RBGDR

WOMEN'S PROTAGONISM AND TERRITORIAL PUBLIC POLICIES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TERRITORIES FOR PEACE PROGRAM (TERPAZ)

PROTAGONISMO FEMININO E POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS TERRITORIAIS: UMA ANÁLISE DO PROGRAMA TERRITÓRIOS PELA PAZ (TERPAZ)

RBGDR

REVISTA BRASILEIRA DE GESTÃO E DESENVOLVIMENTO REGIONAL
V.22, N°4, Edição Especial 2026 | Taubaté/SP - Brasil | ISSN 1809-239x

WOMEN'S PROTAGONISM AND TERRITORIAL PUBLIC POLICIES: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TERRITORIES FOR PEACE PROGRAM (TERPAZ)

PROTAGONISMO FEMININO E POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS TERRITORIAIS: UMA ANÁLISE DO PROGRAMA TERRITÓRIOS PELA PAZ (TERPAZ)

Marisa Elenice Silva Lima[1] | Fabia Jaqueline Miranda Nobre[2]
Ana Maria de Albuquerque Vasconcellos[3] | Maria Betânia de Carvalho Fidalgo Arroyo[4]
Cacilene Moura Tavares[5]

Received: 01/29/2026
Accepted: 09/29/2026

1 PhD candidate in Administration (UNAMA). Professor at the University of the Amazon (Universidade da Amazônia). Belém – PA, Brazil.
E-mail: marisalima23@hotmail.com

[2] PhD in Administration (UNAMA). Professor at the University of the Amazon (Universidade da Amazônia). Belém – PA, Brazil.
E-mail: fabiajami@hotmail.com

[3] PhD in Development Studies (UWS). Professor at the University of the Amazon (Universidade da Amazônia). Belém – PA, Brazil.
E-mail: anamaria.vasconcellos@unama.br

[4] PhD in Administration (UNAMA). Professor at the University of the Amazon (Universidade da Amazônia). Belém – PA, Brazil.
E-mail: betania.fidalgo@unama.br

5 PhD in Science and Mathematics Education (UFPA). Professor at the University of the Amazon (Universidade da Amazônia). Belém – PA, Brazil. E-mail: kassymoura74@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes women's protagonism within the Territories for Peace Program (TerPaz), an integrated territorial public policy implemented in the State of Pará, Brazil, aimed at promoting citizen security and reducing social inequalities in territories marked by high vulnerability. The study sought to understand how women's actions contribute to the implementation of territorialized public policies, to territorial development, and to the strengthening of social protection networks. Methodologically, a qualitative approach was adopted, based on bibliographic and documentary research and on participant observation. The documentary research comprised the analysis of institutional documents, management reports, administrative records, and service data from the Usinas da Paz (UsiPaz), whereas participant observation derived from the author's involvement in the design and initial implementation of the program, which made it possible to contextualize and interpret the institutional processes analyzed. The study was anchored in theoretical frameworks on territory, public policy, territorial development, citizen security, and gender. The results indicate that women are the main group served by the UsiPaz and that their role, as evidenced in the institutional documents and in participant observation, goes beyond that of service users, manifesting itself in community mobilization, in mediation between the State and society, in the coordination of social protection networks, and in the promotion of initiatives aimed at strengthening citizenship and territorial development. It is concluded that women's actions are a relevant element in the implementation of TerPaz, which reinforces the importance of mainstreaming the gender perspective in the planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation of territorialized public policies.

Keywords: Public Policies; Territory; Women's Protagonism; Citizen Security; Territorial Development.

RESUMO

O artigo analisa o protagonismo feminino no âmbito do Programa Territórios pela Paz (TerPaz), política pública territorial integrada implementada no Estado do Pará, voltada à promoção da segurança cidadã e à redução das desigualdades sociais em territórios marcados por elevada vulnerabilidade. O objetivo do estudo consistiu em compreender de que maneira a atuação das mulheres contribui para a implementação das políticas públicas territorializadas, o desenvolvimento territorial e o fortalecimento das redes de proteção social. Metodologicamente, adotou-se abordagem qualitativa, fundamentada em pesquisa bibliográfica e documental e em observação participante. A pesquisa documental compreendeu a análise de documentos institucionais, relatórios de gestão, registros administrativos e dados de atendimentos das Usinas da Paz (UsiPaz), enquanto a observação participante decorreu da atuação da autora na concepção e implementação inicial do programa, possibilitando contextualizar e interpretar os processos institucionais analisados. O estudo foi ancorado em referenciais teóricos sobre território, políticas públicas, desenvolvimento territorial, segurança cidadã e gênero. Os resultados indicam que as mulheres constituem o principal público atendido pelas UsiPaz e que sua atuação, evidenciada nos documentos institucionais e na observação participante, ultrapassa a condição de usuárias dos serviços, manifestando-se na mobilização comunitária, na mediação entre Estado e sociedade, na articulação das redes de proteção social e na promoção de iniciativas voltadas ao fortalecimento da cidadania e do desenvolvimento territorial. Conclui-se que a atuação feminina representa elemento relevante para a implementação do TerPaz, reforçando a importância da incorporação transversal da perspectiva de gênero no planejamento, na gestão, no monitoramento e na avaliação das políticas públicas territorializadas.

Palavras-chave: Políticas Públicas; Território; Protagonismo Feminino; Segurança Cidadã; Desenvolvimento Territorial.

1 INTRODUCTION

Social and territorial inequalities in Brazil are a structural feature of the historical process of the country's economic, social, and spatial formation. The concentration of income, unequal access to public goods and services, and the asymmetric distribution of opportunities among regions and among different portions of urban and rural space reflect a development model marked by deep disparities. These inequalities are most intense in peripheral territories, where the fragility of the State's presence contributes to the reproduction of social vulnerabilities, violence, and exclusion, compromising the population's living conditions.

In this context, territorialized public policies play a strategic role in promoting regional development and reducing socio-spatial inequalities. By recognizing territory as a socially produced space, constituted by economic, political, cultural, and community relations, these policies seek to overcome fragmented sectoral interventions through coordination among different areas of government, such as public security, social assistance, health, education, culture, and labor. This perspective favors broader access to rights, the strengthening of social protection networks, and the promotion of territorial development.

It is in this setting that the Territories for Peace Program (Programa Territórios pela Paz, TerPaz) is situated: an intersectoral public policy implemented by the Government of the State of Pará with the aim of promoting citizen security and reducing social vulnerabilities in priority territories. The program is grounded in the integration of public policies and in the expansion of the State's presence through the establishment of the Usinas da Paz (UsiPaz), public facilities designed to provide social, educational, sports, cultural, and citizenship services in a coordinated manner.

Among the different actors involved in implementing TerPaz actions, the significant participation of women stands out, whether as professionals responsible for carrying out public policies, as community leaders, or as users of the services offered. Although administrative records show high female participation in the activities developed by the program, understanding the meaning of this presence requires going beyond the quantitative dimension and also considering the forms of action described in institutional documents and discussed in the literature on gender, public policy, and territorial development.

From this perspective, women's protagonism is understood in this study as an analytical category related to women's role in the processes of implementation, mediation, and strengthening of social protection networks in the territories, and not merely to their greater share among the program's users. This approach allows a more comprehensive analysis of women's contributions to the implementation of territorialized public policies, avoiding inferences based exclusively on quantitative indicators.

Against this background, the study sought to answer the following research question: how do women's actions within the Territories for Peace Program contribute to territorial development, to the strengthening of social protection networks, and to the implementation of public policies in the territories served?

The general objective was to analyze how women's actions in the Territories for Peace Program contribute to territorial development, to the strengthening of social protection networks, and to the implementation of public policies in the territories served.

To achieve this objective, the following specific objectives were defined: (i) to contextualize the TerPaz Program as an integrated territorial public policy; (ii) to identify the forms of women's action in the implementation of the actions developed by the program; (iii) to analyze the administrative records and institutional documents concerning the profile of the services provided and female participation; and (iv) to discuss the contributions and limits of women's actions for territorial development and for the implementation of public policies.

The article is structured in six sections, including this introduction, in addition to the references. The second presents the theoretical framework, addressing the concepts of territory, public policy, territorial development, and gender. The third describes the methodological procedures adopted. The fourth contextualizes the TerPaz Program, highlighting its objectives and lines of action. The fifth presents the results of the analysis of documents and administrative records concerning women's actions in the program and discusses them in light of the theoretical framework. Finally, the sixth section presents the concluding remarks, summarizing the main findings, the limitations of the study, and the recommendations for future research and for the improvement of territorialized public policies.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 THE INTERSECTION OF TERRITORY, PUBLIC POLICIES, AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

Territory is a central analytical category for understanding public policies and development processes, insofar as it expresses not only a physical-administrative delimitation but also a social construction historically produced through power relations, social practices, and the differentiated uses of space. According to Raffestin (1993), territory is the result of the action of social actors upon space, taking shape as an expression of domination, appropriation, and political mediation.

In this sense, "territory is formed from space; it is the result of an action carried out by a syntagmatic actor" (Raffestin, 1993, p. 143, our translation), which highlights its relational and political character. From this perspective, territory materializes conflicts, disputes, and forms of cooperation, reflecting the balance of forces that structures society at a given historical moment.

Santos (1999) deepens this analysis by introducing the notion of used territory, understood as the lived and socially appropriated space in which systems of objects and systems of actions are articulated. For the author, territory corresponds to "the ground plus identity" (Santos, 2000, p. 96, our translation) and is inseparable from everyday practices, from economic, political, and cultural relations, and from the forms of reproduction of social life. This conception makes it possible to understand that public policies do not affect space homogeneously; rather, they produce differentiated effects according to territorial dynamics, the actors involved, and the existing infrastructure.

The organization of territory nevertheless reflects the structural inequalities of capitalist development, characterized by selective investment processes, concentration of resources, and the production of regional and intra-urban asymmetries. Corrêa (2003) stresses that geographic space results from historical processes that privilege certain places to the detriment of others, reinforcing socio-spatial inequalities. As a result, territorial development occurs in an uneven and combined manner, conditioned by political, economic, and institutional decisions that define where, how, and for whom public policies materialize.

It is in this context that the State assumes a central role as mediator of territorial inequalities through the formulation and implementation of public policies. Such policies can be understood as the set of actions, programs, and decisions adopted by the State to respond to social demands and to intervene in economic, social, and territorial reality (Souza, 2006).

Drawing on the conceptions of various authors, it is possible to understand more specifically what public policy means. For Dye (1984, p. 1), public policy is "whatever governments choose to do or not to do," which highlights its selective and political character. In the view of Peters (1986) and Höfling (2001), these actions directly influence citizens' lives and may either reproduce or mitigate social and territorial inequalities.

When guided by a territorialized and intersectoral approach, public policies take on a structuring character, as they act continuously on the population's living conditions and on the organization of space. Unlike one-off or compensatory actions, structuring public policies shape the social and institutional infrastructure of territories, creating lasting foundations for social and territorial development. This infrastructure comprises the availability of facilities and services in the areas of health, education,

social assistance, culture, mobility, labor, and security, which are fundamental for expanding access to rights and strengthening social protection networks.

Santos (2006) emphasizes that infrastructures are not neutral but selective, resulting from political choices that favor certain social groups and territories. Thus, the establishment of public facilities redefines flows, centralities, and spatial hierarchies and may foster processes of territorial integration when guided by criteria of equity and social justice (Corrêa, 1997). In this sense, the qualified presence of the State in the territory is a fundamental element for reducing socio-spatial inequalities and promoting territorial development.

Citizen security enters this debate as a dimension inseparable from territorial development, as it combines actions of violence prevention, social protection, and the promotion of rights. Unlike repressive approaches centered exclusively on penal control, citizen security presupposes the integrated action of the State in the territories, recognizing the multicausality of violence and the centrality of social policies in reducing it. According to Waiselfisz (2015), the decline in violence rates is associated with expanded access to rights, the continuous presence of the State, and the strengthening of community networks.

Understanding territory as a lived and politically produced space therefore makes it possible to recognize that territorial development is not reducible to economic growth; it also involves guaranteeing rights, expanding social capabilities, and strengthening community bonds. Territorialized public policies, by integrating different sectors and recognizing local specificities, may thus become strategic instruments for promoting citizen security and for building fairer, more inclusive, and socially sustainable territories, under the logic of human rights.

2.2 PROTAGONISM AND PARTICIPATION IN THEIR DIFFERENT EXPRESSIONS IN TERRITORIAL PUBLIC POLICIES

The analysis of territorial public policies, especially those guided by the perspective of citizen security and social development, requires a conceptual distinction between participation, protagonism, and their different forms of expression in the territory. Although these terms are often used interchangeably in institutional discourse, they express distinct levels of agency, decision-making power, and capacity for social transformation, especially when analyzed in light of the structural inequalities and gender relations that cut across territories.

Participation refers, in general terms, to the involvement of individuals in actions, programs, or institutional spaces promoted by the State. It is a concept associated with presence and inclusion in previously structured initiatives, whose objectives and limits are institutionally defined. Gohn (2011, p. 33) observes that participation can take different formats, from informative and consultative mechanisms to deliberative bodies, but does not always guarantee effective influence on decision-making processes. Thus, participation in itself does not imply a redistribution of power or a transformation of the structures that produce inequalities.

In territorial contexts marked by social, economic, and symbolic asymmetries, participation tends to take on an instrumental character, functioning as a strategy for legitimizing State actions. According to Farah (2004), the incorporation of participation into public policies does not always translate into substantive democratization and may coexist with centralizing and exclusionary practices. In such cases, participation is limited to the execution or validation of decisions already made, without altering the foundations of public policy.

Protagonism, in turn, presupposes a higher level of social and political agency. Unlike participation, protagonism implies the active, intentional, and strategic action of individuals in defining, conducting, and giving new meaning to collective actions. The protagonist does not merely take part in a policy but influences its course, mobilizes resources, brings actors together, and produces meanings for public action in the territory. It is, therefore, a category that refers to individuals' capacity for transformative action within public policies and territorial dynamics.

In the sphere of territorial public policies, protagonism manifests itself in different ways, and a distinction can be drawn between institutionalized protagonism and community protagonism. Institutionalized protagonism refers to the action of individuals within the formal structures of the State, when they take on technical, administrative, or management functions in the implementation of public policies. This protagonism is institutionally recognized and regulated, operating within normative frameworks and organizational hierarchies. A significant female presence is observed in this field, especially in areas related to care, social mediation, and social protection.

However, as Biroli (2018, p. 78) warns, the increased presence of women in public policies does not automatically guarantee a redistribution of decision-making power and may reinforce the tendency to hold women responsible for managing social vulnerabilities. Thus, women's institutionalized protagonism may coexist with processes of overload, precarization, and naturalization of care work, especially in peripheral territories.

Community protagonism, in turn, emerges from everyday practices, solidarity networks, and forms of social organization built within the territories. It is a protagonism anchored in situated knowledge and lived experiences, frequently exercised by women. According to Federici (2019, p. 42, our translation), "women have historically been responsible for the reproduction of life," playing a central role in sustaining communities, even though this work remains invisible or undervalued.

In the territorial context, women's community protagonism is expressed in the organization of care networks, in conflict mediation, in the liaison between the State and the community, and in the production of collective responses to social vulnerabilities. Although fundamental to the effectiveness of public policies, this protagonism tends to be appropriated or instrumentalized by the State without due political recognition and without a corresponding redistribution of resources and power.

The distinction between participation, institutionalized protagonism, and community protagonism shows that women's protagonism in territorial public policies is neither homogeneous nor free of contradictions. According to Scott (1995), gender is a useful category of analysis precisely because it makes it possible to understand how power relations are structured and reproduced in institutions and territories. Recognizing women's protagonism therefore implies problematizing both its transformative potential and the limits imposed by institutional structures and gender inequalities.

Understanding the different expressions of protagonism in territorial public policies is central to a critical analysis of State action in the territories. This distinction makes it possible to recognize the strategic role of women in mediating, implementing, and sustaining public policies without naturalizing their overload or reducing their action to a functional resource of the State. By incorporating this reading, it therefore becomes possible to advance in the construction of territorialized public policies that are more equitable, sensitive to gender relations, and effectively committed to transforming social and territorial inequalities.

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This study adopted a qualitative approach on the understanding that the analysis of territorialized public policies and of women's actions within TerPaz requires the interpretation of institutional processes, social practices, and territorial dynamics that cannot be grasped exclusively through quantitative indicators. From this perspective, the study sought to analyze how the institutional documents, the administrative records, and participant observation contributed to understanding women's actions in the implementation of the actions developed by the program.

As for the technical procedures, this is a bibliographic and documentary study combined with participant observation, of a descriptive and analytical nature. The bibliographic research drew on classic and contemporary works on territory, public policy, territorial development, citizen security, and gender studies, which make up the theoretical framework that guided the interpretation of the data. The documentary research focused on the analysis of official documents related to TerPaz, making it possible to examine its institutional structure, guidelines, implementation strategies, and information on the services provided at the UsiPaz.

Participant observation was a complementary strategy for producing qualitative data. The author took part in the process of designing, structuring, and initially implementing TerPaz, working in the coordination of actions during its rollout phase. This experience made it possible to systematically follow the intersectoral planning, the coordination among the agencies involved, and the community mobilization strategies developed in the territories served. The observations produced during this process helped to contextualize the interpretation of the institutional

documents and administrative records, making it possible to understand aspects of the program's operating dynamics that would not be fully grasped through documentary analysis alone.

The documentary corpus consisted of 11 (eleven) institutional documents produced between 2019 and 2025, including state legislation, institutional documents of the program, and official management reports. The following were analyzed: State Law No. 9,045 of April 29, 2020, which established the Strategic State Secretariat for the Articulation of Citizenship (Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania, SEAC); the institutional documents of the Territories for Peace Program (TerPaz); the SEAC Management Reports for the years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025; and the Management Report of the Territories for Peace Program prepared by the State Secretariat for Public Security and Social Defense (Secretaria de Estado de Segurança Pública e Defesa Social, SEGUP) for the year 2019.

As an inclusion criterion, the study considered official documents produced by the agencies responsible for coordinating and executing the program that contained information on its implementation, institutional organization, profile of services provided, actions developed, and administrative records related to the objectives of this research. Duplicate documents, preliminary versions, materials without institutional validation, and documents that did not contain information pertinent to the object under investigation were excluded.

The administrative records were analyzed in aggregate form, preserving the confidentiality of individual information. Initially, the data were checked, duplicate records were eliminated, the available information was standardized, and the consistency of the records was verified. Incomplete information was retained when it did not compromise the descriptive analysis of the indicators, and this limitation was taken into account in the interpretation of the results.

Data analysis was carried out using the Content Analysis technique, as proposed by Bardin (2016), in three stages. The first corresponded to pre-analysis, comprising the organization of the documentary corpus and of the records from participant observation, as well as an exploratory reading of the selected materials. In the second stage, the material was explored through thematic coding and the grouping of information according to previously defined analytical categories. In the third stage, the results were treated, inferred, and interpreted, bringing together the documentary

evidence, the administrative records, the observations made, and the theoretical framework adopted.

The analytical categories used were: (i) territorialized public policies; (ii) women's action and protagonism; (iii) territorial development; (iv) citizen security; and (v) social protection networks. Coding was performed manually, without the use of specific software, prioritizing the identification of recurring patterns in the institutional documents, in the administrative records, and in the observations made during the program's implementation process.

The administrative records were used for descriptive purposes, through the presentation of absolute and relative frequencies of the services provided by the program. However, the interpretation of the results was not based exclusively on the numerical predominance of women among UsiPaz users, but on the combined reading of the administrative records, the institutional documents, the evidence from participant observation, and the theoretical framework on gender, public policy, and territorial development.

As a matter of methodological rigor, it is acknowledged that the author took part in the process of designing and initially implementing TerPaz. This condition, although it provided extensive knowledge of the institutional context, required additional care to minimize possible interpretive biases. Thus, all analyses were grounded primarily in official documents, administrative records, and specialized scientific literature, and participant observation was used exclusively as a complementary source for contextualizing and interpreting the findings. This strategy sought to ensure greater objectivity, transparency, and reliability of the results presented.

As a limitation, it is acknowledged that the research did not include interviews, focus groups, or other techniques for directly producing data with UsiPaz users and professionals. Thus, although participant observation and the institutional documents made it possible to understand relevant aspects of the program's implementation, future investigations may deepen the understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and strategies developed by women in the territories through qualitative field approaches.

4 THE TERRITORIES FOR PEACE PROGRAM (TERPAZ): CONTEXT OF CREATION, OBJECTIVES, STRUCTURE, AND LINES OF ACTION

TerPaz is part of the reconfiguration of the debate on public security in Brazil, marked by the need to move beyond models historically centered on penal repression and isolated police action. The persistence of high rates of violence in socially vulnerable territories exposed the limits of fragmented, sectoral public policies and reinforced the demand for integrated, territorialized approaches oriented toward the promotion of rights. In this scenario, TerPaz takes shape as a structuring territorial public policy guided by the principles of citizen security, social prevention of violence, and territorial development.

The program's design starts from the recognition of violence as a multidimensional phenomenon, directly associated with structural inequalities, the historical precariousness of social infrastructure, and the fragility of protection networks in peripheral territories. This understanding is close to the perspective of territory as a lived and politically produced space, as discussed by Raffestin (1993) and Santos (1999), in recognizing that the dynamics of violence and vulnerability are not distributed homogeneously but are concentrated in spaces marked by historical processes of social and territorial exclusion.

The mission of TerPaz is to act directly in these territories, strengthening the qualified presence of the State through the integrated provision of public policies and the establishment of social facilities. In this sense, the central objective of the program is to reduce violence and improve the population's living conditions by expanding access to rights, promoting social inclusion, and strengthening community bonds. It is a strategy that shifts the axis of public security from repressive control to the promotion of social and institutional capabilities in the territories (Pará, 2019a).

The TerPaz intervention strategy is based on the social prevention of violence, combining actions in the areas of education, health, social assistance, culture, sports, and vocational training. By promoting opportunities and reducing structural vulnerabilities, the program seeks to address social factors that directly affect the reproduction of violence. This approach is in dialogue with national and international experiences in citizen security, adapted to the local reality, as opposed to exclusively punitive models. The notion of "territories of social decohesion" guides the program's

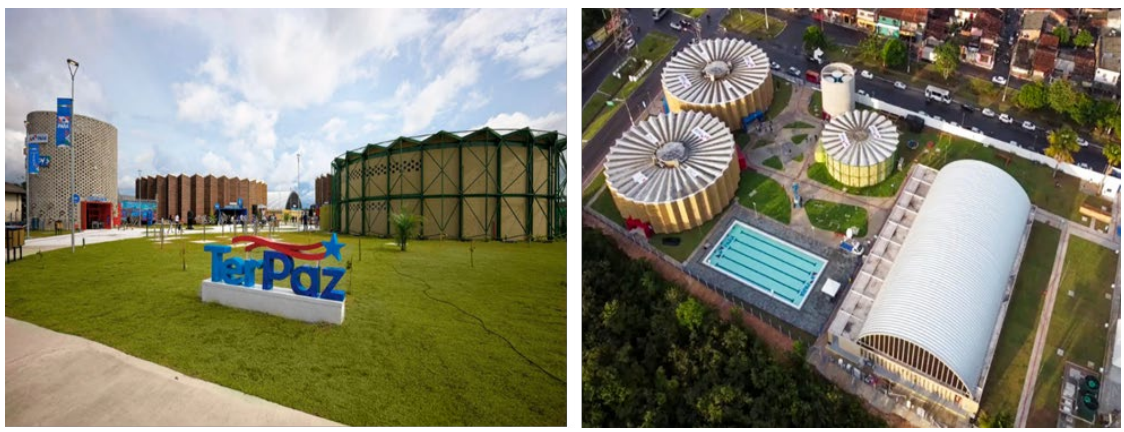
logic of spatial prioritization, recognizing the concentration of vulnerabilities and directing State resources more equitably.

Legally instituted by Decree No. 141 of June 10, 2019, TerPaz establishes the Policy for Social Inclusion and Violence Reduction in the State of Pará and is structured on principles such as the territorialization of actions, intersectorality, social participation, and the centrality of human rights, reaffirming territory as a strategic space for State intervention.

The territories in which TerPaz operates are defined on the basis of indicators of social vulnerability and violence, prioritizing areas historically neglected by public authorities. By concentrating efforts in these spaces, the program seeks to reduce territorial inequalities and reconfigure local social and institutional dynamics, strengthening social infrastructure and expanding access to public policies.

The institutional structure of TerPaz is organized according to an intersectoral logic, involving different government agencies and public policies. This coordination allows actions and resources to converge, favoring more integrated responses to territorial demands. In this arrangement, the UsiPaz, illustrated in Figure 1, are strategic public facilities that materialize the continuous and coordinated presence of the State in the territories. By concentrating services and activities in a single space, the UsiPaz strengthen social protection networks, expand access to rights, and redefine the uses and meanings of the territory.

Figure 1 | Usinas da Paz in Cabanagem (Belém) and Icuí (Ananindeua)



Source: Agência Pará (2025).

The lines of action of TerPaz comprise initiatives for prevention, social protection, and the promotion of rights, based on the understanding that citizen security depends on expanding social opportunities and strengthening community networks. Preventive actions, aimed especially at young people, are linked to social protection actions directed at groups in situations of greater vulnerability, particularly women, children, and adolescents. Actions to promote rights reinforce access to public services and encourage social participation, consolidating bonds between the State and the community.

TerPaz thus takes shape as a territorialized public policy that puts into practice the theoretical assumptions discussed above by bringing together territory, public policy, citizen security, and territorial development, creating the institutional conditions for the action of the social actors who sustain the policy and make it effective.

4.1 IMPACTS OF WOMEN'S PROTAGONISM IN THE TERRITORIES SERVED BY TERPAZ

In the context of TerPaz, women's protagonism emerges as a central element for the effectiveness of territorial actions, producing significant impacts on both the social dynamics and the institutional dimension of the territories served. Women's action goes beyond mere participation in public policies and constitutes an active practice of mediating, coordinating, and sustaining State actions in everyday territorial life. This centrality reveals that the functioning of territorialized public policies is deeply tied to the forms of social organization and the care networks historically built by women.

One of the most relevant impacts of women's protagonism concerns the strengthening of social capital in the territories, understood as the set of relations of trust, cooperation, and solidarity that sustain social cohesion and collective action. By mobilizing material and symbolic resources, women expand the community's capacity to confront social vulnerabilities, contributing to the building of bonds among families, social groups, and public institutions. This process is of fundamental importance for strengthening community networks and creates more favorable conditions for implementing public policies oriented toward prevention, social protection, and the promotion of rights.

Women's protagonism is also decisively expressed in the expansion of access to the public services offered by TerPaz. The active presence of women in mediating between the State and the community

favors the circulation of information, the identification of historically repressed demands, and the referral of individuals and families to the services available at the UsiPaz. This action contributes significantly to reducing symbolic, institutional, and territorial barriers to accessing public policies, especially for groups in situations of greater vulnerability, such as women experiencing violence, children, adolescents, older adults, and persons with disabilities.

The centrality of women within TerPaz directly affects the processes of violence prevention in the territories, since, by organizing networks of care, support, and social protection, they act strategically in the early identification of risk situations and in the construction of collective and integrated responses to the multiple expressions of violence. This action is consistent with the conception of citizen security that underpins the program, as it shifts the focus from repression to social prevention, community strengthening, and the guarantee of rights.

Women's protagonism also contributes substantially to giving new meaning to the uses of the territory. The everyday presence of women in TerPaz actions transforms public facilities into spaces of coexistence, belonging, and the production of social bonds, expanding their function beyond the provision of services. The UsiPaz come to be appropriated as community reference spaces that bring together practices of care, training, leisure, and social mobilization, redefining the relationship between the State and the territory.

It should be stressed that this protagonism is not free of contradictions. The centrality of women in mediating territorial public policies simultaneously reveals their capacity for agency and the persistence of gender inequalities that tend to hold them responsible for managing social vulnerabilities. Thus, although women's protagonism enhances the impacts of TerPaz, it also highlights the need for territorialized public policies to incorporate the gender perspective critically, avoiding the naturalization of women's overload and promoting the redistribution of responsibilities, resources, and decision-making power.

The impacts of women's protagonism in the territory are thus not limited to the immediate results of TerPaz actions but bear on the very configuration of social, institutional, and territorial relations. By sustaining, mediating, and giving new meaning to public policies in everyday life, women therefore play a structuring role in consolidating citizen security and in promoting a more inclusive, equitable, and socially oriented model of territorial development.

5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of TerPaz administrative records for the period from 2022 to 2025 made it possible to characterize the profile of UsiPaz users by sex and age group. These indicators were analyzed together with the institutional documents produced by SEAC and with the evidence from participant observation, making it possible to understand not only the profile of the population served but also elements that help to interpret women's actions in the implementation of territorialized public policies.

Administrative records are an important instrument for monitoring the actions developed by the program, making it possible to identify patterns of service use and to follow the evolution of the user profile throughout the expansion of the UsiPaz. However, as discussed in the methodology, such records are predominantly descriptive in nature and, for this reason, were interpreted in conjunction with the institutional documents, participant observation, and the theoretical framework adopted in this research.

Although the Territories for Peace Program was launched in 2019 and the first UsiPaz was inaugurated in 2021, the computerized system for monitoring, recording, and consolidating administrative data began operating in a structured manner only in 2022. The historical series analyzed in this study therefore begins in that year, when systematized, standardized, and comparable information on the user profile and on the services provided at the UsiPaz became available. Thus, the time frame adopted does not derive from the start of the program's activities but from the availability of a structured database capable of lending greater consistency and reliability to the analyses.

Table 1 presents the distribution of UsiPaz users by sex, with absolute numbers and the respective proportions for the period analyzed.

Table 1 | Distribution of Usinas da Paz users by sex (2022–2025)

Sex	2022 (n)	%	2023 (n)	%	2024 (n)	%	2025 (n)	%
Female	21,068	62.11	51,090	61.87	50,153	60.71	93,070	60.69
Male	12,854	37.89	31,488	38.13	32,451	39.29	60,292	39.31
Total	**33,922**	**100.00**	**82,578**	**100.00**	**82,604**	**100.00**	153,362	100.00

Source: SAP BO System – Usina da Paz Universe (2025).

As shown in Table 1, the administrative records indicate that, among the 33,922 users registered in 2022, 21,068 were women (62.11%) and 12,854 were men (37.89%). In 2023, of the 82,578 users registered, 51,090 (61.87%) corresponded to women, while 31,488 (38.13%) were men. In 2024, 82,604 users were registered, of which 50,153 were women (60.71%) and 32,451 were men (39.29%). In 2025, the total number of users reached 153,362 records, of which 93,070 (60.69%) were women and 60,292 (39.31%) were men.

The stability of these indicators shows that women consistently constituted the main group served by the UsiPaz throughout the period analyzed, maintaining a share above 60% in every year of the historical series. These results reveal that the actions developed by TerPaz predominantly reach women living in territories characterized by high levels of social vulnerability, reinforcing the relevance of these public facilities for expanding access to social policies and to the services offered by the State.

However, as discussed by Gohn (2011), participation and protagonism are distinct analytical categories. The female predominance identified in the administrative records characterizes the profile of UsiPaz users but does not, in itself, allow the conclusion that there is women's protagonism in the implementation of the public policy. The administrative records show who uses the services, whereas understanding protagonism requires considering the forms of action developed by women in the everyday dynamics of the territories.

This interpretation is consistent with Farah (2004), according to whom participation in public policies may be restricted to individuals' access to the services made available by the State, without necessarily implying influence over their implementation. In the case of TerPaz, however, the institutional documents and participant observation show that many women perform functions of community mobilization, organization of collective activities, mediation between families and public services, and strengthening of local social protection networks, indicating a role that goes beyond that of service users.

From a territorial perspective, the results are also consistent with Raffestin (1993), who understands territory as the product of the relations established among social actors. In this sense, the UsiPaz cease to be merely public facilities for service delivery and become spaces of coexistence,

social interaction, and the strengthening of community relations. This understanding is reinforced by Santos (1999), for whom used territory corresponds to the space appropriated by individuals through their everyday practices, giving meaning to the public policies implemented at the local level.

In addition, Haesbaert (2004) stresses that territories are permanently produced and given new meaning by the social practices of different actors. Thus, the high female participation observed in Table 1 acquires greater meaning when read together with the documentary evidence and the observations made during the program's implementation, which record women's role in organizing UsiPaz activities, in mediating between the community and the State, and in mobilizing local social protection networks. The integrated analysis of the administrative records, the institutional documents, and participant observation therefore makes it possible to understand that female predominance is an important element for interpreting the territorial dynamics of the program, although it cannot, in itself, be regarded as evidence of women's protagonism.

The female predominance identified in Table 1 represents only one dimension of the profile of UsiPaz users. To understand more fully who accesses the services offered by the program, it is also necessary to analyze the age distribution of the population served. This analysis makes it possible to identify the groups that make the greatest use of the public facilities and to understand how the actions developed by TerPaz reach different stages of the life cycle, highlighting the integrated and intersectoral character of the public policy. Table 2 presents this distribution for the period from 2022 to 2025.

Table 2 | Distribution of Usinas da Paz users by age group (2022–2025)

Age (years)	2022 (n)	%	2023 (n)	%	2024 (n)	%	2025 (n)	%
Up to 14	11,474	33.82	17,440	21.12	15,199	18.40	31,799	20.73
15 to 29	10,505	30.97	20,941	25.36	20,992	25.41	37,697	24.58
30 to 59	8,612	25.39	29,629	35.88	33,591	40.67	62,012	40.44
60 or older	3,331	9.82	14,568	17.64	12,822	15.52	21,854	14.25
Total	**33,922**	**100.00**	**82,578**	100.00	82,604	100.00	153,362	100.00

Source: SAP BO System – Usina da Paz Universe (2025).

The age distribution of users shows important changes over the historical series. In 2022, of the 33,922 users registered, 11,474 (33.82%) were in the age group of up to 14 years, followed by users aged 15 to 29, with 10,505 records (30.97%). The population aged 30 to 59 accounted for 8,612 users (25.39%), while individuals aged 60 or older totaled 3,331 records (9.82%).

From 2023 onward, a gradual change in this profile is observed. Among the 82,578 users registered, the 30-to-59 age group came to represent 29,629 people (35.88%), becoming the predominant group. This trend continued in 2024, when 33,591 users (40.67%) belonged to this age group, and in 2025, with 62,012 records (40.44%), consolidating the predominance of the economically active adult population among UsiPaz users.

On the other hand, there was a proportional reduction in the participation of children and adolescents up to 14 years of age, from 33.82% in 2022 to 20.73% in 2025. Although they continue to represent a significant share of users, this relative decrease indicates expanded access to the program by other population segments, especially adults linked to the actions of vocational training, citizenship, social assistance, culture, sports, leisure, and income generation developed by the UsiPaz.

From a public policy perspective, these results reinforce Souza's (2006) understanding that territorialized public policies produce broader impacts when they bring together different areas of government and respond to the specific demands of territories. The increased participation of economically active adults suggests that TerPaz has been expanding its capacity to serve groups directly related to strategies of productive inclusion, strengthening of local capabilities, and promotion of territorial development.

This dynamic is also consistent with Corrêa (2003), who understands spatial organization as the result of the relations established among society, territory, and public policies. The diversification of the age profile of users shows that the UsiPaz have come to perform functions that go beyond meeting the specific demands of particular groups, consolidating themselves as multifunctional public facilities capable of integrating different social policies in a single territory.

From the perspective of Santos (1999), territory corresponds to the space lived and appropriated by social actors in their everyday practices. The growing predominance of adults aged 30 to 59 suggests that the UsiPaz have been incorporated into the daily life of communities as

permanent spaces for access to rights, community coexistence, vocational training, and the strengthening of social networks. This everyday appropriation of public facilities reinforces their function as an instrument for promoting citizenship and reducing territorial inequalities.

At the same time, the continued significant percentages of children, adolescents, and older adults show that the program maintains its intergenerational character, offering services aimed at different stages of the life cycle. This characteristic reinforces the principle of comprehensiveness of territorialized public policies, allowing a single facility to concentrate actions in education, social assistance, culture, sports, leisure, vocational training, and citizenship.

When analyzed together with the institutional documents and the evidence from participant observation, these results indicate that the increased participation of adults is also related to the expansion of actions aimed at vocational training, entrepreneurship, community gardening, the solidarity economy, and the strengthening of community networks promoted by SEAC at the UsiPaz. Notable among these initiatives are the craftswomen's collectives and the community garden, formed out of the training and social activities developed by the program. These groups began to collectively organize the production and sale of their products at fairs and institutional events, expanding opportunities for income generation and strengthening cooperation networks among women in the territories served.

This experience shows that women's action goes beyond the condition of users of public policies, approaching the perspective presented by Federici (2019), according to which the work of care, community organization, and social reproduction is a central element in sustaining collective life. In the context of TerPaz, many women not only access services to meet their own needs but also accompany children, older adults, and other family members, facilitate the community's access to public policies, and contribute to building local networks of solidarity and social protection.

However, as Biroli (2018) argues, high female participation in public policies does not necessarily imply overcoming gender inequalities. In many cases, it reveals that women continue to be held responsible for care activities, community mediation, and the organization of social networks. This reflection is complemented by Scott (1995), who understands gender as an analytical category that brings to light the power relations present in institutions and social processes, making it possible to critically interpret the roles played by men and women in the implementation of public policies.

From this perspective, the women's protagonism identified in this research does not derive exclusively from the numerical predominance of women among UsiPaz users, but from the combined reading of the administrative records, the institutional documents, and participant observation, which show their role in community mobilization, in mediation between the State and society, and in the organization of local social protection networks.

This interpretation is close to the conception of citizen security discussed by Waiselfisz (2015), according to which violence prevention depends on the integration of social policies, the strengthening of community networks, and expanded access to rights. In this sense, the UsiPaz are consolidated as spaces for the integration of public policies that favor territorial development, strengthen social capital, and expand the possibilities for social inclusion in the territories served.

In summary, the joint analysis of Tables 1 and 2 makes it possible to characterize the population served by the UsiPaz as predominantly female and composed mostly of economically active adults. However, these quantitative indicators describe only the profile of users and do not, in themselves, constitute evidence of women's protagonism. The understanding of this protagonism results from the combined reading of the administrative records, the institutional documents, participant observation, and the theoretical framework adopted, making it possible to identify women's contribution to community mobilization, the implementation of territorialized public policies, the strengthening of social protection networks, and the promotion of territorial development and citizen security.

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study analyzed women's actions within TerPaz, seeking to understand their contribution to the implementation of territorialized public policies, to the strengthening of social protection networks, and to territorial development in contexts marked by social vulnerabilities. Based on the combined reading of administrative records, institutional documents, participant observation, and the theoretical framework, it was possible to examine different dimensions of female participation in the UsiPaz, meeting the objective proposed by the research.

The results showed that women consistently constituted the main group served by the program in the period from 2022 to 2025. However, administrative records alone make it possible to characterize only the profile of users and are not sufficient to demonstrate women's protagonism. The interpretation of this protagonism derives from the integrated analysis of the institutional documents, which record women's recurrent role in community mobilization, in mediation between families and public services, in the organization of collective activities, and in the strengthening of local social protection networks, in line with the literature on territory, gender, and public policy.

The findings also show that the UsiPaz have been consolidating themselves as spaces for the integration of public policies aimed at promoting citizenship, social protection, and citizen security. In this context, women's participation proves relevant to the dynamism of these public facilities, helping to expand access to the services offered, strengthen collective vocational training initiatives, encourage income-generating actions, and favor processes of social inclusion in the territories served.

At the same time, the research shows that this action takes place in a context marked by persistent gender inequalities. The concentration of care activities, community mediation, and the coordination of social protection networks among women reveals challenges that go beyond the scope of the program and reflect historical processes related to the sexual division of labor. Thus, recognizing the importance of women's action does not mean naturalizing or reinforcing these responsibilities, but understanding the need for public policies that promote greater equity in the distribution of social, family, and community responsibilities.

As a limitation, it should be noted that the research was based on administrative records, institutional documents, and participant observation, sources that make it possible to understand relevant aspects of the program's implementation but do not directly capture the experiences, perceptions, and strategies of the women involved in the actions developed by the UsiPaz.

From a public policy standpoint, it is recommended that the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of TerPaz be strengthened, with continuous improvement of administrative records, systematic incorporation of gender, race, and territory indicators, and the strengthening of actions aimed at gender and racial literacy to improve the quality of the information produced. It is likewise recommended that initiatives aimed at women's economic autonomy be expanded by encouraging

vocational training, entrepreneurship, the solidarity economy, and the strengthening of productive collectives formed within the UsiPaz, enhancing their contribution to territorial development.

For future research, qualitative studies incorporating interviews, focus groups, and field observation are recommended, in order to deepen the understanding of women's experiences, their forms of community participation, their strategies of social mobilization, and the effects of territorialized policies on the promotion of citizen security and territorial development. Comparative studies across different territories and impact evaluations may also contribute to improving the program and to producing evidence on territorialized public policies.

It is concluded that the TerPaz Program is a relevant experience of territorialized public policy in that it integrates different public services in socially vulnerable territories. The results of this research indicate that the significant female participation, together with the documentary evidence of women's role in community networks, is an important element for understanding the dynamics of the program's implementation and its contribution to strengthening social protection networks and territorial development. However, this interpretation should be understood as the result of the combined reading of administrative records, institutional documents, participant observation, and the theoretical framework, and not exclusively of the quantitative indicators analyzed, which reinforces the importance of integrated approaches to evaluating public policies of this nature.

7 REFERENCES

BARDIN, Laurence. **Análise de conteúdo**. São Paulo: Edições 70, 2016.

BIROLI, Flávia. **Gênero e desigualdades**: limites da democracia no Brasil. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2018.

CORRÊA, Roberto Lobato. **Trajetórias geográficas**. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1997.

CORRÊA, Roberto Lobato. **Região e organização espacial**. 7. ed. São Paulo: Ática, 2003.

DYE, Thomas R. **Understanding public policy**. 5. ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984.

FARAH, Marta Ferreira Santos. Gênero e políticas públicas. **Revista Estudos Feministas**, Florianópolis, v. 12, n. 1, p. 47-71, jan./abr. 2004.

FEDERICI, Silvia. **O ponto zero da revolução**: trabalho doméstico, reprodução e luta feminista. São Paulo: Elefante, 2019.

GOHN, Maria da Glória. **Movimentos sociais na contemporaneidade**. 5. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2011.

HAESBAERT, Rogério. **O mito da desterritorialização**: do "fim dos territórios" à multiterritorialidade. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2004.

HÖFLING, Eloisa de Mattos. Estado e políticas (públicas) sociais. **Cadernos CEDES**, Campinas, v. 21, n. 55, p. 30-41, nov. 2001.

PARÁ. Decreto nº 141, de 10 de junho de 2019. Institui o Programa Territórios pela Paz (TerPaz). **Diário Oficial do Estado do Pará**, Belém, 2019.

PARÁ. Lei nº 9.045, de 29 de abril de 2020. Cria a Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania (SEAC). **Diário Oficial do Estado do Pará**, Belém, 29 abr. 2020.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Programa Territórios pela Paz – TerPaz**. Belém: SEAC, 2019a.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2019**. Belém: SEAC, 2019b.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2020**. Belém: SEAC, 2020.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2021**. Belém: SEAC, 2021.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2022**. Belém: SEAC, 2022.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2023**. Belém: SEAC, 2023.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2024**. Belém: SEAC, 2024.

PARÁ. Secretaria Estratégica de Estado de Articulação da Cidadania. **Relatório de Gestão 2025**. Belém: SEAC, 2025.

PARÁ. Secretaria de Estado de Segurança Pública e Defesa Social. **Programa Territórios pela Paz – TerPaz**: Relatório de Gestão 2019. Belém: SEGUP, 2019c.

PETERS, B. Guy. **American public policy**. Chatham: Chatham House Publishers, 1986.

RAFFESTIN, Claude. **Por uma geografia do poder**. São Paulo: Ática, 1993.

SANTOS, Milton. **A natureza do espaço**: técnica e tempo, razão e emoção. 3. ed. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1999.

SANTOS, Milton. **Por uma outra globalização**: do pensamento único à consciência universal. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2000.

SANTOS, Milton. **O espaço do cidadão**. 7. ed. São Paulo: EdUSP, 2006.

SCOTT, Joan Wallach. Gênero: uma categoria útil de análise histórica. **Educação & Realidade**, Porto Alegre, v. 20, n. 2, p. 71-99, jul./dez. 1995.

SOUZA, Celina. Políticas públicas: uma revisão da literatura. **Sociologias**, Porto Alegre, n. 16, p. 20-45, jul./dez. 2006.

WAISELFISZ, Julio Jacobo. **Mapa da violência 2015**: homicídio de mulheres no Brasil. Brasília: FLACSO Brasil, 2015.

Esta obra está licenciada com uma Licença Creative Commons Atribuição 4.0 Internacional.



fapeti

FUNDAÇÃO DE APOIO À PESQUISA,
TECNOLOGIA E INOVAÇÃO





UNITAU

Universidade de Taubaté