FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT_ASSOCIAÇÃO INTERNETLAB DE PESQUISA EM DIREITO E TECNOLOGIA

A RESEARCH PROJECT TO COMBAT GENDER-BASED HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN IN BRAZIL AND INDIA: FINAL REPORT

#RECOGNIZE-RESIST-REMEDY

IDRC · CRDI
International Development Research Centre
Centre de recherches pour le développement international

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the final report of the "#Recognize-Resist-Remedy" project, a collaborative research endeavor between InternetLab and IT for Change. The project was initiated in 2019 with the objective of examining the manifestations of hate speech against women in online spaces. Over the course of four years (2019-2023), the project evolved and adapted to an extremely shifting social and political context, leading to the emergence of new inquiries and the adoption of methodologies that went beyond the original plan. This report refers to InternetLab's part of the project.

Initially, our project aimed to understand the operationalization of hate speech online against women, primarily through the analysis of legislation and law cases. Additionally, we intended to conduct research involving young people. However, as we embarked on our research journey, it became visible that in order to fully grasp the circulation of misogynistic discourse on the internet and develop effective legal, regulatory, and technological responses, **we needed to contextualize the concept of hate speech within the Brazilian context. Our objective was not simply to import a foreign notion but to explore how Brazilian activists, legal professionals, and academics were addressing the issue of hate speech**. Therefore, we posed the crucial question: **How are activists, the judiciary, and scholars in Brazil engaging with the notion of hate speech?** By delving into this inquiry, we aimed to ensure that our research was grounded in the local reality and aligned with the ongoing efforts and perspectives within Brazil.

On the path to answering this question, through interviews, quantitative and qualitative research, we came to realize that, despite the usefulness of the concept of hate speech, in Brazil, unlike in other countries, hate speech is not inherently linked to freedom of expression debates within the judiciary. We also identified the challenges faced by the Brazilian justice system in addressing cases of violence against women in online spaces, particularly when they involve perpetrators who have had previous intimate or sexual relationships with the victims.

In this regard, through in-depth interviews with researchers, legal practitioners, and activists, it became clear that: i) no concept addressing acts of violence can be considered timeless, whether using the notion of "hate speech" or that of "misogyny"; we needed to grapple with this challenge; ii) when we talk about hate speech, it might seem that the focus is on the feeling of hatred itself, but it should be viewed from the perspective of its targets. It is not hatred towards any individual but rather hatred directed at those who belong to historically marginalized groups, such as women. Labeling what structurally happens to women as "misogyny" appeared to be a more fruitful approach.

In this sense, considering the tensions between what is deemed public and private spaces when it comes to online platforms, given the circulation of content from one type of platform to another, we started exploring another category that intersected with the notion of hate speech against women: political violence. Through the MonitorA, an observatory of political violence against women candidates and male candidates on the internet, we observed that these tensions between the public and private spheres also manifested when examining the attacks against women candidates on social media.

Women candidates, both in the first edition of the project in 2020 and in the second edition in 2022, face hostility on social media simply because they are women. Their bodies, their intimate lives, their clothing, their past, whether they are above or below a certain weight, whether they are good mothers or not, become the subject of criticism and attacks. In contrast, men, except those who are gay, transgender, black, or indigenous, have their mode of political engagement primarily scrutinized.

In 2020, our goal was to concretely demonstrate that online political violence affects women and historically marginalized groups. In 2022, we aimed to deepen this understanding. As a result, we began to differentiate between hostile content directed at candidates without resorting to attributes seeking to demean them and content that directly flirts with misogyny, racism, LGBTQIA+phobia, ageism, dehumanization, and so on. This classification proved useful for the private sector to gain a deeper understanding of the context and the situation of structural discriminations in Brazil.

While developing the research in all these different fronts, we also worked hard on dissemination and influence in the public debate through events, media and effective partnerships. We have seen our work quoted in dozens of news outlets, we have been cited by politicians, and we have been invited to important national and international academic, activist and policy spaces to address developments from our research. We acquired an important knowledge on how to build academic legitimacy together with being present and engaged in the public conversation. Part of this involved being flexible, deeply connected to a changing context, and collaborating with others. The single most visible result of our work was that the MonitorA 2020 was cited during the approval and in the justification of the Political Violence Law approved in 2021, after years of a nationwide debate carried out by feminist and antirracist movements.

In the last edition of MonitorA, we managed to evaluate the first results of this development and adopt a critical stance that signs to the need to future work. We developed a study on whether the enforcement of the Law was being effective. We found out that few female candidates were using the Law, and also realized that the scope of the Law needs to be expanded, to encompass more prevention and care for candidates experiencing this type of violence.

METHODOLOGIES

Throughout the course of our research, we employed **six different methodologiesto investigate various aspects of misogynistic discourse on the internet and explore regulatory and legal avenues to combat online gender-based violence. These methodologies included literature review, action research, legal research (case law), in-depth interviews and focus groups, social network monitoring, and netnography**.

By utilizing these diverse methodologies, we were able to refine our research questions and uncover significant findings that contribute to the discourse surrounding misogynistic discourse online and inform strategies to address gender-based violence in digital spaces. Some key outcomes from our research include:

(I) *ACTION RESEARCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: THIS RESEARCH PROVIDED VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO HOW YOUTH FROM MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN SÃO PAULO PERCEIVE AND UNDERSTAND HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN.*

(II) *CASE LAW RESEARCH ON HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CASE LAW ON HATE SPEECH TARGETING WOMEN AND RACISM ONLINE REVEALED DISPARITIES IN THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK. WHILE SPECIFIC LEGISLATION ON RACISM HAS INFLUENCED HOW THE JUDICIARY ADDRESSES ONLINE RACIAL VIOLENCE, GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IS OFTEN CONFINED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGISLATION.*

(III) *MONITORA: AS AN OBSERVATORY OF GENDER-BASED POLITICAL VIOLENCE ON THE INTERNET, MONITORA BROUGHT THE ISSUE OF POLITICAL GENDER VIOLENCE TO THE FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE. OVER THE COURSE OF TWO EDITIONS, WE FURTHER DEVELOPED THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THIS VIOLENCE AND PRESENTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO PLATFORMS. AS ONE OF THE SIGNIFICANT RESULTS, TWITTER SELECTED INTERNETLAB AND AZMINA AS PARTNERS AFTER AN OPEN CALL FOR GENDER AND ELECTIONS, AND USED OUR LEXICON TO COMBAT POLITICAL VIOLENCE DURING THE 2022 ELECTIONS. MOREOVER, THE APPROVAL OF THE LAW ON POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN CITED OUR RESEARCH, UNDERSCORING THE IMPACT OF MONITORA ACROSS DIFFERENT SECTORS OF BRAZILIAN SOCIETY.*

(IV) *INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC DEBATE: LEVERAGING THE DATA ACCUMULATED THROUGHOUT OUR RESEARCH, WE ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTED TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS IN BOTH THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS. WE SUBMITTED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UN AND TO FACEBOOK'S OVERSIGHT BOARD AND PRESENTED OUR FINDINGS AT INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL EVENTS WITHIN THE FIELD, THEREBY INFLUENCING THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION SURROUNDING THESE ISSUES.*

In summary, our research journey, culminating in this report and a book, has illuminated the inadequate understanding of hate speech in Brazil. Public consensus on what constitutes hate speech is lacking, and the legal perspective often employs the concept not to protect marginalized groups but to curtail their freedom of expression. **To effectively combat discursive and symbolic violence against women and other vulnerable groups, it is crucial to adopt an intersectional approach that recognizes and addresses the structural acts of violence prevalent in Brazilian society, such as misogyny, racism, LGBTQIA+phobia, ableism, and more. By acknowledging, naming and having the means to address misogyny as an organizing framework for online gender-based violence, we can work towards mitigating, confronting, and ultimately transforming this social phenomenon**.

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Throughout the four-year research project, we faced several challenges, requiring perseverance and adaptation to achieve the intended outcomes. The three primary challenges encountered were:

(I) *THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: THE PANDEMIC HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE RESEARCH, REQUIRING CHANGES IN RESEARCH PROBLEMS, METHODOLOGIES, AND TRAJECTORY. FIELD RESEARCH AND FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS BECAME UNFEASIBLE, LEADING TO ADAPTATIONS AND ADJUSTMENTS IN RESEARCH PLANS. THE COLLABORATION BETWEEN REDE CONHECIMENTO SOCIAL AND IBEAC PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ESTABLISHING CONNECTIONS WITH YOUNG PARTICIPANTS. ONLINE MEETINGS PRESENTED UNIQUE CHALLENGES IN MAINTAINING ENGAGEMENT AND FOSTERING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS. WE GAVE UP ON CONDUCTING A NATION-WIDE SURVEY THAT HAD BEEN ORIGINALLY PLANNED.*

(II) PLATFORM DATA ACCESS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND DATA ACCESSIBILITY CHANGED DURING THE RESEARCH. PLATFORMS IMPLEMENTED MORE LIMITATIONS ON DATA ACCESS, IMPACTING DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS. WE EXPLORED ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS, BUT LIMITATIONS IN ACCESSING QUALITATIVE DATA AND INTERVIEWS WITH PLATFORM REPRESENTATIVES PERSISTED. WE MADE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY PRACTICES AND DATA ACCESS AND DEVELOPED RESEARCH TO UNDERSTAND PERCEPTIONS AND DISPARITIES IN DATA ACCESS PRACTICES.

(III) IN-DEPTH STUDY ON VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF RESEARCHERS: WOMEN, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO ARE BLACK AND LGBTQIA+, CONSTITUTED THE MAJORITY OF RESEARCHERS INVOLVED. CONSTANT EXPOSURE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE ONLINE POSED RISKS OF DESENSITIZATION AND NEGATIVE IMPACT ON RESEARCHERS' MENTAL HEALTH. PROACTIVE MEASURES WERE TAKEN TO PRIORITIZE THE WELL-BEING OF RESEARCHERS, INCLUDING MAINTAINING OPEN DIALOGUE AND ESTABLISHING A NETWORK OF CARE.

By addressing these challenges, the research project aimed to adapt, overcome limitations, and ensure the well-being of researchers, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of online violence and fostering a healthier research environment.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The collaboration with IDRC was vital to the successful research execution, and IDRC was effectively understanding and flexible with all the challenges we went through, as well as created new opportunities for our engagement with new partners and participation in new opportunities. At InternetLab's side, the grant and its developments led to very important methodological and tactic learnings, as well as helped creating the conditions for internal developments such as a more stable and diverse governance. After having interacted with other research teams that were also part of the Gender Transformative Research funding and understanding the potentials of such interactions, we suggested i) creating more opportunities for research discussion and collaboration between funded organizations throughout the project, thereby facilitating collaboration and joint projects. ii) providing emotional and mental health support to the organizations and researchers involved in violence research, considering the potential impact on their well-being, helping foster a healthier and more sustainable research environment.

2. SYNTHESIS OF RESEARCH RESULTS AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

It is the final report of the "#Recognize-Resist-Remedy" project, which was a collaborative effort between InternetLab and IT for Change. In this report, we will focus specifically on the work conducted by InternetLab. Our project, which began in 2019, sought to understand the nature and prevalence of online hate speech directed toward women. To achieve this goal, we defined our research problem as follows:

"IN BRAZIL AND INDIA, THE PROJECT WILL IDENTIFY THE MAIN SHORTCOMINGS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH LEGAL REFORM, AND HARNESS THE WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY CREATED BY WOMEN SPEAKING OUT IN THESE ENVIRONMENTS TO TACKLE THE PROLIFERATION OF SEXIST/MISOGYNISTIC SPEECH ONLINE. IT AIMS TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS INTO EMERGING POLICY PROCESSES, INTERMEDIARY LIABILITY REGIMES, AND ONLINE CONTENT GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORKS. THE PROJECT WILL ALSO WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO SHIFT INTERNALIZED GENDER SCRIPTS AND ATTITUDES TO DEMONSTRATE HOW DEEP CHANGE IS POSSIBLE IN MAINSTREAM COMMUNICATION CULTURES ON THE INTERNET."

At InternetLab, the project builds upon previous work that began a few years ago, engaging in academic, political, and feminist debates to emphasize that Online Gender-Based Violence is equally harmful as other forms of gender-based violence. Throughout these years, we have come to recognize the importance of conceptualizing online hate speech against women as a manifestation of misogyny—a phenomenon that exists not only outside the internet but also within it, forming a continuum between the online and offline realms.

To comprehensively understand the systemic issue of hate speech directed at women, we have adopted a multi-method approach and collaborated with various social actors and groups, broadening the scope of our research. Moreover, the necessity for flexibility and creativity has emerged due to challenges such as changes in research teams, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and rapid political and social change in Brazil.

The research progress can be divided into five key milestones that pertain to different research fronts. The appropriate methodologies employed for each phase will be discussed in the subsequent sections. In this segment, we will present an overview of the primary findings from each milestone.

2.1 ACTION-RESEARCH WITH YOUTH

Between March and December 2020, we held workshops that aimed to build a common notion of hate speech and how it affects the lives of girls and women. Fourteen young people aged between 16 and 26 years old, living in different peripheral territories of the metropolitan region of São Paulo, participated in the workshops. Each month they received important tasks to facilitate the building of mutual learning: they talked about hate speech with friends and family, produced scripts and interviewed people of different social profiles to construct different and complementary views on the topic. During our monthly meetings with them, we discovered that this concept was not commonly used by them or by the people interviewed.

"TELL ME A WORD THAT YOU WOULD USE TO DEFINE THIS IDEA? INTOLERANCE, BECAUSE WE ALL HAVE PREJUDICE FOR WHAT WE DON'T KNOW, FOR WHAT WE DON'T LIVE, BUT HATE SPEECH IS WHEN IT GOES TO EXTREMISM, EXTERMINATION."

BRUNO, 33 YEARS OLD, SÃO PAULO

ANSWER RECEIVED BY ONE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAD THE TASK, AFTER THE WORKSHOP IN MARCH, TO ASK AT LEAST TWO ACQUAINTANCES WHAT THEY UNDERSTOOD AS "HATE SPEECH".

After holding the interviews, the group emphasized the importance of **raising awareness among both men and women, considering social marks such as social class, generation, and race, as well as concepts of masculinity and femininity.**

RESPONDENTS HOW THEY WOULD ADVISE WOMEN WHO LIKED TO POST PHOTOS AND SUFFERED ATTACKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA, THEY USUALLY HEARD, FROM WOMEN AND MEN, THAT GIRLS AND WOMEN NEEDED TO EXPOSE THEMSELVES LESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA. IT GENERATED ANGUISH IN YOUNG PARTICIPANTS TO REALIZE THAT BOTH THOSE WHO PERPETRATED THE ATTACKS, AND THOSE WHO COULD BECOME VICTIMS, NATURALIZED THE ATTACKS AND TENDED TO BLAME THE VICTIMIZED WOMEN. THIS ANGUISH WAS ELABORATED WHEN THEY PROPOSED PROJECTS TO COMBAT THE PROBLEM FOCUS ON DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS: WOMEN OVER 40, MEN IN GENERAL AND THE POPULATION AS A WHOLE WHO CIRCULATED IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS."

FERNANDA K. MARTINS' NOTES ABOUT THE PROJECT

2.2 CASE LAW STUDY ON ONLINE HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN

hate speech as such is not part of Brazilian's legislation. While racist and LGBTQIA+phobic speech have been recognized as unlawful by the legal system, there is no such a general category, nor a provision against misogynist speech. Recognizing such situation (through extensive desk research on publications and dissertations), our question was: how and which cases reach the judiciary, whether in the civil or criminal sphere? Do court decisions use the term "hate speech" to describe certain situations? In addition, when it comes to social networks, do platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Instagram appear in the decisions?

The first point that caught our attention was the **difficulty of defining how to call verbal violence committed in online spaces considered public or private. This division (and its problems), which assumes a very important meaning in the discussion of gender violence, seems to be blurred in the online environment for at least two reasons: its dynamism and the circulation of content between spaces.** This means that it is quite common for a conversation on WhatsApp, for example, to be transposed publicly on a social network such as Facebook; or for something that was posted privately on Facebook to reach WhatsApp groups.

Therefore, **we decided to focus on cases that could be considered, at least at first, as public; that is, we directed our analysis to content that had circulated not only between the victim and the perpetrator but more broadly.** A second point that caught our attention was the **scarce presence of platforms as parties in the court cases: only ten of 340 cases involved technology companies.**

It is important to emphasize that many of the cases we analyzed were classified by the courts as domestic violence since they came from the victims' current or former partners. However, because they occurred in online spaces considered public, we found that **they must be viewed with more complexity since they affect not only the victim individually but also the social imagination around how women are regarded and treated. We thereby assume that the consequences reach not only the victim but all women.** Besides that, by looking at a large multiplicity of cases – many of which would suit the definitions of hate in the legal literature, **we realize that this term (hate or misogyny) is not used in the courts to refer to cases that could be considered as such.** As one of the conclusions, we defend that, by not considering women as a group that may be the victim of hate speech online, the judicial system and the enforcement system is being ineffective in combating the social naturalization of hate speech against women as a group. **We therefore conclude for the need of reframing gender-based violence in society and in the legislation, going beyond the domestic sphere and considering women as a collective subject, including in the cases in which the speech is addressed to an individual woman.**

2.3 **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

We conducted a series of interviews with researchers, activists, and legal operators to gain insight into the complexities of identifying and understanding hate speech and its usefulness in understanding and mitigating the phenomenon against women. While some interviews were published on our website, others were only used to support ongoing research due to their sensitivity. These interviews provided valuable insight and highlighted the **importance of calling out problems by their true names**, as emphasized by Fabiana Benedito, a militant of the World March of Women and journalist. Besides that, according to Bernadelli, part of the difficulty comprehending the meaning of hate speech and misogyny have to do with the temporality of these categories and the dynamism which crosses the definition of violence in general.

Through these realizations, we came to recognize the significance of defending that if meaningful academics and activists are worried about freedom of expression and how dealing with hate speech notion could be a way to limit the discussion about subjects, there is another perspective that needs to be highlighted: who will defend the right of women to manifest their thoughts without suffering violence? **Women's freedom of expression also needs to be considered in this debate. It also became clear, in Bernadelli's interview, that criminalizing responses was not the only solution, and we must explore alternative approaches to addressing these issues.**

FABIANA BENEDITO ILLUSTRATION FROM THE SPECIAL INTERVIEWS ON HATE SPEECH

"MY IMPRESSION IS THAT THE HATE SPEECH DEBATE COMES A LOT FROM THE LAW, AT LEAST FROM WHERE I HAVE SEEN IT, AND FROM CRIMINAL CLASSIFICATIONS. IN THIS SENSE, I BELIEVE IT IS AN INTERESTING EXERCISE, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I THINK WE HAVE TO REFLECT ON THIS USE, SINCE WE RESORT TO A FEELING, TO HATRED, BUT IT IS NOT HATRED TOWARDS ANYONE, IT IS NOT HATRED LIKE ANY OTHER FEELING. IT IS A HATRED DIRECTED MAINLY TOWARDS WOMEN, BLACK PEOPLE AND LGBT PEOPLE, AND THE HATRED OF WOMEN HAS A NAME; THE HATRED OF BLACK PEOPLE AND LGBT PEOPLE ALSO HAVE NAMES. NAMING IS AN IMPORTANT EXERCISE: SAYING IT IS SEXISM, IT IS RACISM, THAT'S AN IMPORTANT MOVE. FOR ME, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT SEXISM AND RACISM ARE NOT JUST TERMS FOR US, THEY ARE PART OF OUR HISTORY, THEY ARE A SYNTHESIS OF THE BRAZILIAN HISTORY, SO I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS HATE IS." FABIANA BENEDITO, JOURNALIST AND ACTIVIST OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MARCH."

FABIANA BENEDITO, JOURNALIST AND ACTIVIST IN WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN.

"SO WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FIND A CONCEPT OF WHAT MISOGYNY IS, A CONCEPT OF WHAT HATE SPEECH IS THAT IS PERENNIAL, THAT IS TIMELESS BECAUSE THIS IS CULTURAL, THIS IS PART OF OUR TIME. WE NEED TO FIND WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR US TODAY, IN OUR SOCIETY, AND WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. FURTHERMORE, IN A FEW YEARS, PEOPLE WILL CHANGE THAT PERCEPTION AND IT IS OKAY FOR THEM TO CHANGE IT."

PAULA BERNADELI, LAWYER AND FEMINIST

PAULA BERNADELLI ILLUSTRATION FROM THE SPECIAL
INTERVIEWS ON HATE SPEECH
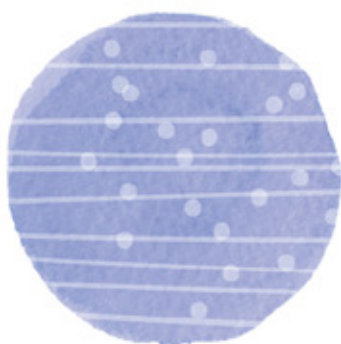
2.4 MONITORA: OBSERVATORY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND MEN CANDIDATES ONLINE

In the face of a political context that has intensified and made women and other historically marginalized groups more severely vulnerable, we took another step towards making the notions of online gender-based violence more complex. This time, we decided to look at another concept of violence that has interactions with hate speech but is also part of the larger misogynistic structure: political violence. On this work front, one of the greatest learnings was that online violence negatively impacted how politically active women placed themselves in institutional politics and therefore women's political representation. It is an invisible barrier. From an intersectional perspective, we attempted to produce comparisons among different groups. **We therefore found that the attacks suffered by women candidates during the 2020 and 2022 elections demonstrate that they are attacked for being women and not doing what they are "supposed to do" (not being public or in the political life, or not behaving modestly and according to gender norms as expected), while men candidates are attacked because of their political actions and ideology. The exception were black, gay and transgender men who were attacked because of their characteristics that did not include being a man.**

After the first edition, we used MonitorA's methodological and technological infrastructure to develop research about attacks against journalists. In this case, the results showed that these attacks traveled accross different platforms, starting, for example, on YouTube and ending up on Twitter. Besides that, again, we identified that **women and black persons are more attacked than persons who belong to other social groups**.

In the second edition of MonitorA (2022), we adapted our study after realizing that observing the number of attacks is not enough; to deal with this problem it is important to recognize the **gender and racial narratives raised on social media**.

In these three research experiences, **the importance of working together with different social sectors - legislative, executive judiciary, academic, and civil society organizations and platforms - was the main key to integrally facing the phenomenon. Besides that, one more time, we faced the point brought up by Bernadelli on the different ways to name acts of violence. Here, the dialogue with the hate speech literature and the other fronts of the research was essential. We also realized that analyzing violence against candidates required working with the concept of political violence, because of how it incorporates specific concerns about political representation and the characteristics of this form of violence.**

Especially because of a well-planned partnership with a feminist media organization, Revista AzMina, the MonitorA research results reached far and wide, and were explored or cited in dozens of media articles throughout the elections and beyond. They were also directly used by candidates themselves during the elections, to make visible the violence they were going through. As we will explore further, they were specifically cited in the process of aproving a Law for political violence against women in 2021.

"MONITORA'S DISCLOSURE HAD AN IMPACT BECAUSE WHAT I WAS FEELING ON A DAILY BASIS WAS QUANTIFIED. IT WASN'T JUST A BUNCH OF CRAZY PEOPLE TWEETING AND ATTACKING ME IN THE FIRST ROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN, I COULD SEE THAT IT WAS SOMETHING ORCHESTRATED, ORGANIZED. QUANTIFYING THIS, MADE MY LEGAL TEAM EVEN MORE ATTENTIVE TO EVERYTHING THAT WAS HAPPENING. SOME OFFENSIVE COMMENTS WERE REMOVED AND COMPLAINTS WERE MADE TO THE PLATFORMS."

SPEECH BY THEN-CANDIDATE **JOICE HASSELMANN** ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE MONITORA
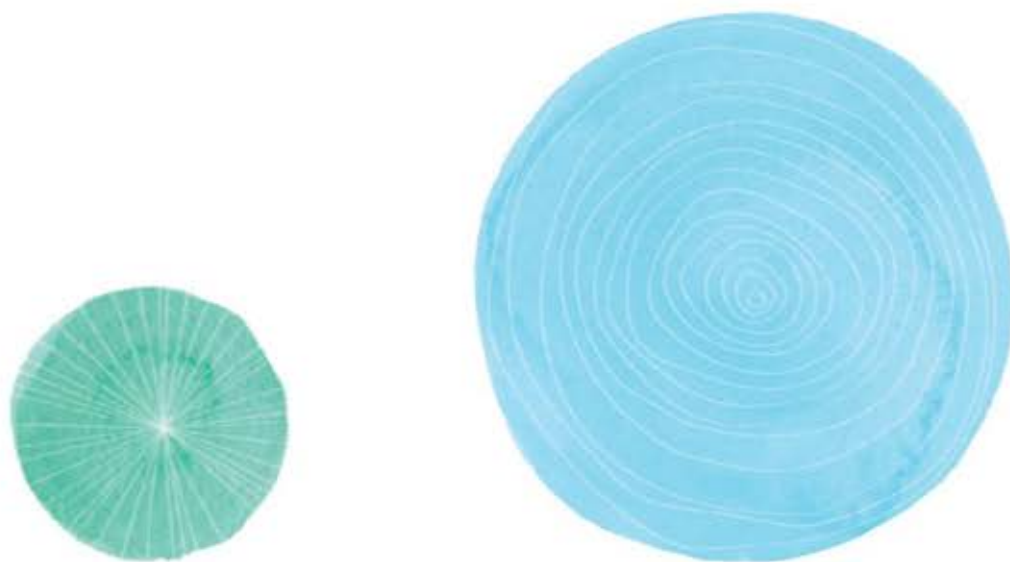
2.5 THE RESEARCH FOR WRITING AND PUBLISHING THE BOOK "MISOGYNY ON THE INTERNET (MISOGINIA NA INTERNET)"

By Mariana Valente marks a significant contribution to the discussion of online gender-based violence and its societal impact in Brazil. In addition to the insights provided in this report, the book delves into the historical context of legitimizing such violence and how society and the legal system has responded to each new phase of the discussion in the past ten years, and explores potential strategies for its mitigation and resolution. Throughout the past decade, Mariana Valente and InternetLab have actively engaged in improving the understanding of violence and fostering dialogue with both private and public sectors. Within the book, Valente puts forth a proposition to address the ongoing debate surrounding the creation of a legal framework specifically targeting misogyny. She acknowledges that some contemporary feminists in Brazil advocate for criminalization as a means of redress. However, she highlights the opposing perspective voiced by black and abolitionist feminists, who argue that criminalization alone will not effectively solve the problem. Their stance is rooted in the understanding that the Brazilian justice system is not accessed equally by different social groups, and they express concerns that criminalization could exacerbate existing difficulties faced by marginalized communities that are disproportionately targeted by racist and misogynistic practices within the justice system. Valente's book explores the multiple results from this project and provides a platform to explore a comprehensive examination of potential solutions to combat online misogyny. By providing an inclusive space for dialogue, it contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding gender-based violence in Brazil and promotes informed approaches to address this pressing issue.

"WHEN CONSIDERING SOLUTIONS TO SOCIETAL PROBLEMS FROM AN INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE, IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER HOW SOLUTIONS FOR ONE SOCIAL GROUP MAY DIFFERENTLY IMPACT DISTINCT POPULATIONS. IT IS OFTEN THE CASE THAT SOLUTIONS MEANT TO ADDRESS ONE ISSUE MAY HAVE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES FOR OTHER GROUPS. FOR INSTANCE, WHILE CRIMINALIZING MISOGYNY MAY NOT NECESSARILY DIRECTLY HARM THE BLACK POPULATION, IT REINFORCES A SYSTEM THAT VIOLATES THEIR RIGHTS AND REINFORCES INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY NARRATIVES. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE CRIMINALIZATION OF MISOGYNY SHOULD BE OUR FOCUS OR OUR STRUGGLE."

MARIANA VALENTE'S BOOK EXCERPT

These five landmarks are crossed by a common thread. With each study, we approach the issues through an intersectional feminist perspective. To find solutions, we explore theoretical frameworks and offer recommendations for various social sectors. In the following section, we will delve deeper into the methodologies.

3. METHODOLOGIES

To advance in comprehending this complex picture of hate speech and misogynist discourse on the Internet, we used multiple methodological strategies, always considering an intersectional perspective. In the 15 different research fronts we conducted over the four years, we used six main methodologies: literature review, action research, legal research, interviews, monitoring and online ethnography. These methodological strategies have been used and refined, in combination or separately, by each research. Below we describe what these methodologies were, how they were used, and at which stages of the research they were employed.

3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review was the basis of all research stages. Right at the beginning of the project, in a coordinated effort among research coordinators, researchers, and interns, **we did an extensive search and organization of the Brazilian academic production about hate speech**. This first step was important for us to understand the limitation and the low adherence to the concept of hate speech in Brazil and, thus, to think of other solutions to think about the misogynist discourse.

Throughout the research, we repeatedly went back to the literature review to broaden the concepts and deepen the research. For example, to improve the intersectional look at our research problem, we turned to **the literary production on intersectionality in Brazil** (such as Maria Filomena Gregori, Lélia Gonzalez and Sueli Carneiro) and in the world (for example, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Hill Collins, bell hooks, and Anne McClintock). On the research about racism, we focused on **the vast academic production on racism and the judiciary in Brazil** (for example, Luiz Valério de Paula Trindade, Márcia Lima, Marta Machado, Natália Néris, Antônio Sérgio Guimarães, Sérgio Adorno, Silvio de Almeida and others).

Thus, **the literature review was essential to raise problems, refine concepts and methodologies, and build discussions with other scholars, a strategy used throughout all research stages**.

3.2 **ACTION RESEARCH**

ARTWORK THAT ILLUSTRATED THE BLOGPOST ABOUT ACTION RESEARCH.
AVAILABLE AT: https://internetlab.org.br/pt/noticias/jovens-protagonizam-acoes-de-
combate-ao-discurso-de-odio-contra-mulheres/

Action research was part of the methodology used in the research with the young people. For this methodological stage, workshops were held in 2020, online, every first Saturday of each month, with the participation of 15 young people belonging to peripherical neighborhoods from São Paulo - all members of the "Literature and Human Rights" project promoted by IBEAC, an InternetLab partner, together with the Rede Conhecimento Social (Social Knowledge Network). A task ("mission") was given to the group to after each workshop. These tasks encouraged them to look inside themselves and, simultaneously, to the outside world. The main goal was that they would also become researchers during the process. Part of the tasks consisted of reaching out to dept interviews with persons from different social-economic backgrounds, racial-ethnic belonging and ages. Besides that, they organized the data obtained in these interviews.

With the results of all these processes, the group was invited to develop their own actions to raise awareness around hate speech against women. Provided with financial resources, training on cultural production, and mentoring from 3 specialists in culture and youth, the group developed 3 projects, each of them for a different audience: young women, older women, and men.

Action research is a methodological strategy that InternetLab had already tested in partnership with Rede Conhecimento Social, which proved to be very productive (as will be pointed out in section 3.c). This work brought about significant results: **qualified debates, a broad process of listening, and collective knowledge that was transformed into a podcast, an online campaign and an intervention in the streets of the city of São Paulo.**

3.3 LEGAL RESEARCH
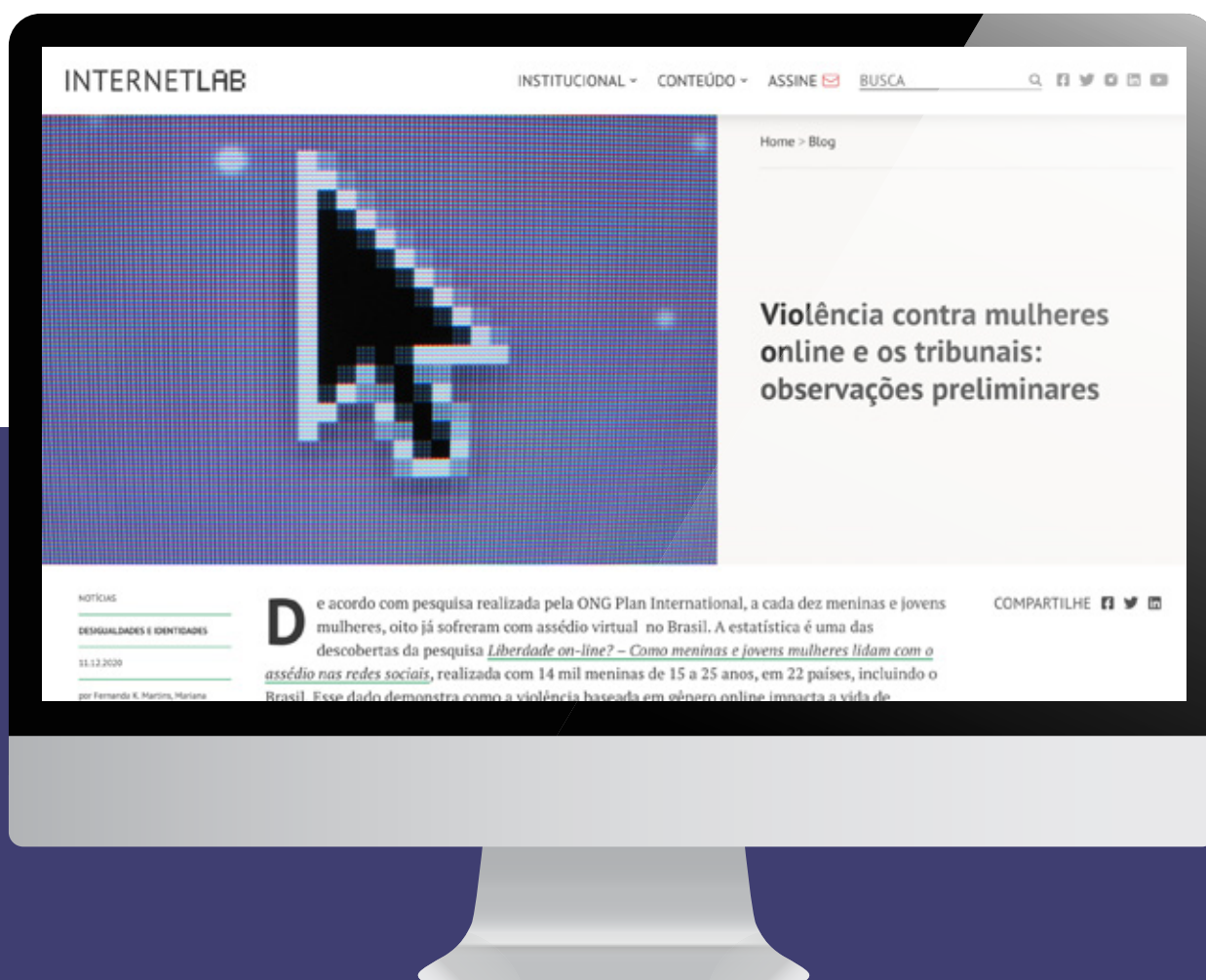
Between 2020 and 2021, we conducted a study to understand how the Brazilian judiciary handled online misogyny cases. Since there is no specific provision for misogyny in the Brazilian law, and the court decisions also do not mention the term, the task was challenging. We had to search with a large set of keywords to find cases that would fit the definition of misogyny. Our objective was to identify cases in which the perpetrator used misogynistic language in "public" spaces or platforms shared by more than just the aggressor and the victim, thus meeting the criterion of incitement, which is at the core of the concept of hate speech. In other words, we considered posts in feeds, groups, pages, tweets, stories, and similar platforms.

We also encountered many cases of private attacks involving strong misogyny, but we did not analyze those in order to isolate the cases that occurred in the public sphere and understand how they are handled within the judiciary. As mentioned in the previous section, defining what is public and private on the internet is not always straightforward because content travels dynamically across different platforms, from messaging apps to social networks and vice versa, blurring the boundaries. Moreover, the legal system also blurs these boundaries. Many cases that occur in public spaces are interpreted as domestic violence cases as long as they involve current or former partners of the victims. As a result, the public dimension of violence and the mobilization of a social imagination about how women are perceived and treated become obscured.

For our data collection, we scraped data from six Courts of Justice (Bahia, Distrito Federal e Territórios, Pará, Minas Gerais, Santa Catarina, and São Paulo) using the R programming language. We used the following keywords: "misogyny," "misogynist," "misogyny and discourse," "feminism," "feminist," "violence against women," "sexism," "sexist," "machismo," and "machista," combined separately with "internet," "social network," "Facebook," "WhatsApp," "Twitter," and "YouTube." As these keywords generated many false positives, we ran another algorithm to identify the judgments that were more likely to be relevant based on the repetition of keywords.

We analyzed about 1,980 judgments from these six courts. In this universe, we separated 340 relevant divided between the civil and criminal spheres, in which we found:

(I) *MOBILIZATION OF A MISOGYNISTIC OR SIMILAR TERM, SUCH AS SEXUAL OBJECTIFICATION, THE JUDGMENT OF A SEXUAL CHARACTER, CREATION OF A PROFILE RELATING THE VICTIM TO THE ACTIVITY OF PROSTITUTION AND/OR*

(II) *THREATS TO THE PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF WOMEN – EVEN WITHOUT EXPLICIT MENTION OF TERMS CONSIDERED MISOGYNISTIC – IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT SHARED BY MORE PEOPLE THAN JUST THE AGGRESSOR AND THE VICTIM, AS IS THE CASE WITH POSTS IN FEEDS, GROUPS, PAGES, TWEETS, STORIES ETC.*

When analyzing the offenses, we created eight categories to fit the violent practices that were found:

(I) HYPERSEXUALIZATION OF THE VICTIMS;

(II) ASSOCIATION OF THE VICTIM WITH PROSTITUTION;

(III) QUESTIONING THE VICTIM'S SOCIAL PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO MOTHERHOOD;

(IV) ARTICULATION BETWEEN GENDER PREJUDICES AND OTHER SOCIAL MARKERS OF DIFFERENCE;

(V) QUESTIONING THE VICTIMS' PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY;

(VI) THREATS;

(VII) UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF INTIMATE IMAGES; AND, FINALLY,

(VIII) NOTES OF "MORAL DEFECTS", WHICH APPEARED AS SUGGESTIONS OF BETRAYAL, CREATING COUPS AND BAD CHARACTER.

We observed how, in the criminal sphere, cases were actually classified under other criminal offenses such as threats, crimes against honor (defamation, slander, and insult), and disturbance of tranquility. In most cases, the perpetrators were male, with the majority being ex-partners and some being current partners. Despite focusing only on cases that occurred in the "public" sphere, most of them were categorized within the judicial system as domestic violence cases. In contrast, in civil cases, where typically the victim seeks financial compensation or injunctions such as content removal, the types of cases were more diverse, and less than one-third involved current or former partners. This may indicate the difficulty in understanding hate speech within the criminal sphere when the case does not involve domestic violence.

In some cases, it became particularly evident that misogyny is not recognized. For example, there was a case judged by the Court of Justice of Minas Gerais involving the musical group UDR. They were convicted for song lyrics they posted online, which they claimed to be satirical. Despite the deplorable content of the songs, there seemed to be a significant degree of selectivity in the decision (as they were Brazilian funk musicians). The contents involved racism, religious intolerance, transphobia, and misogyny, with some verses glorifying rape (such as in the song "Bonde da Mutilação"). However, the charges brought forth were related to racism, religious intolerance (and incitement to crime), with no mention of misogyny and transphobia in the decision. **This does not seem to be due to the absence of legal provisions, but rather a lack of vocabulary and recognition within the social and cultural context.**

3.4 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The use of qualitative research techniques proved to be indispensable in uncovering new insights, delving deeper into data, and shedding light on complex aspects of the research. When confronted with challenges in comprehending how the concept of hate speech was being mobilized in Brazil, both by activists and the judiciary, conducting in-depth interviews became a pivotal moment in the research process. These interviews, carried out by the InternetLab team, led to significant breakthroughs and enabled us to attain fresh findings. Moreover, this qualitative research approach was **also employed to interview journalists in studying online violence against women, specifically targeting black and LGBTQIA+ journalists to enhance our understanding of the data gathered through other methodologies.**

EXAMPLE OF A SCRIPT USED IN INTERVIEWS WITH FEMINIST ACTIVISTS DURING THE SPECIAL INTERVIEWS ABOUT HATE SPEECH

A. Current situation of the social movement and/or social group in question

1. How do you perceive the social organization of feminists in the current Brazilian context?

2. How can feminist women who are not necessarily part of social movements be understood in this context?

3. Have there been significant changes in the feminist activisms in the past two decades? If so, what do you believe has contributed to these changes?

4. What would you highlight as important milestones in the construction of feminist demands in the last decade in Brazil?

B. Internet and activism

1. Can the internet be seen as an important tool in feminist activism? Why?

2. What are the main challenges women face in engaging in online activism?

3. How can these challenges be reduced?

C. Internet and violence

1. Has the internet emerged as an important space for reporting human rights violations? Do you agree with this statement? Why?

>>

2. Has the internet been a significant space for complicating our understanding of gender-based violence, racism, and LGBTQIA+ phobia? Do you agree with this statement? Why?

3. Has the internet been a safe space for the presence of activists? Do you agree with this statement? Why?

4. Do you believe that certain social groups are more vulnerable on the internet than others? If so, which ones? Why?

D. Internet and hate speech

1. In recent years, the debate about whether the internet is a healthy space for discussions has gained strength in Brazil. Can you highlight any milestone that has influenced this heightened debate?

2. When considering attacks suffered by politically marginalized groups, especially on the internet, we have observed the use of the category of "hate speech." Do you find this category useful in the Brazilian context?

3. Have you encountered this category before? Where?

4. How would you define hate speech?

5. Are you familiar with the terms of service of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.? If so, do you consider them sufficient to protect women users from hate speech?

6. In 2019, the Brazilian Supreme Court, based on the Anti-Racism Law, determined that LGBTphobia is a crime. Do you believe it would be an important milestone to extend the law to also consider misogyny as a crime? Why?

3.5 PEER REVIEW GROUP

In addition to utilizing qualitative research techniques, we incorporated focus groups as a valuable research strategy during the 2022 edition of MonitorA. The purpose of these focus groups was to gather feedback from experts in the fields of hate speech, gender and violence, and the Internet in order to enhance our recommendations and gain valuable insights. We invited ten knowledgeable individuals to participate and share their opinions, allowing us to refine our recommendations for addressing political gender violence across diverse sectors of society. By conducting this focus group, we aimed to maximize the effectiveness of our interventions by incorporating the perspectives of various stakeholders based on the findings of our research.

3.6 SOCIAL NETWORKING MONITORING

Throughout the four years of research, monitoring violent speech on social media was a **key research strategy implemented at various stages**. This methodological tool was employed in analyzing the Mari Ferrer case, both editions of MonitorA, investigations into violence against journalists, and the study on political violence targeting the northeastern electorate. Such work requires coding, data analysis and data visualization, which we carried out through internal staff and partnerships. Over time, we gradually evolved and improved the techniques we used for collecting and analyzing network monitoring data.

In the Mari Ferrer case research, our data collection focused on **Twitter users' reactions** to the violence endured by Ferrer during her rape trial. This data collection was limited to a single social network to comprehend the public discourse surrounding the case, including expressions of support as well as instances of new violence against Mari Ferrer.

During the first edition of MonitorA, in partnership with AzMina Magazine and Data Volt Lab, we refined our network monitoring techniques by expanding the networks under observation and developing a lexicon of potentially violent terms. **This lexicon allowed us to filter the millions of manifestations we collected, to analyze them manually – which we find essential to overcome the many problems that automatic hate speech recognition algorithms present**. This methodology and lexicon were further enhanced in subsequent research following MonitorA 2020. **We improved the lexicons for the research on journalists and the northeastern electorate in Brazil.**

For MonitorA 2022, in addition to adapting the lexicon once again, we introduced a new methodological change: **distinguishing between insults and attacks**. Drawing upon intersectional feminist literature and the study of hate speech, **we characterized attacks as hostility targeting historically marginalized groups through the use of racism, misogyny, dehumanization, or disgust. Insults, on the other hand, pertain to comments specifically directed at a candidate without invoking protected groups. Nevertheless, there remains a space for discussion regarding the nuances between these two categories. This advancement was significant as it allowed us to align our work more closely with the categories used by the private sector and engage in critical conversation with them, particularly during the project's final phase, marked by intense debates on platform regulation in Brazil.**

[1] Mari Ferrer is a young influencer who was victim of rape in 2018. During the trial of her case in 2021, Ferrer was subjected to violent comments by the defense attorney representing the accused, who was acquitted. The video that recorded this verbal aggression circulated on the Internet, generating significant impact and provoking a public discussion regarding the treatment given to women victims of sexual violence in Brazilian justice.

EXAMPLE OF THE LEXICON AND ITS CLASSIFICATION, DIFFERENTIATING ATTACKS AND INSULTS.

TERM (IN PORTUGUESE)	TERM TRANSLATED	RELATED TERMS (IN PORTUGUESE)	ATTACK OR INSULT?	CATEGORY
Aberração	Aberration	-	AttacK	Inferiorization
Abortista	Abortionist	Abortisda	Attack	Inferiorization
Aleijada	Cripple	Alejada	Attack	Capacitism/ Psychophobia
Ameba	Amoeba	-	Attack	Dehumanization
Analfabeta	Illiterate	Analfabeto	Attack	Intellectual discredit
Arrombada	Loose vagina or asshole	Arrombado	Attack	Sexual Harassment/ Harassment
Bandida	Criminal	-	-	-
Baranga/broaca	Two-bagger	Bruaca	Attack	Misogyny

3.7 **NETNOGRAPHY**

Online ethnography encompasses a range of research practices and methods that are specifically designed to explore social phenomena within the digital realm. To employ this approach in our study, we collaborated with Lux Ferreira, a non-binary anthropologist who closely observed and analyzed the narratives surrounding the 2022 elections on TikTok from an intersectional perspective and delivered a report, which we incorporated to the MonitorA report. This methodological innovation was essential in overcoming the challenge of limited access to data on TikTok, as the platform did not yet offer an API for Brazilian researchers.

4. PROJECT OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW: CONCLUSIONS FOR OTHER PARTS OF THE PROJECT

The initial phase of this project involved conducting a comprehensive literature review in 2019. The primary objective was to gain a deep understanding of how the concept of "hate speech" was being employed within the Brazilian context. To gather relevant data, we thoroughly searched for the term "hate speech" in databases such as CAPES theses and dissertations and the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD). This yielded a total of 73 articles that explored the topic and its correlation with internet usage.

One noteworthy result was the noticeable increase in research output related to hate speech during the specified time frame of 2008-2018. This trend indicated a growing interest and recognition of the significance of the subject matter within academic discourse. By analyzing these scholarly works, we were able to identify key trends, theories, and perspectives surrounding hate speech in the Brazilian context, particularly in relation to its manifestation on the internet. This literature review formed a solid foundation for our subsequent research activities and informed the project's direction.
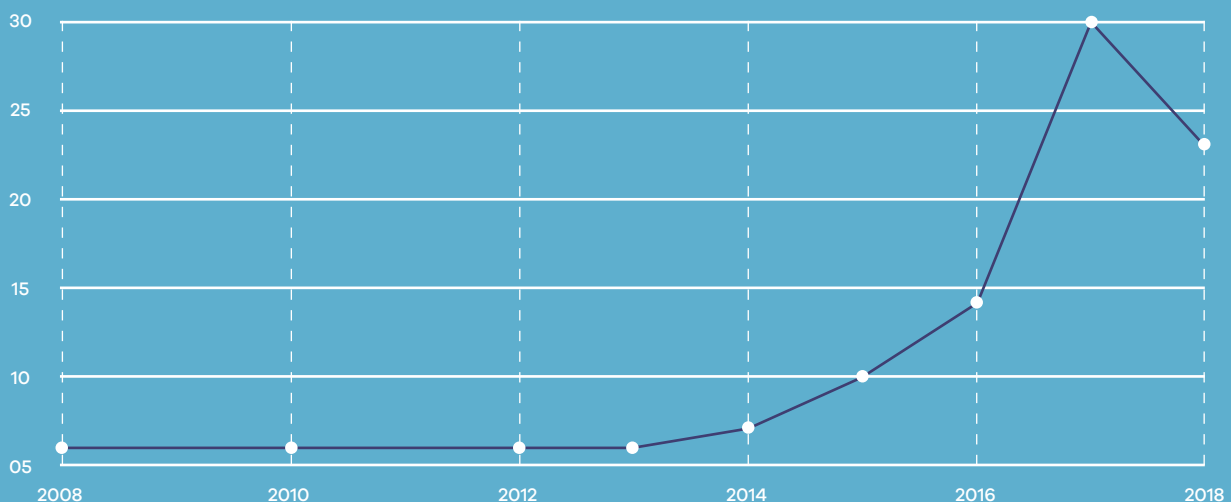
GRAPHIC PRODUCED BY INTERNETLAB ABOUT THE ACADEMIC PRODUCTION, IN BRAZIL, ABOUT "HATE SPEECH"

One hypothesis to explain the increase in research on hate speech during the specified period is the simultaneous occurrence of electoral campaigns online and the widespread use of social media platforms. This convergence likely contributed to the proliferation of discriminatory narratives among both candidates and voters. Regarding the scope of the research conducted, a notable observation is the diverse range of approaches taken, particularly within the field of law. Many studies focused specifically on examining the intersection between hate speech and the fundamental right to freedom of expression. A significant insight gained from this study is that the term "hate speech" continues to be employed inconsistently and without a unified approach in Brazilian academic literature. There is a lack of consensus or a well-established framework for addressing the issue. Consequently, the concept of hate speech in Brazil, particularly from a legal standpoint, lacks clear and widely accepted definitions. While a first recommendation would be for the need for further scholarly efforts to develop a more cohesive understanding of hate speech in the Brazilian context, the other parts of our research suggest that it would be more adequate, due to our history and to how concepts are being constructed within society, to call the different forms of hate speech by their names: misogyny, racism, LGBTphobia.

4.2 ACTION RESEARCH WITH YOUNG PEOPLE: THREE FINAL OUTPUTS

Recognizing the increasing relevance of discussing the impact of online hate speech on historically marginalized groups, as explored in the previous sections, InternetLab deemed it crucial to explore how young individuals perceive this issue. In pursuit of this objective, we established partnerships with Rede Conhecimento Social, an organization specializing in participatory research initiatives, and with IBEAC, a promoter of rights and citizenship in various peripheral territories within the city of São Paulo. In each workshop, we asked the 15 participants to develop "missions", and, finally, to develop a group project, which they did after receiving mentorship and training:

A. The **Pilotas Podcast** is an initiative that focuses on fostering connections with women and discussing gender issues. It specifically addresses hate speech and how it impacts young individuals from peripheral communities. Julia Silva Gomes (17), Renata Herondina dos Santos (24) and Vitória Siqueira N. dos Santos (19) created the Pilotas podcast as a space in which their "registries" and that of other women could be shared. Composed of three episodes, the programs present a chat between the presenters and experts around the issue of hate speech against women and the possible ways to fight it socially. The Pilotas podcast is available on Spotify.

"PILOTAS PODCAST IS OUR VOICE, SHARING KNOWLEDGE, REPRESENTATION. WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF TALKING ABOUT OUR RIGHTS, PROMOTING AND OCCUPYING OUR SPACES," they said.

COVER OF THE PILOTAS PODCAST AVAILABLE ON SPOTIFY

B. An **Instagram campaign**, which aimed to dialogue with men of different ages and regions of the country, questioning behaviors that incite hate speech against women. For the group, composed of Alef de Paula Santos (26), Duda Pimentel (18), Nathália Milarge (23) and Priscila Hidelfonso (17), the focus goes beyond reaching the male audience and working on the possibility of raising awareness about the theme:

"WE ALSO WANT THE PUBLIC ENGAGED WITH THIS THEME TO CONTINUE PROMOTING THE ACTION 'ALL AGAINST HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN' . OUR BIGGEST MOTIVATION IS THAT OUR CARDS CAN SOMEHOW TOUCH THE AUDIENCE".

ONE OF THE PICTURES POSTED ON THE ACCOUNT @CAMPANHAMENOSODIO ON INSTAGRAM.
THE TEXT SAYS: *DO NOT BE SILENT IN THE FACE OF MISOGYNISTIC ATTITUDES,
BE PART OF THOSE WHO FIGHT THE HATE SPEECH AGAINST WOMEN.*

C. Encouraged by the desire to share what was learned during the process, which started in March 2020, the third project engaged with women who walk around the city. The groups designed and glued posters in their neighborhoods with phrases to foster reflections on women residents. Poster design workshops were held online

due to the pandemic. For Ester de Amorim Reis (20), Fernanda Santos Pereira (18) and Sara Regina da Silva Moreira (18), these project workshops enabled contact with people of different ages to share knowledge and new ideas, and the posters made it possible to share this knowledge with other people.

"WE WANT TO FIGHT HATE WITH LOVE; WE WANT TO FIGHT AND TEACH, TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER", said one of them.

The processes also brought great learning. The young people added that taking part in these activities and actions was a gift to them, self-knowledge, and the ability to understand what society thinks about hate speech directed at women.

"WE HAVE LEARNED THAT ON SOCIAL NETWORKS SPEECH COMES IN VARIOUS FORMS, SOMETIMES EVEN DISCRETE, AND THAT MANY WOMEN END UP REPRODUCING IT, BUT THAT WE CAN ONLY FIGHT TO STOP IT BEING PRODUCED, IF WE GET TOGETHER AND FIGHT AGAINST IT", said one of them.

The posters will be glued to different spots in Barragem, Nova América, Colônia, Vargem Grande, Silveira, São Noberto and Campo Limpo neighborhoods, in the South Zone of São Paulo.

IMAGE OF THE CREATION PROCESS OF ONE OF THE POSTERS ON WHICH WE READ THE REFLECTION: *"HAVE YOU EVER STOPPED DOING ANYTHING BECAUSE YOU ARE A WOMAN?"*

READ MORE
1. Blogpost about the project
2. Pilotas Podcast
3. Instagram Campaign
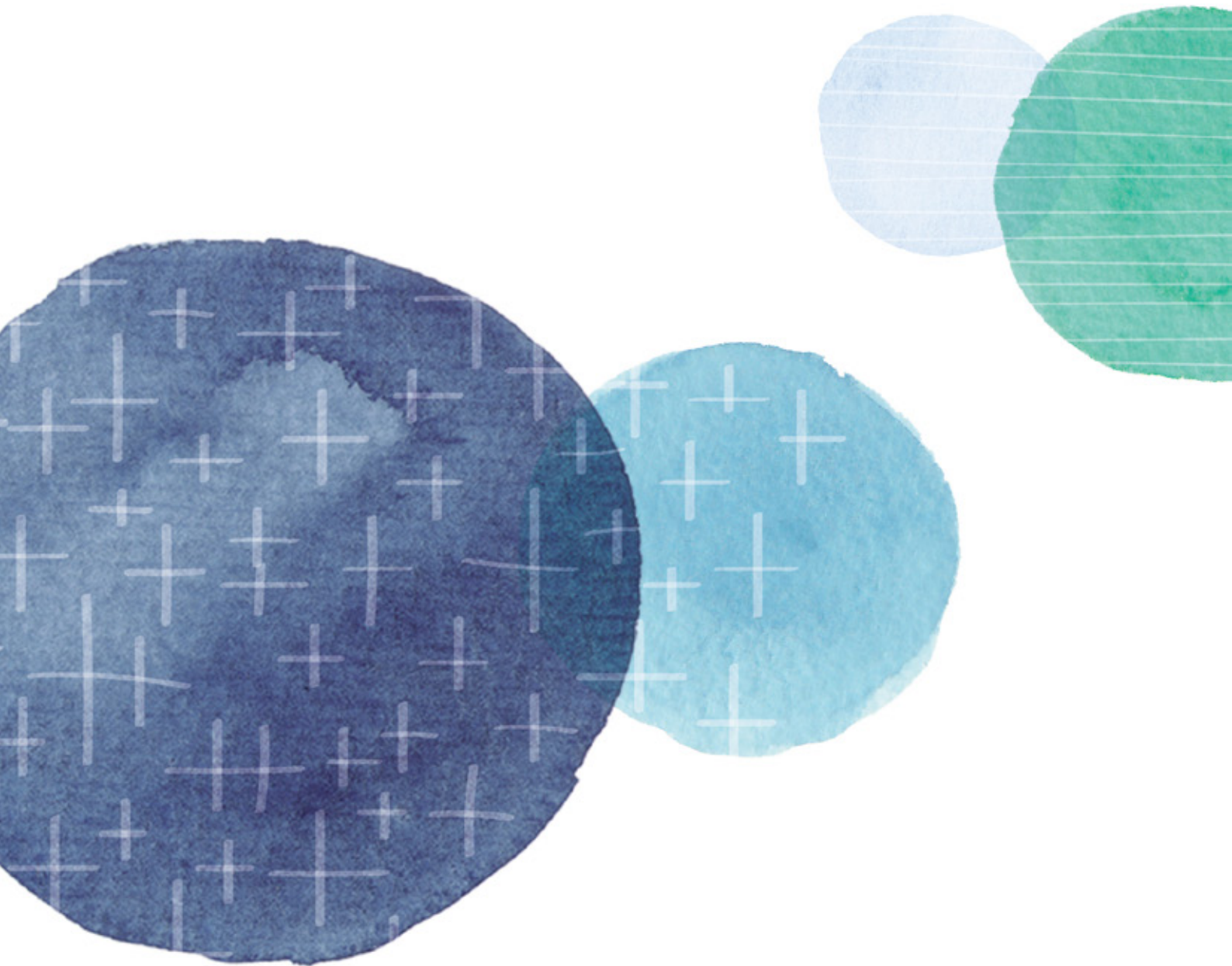
4.3 CASE LAW RESEARCH ON CASES OF HATE SPEECH AND RACISM

As already presented, this research initiative examined how cases of hate speech against women are handled within the Brazilian judicial system and analyzed approximately 1,980 court decisions from six different courts between 2019 and 2021. The findings were published on InternetLab's website, and on the book Misoginia na Internet, and we have explored them before. Besides such outputs and their contribution to other parts of the project, the study stressed **the importance of recognizing and articulating the specific challenges and dynamics that women face within the digital sphere and advocating for appropriate legal frameworks and interventions that can effectively combat and prevent this pervasive form of harm.**

As a follow-up to the study on case law regarding hate speech against women, we were invited by the Center for Racial Justice and Law at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation to contribute to their research on institutional racism in Brazil. **Our specific role was to analyze cases of racial violence that occur on the internet and become subject to judicial processes**. This collaborative effort led to the publication of the report titled "Safety of the Brazilian Black Population: How the Justice System Responds to Individual and Institutional Episodes of Racial Violence.", and we see it as an indirect result of this project, as it contributed to its intersectional approach and uses its methodology and findings.

In this study, we analyzed judicial cases involving **racial offenses online**, encompassing both criminal and civil aspects. The primary objective was to create a profile of racial discrimination cases in digital media, aiming to comprehend how the justice system evaluates these cases and identify specific characteristics compared to offline instances of racism and racial insults.

Within the criminal realm, we examined the application, conviction, and acquittal of crimes related to racism and racial insults committed through digital platforms. In the civil context, our analysis encompassed the determination of compensation, considerations of telematic confidentiality breaches, and legal actions taken against content providers in cases involving online racism.

Our research database consisted of **77 court judgments, with 52 focusing on criminal cases and 27 on civil cases**. It is important to acknowledge that the limited number of cases restricts the extent of comparability and generalization due to its lack of statistical significance. **Consequently, the descriptions and analyses presented are specific to the aforementioned database, and any extrapolation or comparisons should be approached with caution, considering the number of judgments analyzed.**

(I) *AMONG THE ANALYZED CASES, THE MAJORITY DID NOT DIRECTLY MENTION THE RACE AND GENDER OF THE VICTIM OR THE PERPETRATOR. IN THE CRIMINAL SPHERE, ONLY 4 CASES MENTIONED THE PERPETRATOR'S RACE, 3 MENTIONED THE VICTIM'S RACE, AND ONE CASE INVOLVED BOTH. IN THE CIVIL SPHERE, ONLY 3 CASES PROVIDED INFORMATION ABOUT THE VICTIM'S RACE. REGARDING GENDER, IT WAS OBSERVED THAT IN CRIMINAL CASES, MOST PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS WERE MALE, WHILE IN CIVIL CASES, THE MAJORITY WERE FEMALE. THE ABSENCE OF REFERENCES TO THESE MARKERS MAY INDICATE A LACK OF CONCERN FROM JUDGES IN ADDRESSING THE INTERSECTION OF RACE AND GENDER IN CASES OF RACISM, WHICH CAN HINDER RESEARCH EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH PROFILES OF PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS OF RACIAL CRIMES.*

(II) RACIAL OFFENSES PREDOMINANTLY INVOLVE CONTENT RELATED TO RACE AND RELIGION. IN THE CIVIL SPHERE, ONLY CASES OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE AND INSTANCES OF ANTI-SEMITISM WERE FOUND (18 CASES INVOLVING RACE AND 5 INVOLVING ANTI-SEMITIC RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION). IN THE CRIMINAL SPHERE, OFFENSES WERE PREDOMINANTLY RACE-RELATED (31 CASES).

(III) IN THE CRIMINAL SPHERE, THE MOST FREQUENTLY OCCURRING DIGITAL PLATFORMS WHERE OFFENSES OCCURRED WERE FACEBOOK, BLOG/WEBSITE, ORKUT, AND WHATSAPP GROUPS, IN THAT ORDER. IN THE CIVIL SPHERE, THE MOST COMMONLY USED PLATFORMS FOR OFFENSES WERE PRIVATE WHATSAPP CONVERSATIONS, FACEBOOK MESSENGER, FACEBOOK POSTS, BLOG/WEBSITE, AND TWITTER.

(IV) IN THE CRIMINAL JUDGMENTS ANALYZED, THE MAJORITY RESULTED IN CONVICTIONS. IN 60% OF THE CASES, JUDGES CONVICTED INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN RACIST PRACTICES. IN THE CIVIL SPHERE, 46% OF THE CASES RESULTED IN JUDGES RULING IN FAVOR OF COMPENSATION CLAIMS.

(V) THE DATA ANALYSIS REVEALED CERTAIN NUANCES IN CASES OF RACISM OCCURRING ON THE INTERNET. THESE NUANCES ARE MENTIONED BY JUDGES IN THEIR DECISIONS, PRIMARILY TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE ONLINE PUBLICATION OF RACIST CONTENT, REACHING A LARGE AUDIENCE, AMPLIFIES THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF RACIAL OFFENSES.

Through this research, we delved deeper into the phenomenon of racial violence and gained a comprehensive understanding of how courts in Brazil have been handling cases of online racism. **This provided valuable insights for comparing the existing legal framework for racism with the absence of a specific legal framework for misogyny.** By examining the legislative branch's successes and shortcomings in criminalizing racism and evaluating the judicial branch's approach to cases involving online racial violence, **we were able to draw inferences regarding the potential advantages and disadvantages of criminalizing misogyny. Additionally, we explored the potential impacts that such criminalization could have on the judicial system as a whole.**

READ MORE

4. Blogpost with first results of case law study

5. Report "Safety of the Brazilian Black Population: How the Justice System Responds to Individual and Institutional Episodes of Racial Violence."

6. Book Misoginia na Internet (Misogyny on the Internet), forthcoming with Fósforo (publisher)

4.4 MARI FERRER'S CASE

WORD CLOUD OF THE MOST COMMONLY USED TERMS ON TWITTER ABOUT THE MARI FERRER CASE.

Mari Ferrer, a young influencer, experienced a sexual assault in 2018. During the trial of her case in 2021, Mari Ferrer was subjected to violent remarks by the defense attorney representing the accused. The video capturing this verbal assault was circulated on the internet, generating a significant impact and sparking public debate. This study examined how Twitter users responded to the video footage of the trial and their perceptions of the actions taken by the judiciary in the Mari Ferrer case, and was published on InternetLab's website.

We divided the study into two parts: initially, we collected tweets and retweets related to the case that were published between November 3rd and November 5th of this year – the day the article was published and the following two days. To do so, we used the following keywords: "Mari Ferrer," "Caso Mariana Ferrer," "Estupro Culposo" (culpable rape), "André de Camargo Aranha," "#justicapormariferrer" (justice for Mari Ferrer), and "#justicapormarianaferrer" (justice for Mariana Ferrer). The search using these keywords led us to a total of **392,049 tweets** and retweets referencing the case. Given this number, in order to conduct the analysis within a short period of time, we focused solely on the tweets.

We found an average of 20 tweets about the case being posted per minute. To select which tweets would be analyzed, **we set a filter of 5 likes and 5 retweets as engagement criteria, resulting in approximately 3,000 tweets**. In the second phase, **we conducted readings and categorizations of patterns within the selected tweets**. First, we examined whether the tweet's author expressed support or opposition to Mariana Ferrer's arguments. We also assessed the content of the tweets, looking for mentions of the term **"estupro culposo"[2] (culpable rape), as well as any instances of insults or offensive language**.

By analyzing approximately **3,000 tweets, we identified that 93.64% expressed support for Ferrer, 5.63% merely reported the case, adopting a neutral stance, while only 0.73% of users expressed support for the defense attorney**. The key finding of this study was a deeper understanding of how Brazilian Twitter users evaluate and perceive the Brazilian judiciary. **There is a prevailing sense of mistrust regarding how the judiciary handles issues concerning marginalized groups, particularly women, and a pervasive feeling of impunity. One significant impact of this research was its extensive media coverage**.

Given the widespread attention garnered by the Mari Ferrer case nationwide, our research gained substantial visibility. It was widely covered by news portals and shared on feminist and progressive Instagram profiles, reaching a vast audience and contributing to the broader conversation.

[2] This term is intended to remove blame, or responsibility, from the rapist by claiming that the crime happened without the intent to be non-consensual. Besides being problematic, the term contradicts the Brazilian penal legislation since this modality of rape does not exist.
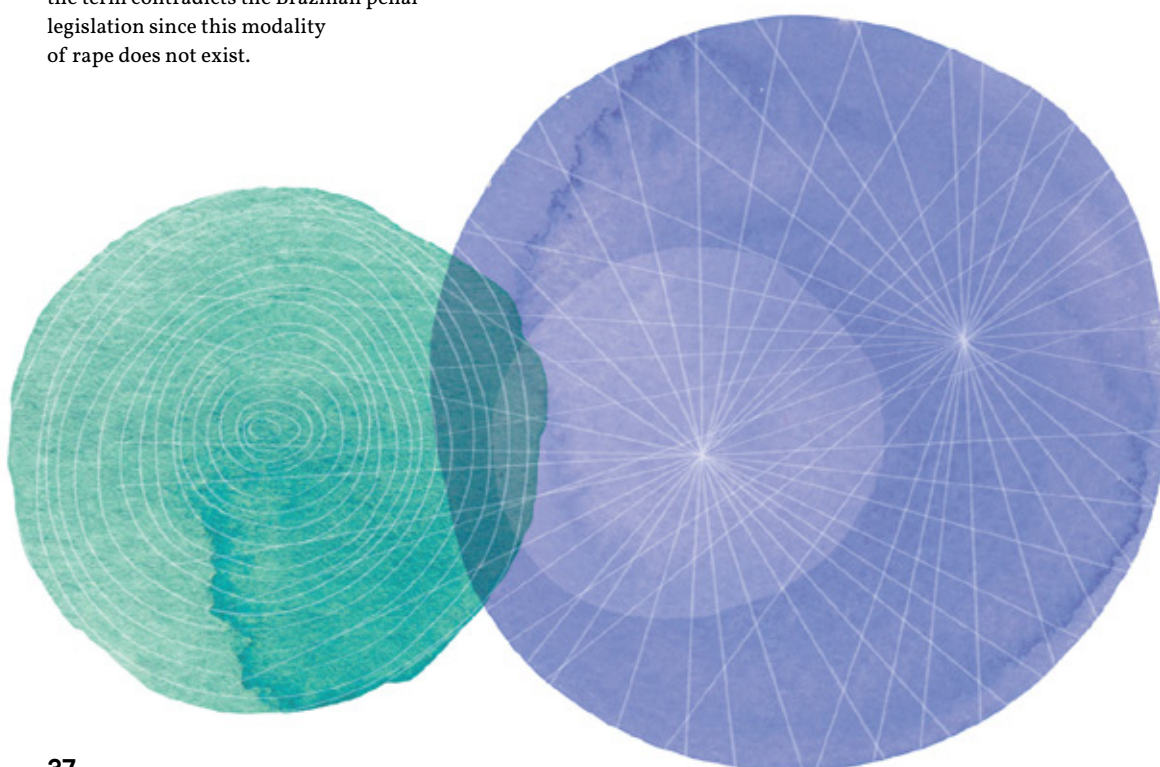
4.5 OBSERVATORY OF ONLINE POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND MEN CANDIDATES FIRST EDITION, 2020

MonitorA, a project developed in partnership with AzMina Magazine and Volt Data Lab, was widely recognized as **one of the pioneering initiatives addressing online gender-based political violence against female candidates. In 2020, we monitored 175 profiles of candidates from all regions, considering various diversity criteria such as ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political spectrum, and policy priorities, on Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.**

Women, both cisgender and transgender, received an average of 40 offensive comments daily on Twitter during the first round of the elections. However, the main issue we observed was not solely numerical: **some male candidates even received more insults on social media, depending on various factors.** For example, Guilherme Boulos, a candidate for mayor in São Paulo, received a significant amount of insults due to the size and visibility of his candidacy. The nature of the insults differed, however: we noticed that men, particularly cisgender white men, were attacked based on their **political actions or**

professional performance, while women were targeted for who they were, their bodies, intellectual capabilities, moral and sexual behavior, and factors related to their family (such as motherhood). Black women faced extreme dehumanization, as seen in the cases of Marina Silva and Benedita da Silva, who were compared to animals ("turtle," "milk cow," "pig") and insulted based on their alleged lack of beauty. Black and LGBTQIA+ men also faced attacks on personal characteristics.

Furthermore, between elections, in light of our previous research findings, particularly from MonitorA, we discovered a significant number of attacks targeting LGBTQIA+ candidates. To address this issue, we have collaborated with Casa 1, a cultural center, shelter, and social clinic for homeless LGBT+ individuals, and MariaLab, an organization working at the intersection of politics, gender, and technology. Together, we have supported the production of an article focusing on LBT candidates and political violence. This article has been published in the 2nd collection of articles titled "TIC, Governança da Internet e Gênero - Tendências e Desafios" (ICT, Internet Governance and Gender: Trends and Challenges). Through our partnership with these organizations, **we conducted a detailed analysis of the data on political violence, specifically concerning sexuality and gender identity markers.** By publishing the article in ICT, Internet Governance and Gender: Trends and Challenges, a renowned publication in the field of digital rights in Brazil, we have achieved significant visibility and impact. **This collaboration and publication have not only shed light on the issue of political violence against LBT candidates but have also provided a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, and activists working in the area of digital rights. By amplifying the reach of this article, we aim to raise awareness, promote dialogue, and advocate for the protection and equal treatment of LGBTQIA+ individuals in the political sphere.**

MonitorA, in its first edition, achieved notable results, particularly in terms of raising awareness and promoting public debate on the challenges faced by female candidates. A significant milestone was the successful partnership established with Revista AzMina, producing several articles in renowned Brazilian newspapers such as Folha de São Paulo, UOL, and Terra. The impact of MonitorA's work was further recognized when it received the prestigious Cláudio Weber Abramo Award, the main accolade for data journalism in Brazil. The impact of MonitorA extended beyond media coverage and resonated with the candidates themselves. Erika Hilton, for instance, expressed feeling safer knowing that the attacks on her social networks were being monitored and that she could file complaints based on the survey's findings. Another highly significant outcome was the approval of the Law on Political Violence Against Women, which explicitly referenced the research conducted by the MonitorA in its justification. This highlights the undeniable impact that the MonitorA had on Brazilian society.

Um monitoramento realizado pelo Instituto *AzMina*, em parceria com o *InternetLab,* apenas entre os dias 15 e 18 de novembro de 2020, coletou 347,4mil tuítes os quais citam 58 candidatas e candidatos que disputam o segundo turno para prefeito em municípios de 13 estados do País. Desses, 109,4 mil tuítes eram direcionados às candidatas, e 8 mil tinham algum termo ofensivo. Entre 2.390 tuítes com termos ofensivos que tinham uma ou mais curtidas ou *retweets*, 17,3% (415) eram ofensas diretas às candidatas, tais como "safada", "lixo" e "vagabunda".[3]

Nesse revoltante cenário, aprovar medidas eficazes no combate à violência política contra a mulher é medida que se impõe.

Com algumas nuances, que serão abordadas no decorrer do presente parecer, a proposição principal e os apensos definem a violência política

DURING THE BILL'S PASSAGE THROUGH CONGRESS, THE BILL'S RAPPORTEUR, CONGRESSWOMAN **ANGELA AMIN** (PP/SC), THE MONITORA IN HER REPORT. IN THE IMAGE, THERE IS THE BILL'S REPORT IN PORTUGUESE

The private sector also acknowledged the importance of MonitorA's work. After meetings with various platforms, where we presented the data and provided platform-specific recommendations, we received excellent feedback. In some cases, the private sector even argued to have incorporated our recommendations. As a testament to the project's credibility, **Twitter selected InternetLab and AzMina as beneficiaries of a partnership program for the 2022 elections. This partnership allowed us to share our lexicon, which served as an effective tool in combating political violence during the election period**.

Finally, some of the MonitorA results were also explored academically and to an international audience in an book chapter about public misogyny, written and published by the director Mariana Valente on the book Constitutionalizing Social Media.

READ MORE

9. Articles published: 1, 2 and 3
10. MonitorA 2020 report, English and Portuguese
11. Article "Violência política, gênero e sexualidade: contribuições para a análise do discurso de ódio contra grupos socialmente minorizados" (Portuguese)
12. Claudio Abramo Prize (Portuguese)
13. Political Violence Against Women Law
14. Political Violence Against Women proposition mentioning MonitorA
15. Chapter "No Place for Women: Gaps and Challenges in Promoting Equality on Social Media", in Constitutionalizing Social Media.

4.6 STUDY ON HATE SPEECH AGAINST JOURNALISTS ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

 In recent years, the online harassment of journalists in Brazil has reached alarming levels, primarily driven by the **widespread use of social media platforms and the institutionalization of these attacks**. This concerning trend has led to the silencing intimidation, and punishment of media professionals, particularly women, through an increasing barrage of verbal attacks and hate speech. Recognizing the gravity of this issue, we undertook a comprehensive study to examine **how social markers are employed as weapons against journalists on social media.**

This research was conducted collaboratively with the Instituto Nacional de Ciência e Tecnologia na Democracia Digital (INCT.DD), Laboratório de Pesquisa Digital Forense do Conselho Atlântico (DFRLab), Instituto Vero, Revista AzMina, and Volt Data Lab, pooling together expertise and resources.

The study conducted on Twitter revealed that individuals initiating attacks against journalists aim to **undermine women's intellectual capabilities in the profession and silence the press.** They also criticize the journalists' **physical appearance** in an attempt to divert attention from their journalistic work and spread false information about them.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE BLOGPOST ON HOW WOMEN JOURNALISTS RECEIVE MORE THAN DOUBLE THE OFFENSES OF MALE COWORKERS ON TWITTER.
AVAILABLE AT: https://internetlab.org.br/en/news/women-journalists-receive-more-than-double-the-offenses-of-male-coworkers-on-twitter/

We monitored a total of 200 profiles of Brazilian journalists on Twitter. Using a lexicon consisting of offensive, misogynistic, sexist, racist, lesbian, transgender, and homophobic words, we collected 7.1 million tweets containing potentially offensive content directed at 133 women journalists and 67 men journalists. Through a more detailed analysis covering the period from May 1st to September 27th, 2021, we identified a group of over 8,300 tweets with five or more engagements (retweets and/or likes) and examined them individually to determine if they constituted direct attacks on the journalists.

We observed that journalists covering political affairs are more susceptible to massive attacks. While only 8% of the offensive tweets directed at male journalists were found to be hostile, 17% of the tweets directed at women journalists constituted personal attacks. Among the most frequently used terms against women were "ridiculous," "scumbag," "nuts," and "wuss." Most of these aggressions also insinuated that women are incapable of interpreting texts or understanding political scenarios.

WOMEN JOURNALISTS ARE MORE EXPOSED TO ATTACKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

17%
of the tweets received by **women** are offensive

8%
of the tweets received by **men** are offensive

200 profiles of Brazilian journalists were monitored on Twitter

133 women

67 men

8343 posts with 5 retweets or likes were analyzed between May 1st and September 27th, 2021

Furthermore, we observed that influential figures, including authorities, play a significant role in amplifying misogynistic and racist attacks against journalists online. Disturbingly, even former President Jair Bolsonaro (PL) has normalized this form of violence on various platforms, further exacerbating the situation. **Moreover, those responsible for supporting and protecting these professionals were not held accountable for their actions.**

MOST FREQUENT TERMS USED TO OFFEND MEN AND WOMEN

WOMEN

DYKE
SNOWFLAKE
SHUT UP
SHUT IT
SLANTED
INCOMPETENT
JACKASS
BLACK
SCUMBAG
NUTS
TRANSVESTITE
BITCH
COMMUNIST
JOURNAZIST
CUNT
PARTIAL
RIDICULOUS
WEAK
BIASED
COMMUNIST
LOSER

MEN

SHUT UP
ILLITERATE
COMMUNIST
BIASED
INCOMPETENT
JOURNAZIST
SCUMBAG
WEAK
SUCK IT
ILL-INTENTIONED
SHITHEAD
RIDICULOUS
IMBECILE
IDIOT
RETARD
SLANTED
TRANSVESTITE

Number of occurrences of each term:

| 1 to 10 | 11 to 30 | 31 to 50 | 51 to 100 | More than 100 |

One notable impact of our research was its influence on public debate, which included extensive dissemination through platforms like the **Podcast Angu de Grilo**, featuring two black women journalists as hosts. Such visibility contributed to raising awareness and generating discussions about the challenges faced by journalists in Brazil. **Furthermore, the data collected during our study served as a crucial foundation for our contribution to the United Nations on the topic of journalists' safety and well-being.**

By shedding light on the alarming reality of online harassment against journalists, we aim to provoke meaningful change, foster accountability among those in power, and advocate for the protection of media professionals. Our collaboration with esteemed organizations and the subsequent dissemination of our findings have not only advanced the understanding of this issue but have also paved the way for **targeted interventions, policies, and support mechanisms to combat the pervasive harassment faced by journalists in Brazil.**

This piece project was co-funded by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

READ MORE

16. Report: Understanding how influence operations across platforms are used to attack journalists and hamper democracies

17. Podcast episode: Angu de Grilo (Portuguese).

4.7 **A GUIDE ON DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND DIGITAL RIGHTS**

Drawing on our experience with research from an intersectional feminist perspective, we have sought to organize, in dialogue with other organizations, steps to be taken forward in addressing the need to transform not only our research but also make transformation a central part of our organization's governance. For this reason, InternetLab, in collaboration with partners from various organizations, produced "Diversity, Inclusion, and Digital Rights: A Guide for Research Processes, Advocacy, and Team Composition".

As organizations in the field of digital rights, we have been at the forefront of denouncing and addressing rights violations in the design, purchase, and use of technologies. However, we must also take a **critical look at ourselves and identify our weaknesses when it comes to creating environments that foster social equity and inclusivity. How can we effectively contribute to the production and strengthening of a more diverse and inclusive field?**

The production of this guide aimed to facilitate critical reflection within entities operating in the digital rights field, helping them to recognize and implement effective diversity and inclusion practices in research activities, advocacy efforts, and team composition. By addressing the pressing issues of diversity and inclusion, our guide is a valuable resource for navigating the complexities and challenges of fostering a more inclusive field.

It provides practical insights and strategies to overcome our weaknesses, paving the way toward a stronger and more equitable digital rights landscape. **Promoting diversity and inclusion is not only a worthy goal in itself but also a fundamental path toward progress and social justice within our field**.

"UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS NOT A SINGLE WAY TO BECOME AN INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE INSTITUTION. YOU SHOULD BE WILLING TO ADAPT, TO ACTIVELY AND PURPOSELY LISTEN TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COLLABORATORS, BESIDES BEING READY FOR SELF-CRITICISM. FROM THE NECESSITIES OBSERVED BY YOU AND YOUR TEAM, SET GOALS AND DEADLINES TO REACH THEM. NOTE THAT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTIONS DEPENDS ON THEIR ARTICULATION WITH THE REALITY IN WHICH THEY ARE BASED. IT IS BETTER TO GO ON WITH A GRADUAL AND ORGANIC PROCESS, THAN WITH A FAST - BUT SUPERFICIAL - ONE."

EXCERPT FROM "DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND DIGITAL RIGHTS:
A GUIDE FOR RESEARCH PROCESSES, ADVOCACY, AND TEAM COMPOSITION"

While this guide was not a direct product of this grant, we consider it to have been made possible due to the learnings acquired in this project.
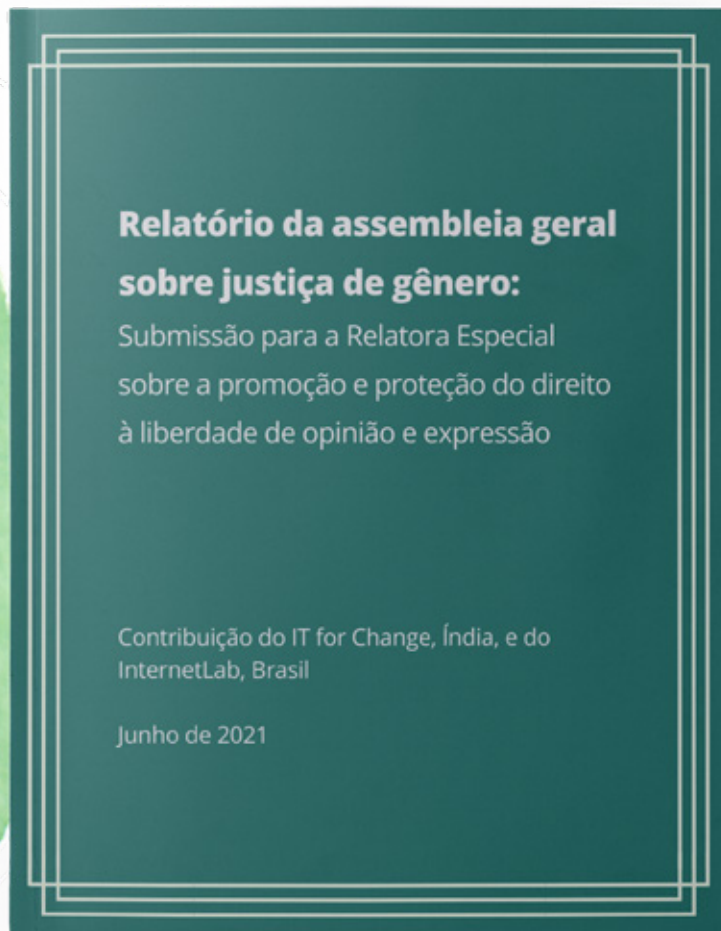
4.8 COLLABORATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

With a comprehensive understanding gained from our extensive research and analysis, we have synthesized our key learnings to try to impact the global discourse. Building upon this knowledge, we collaborated with the esteemed Indian organization, It for Change to amplify our message. Together, we conveyed our recommendations to the United Nations and organized influential roundtable discussions.

Our contribution to the United Nations presented a valuable platform to disseminate our findings and data globally, transcending geographical boundaries and significantly contributing to the ongoing debate beyond Brazil. By partnering with It for Change, we crafted a compelling paper that sheds light on the profound impact of online violence against women on the fundamental right of freedom of expression.

Relatório da assembleia geral sobre justiça de gênero:
Submissão para a Relatora Especial sobre a promoção e proteção do direito à liberdade de opinião e expressão

Contribuição do IT for Change, Índia, e do InternetLab, Brasil

Junho de 2021

JOINT SUBMISSION MADE BY IT FOR CHANGE AND INTERNETLAB
TO THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION
AND EXPRESSION FOR THE UNGA REPORT ON GENDER JUSTICE.

We have also held, with It For Change, the "Roundtable on Feminist Perspectives on Social Media Governance". From the roundtables, articles were published, with the inputs of the event's debates, and a compendium with essays by the roundtable's debaters:

We have actively facilitated a productive roundtable discussion on gender transformation research alongside other organizations that have been granted similar funding. This collaborative forum served as a platform to delve into methodologies and delve into the significant local and digital impact our projects have achieved in terms of gender transformations. These valuable international dialogues have fostered an enriching exchange of experiences, particularly within the Global South, and have facilitated the dissemination of our research data beyond the borders of Brazil. The report summarized the learning across five projects, Africa Alliance of YMCAs (Kenya), Oxfam Canada (Canada), IT for Change (India), American Jewish World Service - AJWS (EUA), and InternetLab (Brazil), including key themes, challenges and the main results. It was written through the access of materials developed by the organizations and through three different meetings (including a summative roundtable discussion at the end of 2022). The conversations seek to find differences and common issues across the research processes.

Throughout the project, we have extensively participated in international events and conferences, exploring research results. As just a few recent examples, Fernanda Martins and Mariana Valente have participated in a few panels at the IGF and engaged with the UNESCO Internet for Trust and the UN Global Digital Compact processes, exploring gender perspectives to internet policy.

REPORT'S COVER AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

READ MORE

19. Joint submission made by IT for Change and InternetLab to the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression for the UNGA Report on Gender Justice.

20. Compendium: Feminist Perspectives on Social Media, IT for Change and InternetLab.

21. Fernanda Martins' and Mariana Valente's engagements at the IGF 2022.

22. Fernanda Martins' and Mariana Valente's engagements with the UNESCO Internet for Trust process.

23. UN Global Digital Compact consultations – outline of the session where Mariana Valente was a briefer.

4.9 CONTRIBUTION TO OVERSIGHT BOARD

Our contribution to the Oversight Board on Meta's nudity policies was an opportunity for us to impact Meta's policies directly, based on the knowledge we accumulated about online misogyny during this project. To this end, we partnered with Lux Ferreira, a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the University of São Paulo, to write a contribution to the case on Meta's nudity policy. **The impact of our action is evident in the fact that our contribution was cited among the arguments brought by the Oversight Board's decision. We pointed out that we were able to identify successive cases of removal of trans and non-binary photos based on Meta's nudity policy**. At the same time, similar images of cis bodies were not removed. Thus, these cases may indicate a tendency towards the sexualization of non-cisgender bodies. Given the relevance of the issue at hand, **working on this case was an opportunity to dig deeper into the subject and contribute to an essential discussion**.

many communities and parts of the world, depictions of uncovered transgender and non-binary breasts might well be considered to traverse community sensitivities. Yet Meta does not restrict such expression. Moreover, the Board is concerned about the known and recurring disproportionate burden on expression that have been experienced by women, transgender, and non-binary people due to Meta's policies (see below). For these reasons, the Board focuses on the other aims beyond "community sensitivities" that Meta has advanced in examining its human rights responsibilities.

It should be noted that some of the reasons Meta provides for its nudity policy reflect a default assumption of the sexually suggestive nature of women's breasts as the basis. The Board received public comments from many users that expressed concern about the presumptive sexualization of women's, trans and non-binary bodies, when no comparable assumption of sexualization of images is applied to cisgender men. (See, e.g., Public Comment 10624 submitted by InternetLab).

The Board received many public comments in this case through its normal case outreach processes. As a body committed to offering a measure of accountability to Meta's user base and key stakeholders, the Board considers comments seriously as a part of its deliberations. As with all cases, we understand that these comments

CITATION TO INTERNETLAB'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE OVERSIGHT BOARD'S DECISION

4.10 HATE SPEECH AGAINST NORTHEASTERNERS DURING THE 2022 ELECTIONS

WORD CLOUD OF THE MOST COMMONLY USED TERMS ON TWITTER ABOUT NORTHEASTERNERS DURING THE 2022 ELECTIONS.

Against the backdrop of the electoral campaign in Brazil, a concerning trend of offensive rhetoric targeting individuals from the northeastern region of the country and allegations of electoral fraud began to emerge. Motivated by the need to comprehend the propagation of xenophobic violence, anti-democratic discourses, and associated fake news, we engaged in an analysis of Twitter contents. This study aimed to shed light on the dynamics underlying such discriminatory speech, which is even classified as a crime under the Antirracist Law (Law No. 7.716/89), while also **examining Twitter's moderation practices concerning xenophobic content**. The impact of our research is evident in the increased visibility and awareness surrounding this important issue, thanks to the publication of our comprehensive article.

READ MORE
25. Report: Hate speech against northeasterners during the 2022 elections (Portuguese).

4.11 OBSERVATORY OF ONLINE POLITICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CANDIDATES, SECOND EDITION (2022)

In the year 2022, the prevalence of online gender-based political violence was evident, and Brazil now counted on a new law to combat it, as mentioned above. The debate had reached institutional spheres. The continuation of the work of the observatory sought to refine the conclusions to provide better answers regarding misogyny and social media in the political context: **what distinguishes heated political debates or even hostile language that belittles historically marginalized groups, and what needs to be done in each case?**

CITATION TO INTERNETLAB'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE OVERSIGHT BOARD'S DECISION.
AVAILABLE AT: https://www.oversightboard.com/news/1214820616135890-oversight-board-overturns-meta-s-original-decisions-in-the-gender-identity-and-nudity-cases/

INSULTS VERSUS ATTACKS

To answer these questions and to complexify the analyses about gender political violence on the internet, MonitorA 2022 proposed a **methodological change regarding what we consider offensive content**. In 2022, we began to differentiate what we consider attacks and insults. The distinction between the **two categories that use hostile language** allowed us to delimit which are the contents that exceed the limits of freedom of expression, transforming the political environment into an inhospitable scenario for the entry and permanence of candidates, especially, women candidates in institutional politics. **We consider insults as content that has hostile and disrespectful language, but that are not attacks per se, even though they may be considered harsher than a simple criticism.** The contents classified as insults, in contrast, do not involve direct associations with gender, race, region, religion or sexuality. That means that **they are used similarly for men and women, for white, indigenous and black people, for trans and cis people.** We believe that, in principle, **insults should not necessarily be removed by platforms**. On the other hand, **attacks are characterized by attempts to inferiorize candidates**. Often, historically aggressive terms are used against people belonging to historically marginalized groups, such as women, black people, indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ people, and people with disabilities. **We believe that attacks should be removed from platforms.** The definition of insults and attacks should not lead to the understanding that insults should be naturalized in the political game. **Massively repeated insults can have even more forceful impacts on the decision of whether or not candidates continue in institutional politics, especially for women. An isolated attack, on the other hand, may have less effect than massively published insults.** It should also be noted that this differentiation applies to **political figures**, that is, people who run for or act in institutional politics and who therefore occupy a central place in the very functioning of democracy.

We were able to observe the narratives mobilized during the elections and their relation to **misogyny and other forms of discrimination**. For example, Michelle Bolsonaro and Janja Lula da Silva, the wives of the candidates who faced each other in the second round, both had prominence despite not being candidates themselves, and **both were targets of hostility that mentioned their religion and morality**. The attacks on Michelle Bolsonaro sought to prove a dissonance between her **religion and behavior**, bordering on misogyny. More aggressive attacks on Janja combined intolerance towards African-derived religions with misogyny, for instance, using the term "*pomba gira*" as a reference to her alleged previous sexual life. **In the netnography we conducted on TikTok, we also observed the immense portrayal of Michelle Bolsonaro's femininity. In videos by Bolsonaro and his supporters, she is referred to as a "princess" and the "true first lady," while women supporters of Lula like Benedita da Silva and Gleisi Hoffman are depicted as supposed examples of women on the opposing spectrum**.

In both editions of the MonitorA, it became evident how **language could be subtly used to convey misogyny**. In 2020, Manuela D'Avila was often called a communist - which is essentially a political adjective. However, in the context, it was clear that "communist" was used as a proxy for a person without desirable moral, religious, and sexual values. In 2022, during a presidential debate, candidate Jair Bolsonaro said to journalist Vera Magalhães, "Vera, I couldn't expect anything else from you. I think you sleep thinking about me. You must have some passion for me. You cannot take sides in a debate. A shame for Brazilian journalism."

The phrase "you are a shame" began to be reproduced on social media, particularly targeting women, subtly conveying gendered notions of morality. **It also demonstrates the power of discourses emanating from powerful political figures**. In 2022, we also identified that men are attacked for their characteristics when they **belong to subalternized groups**. Kim Kataguiri, for example, faced attacks due to his Japanese descent, with derogatory terms like "ugly Japa" and "Kim Kata Koquinho" being used. Fernando Holiday was criticized for perceived inconsistencies between his speech and his ethnic-racial identity, but with racist and violent language: "You are a shame for Brazilian black people! I am disgusted by a guy like you." **Despite the attempt to address the racial issue, such a statement is not related to Holiday's beliefs but to him being a black man with his own thoughts**.

As early as 2020, we identified that Twitter was the platform with the highest number of attacks, a diagnosis that corroborated other research, such as the Amnesty International report of 2018. **We sought to understand the reasons behind this, going beyond content moderation policies. The policies of internet platforms play a significant role, which I will address shortly. It**

also became evident that the way a platform is constructed, what it allows and what it doesn't, plays an immense role. For example, Twitter has an architecture that encourages interactions between people who do not follow each other, showing posts shared by contacts and giving broad reach to posts gaining traction. **This is very different from Instagram, where people primarily interact with those they follow, or TikTok, where even when watching videos of people they don't follow, individuals end up receiving more content they sympathize with, based on the platform's recommendation algorithms (TikTok is known for offering content aligned with users' preferences, based on their behavior on the platform).**

In 2022, MonitorA identified that on Instagram, the most common words directed at Érika Hilton (PSOL-SP) and Duda Salabert (PDT-MG), both elected to the Chamber of Deputies and both heavily targeted on the platform for being transgender women, were "strength," "take care," "courage," "resistance" for Duda (who received death threats in August 2022), and "community," "unite," "congress," "caucus," "popular," "let's go" for Erika. **These were supporters and admirers, using the candidates' social media accounts to show solidarity.**

The MonitorA allowed us to closely observe another phenomenon that is not easily resolved: mass attacks or "dog-piling." These are additive practices that may not be illegal in themselves or violate terms of use, but they cause harm and suffering because they create an **atmosphere of threat (in this regard, they resemble stalking but are committed by multiple people). For example, dozens or hundreds of people going to the profile of a Black candidate and saying something like, "Give up running, you don't deserve to be there." This statement may not be considered illegal, and it probably does not violate the platforms' policies to be removed by them. However, this collective nature creates emotional chaos and can push victims to breaking points. The problem is not only the content of the messages but also the effort and energy required to read, report, block, and take action against them. And even that may not be enough.**

Beyond producing a new version of MonitorA in 2022, we considered that **it was also our role to follow its evolution and use of the Law on Political Violence Against Women in the context of elections.** To this end, we partnered with the Núcleo de Inteligência Eleitoral to analyze the cases in which this law has been enforced since its enactment. Through our research, we sought to identify and understand the challenges faced in accessing relevant data and assessing the effectiveness of the law in protecting women candidates. **The findings revealed significant obstacles that hindered the successful implementation of the law, particularly concerning procedural aspects. This important conclusion underscores the pressing need for changes and improvements to ensure the law's efficacy.** By providing evidence of the law's shortcomings, **our**

research serves as a catalyst for advocating for necessary reforms. It goes beyond mere recommendations by actively monitoring the actions taken by the Brazilian State and platforms, aiming to continue contributing to the ongoing fight against gender-based political violence. **We firmly believe that persistent engagement and critical analysis are essential to effect lasting change. By actively following up on the measures adopted and maintaining a vigilant stance, we remain committed to advancing the cause and addressing the underlying systemic issues that perpetuate gender-based violence in political contexts.**

To organize the knowledge acquired in the last two editions of MonitorA, after the second edition, we built a **website that presents the contents of the second report but also allows users to download the reports on the 2022 and 2020 elections**. The creation of the website was an initiative aimed at publicizing the project's memory, which has played a crucial role in the discussion on political violence against candidates on social media.
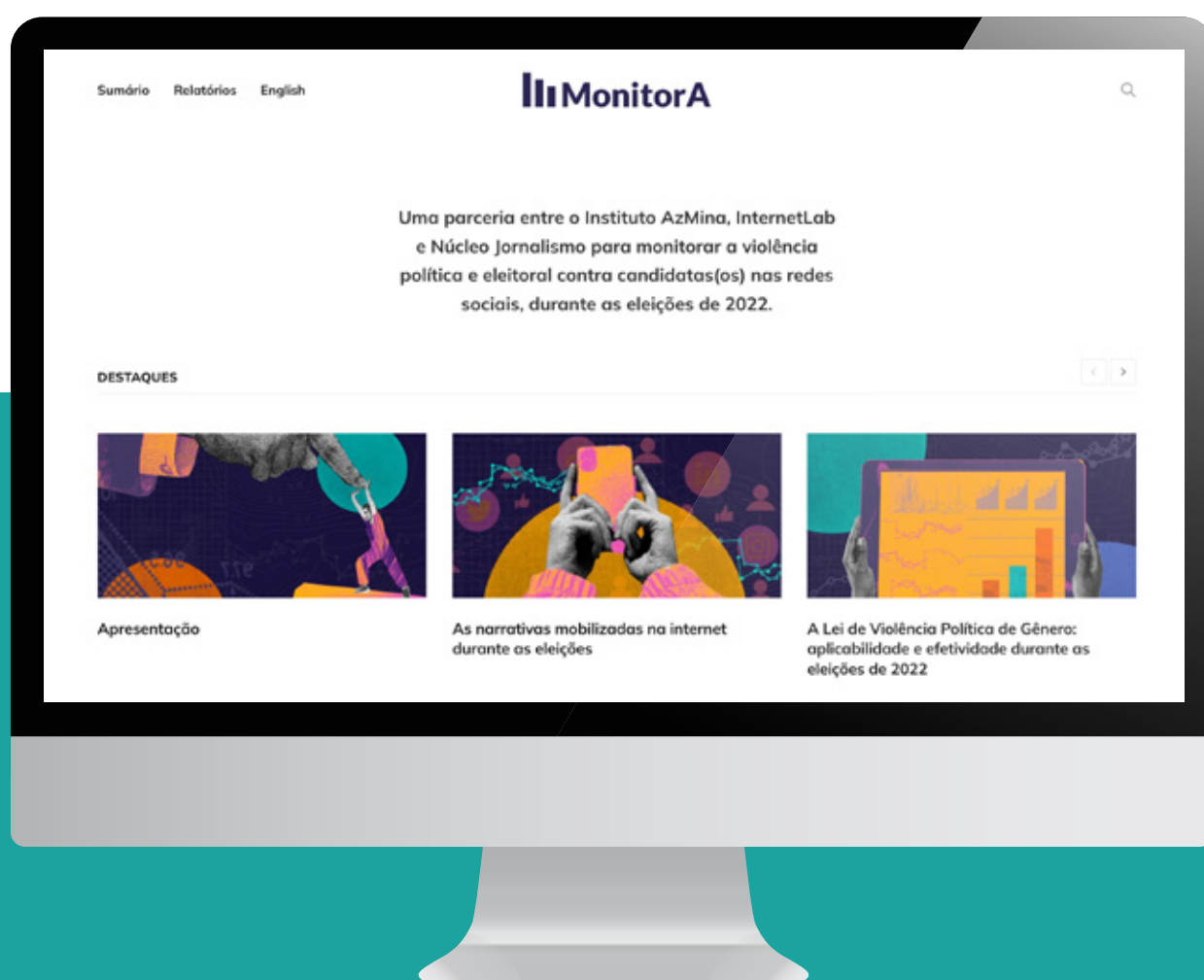
PRINTSCREEN OF THE MONITORA WEBSITE

We also held a launch event for MonitorA, which was attended by members of the public and private sectors, academics, activists, and individuals from civil society organizations. The objective here was not only to share the report with the public but also to foster a debate on the next steps we need to take to address this social phenomenon and make the political environment less hostile towards women and historically marginalized groups.

MONITOR 2022 TEAM GATHERED AT LAUNCH EVENT

Lastly, in partnership with the AzMina magazine, we organized a trip to Brasília where we were delivered the printed version of the report to public authorities and met with important social actors. We met Maria Claudia Bucchianeri Pinheiro, minister of the Superior Electoral Court, Carmen Foro, the National Secretary for Institutional Articulation, Thematic Actions, and Political Participation of the Ministry of Women, the Women's Secretariat of the Chamber of Deputies, representatives Erika Hilton and Luisa Canziani, João Brant, the Secretary of Digital Policies at SECOM, representatives from the Ministry of Racial Equality, and the press and communication advisors of Janja Lula da Silva, the first lady.

BÁRBARA LIBÓRIO, AZMINA MAGAZINE DIRECTOR,
MARIA CLAUDIA BUCCHIANERI PINHEIRO, A MINISTER OF THE SUPERIOR ELECTORAL COURT,
AND **FERNANDA K. MARTINS,** INTERNETLAB DIRECTOR, RESPECTIVELY.

READ MORE
26. MonitorA 2022 website.
27. Monitora 2022 report.
28. Article: Study on the enforcement of the Law on Political Violence against Women (Portuguese).

5. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

Throughout the four years of this project, we encountered numerous difficulties and challenges that required us to persevere and adapt in order to successfully complete our research and achieve our intended outcomes. The evolving political and social landscape, coupled with significant global events such as the pandemic and the Capitol invasion, as well as the changing policies of online platforms, had profound effects on our research and the researchers involved. In light of these circumstances, we would like to outline the three primary challenges we faced, their impact on the research, and the strategies we employed to overcome them.

5.1 THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: ROUTE CHANGES AND ADAPTATIONS

The Covid-19 pandemic had a profound impact on our research, including the research problems, methodologies, and overall trajectory of the project. During the second semester of the project, when we had initially planned to conduct field research and face-to-face meetings with young people, the global health emergency emerged. The imperative of social distancing and the heightened significance of internet-related debates in this period necessitated **a reassessment of our approach and the exploration of alternative avenues to accomplish our objectives**.

The action-research phase, for example, which involved direct engagement with young people through face-to-face meetings and coordinated actions, was initially intended to take place earlier in the second semester of the project. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the lack of effective measures taken by public authorities in Brazil to combat the disease, conducting face-to-face meetings with young people became unfeasible.

Consequently, we had to make adaptations, and these adjustments inevitably impacted the outcomes of the research. For instance, in the action research, **we had to transform the planned in-person activities into a remote format.** As the research involved young participants, building meaningful relationships **mediated by screens posed a unique challenge**. Encouraging active participation, maintaining focus, and fostering deep conversations during online meetings, which often lasted several hours, were all challenges imposed by the circumstances.

The collaboration between the Rede Conhecimento Social and IBEAC proved instrumental in establishing connections with the young participants. **Although building these relationships was complex and demanding, we consider the outcomes achieved through the proposed actions by the young people to be highly positive.**

Furthermore, alongside the transition to remote research, the pandemic brought heightened attention to online debates and an alarming increase in rates of gender-based violence, both online and offline. In Brazil, data from institutions as Fiocruz indicated a rise in gender-based violence during the 2022 elections. Consequently, **the investigation of online violence against women has taken on a new significance, with a larger number of cases that we have had to consider and address, such as the Mari Ferrer case mentioned before.**

5.2 PLATFORM DATA ACCESS: A LIMITATION FOR SOCIAL NETWORKS RESEARCH

Over the course of our research, we have witnessed changes in the relationship between social media platforms and the granting and **accessibility of data** for research purposes. In the initial edition of MonitorA, some social media platforms were more cooperative, providing more open and accessible APIs, while others posed challenges. Although we faced some difficulties in obtaining data from platforms as Facebook and Instagram, it was still possible to find solutions to scrap data during the 2020 elections.

In 2022, however, data collection for monitoring political violence in the election became significantly restricted as platforms tightened their data access policies and implemented more limitations on API usage. To overcome this challenge, we had to explore alternative solutions for data collection on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. For platforms where we couldn't access the APIs, we developed new methods to track the public debate. It's important to note that **accessing qualitative data about the platforms, including information about content moderation, criteria for removing violent content, and interviews with platform representatives, proved to be difficult across all platforms, posing more limitations to our research.**

While data access issues did not prevent us from conducting our studies, they did impact the types of results we obtained and the conclusions we could draw. For instance, Twitter had the most open API at the time, leading us to conduct most of our research on that platform. Consequently, the **Twitter dataset provided a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding compared to other platforms where we had limited data for analysis. The current policies**

of several platforms to increasingly restrict access to data, however, pose concerns to the next editions of the MonitorA.

To address the perceived limitations in data access, we took two approaches:

(I) *WE MADE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY PRACTICES AND DATA ACCESS FOR RESEARCH, ENGAGING IN DIRECT MEETINGS WITH PLATFORM REPRESENTATIVES TO DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES WE ENCOUNTERED, AND*

(II) *WE CONDUCTED A NEW STUDY INVOLVING BRAZILIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN RESEARCHERS TO UNDERSTAND HOW THEY PERCEIVE TRANSPARENCY ISSUES RELATED TO PLATFORMS, HOW THE LACK OF DATA ACCESS IMPACTS ACADEMIC PRODUCTION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH, AND WHETHER THERE ARE DISPARITIES IN DATA ACCESS PRACTICES BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN COUNTRIES.*

By actively addressing these data access limitations, we aim to contribute to the improvement of transparency and data availability for research purposes, particularly in the Global South, while shedding light on the challenges faced by researchers in this domain.

5.3 IN-DEPTH STUDY ON VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF RESEARCHERS

The active participation of women, including many who are black and LGBTQIA+, constituted the majority of researchers throughout the four-year duration of this project. Engaging in research that delves into gender-based violence on a daily basis, whether through direct exposure to violent online speech or through describing acts of violence, can have a profoundly negative impact on the mental well-being of female researchers.

The constant exposure to online gender-based violence can manifest in two distinct ways. On one hand, by witnessing hostile content targeting women daily, we face a risk of desensitization among researchers. Having been exposed to a wide spectrum of misogynistic content, it is possible that certain forms of violence may become normalized to some extent, even though preventing the normalization of violence has been a recurring concern throughout both editions of MonitorA. Despite the prevalence of violent speech as a means of communication on the internet, particularly during elections, it was crucial to avoid normalizing such violence.

On the other hand, direct exposure to violence also takes a toll on the mental health of researchers. Researchers themselves often share similar characteristics

with the primary targets of online violence: they are women, non-white, and LGBTQIA+. Consequently, it was necessary to maintain constant presence and open dialogue with researchers to monitor how the research on hate speech against women was impacting their mental well-being. This became particularly sensitive during election periods, as researchers were confronted with a substantial influx of hostile content and a demanding workload.

Therefore, the directors, coordinators, researchers, and interns at InternetLab prioritized the well-being of all individuals involved, taking proactive measures to prevent the negative impact of researching misogynistic discourse on the female researchers. A network of care was established to ensure the continued well-being of everyone involved in the research process.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The collaboration with the IDRC team played a vital role in the successful execution of the research. Throughout the project, there were instances where deadlines needed to be extended or adjustments to the research plan needed to be made due to various reasons. In these situations, the IDRC team demonstrated understanding and flexibility, considering the complexities of the topics being addressed and the challenges posed by the pandemic and the Brazilian electoral and political landscape. Our relationship with the IDRC was largely positive and supportive. After engaging with other grantees in the final stages of this project, to produce a report summarizing learnings from the different reports which we mentioned above, we realized how productive such engagement was.

Our administrative recommendations for enhancing the funding relationship are therefore:

⟨I⟩ *CREATING MORE SPACES FOR RESEARCH DISCUSSION WITH OTHER GRANTEES*

At the conclusion of the project, the IDRC extended an invitation for us to conduct a series of meetings and roundtable discussions with other organizations that had also received funding. This was a valuable opportunity to foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among different organizations, allowing for the exchange of ideas, methodologies, and research strategies. InternetLab, which organized and produced a report on the meetings, found it to be a unique and highly educational experience to connect with organizations from the Global South working on related themes. While the end-of-project dialogue between organizations was fruitful, we believe that regular meetings throughout the project would have been equally beneficial in facilitating collaboration and the realization of joint projects. We would very much enjoy that more opportunities for dialogue between funded organizations be incorporated into future projects, so that these exchanges are not limited to the conclusion of the project, but are instead an ongoing part of the research development process.

(II) *IN RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE, PROVIDE EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TO THE ORGANIZATIONS AND RESEARCHERS INVOLVED*

Research on violence has a direct and significant impact on the well-being of the researchers involved. The continuous exposure to violent content as part of the research process can have detrimental effects on their mental health, particularly for researchers who identify as women, black, LGBTQIA+, and those working in the Global South. Given these circumstances, it is crucial for both the funded organization and the funders to prioritize the monitoring and support of the research team.

We would therefore be happy to, in the future, explore options of psychological support and resources allocated specifically to addressing the well-being of the research staff. This proactive approach would ensure that the researchers have access to the necessary assistance and resources to cope with the emotional and psychological challenges they may encounter during the research process. By recognizing and addressing the potential impact on the well-being of the team, we can foster a healthier and more sustainable research environment.
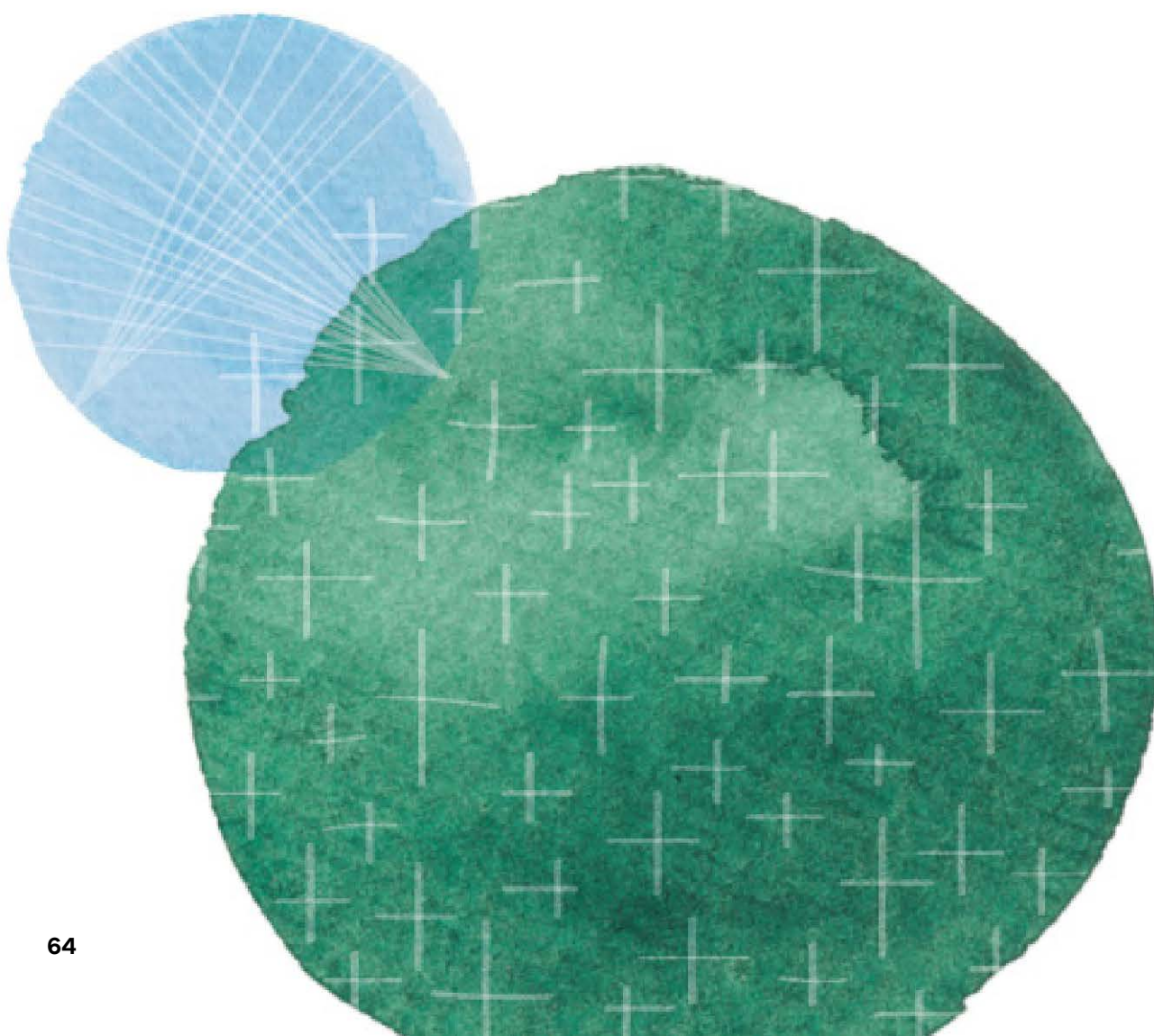
TECHNICAL FILE

COUNTRY

Brazil. This project is carried out as a partnership between Brazil and India, but this report refers to the Brazilian part. Joint action will be described where appropriate.

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