

Modern Slavery Research Center
BRICS Policy Center – PUC-Rio

Social Determinants of Vulnerability to Labour Exploitation and Modern Slavery in Rio de Janeiro:

The case of Morro da Providencia



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Executive Summary:

In the report, public policy, historical aspects, culture, and socioeconomic indicators helped to unveil what is behind the “dominant discourse of the problem of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro”. The analysis of the structural and conjunctural factors framed the discussion on the social determinants of vulnerability to labour exploitation and modern slavery in the Morro da Providencia, the first favela of the city of Rio de Janeiro. However, much has been learned in the last months of immersion in numbers, interviews, visits and talks to leaderships and residents of the Morro da Providencia, posing some challenges that arose from the research process:

1. What are the social determinants of vulnerability to slavery and labour exploitation amongst the residents of favelas in the city of Rio de Janeiro?
2. Why there are no rescued workers from modern slavery amongst the Morro da Providencia’s residents?
3. Are there any social determinant relevant to prevent modern slavery that can be perceived in the Morro da Providencia?

Given the design of the investigation and the fact that it is still a work in progress, the answers are more reflections on venues to be developed in further investigation and research.

- a.* in fact, there is no direct/necessary connection between favelas and modern slavery, particularly from the Brazilian antislavery laws concept, ordinances and public policies; and
- b.* the study has not been able to apprehend and precisely highlight slavery in *this favela* so far.

As for the first situation of non-automatic relationship between favela and slavery, we believe that it is essential to elaborate competing and complementary hypotheses that explain these apparently “counterintuitive” findings based on social determinants. After all, why are *favela inhabitants*, despite being *more vulnerable*, *not usually rescued* from slave-like working conditions?

Considering the inexpressive occurrence of modern slavery in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, and more specifically in Morro da Providencia, it is necessary to consider the hypothesis of the local agency. It manifests itself in the historical and cultural resilience of this favela, besides other aspects that were explored in the report, from public policy scope limits to the existence of networks of help. The residents of favelas like Morro da Providencia are poor, but they know each other, develop bonds, build social and political organizations, and display social cohesion despite conflicts and other issues. Also, we are talking about a community embedded in the *economic centre* of the *second-largest city in the country*. It is not the poorest and most abandoned part of Rio de Janeiro city. This geographic insertion, we believe, favours the emergence and maintenance of social ties and networks; it also provides access to rights and public policies offered by the State.

Now, as to the second question (i.e. that the study did not have access to adequate evidence), several issues seem to be relevant and were discussed in this study. These show the *complexity and social richness* of favelas, as well as the theoretical, legal and infrastructural limitations that residents, researchers, policy makers and bureaucrats deal when studying and fighting modern slavery in Brazil, particularly in urban settings of *global cities*.

Brazilian anti-slavery laws were designed looking at the rural areas, urban modern slavery has not deserved a proper attention from labour inspections nor from the academy and some reasons for that are explored in the report. After all Brazil is the largest exporter of meat in the world and in this sector most rescues of contemporary slavery are concentrated.

Thus, this report stresses an *intersectional analysis* to explore the *social determinants of vulnerability to labour exploitation and modern slavery* in the city and urban sites. Gender, race, state, migration, stigma, work, poverty and COVID 19, alone may not say much but combined with the voice of all stakeholders, including the favelados, open venues to urgent changes. Finally, this report, albeit modestly, aimed to arouse the interest of academic researchers and "cariocas" from the wealthiest quarters, suburbs and favelas to the main characteristics of this city and peoples, *transforming* what was historically considered a *"problem"* to, in contrast, a *solution*.

Acronyms:

BB - Banco do Brasil [Bank of Brazil]
BM - Banco Mundial [World Bank]
CIA - Agência Central de Inteligência [Central Intelligence Agency]
CONATRAE - Comissão Nacional para Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo [Antislavery National Commission]
CPT - Comissão Pastoral da Terra [Pastoral Land Commission]
CRAS - Centro de Referência em Assistência Social [Social Assistance Reference Center]
DETRAE - Divisão de Fiscalização para Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo [Division of Inspection for the Eradication of Slavery]
DPU - Defensoria Pública da União [Public Defenders Office]
GSI - Índice Global da Escravidão [Global Index Slavery]
IDEB - Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica [Basic Education Development Indicator]
IBGE - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística - IBGE [Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics]
ILO - Organização Internacional do Trabalho [International Labour Organization]
I-MiGRa - Instituto Migração, Gênero e Raça
InPACTO - Instituto Pacto Nacional pela Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo [National Pact Institute for the Eradication of Modern Slavery]
IPP - Instituto Pereira Passos [Pereira Passos Institute]
MC - Ministério da Cidadania [Ministry of Citizenship]
MD - Ministério da Defesa [Ministry of the Defense]
MDS - Ministério de Desenvolvimento Social [Ministry of Social Development]
ME - Ministério da Economia [Ministry of Economy]
MPT - Ministério Público do Trabalho [Labour Prosecutors Office]
PAC - Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento [Growth Acceleration Program]
PAI - Projeto Ação Integrada [Integrated Action Project]
PNUD - Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento [United Nations Development Program]
SEDSDH - Secretaria Estadual de Desenvolvimento Social e Direitos Humanos do Governo do Rio de Janeiro [Social Development and Human Rights Secretariat of the state of Rio de Janeiro]
Smartlab - Observatório da Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo e Tráfico de Pessoas [Antislavery and anti-trafficking in Persons Observatory]
SRTE - Superintendência Regional do Trabalho e Emprego [Regional Superintendence of Labour and Employment]
SUAS - Sistema Único de Assistência Social [Unified System of Social Assistance]

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with the inputs of

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Acknowledgements

This report is a collective effort of an *engaged network* that is interested in creating knowledge in the fields of human rights. It also tries to reflect the demand of favelados for a localized and specific look at their history, culture, ancestry, but also the challenges they face in their daily lives.

Therefore, this document was only possible because it had a wide range of partners, from residents of Morro da Providencia, through governmental and nongovernmental organizations, individuals and academia. The first ones are translated by the participation of the 202 respondents to the questionnaire, and by the *Coletivo Machado de Assis*, responsible for translating our academic restlessness into an accessible dialogue with the residents. We are also grateful for the continuous partnership of several inspiring and resilient women from *Cooperativa Maravilha*, who contribute on a daily basis for the protection and human rights. We would like to thank the Professor (University of Essex) *Matthias Assunção*, who didactically opened our eyes to the complexity of the history of Morro da Providencia, making it easier for us to have a holistic view of the region.

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We hope to have been able to express all your disquiet, and that this report will be, in the near future, an instrument for debates on the guarantee of human rights for workers who may be vulnerable to modern slavery in favelas.



Image: Bruno Martins

1. Introduction:

Favelas in the city of Rio de Janeiro have been a core issue in the urbanization debates since the beginning of the last century. With an increase of the so-called urban agglomerates in the first quarter of the twentieth century, a plan to solve the “problem of the favela” was created to respond to the threats of dissemination of diseases, with the first reports being commissioned to public health specialists, by the local authorities. Soon after, in 1943, a commission to study the “problem of the favelas”, stressed in its first report the “criminality, marginality, and social disorganization” seen in these areas.

Hidden behind the “problem of the favela” discourse, land speculation interests led to removals in areas where private property coexisted with public land. In the former, high rentals were charged to the residents, and, in the second, precarious housing was allowed for political and economic convenience. Closer to the wealthiest quarters and centre of the city, the favelas’ residents formed reservoirs of cheap work for the industries and wealthiest quarters. Thus, favelas were never invisible, but always conveniently disregarded.

This study focuses on the favelas as areas characterized by lack of public policies, except for social assistance and the police, historically violent and embedded in racism. The continuity of the “problem of the favela”, has been encouraged by hidden economic and political interests but coexists with transformations. These transformations were led mainly by the women and work of a significant number of local organizations, linking favelas to other communities in the suburbs and groups in the wealthiest quarters. With the sacrifice of many, favelas residents are gradually occupying spaces in politics and local council, but much must be done and understood to result in concrete transformation.

Data and qualitative analysis on socioeconomic indicators are relevant to the construction of efficient antislavery public policies, however taken alone they are not enough to explain the persistence and normalization of labour exploitation in the city and territories. Nor income or gender explain submission to slavery if, for example, migration or level of education numbers are disregarded locally. Favelas are marked by heterogeneity, different socioeconomic classes, and origins, demanding an intersectional analysis to map levels of vulnerability.

The Morro da Providencia was chosen as case study for its links with history, waves of migrations, culture, colonial slavery, modernization, and decadence of the city’s port. Undoubtedly, colonial slavery has printed some of the main features seen in the port zone today, but data, literature and interviews for this study does not point to a direct relationship between colonial and modern slavery. The ideals of modernity and positivism in the advent of the Republic, neoliberalism in the end of twenty century, added to recent transformations of capitalism impacting work relations, all framed by social stratification theories, as well as studies of inter-and intra-generational mobility, help to predict the “destiny” of specific social groups (Hout, 2015).

Whereas there is a social perception of poverty and socioeconomic vulnerabilities in these territories, there is a strong culture that strengthens residents of favela. This complex context showed that even though there is an environment that could reproduce patterns of modern slavery, there are also several variables that justify the lack of modern slavery in the favelas. Even so, it is undeniable that, while researching socioeconomic profiles of people who could be submitted to several forms of violence, including modern slavery, we came across to the profile of the favelados.

Hence, this relation rose questions towards what the social determinants of vulnerability to slavery and labour exploitation amongst the residents of favelas in the city of Rio de Janeiro are.

Without the ambition of answering such complex questions, the study brings some clues and reflections, aiming to break with the binary discourse of a place of criminals or victims. Along the research, other questions rose to the attention:

1) Why aren't there any rescued from modern slavery amongst the residents of Morro da Providencia?

2) Is there any relevant social determinant to prevent modern slavery that can be perceived in Morro da Providencia? If positive, could it be seen in other favelas?

Granted the complexity of the research, the interviewed agreed that all variables have some relevance, varying impact according to temporal and geographic contexts. Therefore, we started to reflect on whether there is modern slavery on the favelas and/or among the favelados (especially residents of Morro da Providencia). It is fundamental to highlight that Brazil has a solid antislavery public policy that has its own approach, therefore whenever we mention people rescued from modern slaves in Brazil, we are talking about those people who were seen by the policy and possibly removed from a situation analogous to slavery.

When reflecting on which variables are more relevant to expose (or remove) someone to modern slavery, and how do they interact in the lives of people who are vulnerable to this violence, the research came across a perception that favelas are not a plastered environment. They have their own "generative flux" that construct realities based on each context, time and methodological approach (Law, 2004).

The fact that we are dealing with interchangeable variables, suggests that it is impossible to develop a holistic study if we disregard the complexity of the analysed context. Then the purpose becomes an intersectional reflection, with a lens that enables researchers to perceive how multiple layers of violence – structural or contextual – impact on social backgrounds. Therefore, it aims to be less a definitive study and more a debate on neglected social spaces, as well as the inadequacy and stiffening of antislavery public policies to deal with contexts of favelas, its residents and urban setting.

Thus, we reflected on our process of knowledge production about a territory that is so heterogeneous, like the favelas, we could no longer admit, nor sustain, this binary approach. All the variables that will be seen throughout the report interrelate and are co-dependent on each other and on the context, which are not inserted in a static reality. Hence, variables tend to react in multiple ways, varying influence according to context, group, expected result, etc. Therefore, the objective of the process of analysis becomes as important as the result of the research.

The next sections of the report will provide a broader understanding of the current context, including socioeconomic contexts of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, favelas and Morro da Providencia, as well as the history of the construction of contemporary anti-slavery public policies and profile of those rescued by it.

Furthermore, when we start discussing social determinants to modern slavery, we reflect on the profiles of people that could be submitted to a set of violence, including labour exploitation. The end of the report provides more of a contemplative approach on the future of work relationships, and how it might impact on the lives of people in situations of socioeconomic vulnerabilities in the favelas.



Image: Heloisa Gama

2. Methodology:

This research is characterized as a qualitative case study. The case's population is that of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro. The case itself is a favela known as Morro da Providencia. It is, therefore, a single case study. The reasons behind the choice of this favela can be found in the introduction of this report; they include the historical importance of this community as the first Brazilian favela, closely linked to the end of slavery in Brazil and the migration of great masses of vulnerable populations throughout the 20th century.

Mixed research methods were employed (Seawright, 2016), despite its qualitative orientation. Several interviews with technicians, specialists in social assistance and residents of the favela were done. Simultaneously, the research collected secondary data about the population of the favelas of Rio de Janeiro and Morro da Providencia. After preliminary analysis on the datum, we've developed a survey to be answered by the residents of Morro da Providencia and its surrounding areas.

The qualitative approach is justified insofar as this is the most recommended procedure when dealing with research problems, such as discussed in the introduction section. It helps us a) identify the main social determinants of contemporary slavery in the urban context of Rio's favelas, and b) understand how they act on the vulnerability of the residents of these localities. Furthermore, the qualitative case study is recommended for generating explanatory hypotheses, evaluating the internal validity of propositions, and elucidating causal mechanisms (Gerring, 2006, p. 38) among the social determinants arranged at the beginning of the research, as well as those that arose during the investigation. Last but not least, it is an adequate research design for this socially sensitive topic following the lack of robust quantitative data available on victims of modern slavery in global cities.

2.1 Data collection

The research dataset consists of secondary data (documents, studies and statistics), and primary data from in depth interviews and a survey.

- *Documents, studies and statistical data*

The specialized literature on contemporary slavery, the stratification and social inequality of Brazilian socioeconomic relations were reviewed. It covers both modern and historical contexts.

Indicators and quantitative data were used. These were selected to illustrate the socioeconomic context of the favelas in Rio de Janeiro compared to other areas of Rio de Janeiro city. The data comes from the last Brazilian population census, carried out in 2010 by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (*Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística* - IBGE). The 2010 census, although outdated, is the leading data available with a geographic coverage capable of elucidating the socioeconomic conditions of subnormal agglomerates, a concept given to describe social spaces in abnormal conditions, including *favelas*.

Other indicators, specially designed for the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro and generated from IBGE data, were obtained from the databases of Pereira Passos Institute (*Instituto Pereira Passos*, IPP), a research institution of the Government of the State of Rio

de Janeiro. Data were also consulted on the number and characteristics of those rescued from conditions analogous to slavery in the state of Rio de Janeiro over the last twenty six years. Data was provided by the Division of Inspection for the Eradication of Slavery (in Portuguese, *Divisão de Fiscalização para Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo* - DETRAE). The NGO Caritas Arquidiocesana was also important on this data collection because they assist people who were not necessarily rescued by the State, but were in vulnerable conditions to modern slavery¹.

Finally, data on the profile of those assisted by social assistance institutions operating in the central region of Rio de Janeiro, such as data from two Social Assistance Reference Centres (*Centro de Referência em Assistência Social* - CRAS), Dodô da Portela and Ismênia de Lima Martins, also were analysed.

We shall discuss the particularities of both cases in the next sessions.

- *Open and semi-structured interviews*

Due to the COVID-19's pandemic situation, all interviews were conducted online and lasted an average of one and a half hour. As for the criteria for the selection of interviewees, we used Purposeful sampling, i.e., "the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015, p. 96).

More specifically, the purposeful sampling used was snowballing or chain sampling (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). The first interviews aimed at opening up the field of study with specialists, technicians and public servants working at the state level who had experience with vulnerable urban populations. As the interviews progressed and generated feedback, the research was directed towards the actors located in the field, finally reaching the residents of the investigated location.

¹ We shall discuss the particularities of both cases in the next sessions.

Table 1 - Interviews conducted

<i>ID number</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Interview date</i>
1	Public Defender of the Union (Nathalia Von Rondow)	08/03/2021
2	Head of DETRAE (Mauricio Krepsky)	09/03/2021
3	Head of SUAS (Francisco Xavier)	26/03/2021
4	Social activist and cofounder of NGO Som+Eu (Moana Martins)	21/04/2021
5	Governmental Researcher - IPP (Adriana Vial)	10/05/2021
6	Head of CRAS Dodô da Portela (Luciana de Oliveira)	19/05/2021
7	Social assistant at CRAS Dodô da Portela (Jucilene Pedreira)	19/05/2021
8	Researcher, social activist and founder of NGO Machado de Assis (Fernando Ferreira)	31/05/2021
9	Social Assistant at CRAS and focal point at Morro da Providencia (Rosângela de Oliveira)	02/06/2021
10	Social activist and cofounder of NGO Providenciando em Favor da Vida (Raquel Spinelli)	04/06/2021
11	Member of the Integrated Action Project (PAI) and Cáritas Arquidiocesana (Thaiany Motta)	28/07/2021
12	Member/manager of the Integrated Action Project (PAI) and Cáritas Arquidiocesana (Yasmim França)	28/07/2021
13	Head of the Antislavery Program in the Regional Superintendence of Labour and Employment (SRTE) (Marcio Guerra)	29/07/2021

Source: author's elaboration.

Regarding the conduction and script of the interviews, the first half were more open, centred on how the interviewees could help the researchers access data about victims of modern slavery, other social indicators and insights to guide the inquiry. As the interviews reached the field agents and the social determinants were debated under the light of the collected evidence, they became semi-structured. Stimuli were used in questions to test the interlocutors' knowledge about the concept of contemporary slavery; the interviewees were also encouraged to give their opinion about the social determinants hypothesized in the research, as well as the mechanisms that connect them with the reality of the residents of Morro da Providencia.

- *Survey*

The last part of the research, the survey, was built from the qualitative interviews carried out and the quantitative data collected about the socioeconomic context of the location.

Its questions were designed to test and quantify the perceptions of hypothetical determinants stipulated by the literature and key residents interviewed in depth. Open-ended and closed questions were included. Most of the closed-ended questions were focused on measuring the living conditions of residents, updating data on the population collected by the 2010 Census. The questions also argued the importance (or not) of some determinants raised by the survey, why such determinants are relevant, and how they act.

The survey was also designed to investigate, using direct and indirect questions, the perception and knowledge of residents about the existence of people in the locality who fall into at least one of the conditions that fit slave-like working conditions in Brazil (discussed in the Context section of this report). The questionnaire was tested with some interviewees to yield improvements and acknowledge the understanding of the target audience. After a round of meetings, minor changes were suggested and adopted.

The survey was designed after a sample by quotas (Babbie, 2003), with age and sex as parameters based on demographic estimates from the 2010 Census (Table 2). The survey was made possible by a partnership with the *Coletivo de Ação e Cidadania Machado de Assis* (in English, Machado de Assis Action and Citizenship Collective), an organization founded and participative in Morro da Providencia since 2011. This NGO was responsible for the application of the questionnaire. The schedule for the data collection was of six weeks, between July and August 2021. The researchers hired from the collective received the appropriate ethical and methodological training for its application.

Therefore, this report is based not on a self-administered survey by the surveyed respondents. The software used to collect the answers was Google Forms. In total, it is expected to reach approximately 200 residents in 10 locations, including Morro da Providencia and its surroundings.

*Table 2 - Sample estimates by age and sex quotas, n= 200**

	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +	Total
Women	40	22	17	13	12	104
Men	38	20	16	11	11	96
Total	78	42	33	24	23	200

Source: own elaboration based on population data from the 2010 Census. * = subject to change, work in progress.

2.2. Data analysis

The study employs standard qualitative analysis, inductive and comparative by nature. Data analysis was developed during the research with feedback from new theoretical and historical readings, quantitative data and, mainly, from the semi-structured interviews discussed earlier. During the investigation a matrix with a preliminary set of social determinants of vulnerability to contemporary slavery was built. It contains its empirical

justification for the case, conceptualization, systematization and operationalization through objective indicators (Adcock and Collier, 2001). The occurrence and explanatory mechanisms associated with the social determinants selected in the matrix were tested in the interviews carried out. Like most qualitative research, the analysis is typically inductive, looking for patterns and categories that build plausible explanatory nexuses.

The interviews were transcribed and manually coded by the researchers (without the aid of CAQDAS software) to detect the social determinants that are more or less relevant in the interviewees' statements, as well as the reasons why they matter and interrelate to one another.

Secondary quantitative data from sources such as the 2010 Census needed additional treatment (i.e. they were not properly arranged in tables contained in documents and studies). After this first step, the data was analysed, resulting in descriptive statistics. Survey results yield additional descriptive statistics and provide a qualitative evaluation of an open question about the interviewees' knowledge of the concept of modern slavery.

2.3 *Bias / limitations*

Scientific research suffers from all sorts of biases and limitations. The limitations of this research concern the literature, the data used and the limitations imposed by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The current research has found limitations, for example, in the literature review and discussion of modern slavery in urban scenarios such as favelas. Although this fact, on one hand, constitutes our research gap, at the same time, it makes comparisons with findings from other studies unfeasible, at first.

About the data, additional challenges were found in the analysis of database of modern slavery rescuing operations in urban contexts. Such data underreport occurrences, being slightly imprecise about the location of the rescue of victims. It also lacks information regarding demographic information and age. The 2010 Census data used to contextualize and characterize Rio's favelas with the rest of the city of Rio de Janeiro are outdated in

more than a decade; moreover, the data for Morro da Providencia itself do not cover several social indicators, and it was necessary to use sample data that comprise all subnormal agglomerations in the port area, and not just the favela chosen as the case for the study.

Although a survey that accurately estimated the average opinion of residents was not the intention, given the qualitative nature of this study, the results of the in-depth interviews and the survey are not subject to statistical inference since the interviewees were selected by snowballing and the survey sample was quota based. Standard methodological caution is suggested when interpreting the findings discussed in the following sections. Although the results encourage the discussion of hypotheses based on the social determinants behind the vulnerability to modern slavery in favelas, these findings concern only the interviewees and the survey population within the COVID-19 pandemic context. They do not necessarily reflect the entirety of the Morro da Providencia, nor other favelas in Rio de Janeiro. Thus, this is not a confirmatory study.

Finally, the research time span and the limited physical access to the field due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic also limited the scope of the findings. Personal observation and face-to-face contacts could yield more qualitative data, including, for example, off-the-record interviews with workers who do not feel safe with online chatting. The lack of access to the field also made it difficult to interview residents who do not have access to the internet, such as the elderly or people who do not possess smartphones and computers.

Interviews and local observations could open up more research fronts on occupations and jobs associated with varying degrees of labour violations, such as drug trafficking, prostitution and street vendors. Other biases, somewhat unavoidable and expected, include the social origin of the researchers (born and raised outside favelas), as well as the availability of the residents to answer one hour long interviews (many of them work outside the favela during the daytime).



3. Context:

This section covers the social context on which the case rests upon. We start briefly discussing the Brazilian socioeconomic context on a national level. Then, we proceed towards the history of antislavery public policies in Brazil. Finally, we present the profile of modern-slaves, particularly the data and aspects of urban slaves in Rio de Janeiro.

3.1. Socioeconomic context

Among the structuring processes of Brazilian society, one can point at its unequal and highly concentrated² economic development, its unequal social relations by gender, race, class and region of the country, and its troubled record of pendular swings between democratic and authoritarian political periods. On top of it, it is worth mentioning other processes, equally structural, such as demographic changes, internal migrations and immigrations.

² Here we stress that this concentration happens at both social and geographical levels. On its social aspect, wealth and power are essentially in the hands of the white, highly educated political-economic elites. Regarding geographical inequalities, the south-eastern, south and central-west areas of Brazil are the richest ones, in contrast with north and north-eastern.

Not even the social advances documented by the abundant literature have done enough to reverse these basal characteristics. In the words of the organizer of an influential study on the topic, “[...] despite such dramatic changes, inequality has remained resilient in a number of relevant dimensions during the first decade of the twenty-first century” (Arretche, 2019a, p. 332).

Social inequality can be measured in several aspects, including income³. Regarding this specific measure, Brazil figures among countries with the highest inequality, occupying the 156 position in a recent world ranking, alongside sub-Saharan African countries such as Mozambique (IBGE, 2020a, p. table 1, 52). Inequities are manifested, above all, in people and social groups, which means that the social position of a given citizen in Brazilian society is co-dependent on characteristics such as race, gender, class, educational level and place of origin, all of which are transferable across generations (Hasenbalg and Silva, 2003).

The current trends do not break with historical patterns. Some have been unfolding in the last two decades, such as the restructuring of production and work (Nadya Araújo Guimarães, 2002). From an economic point of view, it is also necessary to emphasize that “[...] pro-poor growth, that is, an increase in per capita income with a reduction in inequality and poverty” (Barbosa et al., 2020, executive summary) seen between 2001-2015 had been reversed, bringing back the country to the early 2000s in several socioeconomic indicators.

Recent synthesis of national-level social indicators, carried out by the IBGE, can help to illustrate other aspects of this situation. Data shows how the last ten years were distinguishable by an abrupt decline in the growth of the GDP per capita, also noted in the household per capita consumption (IBGE, 2020a, p. 14). This socioeconomic slump occurs amid the loss of participation in the industrial sector's GDP, which happened in parallel with the rise of the service sector in the Brazilian economy (IBGE, 2020a, p. 15).

The labour market has been showing a decline in the level of employment, which means growth in unemployment and

³ Social inequalities are not, of course, restricted to income or concentration of wealth.

underutilization of the workforce since the year 2014 (IBGE, 2020a, p. 19). The percentage of Brazilians working with formal contracts has also been falling since that year, with the rise of informal labour and self-employed workers (IBGE, 2020a, pp. 20-21).

Among informal workers, the average monthly earnings declared by each respondent were lower than workers in the formal economy. Furthermore, the increase in informality has been driven by the services sector, especially in occupations related to accommodation and food (IBGE, 2020a, p. 23). These occupations belong to a subgroup of economic activities that concentrates the lowest average monthly income in Brazil (R\$ 1466 in 2019), alongside with domestic work (R\$ 898 in 2019) (IBGE, 2020a, p. 24). It is worth mentioning that women are the majority working in these occupations.

Given the historical trajectory and structural inequalities, it is not exactly a surprise that the most recent data keep showing that "[...] women, black or brown people, young people and the population with lower levels of education had more unfavourable indicators" of income and access to decent jobs (IBGE, 2020a, p. 28).

These results illustrate how the progress made towards social equality was pretty much lost after the economic downturn started in 2015 (IBGE, 2020a, p. 53). According to IBGE, "[...] it is noteworthy, once again, the little variation in the structure of Brazilian inequality reflected by the unequal distribution of income among people over the years" (IBGE, 2020a, p. 53). Blacks, for example, remain over-represented in the poor population and under-represented among the wealthy classes (IBGE, 2020a, p. 55). And, if the percentage of the inhabitants living in extreme poverty seems low according to international standards (6.5% in 2019), almost 30% of it makes only half a minimum wage each month, an astonishing percentage used as criteria for admission in the federal government aid programs (IBGE, 2020a, p. 64; Xavier, 2021).

The same pattern happens in education, where trends in segregation by class and race persist. The higher the family income, the higher school attendance, with drastic differences in access to higher education. Non-whites have lower net school

attendance than whites at all stages of school life, with the biggest difference also in higher education (IBGE, 2020a, pp. 91-92). Advances have occurred with a gradual increase in schooling and a decrease in the percentage of the population without (or incomplete) elementary education (IBGE, 2020a, p. 96), with new generations surpassing themselves in levels of formal education (IBGE, 2020a, p. 97). Women still achieve higher educational levels than men, but whites are more educated than blacks (IBGE, 2020a, p. 99). There is a growing concern, however, with the large number of young people who neither study nor work (IBGE, 2020a, p. 105).

In this contextual overview, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic cannot be neglected. Inequalities persist and manifest themselves even in a disease that, at first, would hit everyone equally. According to a study carried out in the first phase of the pandemic (between February and June 2020),

COVID-19 mortality rate (per 100,000 inhabitants) was correlated with: the proportion of the population residing in households with excessive density (i.e., with more than three residents per bedroom) [...]; the average income [...]; interpersonal income inequality, measured by the ratio between the share of the 10% wealthiest and the 10% poorest in the mass of income (Villela and Marques, 2020, p. 590).

Moreover, work activities considered essential during the pandemic (trade in goods and services, including those of: food, rest, cleaning, hygiene, marketing, maintenance and automotive technical assistance, transport and logistical activities of all types of cargo and people on highways and roads, and others) are usually executed by those living under a vulnerable socioeconomic situations. As mentioned before, people with low access to education, decent household, and nutritional security, for example, are seen occupying those spaces. Therefore, it is possible to understand that the risk presented by the new coronavirus threatens them more than the wealthiest part of the population.

A recent study shows an excess in mortality levels and a greater risk of death for the black population at any age when compared to the white ones (Marinho et al., 2021). Such impacts were predicted by several scholars at the beginning of the pandemic (e.g. Carvalho et al., 2020; Demenech et al., 2020).

The pandemic also resulted in the loss of income of a considerable portion of society (Moreira, 2021), with dire consequences, such as food insecurity (*Rede brasileira de pesquisa em soberania e segurança alimentar e nutricional* and Vox Populi, 2021), indebtedness (Rodrigues, 2021) and evictions as a result of the rise in rents (Kwak, 2021). Examining the structural and contextual characteristics of Brazilian society offers a guide to reasoning about the potential social determinants of modern slavery in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. These shall be analysed in more detail in the next subsection.

3.2. *History of antislavery public policies in Brazil*

Brazil has a complex socioeconomic formation, that is also based on labour exploitation of the ones who have been historically facing several challenges to access human rights. Nevertheless, the country is the twelfth wealthiest in the world (GDP) (World Bank, 2021) and the seventh most unequal (GINI) (Central Intelligence Agency, 2021). This contradiction is not occasional: as a standard since colonial times, the wealth is still concentrated in the hands of few.

Modern slavery is one of the most serious and persistent social problems. It is also the updated version of a dynamic of exploitation that tainted the construction of Brazil throughout the centuries⁴. Slavery, mostly based on sub-Saharan African black people, was everywhere: in the rural sectors, in the houses (domestic work), constructions, and etc.

This exploited group of people, officially freed by the Brazilian empire with the abolition of slavery, became “free workers”. Nevertheless, they didn’t have access to public policies, and often had their needs and demands overlooked for the most part of the last 130 years. This denial of basic human rights and public policies, along with their ongoing exploitation, is fundamental to mark inequalities and distinct socioeconomic layers in Brazil (Franco, 1997, pp. 104–105).

⁴ Brazil was the last western country to completely abolish slavery (in 1888) (Carneiro, 2018).

Modern slaves are a group of people who possibly face more degrading condition of life than the colonial slaves (Plassat and Suzuki, 2020). While in the past they were considered as goods or assets, nowadays, they are disposable and cheap (Bales, 2012). Even though the non-white population is more vulnerable to exploitation, mostly due to the lack of public policies to properly include them into society, modern slavery is not restricted to this social group. Beyond race, this hideous crime tends to affect people with low (or no) access to education, health, labour, social security and other social rights and public policies.

Considering that more than half of the Brazilian population is not white, this invisibilization taints its society as a whole. These victims of the absence of public policies become marginalized and removed from large urban centres, so they find shelter in precarious places and end up accepting any job, perpetuating degrading conditions. Poor migrants and descendants of slaves are currently conditioned to educational, health, safety and economic instabilities, that way being exposed to contexts that often pushes them to precarious livelihoods (Figueira, 2004).

Despite the official abolishment of slavery, and the ongoing practices of exploitation of vulnerable people, modern slavery was only officially recognized as a reality in Brazil around 1995. At the time, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso gave a statement on the radio confirming the existence of the crime and promising to take efforts to tackle the problem. For that, and understanding that the rescue of workers was the main urgency, especially in areas of difficult access, the government created a national strategy that developed a series of initiatives to prevent and prosecute this crime, as well as promote repair to the victims of modern slavery (Gama, 2021a).

Even so, it is fundamental to point out that a federal strategy to tackle modern slavery in the country happened because Brazil was accused by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights of being permissive in cases of modern slavery, which was a crime prescribed in the Penal Code since 1940. This was an articulated denounce, with several non-governmental organizations, that was taken to an international court in 1989, as a response to the case of "José Pereira", a teenage boy who was shot in the face while trying to run away from a farm where he was being

submitted to modern slavery⁵.

Brazilian's recognition of its international responsibility towards the case, and internal context of modern slavery, happened as a response to a Friendly Settlement Agreement that was crucial to the construction of an antislavery public policy that started with the creation of a mobile taskforce, commonly known as Mobile Group (in Portuguese, *Grupo Móvel*). The initiative counts with vertical and horizontal articulation, in several sectors and institutions, including: the Antislavery Regional Taskforces (ME), Labour Prosecution Office, Civil, Federal, Military and/or Road Police Forces, other relevant state stakeholders that might be important to the rescue (COETRAEs, por example). It has a prompt response to denounces of modern slavery in remote areas and/or in cases that might present risks to the lives of the rescuing operation teams.



Source: UFRJ / GPTEC collection
To the right is José Pereira, and below is a part of the report that denounced his working conditions to the international court.

José Pereira, 17 anos, usado no trabalho escravo em Xinguara, na fazenda Espírito Santo em 1989. Seu companheiro de fuga recebeu um tiro na cabeça e morreu na hora. José, apesar de baleado na cabeça, sobreviveu, denunciou o fato. Foram soltos 60 trabalhadores e ninguém responde por estes crimes. Morreram outros que tentaram escapar antes da chegada da polícia.

José Pereira, 17 years old, used in slave labor in Xinguara on Holy Spirit Farm in '89. His escape partner was hit by a bullet in the head and died instantly. José, despite being hit in the head also, survived and denounced the crime. Sixty workers were released and no one has been prosecuted for these crimes. Others died in the escape attempt before the police arrived.

⁵ Even though Jose Pereira's case was the main responsible for the construction of an antislavery policy, it was not an isolated fact. Before that, around the 1970s, the NGO *Comissão Pastoral da Terra* (CPT) was already denouncing working conditions in the rural parts of the North and Northeast of Brazil. The organization was led by Dom Pedro Casaldáliga, a bishop of the Catholic Church and defender of indigenous and rural workers' rights. His advocacy against rural violence was fundamental for the structuration of an organized civil society that was vital for the construction of the antislavery public policies.

José Pereira's case also stimulated the creation of the Antislavery National Commission (*Comissão Nacional para Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo* - CONATRAE), responsible for the antislavery national policies, and the creation of the "National Record of Employers who submitted workers to condition analogous to slavery", commonly known as "dirty list". One of the most important contributions of this set of tools was the Law no 10.803 from December 11, 2003, which defines the crime of modern slavery on the Penal Code (Brazil, 2003) as follows:

Art. 149. To reduce someone to a slave-like condition either by submitting it to forced labour or the exhausting journey, or subjecting them to degrading working conditions or restricting, by any means, movement due to debt bondage with the employer or agent.

Penalty - Imprisonment from two to eight years and a fine in addition to the penalty corresponding to violence,

§1 to the same penalties apply to those who:

I - restricts the use of any means of transport by the employee, in order to retain it in the workplace;

II - keeps overt surveillance in the workplace or seizes documents or personal objects of the worker, in order to retain it in the workplace.

§2 The penalty is increased by half if the crime is committed:

I - of children or adolescents;

II - on race bias motive, colour, ethnicity, religion or origin.

The law also changed articles 203, 206 and 207 of the national Penal Code. The first regulates the need to respect rights established under the labour law, penalizing with 1 to 2 years of jail and fines. As seen in article 149, there are some aspects that aggravate the penalty, such as being a minor, elder, pregnant, indigenous, or physically and/or mentally handicapped. Articles 206 and 207 rule crimes related to internal and international human trafficking. It also expanded the access to unemployment insurance to workers who are rescued from a slave-like condition. After the law, this social group can be prioritized while requesting the unemployment aid, up to three installments of minimum wage, as a compensation for the suffered violence.

Rescuing operations are held by labour fiscal auditors and labour prosecutors, when the laws' violations need to be seen in the act presupposing a labour relationship. A slavery flagrant results in the termination of the work relation and payment of damages and labour rights by the employer to the rescued

worker. Also, at the same moment, workers gain a Formal Working Permit and if it's their wish they are able to enter the formal market.

The labour prosecutors who are a part of the rescuing taskforce, may file a public civil action at the Labour Courts or negotiate a Conduct Adjustment Term (in Portuguese, *Termo de Ajustamento de Conduta* - TAC), where the employer makes a series of commitments towards the rescued worker and the State of Brazil.

Another relevant and vanguardist initiative happened in 2005. Following the Antislavery National Pact recommendations, with the creation of the National Pact Institute for the Eradication of Modern Slavery (inPACTO). The institution has as the main objective turn antislavery initiatives into a collective action between the private sector, government, unions and civil society.

Another relevant initiative is the "Integrated Action Project" (in Portuguese, *Projeto Ação Integrada* - PAI) which is a local network, including civil society organizations and governmental institutions, responsible for the identification of victims of modern slavery locally, breaking the cycle of modern slavery with the guaranty of remedies and opportunities. There are five PAIs in Brazil, the first PAI was created in the state of Mato Grosso in 2009, followed by the states of Bahia in 2013, and Rio de Janeiro in 2014. In the same year, Maranhão, Tocantins, Piauí and Pará got together and created the Antislavery Integrated Network (in Portuguese, *Rede de Ação Integrada de Combate à Escravidão* - RAICE). The last one was created in 2017 in Ceara.

The PAI in Rio de Janeiro was developed and is supported by the Labour Prosecution Office (MPT), in partnership with the NGO Cáritas Arquidiocesana and the Social Development and Human Rights Secretariat of the state of Rio de Janeiro (in Portuguese, *Secretaria de Estado de Desenvolvimento Social e Direitos Humanos* - SEDSDH). It is funded with resources from the compensations for moral damages earnt by the TACs carried out by the MPT.

In the case of Rio de Janeiro, the Integrated Action Project has a broader goal. Rio's PAI aims for a holistic approach, seeking to strengthen the citizenship and human dignity of the workers (França and Motta, 2021). According to the representatives of

the institution (2021), people in vulnerable conditions to modern slavery are living under layers of vulnerability overlaid by labour exploitation. Most were not being effectively supported by public policies when they were submitted to modern slavery. They mentioned (2021) that this possibly happens as an effect of gender bias, in which adult men don't seek for the "*bolsa família*", a social welfare program of the Brazilian government. In addition, they argue that many of the people that are exposed to risks of violation of their rights, are irregularly registered in the social assistance databases, jeopardizing access to public policies.

As seen, during the past 26 years, since the implementation of the national antislavery policy, official data shows that over 56.021 workers were rescued from modern slavery in more than 5.684 establishments around the country, and over R\$ 112.423.459,59 on severance pays were received by them (DETRAE, 2021).

Even though it seems to be a relevant and impressive number, there are some methodologies that suggest that for each rescued worker in Brazil, there are 5 living under similar conditions, meaning that over 280 thousand workers have been exploited in Brazil in the contemporary years (Plassat, 2010). This specific approach was developed by one of the most important NGO in the history of antislavery in contemporary Brazil, the Pastoral Land Commission (in Portuguese, *Comissão Pastoral da Terra* - CPT). The suggested method is based on the fact that rescuing operations that actually occur correspond to an average of 60% of registered denunciations (Em discussão!, 2011).

Global Index Slavery suggested in its report from 2018 that there are 369 thousand workers being explored in slave-like condition in Brazil at any given day. The estimated numbers of slaves in Brazil, of 369 thousand (Global Slavery Index, 2018), compared to the rescued workers by the labour inspections, 56.021, show the limits of the public policy in covering the magnitude of modern slaves in urban and rural areas in the country.

In the next section we will look into the profile of those who have been rescued from modern slavery in Brazil since the beginning of the antislavery policies, in 1995. We will try to explain how they end up in certain situations, who and where they are.

The following table summarizes the most important laws to understand the modern slave legislation in Brazil.

Table 3 - Antislavery laws in Brazil

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Ordinance No. 549 and 550 of July 14, 1995	Creates the "Special Mobile Inspection Group" and establishes its procedures. This instrument is an articulated taskforce to ensure labour and human rights, ultimately rescuing modern-slaves.
Law no 10.608 of december 20, 2002	Changes de Law no 7.998/90 to assure the payment of unemployment aid to a worker who is rescued from slave-like conditions.
Art. 149 of the Penal Code	To reduce someone to a slave-like condition is a crime.
Art. 149-a, II of the Penal Code	Human trafficking for the purpose of modern slavery is a crime.
Art. 203 of the Penal Code	It is a criminal offense to frustrate, through fraud or violence, a right guaranteed by labour law.
Arts. 206 e 207 of the Penal Code	Rules on the recruitment of workers.
Resolution 05/2002 of CDDPH	Creates the Antislavery National Plan, as determined by the National Human Rights Plan. Express the government's intention to build a permanent antislavery public policy. The main objective was to integrate and coordinate actions of different institutions.
Constitutional Amendment 081	Still to be regulated. According to the norm, if someone is found under slave-like conditions in the property, the land will be expropriated by the federal government and destined for land reforms and popular housing programs.
Ordinance No. 9.943 of July 31, 2003	Revoked by the Ordinance 9.887/2017, but created the Antislavery National Commission. Its objective is to coordinate and evaluate the implementation of the actions foreseen in the National Plan.
I Antislavery National Plan in 2008	Following recommendations after expiration of the first, in 2008 was created the II Antislavery National Plan, updating the former.
State Ordinance No 42.542 of June 30, 2010	Creates the Antislavery State Commission of Rio de Janeiro (COETRAE RJ)
State Ordinance No 43.963 of November 13, 2012	Creates the Rio de Janeiro's Antislavery State Plan. It regulates state guidelines for prevention, prosecution and reparation to victims of the crime in the state of Rio de Janeiro.
Ordinance MTPS / MMIRDH No 4 of may 11, 2016	Creates the "registry of employers who subjected workers to slave-like conditions", popularly known as the "Dirty List". The mechanism aims to list employers who have been caught submitting their workers to conditions of contemporary slavery.
Ordinance No 9.887 of june 27, 2019	Replaces the previous instrument that created the CONATRAE (Ordinance No. 9.943), and gives it a new format. Civil Society criticizes this instrument because it brought several setbacks, such as the reduced number of participating institutions (eight to four).
Ordinance No. 87 of March 23, 2020	Provides residence permit for immigrants rescued in situations of human trafficking and modern slavery.

Source: authors' elaboration based on Gama (2021a).

3.3. Profile of modern slaves in Brazil

Nowadays, modern slaves in Brazil are majorly free people. Most of them do not have movement restriction, nor are threatened to stay in the worksite, but are still victims of precarious and degrading working conditions that reduce human beings to disposable assets (Pandelivery - Quantas vidas vale o frete grátis?, 2020 minutes 0 to 1). In the contemporary context of neoliberal capitalism, there is a logic of exploitation of the human body that permeates the individual and justifies the institutionalization of the exploitation (Von Rondow, 2021).

According to representatives of Integrated Action Project and other stakeholders acting in the fight against modern slavery in Brazil (França and Motta, 2021), workers are at risk of being submitted to modern slavery because they live under layers of several vulnerabilities and weakly access social assistance public policies. This context is currently aggravated by the recent transformations impacting on the work relations (Antunes, 2020; Figueira, 2020) (e.g. deliverymen and women of apps, such as iFood, Rappi, Uber, etc).



Image: Lalo de Almeida - Folha Press

The estimated numbers of enslaved people depend on the variables used and access to data. For example, the numbers provided by Antislavery and anti-trafficking in Persons Observatory (in Portuguese, *Observatório da Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo e Tráfico de Pessoas*) and the numbers of DETRAE, a governmental body associated to the Ministry of Economy responsible for the rescuing operations, rely on the official numbers of people who were effectively rescued by the Brazilian public policy.

For that matter, it is fundamental to consider that the creation of the current antislavery policy was a response to a series of denunciations related to labour conditions in rural areas. It mostly happened as a result of an organized civil society that was fighting for the rights of traditional minorities, such as indigenous people, *quilombolas* (descendants of African slaves who resisted slavery), riverines (a traditional population composed by people who live near rivers, mostly in the Amazon Region) and farm workers. As a consequence, prevention and remedy instruments were developed considering the rural reality. Currently, official numbers state that 78% of rescued workers were found on rural sites and its majority were in the livestock sector (DETRAE, 2021).

Urban forms of modern slavery in Rio de Janeiro, previously disregarded by inspections and normative guidelines, started to be officially recognized and systematically inspected only in 2013, mostly due to the rise of cases in the civil construction sector, accounting for 66%⁶ of the rescued workers. This increase of urban modern slaves was also seen as a result of a national infrastructure program set up in 2007, with its second phase being carried on between the years of 2011 and 2017 (de Paula, 2020; Guerra, 2021). The Growth Acceleration Program (in Portuguese, *Programa de Aceleração do Crescimento* - PAC) was cardinal for the intensification of northeasterners' migration, who were vulnerable to the risks of modern slavery.

In order to meet this federal program, precarization of labour rights was, to some extent, overlooked while workers faced degrading and precarious conditions, such as poor accommodations. At that time, for the first time in the Brazilian antislavery history, urban rescues surpassed those in rural sites (de Paula, 2020).

In the state of Rio de Janeiro⁷, 1.696 workers were rescued from slave-like conditions between 1995 and 2020. The data follows the national trend with the majority of workers found in sugar cane plantations and other rural areas (64%). Most of rescued workers are non-white (81%) and almost half of the rescued have dropped out of school at the age of 11 (44%). Around 20% are illiterate and 35% have studied over the age of 11, but between them, the majority (15%) dropped out of school at the age of 11 to 15 years old.

⁶ Based on data from DETRAE in 2019.

⁷ All the data mentioned in this paragraph comes from the DETRAE (2021) and Observatório da Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo e do Tráfico de Pessoas (2021) database.

In contrast, in the city, the 317 rescued people, since 1995, were working in restaurants and other food and beverage services establishments (41%), confirming that the rural-based activities in the city are a minority (27%) when compared to urban work activities (60%).

The national coordinator of the Unified System of Social Assistance (Sistema Único de Assistência Social - SUAS), in the interview to this report recognized a direct connection between school drop out and child labour in Brazil. Based on ILO (2011) 90% of former modern-slaves have history of child slavery. They are subjected to this condition mainly because of the need to supplement their family income, resulting in school dropout with similar pattern reproduced by their parents, and possibly, later on, reproduced by their children (Quattri and Watkins, 2019; Von Rondow, 2021; Xavier, 2021).

Regarding gender-based issues, the state of Rio de Janeiro follows the national trend, showing a pyramid majorly composed by rescued men (84% of all rescued from modern slavery) in contrast to the international trend of women, which account for 71% of all the victims of slavery in the world (ILO and Walk Free Foundation, 2017). However, it does not mean that women aren't as subject to slave-like conditions, nor that men tend to be more exploited. Rather, it shows that the Brazilian public policy was not designed with focus on informal sectors of the economy, such as care services, domestic work and also sex work, in which, as seen before, women are more present. For example, during the interview conducted for this report, the Public Defender Nathalia Von Rondow (2021) mentioned that the brazilian government has never rescued women in situations of sexual exploitation in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

The naturalization of women's exploitation in Brazil results in institutionalized underreporting (Equipe "Escravo, nem pensar!," 2020). Furthermore, structural discrimination naturalizes the exploitation of female work. More years of education did not increase the presence of women in the formal market, which is lower compared to men with the same level of education. They are pushed into spaces of informality in the services and care sectors, often unfairly remunerated (I-MiGRa, 2020).

In terms of race, among those who declared race, the majority of those rescued in the city is made of non white (81%), with a large portion of asians and asian descendants (44%), blacks (21%) and mixed race (18%). As noted in all territorial levels (national, state and municipal), non white people are the

most vulnerable to modern slavery (Observatório da Erradicação do Trabalho Escravo e do Tráfico de Pessoas, 2021)⁸.

Poor migrants are historically vulnerable to labour exploitation and degrading conditions. The labour inspector Marcio Guerra (2021) in an interview for this report, pointed out that bad accommodation at work is the most frequent⁹ complaint used to typify the violation of the labour law, which may result in the needed flagrant of the slave-like condition. According to him, this could be a reason for the significant number of migrants rescued in rural and urban areas, in contrast to the lowest number of residents.

Agreeing with his analysis, the representatives of Cáritas (Yasmim and Thaiany 2021), the Public Defender Natalia Von Rondow (2021) and the head of the CRAS Dodo da Portela (Luciana and Jucilene 2021), pointed that far from home and family ties, migrants tend to accept "any type of accommodation" when offered as a "benefit" from the job position. On the other hand, based on Guerra's observations (2021), the absence of rescued people from favelas in urban areas might happen because they are not in the accommodations during inspections operations. However, this is not an indicator of the absence of slavery amongst residents in favelas. There is a limit in the current antislavery laws and audits that do not cover some types of work relations, activities and occupations in rural and urban sites.

According to the representatives of SUAS, DPU, Cáritas, CRAS, and DETRAE, the majority of the rescued workers and people vulnerable to modern slavery have or had previous access social assistance programs. According to the interviewees, probably the value of the aid, insufficient to cover basic needs, did not solve basic subsistence needs. Added to this, according to Caritas' representatives there are many system registry issues. Vulnerable people exploited at work are not even supported by social security.

Therefore, the efficacy of social public policies depends on a more integrated approach considering the intersection of gender, level of education, the condition of migrants, levels of income, social aid, domicile, family ties, and knowledge and information on existing public policies, amongst others factors that are analysed in this report.

⁸ The labour inspector Marcio Guerra (2021) added in the interview for this report that the identification of race, which is self declared, started to be considered in the national database very recently.

⁹ According to Caritas Arquidiocesana's report, extensive workload is the second most frequent reason for reporting.

Image: Human Rights Secretary / 10 anos de CONATRAE

Labour Fiscal Auditor issuing a work permit for a rescued worker in Para.



To illustrate the urgency to adopt an integrated approach, the labour laws and national antislavery policy, rely on an “ideal” of victim (Plassat and Suzuki, 2020) and when degrading conditions are seen, their rescue becomes inevitable. However, in some situations, the worker does not want to be “rescued”, since the offered future might not fit into their life plans or because they do not consider themselves a victim of modern slavery. For example, for some migrants who are distant from their home and family support, having a bad job is better than being unemployed with no prospect of decent future (Caritas RJ and MPT-RJ, 2020).

In another note, international data (Bohnenberger, 2020) suggests that we are currently facing the worst global economic recession since 1929, with the possibility of a post-pandemic period with 20 million to 25 million people in precarious work conditions who might face extreme poverty. Furthermore, in a global context of transformations at work, with a fast growing informal economy, it is essential to reinforce that modern slavery sustains itself amidst power imbalances and inequities, as seen in people living in favelas of Rio de Janeiro (Gama, 2021b).



Image: Bruno Martins

4. *Rio de Janeiro, favelas and Morro da Providência:*

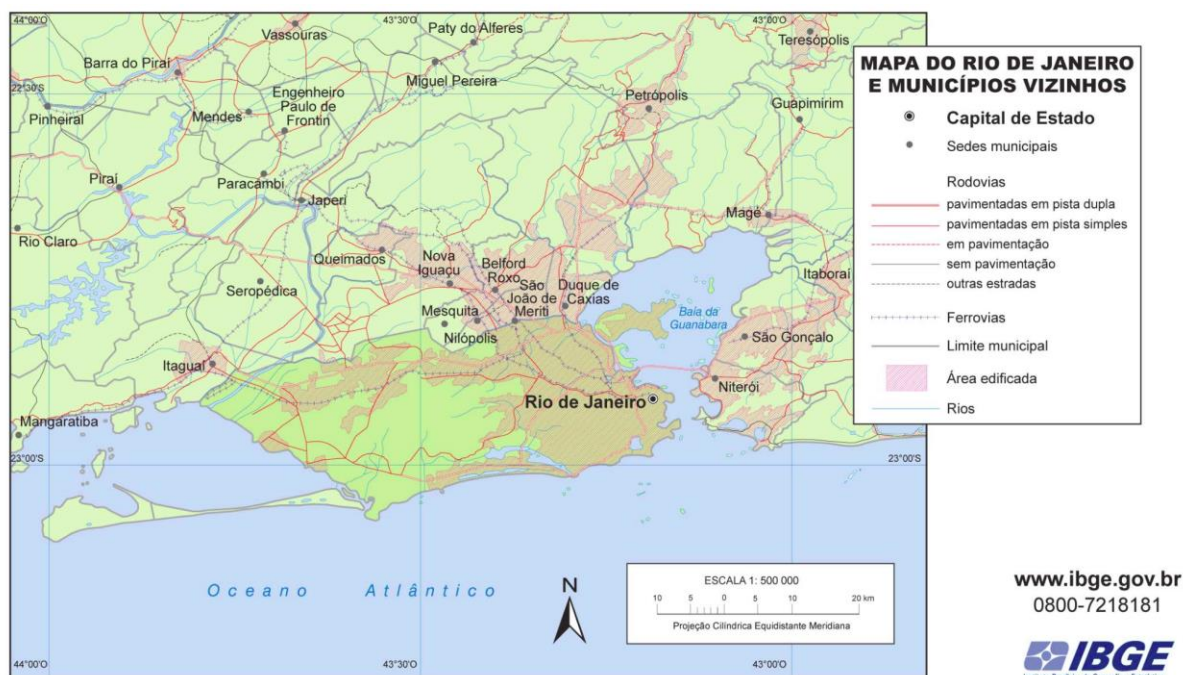
*The Marvellous*¹⁰ city of Rio de Janeiro is amongst the ten most unequal metropolises in the world (Razvadauskas, 2017). Every day two million residents in the metropolitan region of Rio de Janeiro (RMRJ) commute to the capital in crowded public transports to access health, education, better salaries, work and cultural activities (Casa Fluminense, 2020, p. 9). The metropolitan region has 13.131.509 inhabitants, which corresponds to 75% of Rio de Janeiro's state population, the second-largest metropolitan area in Brazil, after São Paulo, and the third in South America (Wikipedia contributors, 2021).

With a population of 6.747,815 million (IBGE, 2020b), the city of Rio de Janeiro has two-thirds of residents (34,1%) with incomplete elementary education and over 15% graduated at the universities (16.5%) (IBGE, 2010a). With 21,21% of the population working in the service sector, mostly shops and markets (IBGE, 2010b), 35% earns

¹⁰ Rio de Janeiro is also named the Marvelous City, a reminder of the glorious times when it was the capital of the Brazilian Republic, attracting tourists for its natural beauty and the happiness of its warm population.

between one and two minimum wages (IBGE, 2010c). Rio de Janeiro's Human Development Indicator is the 45 amongst the 5.564 municipalities in Brazil based on research of the United Nations Development Program (PNUD Brasil, 2021).

Map 1 - Political map of the city of Rio de Janeiro and other cities in the metropolitan area



Source: IBGE (n.d.)

There is a notorious asymmetry in the metropolis region comparing socioeconomic indicators. This asymmetry is observed, for example, in Rio's average per capita income of R\$ 1,784.44 (about US\$ 350,00), which can be 100% higher if compared to the per capita income of some cities in the neighbourhood (Casa Fluminense, 2020, p. 12). On the other hand, the city of Niteroi, 15 km away from Rio de Janeiro, has the highest per capita income of the country at the level of R\$ 3.114,00 (US\$ 560,00) (Casa Fluminense, 2020, p. 12).

Based on the Basic Education Development Indicator (in Portuguese, *Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica* - IDEB 2020), comparisons between the city and suburb indicators show large gaps regarding public health and education provision. Public schools and nurseries in the suburbs are deficient and present lower performance results, resulting in overloaded classrooms and school evasion (Casa Fluminense, 2020, pp. 36-39). The capital concentrates 36% of the public nurseries while in certain municipalities with higher population density this percentage falls to 6% (Casa Fluminense, 2020, pp. 32-35).

The search for job opportunities, better wages, access to health, education, and cultural activities, have been pushing residents from the suburbs, mainly from the west zone and nearby cities (Baixada Fluminense) to the capital in the last decades. Currently, the majority of internal migrants is not composed by the northeasters (in Portuguese, *nordestinos*), but by the former suburban residents. In addition, there is an increasing number of people moving to the centre of the city of Rio de Janeiro populating the favelas, squats ("*ocupações*") and streets, based on the questionnaires carried out for the present study.

Added to the place of residence, racism, xenophobia and sexism have been impacting salaries and employability in the metropolis region. There is a difference in wages of approximately 75% between earnings paid to white workers and non-whites following the national tendency and of 17% between men and women in the formal market (Casa Fluminense, 2020, p. 17). Moreover, the percentage of non-white men killed by the police is almost 80% of all deaths related to this reason in the metropolitan area (Casa Fluminense, 2020, p. 25). It is important to highlight that the city's violent death rate (21 per 100 thousand inhabitants) is one of the highests in the country (Instituto de Segurança Pública, 2021, p. 4).

The existence of data and qualitative analysis on socioeconomic indicators are relevant to the construction of efficient antislavery public policies. However, these indicators, alone, cannot explain the persistence of modern slavery, disregarding the local assets, histories and socioeconomic factors which impact places differently.

The structural and contextual characteristics of Rio de Janeiro demands a place-based intersectional approach to the construction of social projects and public policies aiming at the favelas. Unlike other favelas in the town, for example, the Morro da Providencia, our case study, has its origins and evolution linked to colonial slavery, colonialism, migrations, modernization and decline of the city's port area. The next section will explain some of the history and cultural aspects together with current socio economic indicators of the port area, where the first recognized favela of Rio de Janeiro has its origin.

4.1. *Rio de Janeiro's port area*

As the capital of the Portuguese empire, with ports and warehouses serving slave trade, the city of Rio de Janeiro, and specially the port area, were deeply marked by migration.

Poor Portuguese and Spanish succeeded mainly by Italians and Germans, populated, alongside enslaved Africans, the surroundings of the port, a territory of exploitation of the workforce, precarious work and conflicts (Santana and Queiroz, 2005, p. 29).

In 2011, during excavations for the 2016 Olympic Games, the Valongo Wharf, built in 1811, was discovered hidden under layers of sidewalks. At the Valongo Wharf, one of the biggest slave ports in the world, approximately one million Africans have docked, with final destiny in the plantations of coffee, sugar cane and gold extraction in Minas Gerais and São Paulo (Mattos and Abreu, 2010). Valongo Wharf was strategically placed between the hills of Conceição and Providencia (Mattos and Abreu, 2010, p. 124) to hide what was considered an "unhealthy business". The population complained about diseases and deaths brought by the African migrants, despite the opposition of the African traders (Mattos and Abreu, 2010, p. 32).



Image: Luiz Souza
Valongo Wharf, Rio de Janeiro

Identity and religion were relevant factors to the cohesion of different African nations in Rio de Janeiro. In the view of the local elite, black religious leaders called "African wizards" by the police could influence others with risks of rebellions. In moments of suspicion when an "insurrection of blacks" was being organised, the Chief of the Police of Rio de Janeiro used to carry out investigations into the Valongo street to find the "dangerous" religious leaders (Mattos and Abreu, 2010, p. 36). Confirming the origins of race discrimination in police inquiries and trials nowadays, arbitrary judgements were normal at that time. Trials of false spiritism with white and black people accused of illegal practice of medicine, resulted in the punishment and conviction of Africans or afro brazilians as "bad wizards", while the "whites" were often released. In these cases, the police and judicial inquiries helped to justify punishing black leaders for "evil deeds" (Ribeiro, 1995, p. 13).

The fear of insurrections was permanent, especially after the famous rebellion of African slaves in Bahia in 1835, called the *Revolta dos Malês*, or Rebellion of the Malês (Reis, 2003). After this episode, Africans were violently persecuted in the provinces of Rio de Janeiro and Salvador (Reis, 2003, p. 135). The first laws allowing invasions in domiciles by the police and death penalties to black leaders were published after Malê's rebellion (Reis, 2003, p. 428). In the words of the city of Salvador chief of the police: "[...] none of these Africans are citizens nor beneficiaries of the privileges of being immigrants, they are simply inhabitants with no rights" (Reis, 2003, p. 428).

With the abolition of illegal slavery in 1888, Africans, African descendants, and freed slaves came over to Rio de Janeiro from the northeast. The decline of the sugar plantation based on slave workforce in the *Recôncavo Baiano*¹¹ attracted some of these freed slaves to the state and to the port area. The emancipation laws that resulted in the end of slavery have opened alternatives to these workers, and the capital of the empire seemed to be a promisor destiny (Santana and Queiroz, 2005, p. 16).

Identities were not a distancing factor between these groups, that, in contrast, gathered around a common identity of migrant and poor (Maia et al., 2005). Collective consciousness (Alinia, 2015, p. 2336) amongst African groups of different cultures and faiths made them move forward, resisting social exclusion.

The first group of freed slaves, the "baianos" came in the XIX century with their religions, samba and capoeira, also planting the seeds of the current schools of samba parades in Rio de Janeiro. At the beginning of the XX century, the port was a place of cultural encounters and the largest area with job opportunities characterized by precarity and low payment because of the growing labour supply. These groups of afro brazilians and poor europeans worked in the port or on the provision of services to the rich neighbourhoods due the proximity with the wealthiest areas (Ribeiro and Lago, 2001, p. 153).

The capital of the imperial court was a symbol of freedom for black slaves and freed slaves. Blacks corresponded to 46,98% of the total population of the city (Valladares, 2015, p. 59). The waves of European immigrants attracted by governmental campaigns for "whitening" or *branqueamento*, in Portuguese, of the Brazilian population and rural work, were not able

¹¹ *Recôncavo Baiano* was a region of sugar cane plantations with slave's workforce in large scale, in the metropolitan area of the capital of the state of Bahia.

to change this main feature of the capital of the empire. Also, the great majority of workers of the region's nascent industry were blacks, giving birth, along with the Europeans, to a working class in the city of Rio.

In the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twenty's the Bank of Brazil (Banco do Brasil), in accordance with English economic interests, was responsible for the birth of a powerful textile sector in the capital. Women and children were largely included in the workforce, following the capitalist model already in place in England. The products were exported to Europe and to the United States until the competition with North American cotton resulted in the decline of the sector. Gradually, land speculation turned to a promising business and has succeeded the growing industrialization seen in the suburbs and surroundings of the port. With the coffee sector crises and the decrease in exports of textiles the port was impacted (Severino, 2015) aggravating poverty and informality.

Resilience could be observed through different lenses. Distant from the institutional domain and political elections, the Africans and afro Brazilians did not have any chance to interfere in the destinies of the country but they were active subjects of the city's cultural life (Pereira, 2020, p. 17). The samba, carnival and black dance balls carried on in the centre of the city became famous, reaching the middle class quarters and elite intellectuals. The black's balls were reviewed in journals by famous intellectuals, such as Olavo Bilac, who has dedicated some pieces of his writings on detailed descriptions of the "innovative" rhythm danced in the clubs¹².

Promoted and organized by black workers at formal associations and brotherhood societies, these parties were a strategy to affirm their worldviews, in places of "affirmation of customs, projects and aspirations" (Pereira, 2020, p. 17).

The increasing number of "societies" gathering freed - slaves led to a permanent control of their activities by the police authorities including routinely threats of license cancellation. There was a judicial complaint brought by a worker's club in the port area of Rio which became famous. This judicial complaint to the Supreme Court required the reopening of a worker's club arbitrarily closed by the authorities, because of a law

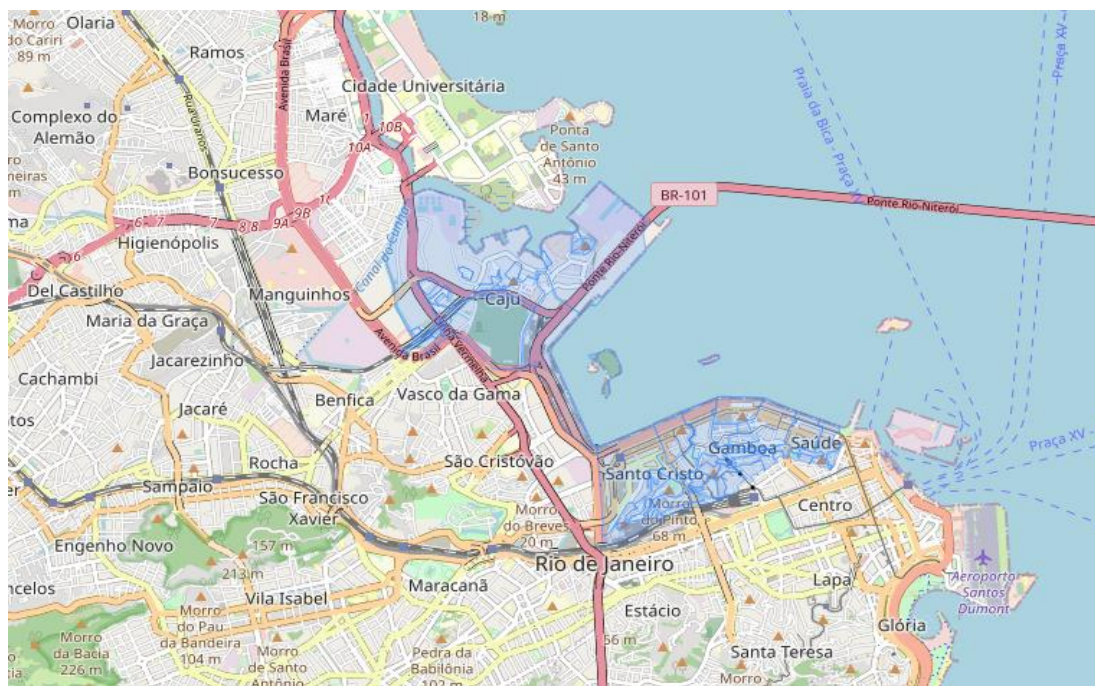
¹² The balls in the clubs of the port area were characterized by a fusion of dances where the "jongo", a typical African dance, was mixed with the Portuguese "cana verde" and the "porace" from the Brazilian Indians (Pereira, 2020, p. 16).

guaranteeing the right to create associations for religious, moral, scientific, political, artistic, or simple recreation. The case called attention to its members and leaders, poor black workers, who were the complainants in this judicial action. They aimed for the assurance of their rights fighting social exclusion (Pereira, 2020, p. 236).

In the transition of the nineteen to the twenty century an intellectual bourgeoisie elite has gradually been consolidated embedded in the ideology of modernity and positivist ideals. Thus, police repression was constant and against any activity or manifestation out of what was considered "modern". As a result, added to the clubs and parties' cultural affirmation, conflicts were constant with strikes and rebellions mostly choked by police repression. In the view of the bourgeoisie, these events were opportunities to include the rising working class into "modernity" with the use of force and repression (Bretas, 1997).

Currently the port area is considered the first administrative region of the city, Região Administrativa 1 (AP1), out of the thirty three administrative regions (Cavallieri and Vial, 2012, p. 13). The port area includes four neighbourhoods, Gamboa, Santo Cristo, Saúde and Cajú with 48.564 inhabitants (IBGE, 2016).

Map 2 - Rio de Janeiro's port area



Source: (IBGE, n.d.)

Formal occupations are mostly in the service sector, civil construction, domestic service (mostly women), commerce, accommodation, snack shops and car repairs (IBGE, 2010d). Of the economically active population in the region, 45,7% earns one to two minimum salaries, and 31% until one minimum salary (IBGE, 2010c). Even when compared to other favelas in the town, the ones in the port area are characterized by low socio and economic indicators and poor infrastructure (IPP, 2020).

Migration waves have always been an important factor impacting the city's cultural and social economic indicators, especially in the port area. The observed flux of immigrants, poor Europeans, africans and african's descendants who came from the northeast of Brazil, in the last decades and centuries, are responsible for the main features of the first Administrative Region of the town. Living in old tenements famous for high density of population and low hygienic conditions, such as the famous "*cabeça de porco*" or pig's head¹³, they were often subject of evictions. Currently, removals of favelas residents in the centre and port zone are not anymore justified by the threat of diseases and epidemics, but by the revitalization plans of the port area and downtown¹⁴.

Today, africans from Senegal, Congo, Ghana, and Angola, but also people coming from Syria, Bolivia, Venezuela and East Asia contribute to a vibrant scene of cultural exchange and resilience along with the african and northeast descents in the favelas of the port area. Nevertheless, running away from political and economic genocides in their countries, or victims of the trafficking mafias, these immigrants face in the city of Rio discrimination and prejudice from the society, sharing with the poor Brazilians the challenges of social exclusion and vulnerability to slavery.

¹³ The "Cabeça de Porco" or "Pig's Head" tenement suffered a higinezation intervention resulting in the eviction of all residents, during the Mayor Pereira Passos' famous city reform in 1906. The evictions were responsible for the growth in the number of favelas in the surroundings of the port area.

¹⁴ The "Project Reviver Centro" was launched in 2021 by the local council and it's a continuation of the "Project Porto Maravilha" set up in 2011.



4.2. *Favelas*

The city of Rio is characterized by a “belt” of favelas in the surroundings of luxury buildings and shops, reflecting the social inequality observed in the national numbers and indicators. Official statistics estimate that 22% of the city's population live in favelas (IBGE, 2010e) and 19,9% of the households in the Rio de Janeiro state are located in favela's (IBGE, 2010f). Despite the number of surveys and policies dedicated to understanding the favela phenomenon (Valladares, 2015, p. 63), they were included in the official statistics just in 2010.

In 1937, the Code of Construction of the capital, officially recognized for the first time the existence of the first favela in Rio, the “Morro da Favella” in the port area, as a “type of urban agglomeration in the capital of the Republic” (Valladares, 2015, p. 64). The “Morro da Favella” was the original name for the Morro da Providencia given by the migrants who fought in the Canudos Rebellion in the end of the XIX century. “Favella” was the name of a plant seen in Canudos and it was also found in the place where they started to build their first houses.

These types of urban agglomerations were considered “temporary spaces” confirming the intention of extinguishing these locals of “disorder, blacks and pardos of hereditarily backward, lacking ambition, and ill-adjusted to the demands of modernity” (Valladares, 2015, p. 65). The first survey data in the favelas of Rio was carried out in 1947 and 119 favelas were recognized with 138.837 inhabitants equivalent to 7% of the city's population. It is important to highlight the inhabitants' increase of three times in relation to the total number of the city's population from the first survey, in the end of the 40's, to the last in 2010.

The survey of 1947 gathered data on: a) the main characteristics of the houses and accommodations, types of sanitation and access to water, energy and value of the rentals paid; b) population's characteristics, gender, colour, existence of birth registry, occupation, salaries, level of education and naturality (Valladares, 2015, p. 47). In its conclusions the survey of 1947 pointed out:

The high proportion of inhabitants in economically passive ages such as children and adolescents, low income and education levels, poor hygienic conditions and sanitation, which present a favourable climate for the development of factors of disintegration of the human personality (Valladares, 2015).

These first surveys relied on the definition of favela based on the type of the accommodations, their characteristics and material used, type of property title, absence of sanitation, access to water and energy. Today, laws and public policies call favelas "Subnormal Agglomerates" (IBGE, 2020c) and remain characterized by the absence of property title and lack of essential public services amongst other factors linked to the lack of urbanization (*Câmara Municipal do Rio de Janeiro*, 2011).

With low levels of education and income in comparison to the rest of the city, only 1.34% of the favelados had reached university in 2010, the year of the last official survey. Related to the minimum wage, a proportion of 33.19% of the residents in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro earns up to one, and 82% earn something between zero to two (IBGE, 2010c).

The dominant discourse relates favelados to criminality and favela to poverty (da Águeda, 2005, p. 60). Based on this discourse, favelas are still considered a homogeneous place marked by marginality and social disorganization (Jovchelovitch and Priego-Hernández, 2013, p. 41). The dominant discourse ignores differences, economic classes distinctions and diversity. Based on this binary and dialogical discourse, the favelados are classified either as victims or criminals (Preteceille and Valladares, 2000, pp. 482-3).

4.3. Morro da Providencia

The Morro da Providencia (Providencia hill) was the first residence of large contingents of black combatants in the Paraguayan war in 1864 and Canudos rebellion in 1897.

Left abandoned without any compensation, they started to build houses in the back of the Ministry of the Defense building, as an act of protest for the unfair treatment they received. The precarity of lives and work conditions have been reproduced along the decades and were aggravated by removals, justified by the "temporary spaces" discourse and hidden expectations of gentrification carried on in the successive port revitalisation plans (Guimarães, 2014)¹⁵.

Map 3 - Morro da Providencia, Rio de Janeiro, 2018



Source: IPP (2018).

Based on the official survey, the Morro da Providencia had 4.094 inhabitants in 2010, however recent data from the Emergency Committee of the NGO SOS Providencia in survey realized during the Covid 19 pandemic, estimated a number of 9.000 thousand residents in the favela in 2020. Despite the same trend in the port area (RA1), the socioeconomic indicators of the Morro da Providencia are lower than the estimates for the favelas in the other RAs of the city.

¹⁵ The "Porto Maravilha" was the last revitalization plan for the port zone starting in 2011 to finish in 2030. The project's aim was also to prepare the region for the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games. The port area and specially the Morro da Providencia was strongly impacted, with arbitrary removals and conflicts.

Based on a survey carried out in the Morro da Providencia for the present report, 68.5% of the respondents considered themselves non-whites, a percentage higher than the official numbers of blacks and *pardos* for the port area (48,5%) and the whole city (47.98%) (IBGE, 2010g).

The Morro da Providencia still resembles the plurality of individuals, social groups and collective memories of migrants and immigrants who historically populated the port surroundings (de Assis, 2005, p. 70). On the other hand, 66.9% of the interviewees for this report said they live in the favela since they were born, confirming the existence of an increasing first and second generations of cariocas¹⁶, grandsons, sons and daughters of northeasters' migrants. Asked if they enjoy life in the favela, 82% confirmed they liked it, pointing out that the main reasons to stay are housing and work.

The eldest migrated in the end of the 90's from the northeast region and established their residences in the favelas of the wealthiest quarters of the south zone, including the Morro da Providencia, due to its proximity with these affluent regions. Family networks of migrants from the northeast will further increase the favela population in the city, as these networks function as a door to access to housing and faster insertion into the labour market (Ribeiro and Lago, 2001, p. 36).

The Morro da Providencia is called a "female favela", or a motherhood, by residents since many social projects and local civil society organizations are led by women. In the Morro da Providencia, vulnerability to labour exploitation is tackled with the leadership of mothers and grandmothers in a patchwork of actions. NGOs, families, churches, universities, human rights national and international funds, students and groups of people from the south zone boroughs form a network of mutual help and resilience, with the protagonism of local actors.

Data shows that women are a minority in the groups up to the age of 29, and the majority in the group of 30 onwards (IPP and IBGE, 2010a). It indicates a higher life expectancy for women than men, in accordance with the literature on life expectancy by gender and because of the greater vulnerability of men, either due to a lower access to health care or higher chance of being victimized in violent conflicts. Although being the majority of the residents in the Morro da Providencia, women have lower salaries when compared to men (IPP and IBGE, 2010b) and are

¹⁶ Expression used for the people born in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

mostly in the informal sector. According to Raquel Spinelli, leader of a relevant NGO from the region, this might happen because women find more job opportunities in the informal sector since they often have to attend to domestic and parenting obligations and house tasks (Spinelli, 2021).

Literacy levels vary depending on the age group of residents. Those above sixty years old show an illiteracy rate near to 60%, while the totality of those between twenty to twenty-four years are literate (IPP and IBGE, 2010c). These numbers, for one side, show an improvement on education level when compared to the level of education of the last generations of parents and grandparents, but still, school evasion is high. The interviews with the Center of Social Assistance of Morro da Providencia (de Oliveira and Pedreira, 2021) for this report called attention to the families prioritizing income generation rather than education.

With a lack of better options, some of them end up choosing to withdraw children from school during economic crises, either because they need to supplement income, or because child labour often exhausts the children to such an extent that school performance no longer sustains them in that space (de Oliveira and Pedreira, 2021). In the same direction, specialists point out that school evasion and child labour is often observed in the favelas of the wealthiest quarters in the south zone and center, due to a more facilitate access to work (IPP, 2013, p. 20).

Barriers to university are a reality in the Morro da Providencia. Numbers for the port area estimate approximately 2% of the residents who have attended the university, based on data from the last official survey in 2010. Considering that the numbers for the Morro da Providencia are equivalent or lower than the former's (port area) it can be assumed that less than 2% of the residents attended the university. For that matter, 59.5% of the respondents to the questionnaire for the report in 2021 said most of the people they know in the favela have just finished elementary school.

To complete the scenery of vulnerability to labour exploitation, the average salary in the Morro da Providencia is half the national minimum wage, with self-employed workers such as street vendors, domestic work, civil construction, food, and shops. Also, the respondents of the questionnaire called attention for the COVID 19 impact on children in the Morro da Providencia with 74.5% drawing attention to an increase in child labour, and 80% stressing the high numbers of unemployed workers specially amongst women.

The case study on the Morro da Providencia, a favela localized in the port area of the city of Rio de Janeiro, showed some aspects of the history and culture that were analysed in combination with current socioeconomic indicators of the state, city and local. The results of the analysis are explored in the next section, when the social determinants of vulnerability to exploitation and modern slavery are presented and discussed.



Image: Luiz Baltar

5. *Social determinants:*

In this section, the contextual data of the country will be analysed together with data and empirical findings related to the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, with an emphasis on Morro da Providencia. But first, we discuss the theoretical framework in which this investigation rests, as well as the justification for the social determinants selected.

Starting with the theoretical approach, we believe that an analysis of social determinants should seriously consider social stratification theories, as well as studies of inter and intra-generational mobility. In these studies, the attributes/characteristics of individuals, their families and their location predicts social status and social outcomes. In other words, social origin helps to predict the “destiny” of specific social groups, given their interaction with others and the resources they make available (Hout, 2015).

The studied favela's population not only has characteristics that indicate greater social vulnerability, but they also lag behind the other areas of the city, given the reproduction of inequality over time. Here we take inspiration from the Hasenbalg-Silva (2003) model, as

synthesized by Lima, Rios and França (2013, p. 58).

The proposed analytical model [...] allows us to understand the intergenerational transmission process of social inequality by presenting the components of the stages of the social life cycle. According to the authors, the cumulative process of disadvantages, associated with discriminatory mechanisms throughout its trajectory, is what characterizes inequalities in Brazil. It is to say, the determinants of inequalities must be observed taking into account the so-called productive factors (for example, education and experience), but the non-productive factors must also be emphasized (the determining effect of colour, gender or region), corresponding to the phenomena of discrimination and segmentation.

Thus, the determinants discussed below should not be taken individually or in isolation: they combine and produce, in the end, the conditions through which this population can be described as socially vulnerable.

- *Gender*

The sexual division of social roles, with differences in wages, prestige, and the risks taken in each job, appears central to thinking about how men and women structure their personal and family lives. There is a vast literature indicating that women earn less for the same functions, both in formal and informal sectors, and are more subject to moral coercion and physical and sexual violence at work.

- *Race*

Racial bias is widely documented in the Brazilian social sciences, as it pervades all social relations. This determinant becomes one of the most important since residents of Rio's favelas are generally black (not white).

- *Migration*

Migration is a central phenomenon for understanding Brazil, especially the occupation of Rio's favelas. Regional inequalities have historically driven migrations in the country, with a large population coming from the north and northeast to the south, southeast (where Rio de Janeiro city is located) and midwest regions for better life opportunities. Much of this migration was characterized as rural exodus, a trend that lost intensity in the 2000s (da Cunha, 2019, p. 210). Although not all migrants fit this profile, almost all inherit inequalities of origin (national or international).

- *Education*

The effects of education and qualification on the different stages of life are monumental. A low level of formal education can drastically reduce opportunities for well-paid work. Difficulty in accessing and claiming rights also involves knowledge acquired in schools and universities.

- *Work / occupations / poverty*

The preceding factors intertwine and help to explain the jobs taken by this population, of paramount importance given the emphasis on modern slavery adopted in this report. Some jobs are more precarious and poorly paid, trapping low-income people in vicious circles by compromising access to education and social mobility for future generations. Also, this population is more vulnerable to unemployment.

So far, we've discussed the determinants related to the characteristics of favela residents. However, external processes, agents and events may also contribute to making this population more or less vulnerable to slavery.

- *Stigma*

Social stigma can be understood as a historical construction based on the characteristics of the residents (favelados) and the locality (favela). Stigma is a relevant determinant insofar it prescribes social scripts and the creation of social patterns expected from the position of individuals in society. Furthermore, in addition to the possible internalization of prejudices and self-segregation of favela residents, there is concrete evidence of an income bias against favelados (Neri, 2010).

- *The role of the State / governmental stakeholders*

The role of the State and governmental stakeholders permeates all the determinants discussed so far. In Brazil, economic development is accompanied by greater access to several public services (Arretche, 2019b). In the case of Rio's favelas, however, we highlight the performance of the State in perpetuating social abandonment and disparities in the limited access to services, public policies and the justice system.

- *The Covid-19 pandemic*

Last but not least, the current Covid-19 pandemic, despite being a temporary factor, has had devastating effects on the poor population. In favelas, it would be no different, and the relationship between the pandemic and loss of income and changes in working conditions tends to be more complex in these areas of the city than for other social strata.

But how exactly did these determinants appear in the data produced and collected? I.e. How do they work to make this population more vulnerable?

- *Gender*

Gender relations in Morro da Providencia largely echo those existing in Brazilian society: women are paid less and are more occupied with housework and parenting. Family arrangements composed of grandmothers, mothers and their respective children and grandchildren are not unusual. As for occupations, a good part of the women seem to take responsibility for domestic work. Some often try more flexible professions, opting for jobs close to their residence and family. Teenage pregnancy and lack of family planning were identified as factors that hinder access to better jobs and higher education for young and adult women. The interviews also revealed that men seem to prioritize formal occupations, which is an expected position since most of them work long journeys in physically intensive professions; they also have more difficulties accessing social assistance systems.

- *Race*

Racial discrimination often implies lower chances in schooling and particularly in the labour market. As a result, the black population find jobs in more informal and precarious occupations. However, although some interviews have found this social determinant particularly important, other interviewees reported that racial bias does not seem to be a key factor, as it reacts to different periods of greater or lesser discrimination. If racism seems to structure relationships and opportunities, racial self-assertion has also created niches in the ethnic-racial economy, as exemplified in hair salons focused on Afro aesthetics, which have the participation of African immigrants.

• *Migration*

The interviews pointed to a greater vulnerability of migrants, mainly because they are already in a weakened position while searching for opportunities. Migrants would thus be more likely to accept "any job", in addition to having, in principle, fewer social ties and knowledge of the implicit rules of coexistence in the favelas and Rio de Janeiro. Interviewees confirm the tendency of new migrant groups coming from other Rio de Janeiro city zones and the metropolitan area seeking for housing and employment. Immigrants, many of whom come from sub-Saharan African countries, Haitians, Bolivians and Venezuelans, are embedded in several ethnic economic networks. Language and cultural barriers can present challenges to the internalization of these people into Brazilian society, which could make them more vulnerable due to the lack of knowledge of safeguarded public policies and rights.

• *Education*

Education is a typically cumulative social determinant. In Morro da Providencia, lower levels of education and job skills reserve fewer formal/better-paid jobs for the population. The semi-structured interviews indicate that many families can't keep their children studying, many of whom go to work in their spare time to improve their daily earnings, thus compromising future individual and family income. Some interviews report a kind of discouragement/devaluation of formal education by the residents, a phenomenon understood by some interviewees as a "labour culture" to the detriment of an "educational culture". There are also adverse effects associating educational levels with the resident's lack of knowledge of rights and access to justice, as seen in the granting of social benefits provided by CRAS. Furthermore, respondents located in the field of study had a vague knowledge of the concept of modern slavery, a hint at the misinformation about workers rights that takes place in Morro da Providencia.

• *Work/ occupations/ poverty*

For these reasons, favela residents end up working in precarious occupations characterized by intensive and extensive workloads, lower wages, instability and lack of rights. Enhanced by the pandemic, there has been a rise in jobs related to the so-called gig economy,

which is driven by smartphones and deliveries. The sector is composed of occupations that often don't guarantee labour rights, nor does it establish labor relations. We highlight that the Brazilian public policy does not have the necessary means to rescue those being exploited by this sector, because there is not an employment relationship that typifies the abuse, hence it can not be considered as modern slavery. They also experience prolonged periods of unemployment, shifting between jobs frequently, hence tend to accept precarious jobs more easily due to the imperative of survival. The interviews, however, cast doubt on the occurrence of modern slavery in Morro da Providencia, even though the interviewees are aware of residents who are subject to labour relations that met at least one of the necessary criteria to qualify, according to the law and guidelines, as a condition analogous to slavery. The reports pointed to possible transgressions in domestic work, surveillance services and supermarket chains.

• *Stigma*

Stigma appeared in the interviews as a possible greater acceptance or conformity towards situations of exploitation in the most varied forms, including precarious work and those analogous to slavery. According to one interviewee, residents who perform as "favelados" make it even more difficult to secure jobs and social relations with the people living outside favelas. Stigma is also reproduced by actors outside Morro da Providencia. There are several reports of discrimination. One interview revealed that managers avoid hiring residents in business activities around the community due to distrust of this population. The stigma is such that some interviews speculate about the construction of stereotypes between native and migrant residents (newcomers). In these narratives, the migrant populations should be praised for their determination and resilience when taking part in precarious jobs. Native residents, however, are described as being "lazy" or unwilling to take risks to overcome their poverty statuses. As for the location of Morro da Providencia, the favela and the central region have been the housing destination for internal migration in the city of Rio de Janeiro and other cities in "Greater Rio" (the metropolitan area of the town), increasing the concentration of the vulnerable population and possibly the risks of labour violations.

- *The role of the State / governmental stakeholders*

The State appears as a direct and indirect social determinant. It supports the maintenance of stigma by offering few public services to the population and not correcting historical inequalities. Some interviews reported a historical complaint from the favela's population: that communities such as Morro da Providencia only get to know the State by the police repression forces due to drug trafficking that takes part in some parts of the community. The treatment usually given to favelas is insulation, a zone free from legislation and the provision of services and rights. Concerning modern slavery, the dismantling and lack of state coordination, personnel to meet the demands of the population and, above all, the capacity to monitor allegations of labour violations were pointed out in the interviews. There is also no adequate training of existing personnel to detect specific demands and possible violations happening to this population. We here stress that the legal concept of modern slavery and the established repair mechanisms were unknown by some professionals of social assistance. Our survey points out that the inhabitants in Morro da Providencia know public policies and initiatives (NGOs working in the region 83,8%, Public Defender's Office 76,5%, CRAS 66,2% and Labour inspection 55,4%). The majority of interviewed residents, however, do not know what modern slavery is (77%) and 92,2% are unaware of its reporting mechanisms.

- *The Covid-19 pandemic*

As expected, the pandemic is severely affecting the lives of the residents, whereas 70% believe that the current situation worsened labour conditions. The loss of income has made them more vulnerable due to their insertion in the informal labour market, which happens to be more affected by lockdowns. It is the case of hawkers, who depend on street commerce and the income from workers who started working in home offices. In the beginning of lockdowns, there was a rush in the search for emergency aid, food and other resources, which clogged the system for a while. Some interviewees pointed out that to this day there are people who have not accessed the aid promised by the State. Among those who managed to access, these

became the only source of income and subsistence¹⁷. The impact of the Covid-19 was determinant for the rise in child labour as well. According to our survey, 79,9% believe that the current context was responsible for the rise in numbers of children who have to work, and 15,7% believe that there was a reduction. We point out that some interviews report that child labour in the region of Morro da Providencia can be seen in services such as: hawkers, local street fairs and construction sites. All these sectors were paralyzed when lockdown was in place. It is unclear how much the pandemic has affected specific populations such as migrants and immigrants in this locality.

¹⁷ It is worth mentioning that the federal aid program offered R\$ 600 (about U\$ 115) a month for each family that requested the benefit. This amount was revised in 2021. Nowadays the payment checks are about R\$ 150-375 (U\$ 29-72).

Image: @JR (Jean René)

The *Casa Amarela Providência* (Providência's Yellow House) is the highest part at Morro da Providência and exists since 2009. It is a social project, focused on education, arts and social support. It is also a symbol of resilience.

6. Conclusions:

We begin the conclusion of this report by recovering the findings discussed in the previous section. What are the social determinants, and how are they related to modern slavery in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro? Studying them from the Morro da Providencia case, we believe that certain factors make this population more vulnerable to situations of exploitation. Gender and racial inequalities, but also education, migration, poverty, the Covid-19 pandemic and the role of the State and other governmental stakeholders: all of this helps to explain why favelas have potential victims of modern slavery. Morro da Providencia, in particular, has gone through a century of dramatic social changes. Slavery pervades its foundation and the history of the central region of Rio de Janeiro.

However, despite these social determinants having been traced and identified with the help of qualitative and quantitative data, we believe that the study so far can be considered "inconclusive", although this is not a significant problem from a scientific point of view. In other words, this report can be considered as "unsolved" not because these social determinants and their mechanisms are not relevant or because we do not know exactly how they intertwine to make this population a target of labour violations. It is so because we do not know much about the actual existence of modern slavery in the Morro da Providencia. Even though this was not the leading question of this project, the concrete evaluation of modern slavery in the favelas ends up being decisive for the debate on social determinants to advance.

Once we've discussed these points, the main conclusion of this report is that there is a greater social vulnerability of the population residing in favelas in relation to non-residents as a result of structural inequalities of the Brazilian society. It is not clear, however, that this social vulnerability necessarily translates into greater forms of exploitation, such as modern slavery, at least within the parameters of Brazilian law (although we continue to believe that the existence of these violations are likely and expected in this social space).

Given the design of this investigation and the fact that it is still a work in progress, it is possible that:

1. in fact, there is no direct/necessary connection between favelas and modern slavery, particularly from the Brazilian antislavery laws, ordinances and public policies;

and/or

2. that the study has not been able to apprehend and precisely highlight modern slavery in this favela so far.

As for the first situation (the non-automatic relationship between favela and slavery), we believe that it is essential to elaborate competing and complementary hypotheses that explain these apparently “counterintuitive” findings based on social determinants. After all, why are favela inhabitants, despite being more vulnerable, not usually rescued from slave-like working conditions? Why do they not compose the usual profile of enslaved workers in Brazil?

Considering the non-existence (or not expressive occurrence) of modern slavery in the favelas and on favelados, and more specifically on Morro da Providencia, it is necessary to consider the hypothesis of the local agency. It manifests itself in the historical and cultural resilience of this favela, as seen in section “Rio de Janeiro, favelas and Morro da Providencia”. Furthermore, and in close relationship with this explanatory path, social, ethnic and family networks (including here migrants/immigrants) can be decisive factors to provide the material and social means by which residents are not usually facing working conditions analogous to slavery and other oppressions. Yes, the residents of favelas like Morro da Providencia are poor, but they often help themselves. They know each other, develop bonds, build social and political organizations and display social cohesion despite conflicts and other issues (which affect any community, we must say).

Concerning the poverty of the local population, one should consider that, despite being (very) poor, we are talking about a community embedded in the economic centre of the second-largest city in the country. It is not the poorest and most abandoned part of Rio de Janeiro city (which happens to be the western zone of Rio, where there are more miserable people) (Neri, 2010, p. 34). This geographic

insertion, we believe, favours the emergence and maintenance of social ties and networks; it also provides access to rights and public policies offered by the State.

This consideration immediately leads us to discuss the research framework. In the course of the study, we came across the possibility of confusing the misery, poverty and social abandonment by the State that unfortunately characterize this population as a necessary factor driving people into modern slavery. However, it cannot be stressed enough that correlation does not imply causation. Furthermore, there are causes that, even though can be described as necessary, are not, on their own, sufficient to support explanations.

Now, as to the second problem (i.e. that the study did not have access to adequate evidence), several issues seem to be relevant. These show the complexity and social richness of favelas, as well as the theoretical, legal and infrastructural limitations that residents, researchers, policy makers and bureaucrats have to deal with when studying and fighting modern slavery in Brazil, particularly in urban settings of global cities.

As discussed in the Context section, it is clear that we face a problem in the frontier of the conceptual definition of modern slavery, a definition that should be able to describe other realities than that of the rural world or situations that are not entirely dependent on the *sine qua non* bond between workers and employers. Here, it seems unavoidable the need to adopt a perspective of long historical duration (as we've done in the Context section) when reassessing/resignifying the work ties of the residents of this region, especially if we remember the existence of various modalities of enslavement that happened in the colonial period, like that of the "escravos de ganho" engaged in urban scenarios.

The limitations of the conceptual definition of Brazilian antislavery legislation have severe practical implications. In the current state of affairs, and despite its broad and recognizably progressive character compared with other countries, this definition seems to make a good part of the workers employed in urban economic circuits invisible. The production of data on people working in conditions analogous to slavery depends on this legal framework. With insufficient transparency and in the absence of more granular labour inspection databases, it is hard to make any robust inferences about the country's enslaved population, especially those rescued in cities.

This verdict may explain the findings of this report. For example, according to one of the interviewees, one of the main factors that explain the failure to carry out inspections and the proper flagrant modern slavery is the fact that many urban workers who work in precarious conditions do not sleep in the accommodation offered by employers. It is so because most workers have their own houses in the city. In other words, it is not that infractions do not happen: they are underreported, a reality shared with several social issues, such as violence against women and the sexual abuse of minors.

The capacity and performance of the Brazilian State (in its various administrative levels) also seems to be central. We repeat here the arguments developed earlier in the section on social determinants, now focusing on the impact of the State's role in perpetuating these social inequalities and, worse still, the existence of modern slavery.

As for state capacity, this research highlighted the lack of staff (e.g. the number of labour auditors working in the most socially vulnerable locations) as well as the hard access of bureaucrats in these locations, especially due to the context of police violence that characterizes most favelas in Rio. Public education, a responsibility of the State and a right of their citizens, also directly affects the (social) construction of these data. For example, there are gaps/insufficiencies in social assistance services training more accessed by residents of Morro da Providencia.

As for favela residents, there are no educational and awareness programs for the community to safely and regularly activate channels to expose modern slavery circumstances. How can residents report labour violations if 1) they don't know/are not aware of the legislation and 2) they don't know the institutions and public channels to report such crimes? Again, although the majority of the community reports are unaware what modern slavery is about, when asked if they know people subjected to working conditions with any of the characteristics necessary for the crime of modern slavery to be typified, the answer is generally yes, especially when we conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews.

We believe that we have achieved our goal of opening up a window for debate by identifying the social determinants that drive favela inhabitants to a greater vulnerability to modern slavery. Despite the discussion in this concluding section, in one way or another, the potential vulnerability of this population is not up for debate. In any case, it is necessary to discuss gaps and new directions for future investigations.

Perhaps one of the main obstacles faced in this report is its focus on a region/locality and not on occupations or niches of specific jobs where there is certainty or a greater probability of slavery infractions. It is also possible to move forward in the study of the exploitation that takes place among residents themselves in informal commerce (e.g. economic circuits of street vendors) and in illegal markets, such as drug trafficking, prostitution and child labour. Investigating these activities, however, would involve a salutary effort to consider modern slavery beyond formal employment bonds as for the Brazilian legislation, an effort beyond the scope of this report.

Finally, although it is also beyond the scope of this study, we are tempted to underline intervention schemes and recommendations for studying and fighting contemporary slavery in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. In particular, the social construction of the identity¹⁸ of ex-enslaved actors demanding reparatory rights seems crucial to us, with an emphasis on the performance of these actors in their cause, i.e. empowering local actors to resist modern slavery. The possible proposals at the moment partly reflect what we have been discussing so far:

- 1) the need to rethink the role and capacity of the State and stakeholders in exercising available institutional actions;

and

- 2) the redesign and improvement of several interconnected public policies with an intersectional approach (infrastructure, education, etc.).

¹⁸ This insight was inspired by the process of the social construction of workers identity and, more specifically, unemployed workers, as described in the literature on the economic sociology of labour markets (Nadya Araujo Guimarães, 2002).

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