

## BACKGROUND ON BRAZIL

**BRAZIL IS BIG. IT IS THE FIFTH LARGEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD. IT COVERS 3.2M SQ MILES, IS SPREAD OVER THREE TIME ZONES AND HAS A POPULATION OF OVER 208M. DESPITE BEING THE NO.1 COFFEE PRODUCER IN THE WORLD AND HAVING THE LARGEST ECONOMY IN SOUTH AMERICA, BRAZIL ALSO HAS CHALLENGES.**

**Fragile democracy is part of Brazilian life.** From 1964 to 1985 Brazil was under a military dictatorship. Since then only two elected presidents have completed their terms of office. Over the past few years progress has been made to provide stability and to raise many out of poverty, but unfortunately the gap between rich and poor remains very wide.

**Brazil is one of the world's most important environmental powers.** It contains almost 70% of the Amazon rainforest, along with a huge amount of natural resources. Its influence is crucial to discussions and decisions regarding climate change.

**'Predatory development' is the cause of many problems.** The mass exploitation of the rainforest, as well as extensive mining and uncontrolled land grabbing, has led to unsustainable development in many areas.

**The building of new cities, like Ariquemes (pop.100k) in the north-west of Brazil, was to accommodate workers and their families.** Unfortunately, these new, quickly populated cities created societies without normal community and family structures. This has led to higher than average levels of violence and crime, particularly against women.

## HOW CAN I HELP?

### LEARN

Please use the resources provided by World Development, available online at [www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development). Find out more and learn how beautiful it is when women and men work together to bring the hopes they share for their community to fruition, and how the voices of women who have suffered the most can turn that suffering to greater dignity for all.

### PRAY

**Prayer is a vital activity** in the communities where Christian Aid and Tearfund work and partner. Use the information available through this appeal to pray knowledgeably for their work and the people involved.

### GIVE

The 2018 World Development Appeal highlights partner communities in Ariquemes, Brazil. The emphasis is on the long-term challenges and practical action needed for good and sustainable support in dangerous places, with a particular focus on the importance of gender justice. Your giving will enable organisations like CONIC and others to support some of the world's most vulnerable people, building a safe future for them in some of the hardest places in the world to be a woman, and to be poor. Funding supports projects, including their monitoring and ongoing evaluation.

**For further information:**  
World Development, Assembly Buildings, Belfast BT1 6DW  
[www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/world-development)  
Registered Charity in Northern Ireland (NIC104483)  
Registered Charity in the Republic of Ireland (20015695)



**Presbyterian**  
CHURCH IN IRELAND



**Together we are changing some of the world's most dangerous places.**

Support the World Development Appeal to give resilient communities in places like Ariquemes in Brazil a safe and sustainable future.

Working together, serving our neighbours and glorifying God.

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Fabiola and Elineide



**"I FELT SAFE, AND I KNEW THAT MY CHILDREN WOULD BE SAFE TOO..."**



Elineide's sister Eliane



**IN A 2017 SURVEY IN BRAZIL, ALMOST A THIRD OF GIRLS AND WOMEN SAID THAT DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR THEY HAD SUFFERED VIOLENCE, FROM THREATS AND BEATINGS TO ATTEMPTED MURDER.**

**SINCE 1985, OVER 100,000 WOMEN HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES, OFTEN AT THE HANDS OF A HUSBAND, PARTNER OR FAMILY MEMBER.**

Unfortunately, gender-based violence is not unique to Brazil. A product of inequality and an abuse of power and privilege, it is prevalent in many countries around the world.

Following years of government instability and uncontrolled development, Brazil is still struggling to deal with the issue. "Violence against women is still a huge, huge problem," says Jose Maria, Police Commissioner in Ariquemes.

**In just one example of abuse experienced, a former resident of the safe house says: "When I got pregnant the aggression started being more violent, more often, and many times I thought that I would lose the child. He wanted me to take medicine to have an abortion."**

The World Development Appeal 2018 aims to help some of these women as they seek safety and to escape the cycle of violence that has embedded itself in parts of Brazilian life.

**In 2010 the local government of Ariquemes recognised that it had a problem.** Violence against women had reached epidemic levels, it was out of control. A meeting was called by the mayor, and local civic leaders, churches and others came together to seek a way to stop this evolving tragedy. It was the local church that took the lead, and with the help of the surrounding community, 15 days later the Casa Noeli safe house opened its doors.

**Eight years on and the Casa Noeli dos Santos safe house has now taken in over 1500 abused women.** Few have the resources or family support to help themselves or their children and many are poorly educated.

When former resident, Fabiola (33), was in the safe house, her mother moved Fabiola's abusive ex-husband in with her. "She was the type of woman who thought that once I had gotten married then I should stay married, because I had children... even though he assaulted me," Fabiola says. Fabiola suffered abuse for over five years, her ex-husband even burnt her clothes and belongings. But Fabiola found something different at Casa Noeli: "I felt safe here and I knew that my children would be safe too." Although Fabiola has had to deal with so much trauma, her faith has remained secure: "God won't let us down, he never does. Faith is everything, so we need to keep on trusting."

**Today, the driving force behind the safe house is Rev Elineide Ferreira.** Elineide's family has their own story of violence to tell. Her sister Eliane was stabbed seven times by her ex-husband nearly 20 years ago. Thankfully, Eliane survived and now works alongside Elineide in the safe house.

When a women goes to the police to seek help, Elineide (32) is usually the first to get called – anytime, night or day, she can be contacted to go and pick up a victim, more often than not, with children. The safe house also acts as a gateway to other services, working closely with the local legal system and educational authorities to help those staying there. "Sometimes their stay can be very short, for some just one night. In some more complex cases they can stay for up to three months," explains Elineide.

**The Christian Council of Churches in Brazil (CONIC) has been supporting the safe house since 2011.** Stressing the need for outside support, a CONIC representative says, "the safe house is very important, and the support of people like you is fundamental for the work to continue. I've seen the joy of the women there and also of Elineide herself. This work can be very lonely and working with violence can be very hard. Your support is fundamental, please do support the safe house."