. Kids arrived with bottles full of marbles. ‘Damn, he’s got a bottle full of marbles! He’s that guy’s son, or that guy’s brother.’ And from that, ‘Damn, he’s a drug dealer’s brother, his uncle does this, his father does that.’ And, of course, a 7 or 10-year-old kid with a bottle full of marbles – he’s the big shot. • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX



D., in turn, describes how children are seduced through the daily interactions with adults involved in crime:

You’re there talking, playing marbles, or flying a kite or whatever, with the kids. Then a crew passes along with over 40 people, their rifles up high, with a lot of money. ‘Go over there and buy a pizza for us. We’ll give you 100 reais for two pizzas that cost 40 reais. You can keep the change,’ That’s it, you won the kid over. You didn’t invite him to be part of traffic. You haven’t asked him anything. But that kid will certainly look up to you, he’ll want to be close to you to make more money. ‘Here, buy me a Coke.’ And the Coke costs 1.65 reais and the guy gives you 5 reais in your hand, ‘Buy me a Coke, the change is yours.’ It’s sealed. And we were always around, always close. Once in a while, ‘What is it? Want to get shot?’ ‘No.’ ‘You want to shoot?’ And then you bam, bam, bam. Wow, it’s exciting. Any child, you feel like Braddock, you feel like Rambo, something like that. This criminal is also a victim and one day they did this to him, but he’s unaware that he’s doing this to someone else... I think no criminal does this with a kid thinking about what the kid will become, that he’ll go into trafficking, or whether it will be good for the kid. I don’t think it’s done with any viciousness • D., 31, VIDIGAL

Proximity and closeness to the men in charge of trafficking can bring much-desired respect, as it did for I.:

I was respected. Everyone knew I was friends with them, that I was involved, even if I really wasn’t. So people [*said*]: ‘I won’t mess with him because he knows the kids.’ So when you go into crime you’re already respected. • I., 18, MESQUITA

Music also influences entry into crime, according to H.:

Sometimes they grow up listening to prohibited funk (music – proibidão), always singing about this is us here, and they are over there... So they’re singing a bloody song, since that’s how it was, a gunfight today and tomorrow there’s a song about it. Nowadays kids 10, 9-years-old are singing and listening to this as if it were normal. And that there is contaminating his mind. Proibidão really does afflict someone’s mind. • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

Values around having many women are also cited as key incentives for youth to join drug trafficking. One activist explains the importance of women and guns as status symbols for men:



Those women are 'Maria-shotguns.' Sometimes the guy has nothing, just has a gun, but he has 50 women. • **ACTIVIST, 42, ROCINHA**

### **"You're born involved": crime, proximity, family, and peers**

When asked about his early involvement in crime, H. replied, "*You're born involved.*" He and other respondents grew up in a universe in which crime and drug traffickers and dealers were part of a daily routine. Though their parents insisted that crime was wrong and that criminals were people they should stay away from, crime was part of their daily lives and "criminals," "outlaws," and "drug dealers" were also siblings, parents, cousins, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. H. continues his reasoning below:

You're born in the community, and you're involved with everything that happens around there. For example, there are many kids my age who haven't gone into crime yet, but they do have an indirect connection. He has a friend, a neighbor, a cousin, a relative. So he lives with that, but isn't a part of it. • **H. 23, MARÉ COMPLEX**

Entering and moving up quickly, sometimes unintentionally, can make it easy for men to stay in and thrive in drug trafficking:

It was a crucial problem, of the drug traffickers with the police, right? Lack of employment, of opportunities, of courses, and the only good thing you had, the only thing that you could do was to enter drug trafficking. So you'd enter drug trafficking one day, the other day you'd be armed, then in one week the police would kill someone and you, you would move up in your post. Next thing you know, in three months you were manager of this and that, sometimes sought after from the police. You learned how to shoot without knowing how, fired shots without knowing how, fought amongst yourselves... Problems occurred and wars ended up causing friends of the same faction to go to the rival faction and friends waging war against friends in the same favela. Neighbors, born and raised together, in separate wars, one wanting to kill the other... I have a bunch of friends who died. • **FORMER TRAFFICKER, 36, IN A GROUP FOR MEN WHO HAVE USED IPV**

Adding to the tension between family and crime, older brothers preceded E. and F. into drug trafficking, and A.'s stepfather was a renowned criminal in their place of residence. E. and F. had great admiration for their brothers, and respect for



them as “outlaws.” The reports from E. and F. describe the allure their older brothers had on them as children and teenagers: their “outlaw” identity, the consumer goods they flaunted, the power grounded in weapons, the respect and admiration they enjoyed, their confidence when walking around the community.

The reference I had was of guys with guns walking around with power. My brother, he had respect, man, he was an outlaw. He’d walk armed up and down, no one came in his way. Other people respected him, so he was my hero. • F., 26, YOUNG MAN FROM MARÉ COMPLEX

An older brother also had an influence on E. as a child and youth:

I was a little kid, no malice in me, I didn’t quite understand any of that. [*My brother’s*] mind was more open really. I had a kid’s mind, I was still a teenager, so I mirrored myself after him: his brand clothing, talking with others – he had a lot of friends. Others respected him; the favela drug lord liked him. He’d make ammunition for a gun, he was well-respected. Everybody liked him. • E., 29, YOUNG MAN FROM MARÉ COMPLEX

Interviewees identify certain moments as “turning points” with a definitive impact on their entry into crime. This was so in all cases where family members influenced men’s entrance into trafficking. E. and F. point to the murder of their brothers – one by peers in drug trafficking, the other by police. This was the moment when both young men became directly engaged in crime, either because the protection that the brothers had provided them suddenly ended, or hatred became aroused. Similarly, H. lost his mother and was thrown out of his house by his stepfather. This moment, together with struggling with his stepfather, marked a change in his life and ultimately was his “ticket” into crime.

Some men interviewed hold a positive view of the educational use of violence by their parents in their childhood. For example, some say they opted for crime *despite* their strict upbringing and the moral education they received at home. Other men do not share this view: F. says his father beat him with no intention to educate him. Describing men’s perceptions of violence experienced in childhood and adolescence as “normalized” implies that they characterize their experiences as violent, which they largely do not. H. perceives the beatings he suffered from this stepfather not as punishment, but as the stepfather simply wanting to mistreat him.

In sum, entry into drug trafficking is a process with complex pathways and push and pull factors that affect men’s life trajectories. Consideration of these factors, combined with the survey results, provide important insight into how early exposure, family factors, identity, peers, personal attributes and disposition, and ideas about masculinities all interact to construct pathways into violence.

## NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES: PATHWAYS OUT OF VIOLENCE

What made some of the men who participated in this research reject or take on and sustain nonviolent trajectories? The quantitative and qualitative findings suggest a range of factors that often act in combination at the individual, family, and societal levels. These factors provide an important counterpoint to trajectories into violence. Factors promoting nonviolent trajectories as well as strategies for working with specific groups and are summarized in Box 7.

### NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES FOR MEN

**Quantitative data** corresponding to the North, the area with higher exposure to urban violence, show several factors most strongly associated with promoting nonviolent male trajectories:

- fatherhood
- gender equitable attitudes
- participation of father/male reference person in domestic chores
- connection to social support circles
- men's education level

**Qualitative research** suggests several factors associated with nonviolent trajectories:

- fatherhood
- developing mechanisms to "cool down"
- widening life perspectives, gaining urban mobility
- individual traits such as emotional and pro-social skills, "willpower," and motivation
- rejecting masculine norms tied to violence, adoption of more gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors

### Nonviolent strategies among former traffickers

- NGOs' assistance in leaving drug trafficking
- family tension or support in leaving
- exit because of traumatic events and risks: the death of friends, risks of being shot
- redefining "real men" while fostering alternative nonviolent identities outside of traffic

### Nonviolent strategies among police

- mechanisms to prevent transferring stress from police work to home
- seeking psychological services

### Nonviolent strategies among activists

- rejecting violence and trafficking during childhood
- developing nonviolent peer groups
- learning mediation skills



## FACTORS PROMOTING NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES

Participation in active caregiving and household tasks, higher levels of education, and engagement in social groups are among the factors supporting nonviolence. Quantitative data suggest that participation in active caregiving plays an important role in nonviolent male trajectories. **Data suggest that men living in areas with higher levels of urban violence (North; n=451), who do not participate in caregiving for their children 12 and younger are more likely to have used physical UV (p=0.004).** The relationship is not causal, but the finding does suggest at a minimum that violence and caregiving interact: caregiving may be a driver of lower use of physical urban violence, or lower levels of exposure to violence and fear of violence may increase the likelihood that men participate in caregiving.

A statistically significant association between education and perpetration of violence suggests that **more educated men are less likely to perpetrate sexual violence (p=0.015)** and intimate partner violence (p=0.014), an association found in most countries where IMAGES has been carried out.

Our research suggests that nonviolent trajectories are shaped by male role models and their participation in domestic chores. In the North, the area of the city with higher homicide rates, men whose fathers did not participate in at least one domestic task are more likely to have used sexual violence (p=0.009). Like the association between men's involvement in caregiving and their perpetration of physical UV, this result points toward the inter-generational transmission of gender norms and the strategic role of caring fathers.

**Men who participate in social groups (e.g., social, religious, or cultural groups or sharing an apartment/house with others) are less likely to use sexual violence (p=0.001) and intimate partner violence (p=0.006).** Again, causality is not implied, but it is reasonable to assume social groups are a buffer against the use of some forms of violence for some men and women.

It is important to recall a caveat presented in the conceptual framework: Nonviolent trajectories are non-linear and often mixed with violent practices and attitudes, i.e., men leave trafficking while continuing to use IPV or they may protect their own families from violence but use it against others, and peace activists use violence against their wives and traffickers.

Temptations to return to trafficking are strong, and they are very real given the settings of insecurity and inequality in many neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro. Traffickers themselves did not talk much of wanting to return, but several wives mentioned their husbands still considered it. One NGO with a reintegration program for men leaving drug gangs, through which we interviewed several men, had lost several men back to trafficking in the preceding months. The money is far greater than any accessible minimum wage job could offer and the power-related benefits and status are not easy to replace. As for activists, they make little money and their work can put them at risk. For the police, leaving the job altogether, or creating more peaceful change toward nonviolent forms of mediation are measures met with resistance within police forces.

The remainder of Section 10 presents factors for promoting nonviolent trajectories that were raised across all interview groups. Subsequent sections outline strategies for resistance and resilience used by specific interview groups (e.g., former traffickers, police, and activists).

## FATHERHOOD IS A KEY FACTOR

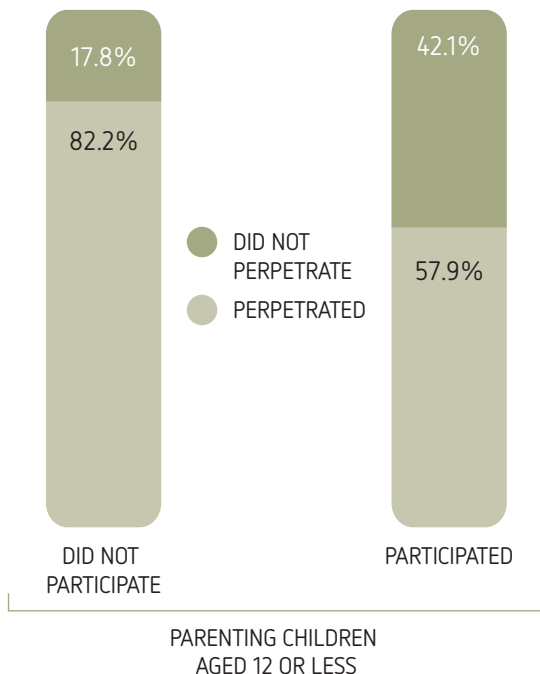
Among all groups interviewed, experiences of fatherhood (and motherhood) featured prominently within nonviolent trajectories. In the case of traffickers and police, fatherhood sometimes coincides with less time on the street (and therefore less exposure to urban violence) and more time at home. For traffickers that already had children, leaving the drug gang meant they could spend more time at home. Fatherhood seemed to stimulate a “changing of priorities” and reflection about life choices. Being a biological father also matters less than having an attachment to the children.

A hypothesis that emerges from these findings is that of “setting an example.” When fathers teach their children that they do not want them to enter drug trafficking (the most common example), or want them to stay away from guns, they are reinforcing a nonviolent trajectory for themselves.

### The effect of fatherhood

The way fatherhood is assumed and men’s memories of their fathers participating in household tasks can shape nonviolent trajectories, suggest survey findings from the sample of men in the North (n=451). **Data show that men who reported active involvement in parenting children ages 12 or younger (daily care of children, care in case of sickness, preparing food, changing clothes and diapers, giving a bath, playing) are less likely to perpetrate urban violence** (Figure 15; p=0.001). Like the association between gender-equitable norms and perpetration of violence, this finding on fatherhood emphasizes the fundamental role of equitable gender norms in nonviolent male identity constructions. Again, we cannot impute causality, only association.

FIGURE 15 | RESPONDENT’S PARTICIPATION IN PARENTING CHILDREN AGED 12 OR YOUNGER AND THE USE OF PHYSICAL URBAN VIOLENCE (NORTH)





**Men (North; n=451) whose own fathers participated in household tasks are significantly less likely to perpetrate sexual violence.** Like the finding on fatherhood, this result points toward the relevance of gender norms in shaping nonviolent trajectories and provides evidence for the intergenerational transmission of gender norms and patterns of violence (Figure 16).

Even when men want to play active fatherhood roles, however, they can be met with resistance. The wife of a PMRJ officer describes how her husband faced “bullying” by other police:

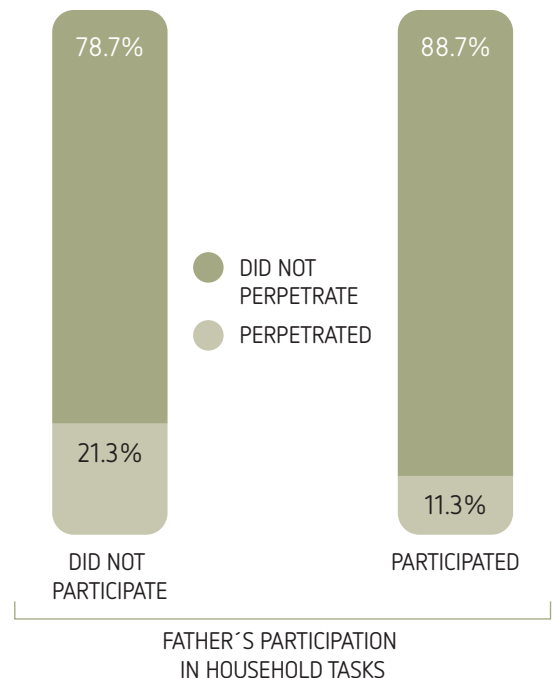
When he’s home he does things [*with our son*] but he suffers bullying. He says he suffers bullying at work, because he says that he takes his son out strolling, he changes diapers, gives baths, and gives food. He says that people [*police officers*] keep screwing with him [*because of this*]. • WIFE OF POLICE OFFICER, 37, PMRJ

She became skeptical about her husband’s potential role as a positive father figure when he started to show greater signs of stress and aggression after being promoted within the PMRJ:

I’m uncertain about the future because I don’t know if I want one of these fathers for my son. What I want to say is that his father won’t change, and I don’t know if I want him living together with a person like this, who’s always nervous, who’s always stressed, who fights, who screams... It’s his way really, it’s that person who’s contaminated by that, who’s always... it coincided with his profile change of battalion, of being in a more inside [*office*] position. • WIFE OF POLICE OFFICER, 37, PMRJ

In spite of these challenges, men describe aspirations around fatherhood. Several male police officers and drug traffickers remarked on “always wanting to become fathers.” Among men formerly involved in drug trafficking and their wives, the discourse about entering traffic in drugs was much more centered on “never wanting to join” compared with other groups. Police officers and former traffickers alike who have children describe the important role children play in promoting nonviolence in their lives away from the streets.

FIGURE 16 | PARTICIPATION OF THE RESPONDENT’S FATHER IN DOMESTIC TASKS AND RESPONDENT’S PERPETRATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE (NORTH)



### Men's father figures: taking the positive, rejecting the negative

In interviews, men reflect on their fathers in the past, and narratives emerge around becoming fathers. Men consistently refer to their fathers as absent, or otherwise tend to have negative memories of them as violent or disciplinary. A few exceptions are found among peace activists who had close relationships with their fathers or another male figure such as an uncle.

A characteristic shared by men who adopt nonviolent trajectories is that of discerning both positive and negative qualities of their fathers (or mothers), and retaining the positive, nonviolent ones. Men describe fathers that were violent, alcoholics, or womanizers but along with the negative aspects, they cite qualities they admire and want to adopt, such as being social and good to friends, instilling values around education and work, generosity, and willingness to help others.

Two activists witnessed extreme episodes of violence on the part of alcoholic fathers. One explains how his childhood experiences motivate him to reject IPV and adopt nonviolent strategies as an adult with his partner:

The violence from my father against my mother, my grandmother, and my aunt confronting him when he fired shots, this marked all of us and I hate conflict, I'm horrified by violent conflict. There are no arguments with DR, my wife, and DR I adore *[her]*... Many times for example – I'm married, it's eleven o'clock at night, the fight starts... I'm unable, it *[the fighting]* puts me to immediate sleep. It's like I've been doped, the fighting dopes me, and I say, 'I can't handle it *[laughs]*. Let's continue tomorrow when you're calmer'... I avoid whatever type of fight in whatever situation, it left me very rational in life, whatever type of fight I'm always going to try to rationalize and arrive at a point of agreement. • ACTIVIST, 53, MARÉ COMPLEX

Another activist explains the importance of his stepfather in the construction of his childhood and the world inside and outside the favela:

My stepfather also cooked. He was a driver for a piped water *[company]* at the time, and in one way or another he always looked for a way to be present. But since he travelled, sometimes he stayed a week away. But every Saturday morning he would come back full of ice cream. There were those huge pots of ice cream, a party. He also had a bar, if I'm not wrong, in Lapa, and I also went there to work with him. So we had a childhood that many children here in Rocinha didn't have. In my time I flew kites, I played with puppets, played hide and seek. • ACTIVIST, 42, ROCINHA





For this activist, his stepfather was a key paternal figure in his childhood, yet he also recalls him being violent toward his mother and having a drinking problem. Another activist who grew up with a very violent father values the fact that his father focused on the importance of education, not allowing his children to work until 18 years old. And a third activist with a violent father describes how the support he received from direct and extended family members helped them deal with the violence, accepting both his father’s positive and negative sides:

We were able to construct a network of affection, and my family is very loving, we were able historically. For example due to a very serious problem of violence from my father, of my mother’s pain, we were able to have a stable family, we were able to make it... We took what was best from my father and rejected the worst parts of him. Primarily, the work ethic was very strong in my house, this thing about being a worker was very central. And, second, to be honest... because you had to be honest, correct, disciplined, this was very strong in us. My father instilled in us the following: you have to be proud of who you are, never lower your head for anyone. This my mother repeated to us all the time: ‘Your father never lowered his head for an official [*or boss*], he always followed the rules and so you have to follow to rules, too.’ This left a mark on all of us, we are all workers.

• ACTIVIST, 53, MARÉ COMPLEX

### Generation to generation: replacing violence with caregiving

Just as violence can be transferred from generation to generation, it can also be transformed. Earlier IMAGES data have shown (1) how different types of violence witnessed or experienced by boys during childhood influences their use of violence as adults, and (2) that men whose fathers participated more in the household and were nonviolent are more likely to have equitable and nonviolent relationships themselves (Barker *et al.*, 2011; Kato-Wallace *et al.*, 2014). Caregiving, along with a number of gender-equitable indicators, was also shown to be associated with less supportive attitudes toward violence and reported violent behavior (Barker *et al.*, 2011).

These findings about fatherhood and caregiving are part of growing research that examines the implications of caregiving for violence reduction (among other effects) on the lives of men, women, and children (Barker *et al.*, 2012; Kato-Wallace, 2014). This research provides several insights as to how caregiving can be a factor in support of nonviolent trajectories, and how caregiving is threatened in multiple ways with involvement in violence.

Among police interviewed, two express the desire to leave street violence due to the arrival of children. Their reasons are the desire for less exposure to violence and the need to spend more time with their children. One police officer explains how becoming a father was an important factor in his decision to transition from street work to a position as a driver for a commander:

I lost a few of his years, right, when he was small, because I almost never came around, sometimes I would come home and he was sleeping, I would leave and he was sleeping, I would go through two, three days without seeing him, without playing with him, without anything. I said, no, I'm gonna start to change this, and that's when I started to move away from the street. It was more for him really, to be able to grow up, and be with him, and that there you're able to sleep at home every day. He wakes up, sees you – I would play with him and everything, so, that was the motive really, it was him really. • MALE OFFICER (SOLDIER), 41, PMRJ NOVA AMÉRICA

Similar to several other police officers who displayed nonviolent trajectories, this officer recalls memories of nonviolence between his parents, which influenced him to use nonviolent caregiving with his own children. One interviewee says he had grown up in a space of nonviolent “dialogue” with his parents.

Among all qualitative groups interviewed, some men repeat predominant themes of wanting to give their children something better than they experienced in their own childhoods, and not wanting to “miss out” on raising their sons and daughters. Like the police officers above, several men cite becoming fathers as a reason to leave trafficking. One man is afraid to die and leave his daughter behind. Another young father, who left when his son was born, now wants to be an example:

I'm a father of two children. I know my children depend on me, so I have to give my best. So for me, my current life is very stable... Man, I have to give an example to my son. So that tomorrow he doesn't grow up and say like I did, 'Your father was an outlaw.' He was an outlaw and now he's in school. So that he thinks, 'My father has gone through a lot'... The father has to give an example to his son, so that he'll always tread the right path; he'll go to the wrong side only if he wants to. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

The same man describes how he missed out on his daughter's childhood due to traffic:

I lost 13 years. My daughter is 12 years old now, I didn't see her grow up, now she has breasts, she has her periods... I'd focus all my attention to traffic, leaving my family without the attention I had to provide as a family man and father. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX



## To sleep with a peaceful mind at night

Another benefit for men leaving trafficking is the possibility of living in more a peaceful environment with their family and children. This peace of mind also lifts a weight off their shoulders, with the departure from heavy identities such as “outlaw” and “criminal,” and with a distancing from the evil they have seen. C. associates this feeling with his children and what he desires for his children:

With what I earn I can pay my bills, my debts, and support my children. To have a day like the one I had yesterday with them, the whole day with them and spending hard-earned money, but I sleep with a peaceful mind at night... I've done a lot of evil, how many lives must I have fucked over, selling drugs, how many kids have I encouraged to smoke pot. These minors I see today, I used to see most of them running around with snot on their noses, wearing diapers, they'd see us with our guns, rifles, and if they're there now it's also because I helped, man. And I also think about my children, nowadays I see my children and crime also exists where my children live, and the guys there all know they're my kids, and the guys talk to them, ask about me, when I pick them up [*the children*] the guys come over to talk. • C., 33, CERRO-CORÁ

E. left trafficking because he feared that he would leave his family helpless if he died. After leaving crime he cherishes the moments spent with his family, especially with his daughter:

I'd go in the house, I'd look at my daughter, my children, and I was afraid that I would be gone one day. 'Mommy, where's Daddy?' And that my mother would suffer and my wife would suffer with all that... I'm trying to recover lost time, things I couldn't do before with my daughter, I'm doing them now... I try to help her with her homework, talk to her about right and wrong, not to hang around with bad company or be out on the streets, and I play with her, calmly. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

Another account from C. prioritizes the time he spends with his children, which he considers the main reward since his departure from crime. In addition, unlike his father, he strives to maintain an understanding approach with his children:

Now and then they spend the whole day with me. We went to watch the parade and then we went to the movies... I don't want to make the mistakes my father made with me – rudeness, he would never listen, all that mattered was his opinion. I don't want that. When my son appeared with a pierced ear, I wanted ... Then he pierced his other ear, 'God damn it.' When I saw my son with two earrings, plucking his eyebrows, 'What the fuck!' But then my current wife, the woman who helps me a lot, [*she said,*] 'The world they live in

today is completely different from the one you were raised in.' And she sits and talks with me. They know I don't like it, sometimes I'll say something, but I try not to be the way my father was with me. • C., 33, CERRO-CORÁ

### Strong family support can be crucial to exits

In a few cases, families mobilized to provide extraordinary support to men leaving trafficking. For example, one father stood by his adolescent son as the son said “good-bye” and paid dues to the traffickers before exiting. This former traffickers’ extended family also rallied to support him financially, emotionally, and in arranging everything around his trip to live with his grandmother in another city so that he would not be exposed to violent confrontations that they anticipated were imminent.

A number of interviewees point to the positive protective influence of other extended family members, including both paternal and maternal figures, who help build a support system. The same activist who cited the presence of his brother as parental figure, also cited the presence of an aunt as another protective factor in dealing with his father’s violence.

When faced with violence or conflict at home, the presence of siblings may help. An activist describes the influential role his eldest brother played in dealing with his father’s violent and suicidal behavior:

Of the five, the leader of the family was the second brother, he was six years older than I was and he was my paternal reference. It was him who took me to school, he took care of me, until today we’re very close and beloved brothers, and I think that it’s obvious that at our age we stayed very close friends. He was fundamental for me in having a paternal reference, he was sort of my idol. • ACTIVIST, 53, MARÉ COMPLEX

Among former traffickers interviewed, men’s spontaneous descriptions of close relationships with their mothers were frequent and significant. They were protective of mothers after having seen them struggle with poverty and, usually, struggle as a single mother who was abandoned by or suffered violence from the father. As captured by previous research in favelas, mothers living in poverty have raised a generation of young men. Grandmothers have also played a significant role in raising children, including for many of the children of former traffickers and women interviewed in this study.

Interestingly, former traffickers often refer to their mothers both as *a reason for entering* (to provide for and support her after seeing her struggle), and *a reason for leaving* (given her suffering and worry). Overall, male and female interviewees involved in trafficking described parenting, both by mothers and fathers, in two extremes: overprotection and not letting children (especially girls) leave the house alone, or parents leaving children “loose” on the street and therefore more exposed to involvement in illegal traffic in drugs.



## MECHANISMS TO “COOL DOWN”

Men most commonly describe an adrenaline rush and absorption in the moment of violence; those who embody resilient and resistant characteristics reflect on and process those experiences afterwards. Repeatedly, men describe being aware of and taking stock of the situation. This typically takes place after a violent episode when they most often describe feeling more neutral or detached.

Participants shared important everyday strategies for coping, resisting, and avoiding bringing violence from the street into the home. Women and men police personnel discussed ways they “cooled down” after an especially stressful day. For one female UPP commander whose husband was also a police officer, having children forced them to leave whatever happened in the “street” behind before coming in the door. Several rituals helped them do this. They had a sofa in the hallway of their apartment building, and the commander sometimes sat there for a good while before entering her home. She always sent coffee downstairs to the doorman so she could drink one with him before going up to the apartment. When her husband took longer to come home after duty, she knew he had a hard day.

Another police officers’ wife notes that her husband rides his bicycle after a shift. A young female soldier commented how her husband, another PMRJ officer, “comes home already changed (from his uniform), with attention and affection” and has food ready by the time she comes home. A military police officer’s wife said her husband used to go to the gym, but now he does construction projects with tiles as a hobby to take his mind off of the streets.

Whether cooking, riding a bicycle, or some other ritual, hobbies and “cooling down” mechanisms are fundamental among the police especially when entering the home. They are also important, albeit to a lesser extent, among other groups. They serve to counter negative forms of dealing with stress such as through violence, ignoring the family, or turning to alcohol or prostitutes, which are all too common says a female psychologist:

I don’t think they want to be less aggressive. It’s a completely twisted strategy. They run to alcohol, they run to drugs, lovers, sex – it’s these strategies that I see in a general form. In my own house I see this, I try to tell [*husband’s name*], ‘Man, you’re an alcoholic’ and he says, ‘Of course not.’ Now he’s slowed down but it used to be almost every day he would come home and drink a beer, a whiskey or a cachaça... He tries to joke around, to fool himself, but to me that’s just trying to deal with suffering.

• FEMALE PSYCHOLOGIST, 37, PMRJ

For the husband whose “cool down” was a bike ride after his shift, stress later increased. His wife says as he rose to a higher rank and work became more stressful, he started drinking every day when he came home, and rarely spent time with their young son. The PMRJ psychologist says that her patients experience similar situations.

## WIDENING LIFE PERSPECTIVES, GAINING MOBILITY

Both former traffickers and activists alike report processes of **widening of their life perspectives**. Men involved in trafficking describe feeling that their time is short and that they need to live intensely in the little time they have outside of working; in contrast, former traffickers begin to plan their lives in a longer time frame. They describe not just giving up the experiences associated with trafficking – parties, casual sex, etc. – but living more frugally and thinking about building family and saving for material goods they need over time.

Broadened **urban mobility** is especially important for transiting through the city without fear of being recognized or arrested, being able to enter enemy areas (in the case of traffickers), and for obtaining opportunities beyond the favela – namely, beyond trafficking. Urban mobility is the ability to access resources and opportunities outside favelas and other low-income areas. For many men, their experience of the city begins after having left crime. As F. narrates his experience of visiting a tourist destination in the city, he recalls with emotion his meditation on life (“a movie passed through in my mind” and “I started to cry”), and his feeling was of freedom (“I’m free, I can do what I want”). A related story comes from B.:

I rarely left the community... You may even go out, but it's very distressing to be out in the street. You're in trouble and you think someone can see you, report you, you start to think a policeman will recognize and arrest you. And so you avoid going out so you can feel safer, you feel safer in the community... Now I'm settled, I take my kids to the mall, I go to the beach. I can peacefully go anywhere, my papers are all good. I don't owe anything to justice. • B., 43, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

Former traffickers lived in and often had power and status exclusively in their community of origin. They lacked mobility around the greater city and thus lacked exposure to alternative identities and opportunities. These findings suggest how exposure to violence and criminality are connected to inequality: both violence and inequality are confined within the same urban spaces rather than in the broader city.

Given the challenges of “staying out” in the long term, it is essential for former traffickers to have geographic distance from the people and territories where they were once active, drug selling points, and rival faction territory. Distance from others requires reconstructing social networks. This distance is often maintained not only in the period immediately after departure, but also long after, given the fear that proximity could incite a desire to return or result in unnecessary risks. The important role of urban mobility nonviolent trajectories among activities is discussed in the following section.

Education has been shown to significantly widen the life perspective of individuals and has also been shown to have a protective effect regarding victimization by violence as well as a positive effect on the construction of nonviolent trajectories. More educated men are less likely to have perpetuated sexual ( $p=0.015$ ) and intimate partner violence ( $p=0.014$ ), our survey shows.



## INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY TRAITS

At the individual level, emotional and pro-social skills are evident among all groups in terms of their nonviolent trajectories: the ability to engage in a dialogue, relate to others, and to mediate. Activists, principally, describe these skills and scenarios beginning from a young age, when they took on the role of breaking up fights in school or the community. Former traffickers describe the positive side of skills they gained in “learning how to deal with people in difficult situations.” Research points to a combination of both individual and environmental factors that can contribute to resilience or protection, in the face of adversity (Barker, 2005).

Some people suggest that leaving crime is a matter of individual-level factors, former traffickers say. First comes a **test of willpower**, which fosters the support of some and asserts itself against the “nay-saying” of others. Like entry into crime and progression within crime, departure from crime is characterized by former traffickers as a testament of a person’s disposition:

The person who likes you, wants your own good... but if the person doesn’t like you, ‘Ah, he’ll soon return to that life, that’s how he is,’ they don’t trust your potential to change and believe you’ll always be like that. E., 29, Maré Complex

The account below comes from H., who also highlights the importance of having supportive figures that believe in rather than doubt a man’s ability to leave trafficking. Leaving and staying out became a source of pride for this man:

Then I came here to the community, it was already pacified and many people would say, ‘Let’s see if he’ll get his hands on it again.’ To get your hands on it is slang for going into crime once again. ‘Let’s see what’s up with him, he won’t put his hands on it because there’s police here, he’ll soon go back to robbing again, he can’t be fixed.’ And today I beat my chest and proudly say that I showed them otherwise, I can proudly say I’m a project and I am a special person, and now I walk with my head held high. I have my job and help from the [NGO] project that they gave me before. H., 23, Maré Complex

Several respondents refer to their departure as a consequence of their maturation. They also present engaging in crime as a result of a reckless and immature attitude they had at the time. **The decision to abandon drug trafficking is most often presented as the product of a responsible attitude, reflecting their newfound maturity.**

Some respondents also mention their **disillusionment with crime**, again pointing to the changes within the criminal world over the past decade: they could not morally justify the increasing violence with crime. Others report a desire to rid themselves of the weight of the knowledge that their wellbeing, as beneficiaries of crime, was achieved at the expense of others:



It's terrible. It's good when you enjoy it, you're happy without taking happiness away from anyone. You are a criminal, you're seen as a criminal, for humanity that's being evil and no one wants to be evil. • A., 51, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

Moreover, the account by G. indicates that departure is experienced as a **broadening of horizons**: the recognition of life opportunities of which he was unaware when in the life of crime:

If you're in the drug trade you use more drugs. You live in the world of drugs, you think about it... But it's not quite like that, there's a whole world out there. Tons of stuff to do, courses, you just need to leave it all for a reality check. • G., 26, MARÉ COMPLEX

If life in trafficking is seen as an illusion, it is understandable that some respondents portray their departures as an acknowledgement of reality.

The narratives of others emphasize the importance of **perspective** in and out of criminality. Some describe gaining perspective when they were in prison, or when a traumatic event happened. Repeatedly, interviewees describe "not realizing what they were in," "next thing I know," or "how did I get here?" Even when thinking about leaving crime, considering doing so often seems unattainably difficult.

If you go now to a drug selling point and talk with a kid, you will talk about it for hours and he won't understand... But if he goes through half the process that I or one of the other kids have gone through in the project [*which encourages and assists leaving crime*] he would understand. • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

The accounts suggest that in addition to having provided them with a means of making a living, crime provided them with certain attitudes related to youth and particular forms of masculinities that favor the use of violence. Some of them, however, eventually distance themselves from these attitudes.



## REJECTION OF MASCULINE NORMS TIED TO VIOLENCE AND TRAFFICKING

Norms of dominant masculinities and values tied to drug trafficking groups are openly rejected by both activists and former traffickers. Among activists interviewed, several specifically reject values around having relationships with many women and owning guns, both popular status symbols among drug traffickers. A number of activists also describe being able to “see through” and reject symbols of status and power, including using violence to obtain these symbols:

I think it’s the power, right, the representation of power, over authority... that who looks at him knows that he’s a dangerous person, **it’s the possibility of becoming famous for holding a gun**. I don’t feel this about them, ah so and so has to know that, because after having a gun and then in between them there’s already a fight for who will be more famous for being more violent. So, for example, you’re caught drunk, wanting to beat on your wife, and your wife goes there and calls the trafficker. When they get there, it’s a fight in between them to show who is more violent, so you’re used as a representation of power that you can have over someone.

• ACTIVIST, 43, MARÉ COMPLEX

The same activist observes traffickers’ desire to be recognized, including for violence, despite the need for other skills even within trafficking:

In this *[trafficking work]*, some say, ‘I am so and so,’ and pow, I say, ‘I’ve never heard of you!’ Wow, they become disappointed, you notice it in their look... So after they enter *[drug trafficking]* they have this necessity inside the group to grow to the best capacity of being violent, even though there’s this side that the kids who really stand out inside the hierarchy are the ones who know how to do accounting. They were those who had better school skills to deal with numbers, to manage money. • ACTIVIST, 43, MARÉ COMPLEX

This rejection of masculine norms is seen less among the police, though some higher-ranked officers condemn lower-ranked soldiers’ for wanting to prove themselves by using guns when it was not necessary.

## NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES: STRATEGIES AMONG FORMER TRAFFICKERS

Men enter and leave drug trafficking multiple times in Rio de Janeiro, especially men in the lower ranks of trafficking, in contrast to gangs in Central America and other parts of the world where leaving is more prohibited. Younger men who participate in trafficking and those who remain as runners and sellers (rather than drug lords) speak of entering and leaving an average of three or four times. The processes of transformation to nonviolence, are thus far from linear.

Among those interviewed, some had left crime a few years ago while others had done so only a few months prior to the interviews. Former traffickers describe a combination of factors, rather than just one, that motivated their departure from crime, including assistance from NGOs, tensions with family members, imprisonment, and traumatic events.

### NGO ASSISTANCE IN LEAVING DRUG TRAFFICKING

Of the former traffickers interviewed, six had left crime at least once while participating in an NGO program. Over the years, Rio de Janeiro has had a handful of NGO projects dedicated to reintegrating former traffickers; while important, these projects are small and temporary as they are grant-based (rather than institutionalized with government support). At the time of research, one primary NGO project actively sought to recruit young men leaving drug trafficking and another employed older generation traffickers.

NGO projects most commonly provide education and job training opportunities, and a stipend for about one year until former traffickers obtain jobs. They also offer legal and psychological support, and counseling with a life philosophy based on values of work and family, the long-term gains of a lifetime in legality, and the expansion of the horizon of expectations of what life can provide.

Finding a job is more difficult with each re-entry into the formal job market, especially after long absences or with a criminal record (when other skills or education are absent), in the experience of all interviewees who have tried. Even during the first part of field research for this study, interviewees from one NGO program said a few men trying to leave had already returned to trafficking, even if to a lesser degree – a testament to the challenge of leaving.

Adherence to religious institutions, especially the Evangelical church, or the belief in God proved critical in some trajectories despite the distrust of some respondents toward religion. Through faith, they gained psychological support and reaffirmed principles contrary to crime. In this research, it arose less in interviews and other strategies but, historically, conversion has been one of the most accepted means of leaving drug trafficking in Brazil (Teixeira, 2008, 2011) and elsewhere in Latin America.



## TENSIONS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS ENCOURAGE TRAFFICKERS TO LEAVE

Reasons that men leave trafficking include the suffering caused to family members as a result of involvement in trafficking; the inability to keep up with everyday family life; the perception that family members depended on them; the fear that, if they died, they would leave the family destitute; and the desire to adequately fulfill the role of a family father.

Some men report taking measures to preserve distance between family and criminal activities while involved in trafficking, making a constant effort to demarcate boundaries between the two worlds, which indicates their valuing of family. Most of the older generation drug lords who once “ruled” over one community say they were concerned with residents and tried to protect them from violence – with a story told about a drug lord taking ammunition out of a police officer’s gun. Two former traffickers say they prohibit the use of violence against women: one because he does not want to be like his father, and another who makes it a policy because he disagrees with the practice.

## IMPRISONMENT: REFLECTIONS ABOUT IMPACT ON FAMILY

Incarceration stands out among the experiences that trigger decisions to depart the life of crime. The theme of family returns again in several traffickers’ accounts. Even men like E., who returned to crime after being released from prison, underline the painfulness of the incarceration experience:

I spent three days, I was a minor, on the fourth day I left... and I was scared from that; I had never been to prison before, prison is a sinister thing. A friend of mine came back crazy from prison. It is a very painful thing, terrible, something that makes you think and say: this won’t work. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

It is precisely because of this suffering that incarceration led C., I., and A. to reflect on the costs of their involvement in drug trafficking, but above all on the costs for their families, ultimately leading them to decide to leave crime:

I saw that I had three people depending on my life change... My two sons and my father, and that’s when I decided, and it came like a door that God opened for me. And I focused and have focused on this. • C., 33, CERRO-CORÁ

In the cases of I. and A., their decision to leave came from conversations with family members during their imprisonment:

When I was on the inside I said, 'I don't want this for my life'... My mother talked to me a lot, 'Son you don't need this.' If I do this, my younger brother would have the same influence... 'Gosh, my brother does it, I'll do it too; it must be cool to carry a gun to the baile'... Then I said, 'No, I don't want my brother ... I know how it is, I lived this life, I don't want my brother to live this life too.' My stepfather also talked to me... I started to cry... I was in solitary, they left me in my underwear the entire time. It was freezing cold, there in solitary in my underwear and they even turned on the air conditioning. There's a small stone for you to sit on, a hole to piss and shit, and that's it. I left that place trembling and pale. 'My white son,' they said. Then I got out in handcuffs. • I., 18, MESQUITA

Your family, your wife. I'm married on paper... You have kids, but you don't have a family life, you know. And so you suffer and you pass that suffering on to your family. Then you get arrested and your family, wife, children all go to the prison door. That hurts you, because you're passing suffering along to a person that has nothing to do with what's happening there, man. And that begins to hurt you: your children go through the humiliation, through all those things... On the next date for me to leave [*prison for trafficking again*], my wife crying... 'Are you going back to that life?... And I'll stay here suffering with our children?' That was that. I said, man, let's work, we can live, we'll find a way. • A., 51, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

Several men interviewed say prison provides opportunities to intensify criminal practices. It functions as a period for establishing connections within crime, to learn, and to gain experience. In addition, in some trajectories prison provides security. It also keeps traffickers away from armed conflicts and thus the years spent in prison may be one of the reasons why some respondents remained relatively unscathed after so many years in crime. B. makes the following assessment: *"Twenty-seven years [in crime]. During these 27 years, 10 were in prison. I think if I hadn't been behind bars during these 10 years I'd have died."*



## EXIT DUE TO TRAUMA: DEATH OF FRIENDS, RISK OF BEING SHOT

Leaving the life of crime may occur after a certain traumatic event, often in combination with age, and being tired of the fears, risks, and lifestyle associated with trafficking. Among men interviewed, a traumatic event often prompts them to weigh the costs of a criminal career and shows them that crime is not worth it. Traumatic moments may lead them to re-think and reflect upon themselves and/or to become open to appeals from relatives to leave crime:

I had a pulmonary infection, suffered during six months in the hospital, you know, suffering a lot, and I said, man, I’m gonna leave this thing, this is crazy, this is no life to live, and I opened my mind... The way I was, God forbid, save me and give me many years to live. I was supposed to be dead already. I stayed six months in the hospital. Here, look [*showing his scar*]. There was a drain here in this hole, you know, like a puppy. That’s what gave me strength. • G., 26, MARÉ COMPLEX

Injuries, bullet wounds, or other traumatic events do not always lead to major turning points, however. Among most men interviewed, a suffered blow did not trigger reflection on life or a meditation on the costs of a criminal life, and did not necessarily cause them to leave a life of crime. This was true even for some respondents who at a later time established an exit strategy after a setback. Therefore, it is a specific conjunction between life trajectory and an event that causes the latter to become a turning point.

Respondents emphasize aspects of trafficking such as the shootings, fallen comrades, violence suffered (which remains with them), and fear of being arrested or killed. They recall the restlessness of a life lived constantly on alert and away from their wife and children, and difficulty experiencing their children growing up. And they describe long and excessive working hours and being “on call.”

The accounts below are from C., who held a prominent position in traffic:

It’s a situation that I can’t even explain to you, how it feels to carry a dead friend, shot in the face with an open stomach, his intestines hanging out. You see the man dying, holding your hand there, watching the agony of man struggling against death... and he says, ‘Don’t forget my children... take care of my children for me.’ You see the guy dying and you have run away and leave him there.

Something happens inside my chest when I come back to these moments... But you’re involved with it all, guns, so many women after you, baile funk every weekend, forbidden funk music songs (proibidão) mentioning your name. All of that blinds you, the feeling of power that you have: the powerless, the powerful. All of that blinds you. • C., 33, CERRO-CORÁ

The adrenaline rush or sense of indifference during the moment of violence is different from the memories that come after, men report. These memories are often visually vivid and followed by insomnia.

Only when you come back... I'd go home, take a cold shower, then I'd remember everything and all, this happened a lot to me and some of my colleagues who aren't alive any longer. I'd remember the person's face, as if I felt – it gives me goose bumps thinking about it – as if I felt the terror I caused to that person through his eyes. Or else when I put the gun in the hands of a child, the look of terror in the father's or mother's eyes. Another example: there's some pumped, strong guy and me all skinny putting on a show, showing him that I'm the man (eu sou o cara). All of that came to me, and I'd stop and think: fuck, that's crazy. And how hard it is to sleep after all this. • H., 23, MARÉ COMPLEX

Risk and constant worry constitute reasons for E. and G. to leave traffic:

You suffer a lot, I went to war with another favela, you see your friend getting shot, asking for help and I couldn't do anything about it because I was shot too ... I was almost crippled. I can't close my left hand... Damn, you can't imagine it, you spend 13 years in traffic, how many adrenaline rush situations haven't you gone through? The police there on your tail, shoots at you and you have to run desperately. And you see yourself going forward and your friends staying behind... When you invade an enemy area, you don't know what's behind that alley, over that slab... If I could go back, I'd do everything differently, I would do it all differently... It is a business that's not worth it, you see it's really a thing of the enemy [*the devil*], all of that is there to make you blind. And unfortunately the enemy is dirty, he blinds you with clothing, bikes, cars, gold chains, a good life, weapons, respect... a sense of power. • E., 29, MARÉ COMPLEX

I'd go in and out [*of traffic*], but sometimes I'd stay a long time. Hiding from the police, armed, other's people money in my bag, you don't sleep properly, you can't rest your head to sleep... Always worried about your life... Everything's baile, whiskey, women, sleepless nights, alleyways, hiding, it's tough... There was a never a good side for me... If you say it's good you're crazy. What is the good side if you can lose your life tomorrow?... There are three things: dying, prison, or crippled in a wheelchair. Are these three things the good side for them?... The only ones left [*from his friends during his time in traffic*] are me and that guy there you were talking with outside [*of the interview*]. • G., 26, MARÉ COMPLEX





## “ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO LEAVE”: YOUTH AND LOW RANK

Younger age and lower rank often mean fewer obligations and greater potential to leave. There are many obstacles for leaving crime, and these obstacles increase with age and rank including entanglement with political, economic, and moral obligations, all traversed by the illegality of crime. Men in higher positions may have to pay any “outstanding debts” (to the *chefe*) “in order to avoid being vulnerable,” as one former trafficker describes it.

B., for example, reports that before leaving crime he had to coordinate the delivery of weapons and drugs entrusted to him, undertake negotiations involving actors in other locations and traffickers who had been or arrested, and even manage the inheritance materials from deceased traffickers.

I think that adolescence, that whole period of discoveries... So the kid goes into the drug trade, then he becomes an adult. That’s how they learned it, that’s how they were brought up. That was the case with me when I was a teenager, some 13, 14, 15 years old. Adolescence ends, you’ll become an adult, and if sometime later in his adult life, or maybe even during adolescence, he wants to leave he can’t do it anymore. First, because he got used to that easy life: he doesn’t have a profession, can’t do anything else, doesn’t know how to obey anyone, has no rules, wakes up and sleeps whenever he wants, does whatever he wants. Of course there’s a hierarchy within traffic, but you have that freedom.

And this is how I see it, the guy’s inside traffic, with his power, success, 20 women inside the favela, car and motorcycle of the year, the best sneakers, a gold chain. He has no peace and if he wants to leave he can’t anymore. Because he knows too many people already, he’s seen too much, he knows the whole organization, has a bunch of enemies. The money he earned, he’s earned more enemies than money. It’s almost impossible to leave now. And then it’s all about either dying or going to prison. • D., 31, VIDIGAL

Some respondents lucky enough not to have died and aged within crime ultimately feel misplaced within contemporary trafficking groups, and do not wish to stay. B. describes how with maturity comes physical and mental fatigue:

I can’t fucking take it anymore. I’m old, I can’t handle being locked away, I have three bullet marks on my body, I can’t handle this anymore... I used to be skinny, now I’m fat. I can’t run from the police anymore... And so your head changes, age comes along, you become tired, your head changes, you have a broader view on things... It’s tough, you become tired, you believe you’re one thing and when you see it you’re another. • B., 43, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

Another factor making it hard to leave is attachment to what crime provides, interviewees said: “*Once you become used to it, it’s very hard to leave.*” They speak of the vulnerable condition of those who leave, which may be related to potential violence from the police and from crime. For example, A. jokes about several death threats he has received: “*You know what I say to them? Get in line because the queue has passed beyond Sao Paulo.*” Men who want to leave may also be vulnerable because of their debts with justice: “*I still had my legal problems. I couldn’t leave and become vulnerable,*” a former trafficker said. There is also the difficulty of finding a job especially in the case of former prison inmates, as well as inadequate labor wages. Such were the reasons that led H., G., and E. to return to crime after having attempted to leave on previous occasions. In addition, the need to provide family support remains real. Insecurity undermines the ability to picture different destinies after so many years in crime, as A. reflected: “*Forty years in crime, to leave like this... Where to?*”

### “IT’S NOT WORTH IT”: LIFE IN CRIME MEANS SOCIAL ISOLATION

Respondents unanimously describe a negative view of their experience in crime. They enjoy what crime provides yet describe its attractions as an “illusion” or “blindness.” They describe a lack of moral justification, misplaced sense of prestige, and an “unruly” life. The pleasures provided by crime serve to keep them bound to a life that ultimately is “not worth it.”

References to crime are almost always negative and characterized as morally reprehensible, with the exception of nostalgic idealization of “the times of drug trafficking in the past.” Some men insist that crime does have a good side; but, in doing so, they mention the hedonism of their lifestyle.

When speaking of the changes within the criminal world, B. emphasizes the decline of an approach of support and collectivity, and the rise of individualism. Some men leave crime because they dislike the current configurations it is taking:

And so it was different [*back then*]: the guys had a box, if you got arrested and depended on money to get out, someone would take money from that box and release you – they paid the cops to release you. Nowadays if you’re arrested no one cares about you... There was unity, people cared about each other. If you had a plan to escape prison everyone chipped in with some money. • B., 43, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

The change in trafficking can also be understood as favoring a more hypermasculine version of masculinities, as B. continues:

Nowadays it’s every man for himself, survival of the fittest. ‘I’m the man, I have so many communities [*under my control*]. I have this many guns, I run everything.’ So it all became very divided.



## REDEFINE “REAL MEN”: FOSTER ALTERNATIVE NONVIOLENT IDENTITIES

The findings suggest that social norms valuing men as providers and responsible workers need to outweigh the attractions of being a provider and a man who uses violence. One way this is done is through involvement in an NGO reintegration project that supports transition into the formal job market, yet projects are of limited duration.

A few young men describe the search for alternative identities as a man – something two young former traffickers found in a dance called *passinho*. This mix of breakdancing and the popular funk of Rio’s favelas involves a performance of masculinity that offers an allure to women similar to the drug trade’s infamous *funk bailes*. It does not appeal to masculinities associated with violence; rather, it is associated with bodily skill, technique, and aesthetics. Dancing provides a forum in which the two young traffickers can continue to show off name brand clothing – the style and status they once enjoyed as traffickers – and display themselves on the street and in popular online videos. Dancing *passinho* does not come close to offering the money of trafficking. However, as one young former trafficker who now dances (and paints houses to earn a living) says, it has some similar benefits:

When I was involved in the other life [*traffic*], the girls liked it. But I said, ‘Is that all there is [*being in traffic*] – or is there another way to get attention?’

• FORMER TRAFFICKER WHO DANCES PASSINHO

The other young dancer interviewed says that “Now in the dances (*bailes*), it’s not just the criminals who get attention – it’s dancers, too.”

A trajectory out of violence offers more than nonviolence: it also provides an opportunity to adjust gender norms toward greater equity, as seen in the examples of men taking on more active caregiving roles and household tasks upon leaving trafficking. In addition, men describe wanting to alleviate the worry of family members and mend the relationships with those they had held at a distance or treated poorly during involvement in the illegal drug trade. The tendency, especially for younger and less experienced drug traffickers, to enter and leave gangs multiple times has policy implications; policymakers can capitalize on moments in which young traffickers leave and can be encouraged to stay out.

## NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES: STRATEGIES AMONG POLICE

Among police, “nonviolence” is “non-mandatory.” In other words, all of the strategies discussed in this section depend on the individual prerogative of police officers (or perhaps encouragement from a like-minded commander). Strategies for police include obtaining mediation training or any kind of training that promotes human rights and nonviolent conflict resolution or a broader view of addressing urban violence in Rio de Janeiro; developing relationships of trust with residents; and seeking psychological support to address violence experienced on the job or earlier in life.

The qualitative findings show a remarkable absence of police strategies to resist or reduce the use of violence in the streets, while on patrol in particular. Compared with male police officers, female police raise the importance of dialogue and mediation much more frequently, and see use of force as a last resort to solve conflicts. This finding should be further analyzed in order to understand the implications, such as the greater expectation and acceptability for women (when compared to men) to use mediation in the police force.

Police officers, male and female, talk about removing themselves from the street to more administrative positions. They also note the importance of going beyond basic training, and to pursuing higher education in social sciences (as done by the highest-ranked colonels). They seek education that offers a broader and more critical look at public security. One male colonel, for example, explained how he incorporated the use of literature and art during trainings for officers, to include reflections around death. Such discussion on death is part of a discourse that departs from a normalizing – and even glorification, as this colonel suggests – of violence, arms, and death that prevails among traffickers alike.

### **Mechanisms to prevent taking stress from work to home**

Creating mechanisms to avoid bringing workday stress from the streets into the home is the main nonviolent strategy cited by police. Police operating on the street (*praças*) are exposed to risks associated with the use of violence, pressures, and may feel devalued and underpaid in their roles. Higher-ranked officers, on the other hand, complain of institutional and political stressors.

Using strategies to avoid taking work-related stress into the home is a practice a number of male police officers consider important. The men describe an extremely high level of “off-duty stress” that carries over into relationships with their partners and families and also into other public places in which they circulate. For example, police have their fears of being recognized and killed while off duty. Female partners of police officers (two were also in the PMRJ) recount increased stress during the times of violent protests prior to the World Cup. They also attribute stress to poor working conditions and poor pay.

Female officers also acknowledged stress. One commander explains that her marriage to another PMRJ officer helped them understand their stress, including when her husband was in a shock battalion:



I have a great facilitator [*in dealing with work stress*]: my husband is from the same profession and now he’s working with the UPP. But before he was with a type of repressive police, it was the shock battalion... Everything for him was shooting, beatings, and bombs, so you can imagine the two of us angry together inside the house? So we always had to create mechanisms. • FEMALE, 38, PMRJ COMMANDER

Finally, another strategy police officers employ is to communicate with their children about the presence of guns in their homes, in order to minimize the potential risk of their presence:

Now he’s a bit older and I tell him, don’t touch this, this is a firearm, this right here hurts. • MALE OFFICER (SOLDIER), 41, PMRJ

When I got older... he tried to familiarize me with the handgun... So with the unloaded handgun he would say, ‘Get the gun, up there, by the handle and bring it to me’ and I would get it. So he tried to not let it turn into something forbidden, not to incite our curiosity, and he always had this very open relationship with us. ‘It’s not for you to mess with this, it’s dangerous. If you mess with this, you’ll have a lot of problems. If you’re curious about how the weapon works I can take you places for you to understand, shooting ranges’... So I never had any major fascination about the handgun. • YOUNG WOMEN, 23, STEP-DAUGHTER OF PMRJ OFFICER

### Seeking psychological services within the police force

Psychological support is fundamental to preventing transfers of violence from the street to the home. Such services are remarkably rare. At the time of the fieldwork, 50 psychologists served more than 50,000 military police (PMRJ). Several interviewees cite the importance of family support in dealing with urban violence, while a few male police officers refer to the importance of institutional psychological support in reducing stress.

A female psychologist in the military police in particular advocates the potential of psychological services. She reports strong resistance on the part of police officers to seek help. Much of this reluctance is due to hypermasculine norms around men as tough police officers:

There’s a big stereotype in this image of being a military officer, in being a hard-ass, that therapy is a thing for the weak, to display feelings, talk about this, suffering. I think there’s still a lot of resistance. • FEMALE PSYCHOLOGIST, 37, PMRJ

In the following example of men’s resistance to psychological services, a commander plays a vital role in supporting a police officers’ treatment, and importantly, removing him from street duty:

I didn't believe it, because he said that his wife continued saying that he was still neurotic but he thought he was getting better; and he didn't want to, there's no way to oblige him. I already told his boss [*a commander*], 'Look, I think he needs this, but he doesn't want to and he's at liberty not to want it, but if I were you I would not put him out on the streets for now.' This boss listened, but there are others who may not... and this one [*the police officer*] stayed working internally [*and off the streets*].

Addressing issues of self-esteem and demoralization among police is an important part of their psychological support:

It's because he has his problems and difficulties with self-esteem and those issues... In a general sense, police officers have very bad self-esteem, my colleagues and I always heard this... As I said, they work a lot and are not valued for their work, they have a work day of at least 40 hours, at the minimum because they always work more, they have service, they get out late. We have hours to come in and hours to come out, but if the battalion is under alert no one can leave, but [*psychologists*] can leave and we make the same thing. • FEMALE PSYCHOLOGIST, 37, PMRJ

Encouraging well-respected officers and key influencers to seek (and promote) psychological services is a nonviolent strategy for police. Such leaders can serve as an example for others and "normalize" the seeking of help. The wife of a police officer describes her husband's experience after a close encounter with death:

It was post-traumatic stress. For me he was a huge 'champion.' I always told him, 'Gosh tell everyone,' and he would really tell them, and he was a guy who was highly respected – respected because he was a highly operational [*officer*]. He must have really been a killer, he wasn't afraid; he really went into combat. He was really well known, really respected, so much that no one messed with him and people would come talk to me with a lot of respect to know if he was doing better, if he was taking care of himself... It's a much-needed 'campaign' [*to support male officers in seeking psychological services*]. He said, 'I didn't know that it was an illness, I thought I was becoming crazy' and then a friend said, 'No, go to the psychologist,' and so on. And then he started telling others, 'I got better with the psychologist, with the therapy.' • WIFE OF POLICE OFFICER, 25, NOVA AMÉRICA

Her husband returned from work wanting to stay off the streets. She recounts an exchange in which he succeeded in rejecting a masculine form of humiliation from his commander: "*The commander said, 'Ah you want to stay inside? Then go clean the bathroom.'* And he said, 'OK!'"



## NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES: STRATEGIES AMONG ACTIVISTS

### Rejecting violence and trafficking during childhood

The activists who promoted peace, nonviolence, or social equality grew up in the same environments as the traffickers, yet they pursued pathways away from violence. Two had even formerly been drug traffickers, but beginning in childhood did not identify with the life of trafficking.

Among activists interviewed, a number of strategies are identified for rejecting – rather than replicating – violence witnessed or experienced as a child or adolescent. For example, growing up around violence may push them to continue their studies and other opportunities. Many activists see their own friends either go away to prison or die as a result of joining a drug trafficking group, and feel deterred from joining:

Time went by and I started to see more of things, the crowd becoming involved with trafficking, getting arrested, people dying, too. So I began to realize that that wasn't the type of gig that I wanted for myself like, seeing a guy die in front of your house.

• ACTIVIST, 24, MARÉ COMPLEX

Some interviewees had family members who experienced violence from police and others had family members who had either joined trafficking or experienced violence from drug traffickers.

### Developing and sustaining nonviolent peer groups

Several activists expressed a sense of agency in developing their identity through peer groups that were not involved with trafficking. One activist, who grew up amidst violence in his favela but not in his home, explained how he picked up a camera on his own and built a group of friends within the community around his hobby. He is now a community photo journalist. An essential part of this resistant strategy is developing a peer group outside of trafficking:

I started doing it alone, I grabbed a camera and started to photograph. And then came a friend, and he said he had bought a new camera, and he wanted to learn how to use it. Afterwards came another friend who liked the idea and wanted to buy a camera for himself too. And the group grew, and we began to make it 'official.' Every Saturday, we would go around Rocinha, photographing everything. We learned about everything, see the light, questions of angles, questions of shadows. There were even residents who would go by and pose... it was very fun. • ACTIVIST, 31, ROCINHA

The presence of a peer group during their teenage years serves as a sort of protective mechanism for men to resist joining drug trafficking groups. One activist explains the positive and protective influence of this peer group as a teenager:



We ourselves strengthened our group, until today when we meet up somewhere ... even the ones that went to live outside *[of the favela]*, right, always have this link that they have to come back, that we have to reunite. So this part stayed very strong. We really defended ourselves because of the violence too, right, it was a way for us to protect ourselves. Normally the ones who would go around alone suffered a lot from the violence of certain groups, right. And our group was the more open group, we were the group who accepted everyone, those who weren't accepted in other groups were always there *[in our group]*. • **ACTIVIST, 43, MARÉ COMPLEX**

### Learning mediation at a young age

Like men in other interview groups (police officers, drug traffickers, and men who used IPV), a number of activists recall engaging in street fights and violent behavior as in childhood and adolescence. In contrast to these groups, however, activists had more positive peer groups, and some describe playing a type of mediator role from a young age. The activist who formed a photography group, mentioned previously, describes how he received his nickname:

I was always sort of a 'UN type,' in fourth grade a professor told me like this, that I was like the UN *[United Nations]* because I got along always with the most rowdy and the most nerdy. I was always in the middle. And I always tried to break up fights, because it was on one side, the rowdy guy, who just knew of fighting and was my friend – and on the other side, the one that didn't want anything to do with it *[fighting]*, didn't even know how to fight, but got himself involved. • **ACTIVIST, 31, ROCINHA**

Activists also note a demand for police officers as mediators. A vacuum in conflict mediation formerly assumed by drug traffickers in communities is resulting in an increase in public and private violence, activists explain. This again questions the role of the police as either aggressor or mediator.



### Activists’ social mobility

Having greater mobility in the rest of the city beyond one’s own neighborhood is a crucial factor that facilitates exiting trafficking among all groups; it is especially significant for activists. When they lived and operated in favelas where they grew up, they had social networks and references beyond the favela and were thus less affected by vulnerabilities faced by those who remain only within the community (including traffickers and their families). Activists from Rocinha and Rocha Miranda, for example, say they learned their way around the city center, gaining access to networks including job opportunities beyond those previously perceived as available as favela residents. As adults, activists find that their potential impact on reducing violence is stifled by the very risks associated with their work in the violent contexts in which they live.

Interviewees describe a situation in which traffickers have power and mobility within the territory they dominate, but cannot go to areas controlled by other factions, and rarely leave their own favela. Masculinity is created and contested within the favela, and in the same community, status can be achieved, lost, and re-gained by commanding respect in the eyes of other traffickers and of women. Living in a favela provides protection for traffickers given their status, but it also presents major vulnerabilities and limitations in terms of greater opportunities and aspirations.

Crucially, this greater mobility on the part of activists, and restricted territory on the part of traffickers, means that activists had greater exposure to forms of masculinities distant from those that favor violence and gender inequity.

# CONCLUSIONS AND STRATEGIES



## CONCLUSIONS

Experiences from childhood through adolescence in settings of socioeconomic inequality and high levels of urban violence promote men's use of violence and especially their *willingness to use violence*, as findings from this research show. The interviews suggest that rarely do men *want* to use violence; rather, they feel pressured to use it, especially in groups involving other men. Their willingness to use violence is accompanied by rewards related to hypermasculine ideals that in turn are actively encouraged by their male peer networks involved in groups contributing to urban violence.

When men do not show this willingness to use violence, they risk violent reprisals themselves. Yet amidst risks of and incentives to use violence, men respond with small forms of resistance, and they pursue lifelong trajectories away from violence and armed groups. **Their world widens to one that includes other models of engagement as more equal fathers and partners, and as active citizens with a stake in taking part in the construction of their own safer and more inclusive city.** Our qualitative research suggests that when they are able to sustain a pathway out of violence, men feel more satisfied with those options compared to a life in which violence is imminent – both expected of and a threat against them. A former trafficker says no man wishes for a life of crime:

Nobody wants to stay in crime... 'I love crime.' You won't find a single person saying that to you... He may boast and say this, because he's clueless, but I doubt you'd find someone saying that with their heart. There's no way you'll find that. • A., 51, ALEMÃO COMPLEX

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITIES AND TRAJECTORIES OUT OF VIOLENCE ARE COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC**

• Men may leave trafficking or become peace activists, but some soon return again. Police may promote non-confrontational approaches in their work, but bring violence and tension into the home. Also, there are real economic incentives to enter and remain in trafficking.

The findings from this research point to three main conclusions. **First, the impacts of urban violence are widespread and not confined to the streets: every day, partners and family members experience the weight of urban violence and socioeconomic stresses that men are expected to bear.** When these wider effects are addressed, sons and daughters can grow up in a city in which they do not live in fear of what will happen to them and those in their lives – especially important for the families of low-income, young black men. The neighborhood with higher homicide rates (North) consistently has higher rates of nearly every kind of violence – public and private – and higher rates of fear among its residents.

**Second, it is essential to move beyond the notion that violence is “natural” for men and to address the overwhelmingly low-income, young black face of homicides in Brazilian cities like Rio de Janeiro.** It is critical to move beyond a repressive model of policing or blaming of individuals.

**Third, our findings suggest that exposure to urban violence either through personal experience of violence or indirectly by residing in areas with high homicide rates promotes violent trajectories.** In this regard, the results suggest an interplay of violence between public/urban and private/domestic spheres. In multi-variate analyses, men who were exposed to urban violence during childhood are nearly four times as likely to have used a form of violence (public or private), and nearly four times as likely to have used IPV compared with men who were not exposed to urban violence during childhood. In addition, men who report feeling fear of any social actor are nearly twice as likely to report using IPV.

**THESE FINDINGS SUGGEST THAT MEN'S FEAR OF THREATS RELATED TO URBAN VIOLENCE TRANSLATE INTO THE USE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THEIR FEMALE PARTNERS<sup>21</sup>**

• Fear generates resentment toward others, challenges dominant male identities, and creates feelings of powerlessness. A man responds to these feelings of powerlessness by using violence against someone vulnerable or weaker than him – namely his female partner – as a way to reclaim power.

Similarly, the quantitative results of this research suggest an association between work-related/economic stress and perpetration of physical and verbal urban violence. Dominant masculine identities may be challenged amidst fear of threats, economic stress, and low self-esteem, again shaping violent masculinities.

21. These findings can be seen in the Adjusted Odd Ratio tables in Annex 2.



In sum, it is important to address the patriarchal structures that create violence and foster political and financial motivation to perpetuate repressive security policies, and to address the lack of support structures present for pursuing nonviolence. Of all the groups in the study, only the police had formal spaces for therapy, yet insufficient compared to the need. **To focus on nonviolent, equitable, caring versions of manhood and womanhood and on strategies for nonviolence is a profound and new agenda for public security, and for safer and more inclusive cities.**

**Urban violence will lessen when measures of youth welfare, opportunities, social equality, and income equality improve.** An underlying assumption of public security approaches in Rio de Janeiro – and one not unfamiliar to other Latin American cities – is that bolstering the numbers of police will reduce urban violence. As such, significant amounts of political and financial resources are dedicated to temporary responses and in reinforcing repressive solutions.

This is a critical moment in Rio de Janeiro's public security history and a moment where alternatives to confrontation may be more relevant than ever. Samira Bueno, Executive Director of the Forum de Segurança Pública, recently stated that while the UPP gives the sensation that it will be possible to reverse urban violence patterns, the question remains "until when will it be possible to reduce (criminality) just with police activity? There is a limit to this model."<sup>22</sup>

A more integrated public security model could have much to gain by considering the vulnerabilities, social conditions, and existing nonviolent trajectories that could be leveraged in prevention and other types of social programs with long-term effects in reducing urban violence rates. Existing solutions overlook patriarchal structures, gender inequalities, and race. Developing more inclusive and comprehensive security models entails addressing the under-acknowledged and yet preventable militarized and hypermasculine norms that uphold violence. Most of all, favelas remain isolated from inclusive security models and strong police reform – and from better education, health, and employment opportunities that facilitate nonviolent trajectories starting from the earliest years in life.

This research shows how former traffickers, police, and their spouses and family members who live in scenarios of urban violence employ remarkable strategies to overcome vulnerabilities, to avoid using violence in the first place, and to develop nonviolent trajectories. The trajectories of these women and men – analyzed from their own experiences – provide a wealth of knowledge for promoting nonviolence. There are numerous implications for policy and practice to transform vulnerabilities to nonviolent pathways; several of these implications are discussed in the final section of this report.

22. See: <http://oglobo.globo.com/rio/estudo-mostra-rio-como-quinta-capital-menos-insegura-17646269>

## STRATEGIES FOR PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND RESEARCH

Strategies to promote nonviolence must reflect the shifting nature of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro, including noting the changes in drug trafficking patterns and persisting police violence. Strategies should also offer viable and attractive alternatives to youth, beginning from an early age.

Urban public security policies should include an innovative gender perspective, rather than initiatives that are punitive or morally based, in order to confront the structural problems related to violence in Rio de Janeiro and other cities. Overcoming inequalities is central to reducing violence. Collective policies, rather than ones that solely target individuals who use violence, are necessary in order to sustain new, peaceful forms of coexistence within communities. The following strategies emerge from the results of this mixed-methods study and reflect the need for action from various sectors so that responses may be holistic and lasting.

**PRIORITIZE PROGRAMMING AIMED TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND TRANSFORM GENDER NORMS** • There is a need for programs that work with at-risk groups to address norms and values around masculinities that may lead youth to enter drug trafficking and violence. Given findings that show it is easier for lower-ranked boys to leave, efforts should be made to intervene before boys enter trafficking and while they are in early stages as child soldiers.

Several evaluated models of group education methodologies designed to transform and prevent violence provide a basis for adaptation. These include Promundo's Program H/M (H for *homens/hombres* and M for *mulheres/mujeres* in Portuguese and Spanish, respectively, meaning "men and women"). These efforts to foster nonviolence should be made available in schools, health centers, and in other spaces that are accessible to children and youth.

At their core, these programs address the fundamental and gendered processes of socialization and the prevention of violence. They provide avenues for young men to reflect and develop alternatives to the very real pressures to provide and demonstrate status (i.e., shown by displays of name brand clothing acquired through participation in armed groups) and the pressures to use violence as a tool to exert power and respect. Efforts fostering young men's initiative to develop their own nonviolent markers of manhood and status, resolve conflicts through dialogue, and favor healthy relationships are crucial.





**OFFER SPACES FOR YOUTH TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED THROUGHOUT CHILDHOOD** • This includes secondary prevention of violence in schools and other spaces in order to prevent intergenerational transfers of violence. Initiatives such as Promundo’s Living Peace groups have been adapted to post-conflict settings and could expand to those of chronic urban violence. “Living Urban Peace” and “Youth Living Peace” are promising models in the planning stages of development. They focus on secondary violence prevention through socio-educational activities and group therapy sessions held with young boys and professionals who work with boys (e.g., social workers and teachers). They enable boys to develop positive coping strategies and restore healthy, violence-free relationships in settings of high levels of violence. These approaches also promote strengthening the capacity of community service organizations to support survivors and victims, advocacy with policymakers to implement successful programming, and policies to prevent and respond to youth violence and exposure to violence. Such groups are relevant both to future policemen and other men who do not use violence whether in trafficking or their own relationships.

**OFFER GROUP EDUCATION FOR ADULT MEN WHO HAVE USED OR MAY USE IPV AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE** • Spaces for men to seek help for using IPV are extremely limited, as indicated by the quantitative data showing perpetration of these forms of gender-based violence. Groups exist for men convicted of using IPV (many other interviewees used IPV and were never convicted), and a small fraction of police may be referred to a psychologist. Findings, however, reinforce the need for prevention and for breaking cycles of physical violence or controlling behaviors that may contribute to physical IPV.

**ADOPT INTEGRATED STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT NONVIOLENT TRAJECTORIES OF MULTIPLE ACTORS** • One aspect of these efforts includes investing in civil disarmament. A unique disarmament initiative was introduced in 2004 in Rio de Janeiro;<sup>23</sup> subsequently, however, no substantial program at the government level has been created to address the transitions of many men (mostly young men) who had recently turned in their arms and/or left drug trafficking. Our research advises against Bill 3722<sup>24</sup> and recommends the investment in a new national gun buyback campaign aimed at more comprehensively addressing risks and use of firearms.

Some action has been taken, though only by a handful of NGO-based and short-term initiatives, which are insufficient to support nonviolent trajectories of a population – trajectories that are vital to improving public security. Lacking positive alternatives, youth face higher risks of being embraced by a gang or becoming involved in violent trajectories with accompanying manifestations of violence in their intimate/family relationships. As such, there is a need to prevent violence among youth who may be at risk of joining an armed group, and a need to support youth who have already been involved in an armed group and are making efforts to leave and stay out.

23. Rio de Janeiro was the state with the second highest number of weapons turned into the program (Bandeira & Bourgois, 2005). Subsequent campaigns followed (with another main initiative in 2011), but with fewer numbers of weapons collected. Since 2004, the disarmament campaign collected 650,336 weapons throughout Brazil (Ministério da Justiça, 2014).
24. Bill 3722 would take away gun carrying limitations, decrease the minimum age for the acquisition of firearms from 25 to 21 years old, allow citizens to have more than six guns without any type of justification and end the mandatory background checks for all new gun purchases.

**ADDRESS PRACTICAL EMPLOYMENT NEEDS** • If lack of employment opportunities is a major reason for entering drug trafficking, what are meaningful alternatives? The financial crisis that emerged in the last year of this research (2015) presents an opportunity to reflect on gender norms associated with hegemonic masculinity and men as “providers.” Both the groups of men who used IPV and former traffickers described feelings of shame around being unemployed and having a loss of identity as men. This theme of “no income = no manhood” is reinforced in previous research on masculinities in Brazil (Barker, 2005).

The implications of urban violence for inequality are clear: low-income communities experience urban violence and failed policy attempts to reduce it. Local businesses, residents, and families experience economic setbacks in unsafe neighborhoods, and favela communities that were temporarily safer (with UPPs for example) are returning to past levels of violence that shift daily routines and opportunities that involve nonviolent pathways.

**ADDRESS PARTICIPANTS’ AGE, RACE, CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES, AND ASPIRATIONS**

• Violence prevention programs can be much more effective when they reflect sociodemographic characteristics of the populations most at risk. Men and women interviewed said that society (upper and middle-class) assumes that favela residents are violent without understanding the greater economic and social politics. Furthermore, supporting campaigns such as Amnesty International’s “Young, Black, Alive” (*Jovem Negro Vivo*) campaign – at international and national levels – is critical for raising awareness of and addressing urban violence in a way that brings visibility to rather than marginalizes the group most at risk.

**ADDRESS POLICE VIOLENCE, INCLUDING TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING MECHANISMS**

• Substantive efforts to reform the police force are required in order for policing to shift away from militarized tactics that favor the use of excessive force, corruption, torture, and lack of routine investigations. Incentives – beginning with decent salaries – must be given to male and female police to value and integrate methods of conflict resolution and nonviolence. By doing so, police have a greater chance of countering the persisting militarized war ethos and instead becoming allies in more peaceful communities.

It is necessary to take into consideration that police themselves are often raised in contexts of urban violence. Promoting psychological support within police forces and developing tools for dealing with threats of violence, death, and forms of discrimination against low-income, young black men are essential. Higher-ranked officials and well-respected “combat” soldiers have a role in advocating for lower-ranked officers to seek psychological services as way to break taboos of men seeking mental health services. Working with the police will also entail bridging gaps between the high commanders and police in the streets who are exposed to and



use the most armed violence. Finally, programs for police should leverage existing strategies to reduce stress between work on the streets and coming home.

**PROMOTE MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS** • Mediation and nonviolent conflict resolution practices have been developed and tested in favelas and other communities during the past few years. Several of the male and female police officers interviewed emphasized the importance of mediation and conflict resolution skills.

Examples of these practices exist in a small number of UPPs and though they face resistance and weak overall support, they are promising approaches. In the current model, however, only some police receive special training in mediation – as if it were not part of their everyday work. As such, these mechanisms must become mainstreamed as “real police training” if the confrontation model of policing is to be overcome.

Some interviewees who describe open dialogue and nonviolence during childhood (female and male police officers and activists) say this influenced them to use dialogue to solve conflicts later on in adult life. There is need for more focus on and programs around nonviolent caregiving and communication for parents.

Dialogue between police and residents must extend beyond the lip service of “proximity policing” to legitimate exchanges and actions based on prioritizing residents’ security.<sup>25</sup> A local level example is promoting community forums, which was started but never sustained by the former “Social” UPP program. Finally, training in using and displaying arms is important to reduce the daily, militarized impact of police presence in all types of communities.

**FOSTER CAREGIVING, INVOLVED FATHERHOOD, AND ROLE MODELS WHO ARE POSITIVE AND NONVIOLENT.** • Caregiving should be promoted as a revolutionary and evidence-based strategy, whether involving biological or non-biological parents or adults. One woman from the Alemão Complex described how her husband, a former trafficker, had a painful and violent upbringing with his own father, but that he had received support to stay out of trafficking from her own parents. Global work on fatherhood and caregiving also is showing promising potential in numerous conflict-affected settings.

Promundo’s Program P (for *paternidade/paternidad* or “fatherhood”) could also be effective. Findings demonstrate how experiences of violence or otherwise negative experiences with one’s father affect men’s use of or resistance toward violence in their adult lives.<sup>26</sup> Prevention programs should also consider concepts of respect, dignity, and other attributes that young men desire. Programs focused on nonviolent caregiving for mothers and fathers have an enormous role to play in preventing violence among the next generation.

25. Adapted from the panel presentation by Ignacio Cano and others, “The Future of UPPs” (27 January, 2015, Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro).

26. Information about Program P is available at the following link: <http://www.promundo.org.br/en/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Final-Program-P-Single-Page.pdf>

#### ADDRESS THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN VIOLENCE IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPHERES AS A MATTER OF URBAN VIOLENCE •

Understanding the toll of urban violence and how it plays out at the household level and in public with men and women will advance strategies capable of addressing the multiple dimensions of urban violence. Dichotomies have long existed between domestic or “gendered” violence in contrast to men-on-men violence, often considered to be in the realm of public security or urban violence (and thus unaccounted for in terms of its gendered implications). Yet the relevance of analyzing the interactions among these types of violence and vulnerabilities is apparent when considering a common denominator: men’s use of violence to correct or to impose order for a man seeking to re-establish his respect or status. Overcoming multiple forms of violence requires addressing the rigid masculinities that reinforce violent norms and behaviors.

Attention to non-physical forms of violence is also a concern. Findings show it prevailed in intimate partner relationships within urban violence. Men felt “pushed to their limit” and compelled to use physical violence after being “provoked.” The prevention of both physical and other forms of violence should be part of security agendas. Preventive programs need to reach couples before the “tipping point” – taking cues from reflexive groups for both men and women in the couple early on.

#### CONDUCT ADDITIONAL RESEARCH TO STRENGTHEN THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT PROMOTE NONVIOLENCE •

Areas to explore further research include a sharper understanding of violence during childhood. We know that violence during childhood drives intergenerational violence, but several participants rejected it and said they did not want to be like their fathers (or other family members), so did not use it. It is important to leverage this rejection of violence, and support men in rejecting violence over their lifetimes. For example, some traffickers and activists (a few who also had been involved in trafficking) described tragedies during childhood such as the death of one or both parents. For the activists interviewed, this was an impulse toward responsibility, action, and a different life. The men and women who entered trafficking, on the other hand, often did so as an economic means amidst a difficult childhood or a desire to leave abuse in their households of origin.

The lives of men and women in settings characterized by high levels of chronic, daily, urban violence are highly complex. Care must be taken not to place the responsibility to develop solutions for individual citizens on non-state actors alone. Rather, responses and responsibilities must be integrated and shared by public security actors and other policymakers. In this way, advancements in research, policy, and program interventions may begin to shift a security paradigm based on confrontation, marginalization, and “othering” to one that supports nonviolent trajectories and comprehensively takes into account the dynamics between masculinities and gender, and urban violence in the streets and beyond.

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# ANNEXES

## ANNEX 1 | METHODOLOGY, ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

### QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The following favela communities and neighborhoods in the greater metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro are represented in the qualitative research but are largely not identified with respondents as to protect confidentiality: Alemão Complex, Andaraí, Caju, Catumbi, Cerro-Corá, Formiga, Madureira, Maré Complex (from diverse drug trafficking factions and neighborhoods within), Mesquita, Nova América, Rocinha, Santa Marta, and Vidigal. They include a mixture of area and population sizes, UPP and non-UPP communities, and geographic locations and distance from the center of the city. Respondents were aged 18 to 53 years. The period of involvement of former traffickers ranges from a few months to three decades. The three oldest respondents came to occupy leader positions within trafficking (about one third of the sample), while others assumed lower positions.

Participants were contacted through a snowball sampling approach, beginning with (but not ultimately limited to) entry points in known NGO programs. Qualitative analysis was conducted using an online software program, Dedoose. Multiple public events, a survey of the media over the three years, and discussions with partners and other SAIC researchers contributed to the analysis.

The life histories and the categories of participants are diverse; however, they share a fundamental commonality: **all** participants perceived themselves to be leaving behind something negative (drug trafficking or violent trajectories) for something they perceived as positive (not being in gangs, or not being violent). A state of *being in transition*, therefore, in effect likely filtered how they presented their stories, i.e., that the “violent past” was negative and the nonviolent present was positive. Nevertheless, “leaving” is not a permanent state: the researchers were told that several of the men interviewed in Maré, for example, returned to drug trafficking after our research, suggesting the tenuous nature of pathways out of violence. One former member of a militia group was interviewed. However, due to security concerns and the difficulty identifying ‘former’ militia, no further interviews were conducted with this group and this single interview was discarded from the analysis.

The interviews with women and family members are crucial for several reasons: (a) they provide narratives that complement the experiences of men in groups involved in urban violence by having a close but outside perspective, having lived alongside men’s trajectories; (b) they provide a basis of comparison in terms of gendered differences in how men and women experience contexts of urban violence; and (c) they shed light on how violence mostly among men profoundly affects the lives of women and family members, recognizing that it matters *whose* experiences we ask about in seeking to understand the full magnitude of forms of violent experiences and nonviolence.

The inclusion of actors beyond men in the context of urban violence also reinforces the fact that homicide is only one face of urban violence in Brazil. Vulnerabilities and multiple forms of violence are experienced daily by men and women, in public spaces, in intimate relationships and among families. Data from the Rio de Janeiro State Secretariat for Public Security in 2012 show that compared to 2011, there was a 23.8 percent increase in cases of rape and other sexual violence reported to the police in Rio de Janeiro. Furthermore, measures of “sense of security” vary according to sex, age, race, and socioeconomic status.

Finally, these life histories are complex given that people’s lives are constantly evolving and responding to new opportunities and challenges. New employment opportunities may change an individual’s calculations of income generation outside gangs, for example. We must acknowledge that life histories are embedded in complex historical and cultural moments; understanding them and imputing causality is always limited.

## QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Considering the heterogeneity within the IPSA for which homicide rates are reported and the adjustment of the sample corresponding to IPSA 23 (South), the North–South divide is somewhat imprecise, while still broadly corresponding to areas more and less exposed to urban violence. Within the southern zone is one of the highest-income areas of the city; the South has therefore received greater public security investment overall. The northern zone is further from Rio’s downtown and from middle-class settings; the North has also received less public security investment.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was constructed based on the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) instrument. The questionnaire was adapted to include questions about urban violence, as well as often-overlooked daily “micro” insecurities in urban settings, such as threats, intimidation, and fear of violence.

The questionnaire was pre-tested and applied by trained and experienced interviewers between 22 and 50 years old, who approached the subjects in their residences from Monday to Sunday during two periods: March – May 2015 and January – February 2016, according to the sampling protocol, which defined the number of interviews for each sector within the macro-areas. In order to control for variations in reading ability and standardize the application, the questionnaire was read aloud at the residence of the household survey participants. Female interviewers delivered the questionnaire to female subjects and male interviewers to male subjects. The training of the interviewers consisted of 8-hour workshops for male and female interviewers at the Promundo office, where interviewers were introduced to the study protocol and to the instrument using the Promundo Interviewers Manual (Promundo, 2013). In the context of the workshop, all interviewers test-applied the questionnaire and discussed ethical considerations and the security protocol. A fieldwork supervisor from the research team accompanied the data collection process at the different sites and conducted quality control.

The IMAGES–UV questionnaire covered the following themes:

- **EMPLOYMENT** • employment status, unemployment and underemployment, stress and reactions associated with unemployment;
- **EDUCATION** • educational attainment;
- **CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES** • victimization by violence as children, witnessing of gender-based violence, witnessing of drug abuse among adults;
- **RELATIONS AT HOME (IN CURRENT HOUSEHOLD)** • marital/cohabitation status, division of/ participation in household chores, perceived satisfaction in family life, household decision-making, time use in specific domestic chores, and family care including childcare;
- **PARENTING AND MEN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS CHILDREN (AND WITH NON-RELATED CHILDREN WHO MAY LIVE IN THE HOUSEHOLD)** • number of children, living situation of each child, use of violence against children (psychological, physical, sexual);
- **ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN AND MASCULINITY** • attitudes toward gender equality (using the GEM Scale and other measures);
- **HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE** • lifestyle questions (substance use, exercise, etc.), use of/victimization of violence in other contexts, morbidity;
- **PARTNER RELATIONS AND SPOUSAL RELATIONS** • current relationship status/satisfaction, relationship history;
- **RELATIONSHIP AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE** • use of violence (physical, sexual, psychological) against partner, victimization of violence by partner, men's use of sexual violence against non-partners, men's self-reported purchasing of sex or paying for sex.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Analyses were conducted using Version 23 of IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive and bi-variate inferential statistics were used to assess the strength of the associations between independent (causal) and dependent (effect) variables, primarily exploring the relationship between exposure to urban violence, gun ownership and attitude toward guns, socioeconomic indicators, gender-equitable attitudes, and the perpetration of different forms of violence. Chi-square tests provided proof of the statistical significance of the observed differences, defined at  $p < 0.05$ . Models were restricted to valid answers, excluding those who responded “don’t know,” “doesn’t answer,” and “doesn’t remember.”

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study was approved by the ethics committee of the Centro de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas (CFCH), Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (Center of Philosophy and Human Sciences, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro). Informed written consent was obtained for all interviews. Principles of consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation in the research and audio recording were read to all participants. Participants were reminded at several points during the interview that they were not required to answer questions that they did not wish to answer. Broadly, the teams followed the guidelines of Security and Ethics Protocols created with IDRC in order to ensure confidentiality, privacy, protection from further violence, and to protect from other related risks – especially when interviewing men and women, ensuring men and women interviewed were not from the same couple. Interviewers were trained to follow ethics procedures to prepare them to respond in challenging situations. For security reasons, household interviewers were equipped with institutional identification badges and T-shirts and were further organized in groups of two or more. Despite these security measures, ongoing urban violence forced interviewers to abort their activities on several occasions.

The original paper survey questionnaires are kept in locked cabinets at local partners’ offices, and copies will be kept in storage at Promundo’s office in Rio de Janeiro for a maximum of five years, following institutional procedures for data handling and storage. The interviewers and transcribers were instructed not to use participants’ real names or demographic data. Unique codes were developed in order to de-identify the quantitative surveys. Only the immediate research team has access to both the transcribed qualitative data and the locked paper quantitative questionnaires.

## LIMITATIONS

Though the utmost care was taken to maintain privacy and confidentiality, distrust and fear among the population in violence-affected settings hampered data collection as did ongoing violence including an unexpected intensification of violent episodes in the communities. Some practical strategies were adopted to protect the trained and experienced interviewers during the data collection process. Nonetheless, exposure to urban violence during the data collection process translated into delays and interviewer drop-out and may also have biased the selection of interviewees. The unpredictable and fluid nature of urban violence in Rio de Janeiro represented challenges in terms of the temporal validity and the ability to generalize from the results.

Second, challenges were posed by the sensitivity of questions around gender-equitable social norms, gun ownership and use, and especially around victimization and use of violence. Many questions asked about serious criminal assaults including murder and sexual violence. Under-reporting and selective reporting thus represented a significant challenge, which was further aggravated by social desirability, limitations in subjects' ability to recall childhood experiences, and disclosure-related biases.

The triangulation of results allowed the researchers to gain a richer sense of the associations among exposure to and perpetration of urban violence, masculinities, gender norms, and gun ownership. It enabled a better understanding of nonviolent masculinities in settings of urban violence. Triangulation also provided a better understanding of the processes of transmitting violence from one generation to the next, and from the public to the domestic sphere.

In the case of the qualitative research, participants who had left crime with the help of NGO programs were likely to be in more self-reflective phases compared with participants who were still active in trafficking. In other words, their choice to be part of the NGO program may have reflected their desire to reject crime and to reaffirm devotion to their new life conditions.



## ANNEX 2 | MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

TABLE 1 | PERPETRATION OF ANY TYPE OF VIOLENCE  
BY KEY VARIABLES, ADJUSTED ODDS RATIO

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BOTH AREAS			NORTH			SOUTH		
	ADJUSTED OR (N=435)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=355)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=80)	95% CI	
FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTORS	1,25	0,72	2,15	1,19	0,62	2,28	1,32	0,43	4,10
WITNESSING IPV DURING CHILDHOOD	1,32	0,80	2,16	1,19	0,69	2,05	2,16	0,63	7,47
EDUCATION LEVEL									
NO EDUCATION									
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	1,12	0,08	14,88	1,12	0,08	15,21			
HIGH SCHOOL	1,52	0,11	20,15	1,46	0,11	19,71	1,79	0,49	6,48
HIGHER EDUCATION	1,06	0,07	15,12	0,87	0,06	12,74	2,65	0,38	18,73
OTHER	727968665,84	0,00		831155188,48	0,00		867887910,32	0,00	
EXPOSURE TO UV UP TO THE AGE OF 18	<b>3,9***</b>	2,32	6,59	<b>4,02***</b>	2,26	7,16	4,09*	1,04	16,14
WORK-RELATED STRESS	<b>1,50</b>	0,95	2,35	1,35	0,82	2,23	2,43	0,78	7,51
GEM SCORE		0,96	1,00	<b>0,98*</b>	0,96	1,00	0,94	0,82	1,08

VALUES IN BOLD WITH STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE AT P<0,05

\* 0,05>P>0,01

\*\* 0,01>P>0,001

\*\*\*P<0,001

TABLE 2 | PERPETRATION OF IPV BY KEY VARIABLES, ADJUSTED ODDS RATIO

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BOTH AREAS			NORTH			SOUTH		
	ADJUSTED OR (N=434)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=355)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=79)	95% CI	
FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTORS	<b>1,83*</b>	1,08	3,12	<b>2,43**</b>	1,25	4,72	0,79	0,27	2,25
WITNESSING IPV DURING CHILDHOOD	1,26	0,82	1,95	1,25	0,76	2,04	1,26	0,44	3,54
EDUCATION LEVEL									
NO EDUCATION									
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	0,47	0,04	6,08	0,48	0,04	6,16			
HIGH SCHOOL	0,44	0,03	5,61	0,51	0,04	6,44	0,41	0,13	1,33
HIGHER EDUCATION	0,29	0,02	4,03	0,26	0,02	3,66	0,84	0,14	5,06
OTHER	1,01	0,03	35,50	1358095455,20	0,00		0,99	0,05	19,56
EXPOSURE TO UV UP TO THE AGE OF 18	<b>3,73***</b>	2,00	6,94	<b>3,05**</b>	1,59	5,84	1573780780,56	0,00	
WORK-RELATED STRESS	<b>1,21**</b>	0,80	1,84	1,43	0,90	2,27	0,99	0,34	2,88
GEM SCORE	0,95	0,91	0,98	<b>0,94**</b>	0,91	0,98	1,00	0,88	1,12

VALUES IN BOLD WITH STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE AT P<0,05

\* 0,05>P>0,01

\*\* 0,01>P>0,001

\*\*\*P<0,001

TABLE 3 | PPERPETRATION OF PHYSICAL URBAN VIOLENCE  
BY KEY VARIABLES, ADJUSTED ODDS RATIO

PREDICTOR VARIABLES	BOTH AREAS			NORTH			SOUTH		
	ADJUSTED OR (N=434)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=355)	95% CI		ADJUSTED OR (N=79)	95% CI	
FEAR OF SOCIAL ACTORS	1,15	0,69	1,91	1,31	0,71	2,40	0,86	0,29	2,57
WITNESSING IPV DURING CHILDHOOD	0,76	0,49	1,18	0,79	0,48	1,29	0,64	0,22	1,88
EDUCATION LEVEL									
NO EDUCATION									
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	4,32	0,31	60,08	3,92	0,29	52,92			
HIGH SCHOOL	4,43	0,32	61,54	3,68	0,27	49,57	1,66	0,48	5,76
HIGHER EDUCATION	4,81	0,32	71,79	3,66	0,25	53,61	3,35	0,54	20,89
OTHER	1,21	0,03	44,81	0,00	0,00		0,47	0,01	18,30
EXPOSURE TO UV UP TO THE AGE OF 18	<b>3,4***</b>	2,00	5,82	<b>3,32***</b>	1,85	5,96	<b>4,15*</b>	1,03	16,70
WORK-RELATED STRESS	<b>1,7*</b>	1,13	2,57	1,49	0,94	2,34	<b>3,2*</b>	1,08	9,47
GEM SCORE	<b>0,96*</b>	0,93	0,99	<b>0,96*</b>	0,93	1,00	0,90	0,79	1,03

VALUES IN BOLD WITH STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE AT P<0,05

\* 0,05>P>0,01

\*\* 0,01>P>0,001

\*\*\*P<0,001







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