



Facing domestic violence against women in Brazil: advances and challenges

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This article offers a critical overview of the Brazilian legal framework for confronting domestic violence. Intimate partner homicides are epidemic in Brazil: there are four deaths of women per day. In 2006, the Maria da Penha Law (MPL) introduced integrated polices and transformed criminal procedures to deal with the complexities of gender violence. Reforms included the establishment of The House of Brazilian Women, women-only police stations, specialised courts, intervention orders, interdisciplinary experts, and perpetrator programs. In 2015, a new law established the crime of femicide and was designed to prevent 'honour killings' defences in cases of intimate partner homicides and to avoid impunity. Despite the legal reforms, the structure and articulation of the networks of services remains a challenge. The MPL led to great social change in Brazil by raising awareness of violence against women, and facilitating a broader discussion about gender equality.

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