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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LEGAL SERVICES OF THE MARANHÃO WOMEN'S HOUSE IN IMPERATRIZ IN RECENT YEARS, IN THE PREVENTION OF NEW AGGRESSIONS[1]

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we analyze the effectiveness of the legal services provided by the Maranhão Women's House in the city of Imperatriz in the prevention of new aggressions regarding domestic violence. Considering the high rates of aggression against women, we seek to understand how specialized legal assistance contributes to protect these victims and how the breaking of the cycle of violence is analyzed. We adopted a qualitative and quantitative approach, based on the analysis of statistical data and the collection of reports from professionals who work in the support network in front of the Women's House, some of them being the Defender's Office, the Prosecutor's Office and the Women's Police Station. We found that the intersectoral performance of the Space provides a humanized and welcoming service, although it still faces challenges such as limited resources and demand overload. We observed that emergency protective measures, when applied quickly, help in an intensified way to ensure the safety and protection of victims. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that despite the advances, there is a need for institutional strengthening and integrated policies, in order to expand and ensure continuous and humanized care for women who are vulnerable due to violence.

Keywords: Domestic violence. Legal services. Public policies. Protection of women. Human rights.

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INTRODUCTION

This article deals with domestic violence in Brazil, focusing on the performance of the Casa da Mulher Maranhense in Imperatriz, specifically with regard to the effectiveness of the Legal Services provided by the Institution in recent years, in the Prevention of New Aggressions. Domestic violence continues to be a serious social and legal problem, even with advances in public policies and the legal system, especially after the creation of the Maria da Penha Law (Law No. 11,340/2006), which aims to guarantee the protection of victims and ensure the punishment of aggressors. In this context, the performance of institutions specialized in the care of women victims of violence is crucial, with the Casa da Mulher Maranhense being an important example of this protection network.

The study was motivated by the high incidence of domestic violence in the state of Maranhão, which occupies a prominent position among the states of Brazil with high rates of aggression and femicides. The choice of this theme is justified, socially, by the need to discuss and improve the mechanisms of protection for women and, legally, by the relevance of analyzing the effectiveness of protective measures and legal services offered to these victims. Personally, the theme was chosen because it reflects a problem that still affects the lives of millions of women, especially in more vulnerable regions, such as Maranhão, where domestic violence remains a structuring challenge in society.

Domestic violence is configured by acts of physical, psychological, sexual, patrimonial and moral aggression, committed in the family or domestic sphere, as defined by the Maria da Penha Law. The central problem that guides the present study is: **what is the effectiveness of the legal services offered by the Casa da Mulher Maranhense in preventing the recurrence of domestic violence in Imperatriz?**

The general objective of this research is to analyze how the legal services provided by the Casa da Mulher Maranhense contribute to the prevention of new aggressions and the protection of victims, promoting a safer domestic environment. To this end, the article is structured as follows: initially a contextualization of domestic violence in Brazil and Maranhão will be presented, especially in the city of Imperatriz, followed by an analysis of the Maranhão Women's House and its Role in the network of protection for them, still within this chapter an approach to the legal services and the application of protective measures, In the penultimate chapter, the institutional perception of agents to combat violence will also be addressed. Then, the results obtained through the analysis of research and interviews are discussed, culminating in the conclusions and suggestions for improvements in public policies aimed at domestic violence.

The data used for this research were used through data formally requested by the Institute of Higher Education of Southern Maranhão to the Women's Defender's Office, the Specialized Women's Police Station, the Specialized Women's Prosecutor's Office, at the Maranhão Women's House, referring to domestic violence in the state.

The methodology used in the research has a quantitative and qualitative character. The quantitative survey was based on official data recorded by the Casa da Mulher Maranhense between the years 2022 and 2024. Thus, the study aims to carry out a survey on the scenario of domestic violence in Imperatriz. Thus, according to the researchers, the quantitative research method believes that everything can be qualified so that they can be classified and analyzed for the means of statistical tools (Gil, 2007). Therefore, this article is also structured through bibliographic research, based on Brazilian legislation, doctrine and research on various informative sites.

Thus, the qualitative research took place through semi-structured interviews with professionals in the legal and social areas, as well as through institutional observation during the technical visit formally carried out. Therefore, the present combination of these approaches allowed a broad and in-depth analysis of the theme, contributing to the improvement of care and protection practices for women victims of violence.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE BRAZILIAN AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Since the enactment of **Law No. 11,340/2006 (Maria da Penha Law),** the country has taken a significant step forward in the protection of women victims of violence, establishing legal mechanisms to prevent, punish, and eradicate this type of aggression. This law contemplates emergency protective measures, the creation of specialized care services and the accountability of the aggressor.

However, domestic violence, unfortunately, is still a problem present in the Brazilian context, and is characterized as one of the greatest inconsistencies faced in society. It is a structural violation of women's human rights, since there is inequality and systematic oppression rooted, with social resistance to change sexist behaviors, on the part of society, also reflecting the historical and cultural roots of a patriarchal society, where several women are still subject to the manifested scenario, in various ways, such as through the act of aggression, violating, abusing her, disrespecting, offending, invading and more, causing her serious side effects, such as psychological and moral, social, among others, regardless of her financial class, often for the simple fact of being a woman. In view of this, violence, whether material or moral, vitiates consent, since it suppresses the will, and the violated

person is induced to perform an act or deprive himself of an action due to fear, or the danger that violence unfortunately offers.

CONCEPT AND TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACCORDING TO BRAZILIAN LEGISLATION

READ

Violence can be understood as the use of force to achieve an objective that, without this imposition, would not be achieved. This concept comes from the Latin "violentia", from "violentus", which refers to the idea of impetus, fury and imposition. It is also linked to the verb "Violare", related to power and strength as well as transgression and disrespect.

In the field of Law, violence manifests itself as a form of coercion, aggression, violation, abuse, disrespect and offenses, causing serious psychological, moral, and social side effects, among others. The victim's resistance is nullified through this physical or psychological imposition, which can occur both through aggression and through threats and intimidation that generate fear and embarrassment. The author Nagib Salibi Filho reflected that legally, violence is a form of coercion, or constraint, put into practice to overcome the other's capacity for resistance, as well as an act of force exerted against something (Filho, 2003, p.67).

In view of this, since 2003, Brazil has undergone significant transformations in terms of assistance to women in situations of violence, with the expansion of public policies aimed at their protection and confrontation of gender violence. Domestic violence is one of the most serious violations of human rights, being a phenomenon that affects thousands of women in Brazil, as well as children, the elderly and other vulnerable groups. This type of violence occurs within the family environment or in relationships of affection, causing profound physical, emotional and social impacts. In response to this reality, the Brazilian State enacted Law No. 11,340/2006, known as the Maria da Penha Law, which establishes a set of protective measures and legal mechanisms for the prevention, punishment and assistance of victims.

Thus, in the light of article 5 of the Maria da Penha Law, for this purpose, domestic and family violence against women is configured, as any action or omission based on gender that causes death, injury, physical, sexual or psychological suffering, and moral or property damage. This violence can occur in the family environment, when there is a relationship between people who live together or have lived together, regardless of blood ties; in the domestic sphere, when the aggression happens inside the residence or in a common living space; finally, in the context of intimate relationships of affection, when there

is a loving or affective bond, such as between boyfriends, partners or ex-partners, even without cohabitation.

Types of Domestic Violence according to Brazilian Criminal Law

Article 7 of Law No. 11,340/2006 establishes five main categories of domestic violence. In item I of this same article**, physical violence** is addressed, which is the most visible and comprises any action that causes damage to the victim's bodily integrity or health, including punches, kicks, slaps, strangulation, burns, use of sharp or piercing objects and aggression with weapons, such as wounds by firearms or knives, among others. The second category is addressed in item II, which emphasizes **psychological violence**, which in turn involves emotional aggression that affects the victim's mental well-being, such as threats, humiliation, social isolation, manipulation and constant persecution. Although it does not leave visible marks, this type of violence causes disorders such as anxiety, depression and panic syndrome, for example. In this sense, according to Cavalcanti (2007, p. 12)

> Psychological violence is the action or omission with the scope of harming or controlling actions, behaviors, beliefs and decisions (...) through intimidation, manipulation, threat (...), humiliation, isolation or some other attitude that creates damage to psychological health, personal development and self-determination.

Sexual violence is already provided for in item III of Law No. 11,340/2006, understood as any conduct that causes embarrassment or makes the victim witness, maintain or participate in unwanted sexual intercourse, through intimidation, threat, coercion or use of force; that induces her to sell or use, in any way, their sexuality, which prevents them from using any contraceptive method or which forces them into marriage, pregnancy, abortion or prostitution, through coercion, blackmail, bribery or manipulation; or that limits or annuls the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights.

Property violence is characterized, according to item IV, by the abusive control of the victim's assets and financial resources, which may involve withholding of salary, destruction of personal documents, misappropriation of money and the prohibition of access to basic resources. A widely discussed example was the case of presenter Ana Hickmann, in 2023, when she filed a police report against her ex-husband Alexandre, accusing him of domestic and property violence.

Finally, **moral violence**, highlighted in item V, refers to conduct that affects the victim's honor and reputation, such as slander, defamation and injury, whether in the domestic environment or even on social networks.

To ensure the safety of victims, the Maria da Penha Law provides for emergency protective measures, such as the removal of the aggressor from the home, the prohibition of contact with the victim and inclusion in social and psychological assistance programs. In addition, **Law No. 13,104/2015**, known as **the Femicide Law**, included the crime of femicide in the Penal Code, characterizing it as qualified homicide committed for reasons of gender in the context of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a structural problem that requires strict measures to be eradicated. The strengthening of public policies, the improvement of legislation and the awareness of society are essential to ensure the protection of victims and the accountability of aggressors. The Maria da Penha Law represents a significant advance in this fight, but its effectiveness depends on the efficient application of protection mechanisms and the guarantee of access to justice for all victims.

STATISTICS AND OVERVIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MARANHÃO AND IMPERATRIZ

The brutality with which domestic violence still occurs in society highlights how alarming this problem is, in addition to flagrantly violating human rights. In Maranhão, in particular, the rates are worrying, and the city of Imperatriz stands out in this scenario. Based on recent data from the last five years, obtained through documentary research on news sites in the local region, some of them from the City Hall, the Federal Government and the newspaper Mais Maranhão, it is possible to perceive the magnitude of the issue. These data also reveal the measures adopted to confront it, such as the reception actions and the work of the Women's Police Station, essential in the fight against domestic violence.

In this bias, according to the 10th edition of the National Survey of Violence against Women, 25% of women in Maranhão have already suffered some type of domestic or family violence caused by a man. Among them, 27% suffered violence in the last 12 months, rates similar to the national rates. With regard to Maranhão, in 2024, according to the Online Newspaper of the Journalism course at UFMA (Federal University of Maranhão) in Imperatriz, during August Lilac, a month of awareness and fight against violence against women in Brazil created by the Federal Government, it is noteworthy that the state recorded 37 femicides, including both attempts and cases consummated through aggression.

In addition, according to data from the Brazilian Yearbook of Public Security, approximately 37 femicides were registered in the state as of August 2024. Despite this,

there was a reduction of about 70% in these cases in October 2023, compared to the periods of the last five years.

In view of this panorama, the Maranhão Women's House in Imperatriz is one of the main institutions responsible for the care and protection of women in situations of domestic violence in the region. The House offers specialized services, focusing on legal, psychological and social support, seeking to ensure the safety of victims and the effectiveness of the protective measures established by the Court. However, despite the importance of this institution, it is undeniable not to say that the Women's Police Station acts in a concrete and effective way in the fight against domestic and intrafamily violence. However, according to data obtained by the 8th Specialized Justice Prosecutor's Office, through the news portal of the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Maranhão (MPMA), the city is still the target of a high demand related to cases of domestic violence, in March 2023 alone about 69 complaints related to domestic violence against women were registered. In addition, in the same period, 17 final allegations were presented, three appeals were filed and another 88 manifestations were made.

In view of this, the Special Court for Domestic and Family Violence against Women has also faced tragic cases. In September 2024, for example, the femicide of Francisca Helena Maria da Silva Xavier[4], 57, victim of an attack with a bladed weapon, a kitchen knife, through several blows to the neck, by her partner, who then tried to take his own life by stabbing himself in the belly.

In this sense, through an interview at the Women's Police Station, located inside the Women's House, the Administrative Clerk, Thagila da Silva, emphasizes the high demand faced in Imperatriz, as it is considered high, especially compared to the number of servers available, many times according to her it occurs to reach up to 800 inquiries per year and that such overload compromises the speed and effectiveness in the care of victims (Women's Police Station, 2025).

It also highlights that the most recurrent crimes recorded by the Specialized Women's Police Station in Imperatriz are threat crimes, which have significantly high rates. Then, they configure the crimes of bodily injury, emotional damage and infractions related to subjective honor, such as slander, defamation and injury. Also considering the cases of rape, sexual harassment and sexual harassment that also configures a considerable demand.

[4] Arrest Notice No. 0817953-28.2024.8.10.0040 and Criminal Action of Jury Competence No. 0818510-15.2024.8.10.0040, Court of Justice of the State of Maranhão.

Thus, it is clear that this panorama reflects a picture of growing violence that requires a more effective response from the authorities, such as the Public Prosecutor's Office, Specialized Courts, among others, and society. Such a scenario is extremely worrying, as evidenced by the Head of the Department of Femicide and Director of the Casa da Mulher Brasileira, through the social network, Instagram, on the profile of the Casa da Mulher Maranhense, highlighted the increase in femicides in recent years and in 2023, stating that this problem is not just isolated, but part of a continuous cycle of violence that women face in abusive relationships. In addition, it also appeals to each person who experiences such an act, or knowledge of this dangerous situation, to make a complaint, which can even be anonymous, through the numbers 180 or 181.

THE HOUSE OF MARANHÃO WOMEN AND THEIR ROLE IN THE WOMEN'S PROTECTION NETWORK

"Life begins when violence ends" (Penha, 2006). This statement by Maria da Penha states that the best phase that women experience is when they themselves are faced with the opposite side of violence, that is, free from the relationship of abuse and any action that causes damage to bodily integrity or their health. In this way, it reiterates the importance of public policies that promote greater acceptance and zeal. Thus establishing greater guidelines to face this factor, this being the basis of the actions of the Casa da Mulher Maranhense, an institution that, through an integrated and multidisciplinary service, not only seeks to guarantee safety, but also dignity and the restart of life of many victims.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE MARANHÃO WOMEN'S HOUSE IN IMPERATRIZ

The Maranhão Women's House in the city of Imperatriz was inaugurated in August 2020, it was consolidated as a pillar support for victims, as its objective is to provide specialized and humanized care to victims of this pathology, all with the purpose of eradicating violence against women vulnerable to this conflict, being all aligned with the guidelines of Law No. 11,340/2006.

The Space of the Maranhão Women's House follows the model of the Brazilian Women's House (CCB), an institution also dedicated to the reception of victims, the CMM of Imperatriz has its location and service, according to the portal "Imirante.com" on Avenida São Sebastião, in the Vila Nova neighborhood, with services from Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 6 pm.

Since its inauguration, the Maranhão Women's House has shown a very important role in the protection of women in Imperatriz, victims of the pathology studied in this article. In 2022 alone, the dedicated space carried out around 8,000 consultations, with women victims of domestic violence being welcomed and guided about their rights and access to justice (Jornal dos Municípios, 2022). In addition, by July 2024, the unit could also register a total of 28,294 attendances (Imirantes, 2024), reflecting the growing demand for reception and support services in the Tocatina region.

The CMM of Imperatriz has several specialized bodies and sectors, in order to meet the victim's needs, such as psychosocial care, which is the first effective moment, the woman victim of domestic violence goes through a screening, with guidance and possibilities of referral to the Women's Reference and Care Center (CRAM) - which is generated by the municipality - or to the internal bodies that work in the house, at the Social Worker Center.

In addition, collaborate with other support institutions, such as the Specialized Women's Police Station (DEAM), the Specialized Court for Domestic and Family Violence, the Women's Defender's Office, the Maria da Penha Patrol - a public security program, which aims to monitor compliance with protective measures, provided for in Law 11.340/2006 -, and the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Women's Care.

Finally, it contains the support of each Social Assistance Center of the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Social Assistance Center of the Public Defender's Office and other support professionals who also work in initiatives such as reflective groups for men, which have the support of the municipal management, including for lectures.

LEGAL SERVICES AND THE APPLICATION OF PROTECTIVE MEASURES

Confronting domestic violence requires an integrated approach, since legal services such as assistance, protective measures and psychosocial monitoring play an essential role in the formation of protection and access to justice for women victims of violence. In this sense, according to Maria Berenice Dias, indoctrinated in the area of Family Law and Domestic Violence, "the application of emergency protective measures must be immediate, aiming at the protection of the victim and the interruption of the cycle of violence" (Dias, 2016). In this aspect, the Maranhão Women's House, together with the constituted bodies and in partnership with the Reference Center for Women's Care (CRAM), represents a strategic point, offering a network of reception and specialized legal support. Thus, this topic analyzes the performance of legal services in the fight against domestic violence, with

emphasis on the emergency protective measures provided for by Law 11.340/200, which aims to safeguard the safety of women in situations of violence.

Legal Services

According to Jurema Wernec, executive director of Geledés, the Black Women's Institute, "the Shelters are indispensable in the construction of a protection network that ensures women in situations of violence a safe space to reconstruct their stories." Based on this statement, it is possible to see the importance of the Maranhão Women's House in Imperatriz, because in addition to offering legal and psychological services, it is an environment to which women receive shelter.

The Maranhão Women's House (CMM) has specialized and humanized care, reception rooms, reception, passage shelter with accommodation, playroom and other facilities. The space attends to cases of family domestic violence, rape cases and other cases of sexual violence, and also refers them to reference agencies. The agency also promotes actions to generate employment and income, based on the services of Sine Mulher, coordinated by the State Secretariat of Labor and Solidarity Economy (SETRES).

According to reports received by the professionals of each agency, working in the House, as mentioned, legal assistance is initiated from the psychosocial screening, carried out by the social assistance center of the house. This first initial step is extremely important, as it allows the identification not only of the appropriate measures, but also of the emotional condition of the victim, ensuring not only an isolated legal service, but also an integration with the support network capable of offering humanized protection.

In view of this, the Women's Police Station of Imperatriz, one of the bodies operating within the space of the Maranhão Women's House, through the procedures of ordinary work, the body seeks a multiple relationship with the other bodies of aid and protection to victims of domestic and intrafamily violence.

The Women's Police Station of Imperatriz is the body responsible for receiving complaints of violence against women and following up on the appropriate legal procedures to ensure the protection of the victim and the punishment of the aggressor. In addition to acting in a concrete and effective way, in the fight against domestic and intrafamily violence.

However, despite being a specialized body, it does not work 24 hours a day, only during business hours, that is, any demand that arises after 6 pm, weekends or holidays will only be met by the City's Central Shift.

Application of protective measures

Emergency protective measures are those that can be adopted immediately after the complaint or registration of an occurrence of violence, and aim to prevent the aggression from repeating or intensifying. Among these measures, the following stand out: the removal of the aggressor from the home or place of coexistence with the victim, the restriction or suspension of visits by minor children to the aggressor, and the prohibition of any type of contact between the aggressor and the victim, whether by telephone, internet or in person (Brasil, 2006).

Emergency protective measures are provided for in Law 11,340/2006, and are then regulated from article 18, which addresses the general provisions, when the file with the request of the offended party is received until its processing in article 21 of this law. Article 22 deals with emergency protective measures that oblige the aggressor, emergency protective measures to the offended party, stemming from article 23 to article 24, as well as the crime of non-compliance with emergency protective measures in article 24-A, as inserted in 2014, through Law No. 13,641/2018.

These protective measures are presented in a non-exhaustive manner, allowing the judge to also grant other protection measures, in order to identify in the specific case situations that make the woman victim of violence even more vulnerable.

Thus, teach among the Emergency Protective Measures that Oblige the Aggressor, as analyzed in article 22 of Law 11.340/2006, thus being able to be applied as follows:

> Article 22. If the practice of domestic and family violence against the woman is verified, under the terms of this Law, the judge may immediately apply to the aggressor, jointly or separately, the following emergency protective measures, among others:
> I – Suspension of the possession or restriction of the carrying of weapons, with communication to the competent body, under the terms of Law No. 10,826, of December 22, 2003;
> II – Removal from the home, domicile or place of coexistence with the offended party;
> III – prohibition of certain conducts, including:
> a) approach of the offended party, her family members and witnesses, setting the minimum distance between them and the aggressor;
> b) contact with the offended party, her family members and witnesses by any means of communication;
> c) frequenting certain places in order to preserve the physical and psychological integrity of the offended party;
> IV – Restriction or suspension of visits to minor dependents, after hearing the multidisciplinary care team or similar service;
> V – Provision of provisional or provisional alimony. (BRAZIL, 2006).

Soon after receiving the complaint, the legislator presents measures that are obligated to the aggressor, in which the judge may apply jointly or separately some urgent measures, as also mentioned in this same law in its article 22.

Also in article 23 of the Maria da Penha Law, it establishes specific measures in order to protect the offended party, thus including her referral to foster care programs, as well as the Casa da Mulher Maranhense, the reduction to the home after the aggressor is removed and even the possibility of removing her from home without prejudice to her rights.

Thus, the main focus is to seek to bring greater protection to the offended. It is worth mentioning that all the measures imposed are patrols by the Maria da Penha Patrol.

It is undeniable that the Maria da Penha Law has provided advances regarding the curbing of violence, but as it is a legislative measure, it needs a competent institutional network so that there is a satisfactory application of its provisions and its application beyond symbolism. There are still challenges to its implementation of measures, whether in prevention, protection and assistance or in the accountability of aggressors.

INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTION OF AGENTS TO COMBAT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN IMPERATRIZ

The Maria da Penha Law should be understood as a system of integral protection for women, requiring articulated action between the Judiciary, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Public Defender's Office and social policies (Maria Berenice Dias, 2007). In view of this, it is possible to understand the perception of professionals who work directly in the fight against domestic violence, which allows us to analyze, from an institutional perspective, the effectiveness of the services offered and the challenges faced in practice. However, among the positive points highlighted is the intersectoral action between the legal, psychosocial and public security sectors, considered fundamental for an agile and humanized service.

Regarding the perception of the professionals who work directly at the Maranhão Women's House in Imperatriz, it offers a practical and institutional perspective on the effectiveness and challenges that follow it in the fight against domestic violence. Through interviews conducted in the Space, and provided by some of the representatives present at the Women's Police Station, the Women's Prosecutor's Office and the Women's Defender's Office, bodies active within the CMM, reveal essential aspects about the functioning of the support network, making it possible to understand how the joint action between the sectors; the social and security service center contributes to the care and protection of the victim and finally to the accountability of the aggressor and also its limitations. Marciane S. Moreno Dutra, Ministerial Technician of the Women's Prosecutor's Office, states that the integration between services allows women to be welcomed and referred efficiently, regardless of the point of entry into the protection network. In addition to legal and assistance services, there is also support for educational and preventive actions, such as

reflective groups aimed at male perpetrators of violence, carried out with the support of the municipality.

The reports collected indicate that, although there are already forms of follow-up after the initial legal service, this process can be significantly improved. According to one of the interviewees, Nielly Santos da Fonseca, an undergraduate intern at the Women's Defender's Office, the women already leave the screening with the social worker with basic guidance, and are then directed to the Defender's Office. From that moment on, they are asked about the desired measures, in addition to filling out a risk form - including at the Women's Police Station - in order to support the request for a protective measure and identify, in an agile and humanized way, the type of violence suffered, in addition, there is the possibility of referral to CRAM, which can be passed on from the initial moment, In addition, after all the care is completed, they still receive psychological support, with previously scheduled times. Finally, she reported that the experience at the site revealed that in a portion of the times, some women voluntarily return to follow-up after noticing significant improvements in their mental health, which highlights the importance of this continuous support.

On the other hand, the interviewee states that many women still arrive at the house without basic information about their rights or even understand the seriousness of the situation of violence they are experiencing. It also highlights that access to information is one of the points that could be strengthened, including from basic education, as a way to prevent situations of vulnerability. According to her words, "many women do not see the dimension of what they are going through", in view of this, there is a need for educational actions and broader awareness, which include the dissemination of legal and emotional knowledge about the types of violence.

During the visit to the units within the Women's House, it was possible to observe a committed performance on the part of the social workers of the house and each nucleus. Every Wednesday, they meet with the victims in the auditorium of the house, mainly to meet those who unfortunately wish to revoke the emergency protective measure. In these cases, every time they feel this need, it is mandatory to go through a whole process of follow-up with the social worker, to make sure that this decision is made consciously and safely.

For Marciane S. Moreno Dutra (Ministerial Technician of the Women's Prosecutor's Office), she considers that although there are psychological services both at the Women's House and the CRAM, a more robust investment by the public authorities is still needed, emphasizing that the problem is not the absence of services, but the limitation of reach. She says that many women have deep psychological suffering, with depression or anxiety,

and are not even able to leave the house to seek help. Finally, he highlights the importance of expanding technical teams and promoting affective search actions.

In view of what has been exposed, it is possible to see that the performance of the Casa da Mulher Maranhense in Imperatriz has been indispensable in the fight against domestic violence, especially with regard to the articulations involved between the bodies that act within the place, which are psychosocial, security and legal sectors. Based on the testimonies of the active civil servants, they reveal that, despite some structural limitations and the need for greater reach and investment - especially in the resources that cover the Maria da Penha Patrol, to monitor compliance with protective measures - the support network has played an exceptional role: to welcome, guide and protect victims. Practical experience shows that, even in the face of challenges, the existing structure has enabled quick and humanized responses. Thus, the data support the relevance of the services offered and confirm that there is a need for constant improvement in public policies aimed at the protection of women.

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study was to analyze the effectiveness of the legal services of the Maranhão Women's House in the Municipality of Imperatriz in recent years, especially with regard to the prevention of new aggressions. In view of this, based on the documentary data collected and obtained through interviews with the professionals working in each agency, located within the institution, it was possible to perceive that the integrated and multidisciplinary performance of each has contributed significantly to the reception, protection and adequate referral of the victims.

As a response to the research problem, it is concluded, therefore, that the legal services offered by the Maranhão Women's House are effective, especially when there is articulation with the sectors involved, whether psychosocial centers, public security, specialized courts, prosecutors' offices, police stations, among others. The application of psychosocial screening, even the other competent bodies, the application of protective measures and legal and specialized care form a fundamental support network to interrupt the cycle of violence. However, relevant challenges are observed, such as the limitation in the opening hours of the Specialized Women's Police Station and the absence of the State and Municipal Government in psychological care, despite containing great support, should be strengthened even more.

That said, the critical analysis allows us to identify that, although Brazilian legislation, especially Law No. 11,340/2006, represents a great advance in the protection of women, its full implementation unfortunately still depends on structural and operational factors.

Thus, it is essential to improve public policies and care for women victims of this pathology, such as the expansion of the operation of the Women's Police Stations for uninterrupted 24-hour service, the increase in specialized professionals to strengthen the patrolling of protective measures.

Finally, the importance of the Maranhão Women's House as a reference in the protection of women in situations of violence is reaffirmed, and the continuous strengthening of this institution is essential.

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