



# Invisibility of Gender Based Violence in the City

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This presentation is based on the “Understanding the Tipping Point of Urban Violence Study”

**10** Researchers

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**4** Cities

Nairobi; - Kenya; Patna - India; Santiago – Chile; Dilli – Timor Leste







## Conventional Wisdom

- Based on the study of '*Understanding the Tipping Points of Violence*' in 4 cities
- Investigating Conventional Wisdom of Causes of Violence, namely:
  1. Political exclusion;
  2. Prevalence of poverty;
  3. Youth bulges;
  4. Inadequate Consideration of gender based insecurity
- Employing participatory violence analysis methods
- Using 'tipping points' and 'violence chains' as conceptual frames.

# 5 Insights on GBV from the Study

Gender based violence reduction strategies:

1. Focuses on women in public domain (Santiago; Patna)
2. Invisibilises violence in private places (Santiago)
3. Ignores (sometimes rightly so) male to male violence in public domain (Dilli)
4. Deals with gender based violence in isolation; it is part of cross sectoral / cross societal violence (Showed up whether we were looking for it or not; Nairobi showed it was the second most prevalent type of violence after political violence; embedded in economics)

Male – female violence is way more complex than patriarchy (Santiago exposed the role of middle class aspiration in difficult economic times; and the silence of middle and higher class women)



# 3 Thematic Insights - Structural & Non-Structural GBV

## I. Non-Structural GBV

- Research has tended to focus on non-structural violence against women at the expense of the structural
- Policies attempts to address the failure to consider women security in cities, from non-structural crimes perspective



# 3 Thematic Insights - Structural & Non-Structural GBV

## 2. Structural GBV is significant in all the case study cities

- Gender based violence is very structural, generally condoned by society and tends to be embedded in culture (Patna, Santiago & Dilli) – ignored by most researchers and policy makers
- Gender based violence can be very widespread because of structural / socio-cultural infrastructures of violence
- Gender based violence can and does tip; the tipping is often unnoticed because of social systems and structures that makes it invisible, e.g. during civil upheavals
- *Structural gendered violence is often not conceptualized as such, therefore no research, policy or programmatic interventions.*



# 3 Thematic Insights - Public & Private GBV

- ‘Violence at home’ and ‘violence on the street’ (Santiago)
- Visible violence tends to happen in public spaces (Nairobi, Dilli, Santiago, Patna)
- Invisible violence does not only happen in private, but tends to be privatized – does not come to the public domain; remains the business of individuals involved; unaddressed by policy or action; acts tend to be criminal yet no action is often taken
- Policy can /does responded to visible / public violence through:
  - Design, quality, quantity, use of spaces contribute to this
  - Policing criminal acts against women happen in public spaces
  - Urban spaces can be designed to reduce violence against women
  - Mapping of hotspots, suggested in the Nairobi study
- *Invisible Violence - Under Researched and there are hardly any policy / programmatic responses, unless it gets to the public domain*





# 3 Thematic Insights - Poor & Rich GBV

- Violence - poverty nexus has placed focus on GBV studies on low income households
- Chile study shows that violence at home reduces in visibility based on class
- The higher the economic class; the more difficult to discern GBV; the more privatized and invisible.
- Women in higher economic classes, find it harder to publicly acknowledge violence in their lives; wary of diminishing their social standing
- Violence as a consequence of pressures of consumption versus diminishing incomes of the middle income families (Santiago)
- *Violence in higher income groups is notoriously difficult to discern and under researched, with virtually no policy responses.*



# 3 Visibility - Invisibility Continuums in GBV

Research, informing policy to take cognizance of continuums designed to erase GBV invisibilities

1. Non-Structural – Structural Continuum: with a focus on Structural Violence that is Socio-Culturally sanctioned (to deal with structural GBV invisibility)
2. Visible – Invisible Continuum: with a focus on Invisible Violence in Private Domain (to deal with spatial GBV invisibility)
3. Poor – Rich Continuum: with a focus on Economic Based Violence amongst higher income groups (to deal with economic based GBV invisibility)