



Brazilian Public Policies for Assistance to Women in Situations of Violence: Contributions from Culturo-Behavioral Science

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Abstract

Brazilian public policies establish that the assistance to women in situations of violence should be carried out by networks comprising health, social assistance, public safety, and justice services. To solve intersectoral problems faced by the networks, the government suggests the creation of units of the Brazilian Woman's House (BWH) – an organization that concentrates the principal services. The objective of this study was to analyze the strategy of the BWH in the context of the networks from a culturo-behavioral science perspective. Toward this objective, national laws, statistical data, and public information related to BWH were analyzed. The analysis of the macrosystem indicates that the existence of a BWH places the services that compose it under the control of a common set of external variables, which can make the effects of legislation and funding more predictable. The organization's Total Performance System shows that reports constitute an essential aggregate product for stakeholders to exercise social control over this public policy. The process level analysis endorses the advantages of implementing BWH units. Some suggestions are made for changes in the wording of BWH legislation that might make BWH's products and the social control of this policy more likely. The recommendations presented should only be considered as a starting point for a broad discussion and future action. It is hoped that this study will support further analysis of the actual BWHs and inform reformulations of this public policy.

Keywords assistance network · behavioral systems analysis · Casa da Mulher Brasileira · domestic violence · intersectoral action · violence against women

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The *Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women* defines violence against women as “any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere” (Decree No. 1.973, 1996, Chapter 1 Article 1). This definition encompasses psychological, sexual, physical, moral, and patrimonial violence within the family or in any intimate relationship of affection, classified in Brazil as domestic and family violence against women (Law No. 11.340, 2006). Violence against women also comprises crimes in several other contexts such as cases classified as sexual abuse/exploitation, sexual harassment, moral harassment, institutional violence, political violence, online violence, stalking, false imprisonment, and trafficking of women.

When considering all types of violence against women, the estimated prevalence in Brazil is approximately 40% of the female population (Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2011b). In surveys conducted before the Covid-19 pandemic, 27% of women declared they had already been victims of domestic violence (DataSenado, 2019). In 2019, 17,841 occurrences of rape were registered in Brazil, an average of 48.8 rapes per day (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2019). Some cases of domestic violence or discrimination against women also culminate in the victim’s death, or femicides (Law No. 13.104, 2015). In 2019, 1330 femicides were registered in Brazil, an average of 3.64 occurrences per day (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2021).

After the decree of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, the social isolation measures adopted in Brazil were accompanied by a drop in notifications of practically all crimes in police stations. However, this does not mean that crimes stopped occurring (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2021). Regarding violence against women, even with the reduction of some indicators (e.g., records of bodily injury due to domestic violence and rape) and lack of data for one of the Brazilian states,¹ the numbers are still alarming. On average, 630 women a day reported domestic violence to the police, totaling 230,160 victims in 2020. Other indicators, such as urgency protective measures and telephone calls about domestic violence to the Military Police, increased by 4.4% and 16.3%, respectively. The 1350 femicides that occurred in 2020 entailed a rate of 1.2 deaths per group of 100,000 people, a rate similar to that of 2019 (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2021).

In Brazil, institutional responses to violence against women through legal, police, assistance, and political apparatus that protect victims and criminalize aggression began approximately 40 years ago (Waiselfisz, 2015). In the 1980s, the first Specialized Police Stations for Women’s Assistance and shelters were created. However, the number of services available and the isolated nature of its actions made this social service infrastructure a very precarious strategy until the beginning of the 2000s (Meneghel et al., 2011; Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2011a, 2011c). This reality has undergone significant changes since the creation of the Special Secretariat for

¹ Brazil is composed of 26 states and the Federal District.

Women's Policies (Law No. 10.683, 2003),² which guaranteed resources for creating services and implementing public policies for women (Secretariat for Women's Policies [SWP], 2011c). Furthermore, the SWP,³ in partnership with the National Council for Women's Rights, coordinated comprehensive processes of consultation to the population at municipal and state levels, the referrals for which were debated at the *National Conferences on Policies for Women* (SWP, 2011b). These moments of democratic discussion resulted in the collective elaboration of the *National Policy Plans for Women* (Special Secretariat for Women's Policies, 2004, 2008; SWP, 2013).

The 2004 and 2008 editions of the *National Policy Plans for Women* consolidated combating violence against women as an intersectoral and priority axis of public policies (SWP, 2011b). The first plan served as the basis for structuring the *National Pact to Combat Violence Against Women* (Special Secretariat for Women's Policies, 2007). This pact consisted of a federative agreement between the national government, the states, and the municipalities to implement actions to consolidate a *National Policy to Combat Violence Against Women* throughout the Brazilian territory (SWP, 2015). In this context of political advances, several laws were approved, including the Maria da Penha Law, which created the Special Courts for Domestic Violence and suggested the creation of multidisciplinary care teams for women (Law No. 11.340, 2006).

The *National Policy to Combat Violence Against Women* was organized into four structuring axes: prevention of violence, combating violence, guaranteeing rights, and assisting victims (SWP, 2011b). The focus of this work was on assistance, and it was established that the national policy must guarantee qualified and humanized assistance for victims through the Service Network for Women in Situations of Violence (SNWSV; SWP, 2011b). SNWSV comprises services from different areas mainly linked to the health, social assistance, public safety, and justice systems. These services are divided into four categories: (1) *Specialized Services for Women* (e.g., Specialized Police Stations, Shelter Services, Special Courts); (2) *General Care Services*, not specialized in women's care, but often the gateways for women in the service network (e.g., Reference and Social Assistance Centers, Public Defenders, General Hospitals); (3) *Information, Guidance and Public Policy Bodies* (e.g., Women's Call Center – Call 180, Women's Policy Bodies, Council for Women's Rights), and (4) *Security and Social Defense Services* (e.g., Civil and Military Police, Institute of Forensic Medicine) (SWP, 2011c).

The concept of a network care for victims of violence followed a broad proposal already adopted in other areas such as mental health, oncology, and combating acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). At that time, networks were seen as an adequate solution to solve complex problems for which resources are usually

² Law No. 12.314 (2010) transformed the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies into the Secretariat for Women's Policies (SWP). At the beginning of the current federal government, the name National Secretariat for Women's Policies (NSWP) was adopted (Law No. 13.844, 2019). The acronym SWP will be used to report events until 2018.

³ A glossary of acronyms is provided after the Final Considerations section.

scarce (Fleury & Ouverney, 2007). According to Fleury and Ouverney (2007), networks are polycentric structures that involve “different actors, organizations or nodes linked together through the establishment and maintenance of common objectives and a compatible and adequate management dynamic” (p. 9). Given the many services and professionals involved in the processes that women in situations of violence go through, for an SNWSV to work the integrated and coordinated action of all responsible sectors is necessary.

In the context of care, services must work from an intersectoral perspective and define service flows compatible with local realities, which must address the demands of women in their diversity. The perspective of intersectoral action represents, therefore, a challenge insofar as it calls for a break with the “traditional” model of public management, which tends toward departmentalization, disarticulation, and the sectorialization of actions and public policies. (SWP, 2011c, p. 17)

Intersectoral action requires articulating various actors and social sectors that move resources and organizational processes to implement public policies in specific territories, promoting social development and facing complex problems (Junqueira, 2000, 2004; Mendes & Akerman, 2007). The city is seen as the ideal sphere to embrace problems in an integrated way (Junqueira, 2000; Rantala et al., 2014). This perspective points out that at least part of public policies can be designed for a country or a state; however, the material reality consists of actions developed by public organizations at the local level. When demonstrated by national statistics, the effects of these policies consist of the sum of the effects produced by individual cities. Therefore, they can be understood as a cumulative effect composed of aggregated products generated by cities (Glenn et al., 2016).

Brazilian studies on service networks and the *critical route* (the path taken by women in an attempt to break with violence), carried out in cities of different sizes located in different states, have shown several problems. Such problems cause many victims not to go to SNWSV or give up on receiving assistance. Among these problems, those related to failures in intersectoral action stand out, such as difficulties in communicating care flows, referrals of victims to psychosocial health services without ensuring their protection, difficulties in accessing some services, and duplicity of procedures (Borsoi et al., 2009; Carneiro, 2020; Kiss et al., 2007; Meneghel et al., 2011; Menezes et al., 2014; dos Santos et al., 2020; Scott et al., 2016; Vasconcelos, 2016).

The SWP was tracking these problems, for example, through the Women’s Policy Conferences held since 2003 at the municipal, state, and national levels (de Fina Gonzalez, 2021). As a result, in 2012, the SWP, in partnership with representatives from 26 Brazilian states and the Federal District, carried out a reevaluation of the National Pact to Combat Violence Against Women (Special Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2007). The evaluation results for the first four years of implementation of this pact pointed out many challenges, including the difficulty of integrating SNWSV services (SWP, 2015). Therefore, in 2013, a reformulation of action strategies was instituted through the Woman: Living without Violence Program (Decree No. 8.086, 2013), currently called Safe and Protected Women Program,

whose objective is to “integrate and expand public existing services aimed at women in situations of violence, through the articulation of specialized care in the field of health, justice, the social assistance network and the promotion of financial autonomy” (Decree No. 10.112, 2019, Article 1).

The most innovative strategy of the Safe and Protected Women Program consists of the creation of units of the Casa da Mulher Brasileira (Brazilian Woman’s House [BWH]), an organization that concentrates “the main specialized and multidisciplinary services of SNWSV” (Decree No. 10.112, 2019, Article 3, paragraph 1). BWH’s general objective is to “provide comprehensive and humanized assistance to women in situations of violence, facilitating their access to specialized services and guaranteeing conditions for coping with violence, empowerment and economic autonomy of users” (SWP, 2015, p. 14). BWHs do not replace SNWSVs. Instead, a BWH consists of a public agency that provides various integrated services and intends to connect women with other SNWSV services that are not made available by them. According to the SWP, bringing critical services together in one place “prevents women from going down a *via crucis*. It prevents them from being re-victimized along this critical route, along this fragmented path, in search of assistance from the State” (SWP, 2015, p. 5).

Some data on the number of services specialized in assisting women illustrate, albeit vaguely, how far policies still need to advance to assist residents of 5568 Brazilian municipalities. The only specialized service available nationwide is the Women’s Call Center – Call 180 (Law No. 10.714, 2003). It consists of a free and uninterrupted telephone service that, among other attributions, informs victims about their rights and care services in their region (Decree No. 7.393, 2010). Specialized police stations are the oldest specialized service in Brazil and are present in 417 cities, that is, in less than 10% of the locations (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2020). Special Courts for Domestic Violence are present in only 138 cities (Conselho Nacional de Justiça, 2020). BWHs are even rarer, totaling only eight units (Governo do Brasil, 2021). Relatedly, the SNWSVs present in Brazilian cities vary a lot in terms of the physical structure and even the human resources needed as a basis for the challenge of implementing a service in an intersectoral network. It is worth remembering that victims can resort to General Care Services in places with no specialized services; however, the lack of training in the area can compromise the quality of care and referrals (e.g., Borsoi et al., 2009).

To assess the knowledge already produced about BWHs, a search was carried out for peer-reviewed articles in the Periódicos Capes database (which brings together databases such as SciELO, SCOPUS, and Web of Science)⁴. The keywords were “casa da mulher brasileira,” “Brazilian woman’s house,” “house of Brazilian woman” and variations of the latter two replacing “woman” by “women.” Among the 14 articles found, 11 merely mentioned the BWH in broad discussions about public policies for women. Two studies included professionals and women assisted

⁴ The journal portal is managed by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior [CAPES]), a foundation linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Education. <https://www.periodicos.capes.gov.br/> Accessed 11/18/2021.

at BWHs as participants but did not address the BWH strategy itself, which is the main focus of the present study (Fornari & da Fonseca, 2021; da Silva et al., 2019). Only Martins and de Araújo (2019) focused on the policy establishing the BWH. Actions that took place between 2013 and 2019 to implement BWH units were analyzed. The federal government expected to install BWHs in all capitals (27 units) between 2013 and 2018. However, until 2019, only seven had been installed, one of which was not yet in operation. Martins and de Araújo (2019) stated that although the BWH “has favored intersectoral action in the places where it took place, its execution encountered relevant organizational obstacles” (p. 51). Among them, budgetary difficulties and problems in federative articulation (agreements are necessary between the federal and state governments to implement the houses) stood out.

Among the recent studies of culturo-behavioral science, Lira et al. (2021) analyzed a set of 23 Brazilian normative documents⁵ (including the decree establishing the BWH), as strategies for the protection of women, based on the concept of cultural design. The analyses showed that this set of documents, for the most part, does not describe the expected long-term results and does not constitute effective cultural design. According to the authors, the scarce statistical data available also do not allow them to say whether the increase in some violence indicators over the years implies the ineffectiveness of the laws. It was not the purpose of Lira et al. (2021) to assess whether laws are effective concerning their specific objectives.

There remains the need to advance care policies for women in Brazil. Knowing each program’s specific potentialities that make up the national policy can facilitate this advance. The Federal Government has declared that it will invest resources in the creation of new BWHs, and one study has already shown difficulties in implementation as well as emphasizing that the BWH is a service potentially capable of developing intersectoral actions (Martins & de Araújo, 2019); further studies need to be carried out. The production of knowledge about this service and how it relates to other SNWSV services and to other sectors and actors relevant to its implementation and maintenance can inform existing BWH, actors who are fighting for the implementation of a BWH in their cities and thinking of alternatives for SNWSVs in cities that do not have this service.

Culturo-behavioral science, as an interdisciplinary specialization within behavior science (Cihon et al., 2021; Cihon & Mattaini, 2020), includes analytic tools that allow the assessment of BWH as an organization (e.g., Behavior Systems Analysis [BSA]) planned for connecting different actors and sectors in order to fulfill the prescriptions of a public policy and promote large-scale social changes, as discussed by Todorov and Lemos (2020). The analysis of the normative documents that regulate the functioning of BWH enables us to understand the “prescribed BWH”. From the prescribed BWH, it is possible to assess whether the prescribed structure and processes are aligned with the products/services that a BWH is expected to produce. If points that need improvement are identified, how the “BWH ought to be” should be outlined. According to Malott (2003) and Diener et al. (2009), comparing the reality

⁵ In the present study, normative documents refer to different types of documents regulating social practices, such as ordinances, decrees, laws, policies, guidelines, and protocols.

of an organization, the “is” with the “ought to be,” allows one to identify discrepancies that serve as a context to implement changes so that the organization achieves its mission. Since BWH is an organization prescribed by federal legislation, it is believed that in addition to comparing the BWH prescribed with the BWH ought to be, the results of such an analysis can serve as a reference for analyzing the “is” of the different existing units and help in the assessment of possible problems that these organizations face.

Therefore, this work has the following objectives: (a) to analyze the strategy of the BWH in the context of the SNWSV from concepts and instruments of analysis of culturo-behavioral science; (b) to check for discrepancies between the prescribed BWH and how the BWH ought to be; (c) to verify whether the statistical data measured at the municipal level allow evaluating the efficiency of BWH; (d) to analyze the BWH legislation as a cultural design strategy for the promotion of integrated and humanized care for women in situations of violence; and (e) to point out aspects that can be discussed with actors and social sectors involved in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of these public policies.

Method

Based on the theoretical framework of cultural-behavioral science (Cihon et al., 2021; Cihon & Mattaini, 2020), an analysis of national normative documents, statistical data, and public information related to BWH was carried out. Concerning SNWSV, the documents “National Policy to Combat Violence Against Women” (SWP, 2011b) and “Network for combating Violence Against Women” (SWP, 2011c) were analyzed.

The documents referring to BWH were: (a) the national decree establishing the “Woman: Living without Violence Program” (Decree No. 8.086, 2013); (b) the decree that made changes to the previous decree and changed the name of the program to “Safe and Protected Woman Program” (Decree No. 10.112, 2019); (c) the general guidelines and service protocols for BWH services—documents written by the SWP in partnership with representatives of BWH Campo Grande (the first city to receive a BWH), the Municipal Secretariat for Women’s Policies in that same city, and other sectors of the federal executive power (SWP, 2015) and; (d) the programmatic guidelines for the implementation of the BWHs, considering the multi-year project for the period 2020 to 2023 (National Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2020a, 2020b).

The analysis procedures and instruments used can be grouped into three stages. In the first stage, a BSA interpretation of the BWH as an organization was made using the Total Performance System (TPS) as proposed by Brethower in 1982, updated by Rummler and Brache in 2013 (Super-System), and described by McGee and Crowley-Koch (2021). That is, it was assumed that a TPS would involve the following components: (1) mission/goal, (2) products/services, (3) receiving system – customers/stakeholders, (4) external feedback (measures of the receiving system), (5) processing system, (6) inputs, (7) internal feedback (measures of the processing system), (8) external environmental variables (e.g., economy, natural environment and

government), and (9) competition. Furthermore, the perspective of the Behavioral Systems Engineering Model – BSEM (Malott, 2003) was adopted. This model uses the TPS for a multi-level analysis (mission, organization, process, task, behavior, and management) referencing two components: (1) analyzing behavioral systems with metacontingencies and (2) engineering and sustaining change with behavioral contingencies. In the present work, the focus was the analysis of the first three levels (mission, organization, process). Moreover, metacontingency is understood as the contingent relationship between (a) Interlocked Behavioral Contingencies (IBCs) that have an Aggregate Product (AP) and (b) selector environmental events or conditions (Glenn et al., 2016). The graphical representation of an “executive summary of the process” (Malott, 2003, p. 101) was used to illustrate the level of the process. Throughout this analysis, the “prescribed” and the “ought to be” of some aspects related to the production of integrated and humanized care were highlighted.

In the second stage, we used the cultural design proposal by Valderlon and Elias (2019) similar to Lira et al. (2021) to assess whether the legislation establishing the BWH (Decree No. 8.086, 2013; Decree No. 10.112, 2019; National Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2020a, 2020b) presents the elements of a cultural design for its specific objectives—the promotion of integrated and humanized care. Valderlon and Elias (2019) proposed four categories of analysis: (1) changing antecedent conditions that provide context for (2) the occurrence of cultural practices (3) selected by short-term consequences that (4) produce long-term results. Statistical data measured at the municipal level were used to illustrate some arguments.

Given the results of the previous steps, the method of analyzing contingencies and meta-contingencies in laws developed by Todorov et al. (2004; see also Todorov, 2005) was used as a reference to: (a) analyze the decrees No. 8.086 (2013) and No. 10.112 (2019) and (b) identify the points in the legislation where it is possible to suggest changes to make the production of BWH products and the social control of this public policy more likely.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented alongside a brief discussion and recommendations.

A Behavior Systems Analysis Perspective on the Brazilian Woman’s House (BWH)

The BWH is one of the “Safe and Protected Women Program” action strategies that aims to strengthen and consolidate SNWSV at the national level through articulating different sectors (SWP, 2015). As already highlighted, the success of this public policy depends on the coordination of various organizations at the municipal level. The general objective of the BWH, is to provide comprehensive and humanized care to victims of violence to guarantee “the fight against violence, the empowerment, and economic autonomy of the users” (SWP, 2015, p. 14). To this end, BWH is based on the guidelines adopted by the National Policy to Combat Violence Against Women. This policy, in turn, is guided by the principles of the National Plans (SWP, 2011b).

Among these principles, the following stand out in this work: (1) Women's autonomy – ensuring that women have decision-making power over their lives and bodies and that they can influence the events of their communities; (2) Equity – guaranteeing equal opportunities for all people; (3) Transparency of public acts – “respect for the principles of public administration, such as legality, impersonality, morality, and efficiency, with transparency in public acts and social control” (SWP, 2011b, p. 32); and (4) Participation and social control – the Brazilian State must ensure that women participate in “the formulation, implementation, evaluation and social control of public policies” (SWP, 2011b, p. 32).

Before delving into how the various sectors relate within BWH and with SNWSW as a whole, we analyzed the macrosystem (Malott, 2003).

The Macrosystem

According to Mobus and Kalton (2015), “systems are networks of relations among components” (p. 23). The macrosystem is the system that contains the organization being analyzed (Malott, 2003, p. 46). In general, “an organization consists of a group of people who perform tasks that achieve a particular product. An organization is defined by its products” (Glenn & Malott, 2004, pp. 91-92). Therefore, a BWH unit, where different types of interactions between its actors and sectors are repeated to provide integrated and humanized care to women, can be understood as both an organization and a system.

Identifying the macrosystem that encompasses BWH requires the understanding that BWH is an action of the “Safe and Protected Women Program” and that this program is part of the National Policy to Combat Violence against Women (Decree No. 8.086, 2013). The NSWP, linked to the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights since 2019, is the body responsible for coordinating the program (Decree No. 10.112, 2019). Thus, BWH is a component of the NSWP, which includes other components focused on the four axes of the National Policy – assistance, guarantee of rights, prevention, and combating violence. For example, the “Maria da Penha goes to school program” promotes the dissemination of the Maria da Penha Law among education professionals and students to prevent and curb violence against women. The “More Women in Power program,” on the other hand, aims to promote the equal political participation of women in spaces of power (National Secretariat for Women's Policies, 2021).

The main AP of the NSWP is the public policies that promote gender equity and the right to live without violence for all Brazilian women. It is understood that women and the entire Brazilian society (e.g., these women's children, work organizations, aggressors, the media) act as a receiving system (customer and stakeholders) for these products. Societal-generated demands and information related to violence (e.g., statistics on violence against women, gender equity) can act as feedback from the receiving system, influencing the evolution of the NSWP. The information generated by the NSWP itself about its actions (e.g., costs, number of cities reached) can also provide feedback to guide the NSWP's subsequent actions. The graphical representation of this analysis (the TPS of the macrosystem) is shown at the top of Fig. 1.

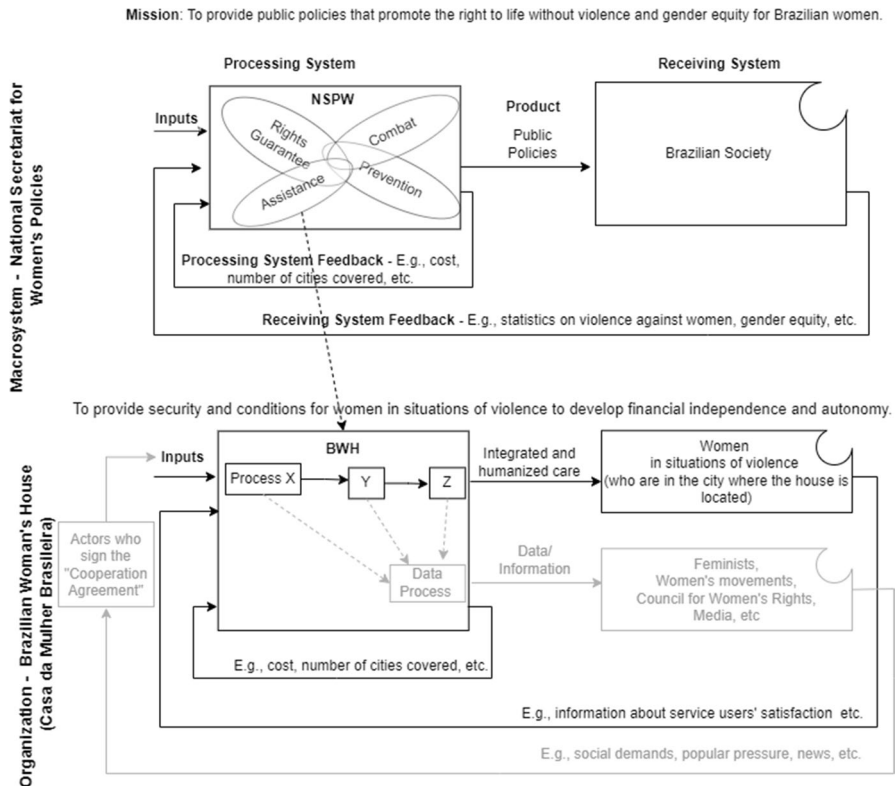


Fig. 1 Relationship between the macrosystem and the BWH

The organization's TPS is shown at the bottom of Fig. 1. BWH's sectors are responsible for a series of processes (X, Y, and Z) that together must generate, as an AP, integrated and humanized assistance, consisting of security and conditions for the development of autonomy and financial independence of women in situations of violence. These women, in turn, are the clients of this service; as part of the receiving system, they can provide feedback (e.g., assessments from women served at BWH about the services received, percentage of women who leave the abusive relationship; percentage of women who achieve financial independence). The feedback from the receiving and processing systems (e.g., costs, number of women served) can affect the subsequent occurrences of the processes inside the BWH. Considerations about these feedback loops and the relationships presented in light gray in Fig. 1 will be taken up in the next subtopic.

For now, viewing BWH as a component of the NSWP helps to understand how the services provided by BWH are part of the actions needed to achieve the mission of providing Brazilian women with conditions to live without violence and with gender equity. The other programs coordinated by the NSWP are actions whose ultimate objective is consistent with this mission. Therefore, the public

policies formulated to achieve this mission are the main AP of the NSWP macrosystem, which depends on several intermediate APs generated by the various assistance, prevention, combat, and rights guarantee programs. These programs do not seem to compete for target audiences (customers, in traditional TPS language) but may, in some situations, compete for financial resources.

The federal government finances the construction of BWH units, the purchase of equipment, furniture, and, depending on the budget, the cost of some services (supply of water, electricity, telephone, internet, cleaning, vehicle rental, driver, receptionist, vigilant) for two years. The maintenance of human resources is the responsibility of the municipal and state governments, the Public Ministry, the Court of Justice, and the Public Defender of the region. For a city to have a BWH, all these sectors need to sign the “Cooperation Agreement for the Safe and Protected Women Program” managed by the NSWP (National Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2020a, 2020b).

Suppose it is true that a city that has a BWH is better able to develop intersectoral assistance than cities whose SNWSV do not have this service. In that case, the relationship established between BWH and NSWP can be considered as a variable that facilitates intersectoral action. It is not just a matter of putting the leading services in one place and facilitating women’s access and communication between services; simply being in the same place is no guarantee that intersectoral action will occur. The Cooperation Agreement establishes the NSWP to monitor and provide technical and financial assistance to the BWHs. These contingencies appear to make it easier for BWH units to be mission-oriented organizations of the NSWP. Although NSWP has promoted the expansion of specialized services and its integrated action for several years, in general, the services that makeup SNWSV are organizations independent of each other and, in most Brazilian cities, some of the organizations that make up the SNWSV do not have the NSWP as a macrosystem. Instead, they are components of other macrosystems (e.g., national systems of public safety, justice, social assistance, health) and are possibly committed to providing services to the Brazilian population as a whole. That is, even if an SNWSV has some specialized services in line with the NSWP’s mission, in non-specialized services (e.g., common police station) there are processes aimed at other APs (e.g., investigation of robberies, homicides, drug trafficking) that compete with processes related to violence against women. In these contexts, at least theoretically, assistance to women is less likely to occur in an integrated and humanized manner.

According to Glenn and Malott (2004), one factor that has implications for organizational change is the number of external variables (e.g., legislation, economic fluctuations) that affect the organization (i.e., environmental complexity). SNWSV comprises several organizations, each immersed in its own environmental complexity. Acting in a network requires the coordination of these services, which seems to imply an even greater level of complexity. Theoretically, the existence of a BWH places the services that compose it under the control of a common set of external variables, which can make the effects of legislation and funding somewhat more predictable for the entire BWH system.

In accordance with Malott (2003), it is necessary to understand the macrosystem to understand how the organization fits into related systems, the demands placed on

them, and to anticipate future demands. This analytical perspective illustrates, for example, that (a) a specialized police station in the context of a BWH, (b) a specialized police station in a city that does not have a BWH, and (c) a standard police station are organizations/systems that belong to macrosystems configured in different ways. Although all are responsible for some similar processes (e.g., the registration of a domestic violence police report), how this process is conducted and how it connects with processes for which other organizations/systems are responsible may be affected by the macrosystem. It is important to note that a specialized police station, for example, remains a component of the Public Security macrosystem. Its APs contribute to achieving both the NSWSP's mission and Public Safety in general. Therefore, there is no conflict between the processes that lead to its products. A standard police station, on the other hand, may end up prioritizing APs that contribute to the Public Security mission, to the detriment of the NSWSP's mission.

Given the level of analysis of the macrosystem, the actors/sectors responsible for specific organizations, for the organization of services in SNWSV, and for the formulation/evaluation of assistance policies for women in situations of violence must consider: (a) Which macrosystems do the set of organizations that make up the SNWSV of the city belong to?; (b) Does belonging to these other macrosystems establish competition between the processes responsible for the APs of this organization and, consequently, the scope of the NSWSP's mission? How?; (c) How do the macrosystems involved impact the resources (money, human resources, information, equipment, technology) on which this organization depends?

The level of the organization

The TPS is an analysis tool that “provides a general overview of the organization and helps focus on the most critical areas for improvement” (Malott, 2003, p. 64). The analysis of the TPS components of the prescribed BWH showed two main APs that ensure that a BWH is achieving its mission.

As already mentioned, NSWSP's mission is to provide Brazilian women with conditions to live without violence and to achieve gender equality. BWH, as a component of the assistance axis of the policies promoted by the NSWSP, has the mission of providing security and conditions for the development of autonomy and financial independence of women in situations of violence. To this end, the documents that regulate the BWH make it quite clear that an AP that a BWH must produce is integrated and humanized assistance. The relationships around this AP are shown in black at the bottom of Fig. 1 (Organizational level). Even assuming that the BWH services (processing system) conduct the necessary processes to provide humanized and integrated care (AP) to victims of violence (receiving system/clients), that these women evaluate the care received well (feedback from the receiving system), that internal reports indicate that the services are going well (feedback from the processing system) and that the resources necessary to provide this service (inputs) are available, it is not possible to functionally assess the maintenance of BWH.

The literature on TPS establishes that “the receiving system demand is what ultimately maintains the set of interlocking behavioral contingencies that form an organization” (Malott, 2003, p. 67). This statement makes perfect sense in the context

of private organizations, in which the receiving system is, as a rule, constituted by customers who pay for the product/service. In most cases, money appears to be the selection event for IBCs. These customers' demands and evaluations can affect the IBCs as they are matched with money. "Customers are selectors, and, along with the income they generate, they constitute the selecting environment" (Malott, 2016, p. 106). Despite the importance of money for the receiving system to select the IBCs and their APs, in general, the TPSs do not illustrate the outflow of money from the receiving system into the processing system. Of course, one could argue that money is implicit among the inputs. However, showing the origin of this resource could facilitate the functional analysis of the events involved.

The questions that arose in using the TPS to analyze BWH perhaps occur in analyzing all organizations that implement public policies. In these cases, the existence and maintenance of the organization depend to some degree on resources (inputs) over which the clients do not exercise direct control. As can be seen in the representations in light gray in Fig. 1, the distribution of resources depends on the actors/sectors that sign the "Cooperation Agreement for the Safe and Protected Women Program," namely: the secretary in charge of the NSWP, the State Governor, the Mayor of the City, the President of the Court of Justice, the General Prosecutor in the Public Ministry and the General Public Defender (National Secretariat for Women's Policies, 2020a, 2020b). Therefore, one must look for the variables that affect the distribution of resources from these agents. Especially as it concerns financial resources, it can be assumed that the demands and pressures made by the population (who are also voters) exert some control over the city's Mayor, the State Governor, and the NSWP (budget action manager and representative of the federal government).

According to Malott (2003), "the receiving system feedback consists of information or data that reflect the customer's evaluation of the products and services" (p. 68). As mentioned earlier, BWH was designed from the principle that society exerts social control over public policies. However, women who receive the services (clients) are often vulnerable, and their bonds with family and friends may be compromised. Usually, victims of violence are weakened, trying to break the cycle of domestic violence, or recovering from some other type of violence suffered. Most likely, during the period they are receiving assistance at BWH, these women cannot collectively organize to make demands on the services they receive. If some women, for example, consider the service terrible and give up the assistance, this may not affect BWH. The women will not get any public assistance. There is no competition for most of the services provided by BWH. Furthermore, there is no option for some victims of violence to ask family members, friends, or private service providers (e.g., lawyers, psychologists) for help. They can only turn to the public service, whether they deem the services as good or bad. However, for the TPS model, the receiving system is composed not only of customers, but also of stakeholders, or "those who receive the financial outputs of the organization (e.g., parent company, stockholder, lending institution, employees)" (McGee & Crowley-Koch, 2021, p. 109). For public policy, sectors for which the organization's mission is a (non-financial) value may constitute stakeholders. For example, in the case of assistance to women, the history of Brazil shows that feminist and women's movements played an essential role in the

creation and maintenance of various public services (Pasinato & Santos, 2008; SWP, 2011b). It is understood that the media, Councils for Women's Rights, research institutes, universities, and others, can also constitute stakeholders and add strength to the actions of these movements. This interpretation suggests that organizational-level TPS involves a chain of metacontingencies, like the conceptualization Malott (2003) presents in her Behavioral Systems Engineering Model. Furthermore, the model predicts smaller metacontingencies within the processing system that provide the intermediate products needed to achieve the organization's main AP. However, the BWH analysis goes beyond these metacontingencies and indicates that the stakeholders and actors who sign the "Cooperation Agreement" also comprise behaviors/IBCs that result in relevant APs. The events that occur within the receiving system and the "input providers system" (in this analysis, the signatories of the Cooperation Agreement) can also constitute metacontingencies.

Future studies could unravel the types of IBCs in these three systems (processing system, stakeholders, and input providers system) and their relationships. The distinction between controlling IBCs (cIBCs) and execution IBCs (eIBCs) proposed by Couto (2019) can enhance this analysis. According to Couto (2019), eIBCs refer to production and "the improvement of Aps" (p. 41). At the same time, cIBCs are related to the maintenance of group members' behaviors, more precisely "to within-group stimulus control" (Couto, 2019, p. 41). Regarding the processing system, for example, this analysis could help distinguish the IBCs that provide direct assistance to women (eIBCs) from those that define and support those processes (cIBCs).

For stakeholders to exercise social control over public policy, they must have information that supports their actions. Despite the emphasis on integrated and humanized care, the legislation that regulates BWH's actions, as well as the guidelines for its implementation and maintenance, started to consider the production of information (e.g., monthly and annual reports) as an AP of the BWH. According to the changes promoted by Decree No. 10.112 (2019), each BWH unit must have a Data System, which must be integrated with the Women Call Center – Call 180 (a service that gathers information at the national level). BWH's data storage system was "designed to provide the statistics needed to monitor and evaluate policies to combat violence against women" (SWP, 2015, p. 51). The registration, care, and referral forms created for BWH services allow the collection of data regarding (a) violence against women – type of violence, profiles of the victim and aggressor, risk perception; and (b) information on the trajectory of women through the services, which, ultimately, shows how the Brazilian State responds to women in situations of violence (SWP, p. 52). Each BWH must organize this information into monthly and annual reports. These reports should serve as the basis for the NSWP to produce a BWH Annual Report reflecting the national data. It is necessary to have BWH units across the country for that to happen. Thus, although there are currently few units, monthly and annual local reports are APs that inform stakeholders and can serve as a basis for building actions that affect the signatories of the Cooperation Agreement and the quality of BWH's services at the local level. That is, the AP "Data/Information" that is not included in the first formulation of BWH (Decree No. 8.086, 2013) may seem less important than the AP "integrated and humanized assistance."

However, the analysis of BWH as a TPS indicates that data play a crucial role so that social control of BWH can occur and can influence the occurrence and quality of care provided.

Finally, in the case of public policies, it is worth noting that the questions raised about the organization's TPS model can also be made about the analysis of the macrosystem. For example, it may be that breaking down the receiving system into both customers and stakeholders also leads to relevant considerations at that level.

The Process Level

In order to understand how the two APs essential to BWH's mission can be achieved, it is necessary to look at BWH's processing system as a process or series of actions (IBCs) and their APs. Following Malott (2003), "understanding the organization as a process involves three steps: performing a structural analysis, performing a department-function analysis, and contrasting the IS and the OUGHT TO BE of the organization's structure and department functions" (p. 83). As this work does not aim to solve the organizational problems of a specific BWH, the third step was not carried out. However, it is believed that the documents consulted allow for some analysis regarding the first two steps and in considering how the prescribed BWH ought to be, which can be used as a reference for analysis of "real BWHs."

Concerning structural analysis, the BWHs bring together in the same space several services involved in assisting victims, namely: (a) Reception; (b) Intake and Screening; (c) Psychosocial Support Service; (d) Specialized Police Service for Women; (e) Courts for Domestic and Family Violence against Women; (f) Public Ministry/Specialized Women's Public Prosecutor's Office; (g) Defenders Office; (h) Economic Autonomy Promotion Service; (i) Transitional Shelter; (j) Playroom; and (k) Transportation Center (Decree No. 8.086, 2013; SWP, 2015).

BWH was conceived to support the sharing of responsibilities among its employees. Therefore, BWH's management involves three integrated sectors: Management Collegiate, Shared Coordination, and Administrative Management. The Management Collegiate is composed of representatives from the various services of the house who have equal authority in decision-making processes. It is up to the Collegiate to integrate different areas and professional training to offer humanized care. The Shared Coordination is composed of representatives linked to the NSWP, to the state, and municipal bodies of policies for women. This Coordination has the following functions: coordinating meetings and monitoring certain services; managing and monitoring the BWH's information system; organizing and making available information and data regarding the assistance; and preparing periodic reports on the status of BWH. The Administrative Management, in turn, is responsible for ensuring infrastructure, logistical, budgetary, and personnel conditions for the operation of BWH (Decree No. 8.086, 2013; SWP, 2015).

The structure of the prescribed BWH (the care services that make up the BWH, the sectors that make up the management, and the management model adopted) serves as a reference to discuss two other types of organizational complexity pointed out by Glenn and Malott (2004). They suggest that the complexity of components refers to the number of elements that make up an organization. The greater

the number of people involved and number of processes, the greater the complexity. When NSWV and state representatives reviewed the SNWSVs and proposed the BWHs, it was decided that the main care services are the specialized services listed above. Several other SNWSV services were left out. In addition, sectors were created (Reception; Intake and Screening; Playroom; and Transportation Center) to support and integrate specialized and outside services. Still, the number of existing components within BWH is smaller than within the SNWSV. That is, the BWH is less complex, can be more efficient in service delivery, and can react more quickly to external environmental changes than the set of organizations that make up the SNWSV.

The other type of complexity, hierarchical complexity, concerns the number of levels or part-whole relationships that make up an organization. Note that “as the levels of management grow, the behavior of those in higher levels becomes increasingly unrelated to critical components of the interlocking contingencies of the lower levels” (Glenn & Malott, 2004, p. 97). In this sense, the limited number of services and their horizontalized structure of the prescribed BWH seem to constitute a strong point of this strategy.

The prescribed BWH structure presents variables that should be considered in analyses and interventions in SNWSV that do not have a BWH. For example, could the contingencies established by the Reception and Screening services (establishing an Intervention Plan and making referrals) and the Transportation Center (transporting the victim between services) not be implemented in cities that do not have a BWH? Or, are periodic meetings between representatives of some of the SNWSV services sufficient to establish intersectoral action and humanized care? These and other questions can be derived from BWH’s general guidelines and care protocols (Decree No. 8.086, 2013; SWP, 2015).

The second step in analyzing the organization as a process, the department-function analysis, involves “creating a model of effective interactions between departments so that organizations can accomplish their goals” (Malott, 2003, p. 85). The most relevant aspect of this analysis is to identify the main AP and the resources (inputs) needed for each department (service) to carry out its function. BWH’s service protocols (SWP, 2015) allow the identification of these elements and delineate the “prescribed process” in the face of different circumstances (e.g., different types of violence, the moment of follow-up in which the woman is). By way of illustration, Fig. 2 shows the interactions of BWH’s services with each other and with other services outside of BWH, as well as the primary APs involved in the sub-processes that occur between the moment a victim of domestic violence seeks assistance and her return to home.

At the top of the diagram, in black, the environment external to BWH is shown, in which the other SNWSV services with which the BWH services can interact are found. Below, in white, the departments created specifically for BWH are presented. According to the classification proposed by Malott (2003), they can be divided into (a) *Integrating Departments* – which receive and provide information to all departments in the organization, such as Reception and Intaking and Screening (I&S in the diagram); and (b) *Support Departments* – which provide services to other departments, such as the Transportation Center and Playroom. Finally, in gray, the *Core*

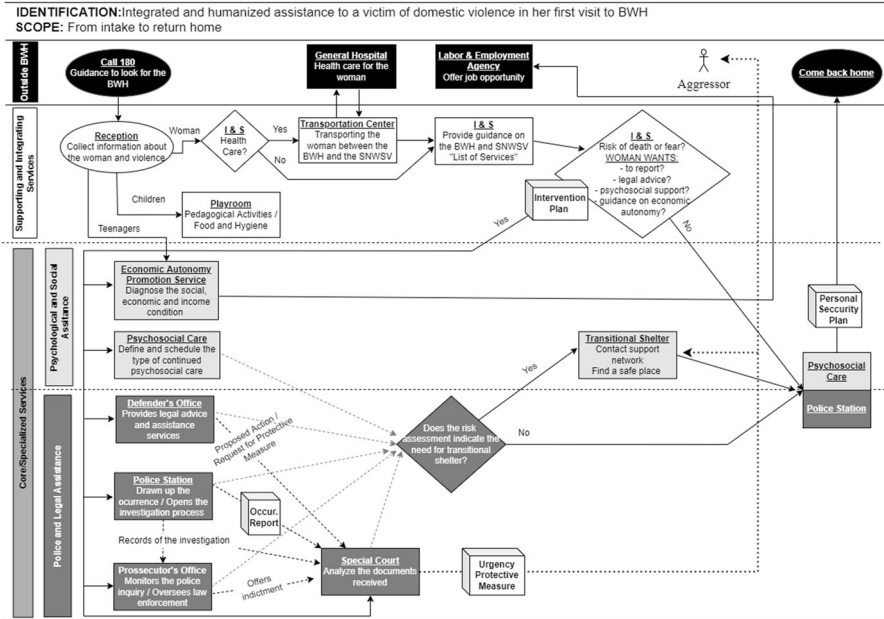


Fig. 2 Summary map of sub-processes involved in the first visit of a victim of domestic violence to BWH

Departments are grouped – the services directly responsible for specialized care. These services were divided into Social and Psychological Assistance, in light gray, and Police and Legal Assistance, in dark gray. Boxes represent the primary APs related to this process.

As shown in Fig. 2, a victim of domestic violence can enter the assistance process through any SNWSV service, such as a call to Call 180, or by going directly to the BWH Reception. The reception staff record, in the “Reception Form,” the socio-demographic data of the woman and information related to the violence suffered. If the woman is accompanied by her children, those under 12 years old are sent to the Playroom; those over 12 are sent to the Economic Autonomy Service to participate in financial education groups. In these cases, the woman receives an identification card for each child, used to pick them up at the end of the appointments. Finally, the woman is referred to the Intaking and Screening (I&S) service. At I&S, psychologists and social workers, preferably in pairs, properly listen to the case and record the woman’s report. Then, if she has suffered physical or sexual violence that requires medical care, the Transportation Center is called to take her to a Health Service and bring her back to I&S after the treatment. Next, the other services related to the situation of violence suffered are presented to the woman. The I&S team must explain all procedures but not influence or accelerate the woman’s decisions. During the appointment, an assessment of the risks to which the woman is exposed is carried out, and the services she wants to access are verified. Based on this, the woman and the team develop an Intervention Plan with a list of referrals to selected services. All information collected by I&S is recorded in the “I&S Form.”

This form and the Reception Form are made available to all BWH services to facilitate integration between the services and prevent the woman from being victimized.

It may be that the woman wants to access only some of the services available or does not want to receive any of them. Whatever her decision, before she returns home, Psychosocial Support and Police Department staff offer to help her devise a “Personal Safety Plan” with measures she can take to protect herself and her children from the aggressor. If the woman wants to access the services available, the procedures described below are adopted. Psychosocial Support offers ongoing assistance. It aims to promote the recovery of women’s self-esteem and autonomy, helping them implement protection mechanisms and overcome the impact of violence. During the first visit to BWH, it is likely that this service will define the type of follow-up (e.g., individual, group sessions) and scheduling of sessions. At the Economic Autonomy Promotion Center, the team diagnoses women’s economic and social conditions, which serves as a parameter for seeking alternative policies to promote income and employment that are appropriate to the situation. The staff at this service directs the woman to the appropriate service and schedules a return appointment for the next month.

The Public Defender’s Office guides women about their rights and assists them in all stages of the judicial process. When pertinent, the Defender’s Office may propose an action to the Specialized Court or request an Urgency Protective Measure from this body. The Specialized Police Station registers the police report, opens the investigative process, collects evidence, sends an Urgency Protective Measure request to the Court, and sends the case files to the Court and the Public Ministry/Special Prosecutor’s Office. This Prosecutor’s Office oversees other services in law enforcement, ensures the efficiency of police services, and files a complaint with the Court. The specialized court processes, judges, and executes the causes arising from violence against women. The judge can grant an Urgency Protective Measure request at this first moment. These legal assistance services, sometimes with the help of Psychosocial Support, are responsible for the Risk Assessment—a standardized process that aims to prevent the occurrence or worsening of domestic violence. Depending on the result, the woman and her children may be referred to the Transitional Shelter (preferably for up to 48 hours) until the Urgency Protective Measure is in force and they can return home safely.

Figure 2 also illustrates the importance of integration between services so that the necessary measures are taken quickly, and the woman receives adequate care. Based on care guidelines and protocols (SWP, 2015), it seems possible for BWH to guarantee the integration between and among services, not only at this first moment but throughout the period in which a victim is being monitored, ensuring the AP of integrated and humanized assistance.

As for the Data/Information AP, the care protocols (SWP, 2015) suggest that the house sector would fill in specific care and referral forms each time the woman visited the service. These forms were designed to collect information that would feed a Data System, which was only mentioned in legislation in 2019 (Decree No. 10.112, 2019). The Cooperation Agreement model (National Secretariat for Women’s Policies, 2020b) establishes that: NSWP is responsible for providing the *National Data and Information System of the BWH*; the state government is responsible for

implementing and administering this system in the existing BWH units in the state; and that the other signatories of the Agreement (Court of Justice, Public Ministry, and the municipal government) must provide information and data for monitoring the program through this system. In addition, the 2015 guidelines state that the Management Collegiate is responsible for organizing and making available information and data about the assistance. However, the descriptions are not sufficient to outline the process of transforming this data into monthly and annual reports available to society. This seems to be a problem for a program that depends on coordinated and standardized actions. According to the protocols, the effectiveness of this data system:

is based on the premise that data from all specialized services at the House must be produced with quality, systematically, and according to shared concepts. To this end, training courses for professionals should be carried out periodically, allowing for standardizing the information collected in the different services in each sector. (SWP, 2015, pp. 51-52)

Considerations about the process of producing these standardized reports are presented, along with the general recommendations, in Section 4.

BWH as Cultural Design

Cultural design is a planned change in the environment that provides context for the refinement or creation of cultural practices that are selected and maintained for short-term consequences and favor long-term results (Valderlon & Elias, 2019).

Lira et al. (2021) argue that taken together, the 23 Brazilian normative documents on the protection of women that they analyzed do not constitute effective cultural design because not all documents describe the expected long-term results. However, it remains to be considered whether the documents constitute cultural design in terms of their specific objectives. According to Lira and colleagues' analysis, the two decrees relating to the program establishing the BWHs (Decree No. n° 8.086, 2013; Decree No. 10.112, 2019) allow us to assume as: (1) *Environmental change*, the construction or expansion of specialized services aimed at women in situations of violence; (2) *Cultural practices to be selected*, "female autonomy responses," such as seeking support services for women in situations of violence and denouncing the aggressor; (3) *Consequences that maintain cultural practices in the short term*, women being removed from the aggressive environment and having access to health, legal, social assistance, and financial independence services; and (4) *Results of these cultural practices in the long term*, health and public safety services are a reference in specialized care for victims of violence.

For Lira et al. (2021), the results are broad descriptions that contain prescriptions from a set of laws on different aspects of combating violence against women. By analyzing the legislation on BWH only, it is possible to point out some specifics about this strategy. In this sense, it is worth adding that the decrees above focus on two sets of "Cultural practices to be selected" that must be issued by employees of the sectors that make up SNWSV, namely: (a) providing integrated and humanized

assistance; and (b) integrating the BWH Data System with the Women's Call Center – Call 180. Even though victims' cultural practices can ultimately be selected, the decrees prescribe changes in cultural practices within and between services. It is a prescription of supporting metacotengencies, whose APs can exert antecedent and consequent stimulus functions for the macrobehaviors planned for women (Todorov & Lemos, 2020). The short-term consequences inferred by Lira et al. (2021) can also affect these two practices; however, there are no prescribed consequences for integrating services or databases. Therefore, even concerning specific objectives, these decrees do not present all cultural design elements.

Are the Existing BWHs Producing Humanized and Integrated Assistance and Providing Information about their Functioning?

Some search procedures for data/information generated by the BWHs were adopted to verify if they have been made available and if they can indicate whether assistance has been offered in an integrated and humanized manner.

First, BWH's monthly and annual reports were searched. Only one of the eight existing BWHs, the Campo Grande unit, published data referring to the services provided (Governo do Estado de Mato Grosso do Sul, 2021). However, there are no monthly reports. The annual data only include the total number of visits made to the reception of BWH (including returns) and the total number of referrals made in the integrated sectors. The two available data sets generate a series of questions. After all, it is impossible to know the total number of women who sought BWH and whether they were victims of violence (given the protocols recommend that all women be referred to the Intaking and Screening service, even if they are not victims of violence). Furthermore, the data referring to the thousands of referrals made in a year do not imply integrated care according to the needs of each specific woman.

If the forms developed for BWHs were appropriately fulfilled, all BWHs would have a database that can generate much more detailed information than those mentioned, providing a history of how assistance has been developed since the creation of BWH in the respective cities. In addition, information on the victim's profile, the aggressor, the types of violence, and others could be analyzed to support actions to combat and prevent violence in the neighborhoods where they occur. However, it is known that recording data in a standardized way and analyzing it to be helpful to guide specific actions are jobs that take time and require specialized professionals. In the legislation on BWH, this aspect was not considered.

The searches on statistics related to violence against women in cities with BWH only confirmed the scarcity of these data already documented by research institutes (Instituto Igarapé, 2021; Senado Federal, 2021), even in the case of state capitals. As the data published by research institutes is fragmented, especially concerning the municipal level, we decided to request data on the Fala.BR Platform (Portal do Governo Brasileiro, 2021), which answers the requests of citizens based on the Access to Information Law (Law No. 12.527, 2011). By way of illustration, the statistics of the city of Campo Grande where the oldest BWH is located were requested.

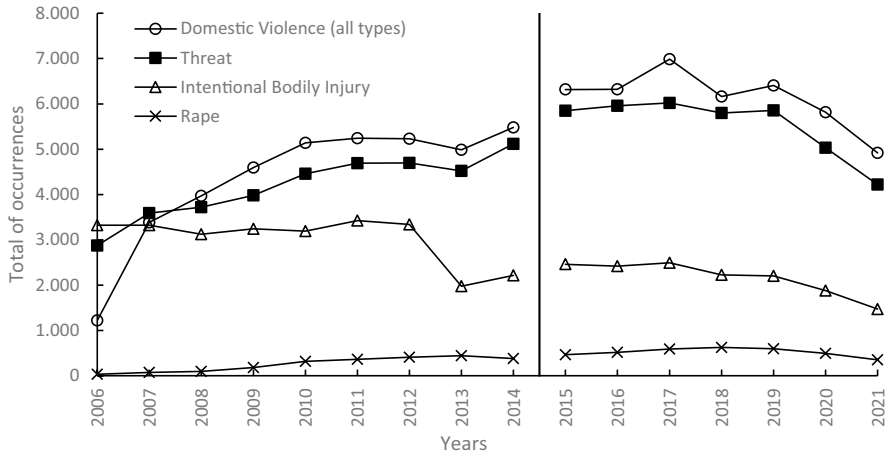


Fig. 3 Number of occurrences of domestic violence, threats, intentional bodily harm, and rapes reported annually before and after the creation of the BWH in Campo Grande, in 2015

The data provided by the State Department of Justice and Public Security of Mato Grosso do Sul were taken from Police Reports since 2006, the date of the Maria da Penha Law, through October 2021. Figure 3 shows the total occurrences of domestic violence crimes (in general), intentional bodily injury against women, threats, and rapes, before and after 2015, when BWH was created in Campo Grande.

In the year that BWH started operating, there was an increase in the record of domestic violence, threats, and rapes. Between 2015 and 2019, the totals for these three occurrences were higher than the totals recorded in all previous years. This correlation may indicate that BWH has made it easier for women to file complaints and that the organization has become a reference for assistance, as Lira et al. (2021) suggested. However, it does not allow us to make inferences about the integration and humanization of care. As for the intentional bodily injury indices, it is necessary to have more information about the criteria used to record this data. It is possible that some cases that were previously registered as bodily harm were registered as domestic violence (physical or sexual) at different times or by different officials. There is a drop in records of all crimes in the pandemic years, reflecting national data (Fórum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública, 2021).

Finally, a search for the “National Data and Information System of the Brazilian Woman’s House” revealed that this system does not exist but that the *National Policy on Data and Information related to Violence against Women* was recently instituted (Law No. 14.232, 2021). This policy has the “purpose of gathering, organizing, systematizing and making available data and information relating to all types of violence against women” (Law No. 14.232, 2021, Article 1). To that end, “the government will establish, electronically and by regulation, the Unified Registry of Data and Information on Violence against Women” (Law No. 14.232, 2021, Article 4). Among other information, this registry will contain information about the care provided by SNWSV. If this law is implemented, it will constitute a milestone

in combating violence against women in Brazil. However, it is still possible that data analysis on a national scale does not present the details necessary to assess the integration and humanization of care provided at the municipal level. In this sense, the proposal made in 2015 that the BWHs themselves produce monthly and annual reports presenting local data, remains relevant and necessary so that social control at the municipal level has better conditions of influence the public policy.

General Recommendations

Given the analyses carried out so far, it is recommended that actors involved in the formulation and evaluation of public policies for women in situations of violence consider discussing with representatives of the SNWSV, BWHs, and stakeholders the possibility of having a Data Analysis Sector within the BWH. The “BWH Data and Information” constitutes an AP envisioned by the analyzed documents. Nevertheless, the documents that have “force of law” (Decree No. 8.086, 2013; Decree No. 10.112, 2019) only mention the task of integrating a data system from BWH to the Women’s Call Center – Call 180. It seems that the Unified Registry will solve this problem. However, the production of reports appears only in the BWH guidelines and protocols. Reading of the decrees in light of the method of analysis of laws created by Todorov et al. (2004) shows that there are no prescriptions for contingencies or metacontingencies related to the production of reports at the local level. Not surprisingly, they have not been produced by the BWHs. Furthermore, they are not expected to be produced if no actor/sector is responsible for making them.

As Todorov and Lemos (2020) suggest, this intervention can be tested on a small scale to verify the effects of the publication of periodic data on the social control of public policy on the integration and humanization of care. An AB design with replications could be used at first. A multiple baseline design across different BWH units can also produce insightful data. If the results indicate that a Data Analysis Sector improves the assistance provided by the BWHs, the institutionalization of this sector in national legislation should be discussed to guarantee resources for the creation and maintenance of this sector in all BWH units.

If interested social sectors decide to insert the Data Analysis Sector into legislation, our surveys can help suggest the wording of the legislative text to ensure the description of contingencies/metacontingencies are aligned with the planned APs; and that the elements of a cultural design are contemplated. With the current legislation, some suggestions can be made. The AP “BWH Data and Information” could be listed, for example, in article 2 of Decree No. 8.086 (2013). An amendment could establish as one of the Safe and Protected Woman Program guidelines, *fostering social control of public policies and the improvement of assistance quality, through the periodic dissemination of reports on the assistance provided to women in situations of violence*. The same decree could list the sector responsible for producing such an AP (possibly a *BWH Data Analysis Sector*) among the services that a BWH can dispose of, presented in the first paragraph of its third article. In addition, the list of actions of the Safe and Protected Woman Program presented in article 3 should be expanded by two points: (a) *periodic training for professionals in all BWH units*

to record information in a standardized manner, and (b) training of professionals from the Data Analysis Sector of the BWHs to prepare reports on women's assistance at the municipal level. Finally, it is essential to note that Decree No. 8.086 (2013) already assigns the NSWP to draft BWH's protocols and standards of care. However, it does not mention protocols for data and information processing. Therefore, it is recommended to amend paragraph VI of article 4, potentially as: *to elaborate, disseminate, and update the assistance protocols, the data production protocols, and the technical standards adopted in the BWH units, with the support of the participating agencies and entities and collaborators.*

In terms of prescribing contingencies and metacontingencies, these amendments add to the legislation: (a) one of the primary APs of BWH – the reports with BWH data and information (the other main AP, integrated and humanized assistance, is already contemplated in Decree No. 8.086); (b) an intermediate AP – registration of information according to a standard; (c) the sectors responsible for these data and information – the professionals who feed the data system and the BWH Data Analysis Sector; (d) some antecedent conditions necessary to produce the reports, such as the training offered and the database; and (e) the probable selector environmental event – social control actions developed by the stakeholders. It is worth noting that no suggestions were made for amendments prescribing the IBCs involved in producing the reports. This was not done because this type of legislative document generally does not provide this level of detail. Nevertheless, it was suggested that the decree prescribe specific protocols for data production. These protocols can detail the IBCs.

The suggested changes would make the decree a more effective cultural design, as it would add: (1) *Environmental change*, the construction of the “BWH Data Analysis Sector”; (2) *Cultural practices to be selected*, to publish information about assistance periodically; (3) *Consequences that maintain cultural practices in the short term*, social control by stakeholders; and (4) *Results of these cultural practices in the long term*, improving assistance for victims of violence. It is estimated that, in addition to the profile of the victims and aggressors, these reports can provide relevant information for the advancement of intersectoral action, such as the time necessary for the women to have access to the indicated services; the specific services, and the average time of follow-up necessary for the victims of the different types of violence against women; the sectors that demand more investment (e.g., it can be verified if the number of social workers, psychologists, and lawyers is sufficient to meet the demand); the percentage of women who have been able to leave an abusive relationship; the percentage of women who have reached financial independence; estimates of the number of vacancies in shelters needed in the region; among others. With this type of information, the stakeholders (receiving system) can put pressure on the *input provider system* to supply the resources needed to meet the local demand at each specific time.

In addition to the estimated effects on the assistance to women directly, a sector specialized in data analysis in the BWH can establish cooperative relationships with researchers from various scientific fields and function as an environment for developing technologies to combat violence against women. For example, strategies that show themselves even more critical during the pandemic, such as cell

phone applications that provide some of the services (e.g., filing a report, calling the police, or receiving psychological assistance), could be integrated according to the reality of the local SNWSV. In partnership with the Data Analysis Sector, researchers in Data Science and Data Engineering could guide projects on machine learning that predict the region's demands. The results of this type of research would help improve assistance and prepare interventions for the prevention of violence. The potential that the BWH has to serve as a reference in the fight against violence against women can be exponentially increased if the data are appropriately analyzed and shared with society.

It should be noted that the analyst can periodically evaluate the integrity and security of the data entered in the system by analyzing the data to produce the reports. For example, suppose the other BWH professionals are not entering the data correctly. In that case, the analyst will be able to help them correct the procedure and ensure an efficient database for the local level and the analyses that will be done from the recently instituted *Unified Registry of Data and Information on Violence against Women*. In a sense, the BWH Data Analysis Sector would also act as a data management unit on violence against women at the municipal level. The suggested changes to the decree regarding BWH (Decree No. 8.086, 2013) may end up favoring the implementation of the new *National Policy on Data and Information related to Violence against Women* recently instituted (Law No. 14.232, 2021). It is noteworthy that including a professional specialized in Data Analysis would not significantly impact the organization's total costs and is justified by the potential to take better advantage of BWH's strategy as a whole. The salary of a data analyst in Brazil is, on average, four minimum wages (Glassdoor, 2021). Given the importance of this sector in the BWH structure, a higher salary could be established to retain the professional; still, the cost-benefit ratio would be advantageous. The state or local government could pay this professional's salary (like the other BWH professionals). It would be defined in the "Cooperation Agreement for the Safe and Protected Women Program" (National Secretariat for Women's Policies, 2020a, 2020b). Finally, it should be noted that the discussion of all suggestions made with representatives of the mentioned sectors and with the society will likely highlight other aspects not considered here.

Final Considerations

In general, for a public policy to change the population's cultural practices, coordinated actions of multiple public agents/sectors and their APs are required, configuring metacontingencies that support the planned change (Todorov & Lemos, 2020). These supporting metacontingencies usually involve the public sectors, which are labor organizations, even though they are not maintained by profit. Thus, it is understood that the principles and techniques in culturo-behavioral science can enrich the investigation of the functional dimensions of governmental interventions and highlight relevant aspects for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies.

In the present work, analysis tools from behavioral systems analysis (Malott, 2003; McGee & Crowley-Koch, 2021) were combined with procedures originating in cultural analysis – laws (Todorov et al., 2004) and cultural design strategies (Valderlon & Elias, 2019) to analyze Brazilian public policies for assistance to women in situations of violence. That combination revealed some aspects that distinguish cities whose SNWSVs have a BWH from those that do not, and relevant variables for BWHs to produce the APs needed to promote women’s security, autonomy, and financial independence. Given this is a national public policy, the prescribed BWH discussed herein can serve as a reference for analyzing the real BWHs that exist in the country. The results presented can save some work, and time, for those responsible for solving organizational problems in specific units and those involved in the evaluation and reformulation of this public policy. The analysis also identified points of current legislation that can be changed so that the prescriptions are aligned both with integrated and humanized care and the social control of this public policy. Furthermore, the analysis of BWH as a TPS indicated that in this type of organization, the receiving system does not directly select the IBCs and the AP from the processing system. Therefore, one must consider that the need to extend the elements considered in this TPS may be present in other non-profit-maintained organizations.

Despite being an advance in analyzing normative documents, this work has some limitations. First, one must consider that laws are only one of the elements that may be involved in changing cultural practices. However suitable it may be, a law does not guarantee that the objectives for which it was enacted will be achieved. Furthermore, the BWH protocols and guidelines and other documents analyzed were written during the former SWP administration. Despite emphasizing the importance of this public policy, the current administration does not agree with all the principles and guidelines that guided the construction of public policies for women in Brazil during previous times. Therefore, even if the current SPWP has not published updated versions of the documents in question, its actions may not align with the previous documents. In addition, a significant limitation concerns the suggestions for changes in the law with reference only to the documentary analysis. Therefore, it is recommended that these suggestions be considered only as a starting point for a more comprehensive social debate.

Overall, it can be said that this work illustrates how the combination of theories and methods advocated by *culturo-behavior science* is an advantage in approaching the various aspects involved in complex social phenomena such as public policies. The analyses presented help to understand a cultural intervention already in place, to think about possible technological refinements, and to identify new research problems. It is hoped that this work will inspire research on assisting women in violence more generally; actual BWH and SNWSV; other public policies by way of the method employed here; refinements of the TPS model for non-profit-maintained organizations; integration of principles and procedures for better analysis of cultural phenomena; among other possibilities.

Finally, it is important to note that public policies to combat violence against women have been suffering from increasing budget cuts. In 2020, the Brazilian government allocated only 0.03% of its budget to the Ministry of Women, Family, and Human Rights, the body that houses the NSWP. Contrary to the urgency that the

Covid-19 pandemic imposed on combating violence against women, the Ministry executed only approximately 30% of the funds allocated to it (Think Olga, 2021). Brazil is going through a period of fast-paced dismantling of public policies. In this context, it is hoped that the production of scientific knowledge can help maintain the strategies developed by the former SWP.

Glossary of Acronyms

AP	Aggregate Product
BSA	Behavior Systems Analysis
BSEM	Behavioral Systems Engineering Model
BWH	Brazilian Woman's House (Casa da Mulher Brasileira)
IBC	Interlocked Behavioral Contingencies
I&S	Intaking and Screening service
NSWP	National Secretariat for Women's Policies (Secretaria Nacional de Políticas para Mulheres)
SNWSV	Service Network for Women in Situations of Violence (Rede de Atendimento às Mulheres em Situação de Violência)
SWP	Secretariat for Women's Policies (Secretaria de Políticas para Mulheres)
TPS	Total Performance System

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Data availability Not applicable

Declarations

Conflict of Interest All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical approval All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed consent Not applicable

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