



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# Cidade Mulher

WORKSHOPS

(adapted from Women's Safety Audits)



**ONU HABITAT**  
POR UM FUTURO URBANO MELHOR

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April 2023

# Implementation of the *Cidade Mulher* methodology in Alagoas

This Executive Summary presents a synthesis of the **Results and Recommendations of the *Cidade Mulher* Workshops**, a methodology implemented in two state schools in Maceió by UN-Habitat, and an additional product of **Visão Alagoas 2030**, a technical cooperation project between UN-Habitat and the Government of Alagoas.

***Cidade Mulher*** is a participatory methodology, based on the “Women’s Security Audits” – which was adapted in the UN-Habitat global “Safer Cities” program.

Originally implemented in Pernambuco by UN-Habitat, in Maceió, the Woman City Workshops were adapted into a pilot initiative, with the participation of members of the Columbia Women’s Leadership Network.

The methodology was developed to be replicated and adapted to the specific contexts of each territory and considers that **security experts are the users of that public space evaluated**. In addition to encouraging changes in the physical environment, it seeks to empower women to occupy public space and participate in decision-making.

The **main objective** of *Cidade Mulher* is:

- **Assess and identify the socio-urban factors that cause feelings of (in)security in public spaces around schools, through the participants’ perceptions, needs and experiences of the city.**

Despite the limitations, the results of this experience demonstrate the potential replicability of the methodology in other territories and the importance of integrating initiatives like this into other public policy construction processes in the state, including contributing to the consolidation of **gender mainstreaming in public policies**.

## Workshops Implementation

### 1. Selection of schools:

The selection process for the two schools considered the high rates of violence, according to the Criminal Statistics and Analysis Center (NEAC/SSP), found in the neighborhoods of both schools, but also due to the contrast of the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb) between them. This difference was important to correlate the impact of educational indexes on the results collected. Despite the limited sample, the definition of the two schools sought to represent the diversity of the young women’s perspective and the influence of the territorial and educational context on their perceptions.

#### Doutora Eunice Lemos State School

- Benedito Bentes neighborhood, upper part of the city
- 21st IDEB in Maceió, 129th in Alagoas
- 22 participants

#### Maria das Graças de Sá Teixeira State School

- Feitosa neighborhood, lower part of the city
- 2nd IDEB in Maceió, 12th in Alagoas
- 14 participants

### 2. Workshops methodology:

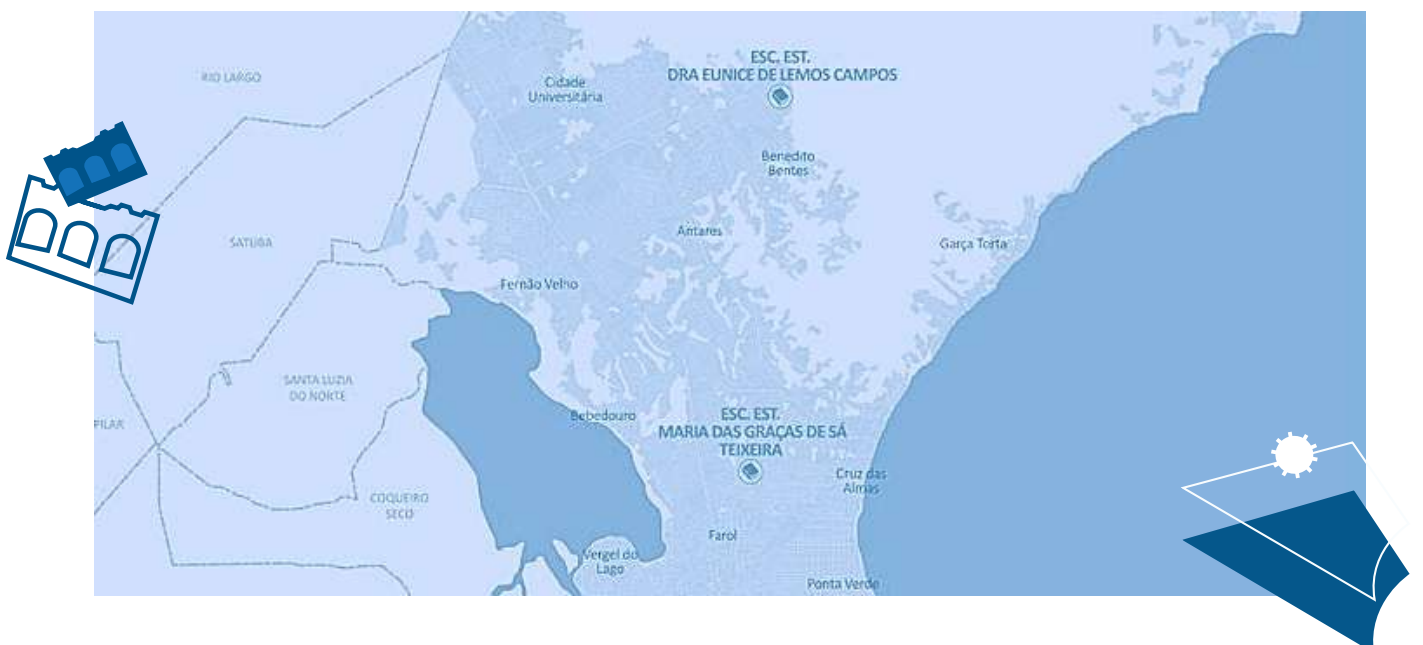
The *Cidade Mulher* Workshops held in Maceió were adapted from the methodology used in Pernambuco by UN-Habitat and consisted of three stages, divided into two periods for each workshop day:

#### Morning

- **Engage**
  - Registration and profiling of participants
  - Session on raising awareness about the workshop topic
- **Welcome**
  - Focus Group Discussion

#### Afternoon

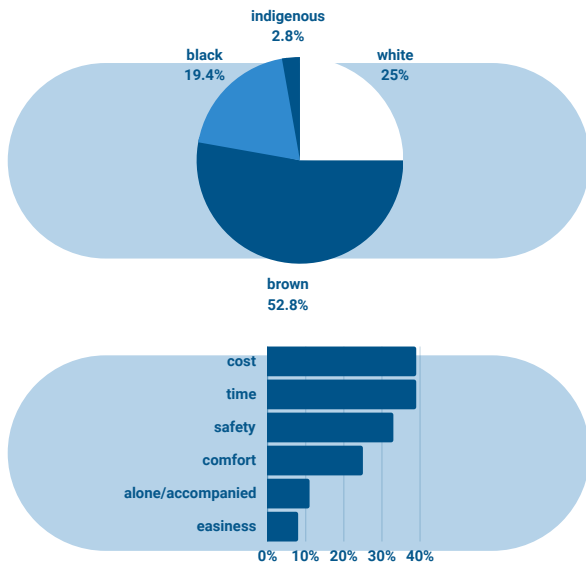
- **Territorialize**
  - Collective Cartography
  - Debate and exchange between groups



# Key findings

## Participants profile

Most of them are young black and brown women, aged between 15 and 20 years old, and they consider that cost and time are the main factors when choosing a means of transport, followed by safety.



## Main differences between the young women by school

The schools have several similarities and differences between them and below are highlighted the main findings that point to possibilities for different actions by public authorities for each territory.

### 1. Future perspectives

The young women believe that they will have more autonomy and will be able to get to know the city more after leaving school, attending higher education and/or starting to work.

- At Feitosa school, the young women had a positive feeling about the future. At Benedito Bentes' school, they demonstrated uncertainty and anxiety.

### 2. Empowerment

The young women that participated in the workshops presented different ways of communicating and occupying the speaking arena during the workshops.

- At the Feitosa' school, the participants seemed more comfortable expressing themselves and exposing their experiences, perceptions, and desires. At Benedito Bentes' school, the young women seemed less comfortable and spoke in a "shyer" tone and it was difficult to extract their opinion and experience on the topic.

### 3. Experience in the city

The young women don't know the city well and don't participate in collectives.

- The young women do not circulate in public spaces, unlike their male colleagues;
- The young women travel within a restricted perimeter in the city, limited to the neighborhood and the route home - school - relatives' house; and
- They do not participate in groups, nor do they usually socialize outside of school or the family environment.

## Cidade Mulher Workshops Highlights

### The feeling of safety in public spaces depends on:

- Not be discriminated against or threatened because of their gender, race and/or sexual orientation;
- Diversity and number of people in the space;
- The time of day and public lighting;
- Maintenance of public spaces and buildings; and
- The (non)existence of crime.

– *"Feeling safe also means feeling welcomed as you are. Not feeling threatened (...) by being a woman, black, lesbian."*

### Cases of harassment of women and violence based on gender are common on the streets and other public spaces:

- Several reports and descriptions of gender-based violence such as: unwanted sexual advances, street-based sexual harassment, catcalls, sexual comments, stalking/following, and threats during their daily journeys around school and in the city;
- Reports of lesbophobia, hate crimes and transphobia; and
- Fear is one of the main factors that lead young women to spend most of their free time at home.

– *"If we don't feel safe at home, imagine being on the street."*

### Constant feeling of vulnerability to violence due to being a woman

- Excessive concern with garments, avoiding wearing clothes that expose the body, due to the fear of attracting unwanted attention and being a victim of street-based harassment, sexual comments, and stalking/following; and
- Excessive fear when being on streets or public spaces occupied only by men, but they feel safer accompanied by male friends and family.

– *"We want to be invisible on the streets to feel safe."*

### Lack of public spaces considered safe and welcoming

- Lack of qualified public spaces in neighborhoods: spaces with adequate maintenance, illuminated, occupied by a diversity of people and with programmatic functions that focus on the use of girls and women;
- Lack of refuge spaces of public access to go to in situations of violence or threats; and
- Streets that are unwelcoming and unsafe for pedestrians.

– *"Men are born much freer. Girls are born confined, imprisoned."*

### Main Proposals from the Young Women

- Creation of leisure and sports spaces that prioritize the use of girls and women;
- Implementation of anti-sexist campaigns and against harassment and sexual abuse in neighborhoods;
- Training on gender issues in schools;
- Expansion of the Ronda no Bairro Program, with the presence of female police officers; and
- Creation of refuge and shelter spaces for girls, women and LGBTQIAP+ people to turn to in cases of violence.

# Recommendations



## SDGS LOCALIZATION

### SHORT-TERM

Delivering of Workshops on Gender Transversalization and Public Policies for the technical staff of the Government of the State of Alagoas

Implementation of institutional anti-sexist campaigns, against harassment, sexual abuse, and against other forms of discrimination (racism, lesbophobia, transphobia) in neighborhoods

Inclusion of a gender perspective in the elaboration of the Integrated Urban Development Plan (PDUI) of the Metropolitan Region of Maceió

### MEDIUM-TERM

Incorporation of recommendations into state programs and projects

Elaboration of strategies so that public education promotes greater connections between students and the surrounding community

### LONG-TERM

Implementation of Her City in Alagoas, a set of UN-Habitat methodologies that promote gender mainstreaming in urban planning, to draw up an action plan that guides urban development in the state in an inclusive and sustainable manner

Development of an urban requalification project around the schools in Maceió to improve safety by improving environmental factors and urban design in the regions adjacent to the schools, including a gender perspective

#### Elaboration of integrated public policies for young people in Alagoas

- Requalification of public spaces from a multisectoral and participatory perspective;
- Implementation of women's community spaces in neighborhoods;
- Expansion of community bases and patrols in neighborhoods, with the presence of female police officers;
- Training of police forces on human rights, gender and urban and domestic violence

## Concluding Remarks

During *Cidade Mulher Workshops* were raised issues that are both consequences of structural inequalities and gender oppression faced by girls and women, as well as factors caused by **urban planning that has not considered their experiences, desires, and intersectional needs in the city.**

As reported, fear and the feeling of vulnerability to violence have limited the freedom of movement and access of girls and women to the same leisure, educational and work opportunities enjoyed by boys and men, negatively impacting their health and well-being. Confronting this challenge, the **design of safer public spaces can help reduce incidents and increase the perception of safety of girls and women.**

The accuracy of the information collected, and the richness of the proposed solutions reflect the importance of using methodological tools such as *Cidade Mulher*, where qualified evidence and data are generated to inform the construction of public policies that confront inequalities, violence, and oppression (sexism, lesbophobia, transphobia, etc.) experienced in urban spaces by girls and women.

Based on the results and recommendations, it is expected to contribute to the **mainstreaming of gender in the formulation of state government policies**, and, consequently, to the construction of more inclusive, safe and sustainable cities for all people.

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