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Final project report

Citizen Security for All

Gender and Security in
El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico



Citizen Security for All: Gender and Security in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico

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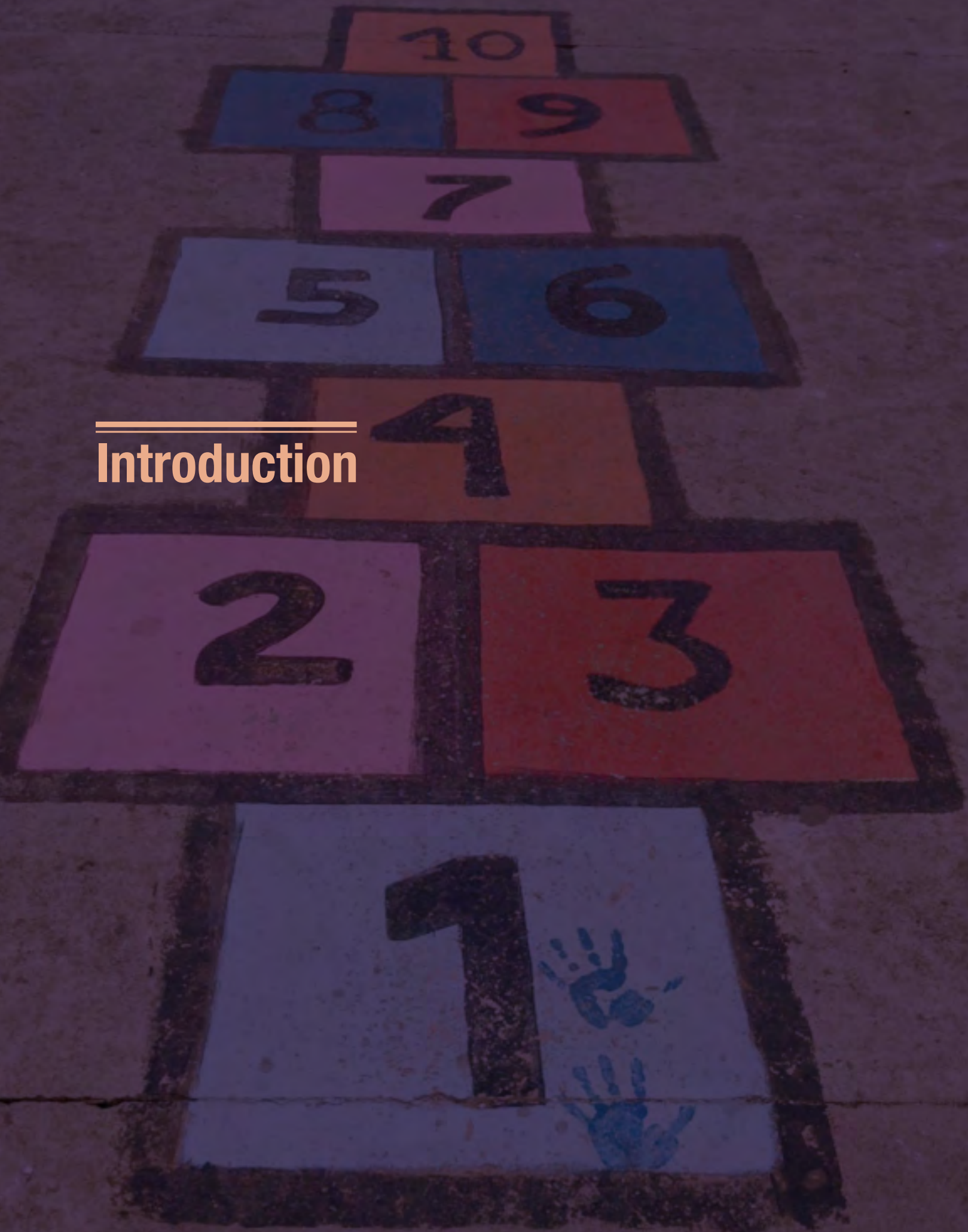
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Introduction





The Pan American Development Foundation (**PADF**) and the Organization of American States (**OAS**)—with support from the United States Agency for International Development (**USAID**)— seek to develop a better understanding of how to incorporate comprehensive gender perspectives in citizen security initiatives in the Latin American and Caribbean (**LAC**) region through the research project *Citizen Security for All*.

This report contributes to a holistic understanding of insecurity by addressing the historically invisible consequences that violence has for women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and other) persons, with a specific focus on three countries profoundly impacted by these issues: El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico.

Through documentary analysis, in-depth interviews with specialists, focus groups, and discussions with project participants, this study analyzes whether the legal, institutional, and systematic frameworks addressing insecurity in these countries include a perspective on the different effects that crime and violence exert on people according to their sex assigned at birth, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

The main objective of the report is to outline key recommendations for future initiatives, ensuring that projects (in their design, activity scope, expected outputs and outcomes, and performance indicators) address insecurity with effective gender mainstreaming that responds to the specific challenges faced by different population groups.¹

PADF appreciates the openness and willingness of representatives and national authorities across the justice, security, and gender sectors who offered insights for this research, as well as the subject matter experts who participated in various focus groups and webinars. Special thanks is also extended to USAID implementers in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico.

¹ While this study is not intended to address gender safety in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it includes information and considerations that illustrate the consequences of crime and violence during this period. It is recommended that future projects carry out an evaluation on the incidence and consequences of COVID-19 on the dynamics of gender-based violence in the region



Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean

The increasing incidence of crime, coupled with high rates of insecurity experienced throughout LAC, represents one of the most urgent shared challenges facing governments in the region. Criminal organizations with significant territorial control, the consumption and trafficking of controlled substances, a worrisome increase in gender-based violence, high levels of impunity and corruption, and the growing circulation and possession of illegal weapons exact a high cost on the population and have permanent consequences on growth and development in LAC.²

Though a mere 8% of the world population, LAC countries account for 37% of all homicides globally.³ Of the 50 most dangerous cities in the world, 42 are in the region⁴. Despite the high occurrence of violence resulting in deaths, less than 10% of homicides are solved.⁵ Consequently, individuals in the region live with both high levels of insecurity, as well as a deep distrust in the authorities and institutions in charge of protecting them.⁶

Factors that make the region particularly vulnerable to crime and violence include structural inequality, high poverty levels, and a lack of employment opportunities. Additionally, limited access to social guarantees such as health, education, formal labor markets, and effective political participation increase the risk factors for engagement in criminal activity.⁷ In contexts where the state has little (or no) capacity to respond to these challenges in a comprehensive and inclusive way, some people (mainly youth) find in illegal activities a place to belong, a community, and the only available economic alternative. Adding a development perspective to effective law enforcement

2 For a complete analysis of the consequences of crime on development, see IDB (2017). *Los costos del Crimen y la Violencia*. Washington. Available at: <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/spanish/document/Los-costos-del-crimen-y-de-la-violencia-Nueva-evidencia-y-hallazgos-en-Am%C3%A9rica-Latina-y-el-Caribe.pdf>

3 UNODC (2019). *Estudio mundial sobre el homicidio*. Viena. Available at: www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/global-study-on-homicide.html

4 Average of Latin America and the Caribbean. Jaitman, Laura & Stephen Machin (2016). "Crime and Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: towards evidence-based policies." CentrePiece. Winter 2015/2016

5 Seguridad, Justicia y Paz (2018). "Las 50 ciudades más violentas del Mundo." Report. México. Available at: <http://www.seguridadjusticiaypaz.org.mx/>

6 Ben Raderstorf, Carole et al (2017). *Beneath the Violence: How Insecurity Shapes Daily Life and Emigration In Central America*. LAPOP/Dialogue. <https://www.thedialogue.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Crime-Avoidance-Report-FINAL-ONLINE.pdf>

7 InfoSegura - PNUD/RBLAC (2020). *La Cara Escondida de la Inseguridad: Violencia Contra las Mujeres en Centroamérica y República Dominicana*. InfoSegura. Panamá. Available at: <https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/presscenter/articles/la-cara-escondida-de-la-inseguridad--violencia-contra-las-mujere.html>

is, therefore, essential.

While men are the most likely victims (and perpetrators) of crimes resulting in death,⁸ violence against women reflects a culture of forced subordination that has been recognized by governments as an affront to human dignity and a manifestation of historically unequal power relations.⁹ This violence, “a product of structural gender factors that have unpinned unequal power relations between genders, has preserved violent hegemonic masculinities and the prevalence of stereotypes justifying and promoting all types of violence,” remains a challenge with serious consequences for the entire population of Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁰ This is why two out of three female murder victims are killed by their partners, ex-partners, or male relatives.¹¹ In most cases, the state does not even have the capacity to document and analyze the real extent of insecurity faced by women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community.¹²

Addressing the root causes of violence, rigorously documenting its incidence, and strengthening prevention mechanisms are fundamental components to reducing insecurity in the region.¹³ Considering that high levels of poverty,¹⁴ limited access to public services, and high rates of administrative corruption (among other factors) affect vulnerable groups twice as much, governments must take effective measures to concretely address the consequences of violence and crime on these distinct groups. The following analysis is a step in this direction.

8 Men constitute 80% of violent death victims and are responsible for 93% of these crimes.

9 Convención Interamericana para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia contra la Mujer, Convención Belém do Pará. Disponible en <https://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/tratados/a-61.html>

10 InfoSegura - PNUD/RBLAC 2020. Ibid.

11 CEPAL. Muerte de mujeres ocasionada por su pareja o ex-pareja íntima. Available at: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/muerte-mujeres-ocasionada-su-pareja-o-ex-pareja-intima>

12 De Grazia, Martin (2020). Crímenes de odio contra personas LGBTI de América Latina y el Caribe. ILGALAC. Buenos Aires. Available at: <https://www.ilga-lac.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cri%CC%81menes-de-Odio.pdf>

13 This was established by the Committee of Experts of the Follow Up Mechanism to the Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women – Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) in their Third Hemispheric Report, which focused on the responsibility of preventing human rights violations of women in accordance with the Belém do Pará Convention and the ensuing state responsibilities. MESECVI (2017) Tercer Informe Hemisférico sobre la Implementación de la Convención de Belém do Pará. Caminos por recorrer. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/TercerInformeHemisferico.pdf>

14 The feminization of poverty, a concept developed in the 70's, holds that economic poverty affects women more than men. According to the United Nations, 70% of poor people in the world are women, and one in five girls in the world lives in conditions of extreme poverty. Del Val, Vega Alonso (2020). La pobreza tiene género. Amnistía Internacional. Available at: <https://www.es.amnesty.org/en-que-estamos/blog/historia/articulo/la-pobreza-tiene-genero/>



Gender Perspective

This study deploys a non-binary, intersectional gender perspective.¹⁵ As such, the term “gender” refers to all individuals along the spectrum, deconstructing the traditional gender binary based on biological characteristics and the assignment of male or female sex at birth. Gender thus includes a wide spectrum of identities that must be considered and represented. Likewise, this report is based on an intersectional approach that recognizes gender as inseparable from issues of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age among other factors that affect levels of privilege and vulnerability. Furthermore, consistent with an intersectional gender perspective, this study is written in accordance with the rules of inclusive language,¹⁶ with the objective of democratizing language and giving visibility to all genders across the spectrum. Use of this language, which is proposed for any development program, seeks to promote inclusion through communication whereby gender-neutral terms are used when speaking of different populations, rejecting assumptions that masculine terminology includes the feminine.¹⁷

¹⁵ Intersectionality is a term defined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989, as the phenomena by which each person is socially excluded or holds privilege based on belonging to multiple social categories. Therefore, when two or more categories converge on an individual's identity or situation, such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or the physical and mental capacity of an individual, among other things, the vulnerability of that individual and possibility of being excluded or limited in their rights and opportunities increases.

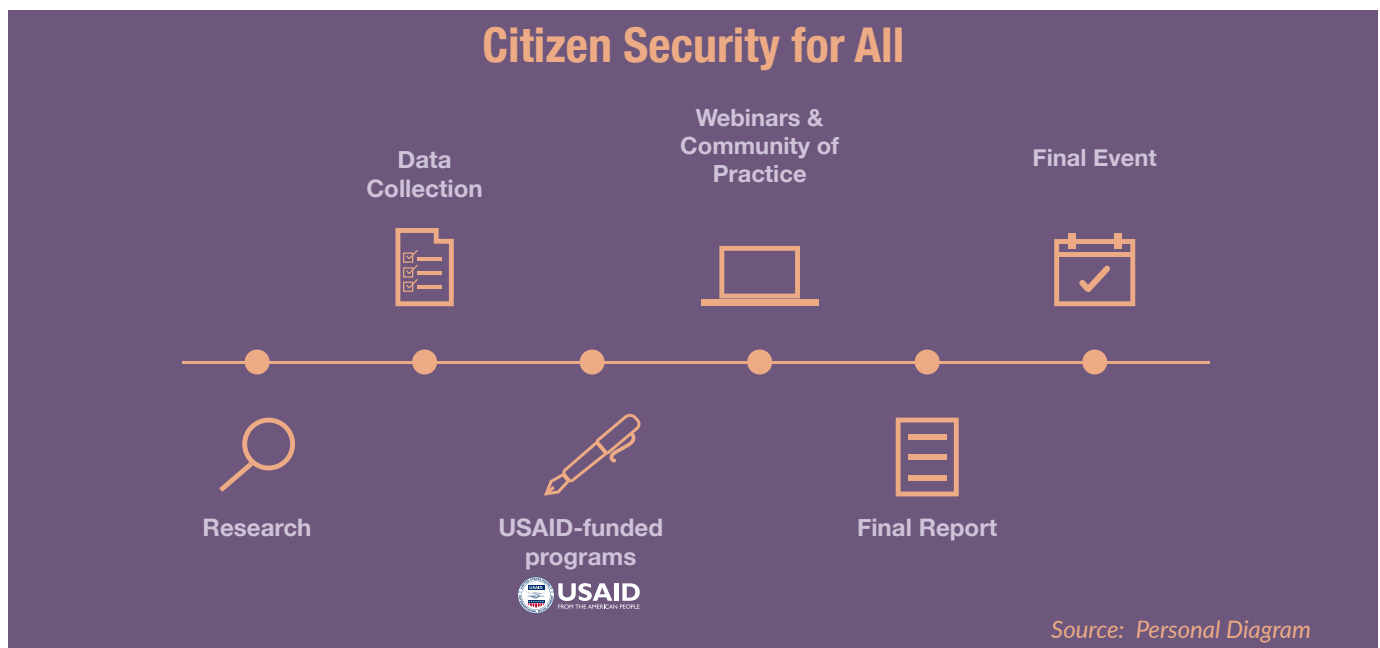
¹⁶ This becomes even more important in the Spanish versions of all documents produced under this grant.

¹⁷ For references on inclusive language, see Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes (2017). Guía para el Lenguaje Inclusivo. Gobierno de Chile. Available at: <https://www.cultura.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/guia-lenguaje-inclusivo-genero.pdf>

Methodology

With the support of USAID and under an agreement signed with the OAS, PADF implemented the *Citizen Security for All* initiative from April 2019 to March 2021. The project sought to increase understanding of how to effectively incorporate comprehensive gender perspectives into citizen security initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean. This would improve efforts to address women, girls, and other vulnerable communities in citizen security programming in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in the countries most affected by crime and violence. The project hopes to encourage organizations and individuals working in the citizen security space to fully comprehend why it is important to address issues affecting women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ individuals when developing projects. As a result of the project, general knowledge will be increased about how to successfully assess these needs in settings of high insecurity so that projects can appropriately address these issues from design to implementation.

The project was conducted in six stages, as detailed below.



Research

During the research stage, PADF accomplished the following:

- Developed standardized tools for data collection in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico
- Reviewed bibliographic sources specializing in general security issues, as well as security from a gender perspective
- Organized focus groups with representatives from government, academia, and other experts on security and gender issues
- Interviewed representatives of organizations in charge of citizen security projects, as well as

participants in USAID-funded projects

Data Collection

The data collection stage of the project included reviewing specialized data and information on gender and security, alongside interviews with a wide range of experts in the citizen security and gender fields. In total, PADF consulted around 250 sources of information, conducted 35 semi-structured interviews, and held four focus groups with more than 50 participants (see Annex I).

Projects supported by USAID

PADF, in consultation with the OAS and USAID, determined that a key element of its project would be learning about the planning, implementation, and scope of past projects in the region in order to incorporate best practices and identify areas of opportunity when prioritizing future citizen security initiatives. The PADF team (in consultation with USAID representatives and implementing organizations) interviewed key staff of the various citizen security projects to determine their impact. The analysis of these projects focused on understanding whether their approach included a gender perspective in order to inform future projects. The following projects were analyzed for this study:

El Salvador

- InfoSegura, implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- Justice Sector Strengthening Activity, implemented by Checchi and Company Consulting

Honduras

- Ensuring Education, implemented by DAI
- InfoSegura, implemented by UNDP

México

- PROJUSTICIA, implemented by TetraTech
- Youth Transforming Youth, implemented by Supera A.C.
- Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia, implemented by Chemonics International Inc.
- Social Reintegration Model for Juvenile Offenders, implemented by Reinserta

In an effort to share findings and recommendations from its research, PADF organized three virtual events in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico, as well as created a community of practice. Details are included in Annex II.

Structure of the Report

This report synthesizes the results of three extensive country-specific investigations on citizen security and gender developed between April 2019 and September 2020 in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico.¹⁸ Although information has been extracted from the national studies, this report does not attempt to be a consolidation or literal transcript of those analyses. Bearing in mind the practical nature of the Citizen Security for All project, each section presents a set of recommendations for the development of future public security projects that prioritize gender, along with a summary of its findings.

To illustrate security challenges from a gender perspective, the first chapter addresses various aspects of crime and violence affecting women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community in the region. Considering the importance of data to sufficiently understand these acts and thus build policies to address them, this section includes a gender analysis of the statistical systems within the target countries. This section argues that the lack of institutional capability, a pattern of underreporting cases of violence, and limited access to updated and representative datasets lead to incomplete knowledge of the consequences that crime imposes on these population groups, thus limiting the success of citizen security initiatives.

The second chapter analyzes how the legal and institutional frameworks in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico have been adapted to address the various manifestations of violence experienced by women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. Preventing violence and protecting victims' lives are minimum commitments in terms of human rights. Therefore, for future projects on these themes, it is essential to understand state capabilities and existing gaps in order to address these challenges.¹⁹

The third chapter examines donor investment on these issues, probing for effective practices and areas of improvement. Through USAID investment in projects focused on the many challenges facing insecurity, countries in the region have been able to make significant progress in improving institutional capacities and responses to crime and violence. Understanding the inclusion (or lack) of a gender perspective in these projects is key to prioritizing future investments.

Finally, the fourth chapter identifies the main findings and presents concrete, development-oriented recommendations that will ultimately address the challenges of citizen insecurity through inclusive gender mainstreaming. These recommendations are applicable to the entire Latin American and Caribbean region.

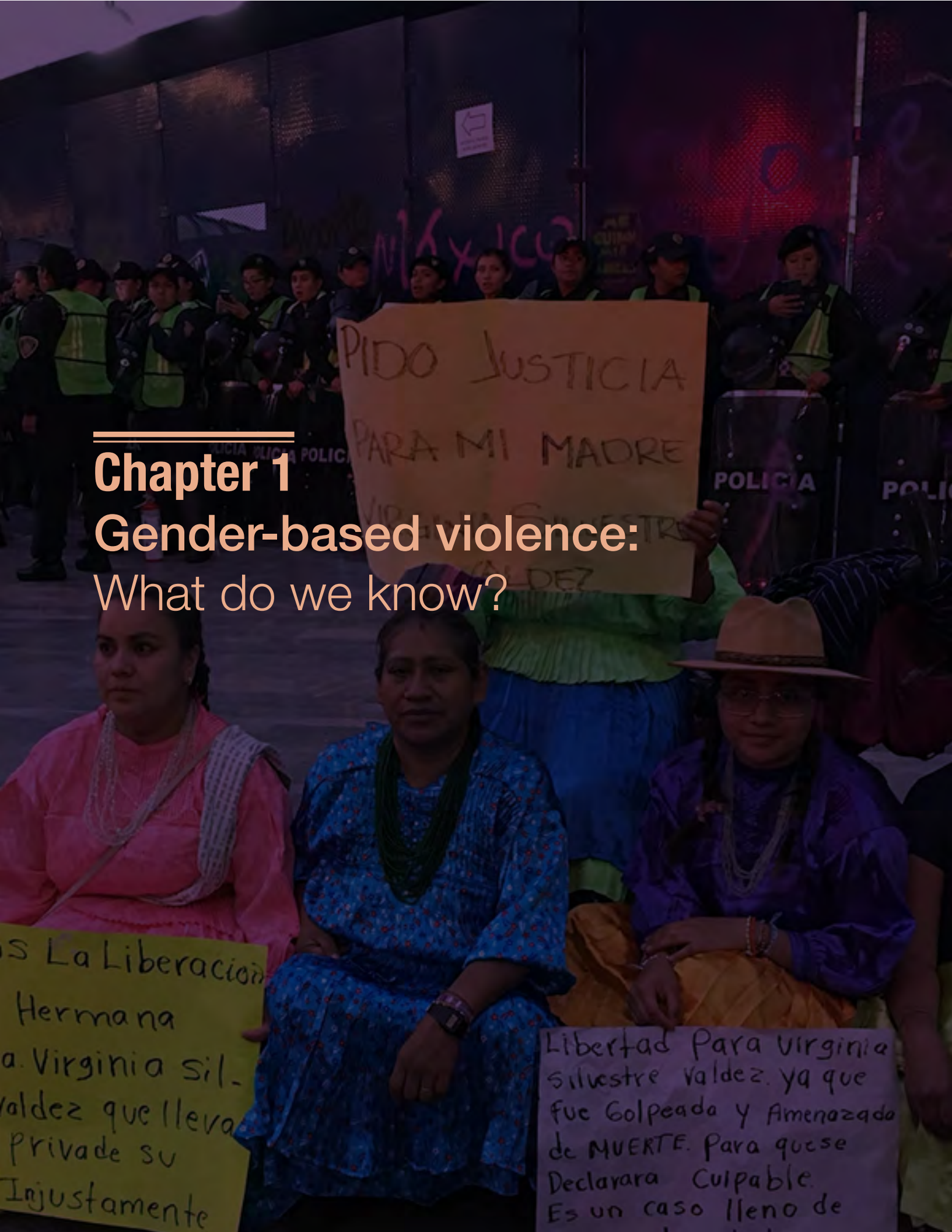
18 Due to PADF's regional presence and accumulated experience on security and gender issues, this report incorporates complementary information extracted from studies carried out in Colombia and the Dominican Republic. These studies are not part of the analysis carried out within the framework of this report, and their use is for illustrative purposes. Those interested in the national assessments may contact PADF to request a copy.

19 Similarly, in their Third Hemispheric Report, MESCEVI analyzed member state capacity to develop public policies, plans, and programs aimed at preventing violence against women, through their system of progress indicators to measure the implementation of the Convention.

Chapter 1

Gender-based violence:

What do we know?



s La Liberación
Hermana
a. Virginia Sil-
valdez que lleva
privada su
Injustamente

Libertad Para Virginia
silvestre valdez. ya que
fue Golpeada y Amenazado
de MUERTE. Para que se
Declarara Culpable.
Es un caso lleno de



The phenomena of insecurity throughout the region, although varied based on context, are produced and sustained by economic asymmetries, structural inequalities, high levels of corruption, and institutional weaknesses, amongst other obstacles.

This chapter's first section analyzes statistical data systems on citizen security in the region, as well as the challenges that persist in documenting violence in its various forms with an inclusive gender lens. Some recommendations are proposed to improve the gender perspective across statistical data systems. The second section addresses various forms of gender-based violence in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), including femicide, domestic and sexual violence, hate crimes, and discrimination, concluding with a study on violence within public security institutions.



Statistical data systems on violence in the region

In many LAC countries, there is a stark absence of accurate data and statistics on citizen security issues. Those interested in designing policies based upon empirical evidence face many challenges, including lack of quality information, limited depth and representativeness of available information, little transparency in sources, delays in making public data accessible and properly stored in government archives, and minimal coordination between the different institutions involved in data collection and/or management. Undoubtedly, the systems supporting data collection and statistical analysis on citizen security issues are incomplete across the region, especially when it comes to identifying and documenting the differentiated needs of women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. Put simply, the lack of information (and thus understanding) grows as the intersection of vulnerability does.

Even though states party to the Belém do Pará Convention²⁰ have committed to conducting research and producing information and statistics with a gender lens, they have for the most part been unable to document violence in an inclusive and representative manner. This gender-centered information is essential to promptly and efficiently monitor the scope of violence and guide evidence-based public policies.²¹

One of the greatest difficulties in obtaining quality data is related to low levels of reporting among victims of crime.²² The lack of a “reporting culture” in which victims feel safe to report the crimes they have suffered is due to various factors, including a widespread mistrust of institutional ability to fight crime and effectively protect victims against future reprisals by offenders. Even worse, existing protocols often re-victimize those who do report, thus discouraging the filing of complaints

20 The Belém do Pará Convention (1994) is an international human rights instrument adopted by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the OAS that establishes women's right to live a life free of violence. This inter-American human rights treaty has served as the basis for the adoption of laws and policies on prevention, eradication and punishment of violence against women of the States Parties to the Convention, as well as the formulation of national plans, organization of campaigns and implementation of care protocols and services, among other initiatives. Belém do Pará Convention. OAS. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/en/MESECVI/convention.asp>

21 MESECVI (2017). *Guía Indicadores*. Pg. 93 Available at: https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/Guia_Indicadores_BDP_ESP.pdf

22 The “dark figure” is as high as 90% in some countries of the region. This figure includes the total number of cases in which persons were victimized in a specific time and space but did not file a complaint to the appropriate authorities.

with authorities. This is particularly true for those who have suffered sexual crimes.²³

In Mexico, 9 out of every 10 crimes– and 99.7% of sex crimes– are not reported.²⁴

Consequently, available data does not reflect true crime levels in the region. This lack of reporting results in making violence and its consequences invisible, which further aggravates the precarious position of historically marginalized groups, such as the LGBTIQ+ community, indigenous and Afro-descendent communities, and women and girls. Underreported crimes (also called the “hidden figure”) become an obstacle in developing evidence-based prevention policies and citizen security initiatives.

According to the Small Arms Survey (a Geneva-based think tank on weapons and armed violence), 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide are in Latin America and the Caribbean.²⁵ Similarly, according to official data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC),²⁶ El Salvador has at least 6.8 femicides per 100,000 women (the highest rate in the region) and Honduras, 5.1.²⁷ In Mexico, at least 10 women die every day from gender-based violence (with a rate of 1.5 femicides for every 100,000 women). While these numbers are extremely high, when considered alongside the reality that this is a significantly underreported crime, the reality becomes even more stark. It is important to note that there is a serious problem with the proper investigation and recognition of femicide as a crime in many countries, which makes any comparative study difficult.

In response to growing insecurity, LAC countries have developed some initiatives to improve and professionalize their information systems, including projects that address data collection, standardization of indicators, and information transparency, among others.

Since the creation of the University Institute for Democracy, Peace, and Security and the implementation of the Observatory on Violence in 2018, Honduras has made progress in monitoring citizen security data and, in particular, recording gender-based violence.

Several initiatives supported by international cooperation and civil society organizations have also strengthened data systems. Since 2016, the Belém do Pará Convention Follow-up Mechanism (MESECVI) has been providing workshops on using indicators to measure violence against women, reaching 20 states party to the Convention, including El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico. Other examples include USAID's InfoSegura program in Central America and the Caribbean²⁸ (focused on modernizing how violence indicators are collected and improving information sharing between data institutions on violence and citizen security),²⁹ and independent observatories tasked with documenting violence not recorded by official statistical systems.³⁰

Even so, the LAC region continues to face significant challenges in consolidating an efficient and inclusive statistical data system.

23 Angel, Arturo (2019). “Más del 90% de los delitos denunciados en el país no se resuelven, muchos los ‘congela’ el MP”. *Animal Político*. Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2019/08/delitos-denuncia-impunidad-mexico-justicia/>

24 Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública (2020). *Información sobre Incidencia delictiva*. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/sesns>

25 Small Arms Survey (2016). More Women than Men Killed in Some High-income Countries—New Study. Available at: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/about-us/highlights/2016/highlight-rn63.html> y CEPALSTAT (2020). Base de datos y Publicaciones Estadísticas. CEPAL. Available at: <https://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/Portada.html>

26 United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at: <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide>

27 Section Ib1 explains the concept of femicide in detail, defined as the violent gender-based death of women.

28 The InfoSegura website available at: <https://Infosegura.org/en/>

29 See Chapter III of this report

30 Independent observatories are citizen- or civil-society-led documentation mechanisms that generate data on crimes not documented in official systems. In collaboration with academia and topic area experts, these

Challenges and Opportunities in Establishing a Transparent, Representative, and Reliable Data System

For the purpose of this research, nine challenges were identified that prevent the establishment of a transparent, representative, and reliable data system on gender and citizen security. Should they be addressed, there is opportunity to better meet the needs of different groups across the region.



Lack of training at the institutional level

In LAC, most countries have established specific institutions to document the consequences that violence and insecurity have on women.³¹ However, despite having a specialized means of collection, consolidation, analysis, and dissemination of citizen security data, there is no training or appropriate investment in personnel to document and handle information from a gender perspective. More inclusive statistical data systems must include sustainable training for practitioners.



Specialized institutions without access to data

Authorities tasked with analyzing and documenting violence on a federal level do not have access to the information they need. They continue to depend on the capacity and willingness of judicial entities, protection agencies, healthcare organizations attending to victims, and other local or state-level response mechanisms to document and report data. These entities do not always comply with the duty to document violent crimes and update databases in accordance with existing legislation or procedures.



Misclassification of crimes

There is also a widespread issue of authorities lacking knowledge on existing laws and legal definitions of crimes, as well as how to apply them. This situation is particularly relevant in the case of femicide,³² which is often misclassified by poorly trained authorities, thus minimizing the number of cases recorded at national and regional levels.

“In Puebla, Mexico, authorities recorded 58 cases of femicide in 2019, while civil society organizations counted 79. The reason: possible underreporting due to not correctly classifying the crimes.”³³

Despite the high prevalence of femicide, most published data is based on incomplete collection systems. Gender-sensitive statistical experts explain that understanding the extent of this crime requires the combination of official data with that of civil society, independent observatories, as well as an external review of intentional and negligent homicides that could be misclassified.

31 These have generally been established in response to the commitments assumed by each State under the Convention of Belém do Pará, as well as various national laws that have been passed to contribute to a life free of violence. Details can be found in the legal framework section of Chapter II.

32 This study discusses the phenomenon of violence in section IB.

33 García, Dafne (2020). El acercamiento de este estudio al fenómeno de violencia se explica en el capítulo IB pag. 20. October. Available at: ladobe.com.mx/2020/10/subregistro-de-feminicidios



Another problem with statistical data systems throughout the region is a lack of standardization in monitoring and evaluation. Citizen security institutions, medical facilities that attend to victims, and entities in charge of consolidating information do not necessarily use the same indicators when measuring violence. Consequently, the data often presents significant discrepancies between local, regional, and national levels. Examples include the use of different age ranges when reporting on violence against women and the omission of indigenous women from violence surveys. In this regard, the variables for documenting feminicides, hate crimes, and sexual violence are different both within and across countries, which impacts the possibility of consolidating solid, representative data.

This lack of uniformity in indicators means much of acquired data is not comparable and, consequently, does not reflect the true incidence of violence faced by different groups in vulnerable situations.

The rate of violence in Honduras is measured based on the National Demographic and Health Survey, which takes a sample of women between the ages of 15 and 49. Based on the age ranges of the respondents, the index does not estimate the levels of violence in adults aged 50 and over, and omits information on violence against girls under the age of 14.³⁴

It is very important to promote collaboration between those working in the statistics and data systems with members of academia and improve the standardization of indicators and categories for citizen security initiatives.



A lack of technical skills and adequate technological resources remain obstacles to efficiently systematize information within citizen security institutions. While this also affects the statistical data system overall, it has a particularly adverse impact on documenting crimes that have historically been ignored.



Data systems continue to fail on issues of inclusion. There are no robust records of violence against indigenous, Afro-descendent, and LGBTIQ+ communities, among other vulnerable groups. Statistical strategies intended to strengthen the gender perspective have excluded LGBTIQ+ persons, leaving a serious gap in information. While indeed limited progress has been made to account for violence against women, there are still issues with consistent monitoring across rural and urban divides, age groups, and racial and ethnic backgrounds.

In 2018, El Salvador signed an agreement to collect information on the LGBTIQ+ community and identify hate crimes based on gender identity or sexual orientation³⁵. The agreement has yet to establish practical protocols to record this type of violence, resulting in no official documentation of these hate crimes

34 MESECVI/OAS (2017). Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2017-Honduras.pdf>

35 Inter-institutional Cooperation and Strengthening Agreement to Reconcile Homicide and Feminicide Figures between the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety, the Attorney General's Office, and the Supreme Court of Justice, 2018.



Information bias

In a region where systemic racism and discrimination based on socio-economic class are regrettable realities, it is critical to understand the different consequences of violence on already vulnerable groups. To date, information acquired about violence often excludes questions about the victim's sex assigned at birth, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and gender identity. This omission leads to incomplete information that does not consider, for example, whether a feminicide or hate crime is related to the ethnicity or race of the victim. This impedes authorities from understanding the intersection of vulnerabilities and victimhood. The study "Access to Justice for Indigenous Women" indicates that information produced and published by the state is insufficient in detecting the magnitude of racial discrimination in access to justice.³⁶ The lack of inclusive statistical insight begins with data collection tools, including how they are designed and the way in which the interviewers ask questions. In the region, this has disproportionately affected indigenous populations, which often are not represented in national data and statistics due in large part to language barriers.

The National Survey on the Dynamics of Household Relationships in Mexico represents a key tool for measuring violence against women and does not include an option to interview indigenous people who don't speak Spanish. If a woman surveyed does not speak Spanish, the survey is concluded without her testimony being recorded.³⁷

Violence against indigenous and Afro-descendant women in Latin America and the Caribbean has been minimally documented and current systems exclude key variables crucial to measuring discrimination by race or ethnicity.³⁸ In addition to including representative indicators, it is necessary to have trained personnel with knowledge of indigenous languages or who have access to interpretation to reduce biases in information collection.



Coordination with independent initiatives that document violence

Given the absence of proper statistical systems to document gender-based-violence in the region, many independent documentation initiatives have played a key role in ensuring the visibility of crimes that are not officially registered by the state.³⁹ Such initiatives include the Observatory of Violent Deaths of LGBTIQ+ Persons in Honduras,⁴⁰ the National Observatories on Hate Crimes and Femicides in various countries in the region, the Gender and COVID-19 Observatory,⁴¹ and "Nosotras Tenemos Otros Datos" in Mexico.⁴²

Given a lack of reliable data on gender-based violence, the National Citizen Observatory

36 Equis Justicia (2019). *Acceso a la Justicia para las Mujeres Indígenas*. Available at: https://equis.org.mx/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Informe-sombra_CERD_ESP.pdf

37 Ibid.

38 As indicated by the MESECVI in their various evaluation and monitoring reports available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/MESECVI/informeshemisfericos.asp>

39 Examples include: www.observatoriofemicidiomexico.org, observatoriofemicidioscolombia.org

40 See Catrachas Observatory, available at: <https://catrachas.org/index.php/es/about>

41 Observatorio de Género y COVID-19 en México. Disponible via: [Obsegenero-covid19.gire.org.mx](https://obsegenero-covid19.gire.org.mx)

42 <https://www.facebook.com/nosotrastenemosotrosdatos/>

on Femicide in Mexico was created by 50 civil society organizations with the objective of documenting, monitoring, and systematizing data on the administration and enforcement of justice for victims of feminicide and gender discrimination.

Independent observatories have played an important role in documenting hate crimes and other forms of violence against the LGBTIQ+ community that are not officially recorded in the region. Likewise, civil society initiatives documenting domestic violence have multiplied in recent months due to heightened need from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Best practices within independent observatories:

- Documentation of crimes not necessarily classified according to national laws
- Continuing documentation of gender-based crimes despite the COVID-19 health crisis
- Dissemination of information to identify different manifestations of violence through forums and recurring publications
- A call for community participation in citizen accountability activities
- Close coordination with civil society to obtain data and statistics
- Constant communication with authorities, demanding the incorporation of gender perspective in data systems and official statistics
- An in-depth breakdown of variables in documenting crimes so as to have more detail on victims of violence

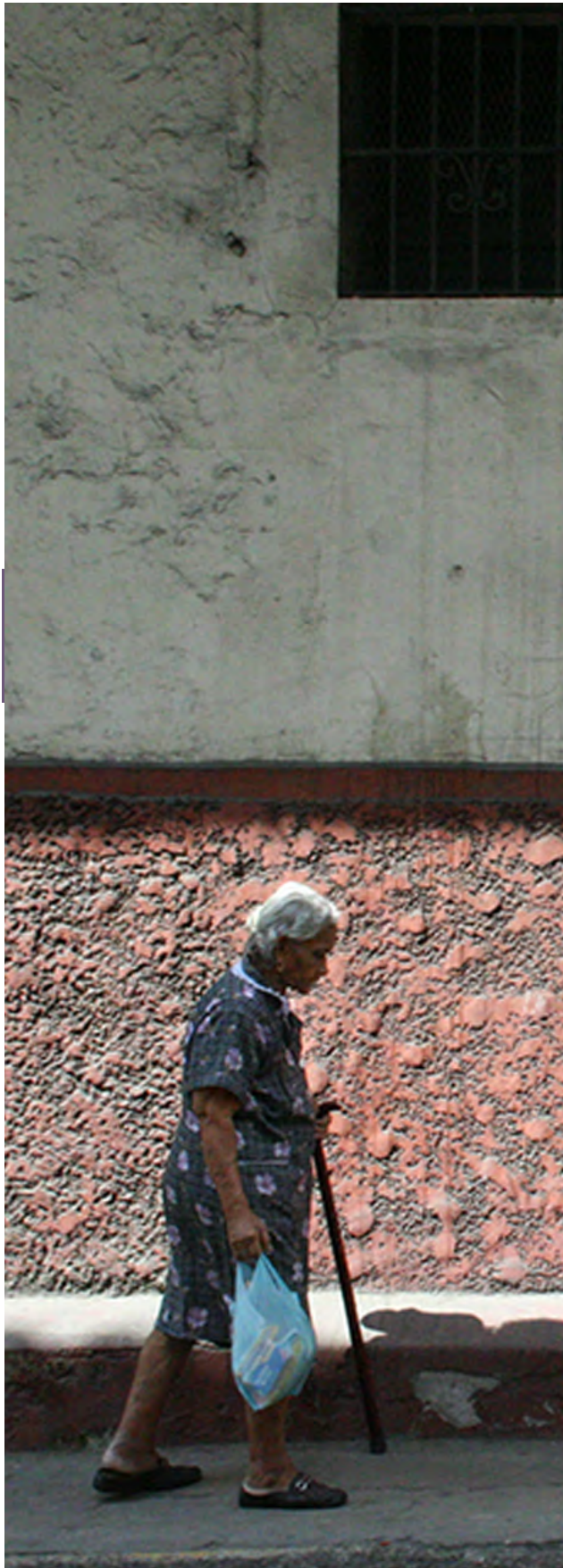


Admittedly, one of the greatest challenges facing these initiatives is their sustainability. The fragile structure of independent observatories, which depend heavily on international cooperation and political will, often results in their efforts being curtailed due to a lack of resources. Additionally, the absence of coordination between official documentation systems and independent observatories often reduces the impact of these initiatives.

Developing professional, comprehensive, and representative statistical systems is the first step to establish a functional citizen security strategy that addresses the different manifestations of violence against women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. The basis for developing public policies responding to these issues will remain insufficient and disproportionately biased against these groups so long as information on violence does not include a gender perspective throughout its collection, documentation, and systematization processes.

Recommendations for the Development of Representative Data and Statistics with a Gender Perspective

The availability and usage of data in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of public policies for citizen security is a critical component of developing initiatives that adequately respond to the challenges that violence imposes on different population groups. Having a reliable



data system requires political will, which is expressed through the provision of adequate resources, training of personnel, and development of long-term technical skills.

To properly understand insecurity from a gender perspective, systems are required to provide conclusive information on the incidence of violence in different populations to understand its causes and measure its consequences. To ensure that statistics accurately reflect the various phenomena of insecurity, it is critical that systems overcome the challenges that arise due to low levels of reporting in the region. Below are recommendations to address some of these challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean.

From gathering to disseminating information, statistical tools must be designed in an inclusive and representative manner

Mechanisms for collecting data must be intersectional and ensure broad representation.⁴³ When conducting a survey or otherwise acquiring insights, questions must address all components of identity to best capture the victim's experience. As such, including questions on surveys about age group, ethnicity, race, and access to resources is key to the ultimate presentation of accurate information. These surveys must stop excluding population groups due to problems with the questions (such as not including an option for their multi-dimensional or non-conforming identity) or the selection criteria of people surveyed. Strengthening information can help identify certain patterns of victimhood and crime.

Additionally, data must be broken down to ensure that different patterns of violence and victimization are understood and documented accurately; this will, in turn, identify the obstacles to security for vulnerable groups and guide strategies to address them

⁴³ The intersectional approach, defined in the introduction, is the phenomenon by which each individual suffers oppression, or holds privilege, based on them belonging to multiple social categories.

Violence differs based on location, presenting a clear rural and urban divide. This presents another reason to ensure intersectionality in data be acquired intersectionality, so that better initiatives can be developed to address distinct patterns of violence. Article Nine of the Convention of Belém do Pará establishes that states must consider “the position of vulnerability to violence that women may suffer due to, for example, their race or ethnicity, as a migrant, refugee or displaced persons.” It also demands states consider whether women are “subjected to violence when they are pregnant, disabled, underage, elderly, socio-economically disadvantaged, involved in armed conflict, or deprived of their freedoms.”

Train all participants in the statistical system to include a gender and inclusion perspective in collecting, registering, analyzing and publishing information to document violence

Apart from ensuring specialized tools, it is essential to have professionals who know how to apply them for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of accurate information. For this to happen, it is necessary to develop continuous gender-based education and training programs, both for those in charge of data collection, as well as the citizen security institutions that document violence and thus feed the national statistical data system on citizen security.

Despite high levels of staff turnover within statistical data institutions (particularly high among those in charge of data collection), all organizations need to conduct a clear, informative onboarding process so that forms and surveys are understood and applied in an inclusive manner. This onboarding is made stronger through developing efficient collection tools and professional documentation protocols that allow a simple and functional survey application, ultimately resulting in less data collection errors.

In El Salvador, Edgardo Amaya, Director of Information and Analysis for the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety, emphasizes the need to have more - and better - data on sexual violence.⁴⁴ He argues that one of the challenges is working with the Ministry of Health to identify cases of individuals affected by sexual assault and among those, to know how many went through the judicial system. With this, he explains, it would be possible to estimate the dark figure of sexual violence in the country.

In this sense, it is necessary to include all ministries involved in registering violence (women, health, public safety, education, economics, science, the judicial system and the statistical data offices) in across-the-board training to ensure that cases of violence are rigorously reported and that the documentation procedures are maintained and understood across departments. Trainings for the public sector must include topics of statistics with a gender perspective including the relevant legal frameworks and the protocols for care for victims of violence. This will ensure standardization to allow for generating representative and comparable data across the region.

In addition, academia's role in accompanying these learning processes is key, as is international cooperation in supporting initiatives that set forth innovative training mechanisms. These efforts will ensure all personnel involved in the systemization of gender violence data and statistics have

⁴⁴ Interview with Edgardo Amaya, Director of Information and Analysis in the Ministry of Justice and Public Security of El Salvador. 2019 (X. Ortiz, Interviewer)

the preparation and tools to effectively do their jobs.

Inter-institutional and intra-institutional coordination: between official data systems, independent observatories, and academia at the regional level

Coordination amongst public agencies and officials documenting violence remains fragmented, and dialogue between these groups and independent observatories is practically non-existent. Integrating information systems is necessary, such as streamlining technology, concepts, criteria, indicators, and methods used. Differences in how information is measured and territorially distributed from one institution to another create difficulties in processing and comparing data. It is critical to consider methods that strengthen coordination between the different agencies in charge of collecting statistics and receiving complaints.

In El Salvador, Amaya asserts that another need is improved data collection related to the cycle of violence; this will allow the proper identification of recurring cases of violence and an ability to address them in a timely manner. He explains that one proposal is to create a unique code to track the recurrence of an individual's care in the system, which would allow files to be created and shared between different agencies, thus improving processes in victim care, limiting the possibility of re-victimization, and ensuring continuity in victim protection protocols.

Establishing efficient processes for documenting violence through integrated and coordinated data collection protocols can also limit the possibility of re-victimization. With precise documentation tools, health and justice agency employees can professionally implement an appropriate care process without the need to repeat interviews from one agency to another. This also represents an opportunity to improve coordination between data and statistics systems. In this sense, investment in technology is critical to ensuring the availability of information for all relevant stakeholders, while maintaining security and privacy.

Finally, it is important to democratize the consolidation of data and statistics and to include civil society organizations in these efforts. With stronger protocols, processes, and standards for data acquisition, civil society organizations can keep better track of reporting and help fill in gaps where they may exist; without this streamlined approach, their information is hardly comparable to that of the national institutions. Independent observatories (if properly funded and consulted) can help in the process of consolidating state data with that of civil society organizations, as well as promote dialogue between these different key actors.

Instilling intersectional approaches to statistical data systems will prove pivotal to the successful design and execution of gender-inclusive citizen security programs. Without accurate data and information to build from, donors and implementers have understandably struggled to grasp the intricacies of the issues at hand. Armed with new, disaggregated, and accurate information, future investments in citizen security will better meet the distinct needs of women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community.

Gender-based Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean

Gender-based violence in LAC is a structural and normalized pandemic that reflects the cultural and social disparity amongst men, women, and non-binary persons in both the public and private aspects of life. Despite a high occurrence of gender-based criminal offenses such as feminicides, domestic violence, public harassment and others, information systems present serious deficiencies that make it difficult to understand the abundance of negative repercussions that gender-based violence imposes on vulnerable communities. Nevertheless, available data does shed light on the dangers that women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community face across the region, as well as how members of Afro-descendant and indigenous communities are subjected to even harsher realities.

Although it is still common in the region to separate domestic violence (traditionally considered a private matter) from citizen security as a public issue, this report is based upon the premise that both are clear incidents of crime that should be addressed in a comprehensive strategy to fully understand the overall consequences of gender-based-violence in the region.



14 of the 25 countries with the **highest rate of global feminicides are in LAC** (CEPALSTAT, 2020)

More than 3,800 cases across **33** countries of women being murdered of the basis of their gender were documented in 2019 (ONU mujeres, 2017)



80% of the worldwide **hate crimes against the LGBTIQ+** community in the last ten years occurred in the region (Observatorio Transrespect, 2020)

Fear of being abused by justice institutions is one of the main reasons why indigenous women do not report acts of violence (Equis Justicia, 2019)



7 out of 10 women in the region have or will suffer from violence in their lifetime (CNN Español, 2016)

On average, **calls to emergency lines for domestic violence cases increased more than 80% from March to July 2020** (López-Calva, Luis Felipe, 2020)





Feminicides in Latin America and the Caribbean

Femicide is defined as a gender-based crime against girls and women, where the reason they are subjected to this type of violence is due to their gender.⁴⁵ Marcela Lagarde coined the term “femicide” when the rate of murders against girls and women in Juárez City, Mexico increased dramatically between 1993 and 2006; at least 400 women were murdered by men during this period.⁴⁶ Femicides represent the most serious and extreme form of violence against women and girls.

Lagarde explains the importance of using the term femicide (not femicide), reiterating that the state is part of this manifestation of violence since femicide does not only imply the act of killing but “the misogynistic act of murdering a woman in the wake of social acceptance.”⁴⁷ Although the legal classification of this crime in the region includes both “femicide” and “femicide,” “femicide” is established as the appropriate term to denote the magnitude of this violence at the regional level. The progress and challenges to properly classify this crime using legal language established in each country will be studied in Chapter II.

The visibility of gender-based violence within private life has grown in 2020. The “double pandemic” of COVID-19 and gender-based violence in LAC has been extremely negative in countries like Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and Ecuador, where the number of femicides has significantly increased as women confined at home with abusive partners.⁴⁸

According to the information compiled by the Gender Equality Observatory of the Economic Commission

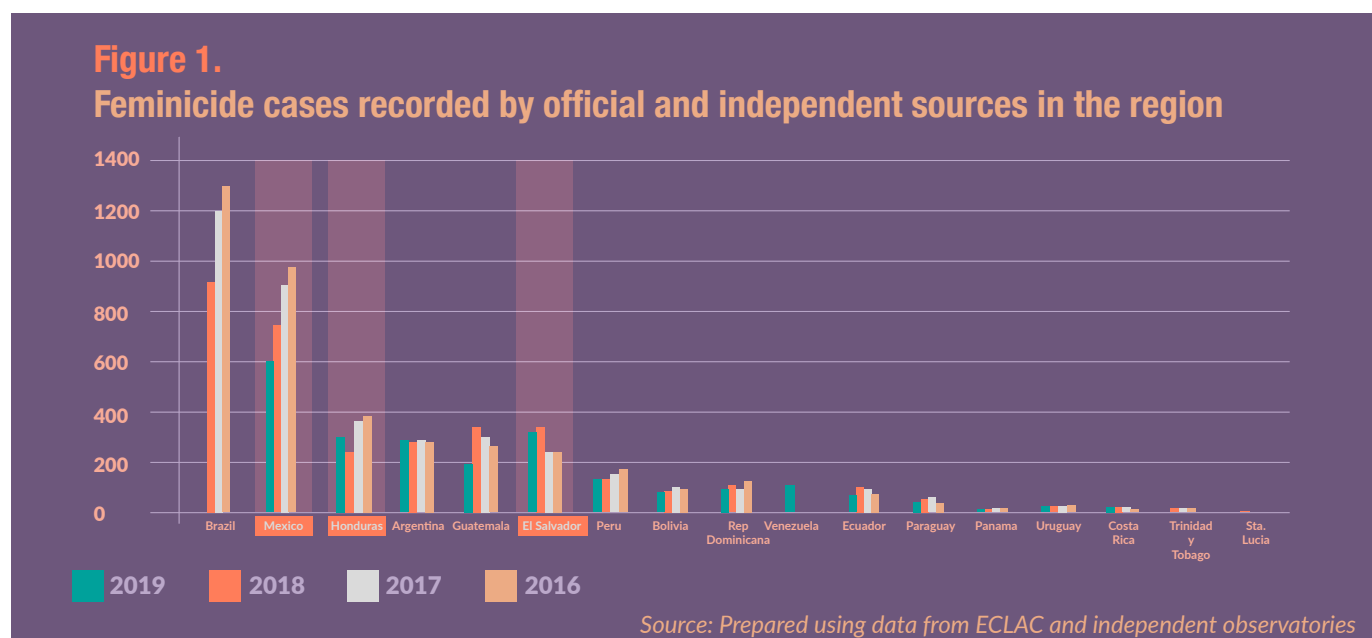
⁴⁵ Chapter II defines the legal basis connected with to this crime

⁴⁶ Lagarde, Marcela (2005). *What do we mean when we say femicide? Special Committee to Understand and Follow Up on Investigations Related to Femicides*. Congress. Mexico. Available at: http://xenero.webs.uvigo.es/profesorado/marcela_lagarde/femicidio.pdf

⁴⁷ González et al. v. Mexico, better known as “Cotton Field,” is an example of the lack of prioritization by the Mexican State, whose sentence was issued by the Inter American Court of Human Rights in 2009. More information available at: https://www.corteidh.or.cr/cf/Jurisprudencia2/ficha_tecnica.cfm?lang=es&nId_Ficha=347.

⁴⁸ The term “double pandemic” refers to what vulnerable groups experience during COVID-19, as they are affected by the pandemic and structural violence that affects them on a daily basis.

for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which only includes data of crimes committed by partners or former partners of the victim, 3,529 women were victims of feminicides in 2018.⁴⁹ The highest rates of feminicide based on population size are found in El Salvador (6.8 for every 100,000 women), Honduras (5.1), Saint Lucia (4.4), Trinidad and Tobago (3.4), Bolivia (2.3), Guatemala (2.0), and the Dominican Republic (1.9). The largest number of overall cases in the region occur in Brazil, Mexico, Honduras, and El Salvador.⁵⁰



Considering the high level of incidence of this crime in LAC, social movements in defense of human rights and the eradication of violence against women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community have made some progress in developing new legislation, as well as in promoting initiatives that address and prevent different manifestations of violence. The inclusion of feminicide within penal codes particularly acknowledges the extreme consequences of violence towards women. Several countries have adopted feminicide as a separate crime under the law, which both highlights the role gender plays in these crimes and commits governments to recognizing this violence.⁵¹ Regardless, it is common to find those responsible for victim care (including the police) to be unaware of the applicable protocols or resisting the categorization of these crimes as required by law. Experts consulted for this study maintain there is general ignorance about the legal framework and note that staff are not properly attuned to or trained in the nuances of dealing with feminicide in accordance with the law. As a consequence, mapping feminicides throughout the region has proved difficult, hiding the growing prevalence of this crime.⁵²

In Mexico, despite recommendations and protocols designated by the Supreme Court and National Security Council that specify all murders of women must be investigated from a gender-based violence perspective, only one in five murders of women is typified as potential

49 The Expert Committee of the MESECVI defined the phenomenon in 2008 as “the violent death of women based on gender, whether it occurs within the family, a domestic partnership, or any other interpersonal relationship; in the community, by any person, or when it is perpetrated or tolerated by the state or its agents, by action or omission.” MESECVI, (2008). Declaration on Femicide. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/DeclaracionFemicidio-ES.pdf>

50 ECLAC (2019). Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at: <https://oig.cepal.org/es/indicadores/feminicidio>

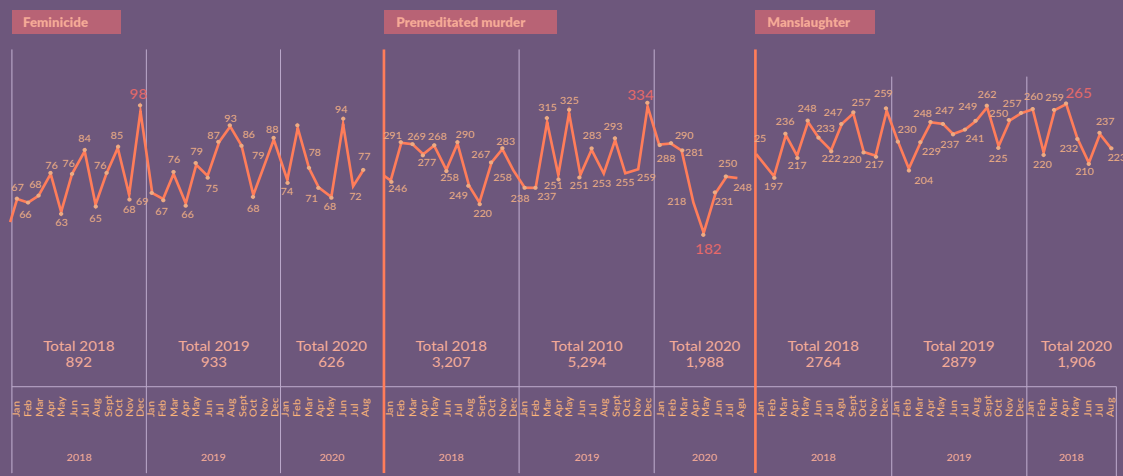
51 The region has classified feminicide, femicide, or aggravated homicide for gender purposes. Chapter II explores the law surrounding this type of violence in the study's countries

52 Consulted within the framework of this study, the judicial advisor Ana Yeli Pérez Garrido, from the Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional de Femicidios (OCNF) states it is common for violent deaths of women to be investigated as homicides, when in reality any violent death of a woman should be treated as a feminicide and, with sufficient proof, may be reclassified as a homicide.

Considering the challenges faced in properly classifying gender-based crimes, it also is important to observe the trend of intentional and negligent female homicides when trying to understand the various forms of femicide in the region.⁵⁴

In Mexico, for example, it was announced in June 2020 that the total number of feminicides had decreased. Records show a monthly drop from 94 to 72 cases between June and July. In the same period, however, intentional and negligent homicides of women show an increase of 46 total cases (figure 2). This highlights the various obstacles that exist in classifying and accurately accounting for feminicides.

Figure 2.
Comparison of feminicides and intentional and negligent homicides of women.
Mexico. 2018 -2020



Source: Information on violence against women, September 2020, SESNSP

Any attempt at reducing and solving feminicides in the region must be directly connected to the study of other violent female deaths; it is critical that all violent deaths of women be examined from a gender perspective to ensure that they receive proper classification and that a clear picture of the magnitude of the violence exists.

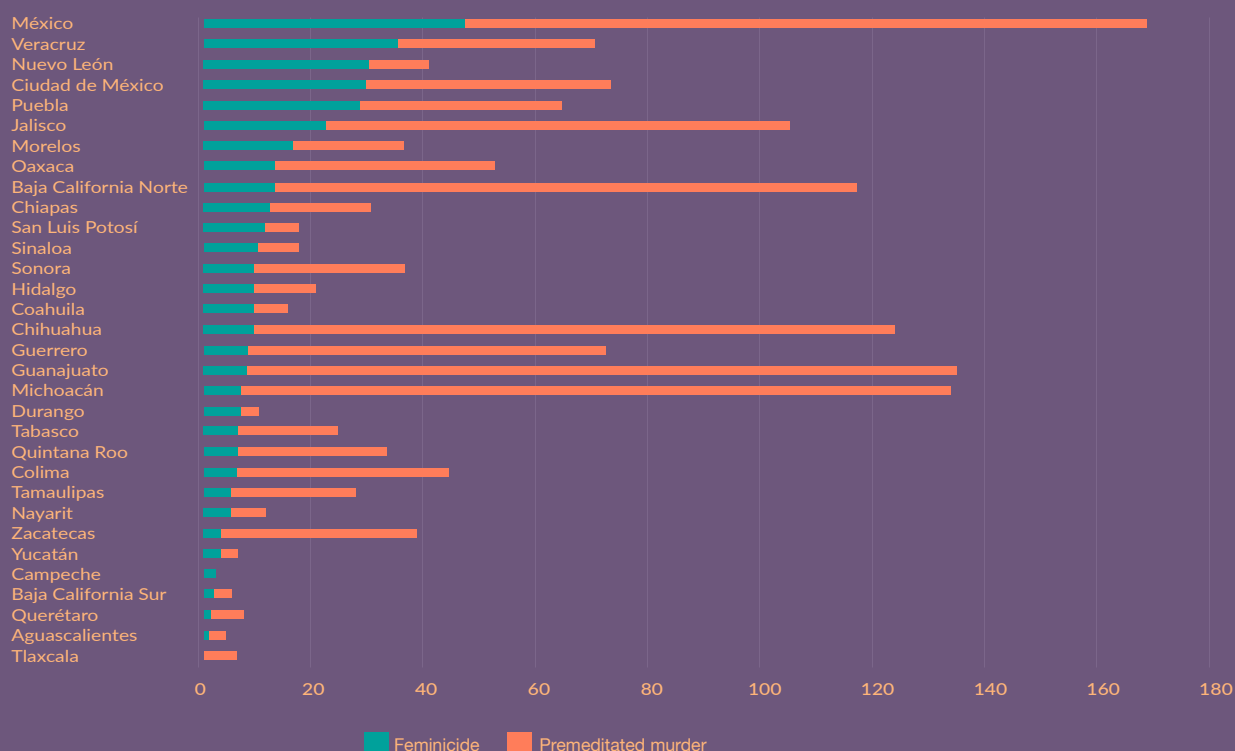
In Mexico, several states report a low official number of feminicides but a high number of intentional homicides of women. Veracruz is the only case that shows the highest number of both feminicides and violent deaths of women. Guanajuato, one of the most violent states in the country, shows only eight feminicides from January to May 2020 against 127 intentional

53 Arteta, Itxaro y Arturo Ángel (2020). "Prosecutors only investigate 1 in 5 murders of women and classify them as femicide" Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/02/fiscalias-indagan-femicidio-asesinatos-mujeres/>

54 The difference between intentional or negligent homicides and feminicides is that the former does not include an element of gender as a motive. Intentional homicides are a subset of homicides in which the perpetrator intentionally causes the death of the victim, while negligent homicides refer to the death of a victim as a result of accidental, unintentional or involuntary actions by the perpetrator, as a result of negligence. David, Jimena (2017). "Cada víctima cuenta". *México Evalúa*, Centro de Análisis de Políticas Públicas. Available at: http://bibliodigitalibd.senado.gob.mx/bitstream/handle/123456789/3409/MexicoEvalua_CadaVictimaCuenta%20%281%29.pdf?sequence=10&isAllowed=y#text=3%20Se%20denomina%20homicidio%20doloso,%20involuntarios%20del%20causante%2C%20como

homicides of women, the second highest figure in the entire country. Similar instances are observed in Chihuahua, Michoacán, and Baja California Norte (see Figure 3).

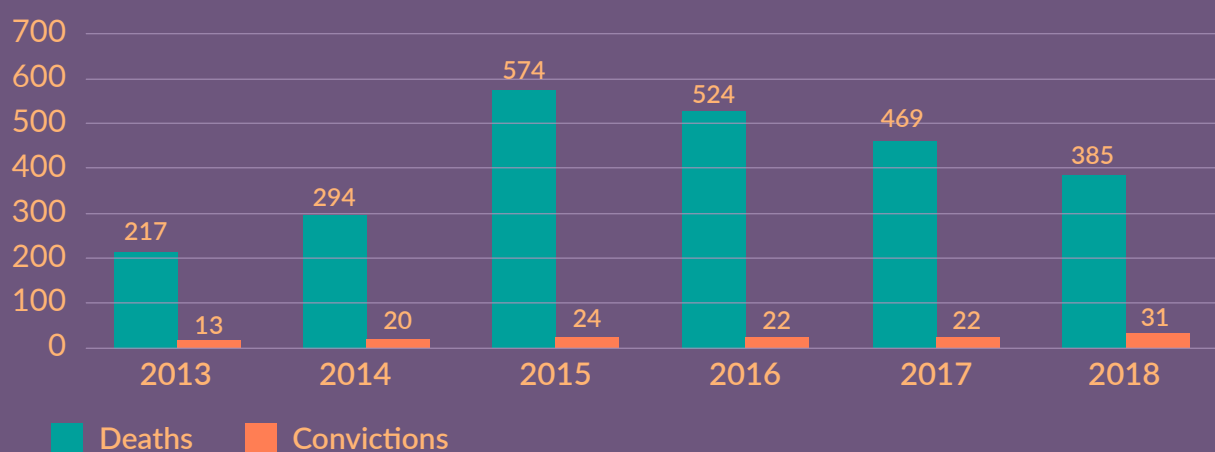
Figure 3.
Comparison of feminicides and intentional homicides of women recorded from January to May 2020



Source: Created using data from the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System

In 2018 in El Salvador, the percentage of overall criminal sentences related to acts of violence against women was under 5% nationally.⁵⁵ Data from InfoSegura indicates that in recent years, the percentage of convictions is below 8% (Figure 4).

Figure 4.
Violent deaths of women and convictions in El Salvador



Source: InfoSegura (2018)

⁵⁵ Organización de Mujeres para la Paz. (2018). *Observatorio de Violencia de Género contra las Mujeres: informe junio 2017 a mayo 2018*. ORMUSA.

Low rates of investigations and court decisions resulting in convictions for femicide confirm both a lack of prioritization towards the classified crime, as well as an institutional inability to prosecute cases.

There is a generalized resistance in the region to address violent deaths based on gender, maintained both through imperfect laws and the inability of state institutions to address and prevent this violence. Without a deeper comprehension of the sociocultural aspects of gender-based violence and more institutional awareness of the legal concepts and requirements of femicide, there is little chance that the rate of offense will drop in the coming years.

The percentage of female deaths investigated as femicides is minimal in the region. The conviction rate for femicide is even lower.

What do we know?

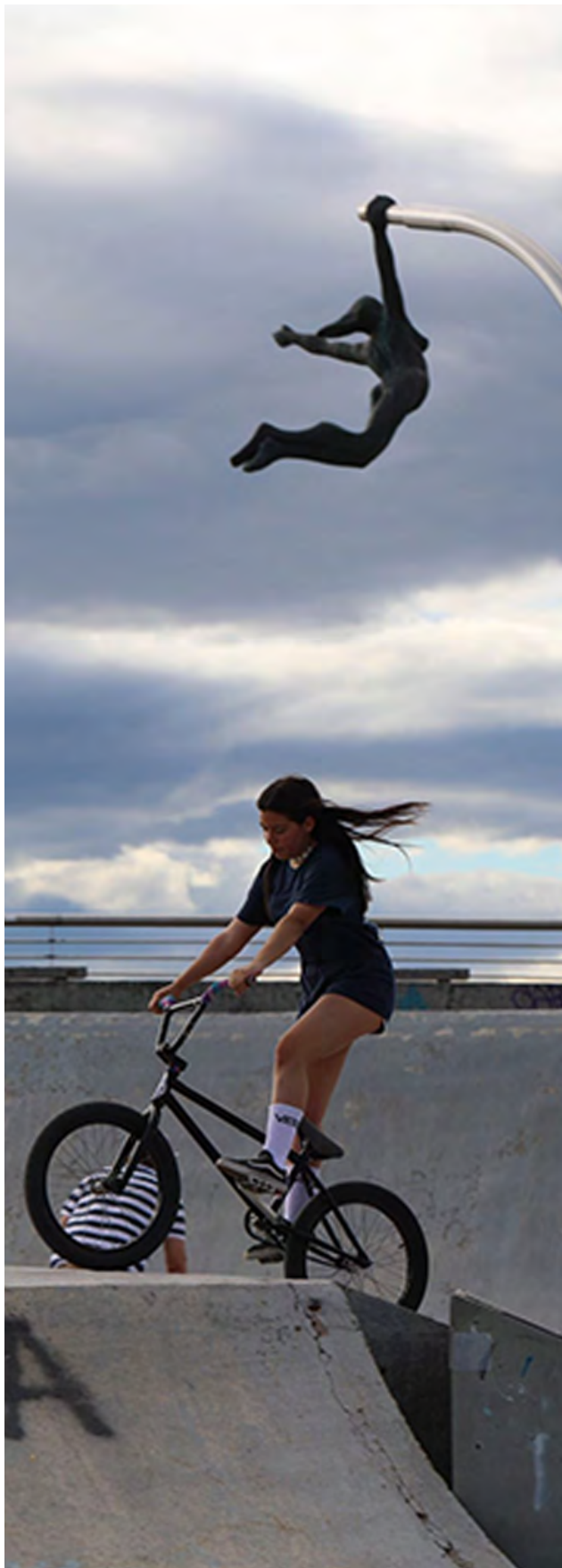
- The classification of femicide continues to vary across local states and across countries in the region, making it more difficult to accurately map the crime in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Understanding of legal frameworks is limited among civil servants in the different institutions that seek to prevent and address the crime of femicide.
- Personnel within public security institutions lack the capacity to process cases of femicide.
- Despite recommendations from experts, violent deaths of women continue to be classified as possible femicides until proven otherwise.
- Lack of understanding, insufficient training of personnel, low capacities and resistance to classifying the murders of women as possible femicides reflect the government's unwillingness to prioritize this crime

The standardization of variables collected on femicides and the creation of databases with clear and reliable national and regional data would strengthen a coordinated approach across the region. To achieve this, strategies must be designed to improve the official data collection process, which requires coordination between different government entities and the inclusion of civil society. As mentioned in the previous section, it is crucial to implement regional and national registries in the police and judiciary to maintain statistics on femicides, with the data separated by age, race or ethnicity, relationship to the perpetrator, and geographic location of the victims.

Domestic Violence

Intrafamily —or domestic— violence includes, for the purpose of this study, any form of violence by a current or former partner in a romantic or family relationship with or without cohabitation.⁵⁶ It is one of the most common forms of violence against women. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 30% of women in the world have experienced violence—both physical and sexual—by a current or former partner or male relative; prevalence of domestic violence is highest

⁵⁶ The definition of domestic violence includes violence against children and adolescents, as well as relatives and older adults. This violence manifests itself in different ways including physical, sexual, emotional, economic violence as well as harassment. Medline Plus. Definitions. "Domestic Violence" in Medlineplus Gov. Available at: <https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/domesticviolence.html>



in Africa and Southeast Asia (37%) and LAC (30%).⁵⁷ In response to this violence, all LAC countries have implemented laws and initiatives to address and prevent domestic violence. However, these efforts continue to be insufficient in dealing with the issue in an efficient, comprehensive, and inclusive manner.

According to official data provided by the Supreme Court of Justice, an average of 58 domestic violence complaints are logged every day in Honduras, resulting in an estimated 20,000-25,000 per year. Recent civil society studies have pointed to even higher levels than previously indicated. In addition to a lack of consistent data, the impunity rate of feminicides and domestic violence remains at 96%.⁵⁸

In the same way, domestic violence complaints are also alarmingly high in Honduras, with 72% of cases unresolved or deemed inconclusive between 2009 and 2018.⁵⁹ One reason for this is that justice personnel often expose women to their aggressors by requesting the victim deliver legal documents and restriction measures to them, a procedure the police should conduct.⁶⁰

As such, there is a lack of effective protocols for responding to domestic violence, a situation which is made worse by the lack of training that victim assistance personnel receive. A limited understanding of the law is one of the most significant obstacles to the development of gender-centered citizen security initiatives.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a marked increase in domestic violence. As a result of quarantine measures in LAC—a region where almost 20 million women and girls already suffer from domestic abuse on a daily basis—the number of complaints has risen

⁵⁷ World Health Organization (2013). Violence against Women. Available at: https://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2013/violence_against_women_20130620/es/

⁵⁸ O'Neill, Sally (2019). *Domestic Violence Case Study in Honduras*. Oxfam. Available at: cng-cdn.oxfam.org/honduras.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/Violencia%20doméstica%20-%20Caso%20de%20estudio_0.pdf

⁵⁹ Inconclusive resolutions imply that women who made allegations did not continue with the judicial process.

⁶⁰ CDM (2019). *Violencia doméstica contra las mujeres en 2017 y 2018*. Observatorio de derechos humanos de las mujeres. Disponible en <http://derechosdelamujer.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Violencia-Domestica-Web-1.pdf>

by more than 70%.⁶¹

Overall, three factors influence this “double pandemic.”⁶² First, for many women, girls, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community, home is an unsafe space. In cases where there is a history of family violence, quarantining has meant that victims spend more time with the people who hurt them. Second, the economic crisis from the pandemic has caused many people to lose jobs and thus find it difficult to meet the financial needs of the home and family. This is recognized as a common trigger for domestic violence, resulting from an increase in daily stress due to the lack of resources.⁶³ Third, victims of violence have reduced access to victim support networks for a variety of reasons, including a lack of personnel at organizations caring for victims of violence, mobility restrictions, and the fact that public health and safety institutions have focused on responding to COVID-19, thereby reducing efforts to address gender-based violence. Similarly, services provided by civil society organizations have encountered barriers to continued operations due to reduced staff and resources.

The Red Nacional de Refugios (RNR, or National Shelter Network) —a civil society initiative in Mexico that provides physical space for protection and offers specialized care for women and their children in situations of family or sexual violence—has seen a 77% increase in requests for support during quarantine. While the network receives some funding from private donations, it depends largely on earmarked resources in the national budget and as of June 2020, half of the 66 service centers that make up the RNR still had not received their operating budgets for the year—a resource usually committed by March 2020.⁶⁴

It is also important to note that within the increase in gender-based violence in times of crisis, groups of greater vulnerability may face higher risks, as well as obstacles in accessing health and essential services or finding shelter. This is the case for indigenous women, elderly women, and members of the LGBTIQ+ community. A study by UN Women, “Strategies for the prevention of violence against women in the context of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean,” indicates that the LGBTIQ+ community has reported increased violence and abuse in their homes during quarantine. Additionally, in countries where travel rules are based on biological binary sex⁶⁵ - including Colombia, Panama and Peru⁶⁶- the risk of violence and discrimination against people from the LGBTIQ+ community in public has increased.⁶⁷

The study “(DES)PROTECCIÓN JUDICIAL en tiempos de COVID-19” [LEGAL (UN) PROTECTION during COVID-19] by the Mexican organization Equis Justicia presents an evaluation of the initiatives implemented to address the pandemic, reviewing whether measures exist to provide continuity in protection services for women. The analysis concluded

61 Sigal, Lucila et al (2020). “Another Pandemic: domestic violence increases in Latin America during quarantine” Reuters.<https://lta.reuters.com/article/salud-coronavirus-latinoamerica-violencia-idLTAKCN2291KJ>

62 A study published by the CIM/MESECVI in 2020, addressing the factors of the pandemic that are affecting women and girls differently, the new patterns of violence, or unequal relationships that they are facing, and the actions taken by States to combat them. CIM/MESECVI (2020) *Violence against women versus measures aimed at reducing the spread of COVID-19*. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cim/docs/COVID-19-RespuestasViolencia-ES.pdf>

63 UN Women (2020). Strategies for the prevention of violence against women in the context of COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at: https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/documentos/publicaciones/2020/05/es_prevencion%20de%20violencia%20contra%20las%20mujeresbrief%20espanol.pdf?la=es&vs=3033

64 Arteta, Itxaro (2020). “Shelters for women that have big debts and few employees because of lack of resources”. *Animal Político*. Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2019/07/refugios-mujeres-endeudados-recursos/>

65 Biological binary sex refers to the assignation of sex at birth based on only the two options of male and female, without considering the possible variations of intersexual individuals.


66 OAS (2020). “La CIDH llama a los Estados a garantizar los derechos de las personas LGBTI en la respuesta a la pandemia del COVID-19”. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2020/081.asp>

67 UN Women (2020). Op Cit


that only 5 of Mexico's 32 states obtained a score greater than 60 out of 100 in terms of measures taken to prevent violence against women during COVID-19 and to guarantee continued access to justice for female victims of violence.

Civil society groups have called for responses to the COVID-19 pandemic that prioritize vulnerable groups. These responses must take into account the delayed impacts of the pandemic, including the economic recession and its consequences for these populations. Measures to prevent and attend to violence against women, children, and the LGBTIQ+ population must be adopted as central elements of any strategy that addresses the pandemic; working closely with feminist organizations and civil society is imperative for all governments. As such, all marginalized groups (indigenous, rural, migrant, displaced, refugee, and disabled women, plus LGBTIQ+ persons) should be represented in strategic planning sessions for COVID-19 relief.


Gender-based violence has increased during the pandemic, making already vulnerable groups even more susceptible: - Different citizen security



El Salvador
During the pandemic, the number of allegations of violence against women increased by 70%.⁶⁸



Honduras
Between January and May 2020, there were more than 40,000 cases filed of assault against women. In April alone, 10,000 women reported being victims of physical violence.⁶⁹



México
The 911 emergency system experienced a 60% increase in calls reporting cases of violence against women.⁷⁰

- The risk of violence against women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community has increased due to quarantine measures
- Women, particularly in times of crisis, continue to be the most subject to unpaid domestic work, food insecurity, and lack of access to basic services
- Indigenous women may face additional risks and obstacles in accessing essential services or finding refuge in situations of violence
- Different citizen security needs are reinforced in times of crisis; as such, governments must consider these disparities in their response.

In El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico:

In the region, the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare not only the shortcomings of healthcare systems, but also those of the citizen security sector in addressing the disproportionate consequences of the health crisis.⁷¹ In this regard, several international bodies have called attention to the ways in which measures taken to eliminate the risks of infection during the pandemic have worsened structural discrimination and disproportionately exposed women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community to risk, thus widening the gap of inequality. Both MESECVI and UN Women have issued recommendations on how to deal with and adapt to emergency situations during the pandemic.⁷²

68 Medicus Mundi (2020). "Feminicidios en El Salvador superan las muertes de mujeres por Covid". *Medicus Mundi*. Available at: <https://medicusmundi.es/es/actualidad/noticias/1268/feminicidios-ElSalvador-muerte-mujeres>.

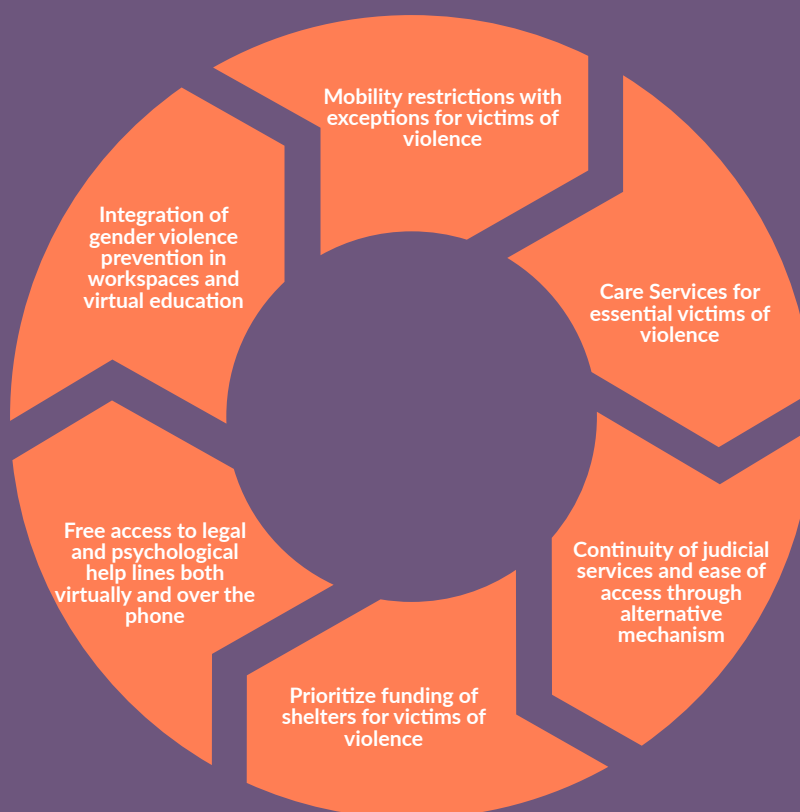
69 Rincón Andrea (2020). "En Honduras, una mujer es víctima de agresión física cada hora". *France 24*. Available at: <https://www.france24.com/es/20200610-pandemia-violencia-genero-honduras-coronavirus>

70 Badillo, Diego. (2020) "Aumentan agresiones contra mujeres durante confinamiento". *El Economista*. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Aumentan-agresiones-contra-mujeres-durante-confinamiento-20200523-0002.html>

71 See, for example CIM-OAS, 2020. COVID-19 in the lives of women: Reasons to recognize the differentiated impacts. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cim/docs/ArgumentarioCOVID19-ES.pdf>

72 CIM/MESECVI (2020). Op. Cit.

Figure 5.
Recommendations for including a gender perspective in crisis responses



Source: Produced with data from UN Women

As countries respond to the different crises in the region, it is critical to ensure continuity with plans to prevent and address gender-based violence and to generate accurate, intersectional records.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is one of the citizen security issues that affects women the most.⁷³ Despite its high rate of occurrence (particularly on those under 19) the real magnitude of this crime is particularly difficult to measure both due to the diversity of forms in which it manifests, as well as a lack of formal complaints from victims. It is estimated that only five percent of adult victims of sexual violence in LAC report the crime to the authorities.⁷⁴

In Mexico, as mentioned in the data and statistics section, the hidden figure of sexual crimes is 99.7%.⁷⁵

In El Salvador, 90% of sexual violence victims are women; this type of crime has increased by 13% a year for the last 5 years. According to data from the InfoSegura Project from 2018, a

⁷³ Sexual violence is defined as any act, attempt or threat of a sexual nature that results in or could result in physical, psychological, or emotional damage, and which occurs against the will of one of the parties. Peñaranda, Paola & Luz Aristizábal (2019). "La violencia sexual en Latinoamérica desde la perspectiva de género". De Prácticas y Discursos. 8.

⁷⁴ Contreras, J et al (2010). "Sexual violence in Latin America and the Caribbean: a desk review". Sexual Violence Research Initiative, Pretoria.

⁷⁵ Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System, 2020

sexual crime was reported every two hours. It is important to note that more than 63% of the victims were between 10 and 19 years old⁷⁶.

Despite some progress in improving the prevention and treatment of violence against women, regulatory frameworks on sexual violence still have limitations that negatively affect victims' rights. For example, the lack of personnel expertise and standardized response procedures in caring for victims of sexual violence subjects them to repeated exposure and abuse.⁷⁷ In situations where sexual violence within a marriage or civil union isn't criminalized, re-victimization can be even worse for those who report such crimes.

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has indicated that sexual violence crimes are characterized by the difficulty in obtaining forensic evidence; therefore, the victim's statement must be considered as key evidence. The MESECVI Committee of Experts (CEVI) notes that States Parties must adopt measures to ensure the criminal justice system protects the dignity and privacy of victims during all stages of the investigative process and trial. Despite these guidelines, victims in LAC are interrogated over and over and are forced to answer questions about their sex lives, the way they were dressed at the time of the attack, or their relationship with the aggressor. Re-victimization has become the norm rather than the exception in the region, and significantly affects a victim's decision to forego reporting a sexual violence experience. Additionally, victimization surveys in the region are limited to women between the ages of 15 and 59, leaving out the experiences of girls and women outside that age range.

Investigation and response protocols for sexual violence cases remain vague, are poorly understood by officials responsible for protecting victims, and lack an intersectional approach. The ignorance of justice system officials on correct protocol is particularly serious given their responsibility for receiving the victim's testimony, documenting complaints, assisting the individual during the judicial process, and providing guidance for accessing medical and protective services, among other duties. There is a lack of socialization⁷⁸ processes for the ways in which both new laws and protocols should be applied. This exists in both public security institutions and health service agencies, which do not have personnel adequately trained to meet the various needs of victims of gender-based violence. Thus, re-victimization has been perpetuated in public health agencies where staff re-interrogate victims instead of focusing on the physical and psychological consequences of sexual violence.

The consequences for victims of sexual violence include serious health complications ranging from physical injuries, unwanted pregnancies, clandestine abortions, sexually transmitted infections, depression, and suicide.⁷⁹ The study "Accelerating progress toward the reduction of adolescent pregnancy in Latin America and the Caribbean" explains that these consequences are aggravated by restrictive regulations that, despite the recommendations of international organizations, continue to impose a double punishment on victims of sexual violence.⁸⁰ Each year, an estimated 15% of all

76 InfoSegura (2019). *Violence against women throughout the life cycle Analysis of El Salvador 2018*. UNDP. El Salvador. Available at: <https://InfoSegura.org/2019/11/19/violencia-contra-las-mujeres-el-salvador-2018/>

77 IACHR (2019). *Violence and Discrimination against Women and Girls: Best Practices and Challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Washington. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh/informes/pdfs/ViolenciaMujeresNNA.pdf>

78 The socialization of a protocol, policy, or law involves specific training to translate the concepts into practical actions and ensure people understand the theoretical and practical components of the law.

79 This report complies with all US Federal Government regulations regarding "Global Health Legislative & Policy Requirements". No reference to pregnancy termination - also known as abortion - should be considered "promotion" under USAID guidelines' standards. They are mentioned as an academic reference from the literature, legislation, discussion by the interviewees, or real cases in the countries studied' judicial system.

80 OPS/OMS|UNFPA|UNICEF (2018). *Accelerating progress towards the reduction of adolescent pregnancy in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Technical consultation report. Washington. Available at: https://lac.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/ESP-EMBARAZO-ADOLESC-14febrero%20FINAL_5.

pregnancies in LACthers giving birth between the ages of 15 and 19. Many of these adolescent pregnancies are the result of rape.⁸¹

In 2017, El Salvador's public health system recorded a total of 19,190 pregnancies among girls and teenagers between the ages of 10 and 19, which amounts to 53 girls and teenagers becoming pregnant each day in the country. In 2018, the Ministry of Health reported a total of 710 adolescent pregnancies to the National Data System, with a primary or secondary diagnosis of sexual abuse. In cases of pregnancies as a result of rape, it is important to note that 81% of perpetrators were either relatives or acquaintances.⁸²

Countries of the region need to incorporate procedures and tools that will allow them to provide comprehensive care for victims of violence, including access to emergency contraception (EC) pills. However, some countries in the region maintain regulatory restrictions on the conditions or practices through which healthcare facilities may acquire EC, even for victims of sexual violence. In Honduras, the use, promotion, sale, or purchase of EC is illegal, regardless of the situation.⁸³

The IACHR has made it a priority to ensure free and legal access to EC for victims of sexual violence as part of any national strategy addressing the issue, which must guarantee “respect and protection, without discrimination, for the sexual and reproductive rights of all women.”⁸⁴ To this effect, the IACHR has reiterated the consequences of denying these rights, and the impact of criminalizing abortion in El Salvador, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua. It has pointed out that governments have an obligation to facilitate safe access to abortion in order to protect the life and health of women, especially in cases where pregnancy is a result of rape or incest.

Similarly, the CEVI recommends that states take steps towards “guaranteeing the sexual and reproductive health of women and their right to life, eliminating unsafe abortion and establishing laws and public policies that enable termination of pregnancy in at least the following cases: i) risk to the life or health of the woman; ii) inability of the fetus to survive; and iii) sexual violence, incest and forced insemination; as well as guaranteeing that women and teenagers have immediate access to affordable contraceptives, including EC, thereby eliminating the discriminatory effects on women of denying them services on the basis of stereotypes that reduce the primary role of women to motherhood and prevent them from making decisions about their sexuality and reproduction.”⁸⁵

PDF

81 The Hemispheric Report on Sexual Violence and Child Pregnancy in the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention discusses this type of structural sexual violence against girls and teenagers and the complex physical and psychological consequences it may cause, as well as its impacts on the rights of girls to full development and to live their lives. MESECVI (2016). Informe hemisférico sobre violencia sexual y embarazo infantil en los Estados Parte de la Convención de Belém do Pará. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/mesecvi-embarazoinfantil-es.pdf>

82 UNFPA/Government of El Salvador (2017). Map of Pregnancies in Girls and Teenagers. El Salvador. Available at: http://www.codajic.org/sites/www.codajic.org/files/Mapa%20EmbarazosSV_%202017.pdf

83 Arango, Mónica (2014). Letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on the prohibition of the emergency contraceptive pill in Honduras. Available at: <https://derechosdelamujer.org/carta-a-la-relatora-especial-de-la-onu-sobre-la-prohibicion-de-la-pildora-anticonceptiva-de-emergencia-en-honduras/>

84 CIDH (2019). Op. Cit.

85 MESECVI, (2014). Declaration on violence against women, girls, and teenagers and their sexual and reproductive rights. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/en/mesecvi/docs/DeclaracionDerechos-ES.pdf>

Case: Abortion as a crime in El Salvador

In 2019, the Evelyn Hernández trial placed the issue of obstetric emergencies resulting in abortion on public display, showcasing the restrictive Salvadoran legal framework that exists in opposition to international standards.

At 18, Evelyn Hernández was a high school student from a rural area of the country who became pregnant as a result of a rape that she never reported due to threats by the gang member who committed the crime (according to testimony by the defense).

After discomfort and heavy bleeding led her mother to take her to the hospital, Evelyn suffered a miscarriage. At the hospital, she was detained on charges of having had an abortion and was handed over to the authorities.

The defense explained that the young woman had an obstetric emergency, but the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic accused her of “aggravated homicide of her newborn son” and for this reason, the young woman was sentenced at her first trial to 30 years in prison.

According to Alberto Romero of the Citizen Group for the Decriminalization of Abortion, the first ruling against Evelyn shows “the fragility of the judicial system, which does not provide any sort of due process, and showcase its prejudice on the basis of stereotypes such as gender and the way a woman should behave.”

The young woman spent 33 months in detention until the Supreme Court reversed the sentence and called for a new trial. The Office of the Attorney General chose to modify the charges by accusing her of murder by omission, which accuses her of not having attempted to save the fetus. The Office of the Attorney General recommended 40 years of jail time, but the judge concluded that because she fainted at the time, she was “not in a position where she could have asked for help.”

Finally, after a trial that lasted almost 3 years, Evelyn was acquitted.

Source: (BBC Mundo, 2017) (elfaro.net, 2019)

The case of Evelyn Hernández exemplifies the institutionalized violence that occurs within entities responsible for providing attention to victims of violence. It is critical for citizen security strategies to take into account the unique characteristics of sexual violence and actively identify the different barriers that limit the full exercise of victims’ rights. Coordination between legal, health, and public security systems is critical to ensure a comprehensive strategy that can eradicate this type of violence.

Hate Crimes and Discrimination

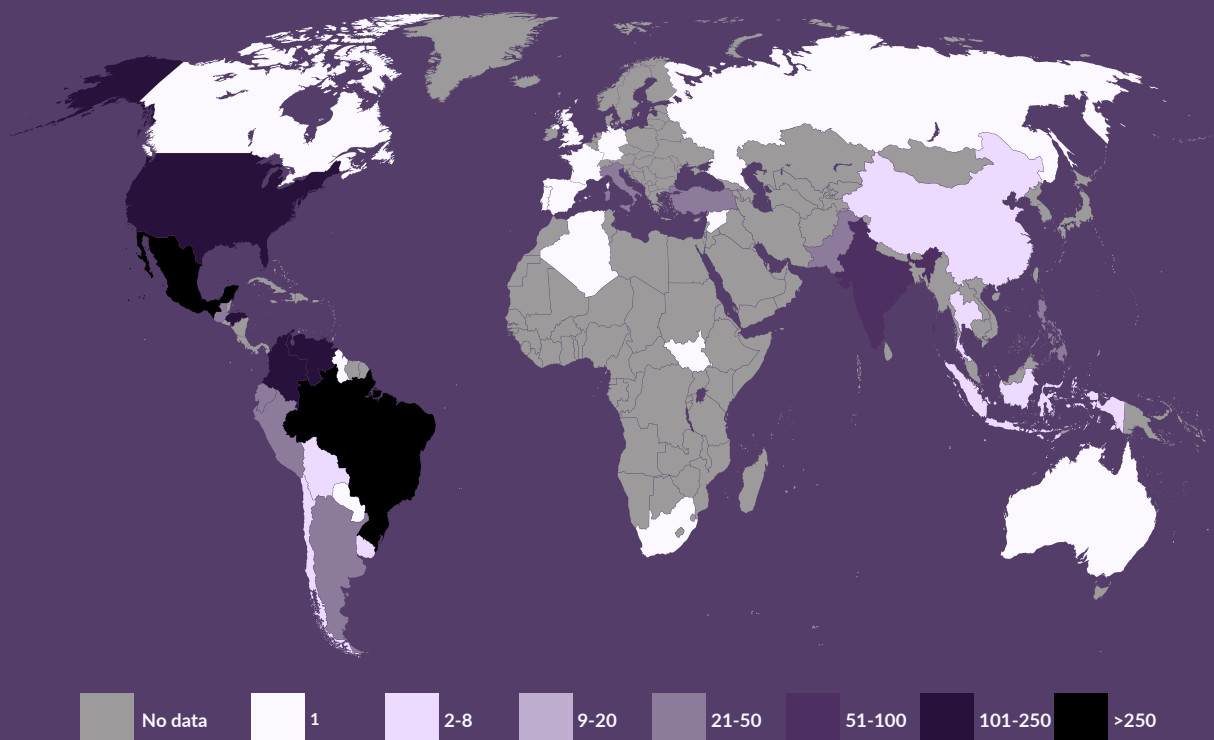
Violence against the LGBTIQ+ population in Latin America and the Caribbean is alarming. Records show that at least 20 members of the LGBTIQ+ community were murdered in the region each month between 2014 and 2020.⁸⁶ This issue is particularly profound for the transgender community; the Trans Murder Monitoring Project indicates that almost 80% of crimes against transgender persons reported worldwide between 2008 and 2019 occurred in LAC, accounting for at least 2,608 recorded deaths.⁸⁷ These figures represent only those reported or registered; this, coupled with the lack of documentation and invisibility of these crimes at an institutional level would imply that the rate is likely much higher. With 71 murders recorded between October 2017 and September 2018, Mexico has the second highest number of hate crimes (due to homophobia and transphobia) in the world, surpassed only by Brazil (with 167).⁸⁸

86 Sin Violencia LGBTI (2020). *Information systems about LGTBI violence in Latin America and Caribbean Population*. Available at: <https://sinviolencia.lgbt/non-violence-lgbti/>

87 Project TransRespect versus Transphobia in the World (2020). “Trans Murder Monitoring”. Available at: transrespect.org/es/map/trans-murder-monitoring/# Project TransRespect versus Transphobia in the World (2018). “369 personas trans y género-diversas reportadas asesinadas en el último año”. Available at: <https://transrespect.org/es/tmm-update-tdor-2018/>

88 Project TransRespect versus Transphobia in the World (2018). “369 personas trans y género-diversas reportadas asesinadas en el último año”. Available at: <https://transrespect.org/es/tmm-update-tdor-2018/>

Figure 6.
Records of transgender people murdered by country
 Trans Murder Monitoring Project - Absolute figures (2008-2015)



Source: Trans Murder Monitoring project (2020)

Security initiatives addressing violence against the LGBTIQ+ community is a global challenge that starts with the scarcity of documentation on the violence. In most African and Middle Eastern countries, not only are these crimes not classified, but LGBTIQ+ persons continue to be penalized for expressing their identity. While LAC has advanced in this area, insufficient data precludes adequate understanding of these communities, thus preventing important efforts to combat hate crimes.

Honduras has the highest number of LGBTIQ+ homicides per capita in the region, with 164 total recorded deaths since 2014.⁸⁹

Mexico has made some legislative progress in the fight against discrimination and violence. El Salvador is also beginning to see changes; for the first time, the 2019 “Report on Acts of Violence against Women” included a section on cases of violence that affect the LGBTIQ+ community. Additionally, in September 2015, El Salvador introduced hate crimes into its criminal code.

Overall, social movements and non-governmental organizations have achieved significant progress in the recognition of LGBTIQ+ rights. However, a lack of legal and institutional frameworks

89 Sin violencias (2019). “El prejuicio no conoce fronteras”. Observatorio Sin Violencia LGBTI. Available at: <https://fslem.org/el-prejuicio-no-conoce-fronteras-informe-del-observatorio-sin-violencia-lgbti/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CEI%20prejuicio%20no%20conoce%20fronteras%E2%80%9D-%3A%20presentado%20por%20el%20observatorio,%2C%20Guatemala%2C%20Paraguay%20y%20Bolivia>.

to eradicate hate crimes and discrimination persists in many countries and contributes to the permeation and normalization of violence within society.

The study “Hate Crimes against LGBTI persons in Latin America and the Caribbean” by the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association for Latin America and the Caribbean (ILGALAC) explains that one way violence manifests against the LGBTIQ+ community is through expulsion or exclusion from the education system starting in early childhood. Around 45% of transgender students drop out of school because of violence suffered in classrooms;⁹⁰ consequently, prostitution has become a frequent occupation for the LGBTIQ+ community

Additionally, this population is subject to discrimination by various public institutions. The LGBTIQ+ community has low access to the health system, where transgender persons are pathologized and stigmatized in medical discourse.⁹¹ Medical forms have a blank space to account for non-binary persons, and the medical needs of sexually diverse individuals in the region are fully neglected. On the other hand, authorities in the citizen security system—from police, to departments responsible for victim care, to the prison system—contribute to this discrimination, reproducing different types of violence rooted in societal prejudices towards diversity. This results in abuse of authority, excessive use of force, symbolic violence, and exclusion, among other issues.⁹² In the same way, this population has been historically marginalized by violence prevention policies and citizen security initiatives.

Ari Vela Morales, Director of the Almas Cautivas A.C. Foundation in Mexico, explains that one consequence of systematic exclusion is that when an LGBTIQ+ person is murdered, it is impossible for the community to claim the body of the victim. By law, this can only be requested by a relative. This legal hurdle leaves many bodies unclaimed and in the hands of authorities.⁹³

Similarly, Mexican muxe⁹⁴ anthropologist Amaranta Gómez Regalado explains that the average lifespan of transgender individuals in LAC varies between 32 and 36 years, equivalent to less than half the average life expectancy of the rest of the population.⁹⁵

Despite moderate progress in eradicating hate crimes against the LGBTIQ+ community in some countries, the number of victims continues to rise across the region. Even though laws represent a first step in eliminating violence, it is again critical to raise awareness and ensure that law enforcement is up to date on current protocols and procedures. The IACHR has expressed concern about the barriers that lie ahead for the LGBTIQ+ community, including discrimination on the part of authorities. They note that OAS member countries must adopt “effective protocols to guarantee life, security, personal integrity and dignity for people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, including laws and policies that promote a cultural change in societies.”⁹⁶ Any comprehensive citizen

90 UNESCO (2016). *Out in the open: education sector responses to violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression*. Paris. Available at: <https://es.unesco.org/news/violencia-homofobica-y-transfobica-escuela-es-problema-mundial-segun-informe>

91 De Grazia, Martin (2020). *Crímenes de odio contra personas LGBTI de América Latina y el Caribe*. ILGALAC. Buenos Aires. Available at: <https://www.ilga-lac.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cri%CC%81menes-de-Odio.pdf>

92 Cardenas Suárez, Madga (2018). “Cuando autoridad es discriminación”. Defensoría del pueblo. Available at: https://www.defensoria.gov.co/attachment/1885/CUANDO%20AUTORIDAD%20ES%20DISCRIMINACION%3%93Nweb_.pdf

93 Ari Vera Morales. Mexico City Focus Group, July 15, 2019

94 The muxe population is from the Zapotec region of the states of Oaxaca, Veracruz, Tabasco and Chiapas in Mexico. The term muxe refers to the gender that defines a person born with masculine genitalia and assumes roles that are socially and culturally considered feminine in social, sexual and/or personal spheres.

95 De Grazia, Martin (2020). Op Cit

96 Rivero, M. I. (2019). “CIDH expresa preocupación por recientes ataques violentos contra personas LGBTI en la región”. OAS. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2019/065.asp>

security strategy must prioritize the development of public policies that protect the human rights of LGBTIQ+ individuals. These are reviewed in the following chapters through examples of what has worked and what can be improved upon.

Insecurity and Transgender Women in the Dominican Republic

Similar to what occurs in the countries included in this study, LGBTIQ+ persons in the Dominican Republic face a high degree of vulnerability. Between 2006 and 2015, at least 33 cases of possible crimes against transgender persons were recorded in the country (Humans Right First, 2015), where there are no official legal mechanisms to punish the crime.

Over time, the LGBTIQ+ community has faced discrimination and neglect. A significant number of transgender women are kicked out of their homes at an early age, having to abandon both family and school. Additionally, low education levels lead to limited employment opportunities, which in many cases means that sex work is the only available livelihood.

"I filed a complaint at a local prosecutor's office, and it didn't help me at all. Imagine, the prosecutor looked at me strangely and asked me if I was a man or a woman. How I urinate and if it's done by sitting or standing. He did not understand that I was a trans woman. (Centro de Orientación e Investigación Integral (COIN) [Center for Integrated Training and Research], 2017)

As a result of the National LGBTI Dialogue held in 2019 by the United Nations Development Program, the Dominican Republic implemented a series of recommendations based on the needs faced by LGBTIQ+ persons in terms of access to justice. These measures include raising awareness in the National Police about LGBTIQ+ human rights in order to eliminate abuse, arbitrary detentions, and mistreatment.

Other important measures suggested were: strengthening the Public Ministry in matters pertaining to hate crime investigations, especially murders of trans women; approval of an equality and non-discrimination law; and the promotion and approval of a comprehensive gender identity law that guarantees the right for people to "socially adopt their gender identity and receive comprehensive

Source: Fernandez, Katherine et al (2020). Género y Seguridad Ciudadana en República Dominicana Research conducted under commission by PADF. Not published. Santo Domingo.

Violence Against Indigenous and Afro-descendant women

Violence against indigenous women and Afro-descendants occurs due to three intersecting types of discrimination: 1) gender, 2) ethnicity or race, and 3) socioeconomic status. In LAC, indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples represent 9% and 24% of the population respectively, the vast majority of which live in poverty. Data from nine Latin American countries indicates that indigenous communities represent about 30% of those living in extreme poverty in the region.⁹⁷ Likewise, according to the World Bank, in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay, Afro-descendants make up 38% of the population, but 47% of those in poverty and 49% in extreme poverty.⁹⁸ Although the Afro-descendant community represents relatively small percentages of the population in the countries of this study (Mexico being the highest of the three with 1.2%), it is important to consider the obstacles that these populations may encounter in accessing public services.

97 ILO (2019). *Implementation of the Convention on Indigenous and Tribal People No.169 of the ILO towards a future that is inclusive, sustainable, and just*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_735627.pdf

98 Spanish CNN, (2020). "This is the situation of black people in Latin America". CNN Available at: <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com/2020/06/08/es-ta-es-la-situacion-de-las-personas-negras-en-america-latina/>



According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 85% of indigenous women depend mainly on informal employment. In LAC, Afro-descendant women also mostly work in this sector, which is characterized by low salaries, instability, and no social security, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty.⁹⁹

Furthermore, indigenous women are subject to violence in communal spaces, community shelters, and relationships.¹⁰⁰ Discrimination against indigenous women, ranging from exclusion to hate crimes, has become normalized in various societies across LAC.

In Honduras, the murder of Berta Cáceres, an indigenous Lenca woman and human rights activist, triggered international pressure to establish citizen security initiatives to protect at-risk indigenous women and to comply with the obligation to investigate, prosecute, and punish those responsible for crimes against indigenous women, as well as provide compensation to all victims. In 2018, the IACHR condemned the prevalence of murders and other forms of violence against women of the Garífuna and Lenca ethnic groups in Honduras, and noted it was due to their gender and ethno-racial origin.¹⁰¹ At present, no legislative or institutional progress has been made in response to this violence.

Indigenous women usually depend on the continually deficient local mediation systems for accessing justice, leaving them in a situation of vulnerability and affecting their right to a life free of violence.¹⁰² Steps taken to include a gender perspective in citizen security strategies through legal frameworks in the region often do not incorporate an intersectional approach that specifically addresses the needs of

⁹⁹ UN Women (2017). *Strategy to prioritize Afro-descendant women in the work of UN Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) 2016-2018*. UN WOMEN. Available at: <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2017/06/estrategia-mujeres-afrodescendientes-onu-mujeres-latinoamerica>

¹⁰⁰ Bionfil, Paloma et al. (2017). *Gender-based Violence Against Women in Indigenous Zones in Mexico*. Available at: https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/data/file/348121/Violencia_de_G_nero_Contra_Mujeres_en_Zonas_Indigenas_en_Mexico.pdf

¹⁰¹ Front Line Defenders (2018). *Historia del Caso Berta Cáceres*. Available at: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/es/case/case-history-berta-caceres>

¹⁰² Olivares Ferreto, E et al (2015). *Gender Violence Against Women in Indigenous Zones in Mexico*. Mexico. Available at: <https://www.epadeq.com.mx/>

indigenous women, who cannot appropriately access the justice system. Within official victim care processes, there is also a systematic lack of training on indigenous languages and cultural practices for judicial personnel serving the indigenous community.

In Mexico, there are 1,600 interpreters accredited by the National Institute of Indigenous Languages; however, the country's bilingual public defense system only has 25. The lack of translators and interpreters leaves indigenous women more vulnerable to institutional obstacles and re-victimization when filing a complaint or seeking medical attention for gender-based violence. The fear of being abused by institutions is one of the main reasons why indigenous women do not report incidents to the formal state judicial systems.¹⁰³

Similarly, indigenous women face many obstacles within the prison system and are disproportionately affected by pretrial detention.

In Mexico, a survey of the incarcerated population shows that in 2016, 42% of imprisoned women who spoke an indigenous language had yet to be sentenced. This figure is higher than that of men, both those who speak an indigenous language and those who do not.¹⁰⁴

A lack of interpreters has been one governmental failure in guaranteeing access to justice for indigenous populations. While the state recognizes the right of indigenous persons to have public defenders who understand their languages and cultures, that right is still not fully guaranteed in practice.

Addressing gender-based violence—and doing so from a perspective that takes into account unequal conditions and diverse backgrounds—in Afro-descendent and indigenous cultures should be a priority in citizen security initiatives. Addressing the needs of women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community in citizen security also means understanding interculturality,¹⁰⁵ which requires deepening and expanding the legal and institutional framework on the problem of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. Chapter III outlines best practices related to this issue in a prior USAID program.

103 Equis Justicia para las mujeres. (2019). Op Cit.

104 INEGI (2016). *Encuesta Nacional de Población Privada de la Libertad (ENPOL) 2016*. Disponible via: www.inegi.org.mx/programas/enpol/2016/

105 Interculturality refers to the existence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures and the possibility of generating shared cultural expressions through dialogue and mutual respect. UNESCO. Definition. Available at: <https://es.unesco.org/creativity/interculturalidad>

Policy to Promote the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – PRO-IP¹⁰⁶

USAID's PRO-IP policy seeks to strengthen the way in which programs are designed and managed to efficiently and interactively benefit indigenous peoples, ensuring that each project and activity supported by the agency in indigenous territories includes their direct and meaningful participation in every facet.

This policy seeks to build the capacity of indigenous peoples and organizations to implement locally-defined solutions to development challenges and opportunities, as well as to encourage greater support from the government, private sector, civil society, and general population.

The general purpose of this policy is to increase “the measurable impact and sustainability of USAID programs by ensuring that our staff and implementing partners engage Indigenous Peoples as meaningful partners in development processes; safeguard against harm; and enhance their ability to promote their rights, determine their own priorities, and advance their self-reliance.”

Establishing this policy across all programs, including those aimed at improving citizen security, creates an opportunity to ensure that indigenous peoples are not excluded from initiatives and are part of development processes that seek to eradicate violence in the region.

Incarcerated Persons

The perpetuation of gender-based violence in LAC is due in part to a normalization of gender stereotypes, which are reinforced during the filing of complaints and within the judicial system. This normalization of social inequalities manifests itself across all levels of society, including the judicial and penitentiary systems, where those most at risk of incarceration don't have the socioeconomic means to access due process.¹⁰⁷

According to the World Prison Brief, 10.74 million people were in penal institutions around the world in 2014, with an average prison population rate of 144 per 100,000 people. Additionally, approximately 13% of the incarcerated persons in the world are in Latin America, despite the region representing only eight percent of the world population.¹⁰⁸

El Salvador has the second highest incarceration rate in the world, with 565 per 100,000 inhabitants¹⁰⁹ within the penitentiary system.¹¹⁰ The rate of prison population growth in El Salvador has been significant in the last decade, with 61% growth per year; this is three times higher than the rest of the region.

Between 2000 and 2017, incarceration of women worldwide increased by 53%, while incarceration of men increased by 19%. The countries with the highest rates of imprisoned women in LAC are Guatemala, Bolivia, and El Salvador, with percentages of more than 7.7% of the population, compared to an average of approximately 4% in other countries of the region. Similarly, these three countries have seen above-average rates of growth.

106 USAID (2020). “Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. Available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/indigenous-peoples/usaid-policy-on-indigenous-peoples>

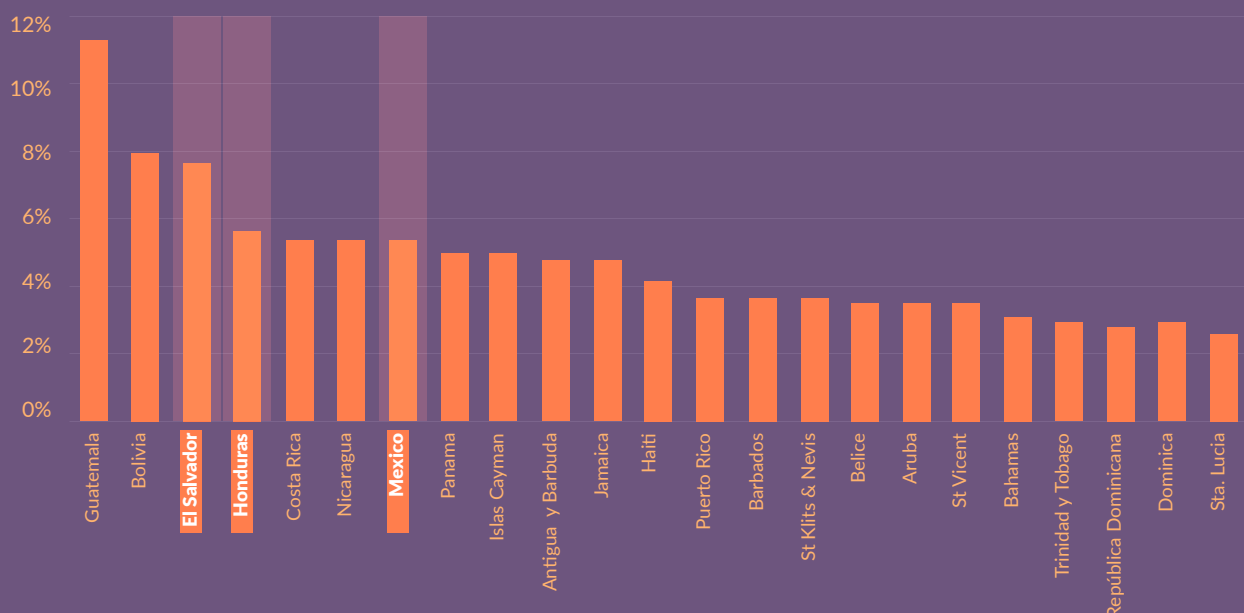
107 Giacomello, C. & Errengerena (2019). *Drug policies, gender and incarceration in Mexico: A guide for inclusive public policies. Equis Justice for women.*

108 Walmsley, Roy (2018). “World Prison Population List”. *Institute for Criminal Policy Research*. Available at: https://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/wppl_12.pdf

109 Ibid

110 Notably, this is only 100 per 100,000 less than the United States, which has a drastically larger population.

Figure 7.
Women as a percentage of the incarcerated population of the region



Source: Prepared with data from World Prison Brief

There are various issues related to the female prison population in the region, including lack of sentences, long wait periods, and severity of the punishments, among others.

In Mexico, 36% of women in prisons have not been sentenced, compared to 14% of men. Additionally, women's sentences are generally longer, averaging 23 years versus 17 years for men, even considering that the most frequent crimes in both cases are categorized as "high social impact:" robbery, kidnapping and homicide for women and robbery, homicide and rape for men. Similarly, different studies have found that women tend to receive more severe punishments than men for the same crime.¹¹¹

Because women remain a minority in the global prison population, facilities, regulations, and operations across penitentiaries are designed to respond to the needs of men.¹¹² A shortage of female custodial, medical, and legal staff makes it difficult to provide specialized care that attends to the needs of the female prison population.¹¹³

In addition to these challenges, evidence indicates that family abandonment of incarcerated women is greater than that of men, as women tend to receive fewer visits.¹¹⁴ Studies indicate that this is a "symbolic punishment for being a woman and being incarcerated,"¹¹⁵ wherein social and cultural

111 Giacomello, C., Blas, I., & Errengerena (2018). *Drug policies, gender, and incarceration in Mexico: A guide for inclusive public policies*. Available at: Equis Justice for all women.

112 Briseño López, M. (2006). *Guaranteeing human rights for women in prison*. National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

113 See for example: National Human Rights Commission (2013) Special Report on women in prison. Available at: https://www.cndh.org.mx/sites/default/files/doc/Informes/Especiales/informeEspecial_CentrosReclusion.pd

114 Azaola, E. (2015). "Las mujeres en el sistema de justicia penal y la antropología a la que adhiero". *Cuadernos de antropología social*. Numero 22. Buenos Aires. Available at: <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/1809/180913913002.pdf>

115 Ibid



expectations towards women lead to rejection by family members. Consequently, women are at a further disadvantage in accessing resources and goods needed to survive in prison, since financial support is generally provided by relatives.

In Mexico City, a study by the Office of the Deputy Secretary of the Corrections System showed that in 2015 there were 1,900 incarcerated women, of which 70% had been abandoned by their families, and 20% had not received a single visit. In contrast, the study notes that of the 36 thousand incarcerated men, more than 90% received frequent family visits.¹¹⁶

The reality of family abandonment is significantly worse for incarcerated members of the LGBTIQ+ community, who often are already separated from their families, which reinforces the vulnerability that persists within prisons. In addition, prison staff in the region lack awareness about diversity and inclusion, particularly those affecting transgender individuals, who are often assigned to prisons based on binary sex criteria and not necessarily in accordance with the individual's gender identity. In Honduras, some prisons continue to prohibit hormone therapies or physical expressions of gender nonconformity in correctional facilities.

The failure to adapt to the needs of different groups in the penitentiary system disproportionately impacts the LGBTIQ+ community. Ari Vera Morales, Director of the Almas Cautivas A.C. Foundation, notes some of the challenges faced by the LGBTIQ+ community in prison:

"In Mexico, sentences for the LGBTIQ+ community tend to be higher than those of other populations."¹¹⁷

Incarcerated LGBTIQ+ individuals are victims of violence and discrimination within prisons at the hands of other inmates, as well as staff. One of the

116 Muñiz, Ruth (2015). "Abandona familiares a 7 de cada 10 reclusas por ser mujeres". Animal Político. December 22nd. Available at: www.animalpolitico.com/2015/12/abandonan-familiares-a-7-de-cada-10-reclusas-por-ser-mujeres/

measures to reduce this violence inside prisons has been isolation, which serves to reduce the freedoms of the population by limiting their time in the common room or in social activities.

The National Committee for the Prevention of Torture, Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment was created in 2011 in Honduras. It mandates that the Public Ministry is responsible for identifying groups in vulnerable situations in order to be able to respond to specific risks facing these groups. However, existing detention centers do not have specialized care guidelines or trained personnel to respond to the needs of this population.¹¹⁸ The CATRACHAS Observatory has reported that many LGBTIQ+ and disabled incarcerated individuals are kept on 'islands,' confined to small areas or hallways inside prisons.¹¹⁹

The indigenous prison population is affected by failures in due process inside penitentiary systems. As previously mentioned, the lack of translators and interpreters for the indigenous population is a significant obstacle in guaranteeing access to justice. According to the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 8,000 indigenous persons are in jail without a conviction, due to the lack of translators.¹²⁰

This problem is even more serious for indigenous women, with 42% still awaiting a sentence. Many indigenous women are highly penalized for crimes against public health, such as drug dealing or trafficking. These indigenous women are often imprisoned without receiving due process, considerations for poverty, or access to an interpreter.¹²¹

In April 2020, the Amnesty Law was approved in Mexico, which proposes prison release for those from vulnerable groups that have been denied access to justice and due process.¹²² This was in large part a response to the COVID-19 health crisis, as officials sought to avoid widespread infection in prisons. The law provides for the release of individuals accused of federal crimes such as non-violent robbery or abortion, as well as indigenous persons denied access to interpretation or translation. However, a review of the scope of this law shows that, in reality, only 7% of those currently in prison could potentially benefit; even so, the process to make this possible would take months.¹²³ In terms of what groups the law benefits, there are few women incarcerated for abortion at the federal level, but the law does not apply at the state level.¹²⁴ As of June 2020, the case analysis commission required to begin the process had yet to be formed.

The initiative has grossly failed to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 to incarcerated persons; as of September 2020, at least 226 incarcerated persons had died from COVID-19 in Mexico and 2,321 had been infected.¹²⁵ This law's limited result is an example of the constant restrictions imposed

118 Trujillo, Karina (2016). *Análisis de las Condiciones de Privación de Libertad para LGTTBI y la Inclusión de Enfoques Diferenciados en la Normativa Penitenciaria*. Available at: <http://www.cattrachas.org/images/archivos/Cattrachas/261-AnalisisdelasCondicionesdePrivacindeLibertadparaLGTTBI.-InclusindeEnfoquesDiferenciadosenlaNormativaPen-1.pdf>

119 Blanc, Jean-Sébastien (2013). *Personas LGBTI privadas de libertad: un marco de trabajo para el monitoreo preventivo*. *Reforma Penal Internacional*. Available at: www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r33600.pdf

120 Fondo para el Desarrollo de los pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y El Caribe (2018). *Más de 8 mil indígenas en la cárcel por falta de traductores en México*. Available at: www.filac.org/wp/comunicacion/actualidad-indigena/mas-de-8-mil-indigenas-en-la-carcel-por-falta-de-traductores-en-mexico/

121 Giacomello, C. Op. Cit.

122 Mexico Amnesty Law (2020). *Diario Oficial de la Federación*. Available at: http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LAmn_220420.pdf

123 Angel, Arturo (2020). "Ley de Amnistía solo sacará de la cárcel a 7% de presos y las liberaciones tardarían meses". *Animal Político*. Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/04/ley-de-amnistia-impacto-presos-liberaciones/>

124 According to a study by the Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida (GIRE), between 2007 and 2017, 228 individuals were sentenced for abortion-related crimes in different states throughout the country, while in the same period only three sentences were handed down at a federal level. Thamés et al. (2018). "Maternidad o castigo". GIRE. Available at: <https://criminalizacionporaborto.gire.org.mx/#/>

125 Guillen, Beatriz (2020). "Reclusos han muerto por COVID". *El País*. Available at: <https://elpais.com/mexico/2020-09-11/al-menos-226-reclusos->

by the same justice system that hinder improvement initiatives within prisons and the security system in general. Although the proposal underlines the relevance of reviewing the imprisonment of persons due to inadequate access to due process, the scope of the law remains limited in practice. Human rights issues within LAC prisons reflect the social inequalities that confront women, indigenous peoples, and the LGBTIQ+ community. These challenges are detailed in Chapter 2.

This chapter has sought to emphasize the importance of implementing an intersectional gender approach when documenting, analyzing, and addressing crime; this should be the basis of any citizen security strategy. In establishing institutional and legal frameworks for the prevention and response to gender-based violence, one must consider the differentiated needs of women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. Likewise, access to justice must be provided equally, ensuring that all staff involved understand and take into account these differences through clear protocols and continuous training.

The following chapter studies the legal and institutional frameworks for citizen security in the region with a focus on analyzing the inclusion of a gender perspective.

han-muerto-de-covid-en-las-carceles-mexicanas-durante-la-pandemia.html#:~:text=Dentro%20de%20los%20muro%20de,de%20Derechos%20Humanos%20



Chapter 2

Regulatory frameworks and institutional in/abilities to address gender needs in citizen security



Since the adoption of the Belém do Pará Convention in 1994, the countries in this study have progressively adapted their regulatory and institutional frameworks to include a gender perspective. Adherence to this convention (and other international instruments) prompted the creation of the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) in El Salvador (1996), the National Institute for Women (INAM) in Honduras (1999), and the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES) in Mexico (2001), agencies that have been key in shaping gender-centered legal and institutional frameworks to confront the different manifestations of violence.

Although a broad examination of legal systems in the region does show significant advances in the areas of femicide, discrimination, domestic violence, and hate crimes, existing regulations have generally favored a punitive rather than preventive approach.¹²⁶ Meanwhile, institutional reforms have fallen short in preventing gender-based violence, reducing impunity, protecting victims, and promoting inclusive access to justice. As such, much work remains to strengthen protection mechanisms, especially for vulnerable groups.

The following chapter analyzes existing institutional capacities and tools in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico to address the consequences of crime and violence imposed on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. With special emphasis placed on recommendations, this section includes some ideas for programs that could help strengthen state capacities and address these challenges in an inclusive manner.

126 MESECVI/OEA (2017). *Third Hemispheric Report on the Implementation of the Convention of Belém do Pará, Prevention of Violence against Women in the Americas* Paths to Travel. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/TercerInformeHemisferico-ES.pdf>

Key milestones in gender-sensitive institutional strengthening

1994

Belém do Pará Convention

1996

El Salvador: Creation of the ISDEMU

1997

El Salvador: National Policy for Women
Honduras: Domestic Violence Prevention Law

1999

Honduras: National Institute for Women

2000

Honduras: Equal Opportunity Law

2001

Mexico: National Institute for Women

2006

Mexico: Law on Equality between Women and Men

2007

Mexico: LGAMVLV
General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence

2009

Mexico: National Public Security System Law

2010

El Salvador: LEIV
Comprehensive Law for Violence against Women (LEIV)

2012

El Salvador and Mexico enact laws against femicide

2015

Honduras: Decree on Gender Budgets
2016: El Salvador

2016

El Salvador: National Assistance System (SNA)

2018

El Salvador: Draft Gender Identity Bill



Legal Frameworks

El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico's constitutions contain articles guaranteeing equality of all people before the law, as do most countries in the region. These frameworks, together with international instruments that promote human rights, have driven states to strengthen their own legal instruments to eliminate discrimination, punish violence, and promote equality.

In response to the serious security challenges that women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community face (as detailed in the previous chapter), the countries in this study have also gradually introduced laws that focus on particular aspects of gender-based violence. The criminalization of femicide, introduction of anti-discrimination laws, and the enshrinement of gender-based equal opportunity laws are examples of these efforts.¹²⁷

To illustrate the progress and outline challenges within the legal frameworks, the following section analyzes how these changes have shaped a relatively robust system of laws that address different forms of insecurity. With substantive progress, do these new legal frameworks alone account for an adequate response to gender-based insecurity?

Legal Classification of Femicide/Feminicide¹²⁸

With the exception of Cuba, all Latin American countries have some law or article in place that addresses or punishes femicide/feminicide.¹²⁹ The commitments assumed by countries through ratification of various international treaties,¹³⁰ as well as the reality of having one of the highest rates in the world of gender-based aggression against women, have required countries of the region

127 Only Mexico uses the word gender in its constitution

128 The term femicide is used for Honduras, while feminicide is used for El Salvador and Mexico, in accordance with the classification established in their internal regulations. See Chapter I for the conceptual development of feminicide as a phenomenon of violence. For an extensive analysis on the use of the terminology femicide / feminicide, see Aguirre, Pamela y Jimena Ron (2017). "El Femicidio: El discurso jurídico Latinoamericano" *Revista Iuris*, Número 16, Vol 2.

129 Deus, Alicia y Diana Gonzales (2019). *Análisis de legislación sobre femicidio/feminicidio en América Latina y el Caribe e insumos para una ley modelo*. MESECVI/ONUMUMJERES.

130 In particular, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention, 1994) Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/convencion.asp>



in general– and El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico in particular– to modify their legal frameworks to specifically sanction this crime.¹³¹ However, the scope of these laws varies based on the particular focus each country has given to its respective regulations.

In 2012, El Salvador adopted the Law of Equality, Equity and Eradication of Discrimination against Women (LIE) and the Special Comprehensive Law for a Life Free of Violence for Women (LEIV), officially designating femicide as a crime.

Both laws recognize the existence of various types of violence, create specialized jurisdictions to respond to these crimes, and establish a data system to better comprehend the extent and true characteristics of gender-based violence.¹³²

That same year, Mexico introduced specific penalties for the crime of femicide (Article 325 of the Criminal Code). Additionally, the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence has given government entities a prominent role in eradicating violence (Articles 21 and 22) and broadening the punitive scope of criminal law to focus on prevention and state responsibility since its creation in 2007.

In 2013, Honduras modified its criminal code to include legislation on femicide as a crime (Arts. 118-A and B). The regulation, which was ratified after 12 years of congressional debate, is limited in that it only establishes penalties for the specific forms of violence described in the law, neglecting a holistic approach to the prevention and protection of gender-based violence.

Regardless of the restrictions, it is worth noting that all three countries have adopted femicide/femicide into their criminal code and as such,

¹³¹ In 2018, the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) adopted the Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls (Femicide/Femicide), which seeks to provide a comprehensive view of the issue and serve as a resource for states and interested parties to achieve the highest standard of protection and interpretation of the rights established in the Belém do Pará Convention.

¹³² El Heraldo Honduras (2014). "Feminicidio tendrá pena de entre 30 y 40 años". *El Heraldo*. Available at: <https://www.elheraldo.hn/sucesos/621722-219/feminicidio-tendra-pena-de-entre-30-y-40-anos-en-honduras>

recognize and can punish this gender-based crime. In Honduras and El Salvador, the penalties for femicide/feminicide range from 20 to 25 years, while in Mexico the same crime carries up to 60 years in prison. While this may appear promising, the maximum penalties for feminicide in all three countries are lower than those for other crimes (such as kidnapping resulting in death in Honduras or the murder of government authorities in the case of El Salvador), ultimately revealing cultural bias toward the lives of women.

Table 1 – Penalties established for feminicides vs. homicide and other crimes

	Femicide / Feminicide	Homicide	Other crimes
El Salvador	20 to 35 years in prison (Article 45 LEIV)	20 to 35 years for aggravated homicide with premeditation (Article 129 of the Criminal Code)	50 to 60 years for aggravated homicide against authorities (Article 129 of the criminal code)
Honduras	20 to 25 years or 25 to 30 in the event of aggravated femicide (Article 208 the Criminal Code)	25 to 30 years in cases of murders-for-hire (Article 193 of the Criminal Code)	Life sentence for aggravated kidnapping cases (Article 240 of the Criminal Code)
México	40 to 60 years (Article 325 of the Criminal Code)	60 years for aggravated homicide (Article 320 of the Criminal Code)	30 to 60 years for domestic homicides (Article 323 of the Criminal Code)

Source: Prepared based on criminal codes and comprehensive laws of the studied countries

Various criteria exist for designating a femicide/feminicide under the law, which in practice can and does lead to underreporting of the crime. Mexican legislation, for example, makes a distinction between negligent homicide, intentional homicide, and feminicide, the latter defined as the crime of “killing a woman because of her gender.” Thus, to classify the crime as feminicide, some of the following circumstances must be met and documented:¹³³

1. The victim shows signs of sexual violence (of any kind)
2. The victim has suffered "indecent or degrading" injuries or mutilations, before or after they are killed
3. There is a history of any type of violence in the family, work or school environment
4. There is a romantic, emotional, or trusting relationship between the victim and the aggressor
5. There is evidence of threats related to the crime, harassment, or prior injuries from the perpetrator against the victim
6. The victim was unable or not allowed to communicate with other people
7. The body of the victim is exposed or displayed in a public place

¹³³ Article 325. Federal Criminal Code

While federal law has led to modifications in the legislative frameworks in many of Mexico's states, the country continues to face challenges in implementing femicide laws, as state-level legislation can alter or impact federal law. One such example of this conflict is in the states of Michoacán and Tlaxcala, where the local criminal codes exclude two of the seven reasons for classifying a femicide that are stipulated in the federal code, namely (1) the preexistence of a romantic, emotional, or trusting relationship between the perpetrator and the victim of the crime and (2) the fact that the victim was unable or not allowed to communicate with other people. Consequently, investigative agencies and prosecutors have limitations on how to effectively prove the circumstances established in the legislation, which in practice results in only three out of every 100 female murders in Mexico being classified as a femicide and only one in 100 actually reaching a conviction.¹³⁴

Similarly, in El Salvador, the principal obstacle in designating femicides as such is a lack of institutional skills required by prosecutors and aides to analyze and prosecute gender-based crimes pursuant to the 2012 LEIV law. According to data from InfoSegura, the average percentage of convictions for violent deaths between 2013 and 2018 is 5.7%, which is why, despite legislation, the majority of femicides remain unpunished.¹³⁵

Practical difficulties in applying standard practices impedes the true visibility of femicide and an understanding of the crime. As will be further explored, a lack of institutional comprehension of the crime and the tools to process it restrict avenues to justice and have generated public mistrust towards public institutions, as well as a mounting fear among women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community of becoming victims of crimes in their neighborhoods, homes, and places of work.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work in citizen security include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The countries studied in this report have made progress in recognizing femicide by incorporating classification guidelines for the crime into their criminal codes The penalties considered for femicides, although relatively high, are still lower than those assigned to other crimes resulting in death The requirement of prosecutors to classify crimes from a legal standpoint, coupled with the lack of resources to properly conduct investigations, together result in a miniscule percentage of gender-based homicides of women being ruled as femicides/femicides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider simplifying legal frameworks and existing requirements for classifying femicide/femicide crimes Expand legislation supporting measures to prevent femicide Build the capacity of justice sector officials on topics relating to gender equality Expansion of resources and tools to investigate crimes within the judicial system, to reduce impunity levels

Domestic Violence and Other Gender-based Violence

Closely related to femicide, domestic (or intrafamily) violence is a systemic issue across Latin America. Given its prevalence, the countries of the study have incorporated regulations aimed at confronting and punishing any of its forms. However, unlike femicide, the laws around domestic

134. Ángel, A. (2020). "Solo 3 de cada 100 asesinatos de mujeres son esclarecidos". *Animal Político*. Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/02/mujeres-asesinatos-femicidios-esclarecidos-condenas-impunidad>

135. InfoSegura (2018). *Violencia contra las Mujeres a lo largo del Ciclo de Vida*. USAID-PNUD. Available at: <https://ameralatinagenera.org/newsite/index.php/es/centro-de-recursos?title=VIOLENCIA+CONTRA+LAS+MUJERES+A+LO+LARGO+DEL+CICLO+DE+VIDA+--+Fast+Track+para+EL+SALVADOR&search=enviado&open=cri3989>

violence are far clearer in establishing the state's obligation to prevent and punish the crime. After ratification of the Belém do Pará Convention in 1996, El Salvador adopted the Law Against Intrafamilial Violence.¹³⁶ The law defines domestic violence as one form of gender-based violence and establishes that the state has a duty to develop actions aimed at preventing and eradicating domestic violence, including:

- Incorporating respect for human dignity into formal education
- Conducting outreach campaigns to raise awareness about domestic violence
- Promoting studies on the causes and consequences of violence
- Establishing legal mechanisms for proper victim care
- Creating a specialized division within the National Civil Police to handle domestic violence cases
- Educating the appropriate officials

In the case of Honduras, the Law Against Domestic Violence (Decree 132, 1997) also establishes the state's duty to implement public policies that guarantee an end to domestic violence and ensure protection for families. Article Two includes that “the state will adopt public policy measures that are necessary to prevent, punish, and ultimately eradicate domestic violence against women.” The law stipulates that, for this to happen, it must:

- Promote and implement measures that help to prevent and eradicate violence
- Provide immediate assistance and protection to female victims of domestic abuse
- Develop plans to address the problem of violence

In Mexico, the Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, enacted in 2007, outlines the coordination between federal and municipal bodies to “prevent, punish, and eradicate violence against women.”¹³⁷ These statutes recognize and incorporate into law psychological, physical, patrimonial, economic, and sexual violence as the different types of violence that affect women. It also mandates that the state must include the following in their practices for eradicating domestic violence:

- Provide free specialized care, legal advice, and psychological treatment to victims
- Provide comprehensive, specialized, and free rehabilitation services to the offender to eliminate violent behavior
- Avoid any situation where the victim and the aggressor are handled by the same individual and in the same location
- Ensure the separation and distancing of the aggressor from the victim
- Promote building and maintaining shelters for victims and their children

In light of the worrying numbers on gender-based violence in the region, it is clear that neither the configuration of a legal framework recognizing the state's role in prevention, nor the increase in penalties in cases of gender-based violence, has been adequate to reduce its occurrence. For example, although El Salvador recently modified Article 338-A of the Criminal Code to increase jail time from one to three years (or the equivalent in community service) for perpetrators who disobey restraining orders in domestic abuse cases, according to experts, victims tend to withdraw

136 Legislative Assembly of El Salvador. Available at: <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/sites/default/files/documents/decretos/5ED0C9E5-8F5A-4874-86FB-982E412E4C44.pdf>

137 Article 1. Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia. Available at: https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/209278/Ley_General_de_Acceso_de_las_Mujeres_a_una_Vida_Libre_de_Violencia.pdf

lawsuits mainly due to family pressure or fear of re-victimization. Similarly, in Honduras, domestic violence regulations have made it possible to strengthen the theoretical framework to address gender-based violence and promote equality; however, experts argue that their effects are not yet felt by the population and that the laws have not been effective.

Along with strengthening laws against domestic violence, countries have also made progress in legally recognizing other manifestations of gender-based violence. These manifestations—with some substantial differences across the target countries—include physical, psychological, sexual, patrimonial, and economic forms of violence. It should be noted that this forces governments to take actions aimed at preventing and reducing these types of crimes, as they are less able to limit what counts as gender-based violence to one strict paradigm.

Of the three countries analyzed, Honduras presents the most limited legislative recognition of the different ways in which gender-based violence manifests itself. Indeed, the two existing laws focusing on domestic violence and feminicides only recognize the violence that occurs at home or in the context of family relationships, ignoring other types of insecurity widely recognized by international organizations or other countries' legal bodies (as indicated in the chart below)

Table 2 - Types of gender-based violence recognized in El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico

	Types of Violence								Modalities			
	Physical	Femicides/ Feminicides	Psychological	Patrimonial	Sexual	Economic	Symbolic	Others	Family/Couple	Community	Institution	Labor/ Teaching
El Salvador	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
Honduras	x		x	x					x			
México	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Developed based on principal national legislation

The types of violence recognized under Salvadoran law are: economic, feminicidal, physical, patrimonial, sexual, symbolic, psychological, and emotional. This formal definition, together with the creation of the Specialized Courts for a Life Free of Violence Against Women discussed in the LEIV, has provided the state with new tools to face some of the multiple forms of violence faced by women, including institutional violence. For example, Article 47 of the aforementioned law states that “whoever, in the public sector, encourages, promotes, or tolerates impunity or obstructs the investigation, prosecution, and punishment of the crimes established in this law (feminicide, feminicide suicide, illegal dissemination of information, etc.) will be punished with a prison sentence

of two to four years and disqualified from a public service role for the same time period.”¹³⁸ Recognition of the various forms of gender-based violence has also been incorporated in Mexican law. Under Article 20 of the General Law on Access to a Life Free of Violence, the state accepts the responsibility to “prevent, care for, investigate, punish, and repair the damage” created by any type of violence, be it “psychological, physical, patrimonial, economic, sexual, or other similar forms.” Notably, the law recognizes different modalities for these types of violence, and that they can occur in family, community, and institutional settings.¹³⁹

Countries in the region have made progress, to a certain degree, in recognizing violence and its various forms through legislation and have—at least in theory—committed to taking concrete prevention measures. The observed approaches have a direct influence on how the state responds to different types of violence, as well as to the different modalities that are expressed. These differences are important, as there is a wide consensus on the need to protect these fundamental human rights of individuals in all forms.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are substantial differences between the countries of this study when it comes to the recognition of the different manifestations of violence faced by women and girls There is no legal consensus regarding the different types of violence. While some countries limit themselves to recognizing only domestic violence, others have incorporated other forms, such as institutional violence. Strengthening legal frameworks should be implemented alongside training and tools for prevention and protection on gender-based violence as established by law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote discussion and analysis of rules for countries to identify and fill existing gaps between domestic and international laws on human rights Promote discussion on how to improve and guarantee access to justice for victims. Include legal mechanisms that allow the prosecution of crimes in cases where victims withdraw their complaints because they fear reprisal Strengthen institutional systems beyond merely establishing legal frameworks, including creating more gender-centered tools for state agencies responding to gender-based violence

Violence against LGBTIQ+ Persons

While undoubtedly there are legal advances in Latin America and the Caribbean aimed at protecting women, children and teenagers, the same cannot be said for the LGBTIQ+ community. Indeed, due to poor regulation and systematic discriminatory practices by the state, many of the hate crimes that occur against people from the diverse LGBTIQ+ communities remain overlooked or silenced.¹⁴⁰

The lack of legislation on non-discrimination and LGBTIQ+ rights is of particular concern given the extremely high incidence of hate crimes in Latin America. In Mexico, on average one LGBTIQ+

138 Ley Especial Integral para una Vida Libre de Violencia para las Mujeres (LEIV). Available at: <https://www.asamblea.gob.sv/decretos/details/3396>
 139 Unspecified, but leaves open the discussion for incorporating additional categories, Art 6. VI. Any other similar forms that weaken or are likely to damage the dignity, integrity, or freedom of women. Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia. Available at https://oig.cepal.org/sites/default/files/2018_mex_ref_leygralvidalibredeviolencia.pdf
 140 According to the National Survey on Discrimination (ENADIS, 2017), Mexico is the second country in Latin America with the highest number of cases of homophobic hate crimes, surpassed only by Brazil.

person is murdered every three days.¹⁴¹ In El Salvador, at least 102 transgender people lost their lives in a violent manner between 2014 and 2016.¹⁴² Members of the LGBTIQ+ community who get in trouble with the law in Honduras are imprisoned in the same facilities designed for people with mental handicaps, an extreme rights violation.¹⁴³

Generally speaking, legal frameworks are restricted to existing constitutional guarantees prohibiting discrimination. In the El Salvador Constitution, for example, Article III states that “all people are equal before the law and restrictions may not be established based on differences in nationality, race, sex or religion,” but does not mention identity, gender, or sexual preference.

Although the Honduras Constitution declares that any form of discrimination is punishable, a 2005 constitutional reform prohibits people of the same sex from marrying or adopting.¹⁴⁴

Although insufficient, Mexico has progressed somewhat in this area. A constitutional reform in 2011 incorporated the prohibition of all types of discrimination motivated by “gender or sexual preferences.” This is in addition to the Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination of 2003, which validates that sexual preferences have been a reason for discrimination. In 2017, the Office of the Attorney General (currently the Prosecutor's Office) approved the “National Action Protocol for Law Enforcement Agency Personnel” in order to guarantee an inclusive justice that considers the rights of LGBTIQ+ people. The document establishes action protocols for cases in which an LGBTIQ+ person comes before a federal or local law enforcement authority and includes concrete actions such as psychological protection for victims or a trained support staff when taking statements.¹⁴⁵

Some progress can also be identified in El Salvador, although limited. In 2010, Executive Decree No. 56 was approved, which contains provisions for public officials on how to avoid discrimination based on gender identity and/or sexual orientation. In the judicial sphere, the Legislative Assembly approved reforms to Articles 129 and 155 of the criminal code to more severely punish crimes including threats and homicides when motivated by identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Moving forward with comprehensive legal frameworks for the prevention of violence in general and particularly relating to gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual diversity is an ongoing task in the region. The rights to non-discrimination, safety, and health must be codified into law and accompanied by necessary methods to implement them. As presented further on, it is also important to draft inclusive laws that call for the documentation of the various types of violence suffered by the LGBTIQ+ community, which remains invisible in registry systems that disregard different gender identities. To date, only El Salvador has a preliminary draft discussing this, although progress on that draft has been stalled since 2018.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

141 La Vanguardia (2020). “Asesinatos de la comunidad LGBT”. *La Vanguardia*. Available at: <https://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/20200515/481149201493/con-117-asesinatos-comunidad-lgbt-sufre-en-2019-un-ano-violento-en-mexico.html>

142 USAID/LINKAGES/UNDP (2018). *Gender-based Violence, HIV, and Key Populations in Latin America and the Caribbean: El Salvador Country Report*. Available at: <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-linkages-el-salvador-gbv-april-2018.pdf>

143 See for example: <http://www.cattrachas.org> or <http://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r33600.pdf>

144 Article 112. Constitution of Honduras. Available at <http://www.poderjudicial.gob.hn/CEDIJ/Leyes/Documents/ConstitucionHN2017.pdf>

145 Instituto Nacional para el Federalismo y el Desarrollo Municipal (2017). *Hace 14 años se promulgo la ley federal para prevenir y eliminar la discriminación*. Gobierno de Mexico. Available at: <http://www.gob.mx/inafed/articulos/hace-14-anos-se-promulgo-la-ley-federal-para-prevenir-y-eliminar-la-discriminacion>

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal frameworks of protection do not expressly consider the protection of LGBTIQ+ persons • In cases where a constitutional regulation exists, it is limited to aspects relating to discrimination based on the sex assigned at birth, as opposed to gender (with the exception of Mexico) • A lack of regulation protecting LGBTIQ+ persons deepens the insecurity of these communities' experiences, making the different forms of violence they are subjected to invisible • Some promising advances in this area come outside of legal frameworks and, as such, leave these populations vulnerable to changing policy and partisanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote discussion of laws that recognize both the rights and unique vulnerabilities of the LGBTIQ+ community to live a life free from violence • Strengthen training on discrimination and human rights for all protection and justice personnel • Promote public awareness-raising measures against discrimination

Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Despite a multitude of international instruments that describe sexual and reproductive rights as a fundamental aspect of human rights, they continue to be a highly controversial issue in Latin America. The discrimination and violence women and girls suffer daily in the area of sexual and reproductive rights include limited access to family planning, lack of preventive care and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, and high incidence of rape.¹⁴⁶ However, perhaps the most troubling human rights violations arise from the criminalization of abortion, regardless of the circumstances.

In 2014, the MESECVI Committee of Experts adopted the “Declaration on Violence against Women, Girls and Teenagers and their Sexual and Reproductive Rights,” outlining the links between gender-based violence and the exercise of women and girls’ human rights.¹⁴⁷ Despite these recommendations and those provided by international organizations on the need to address the issue of abortion, only a handful of countries in the region have made significant progress in this area. For example, several countries continue to have strict laws limiting the options available to doctors to attend to obstetric emergencies where the life of the mother is at risk. In those countries, patients are subject to criminal charges in cases where the fetus or baby does not survive.

El Salvador has one of the most restrictive laws in the Americas on this issue. The constitution, amended in 1999, recognizes “every human being from the moment of conception” (Art. 1) and the criminal code establishes jail time of two to eight years for any “woman who attempts to self-induce an abortion or consents to having another person perform it” (Art. 133). Despite the way the law is written, it is a common practice for judges to sentence women to 35 years in prison, a sentence more in line with the parameters governing aggravated murder than abortion.

The criminal code in Honduras punishes women who undergo an abortion with jail terms of three to

¹⁴⁶ See for example: HCHR (2014). *La salud y los derechos a la salud sexual reproductiva*. Oficina del Alto Comisionado de las Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos. Available at: <https://www.hchr.org.mx/index.php?option=com>

¹⁴⁷ MESECVI/OEA (2014). *Declaración sobre la Violencia contra las Mujeres, Niñas y Adolescentes y sus Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos*. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/DeclaracionDerechos-ES.pdf>



six years in prison. The same law provides penalties of up to 10 years for those who perform or cause an abortion. There are an estimated 50,000 to 80,000 illegal abortions performed in the country each year, and although a very small percentage of them are prosecuted, those facing obstetric emergencies face the prospect of going to jail if they seek medical care in an emergency situation.¹⁴⁸

In Mexico, the only legal cause recognized in every state for granting an abortion is in cases of rape. The General Law on Victims and other regulations guarantee access to this service for any woman who makes a statement that the pregnancy was the result of a rape.¹⁴⁹ Despite these legal provisions, in practice, both authorities and medical personnel place additional requirements on women requesting the procedure, often demanding copies of the official complaint to the authorities or asking unnecessary questions about the situation in which the rape took place. Institutions regularly ignore or disregard the established legal framework, and the process becomes complex and women have obstacles in exercising their rights. Of the 32 Mexican states, only two have free legalized abortion regardless of the cause, while others such as Puebla, Tamaulipas, and Zacatecas have outlawed abortion and stipulate that if a woman has an abortion but has a “good reputation,” they may receive a lighter sentence if convicted.

Although there are diverse regulations across the region, the reality is that current laws expose women to situations where their human rights are violated and where they are subject to unnecessary health risks, violence, and discrimination, all of which has been denounced by different international bodies. The United Nations committee that monitors the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has documented that “the designation of abortion as a crime, the denial or postponement of a safe abortion, the denial of assistance post-abortion, the requirement of having to carry a pregnancy to term,

148 Braunschweiger, Amy y Margaret Wurth (2019). *Las mujeres afectadas por la prohibición del aborto en Honduras se ven obligadas a decidir entre la vida y la muerte*. Human Rights Watch. Available at: <https://www.hrw.org/es/news/2019/06/06/>

149 NOM-046-SSA2-2005

and the abuse and mistreatment of women and girls seeking information on sexual and reproductive health, goods, and services, are all forms of gender-based violence that may in some circumstances constitute torture, cruelty, inhumane or degrading treatment.”¹⁵⁰ Within this context, there is an urgent need to improve regulation and government responsiveness.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Excessively restrictive legal frameworks in some countries negatively impact women's ability to exercise their sexual and reproductive rightsRestrictive legal frameworks place undue hardship on women and girls, including unnecessary health risks and potential criminal prosecutions and jail sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote greater discussion regarding updating legal frameworks governing human rights, considering recommendations from the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Belém do Pará ConventionIn the case of Mexico, promoting a more even application of the legal framework across the country to promote equal rights for women in different statesImprove human rights and gender equality training to justice sector officials

Institutional Framework

As countries in the region have begun recognizing the serious consequences that crime and insecurity have on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community, they have not only improved their regulatory frameworks, but have begun updating their institutional capacity. A few examples of these updates are the establishment of specialized policy institutes focused on gender, the incorporation of training content geared for public servants, as well as the creation of police units to specifically work with victims of violence.

Even though there is progress achieved to date in the countries included in this study, experts and analysts agree that challenges remain in terms of coordination, training, infrastructure, human resources, knowledge, and evaluation. To illustrate some promising experiences and outline recommendations for future programming, the following section explores some of the initiatives undertaken by the executive and judicial branches in order to have a gender-sensitive response to insecurity.

Executive Branch

With the development of public policies and programs to promote greater equality and reduce discrimination over the last several decades, governments have been able to make progress in ensuring that state institutions advance gender equality. Notwithstanding the different approaches,

150 United Nations. (2017). *Convención sobre la Eliminación de Todas las Formas de Discriminación contra la Mujer*. Comité para la Eliminación de la Discriminación contra la Mujer. Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2017/11405.pdf>

legislative and policy priorities in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico all share a common focus on combating insecurity.

The establishment of institutes or specialized government offices to design gender-sensitive policies and programs has provided continuity to policies over time. Analyzing the proficiency with which these policies work within public security is key to assessing the capacities of each country included in this study.

In 1996, El Salvador created the Institute for the Development of Women (ISDEMU) to “design, direct, implement, advise and ensure compliance with the National Policy for Women.”¹⁵¹ Since its establishment, this institution has overseen the development of multi-year plans that, according to agency self-evaluations, have focused mainly on gender awareness initiatives and welfare policies. In terms of security, the agency made progress in outlining some actions related to domestic violence, leaving aside other types of insecurity manifestation.¹⁵² Since the enactment of institutional reforms implemented in 2011, the inclusion of gender policies has been decentralized to each individual agency charged with implementing national policy. As a result, the Ministry of Public Security is responsible for carrying out security policies in all areas, including those measures aimed at improving gender-sensitive security..

The enactment of the "Comprehensive Policy of Citizen Coexistence and Security for Honduras 2011-2022" was the country's first attempt to establish a long-term security strategy. Despite the high levels of insecurity facing Honduras, at the time of publication there is no standard protocol or guiding document that regulates all the agencies charged with citizen security.¹⁵³ In fact, the National Council for Citizen Security was established in 2012 as the highest authority within the Secretariat of Security and,¹⁵⁴ through separate agencies, coordinates a comprehensive strategy to prevent violence including “domestic and/or gender-based violence.”¹⁵⁵

In Mexico, the Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INMUJERES) (National Institute for Women) was established in 2001 to prevent gender discrimination and promote equal opportunities, as well as the free exercise of all women's rights. However, it wasn't until approval of the General Law on the National Public Security System in 2009 that authorities had the regulatory and institutional frameworks to coordinate between federal and state agencies on crime prevention. This law explicitly included a focus on the eradication of “violence, especially that perpetrated against girls, boys, youth, women, indigenous people, the elderly, and within and outside the family.”¹⁵⁶ Additionally, it established guidelines for how police should incorporate a gender perspective into their work (Article. 47). Despite these advances, institutional coordination has remained a challenge in the fight against insecurity in the country.¹⁵⁷ The “Agreement for Equality,” whose goal is to encourage gender-inclusive policies across public policy, and promoted by INMUJERES, was signed by federal authorities in 2019.¹⁵⁸ Almost two years after its enactment, there are critics, primarily

151 <https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/>

152 Vaquerano, Vilma. (2016). “Violencia contra las Mujeres en El Salvador”. *Análisis*, 6. Fesa América Central. El Salvador. Available at: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/fesamcentral/12926.pdf>

153 The Organic Law of the Police filled this gap, to an extent. See *Política integral de convivencia y seguridad ciudadana para Honduras 2011-2022*. Available at: <https://www.acnur.org/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2016/10605.pdf>

154 Redacción La Prensa. (2012). “Crean Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana”. *La Prensa*. Available at: <https://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/te-gucigalpa/335893-98/crean-consejo-nacional-de-seguridad-ciudadana>

155 *Política integral de convivencia y seguridad ciudadana para Honduras 2011-2022*. Op Cit.

156 Art. 20 General Law of the National Public Security System. Available at: http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LGSNSP_270519.pdf

157 The president of the Mexican Institute for Justice has indicated that it is critical to work to create a law governing institutional coordination, to ensure an obligation to improve linkage and connection mechanisms between agencies at different levels of government and to unify criteria – “without laws that obligate institutional coordination, any security model will fail.” Redacción Heraldo de México. (2019). “Importante la coordinación Institucional en el tema de seguridad: Rigoberto Salgado” *Heraldo de México*. Available at: <https://heraldodemexico.com.mx/nacional/2019/6/25/importante-la-coordinacion-institucional-en-el-tema-de-seguridad-rigoberto-salgado-100548.html>

158 Lovera, S (2020). “México sin política de género o política de género sin dirección”. *Las Noticias Ya*. Mayo 20. <https://lasnoticiasya.com/2020/05/mexico-sin-politica-de-genero-o-politica-de-genero-sin-direccion/>

due to the lack of implementing concrete actions for gender mainstreaming throughout government agencies.

At an institutional level, there are not many women in decision-making positions in the region, and this trend is even more apparent within the citizen security sphere.¹⁵⁹ In the last 10 years, no woman has held the equivalent position of Minister of Security in El Salvador or Honduras, while, in Mexico for the first time in its history, a woman was appointed to this role in December 2020.¹⁶⁰ These trends not only show the limited opportunities for growth and participation that women and the LGBTIQ+ community have within the citizen security institutional framework in the region, but also demonstrate the discrimination perpetuated within the very institutions in charge of preventing and addressing gender-based violence. Reviewing human resource policies at the institutional level, and within any citizen security initiative, represents the chance to promote equal opportunities from within these institutions themselves, while furthering the gender and security strategy for the population at large.

Analysts agree that it is imperative to address specific issues related to the disproportionate impact crime and violence has on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community. There is also consensus on the need to strengthen prevention efforts,¹⁶¹ the absence of inter-institutional coordination,¹⁶² and that gender-based policy reviews have been almost nonexistent.¹⁶³ The following are some recommendations from experts on these issues.

Preventive Tools

Legal recognition of the various types of violence that affect women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community – about which the previous section refers – requires that countries take action to apply a gender perspective in addressing insecurity. Although evidence suggests that resources and programs that anticipate criminal behavior and conflict with the law are indispensable in reducing crime and violence,¹⁶⁴ the region has yet to implement sustainable initiatives that focus on prevention.

In El Salvador, enactment of LEIV and LIE laws forced the country to implement specific public policies to prevent violence against women, among other key areas. Below are some examples of tangible initiatives that have arisen from these laws.

While the participation of women in high ministerial positions is 47% in El Salvador, 35% in Mexico and 33% in Honduras, their presence in the legislature is 50% in Mexico, 33% in El Salvador and 21% in Honduras. UN Women (2020). “Mujeres en la política” Available at: <https://www.ipu.org/file/8998/download>

159 While the participation of women in high ministerial positions is 47% in El Salvador, 35% in Mexico and 33% in Honduras, their presence in the legislature is 50% in Mexico, 33% in El Salvador and 21% in Honduras. UN Women (2020). “Mujeres en la política” Available at: <https://www.ipu.org/file/8998/download>

160 In her inaugural speech, Mexican Secretary of Public Security and Citizen Protection Rosa Icela Rodríguez indicated that she would revise the strategy for combating violence to include aspects related to prevention, a crucial theme given the more than 1,000 feminicides registered in 2019. <https://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20201230/6158379/nueva-ministra-seguridad-mexico-revisara-estrategia-violencia.html>

161 Arciniega Rosas, K. G. (2017). La estrategia de prevención del delito en México: Análisis del Programa Nacional para la Prevención Social de la Violencia y la Delincuencia. Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas. Available at: <http://repositorio-digital.cide.edu/bitstream/handle/11651/1636/154687.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

162 Mexico City Focus Group, July 15, 2019

163 Vaquerano, V. (2016). Op. Cit.

164 Abt, Thomas et al. (2018). ¿Qué funciona para prevenir y reducir la violencia juvenil?. USAID-Chemonics. Available at: https://www.chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/White-Paper-JPAL_Espa%C3%B1ol.pdf



Ciudad Mujer Program

Since 2011, the Secretariat of Social Inclusion has created four specialized centers that provide sexual and reproductive health services, support for victims of gender-based violence, childcare support, and prevention-focused programs promoting financial independence and land management. In 2016, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) conducted a short-term evaluation of the services provided at these centers. They recommended expanding the services provided to include psychological support and legal services, as well as expanding the hours of operation since at the time, it was on a limited schedule each day. Despite the credibility and recognition of the services provided under this program, it was dismantled under the current government, showing the urgent need to strengthen institutions so they may be sustained from one administration to another.

Gender Equality Units in Public Institutions

In order to promote and monitor compliance with the principles of equality, equity and non-discrimination established in the LIE, as of 2011, gender equality units were established in public institutions. According to an evaluation carried out by the government, by 2018, 59 of these units had been created in national level institutions and 172 (corresponding to 66% of the country) in municipalities. Among the findings in the report was the need to evaluate the impact of training on new masculinities, improve prevention campaigns, and strengthen the technical capabilities of their own units.

Sexual Diversity Department in the Secretariat of Institutional Inclusion

El Salvador's decree 56 of 2010 established a legal framework meant to eliminate and reduce all forms of discrimination due to gender or sexual orientation within public institutions. To operationalize this rule, the Sexual Diversity Unit within the Secretariat of Institutional Inclusion was established, in charge of developing an "LGBTI Institutional Inclusion Index." A decade later, entities such as the IACHR have

expressed their concern about the profound barriers that the LGBTIQ+ community encounters in the access to justice, exposing some of the existing challenges. After the current administration eliminated the Secretariat of Social Inclusion, the Ministry of Culture became the entity responsible for issues impacting the LGBTIQ+ community. The concept of sexual diversity is not recognized even once in its current plan, limiting itself to gender equality and justice in general.¹⁶⁵ The absence of legislation that explicitly acknowledges sexual identity remains a challenge for El Salvador.

Prevention Initiatives in Colombia

In Colombia, the government has targeted its regulations and policies regarding the protection, security, and rights of LGBTIQ+ people by developing strategies for the prevention of all forms of violence and the elimination of discrimination. In the last decade, the various regulatory instruments aimed at the prevention of violence against women have become inclusive to the LGBTIQ+ community in their provisions, thereby incorporating a more comprehensive gender perspective. For example, several court decisions have been handed down in favor of the protection of the rights of women and the LGBTIQ+ population. The country has been implementing prevention, punishment and monitoring strategies for rapes of women and LGBTIQ+ persons. Additionally, there has been movement towards “specializing” the citizen security mechanisms to promote a cross-cutting gender perspective, adapted to the local contexts and ensuring coordination between entities.

One success story of how policies have been implemented at a local level is that of Bogotá D.C., where the District's Secretary for Women and the Secretary for Planning (Office for Sexual Diversity) have developed and implemented sectoral policies specific to women and LGBTIQ+ people for over a decade:

- Establishment of a Rainbow hotline —Línea Arcoíris— to provide support and guidance to victims of violence
- Installation of the Unit to Prevent Discrimination for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, which provides services to LGBTIQ+ persons in cases where their Constitutional or legal rights have been violated
- Provision of public psychosocial and legal counseling services
- Delivery of community services to link with district programs
- Operation of integrated service centers for gender and sexual diversity

Source: Nieto, Carolina (2020). Género, mujer y seguridad en Colombia. Diagnóstico de la situación y propuestas de integración para su eficaz abordaje. Research conducted under commission by PADF. Not published. Bogotá.

In Honduras, the scant legal recognition of violence against women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community is also reflected in a limited institutional structure for the design of policies and programs. While the government has slowly created gender departments within some agencies, their role is limited to coordinating specific short-term actions. For example, the Secretariat of Security has a gender unit that raises awareness and advocates for the human rights of women, and the Secretariat of Education has a technical team to incorporate gender issues into educational curricula. In both cases, there has been complete inability to formulate long-term policies, according to experts interviewed for this study.

In light of this, different administrations in Honduras have tried to set up special commissions to address specific problems.¹⁶⁶ Although this mechanism has allowed the promotion of some key initiatives, experts do not view the commissions as a long-term solution to face the challenges that

¹⁶⁵ Ministerio de Cultura Gobierno El Salvador. (2019). Plan Estratégico Institucional del Ministerio de Cultura de El Salvador 2019-2024. Available at: <http://www.cultura.gob.sv/plan-estrategico-institucional-del-ministerio-de-cultura/>

¹⁶⁶ This category includes, for example, the Police Purging Commission, which resulted in the proposal to reform the organic laws of the national police, including the curriculum and the code of ethics. *Comisión Especial para el proceso de Depuración y Transformación de la Policía Nacional (CEDTPN) y Asociación para una sociedad más justa* (2016). *Comisión Especial recomienda cancelar a 193 elementos de DNIC, Tránsito y UMEP*. ASJ. Available at: <http://asjhonduras.com/webhnl/tag/comision-especial-de-depuracion-policial/>

come with insecurity.¹⁶⁷ Some of the commissions that have been formed include:

Inter-Institutional Commission on Femicide

This commission has been in existence since 2016 and is made up of the Technical Agency for Criminal Investigation (ATIC), the Secretariat of Security, the Secretariat of Human Rights, the National Institute for Women (INAM), the National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH), and three women's organization representatives. The commission has successfully achieved a budget increase for the Office of the Prosecutor for Women, the creation of the Unit for Crimes against Women, and an expansion of the National Directorate of Criminal Investigation to consider cases of femicide.

Inter-Institutional Commission on Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Smuggling and Trafficking of Children and Teenagers

This commission engages a diverse array of stakeholders to reinforce the rights and reduce the exploitation of children. It includes various government entities, including the Secretariat of Security; international organizations, such as the International Labour Organization; and civil society organizations (CSOs), such as Calidad de Vida, Save the Children, and Casa Alianza. The commission has prepared reports on violence related to trafficked youth and created the National Citizen Security Council. The Deputy Secretariat for Security and Prevention is a member, and also performs administrative duties for the Office on Prevention, Peace, and Coexistence, defines the comprehensive strategy for violence prevention and oversees the implementation of situational violence, violence against women, trafficking, and femicide prevention projects.

The creation of local Municipal Offices for Women—tasked with guaranteeing the fulfillment of women's rights throughout the country—also stands out as a step toward progress in gender inclusion and violence prevention. In practice, these departments hold forums and activities to promote the recognition of women's rights, develop prevention campaigns, and organize training activities for women entrepreneurs. There are at least 40 of these offices across the country, some of which have received support in equipment and training from USAID.¹⁶⁸ Local councils were also established at the municipal level to implement plans for coexistence and citizen security where crimes are prioritized that have the greatest social impact in their communities, and actions to curb such crimes are discussed. While a promising advance, only six municipalities of the over 300 in the country reported having these councils as of 2016.¹⁶⁹ According to some analyses, though not widespread, the municipal model is a good start to deepen the mainstreaming of a gender approach in security issues.¹⁷⁰

In Mexico, in response to the multiple challenges that insecurity poses for girls and women (and stemming from a regulatory framework that recognizes these challenges), a series of programs have

167 Sánchez, Arabeska (2016). *Análisis de Leyes de Seguridad Ciudadana Honduras 2010-2016*. NDI. Tegucigalpa. Available at: <https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/11.07.16%20Ana%CC%81lisis%20de%20Leyes%20de%20Seguridad%20Ciudadana%20HN%202010-2016.pdf>

168 UNDP (2017). "Oficinas Municipales de la Mujer, un espacio que debe garantizar el respeto de los derechos de las mujeres." Available at <https://www.hn.undp.org/content/honduras/es/home/presscenter/articles/2017/01/25/oficinas-municipales-de-la-mujer-un-espacio-que-debe-garantizar-el-respeto-de-los-derechos-de-las-mujeres.html>

169 UNDP (2016). *Proyecto de Seguridad Ciudadana en el Triángulo Norte de Centroamérica – Componente Honduras*. Available at: <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/HND/INFORME%20FINAL%20PROYECTO%20FORTALECIMIENTO%20SECTOR%20SEGURIDAD.pdf>

170 Sequeira, Leslie (2016). *Recuperación de experiencias municipales en la construcción de planes de convivencia y seguridad ciudadana*. Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana. Tegucigalpa. Available at: https://www.sica.int/experiencias/item_13_1.html



been developed to address some of the vulnerabilities that contribute to the rise in insecurity. Although the high incidence of crime and violence that we have seen in the previous chapter demonstrates the need to step up these efforts, some initiatives are a promising start in considering the needs of affected populations that should be adapted to other contexts in the region.

Mexico's National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (CONAVIM), established in 2009, is also a significant advance. Controlled by the federal government, this administrative body aims to combat gender-based violence through improvements to the existing laws and speed up the state's response to situations of violence. During the pandemic, CONAVIM has worked alongside the Mexican Senate on legal reform to simplify the processes through which gender-based violence alerts are activated. This is one of the most meaningful tools the government is counting on to face the growing insecurity faced by women and girls throughout the country.

National Gender-Based Violence Alert

Established in the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence (LGAMVLV), the Alert Mechanism for Gender-Based Violence against Women (AVGM) is "a set of emergency governmental actions to confront and eradicate the femicide violence and the existence of grievances that prevent the full exercise of women's human rights, in a specific territory (municipality or state) where violence against women can be exercised by individuals or the community itself."¹⁷¹ This alert system is activated in order to specifically define a region that has critical violence, with the goal of bringing the issue to the attention of government agencies and the general public.¹⁷²

Once an alert is activated, a set of measures is developed by the government to guarantee the safety of women and girls in these areas and thus

171 Artículo 22. Ley General de Acceso de las Mujeres a una Vida Libre de Violencia, 2007

172 Almaraz, L. (2019). "¿Para qué sirve la Alerta de Género?". *Cultura Colectiva*. <https://news.culturacolectiva.com/mexico/para-que-sirve-la-alerta-de-genero-cdmx/>

end violence, eradicate any unfair legal treatment, and allow the full exercise of their human rights. These measures are designed according to the needs of each state and can include the creation of justice centers for women, departments to analyze and investigate femicide, temporary shelters, databases and activities for the general public such as conferences and training to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence. As of January 2020, 19 of the 32 states—roughly 58% of nation—were formally announced on the Alert Mechanism for Gender-Based Violence against Women.¹⁷³

Generally speaking, all Mexican states that have activated the alert system have subsequently presented an increase in complaints of crimes of gender-based violence and, in 11 states, have also seen an increase in femicides. According to some expert analyses, these alerts have served to highlight gender-based violence in the country, but have not had an impact on reducing its levels due to a lack of political will to improve and implement prevention measures.¹⁷⁴ An assessment by Mexico's National Human Rights Commission in 2019 suggests increasing the presence of more members of academia to handle each alert issuance as well as establish a committee with experienced members to assist in drafting outcome indicators.¹⁷⁵

Child Care Program to Support Working Mothers

To support the employment of vulnerable women, the Mexican government created a childcare program for children aged one to four (or to six if a disability exists). Considering that a lack of financial independence is a significant risk factor for women who are victims of violence, this program has a direct impact by allowing them to continue performing paid work while having a safe place to leave their children. As of 2017, 50% of the country's municipalities provide care services to more than 300,000 parents. The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy carried out an evaluation of the program, concluding that it had contributed to improving the conditions of access and permanence in the labor market for mothers, fathers, and guardians.¹⁷⁶

Up until 2019, the government issued a fixed amount per child directly to child care centers.¹⁷⁷ However, subsidies have since been given to mothers or fathers so they can select the child care center of their choice or use it to pay someone else for the child care. However, some experts note that this money transfer system deserves further study, as there is a fundamental lack of understanding on the role that federal money plays in the dynamics of domestic violence. How the money is spent is not regulated by the state; those who receive it can use it as a means of taking control over their partners. While some studies that have analyzed the role of money transfers in intrafamilial violence dynamics indicate that the impacts are varied, the concerns voiced by critics are valid. In these cases, threats or physical violence can increase when payments are made, especially if they do not arrive on time. Therefore, decision makers should consider programs that, in addition to increasing women's income, build their decision-making capabilities and empower

173 Infobae (2020). "El 56% del territorio mexicano tiene alerta de violencia de género contra las mujeres". *Infobae*. Available at: [/america/mexico/2019/01/16/el-56-del-territorio-mexicano-tiene-alerta-de-violencia-de-genero-contra-las-mujeres/](https://america/mexico/2019/01/16/el-56-del-territorio-mexicano-tiene-alerta-de-violencia-de-genero-contra-las-mujeres/)

174 Hernández, S. (2020). "Continúan feminicidios en estados con Alerta de Género". *LJA Aguascalientes*. 26 de febrero. Available at: <https://www.lja.mx/2020/02/continuan-feminicidios-en-estados-con-alerta-de-genero/>

175 Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (2019). *Diagnóstico de la Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos como integrante de los grupos de seguimiento de la Alerta de Violencia de Género Contra las Mujeres*. Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos. Mexico.

176 Consejo Nacional de la Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (2019). *Programa de estancias para apoyar a madres trabajadoras. Recuento de la evidencia de las evaluaciones 2007-2019*. CONEVAL. Available at: https://www.coneval.org.mx/Evaluacion/RDPS/Documents/NOTA_ESTANCIAS_INFANTILES.pdf

177 Peña, Norma (2016). "Qué efectos tienen los ingresos familiares en la violencia de pareja". *Sin Miedos*. IADB. Available at: <https://blogs.iadb.org/seguridad-ciudadana/es/mas-ingresos-economicos-menos-violencia-de-pareja/>

them to use resources as they see fit.¹⁷⁸

Security on Public Transportation in Mexico City

In 2008, the Let's Travel Safely ("viajemos seguros," in Spanish) program was created to target the violence women face on public transportation and within the public sphere in general. It established sections used exclusively for women and girls on public transportation. In 2017, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) carried out an evaluation of the program, noting it had prevented acts of sexual violence against women in crowded situations that occur on the subway.¹⁷⁹ As of 2019, various steps have been taken to strengthen the program, including increasing the number of police officers at stations, opening mobile complaints units, and establishing penalties for men who get on subways sections reserved for women.

In 2020, the government launched the #DateCuenta (Pay Attention) campaign to educate the population on gender equality issues, starting by highlighting how violence manifests in Mexican cultural customs. Using posters throughout public transportation, the campaign aimed to eradicate gender-based violence within public spaces in the country's capital, as well as address acts of violence within the home. Mexico City's government complemented this initiative with an awareness campaign for sexual diversity.

Mexico City Government Campaigns



Source: Mexico City Government

178 Peña, Norma (2016). "Qué efectos tienen los ingresos familiares en la violencia de pareja". Sin Miedos. IADB. Disponible en <https://blogs.iadb.org/seguridad-ciudadana/es/mas-ingresos-economicos-menos-violencia-de-pareja/>

179 Soto Villagrán, P. et al (2017). *Evaluación de impacto del programa Viajemos Seguras en el Transporte Público en la Ciudad de México: Aportes al diseño e implementación de políticas de prevención de la violencia de género en espacios públicos*. Inter-American Development Bank. Available at <https://doi.org/10.18235/0000804>

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The establishment of agencies responsible for implementing gender-sensitive security policies is recent; they have limited capacity and poor compliance practices. Countries have begun to establish gender units within various government agencies. While this is a positive change, there is a lack of inter-institutional coordination between these units, limiting the creation of institutional policies in the long term. Some early signs of success include promising preventive measures that deliver tools for women to achieve financial independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce collaboration between specialized organizations and agencies, including human resources and technical and operational capabilities. Encourage the design and development of multi-year public policies that prioritize gender inclusion. Promote the evaluation of existing programs, strengthening the experiences that show promising results Establish adequate budgets to develop long-term initiatives Support inter-institutional coordination programs.

Prevention Initiatives in the Region: Colombia

Safe Cities for Women and Girls (Ciudades Seguras para Mujeres y Niñas, in Spanish) is a development project centered on “strengthening judicial officials’ capabilities at the local level, aiming at reinforcing the gender approach inside the national police.” It is one of the projects that has had positive effects in addressing institutional issues in the provision of gender-based security and justice initiatives.

With support from UN Women, the Spanish government, and USAID, Safe Cities for Women and Girls works on different aspects related to the prevention of violence, generating data on the occurrence of crimes, and developing allies to promote change.

Within the framework of this project, exploratory studies have been carried out that reveal the scope of sexual harassment and violence in public spaces in cities such as Medellín, Bogotá, Cali, Villacencio, and Popayán. The study gives a better understanding of the most frequent forms of gender-based violence, the areas of occurrence, and the consequences that this violence has on women and girls.

These studies have made the victims' experiences more visible, enabling the development of proposals to address the violence by various key actors including public entities, civil society organizations, and the private sector. This is encouraging dialogue and an exchange of best practices within the sector.

In Colombia, preventing gender-based violence has been addressed through important public campaigns. With an emphasis on deconstructing gender biases, the campaigns are directed at children and teenagers, integrating gender-sensitive messages from an early age. Topics include new masculinities, violence in the media, awareness and prevention of harassment and institutional violence.

Source: Nieto, Carolina (2020). Género, mujer y seguridad en Colombia. Diagnóstico de la situación y propuestas de integración para su eficaz abordaje. Research conducted under commission by PADF. Not published. Bogotá.

Victim Care Systems

Considering the high levels of crime and insecurity that women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community experience in the region, systems in place for helping victims are a fundamental component of

guaranteeing the life and integrity of those who suffer gender-based violence.¹⁸⁰ A legal framework that recognizes different types of violence will only be effective if those who seek help find in their government—and the people who work in it—a system capable of providing adequate and proportionate protection and response to different emergencies. The countries included in this study have addressed some of these challenges, with mixed results.

With the enactment of LEIV in 2010, El Salvador committed itself to create specialized agencies to care for victims of violence. Since 2010, specific units, distributed throughout the country, have been set up within the various organizations tasked with issues of citizen security, including the National Civil Police, the Attorney General's Office, the Prosecutor General of the Republic, the Institute of Legal Medicine, and public network hospitals. In 2017, the Ministry of Justice and Security created Victim Care Offices in municipalities prioritized by the Plan El Salvador Seguro (PESS),¹⁸¹ offering psychological and legal assistance to both direct and indirect victims of crime.

Given the need to coordinate with the agencies involved in providing comprehensive care to women,¹⁸² in 2016, the National Care System (SNA) was founded for women facing situations of violence.¹⁸³ Led by ISDEMU, the system proposed a strategic plan to improve the care of women with “quality and warmth”, prioritizing emergency situations, providing legal support, informing them on their rights, and offering them protection measures.¹⁸⁴ Through this system, an integrated strategy was established to reduce the overexposure and re-victimization of women and girls who face violence. Despite some progress, inter-institutional coordination at the national level is still a work-in-progress and the women who do file a report are forced to repeat their stories to different agencies, violating their rights and consequently, re-victimizing them.¹⁸⁵

Another key aspect to guarantee quality care for victims and strong protection processes is related to how well-prepared and competent are those who work in each involved institution in the system. According to information collected through different focus groups developed in this study, the lack of training and knowledge on regulations of personnel is a key aspect to improve in the future.

In Honduras, protecting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual abuse and human trafficking has been channeled through a program promoting temporary shelters (Casas de acogias y refugio temporal, in Spanish). This private initiative has been operating in the country since 1996 and,¹⁸⁶ to date, provides seven houses that operate autonomously and independently.¹⁸⁷ In 2018, the network that brings together these shelters proposed legislation to create a national system, but have yet to receive government support for the operation. These shelters for victims are fundamentally important, providing free expert services for women and their children, including housing, food, clothing, legal

180 UNFPA y MESECVI/OEA (2020). *Capacidades estatales y brechas de atención en los servicios esenciales para mujeres y niñas que sufren violencia*. Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/MESECVI-ServiciosEsenciales-ES.pdf>

181 Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana y Convivencia (2017). Plan El Salvador seguro. Available at <https://www.transparencia.gob.sv/instituciones/mjsp/documents/129525/download>

182 The system is made up of more than eight organizations that include the National Civil Police, the Attorney General's Office, the Judicial Branch, the Attorney General's Office, the Institute of Legal Medicine, the Attorney General's Office for the Defense of Human Rights, the Ministry of Health, and some other competent institutions.

183 UNFPA (2016). “Se presentó sistema nacional de atención para mujeres que enfrentan violencia”. Available at: <https://elsalvador.unfpa.org/es/noticias/se-present%C3%B3-sistema-nacional-de-atenci%C3%B3n-para-mujeres-que-enfrentan-violencia>

184 ISDEMU (2016). *Sistema Nacional de Atención para Mujeres que enfrentan violencia*. Available at: https://www.isdemu.gob.sv/phocadownload/RVLV_documentos2016/SISTEMA_NACIONAL.pdf

185 Verónica Gonzales and Rosy Ribera. El Salvador Focus Group, August 14, 2019

186 EFE Américas (2020). “Mujeres huyen de la violencia”. *Efe Américas*. Available at: <https://www.efe.com/efe/america/sociedad/mujeres-huyen-de-la-violencia-a-casas-secretas-en-honduras-que-requieren-fondos/20000013-4330624>

187 Reporteros de investigación (2018). “Ley de casa refugio”. *Reporteros de investigación*. 16 de febrero. Available at: <https://www.reporterosdeinvestigacion.com/2018/02/16/ley-de-casas-refugio-para-proteger-victimas-de-delito-mas-denunciado-en-honduras/>

counsel, medical assistance, training programs, job placement, etc. Around 500 women receive support in these shelters each year, a low number considering the amount of reported violence in the country.¹⁸⁸

One of the most important government measures related to the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups in Honduras is the establishment of Centers for Care and Protection of Women's Rights (CAPRODEM). Dependent on judicial branch implementation and support from civil society, the initiative's objective is to strengthen counseling and legal assistance services for victims. These centers receive part of their funding through a specific tax on financial and telephone services dedicated to increasing security in the country. The centers provide direct psychosocial and clinical care while also collaborating with outside institutions and organizations for other services such as forensic, legal, and financial support. Despite their importance, these centers provide very limited services and are not a presence throughout the country.

From an institutional perspective, the lack of a coordinated government system in Honduras to guide and protect victims of gender-based violence deepens the vulnerability of women, girls and the LGBTQ+ population. Additionally, the lack of training and sensitivity on the part of the professionals in charge of grappling with gender-based violence cannot be overstated; this includes members of the police, judiciary, and health networks, among others. More often than not, protocols established in legislation are not correctly applied and efforts to punish perpetrators are unsuccessful as a result of administrative inefficiencies (stemming from a faulty system for serving subpoenas). According to experts consulted in this study, re-victimization is common and the judicial system in its current state has no real way of resolving the growing number of complaints.

In Mexico, civil society has also played a key role in creating organizations that provide protection and support services for victims. The National Shelter Network (RNR) started in 1999 and since then has been providing physical spaces for protection as well as specialized and interdisciplinary care for women and children in situations of domestic, sexual, or trafficking violence throughout the country.¹⁸⁹ The network shelters are set up by civil society organizations and state or local government organizations funded by the federal government through the National Institute of Women. As of August 2020, there were 69 spaces nationwide at confidential locations to provide free protection with trained personnel. The shelter services include accommodation, food, medical care (both physical and psychological) and job training, as well as shoes and clothing.¹⁹⁰ Considering the country's diversity, the shelters also have interpreters to handle cases of violence against indigenous women. Even though these shelters play a central role in women support, they must compete annually for government resources, which affects their ability to plan for the long term.

Additionally, the Mexican government has been setting up a network of various institutions aimed at providing care and shelter to victims of gender-based violence. In order to coordinate across the various involved agencies, the National System for the Prevention, Assistance, Accountability, and Eradication of Violence Against Women (SNPASEVM) was created in 2007. Among other agencies, the National System coordinates the following organizations:

188 García, Nancy (2019). "Huye, una casa refugio puede salvarte la vida". *Cespad*. Available at: <https://cespad.org.hn/2019/02/21/huye-una-ca-sa-refugio-puede-salvarte-la-vida/>

189 Red Nacional de refugios. Available at <https://rednacionalderefugios.org.mx/>

190 Vázquez Alarcón, A et al (2011). *Modelo de atención en refugios para mujeres víctimas de violencia y sus hijas e hijos*. Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (p. 64). Mexico.

- Justice Centers for Women (CEJUM or CJM): Founded in 2010 by CONAVIM, the centers provide comprehensive care to women who have been the victims of gender-based violence crimes. As of 2019, there were 42 centers across 27 states. While some report to the prosecutor's offices and attorney general's offices, others are dependent on the federal government ministries, creating a challenge in coordinating implementation and budgeting, leading to complications that limit progress on these initiatives¹⁹¹
- National Victim Assistance System (SNAV): Founded in 2013 to direct public policy on assisting victims of violence by designing programs for the protection, assistance, and defense of human rights, and to provide holistic healing to victims¹⁹²
- National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED): Founded in 2003 as the governing institution for policies and measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination, as well as to contribute to ensuring that everyone enjoys the rights and freedoms enshrined in Mexican law. CONAPRED is the institution in charge of promoting campaigns to fight discriminatory violence against the LGBTIQ+ community
- Attorney General's Office (FGR): Created in 2018 - replacing the Prosecutor-General of the Republic - is responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes at the federal level through federal public ministries and planning and executing public policies on criminal investigation

The high number of agencies responsible for the protection of victims of gender-based violence does not necessarily translate into a substantial improvement in the quality of life of women, girls, and LGBTIQ+ community facing insecurity on a daily basis. Poor inter-institutional coordination coupled with insufficient resources, ill-equipped and poorly-trained staff, as well as an insufficient number of shelters, among other shortcomings, have a direct influence on the lack of quality care victims receive.

One common challenge observed at the regional level is the almost non-existent specialized care for the LGBTIQ+ community. Weak legislative recognition of the right to sexual identity coupled with a lack of training for emergency response personnel results in a pattern of re-victimization, discrimination, and institutional ignorance of the challenges existing for this population.

Another problem is the lack of coordination between the different agencies charged with protecting LGBTIQ+ victims of violence. As a result of the lack of common care protocols and limited technical and operational capacity, victims must often deliver their testimonies on multiple occasions, even putting their lives at risk when confronting perpetrators in legal proceedings. The incentives for reporting are thus reduced. Poor inter-institutional coordination has repercussions on inefficient protection systems that sometimes arrive too late to save the lives of victims.

191 The NGO Equis Justicia para las Mujeres performed an evaluation of these centers in 2017, concluding that they lacked common standards for consistently providing services. According to this analysis, the CEJUMs prioritized resources for prosecution and punishment of crimes and not for victim care, as intended under the law. Equis Justicia para las mujeres (2017). *Centros de Justicia para las Mujeres (CEJUM): Informe sobre el estado de la política pública a nivel nacional*. Equis Justicia. México.

192 According to some analyses, the SNAV demonstrates poor coordination and poor accountability. Despite a presence in 14 states, they don't even have an official registry of victims. Ángel, A. (2020). "Incompleto, sin sesionar ni operar: El Sistema para Víctimas en México a 6 años de su creación". *Animal Político*. Available at: <https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/01/sistema-victimas-sin-operar-incompleto>.

Local Committees on Security, Citizenship, and Gender in the Dominican Republic

As a way of addressing violence prevention at the municipal level, the Dominican Republic created local Committees on Security, Citizenship, and Gender in 2013. Led by the Ministry of the Interior and Police, the initiative is a space for dialogue. Their fundamental mission is to facilitate and manage the implementation of public policies and programs for crime and violence prevention, eventually promoting peaceful coexistence among community members, as defined in their work plans.

Composed of representatives from various sectors, including the Ministry of Women, the National Police, and non-governmental organizations linked to gender issues, committees have been formed in 16 of the 158 municipalities in the country to date.

Among its main responsibilities, the Committee on Security, Citizenship, and Gender oversees coordinating and recommending strategies, placing an emphasis on preventive measures, promoting policies for co-existence, encouraging citizen participation, promoting violence-free impacts and opportunities that welcome social inclusion.

Despite progress, local committees have faced great challenges, mainly related to reinforcing a gender perspective across municipal sectors. Therefore, it is essential that city councils and local governments have specialized management tools for gender issues, as well as effective participation in developing policy at the national level.

The creation of intergovernmental spaces, along with citizen participation and focus groups for the prevention of violence at the local level, is a promising formula for strengthening the security agenda with a gender perspective.

Source: Fernandez, Katherine et al (2020). *Genero y Seguridad Ciudadana en Republica Dominicana* Research conducted under commission by PADF. Not published. Santo Domingo.

While prevention of gender-based violence has proved to be the main way to reduce the consequences experienced by women, girls and the LGBTIQ+ community, in places where there are high levels of insecurity as in the cases of this study, it is imperative to strengthen protection mechanisms to ensure availability of resources at the local level, inter-institutional coordination, clear and expedited protocols, as well as effective protection. Additionally, through coordination with civil society organizations, strengthening work to address the risk factors that prevent victims from breaking out of the cycle of violence is key

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A lack of institutional coordination results in a protection system characterized by re-victimization and exposure to new attacks• Employees of institutions involved in the protection of victims of violence lack knowledge of and training on gender issues• The LGBTIQ+ community does not have access to specialized emergency services• Civil society organizations have filled many of the gaps left by government agencies in establishing organizations and protection mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote the creation of effective coordination mechanisms for victim protection, including assistance and emergency response protocols• Strengthen protection initiatives at all levels, including those focused on legal, psychological and health care for victims• Promote discussion relating to specialized protection of the LGBTIQ+ community, including legal and institutional frameworks• Build on the efforts of civil society organizations, particularly those that provide emergency care throughout the country

Gender-Sensitive Budgets

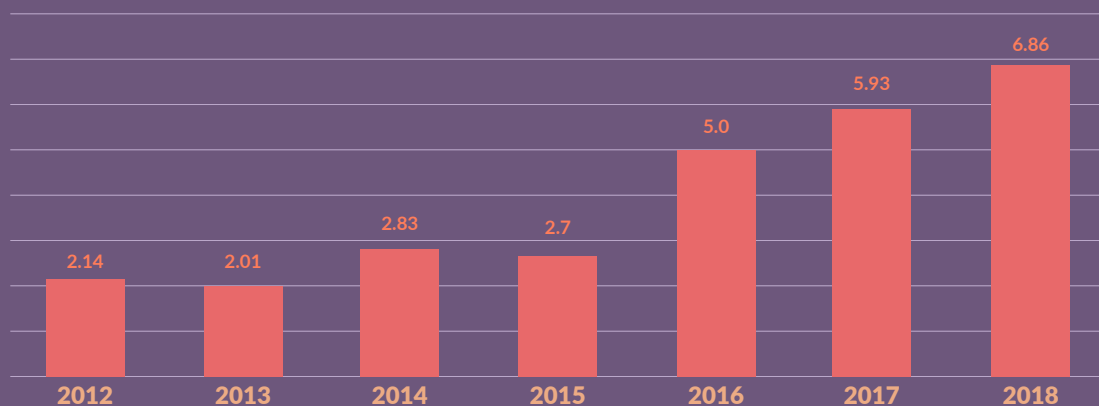
As previously mentioned, the countries in this study have taken some institutional steps both to incorporate a gender perspective into government work in general, and to specifically respond to the insecurity faced by girls, women, and the LGBTIQ+ community. In addition, creating units dedicated to the protection of victims, some governments have made additional effort to establish different institutions and units to mainstream gender initiatives; to date, as established, these have been insufficient

An institutional analysis must also examine budgets established for gender issues. Aside from the numbers, the level of funds dedicated to gender-sensitive approaches in security can be a measure of advancement in a gender-based approach:

- How committed the state is to strengthen and mainstream a gender perspective in citizen security initiatives¹⁹³
- Funding designated for specific programs can provide an opportunity to measure results not only in terms of the amount of funding invested, but the effectiveness of what was achieved

For example, in El Salvador, the amount of funding allocated for security ranks third in terms of overall spending after health and education. Additionally, the amounts to implement actions consistent with the Law on Equality, Equity, and the Eradication of Discrimination against women (LIE) and the Special Comprehensive Law for a Life Free of Violence for Women (LIEV) have been growing steadily in recent years: the budget has been multiplied by three between 2012 and 2018.

Figure 8.
Labeled expenditure for compliance with the LIE and LEIV (2012 - 2018)¹⁹⁴
Millions of Dollars



Source: Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women (2018)

193 In 2017, the Third Hemispheric Report on the Belém do Pará Convention underscored that Latin America and Caribbean countries devoted only 1% of their budgets to combatting violence against women. According to the report, the countries that dedicated the most public spending in this matter are Ecuador (0.9%), Costa Rica (0.6%), and Peru (0.4%). Regarding the countries of this study, Honduras dedicated 0.112%, El Salvador 0.166%, and Mexico 0.030%. MESECVI/OEA (2017). *Tercer Informe Hemisférico sobre la Implementación de la Convención de Belém do Pará, "Prevención de la Violencia contra las Mujeres en las Américas Caminos por Recorrer"*. Available at <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/TercerInformeHemisferico-ES.pdf>

194 Presupuesto destinado por instituciones de la Comisión Técnica de Especializada (CTE) para la implementación de la LIE y LEIV reflejado en millones de dólares.

According to the group of women representatives in the Salvadoran Congress of El Salvador, the funding allocated by the state for programs to promote gender equality remains insufficient. And funding is often subject to budget cuts, as was the case during fiscal year 2020, when projects focused on delivering services to women had their budget reduced by over 60 million dollars.¹⁹⁵ This situation led the organization Panorama Económico to propose that mechanisms should be put in place to allow for women's organizations to participate in the creation, discussion, approval and implementation of funding processes in order to ensure a gender perspective is applied to the budgeting process, which to date has not allowed for such inclusive practices.¹⁹⁶

Under current law in Honduras, public institutions must include objectives to reduce gender gaps in their "Institutional Strategic Plans." Within these documents, each agency must specify which steps and actions will be taken to achieve the established objectives. The programs, projects, services, and activities implemented by public sector entities must also collect data disaggregated by gender, sex, ethnicity, age, department, municipality, etc. The Legislative Commission for Budgets, in coordination with the Legislative Commission for Gender Equity of the National Congress and the National Institute for Women, carries out a biannual monitoring process to assess public expenditures in matters of gender equality, holding public hearings on budget with women's civil society organizations who advocated for this coordination space with the public sector. The Government of Honduras also established a "gender investment index" for government institutions to allocate resources and report on investment in gender programming. Despite the progress made to date, significant challenges remain in planning and reporting expenses on gender when there is limited knowledge of the importance of applying a gender perspective within the public sector. From a strictly budgetary perspective, budget allocations dedicated to the "comprehensive care of women" represent only 0.04% of GDP and 0.19% of total spending.¹⁹⁷

In Mexico, the 2020 budget increased resource allocation for citizen security programming by an additional 39% compared to the previous year.¹⁹⁸ Although this is a significant increase, analysts indicate that it is still insufficient to compensate for the decades of low salaries in the police forces, high turnover of personnel in the security sector, and limited access to necessary equipment for security personnel to successfully carry out their work.¹⁹⁹ In accordance with the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence and the Law on Equality between Men and Women, since 2008, government agencies must account for specific programs and activities in their budgets aimed at promoting gender equality. Since formal inclusion of this requirement, budget allocations identified for "gender equality" have increased an average of 17% annually. The Secretariat of Welfare leads the way with 63% of the total budget including a gender equality focus, followed by the National Science and Technology Council (8%) and the Secretariat of Health (8%). The Secretariat of the Interior only designates 1% of the funds to advancing gender equality.

195 Velásquez, Eugenia (2019). "Diputadas critican reducción en planes para combatir violencia contra mujeres en presupuesto". *Noticias de El Salvador*. San Salvador, El Salvador. Available at: <https://www.elsalvador.com/noticias/nacional/diputadas-critican-reduccion-en-planes-para-combatir-violencia-contra-mujeres-en-presupuesto/667013/2019/>

196 The design of the National Budget still does not incorporate a gender perspective limiting the identification of public spending by management area. Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (2018). *Informe sobre el Estado y Situación de la Violencia contra las Mujeres en El Salvador 2018*, ISDEMU. San Salvador.

197 ICEFI (2019). *Análisis y Recomendaciones al Proyecto de Presupuesto General de Ingresos y Egresos de la República de Honduras para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2020*. ICEFI. Guatemala.

198 Camacho, Z. (2019). "A seguridad, casi 200 mil millones en 2020". *Contralínea*. Available at: <https://www.contralinea.com.mx/archivo-revista/2019/11/15/a-seguridad-casi-200-mil-millones-en-2020/>

199 Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano (2019). *Gasto en Seguridad: Una mirada al gasto de los recursos*. Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano. Available at: https://onc.org.mx/uploads/ReporteSeguridad_CIEP_ONC_VF.pdf

If budget allocations for 2020 are analyzed in detail, it shows that while funding is favored for programs such as reducing school dropout rates through direct family subsidies,²⁰⁰ funding to promote educational public policy on gender equality has suffered deep cuts.²⁰¹ Similarly, during the 2020 budget debates, funding allocated to gender-sensitive citizen security was cut by 40%, reducing funds available to the prosecutor's office for academic research, staff training, as well as preventing and investigating cases of gender-based violence. Furthermore, the funds earmarked for human rights protection and the prevention of discrimination (managed by CONAPRED) - the only area that includes a focus on violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ community - decreased by 63% last year.

One of the most relevant challenges presented by the countries in this study in terms of budget is the lack of policy continuity and sustainability in the long term. Although the adoption of results-based budgeting has been positive, program priorities remain at the discretion of changes in government, and as a result, key programs for gender equality and those including a gender perspective have often been negatively affected by budget cuts. To counter these trends, it will be important to complement results-based budgeting with longer-term planning for multi-year programming that can be measured and evaluated to promote both transparency and effectiveness.

Progress in gender-sensitive national budgets is an ongoing challenge: budget proposals still do not contain information on the impact an expenditure has for girls and women, differentiating from the consequences it can have on other population groups. The main question that should be answered is the impact a fiscal measure creates in terms of equality: "Does it reduce, increase or leave gender inequality unchanged?"²⁰²

As in the case of budgeting, a gender perspective has yet to be included in public procurement processes. The countries of the region have made progress in introducing tools aimed at increasing the transparency of their bidders,²⁰³ yet there is still a long way to go in terms of gender equality in at least three areas: 1) through the participation of women in procurement departments, 2) through participation in the procurement market, and 3) through the consequences that public procurements have on suppliers, differentiated by sex.²⁰⁴ Closely related to the design of gender-oriented programs, a gender perspective also needs to be included in the decision-making process to purchase public goods and services. Establishing measurable and differentiated results would allow not only for increased transparency in the processes, but also for collaboration in the decision-making regarding what type of investment is adequate to meet the differentiated needs of different population groups.

Similar to what happens with public officials who work for the protection and prevention of gender-based violence, it is essential to promote specific training for decision makers at all levels, including in programming, evaluation, and budget analysis with a gender perspective. Beyond a review of the amounts presented in budget proposals by the executive branch, legislative staff must have

200 Dropout prevention programs are classified as promising experiences for reducing violence.

201 Observatorio Nacional Ciudadano (2019). Ibid

202 Elson, Diane (2001). "Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives: Key Dimensions and Practical Examples" in *Gender Budget Initiatives, Strategies, Concepts and Experiences*. IDRC. Brussels. Available at: https://iknowpolitics.org/sites/default/files/genderbudgetinitiatives_eng.pdf#page=8

203 IDB (2017). Mejor gasto para mejores vidas. Available at:

<https://publications.iadb.org/publications/spanish/document/Mejor-gasto-para-mejores-vidasC%C3%B3mo-Am%C3%A9rica-Latina-y-el-Caribe-puede-hacer-m%C3%A1s-con-menos.pdf>

204 Ruiz, Ana Joaquina (2020). Inclusión de mujeres en las contrataciones públicas: la experiencia latinoamericana. IDLA. Available at: <https://openupcontracting.org/assets/2020/08/Inclusi%C3%B3n-de-mujeres-en-las-contrataciones-p%C3%BAblicas-.pdf>

adequate tools, knowledge (and/or expertise) on budgetary matters so that they can incorporate substantive improvements during discussion of these topics.²⁰⁵

Finally, in the future it will be essential for budgets to not only identify programs with a gender perspective, but to contain this perspective across the board, based on evidence, with sustainable programs over time, measurable objectives, and verifiable beneficiaries.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a budgetary perspective, citizen security is among the most important priorities for governments of the region The amounts allocated for security have been growing steadily over the past decade. Even so, they are insufficient, and the resources do not necessarily lead to initiatives that address gender-based violence on a structural level The lack of long-term budget planning weakens the capacity of programs and makes them vulnerable to political changes Technical skills of both those who develop budgets and those who approve them are still limited to ensure that gender is incorporated throughout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the discussion and approval of multiannual budgets, outcome-based budgets, subject to evaluation and accountability Raise awareness on the importance of prioritizing prevention over response and include this perspective in budget discussions Reinforce gender training for key actors in the budgetary cycle, particularly for decision-makers and members of legislature Reinforce the role of civil society in the development and evaluation of budgets, ensuring that they reflect the relevance of gender-sensitive security programs

Police Institutions

In response to high incidence of crime and violence in the region, low approval of the police, overall perceptions of corruption, and poor results in reducing insecurity, El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico have launched important police reforms in recent decades. With some variation, these reforms have generally been aimed at improving hiring and training processes and making them more transparent, improving working conditions for agents, adapting police strategies, and incorporating new technologies into their work.²⁰⁶ The question remains whether these changes have also included a gender perspective that will allow for a targeted response to the insecurity challenges previously described.

Strictly from a numbers standpoint, police institutions in the region are primarily made up of men. On average, only 13% of police in the region are women, and an even smaller number have reached leadership positions.²⁰⁷ Indeed, while Mexico has 14% female police personnel, in El

205 For a more thorough analysis of the role of parliament in the budget cycle see Santiso, Carlos y Marco Varea (2013). "Fortaleciendo las capacidades presupuestarias de los parlamentos en América Latina y el Caribe". *Resumen de Políticas*. IADB. Washington. Available at: <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/spanish/document/Fortaleciendo-las-capacidades-presupuestarias-de-los-Parlamentos-en-Am%C3%A9rica-Latina-y-el-Caribe.pdf>

206 For a detailed analysis see Casas, K et al (2018). *La transformación policial para 2030 en América Latina*. IADB – Dialogue. Washington. Available at: https://www.thedialogue.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/KCasas_TransformacionPolicial_FINAL.pdf

207 Norma, Peña (2016). "¿Las policías Latinoamericanas entienden de género?". Blog Sin Miedo. IADB. Available at: <https://blogs.iadb.org/seguridad-ciudadana/es/las-policias-latinoamericanas-entienden-de-genero/>

Salvador that figure is 11%, and down to barely 9% in Honduras.²⁰⁸ This low proportion of women is particularly relevant as some studies suggest that incorporating more women into the police force can reduce incidents of excessive force, and their presence could help increase public confidence in the police force.²⁰⁹ However, increased participation of women in the police force is not in and of itself a solution. Along with this, there needs to be adequate training on gender, harassment prevention, adaptation of protocols, resource provision, and strengthening the tools that allow greater participation to be reflected in inclusive policies to guarantee a gender perspective both inside and outside of law enforcement.

Efforts to mainstream gender in police action have focused on two main areas: creating specialized units for handling issues related to gender-based violence and training staff in human rights.

With the goal of simplifying police services and bringing services closer to and facilitating care for victims, the Reporting and Citizen Care Unit (ODAC-UNIMUJER) of the National Civil Police was created in El Salvador in 2011. Currently, there are 33 units distributed throughout the country. Despite progress in terms of decentralization, there are some weaknesses, particularly in relation to the lack of coordination with other entities that are part of the protection systems.²¹⁰ Other challenges include lack of progress in planning, monitoring and evaluation, infrastructure, technological equipment, training specialized staff in care protocols, and raising awareness of human rights and gender equality issues in particular. Finally, it is important to note that cadets who enter the National Academy of Public Security, who will become agents of the National Police upon graduation, do not receive any specialized training on gender issues over the course of their studies.²¹¹

In 2012, Honduras launched a profound reform of its police force. With one of the highest homicide rates in the world and a low public perception of its abilities, pre-reform assessments confirmed that the main institutional flaw was in deficient recruitment and training processes.²¹²

Based on this premise, the planned reform set forth, among other measures, the addition of more women into the police force, tougher admission criteria, improved general working conditions and an adapted curriculum focused on human rights in community policing. Within the police force, specialized departments for human rights and a gender unit were created, “which refers cases of domestic and intrafamily violence, but works with limited staff and has inadequate conditions”.²¹³ Despite these efforts, in 2019 more than a third of the population of Honduras said they had little confidence in police officers,²¹⁴ and at the same time, their action on gender matters has been substantially reduced as a result of eliminating a toll-free phone line for reporting violence against women.

208 According to figures in 2016 based on Casas, K. Op Cit.

209 Starheim, Rianna (2019). *Women in Policing: Breaking Barriers and Blazing a Path*. National Institute of Justice. Available at: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/252963.pdf>

210 Interview with the Gender Officer of the National Civil Police, Hernández, B. (July 15, 2019). Gender and Security from the perspective of the PNC (X. Ortiz, Interviewer)

211 Academia Nacional de Seguridad Publica de El Salvador. <https://www.ansp.gob.sv/pensum-tcp/>

212 Velez-Grajales, V. (2018). Los Ingredientes para una reforma policial de éxito. IADB. Available at: <https://blogs.iadb.org/seguridad-ciudadana/es/los-ingredientes-para-una-reforma-policial-con-exito/>

213 Mayan professionals include courses on human rights and policing with a gender perspective. El Heraldo Honduras (2016). “Un total de 24 clases deben aprobar los futuros policías”. El Heraldo. Available at: <https://www.elheraldo.hn/pais/1098839-466/un-total-de-24-clases-deben-aprobar-los-futuros-polic%C3%ADas-en-el>

214 LAPOP (2019). *Barómetro de las Américas. Resultados Preliminares Honduras 2019*. Vanderbilt. Available at: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/honduras/AB2018-19_Honduras_RRR_W_09.25.19.pdf

**Table 3 - Human rights and/or gender courses in basic police training
El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico**

	Human rights	Gender	Care for LGBTIQ+ Community	Total Courses/ Hours
El Salvador	1 course	No	No	18 courses
Honduras	1 course	1 course	No	25 courses
Mexico	40 hours	20 hours	No	972 hours

Source: Created based on the curricula published by the national police academies

In Mexico, of the 972 hours that an applicant to the federal police will dedicate to their basic training, only 60 are allocated to human rights and gender studies. The curriculum, which includes physical training, police theory, prevention and community policing, among other topics, is taught over a period of nine months, a duration some specialists consider insufficient to achieve a professional force. As such, the traffic and preventive police are the most mistrusted Mexican institutions due to lack of effectiveness and a widespread perception of corruption.²¹⁵ In an attempt to incorporate a specialized police response to violence against women, the 2014-2018 National Public Security Program included courses on gender and equity specifically designed for training police forces.²¹⁶ In order to reduce discrimination and violence within law enforcement institutions, in 2016 the Unit for Substantive Equality was also created, aimed at incorporating methods for the prevention, punishment, and eradication of violence against women within the police force. Nonetheless, in recent years, members of the Mexican police have been involved in high profile crimes against women and teenagers. In 2019, the seriousness of these complaints led to the emergence of the citizen movement “no nos cuidan, nos violan” (they don't take care of us, they rape us) demanding increased government measures to stop growing violence in the country.²¹⁷

According to several reports, police in Mexico lack adequate training to deal with acts of violence against women, and even more so against the LGBTIQ+ community. Current procedures expose victims to degrading situations and a lack of adequate protocols, among other shortcomings, often leads to impunity.²¹⁸

Beyond the different processes for training and police reforms, there seems to be a common trend in the limited results to truly incorporate a gender perspective in police action. Low to zero

215 INEGI (2019). *Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública*. ENVIPE. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/envipe/2019/>

216 Policía Federal, P. (2018). *Policía Federal: Institución promotora de la igualdad de oportunidades y no discriminación*. Gobierno de Mexico. Available at: <http://www.gob.mx/policiafederal/es/articulos/policia-federal-institucion-promotora-de-la-igualdad-de-oportunidades-y-no-discriminacion?idiom=es>

217 <https://www.elspectador.com/noticias/el-mundo/no-nos-cuidan-nos-violan-las-protestas-de-mujeres-contr-policias-en-ciudad-de-mexico/>

218 See for example Almaraz, L. (2019). “Revictimización, el principal error en las denuncias por violación”. *Cultura Colectiva*. Available at: <https://news.culturacolectiva.com/mexico/revictimizacion-error-de-ministerios-publicos-en-denuncias-por-violacion/>

quality of police training on gender-related matters, together with an institutional structure with no adequate mechanisms for analysis or special units, has resulted in an inability to respond and a high degree of public mistrust. This situation is just as, if not more, precarious when it comes to the crimes suffered by members of the LGBTIQ+ community. It urgently needs effective training mechanisms and institutional strengthening incorporated with an inclusive gender perspective across the institution. As demonstrated in Table 3, to date, no country included in this study has incorporated into basic police curricula any specialized training on violence against the LGBTIQ+ community, and police forces dedicate less than 10% of their studies to covering human rights and a gender perspective.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is low participation of women in police forces in the region, and the upper ranks responsible for decision-making are mostly male • Basic police training includes only a small fraction of time spent studying gender and human rights • Institutionally, some efforts have been made to include specialized units for gender-based violence assistance. • There is a general lack of awareness with regard to addressing violence against vulnerable groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote greater participation of women in decision-making and leadership positions in the police alongside continuous learning processes • Encourage, increase and strengthen training on human rights and gender for all police personnel. Such training should take place throughout the career path and should be requirements for promotions • Increase police capacities to care for victims of violence, including specialized units, trained personnel, and technical tools.

Judicial Branch

Just as timely, confidential, and comprehensive access to care systems is important, it is critical to have a judicial system that guarantees long-term protection of victims' rights. In situations like those seen in the countries of this study - with high levels of insecurity and violence - a judicial sector that understands international and national legal frameworks on human rights adopted by the country and comprehends the safety challenges faced by different population groups is indispensable.

In the past decade, various efforts have been made in the region to update and modernize the tools available to the judicial sector. Fledgling steps have been taken to increase staff awareness of gender issues, introduce some specialized care protocols, and even bring access to justice to more territories within the countries. Low public trust in the judicial sector and a limited ability to resolve cases suggest there is still a long way to go.²¹⁹

In El Salvador, the enactment of LIE and LEIV in 2010 led to the creation of the Specialized Courts for a Life Free of Violence against Women. This was a substantial step forward in terms of

219 In 2014, the MESECVI published the "Guide to the application of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women". Additionally, they have conducted a series of trainings with justice administration officials to facilitate states' understanding of their obligations through a vision in line with the Belém do Pará Convention and other human rights instruments and favors compliance with these obligations in the judicial response to violence against women. MESECVI/OAS2014). "Guía para la aplicación de la Convención Interame-

establishing a specialized jurisdiction to address victims of gender-based violence, yet this structure has not managed to reduce re-victimization, coordinate centralized protection efforts, implement standard care protocols or, most importantly, comply with legal mandates to guarantee victims access to justice. In fact, although LEIV prohibits settlement and mediation for crimes covered under the law, there are cases where the provision is conditionally suspended and thus the crimes do not receive a sentence. The situation is particularly dire considering only a low percentage of violent female deaths result in a conviction, which seriously affects the credibility of the judicial system as a whole.²²⁰

Experts consulted in the framework of this study explain that responding to the specific requirements of gender-based violence, and improving institutional credibility must begin with:



Many of the challenges previously described can also be observed in Honduras. Despite profound reforms to the criminal justice system in 2002, there is a perception that the judicial branch is weak, ineffective and corrupt.²²¹ General mistrust in the judicial system is particularly serious among female victims of violence. According to the information collected for this study, there is a profound ignorance of the problem of gender-based violence among those who work in the courts. Notwithstanding the fact that the 1997 law against domestic violence established the creation of a specialized jurisdiction on matters of domestic violence through specialized







ricana para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar la Violencia contra la Mujer (Convención de Belém do Pará)", <http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/BdP-GuiaAplicacion-Web-ES.pdf>

220 Only 13.9% of people surveyed indicate they trust the judicial system a lot or somewhat. Latinobarómetro (2018). Informe 2018. Santiago. Available at: https://www.latinobarometro.org/latdocs/INFORME_2018_LATINOBAROMETRO.pdf

221 Insight Crime (2020). *Perfil de Honduras*. Insight Crime Org. Available at: <https://es.insightcrime.org/honduras-crimen-organizado/honduras/>

courts and tribunals (Article 13), to date, only two Special Court against Domestic Violence has been established, for the departments of Cortés and Francisco Morazán.²²² This is undoubtedly an enormous challenge, given the high levels of gender-based violence in the country.²²³

Despite some progress in Honduras on the legal frameworks, the weak institutional framework of the judicial sector is reflected in high criminal impunity. The main contributing factors are:²²⁴

	Poor selection and training of justice officials
	Inadequate application of care procedures for victims of gender-based violence
	Victims' lack of knowledge of their rights
	Poor subpoena delivery systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient resources (both human and financial), as well as a lack of adequate logistics, means that personnel cannot present subpoenas in a timely manner, or at all in some cases
	Underutilization of Gesell Chambers, due to the lack of trained personnel or compliance with protocols, despite availability ²²⁵
	Only two Special Courts against Domestic Violence exist in the entire country; in departments that are not under this jurisdiction, civil courts or other administrative departments are responsible for overseeing these issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cases where there are Special Courts Against Domestic Violence, they are understaffed, resulting in extremely slow response times

In Mexico, the criminal justice system reform brought hope in reducing impunity. However, the reform, which has taken 12 years to implement, has failed to reduce lack of confidence in the judicial system or improve the justice system's response to severe insecurity indices.²²⁶ While the introduction of public hearings allows victims to have greater protection measures throughout the proceedings, little training on the part of justice administrators in gender matters seriously affects the integrity of the system. The public prosecutor's office, responsible for criminal investigations, is perceived by citizens as one of the most corrupt institutions and there are complaints that its actions revictimize those who report acts of violence.

The consequences of low credibility in the system are not trivial. According to figures provided by

222 Poder Judicial (2020). *Estructura, funcionamiento, jurisdicción y competencia de los órganos jurisdiccionales*. Poder Judicial Honduras. Available at: <http://www.poderjudicial.gob.hn/Documents/EFJC-OJ-F2020.pdf>

223 In 2008, the Unit for Crimes Against Women's Lives (Unidad de Delitos Contra la Vida de la Mujer) was created within the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Women (Fiscalía Especial de la Mujer). Despite their relevance, these units eventually disappeared due to lack of resources.

224 USAID. (2015). *Gender-based Violence (GBV)*. USAID/Honduras.

225 A Gesell chamber is a specially engineered environment for interviews with victims and witnesses. It is widely used in criminal justice systems as a tool for avoiding or reducing re-victimization and its effects on the victim and/or witness, particularly when they are a child or adolescent. For more information, see UNODC (2005). "Manual de Utilización de la Cámara Gesell". Available at: <https://ministeriopublico.gob.pa/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Manual-C%C3%A1mara-Gesell-para-publicar.pdf>

226 Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación (2013). *Protocolo para Juzgar con Perspectiva de Género. Haciendo realidad el derecho a la igualdad*. México. Available at: http://archivos.diputados.gob.mx/Comisiones_LXII/Igualdad_Genero/PROTOCOLO.pdf

the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI), at least 63% of the Mexican population that chooses not to file a complaint do so because they do not trust the authorities.

The remaining 37% choose not to do so out of fear of the aggressor or because they had no evidence.²²⁷ Additionally, a high percentage of female victims of violence do not report it because they do not know where to do it or fear that they will not be believed.²²⁸ One of the consequences, as mentioned before, is that 99.7% of sexual crimes are not even reported by victims.²²⁹

Apart from the reform processes, the countries in this study face enormous issues in judicial matters. Low credibility of the institutions, ineffectiveness in exercising justice, high impunity for crimes, and re-victimization remain ongoing issues. The lack of a gender perspective is even more obvious in cases where members of the LGBTIQ+ community pursue justice and are faced with insensitivity from officials and complete lack of care protocols.

In thinking about improving the credibility of justice systems and victims' and survivors' trust in them, it will be vital in the coming years to explore approaches that effectively improve the sector's response. One approach to consider is a restorative justice model where, in addition to punishment, victims can access full reparation. Similarly, justice models should incorporate mechanisms that promote long-term support for victims, ensuring they not only feel safe but that, in coordination with other state entities, they can find tools that allow them to break the cycle of violence.

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a high public lack of confidence in the judicial system Victims of gender-based violence rarely report due to a lack of efficient, inclusive and comprehensive process The victims that do report often face protocols that re-victimize them, and, in the most extreme situations, put their lives in danger Impunity further erodes trust in the judicial system Justice administrators do not have the necessary tools to carry out their responsibilities with a gender perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage training on gender for justice officials Introduce protocols that guarantee victim protection, eliminate re-victimization, and recognize and seek to repair the experiences of victims of gender-based violence Strengthen technical and human capacities to comply with judicial processes and effectively protect victims Design specialized protocols for attention to LGBTIQ+ persons that respect their human rights Raise citizen awareness of judicial services Make judicial services more accessible and implement new mechanisms to facilitate reporting

Prison Sector

Although the number of women and LGBTIQ+ people in conflict with the law represents a minori-

227 INEGI (2019). *Encuesta Nacional de Victimización y Percepción sobre Seguridad Pública (ENVIPE)*. INEGI.

228 INEGI (2016). *Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH)*. INEGI.

229 INEGI (2020). *Encuesta Nacional de Seguridad Pública Urbana*. INEGI. Available at: <https://www.inegi.org.mx/programas/ensu/>

ty percentage of the prison population, their contact with the judicial and prison system is marked by a series of specific challenges that require different gender-sensitive responses. As introduced in the first chapter, from the lack of prisons equipped to receive women, to weak – or no – specialized care for the LGBTIQ+ community, the prison experience often exposes them to acts of violence and insecurity similar to what they experience outside the prison system.

In all the countries in this study, the prison sector is characterized by its precarious institutional conditions (material and human resources), a low reintegration rate of inmates, and overcrowded facilities. Mexico has one of the largest prison populations in the world, while El Salvador has one of the highest rates of incarceration (second only to the United States); overcrowding exceeds 200% in Honduras and El Salvador. Finally, one of the highest percentages of female prison populations in Latin America is in El Salvador (just below Guatemala and Bolivia).

Tabla 4 - Población Penitenciaria | Tasa de Encarcelamiento | Prisión Femenina | Nivel de ocupación en México, Honduras y el Salvador

	Total in prison		Incarceration rate		Women in Prison		Occupancy Level	
	Total	World Ranking	Every 100,000 inhab..	World Ranking	% of the prison population	World Ranking	% according to capacity	World Ranking
El Salvador	36.691	47	565	2	7.7%	30	215,2%	19
Honduras	36.691	65	237	51	5.7%	63	204,0%	23
México	213.493	11	165	93	5.4%	73	96,5%	128

Source: Prepared using information found on World Prison Brief. <https://www.prisonstudies.org/>

In El Salvador, a little over 7% of the prison population are women. According to the Penitentiary Law, female detention centers must dedicate space to care for pregnant women, those who have recently given birth, and provide early childhood education and child care for inmates' children under five years old. With one of the highest incarceration rates in the world, El Salvador's female prison population has doubled in the last 10 years.²³⁰ The reasons why women come into conflict with the law include extortion, drugs and murder,²³¹ crimes that reflect the responsibilities taken on by women within criminal organizations. As mentioned before, in El Salvador more than 30% of women in prison are awaiting sentencing. According to the InfoSegura project, prison overcrowding rates for women are double the national average, reaching 444% in 2017. With the construction of the Ilopango Correctional Facility for Women, overcrowding was reduced to 150% in 2018.²³²

230 IACHR (2019). CIDH presenta observaciones preliminares de su visita in loco a El Salvador. Washington, D.C. Organization of American States.
 231 El Intercambio (2020). "Niños Presos. Obtenido de Los últimos niños del encierro". El Intercambio. Available at: <https://elintercambio.io/ninospresos/elsalvador/>
 232 InfoSegura. (2019). Análisis sobre la situación de la violencia y seguridad ciudadana (ene-dic 2019). USAID-UNDP



It is estimated that around 500 LGBTIQ+ people are incarcerated in El Salvador.²³³ According to the country's Directorate General of Prisons, there is a policy for care for members of the LGBTIQ+ community, and a specific action protocol for the corrections personnel responsible for the care of LGBTIQ+ persons.²³⁴ Additionally, two branches have been built for the LGBTIQ+ community and are currently operating at the Sensuntepeque Correctional Facility.

In Honduras, there are 31 prisons, housing more than 21,000 inmates. Despite recent efforts to increase capacity, overcrowding still exceeds 200%. Poor detention conditions are not the only problem they face;²³⁵ according to a report developed by the European Union's EUROSOCIAL program, prison guards are unable to manage inmates, who live in unsanitary conditions, water quality is poor, and both prisoners and their families are subjected to discriminatory treatment.²³⁶ Although the increase in crime and violence in the country partly explains current high prison occupancy rates, police practices during arrests can be viewed as arbitrary, based on appearances or individual characteristics such as tattoos, reflecting severe human rights violations.

To date, some 1,200 women are incarcerated in Honduras.²³⁷ Most (45%) are imprisoned in the National Female Penitentiary for Social Adaptation and the rest are confined in "mixed" prisons, where they are assigned a wing. According to the IACHR, in 2015, proper separation between men and women was not respected in some prisons.²³⁸ In San Pedro Sula, for example, the IACHR found that although there was a specific ward for female inmates, 26

233 Official data concerning the LGBTIQ+ population does not exist in the country. Interview with Bianka Rodríguez, director of COMCAVIS TRANS. 2020.

234 Dirección General de Centros Penales (2019). *Realizan taller regional en materia de mujeres privadas de libertad*. DGCP El Salvador. Available at: <http://www.dgcp.gob.sv/>

235 Poor conditions in detention centers have led to tragedies like the fire at the Comayagua prison in 2012, where 382 inmates died. Available at: <https://www.notimerica.com/politica/noticia-honduras-honduras-rebaja-18-numero-presos-fugados-carcel-tamara-20170516071250.html>

236 Rivera. Iñaki y Alejandro Forero (2018). *Diagnóstico de la violencia institucional en las prisiones de América Latina: sistemas y buenas prácticas para su respuesta y atención*. Programa EURO social, Madrid P. 43. Available at: <https://eurosocial.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/05-herramientas-diagnostico-violencia-institucional-en-prisiones-al-es.pdf>

237 World Prison Brief. Available at: <https://www.prisonstudies.org/>

238 IACHR (2015). *Situación de derechos humanos en Honduras*. Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.

women shared a cell with 300 men, putting the women's safety at risk.

With regard to the LGBTIQ+ community in prisons, the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture, Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CONAPREV) was created and it was announced that the public prosecutor's office would, among other functions, identify vulnerable groups such as the LGBTIQ+ community and respond to the specific risks that these groups face. However, in Tegucigalpa, people from this community are incarcerated along with people who are mentally disabled.²³⁹ These detention centers do not have specific care guidelines nor trained personnel to respond to the needs of this population.

Over the last decade, the number of incarcerated women in Mexico has increased significantly. While women represented 4.4% of the prison population in 2010, in 2020 this percentage rose to 5.4%, equal to more than 11,500 incarcerated women.²⁴⁰ Although the constitution establishes that "women shall serve their sentences in places separate from those designed for men" (Article 18), prisons have been mainly designed for men.²⁴¹ As a result, of the 300 prisons in the country, only 18 are reserved exclusively for women.²⁴² Given that at the time of sentencing women can choose to stay in facilities close to their homes, almost 60% of women serve sentences in mixed prisons.

The lack of adapting to the needs of different population groups also affects the LGBTIQ+ community. According to official data, approximately 400 people from the LGBTIQ+ community have been identified in the twelve Mexico City prisons. Although some protocol changes have been made to meet the specific needs of this community, these have not been implemented at the national level.²⁴³ As a result, the LGBTIQ+ community is deprived of freedom and subject to discrimination, acts of violence, and faces more risk of human rights violations by staff in correctional facilities.

Common challenges have been identified for prisons, including:

- Building, adapting, and improving prison infrastructure, taking into account the specific needs of the female and LGBTIQ+ population; among other things, dedicated spaces must meet satisfactory conditions to protect their integrity and safety, take care of their children when necessary, protect their hygiene, promote rehabilitation, and guarantee recreation
- The need to consider alternatives to incarceration for women in cases of minor offenses and non-violent crimes that are motivated by lack of opportunities and coercion
- Reconsidering preventive detention for justified cases that do not represent a danger to society
- Having timely and transparent gender-sensitive information, including the number of incarcerated women and LGBTIQ+ persons, specific health requirements, cases of intra-prison violence, and solutions for the data collected
- Providing training and support tools for adequate and effective reintegration of women and members of the LGBTIQ+ community without replicating gender stereotypes

239 IACHR (2020). *Perfil de Honduras*. Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. Available at: <http://www.corteidh.or.cr/tablas/r33600.pdf>

240 A study by Reinserta shows that a woman can be given a sentence of up to five years longer than a man for the same crime. Reinserta. (2020). Diagnostic on the perception of criminal performance in Mexico.

241 Briseño López, M. (2006). Garantizando los derechos humanos de las mujeres en reclusión. Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INMUJERES) y Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD).

242 García, A. K. (2020b). "Mujeres en el sistema penitenciario, las más vulnerables entre los vulnerables de la pandemia". *El Economista*. Available at: <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/politica/Mujeres-en-el-sistema-penitenciario-las-más-vulnerables-entre-los-vulnerables-de-la-pandemia-20200509-0002.html>

243 Wong, A. P. (2019). "Discriminación a la comunidad LGBTI en prisiones de la CDMX". *La Prensa*. Available at: <https://www.la-prensa.com.mx/policiaca/discriminacion-a-la-comunidad-lgbti-en-prisiones-de-la-cdmx-4354646.html>

Based on the above analysis, recommendations for future work include:

Findings	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incarcerated women and members of the LGBTIQ+ community face unsafe conditions, human rights violations, and limited options for rehabilitation• Most of the prisons have been designed to serve the male population. Despite legal provisions, prisons do not have areas exclusively for women, putting their safety at risk• Prison staff do not have adequate tools to meet the needs of women and LGBTIQ+ individuals.• In some cases, judges call for preventive detention measures in higher proportion for women than they do with men	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate to improve prison infrastructure in order to ensure skilled care for women, in compliance with legislation• Promote training for prison staff on gender and human rights• Educate members of the judiciary to use pre-trial detention only in justified cases



The adoption of the Belém do Pará Convention in the early 90s represented an important step towards institutional recognition of a gender agenda for El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico. Indeed, alongside the formation of the National Institutes for Women came the gradual institution of laws that address some of the most urgent challenges faced by women in matters of security, including laws on gender-based violence, anti-discrimination, or criminalization of femicide and other forms of violence.

In order to respond to the growing challenges that crime and insecurity impose on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community, these countries formed new institutions and developed initiatives that aim to prevent and protect victims of gender-based violence. Aside from the differences on how to address these challenges in the future through the creation of new initiatives, it is possible to identify some common findings and challenges:

- In legal terms, the three countries have managed to form a comprehensive framework that addresses the most pressing challenges faced in terms of security and gender; beyond the passing of new laws, it will be important to advance reforms calling for a truly comprehensive gender perspective that deepens human rights protection, safeguards the lives of those affected by gender-based violence, and that forces states to carry out specific efforts in preventing the various forms of crime and violence.
- Improve institutional tools to ensure that the various agencies in charge of gender-based violence prevention and protection fulfill their mandates effectively. Expanding coordination between different state agencies and promoting long-term policies would create a breakthrough and allow for improved attention to the various existing challenges.
- Reinforce gender and human rights training and awareness for all personnel working in state entities, including members of the executive, judicial, police and penitentiary branches
- Although it is possible to identify some interesting initiatives to assist victims and survivors of gender-based violence, the high incidence of femicides, domestic violence, hate attacks, among other crimes for gender reasons, suggests that it is necessary to advance even more in prevention and protection at all levels, including specialized initiatives for women, girls and the LGBTIQ+ community.

Regarding this last point, and in order to outline some specific recommendations for the inclusion of a gender perspective in future programs and projects, the next chapter addresses some initiatives supported by USAID.



Chapter 3

Challenges and opportunities in USAID'S citizen security projects



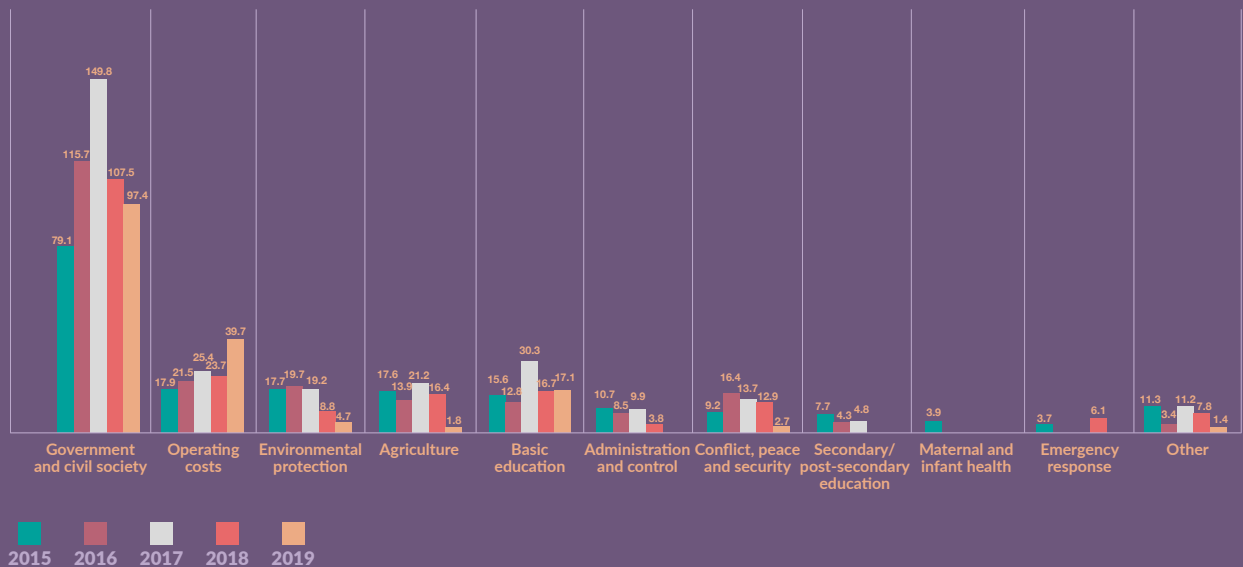
USAID has played a fundamental role in democratic and institutional reinforcement throughout the region, particularly in its over 50 years of work in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico. Through initiatives that seek to improve the living conditions of people around the world, this development agency has promoted projects and programs that address fundamental aspects of human rights including civic engagement, security, education, health, employment, etc.

Despite some differences in priorities between the three countries, USAID has invested in citizen security, strengthening the judicial sector, drug control, and violence prevention in the last few years. As reflected in the graph below, a large portion of the resources allocated to the region in the last five years have supported government and civil society projects including aid to strengthen the judicial sector in El Salvador, violence prevention programs in Honduras, and the protection of journalists and human rights activists in Mexico, among others.

Given that violence, insecurity, and lack of opportunities have serious consequences for the region as a whole, USAID has expanded its development efforts in recent years, examining innovative economic, social, and community investments. In El Salvador, the support provided by USAID has focused on reducing corruption (government integrity), strengthening the abilities of local governments to improve security, reinforcing the justice sector, and preventing crime and violence. In Honduras, the Proponte Más project seeks to reduce youth recruitment into gangs, one of the areas that has received the most resources from USAID since 2016. In Mexico, the PROJUSTICIA project, which supports consolidating procedural reforms aimed at reducing impunity, received more than \$60 million between 2015 and 2019.²⁴⁴ Some additional activities that have received support within USAID's conflict, peace, and security sector include training law enforcement, developing programs focused on crime reduction, and turning schools into centers of social cohesion.

244 USAID Explorer. Available at: <https://explorer.usaid.gov/>

Figure 9.
USAID: Funds implemented by sector in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico
(in millions of dollars)



Prepared by authors based on information found at: <https://explorer.usaid.gov/>

In light of the grim implications gender-based violence has on society's development and well-being (particularly for women and children), since 2012, USAID has promoted a strategy of pursuing global cooperation to prevent, protect, and reduce impunity for victims.²⁴⁵ To meet its objectives, the agency has established some priorities including identifying, developing, and adopting best practices; monitoring and evaluating projects focused on the most prevalent forms of gender-based violence; encouraging research on the challenges faced by victims; and allocating resources to address the multiple facets of this problem.

Considering growing insecurity in the region and its differing impact on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community, the strategy to respond to gender-based violence in these countries takes on special relevance.²⁴⁶ According to USAID Gender Specialist Annie Valencia,²⁴⁷ USAID's policy is framed within a concept of social inclusion where other strategies are addressed, including activities for disabled individuals, victims of human trafficking, and the LGBTIQ+ community. In doing so, the agency doesn't just promote activities or projects focused solely on these issues, but rather integrates these principles of inclusion across all programming.²⁴⁸

Of all the citizen security projects promoted by USAID in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico between

245 USAID (2012). *Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally*. USAID. Available at: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2155/GBV_Factsheet.pdf

246 Development Experience Clearinghouse. Available at: https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00Y-jRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDNmY2Uy&rID=NTIxMjYy

247 Interview, Annie Valencia. 2020. (X. Ortiz, Interviewer)

248 For example, the development program in Honduras that has supported municipal governance since 2017 includes specialized activities in inclusion with a gender perspective for vulnerable populations. However, the activities are part of a larger framework and include collaboration on various issues, including active transparency and post-election accountability. Development Experience Clearinghouse. Available at: https://dec.usaid.gov/dec/content/Detail_Presto.aspx?ctID=ODVhZjk4NWQtM2YyMi00Y-jRmLTkxNjktZTcxMjM2NDNmY2Uy&rID=NTIxMjYy

2015 and 2020, two were conceived with a gender perspective from inception to implementation (in this case, focusing on women). The Mexican projects “Construcción de una cultura de buen trato para comunidades indígenas” (Building a Culture of Fair Treatment for Indigenous Communities) in 2019, and “Evaluación de la violencia de género” (Assessment on Gender Violence) in 2015, specifically sought to address distinct gender issues in citizen security.

The urgency and depth of the challenges that insecurity exerts on women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ population suggests the need to address these aspects from a cross-sectional perspective in all projects. Additionally, this gender sensitivity must be implemented in all components of project planning, from proposal development to the design phase of each project and the very commencement of activities, incorporating specific, gender-sensitive objectives focused on insecurity.

The following pages identify and examine USAID projects that, due to their relevance and application, have significantly contributed to enhance citizen security in the region. Although this is not an evaluation of USAID programming, access was granted to documents, interviews with experts, and implementing partners that helped contextualize how the developed activities consider a gender perspective to comprehensively improve security conditions for vulnerable populations. The main objective of this section is to provide concrete recommendations for the development of future USAID-supported projects.

Professionalizing Statistical Data Systems

Chapter I examined the challenges of integrating a gender perspective into citizen security statistical data systems in the region. Among the main challenges are a lack of training and skills at the institutional level, lack of access to reliable data, failures in classifying crimes, lack of standardization of variables and statistical indicators, lack of inclusivity and intersectionality in the statistical system, and the unsustainability of independent projects to document violence in the long term.

USAID's InfoSegura project seeks to, in part, respond to these challenges. An overview of this initiative is presented below.

InfoSegura Project²⁴⁹

Total investment: \$21 million USD
Period: 2014 -2020
Location: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Belice, Costa Rica y República Dominicana
Implementer: United Nations Development Program
Target: Governments • United Nations Agencies • Universities • Civil society organizations

Background and Objective

The InfoSegura project began in May 2014 as part of the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) to strengthen the development of evidence-based public policies; the inclusion of a gender

249 The following interviews were carried out for this study: Marcela Smutt, Regional Coordinator, INFOSEGURA, UNDP; Margarita De Lobo, INFOSEGURA Project Manager, USAID Office of Democracy and Governance; Margarita Sánchez, Gender specialist with USAID Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Initiative; and Carmela Lanza, InfoSegura Project Coordinator, UNDP, Honduras.

perspective was an integral component of the project. InfoSegura was created in response to the need to improve available information on citizen security in the region, encouraging collaboration between judicial institutions to provide reliable data and statistics on the issue in Central America and the Dominican Republic. In practice, InfoSegura develops programming and strategies for crime and violence prevention, working throughout the information management chain in the production, analysis, use, leverage, and dissemination of citizen security data. The project has a strong training component for institutional and civil society representatives in order to promote a better understanding and analysis of crime information.

Project Scope

The project—which is regional in scope—developed a database for multidimensional analysis of citizen security issues;²⁵⁰ reinforced collaboration between governments, academia, and civil society; and developed shared actions and strategies to address violence and insecurity more comprehensively and with greater coordination.

InfoSegura included a gender approach in its general objective of strengthening capacities to create gender-sensitive, evidence-based public policies. In this sense, the project has contributed to rigorous documentation practices of violence against women in El Salvador and Honduras, generating valuable research on the issue and informing public policies and legislation in an effort to eradicate violence against women.²⁵¹

Margarita de Lobo, who oversees the InfoSegura project for USAID, explained that (within the framework of the project) a groundbreaking survey was conducted in El Salvador to measure and characterize violence against women, including training of staff involved in the issue. She also stated that the project supported research on the continuum of violence against women in Central America to provide critical analysis and data for consensus-building and to improve current policies and models of comprehensive care for women in the project countries.

The project evaluation carried out by James Jessup and Carlos Carcach²⁵² highlights InfoSegura's contribution to the design of the Plan El Salvador Seguro (PESS) monitoring system²⁵³ and the development of the index for prioritizing municipalities within PESS. They note that InfoSegura assisted in the difficult task of harmonizing crime data from different sources and making it available to the user base, helping to strengthen capacities, systems, and provide tools for public policy formulation in the future, regardless of political transitions. This is especially significant in order to ensure the sustainability of the project over time.

250 The multidimensional analysis includes the following factors: non-inclusive growth, high rates of inequality, lack of development opportunities, unplanned and disorganized urbanization processes, deterioration of social cohesion, organized crime (drug trafficking, human trafficking, arms trafficking), weak and oversaturated criminal justice institutions faced with processing high levels of criminality, high impunity rates, corruption, high levels of fear and disillusionment with institutions among citizens, marked polarization, fiscal contraction to finance comprehensive development policies, authoritarian cultural patterns, remilitarization, and prioritization of repressive court tactics

251 Jones, C James, et al. (2019). Final Performance Evaluation of the Regional Public Safety Project (InfoSegura). USAID. Available at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/15213>

252 Jessup and Carcach et al. (2019). Final Performance Evaluation of the Regional Public Safety Project. Available at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/15213>

253 The PESS (El Salvador Secure Plan) monitoring system consolidates data on 80 indicators for PESS, using information from 26 public institutions and the Survey on Victimization and Perception of Insecurity. Some indicators relating to security with a gender perspective included in PESS are: rate of domestic violence complaints compared to the baseline, rate of complaints of violence against women compared to the baseline, femicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants, rate of protective measures awarded by courts (peace and family) for domestic violence victims, number of protection measures applied by Protection Boards in response to threats to the individual rights of children and teenagers, and rate of cases of violence against women classified by violence type according to the LEIV.

The regional coordinator for the InfoSegura Project, Marcela Smutt, highlights that, among the lessons learned, they found that information management requires building trust between academia and public institutions, focusing on practical tools to ensure that evidence is generated and can be used for future policies in the sector.²⁵⁴ Thus, she stresses the importance of reference protocols for public institutions so that knowledge and experience on citizen security statistical issues are not challenged by government turnover.

Gender Perspective

The following chart explains the progress and opportunities brought about by InfoSegura. Based on these, recommendations have been made for future programming.

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of sound research that can inform gender-based violence public policy and strengthen the national strategies for the eradication of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the use of the re-search information in citizen security initiative design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, systematize, and share lessons learned with communities of practice committed to these issues Work with accessible and interactive information dissemination systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination amongst local institutions, legislative branch, civil society, and academia to eradicate violence through evidence-based public policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote transparency and a continuous exchange of information between diverse parties engaged in issues of citizen security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote formal inter- and intra-institutional agreements to ensure the exchange of information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakdown of information to include intersectional variables such as ethnicity, disabilities, and relationship with the perpetrator, among others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure data is separated out more broadly in terms of gender with precise information on violence against the LGBTIQ+ community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train staff responsible for data collection and all engaged institutions within the citizen security space in the comprehensive inclusion of a gender perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of the term “gender sensitive” in the main objective of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the focus of gender mainstreaming goes beyond violence against women to include the LGBTIQ+ population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train teams to design programs that include a holistic and intersectional gender perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a survey to measure and characterize nationwide violence for the first time, including training of staff involved in the issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the standardization and comparability of data between organizations working on citizen security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of key indicators for all information gathering on citizen security to be communicated and distributed across all parties engaged in citizen security interventions

254 Interview with Marcela Smutt, Regional Project Coordinator for InfoSegura. 2020 (X. Ortiz, Interviewer)



Institutional Strengthening for Preventing and Addressing Violence²⁵⁵

Chapter II details the structural inefficiencies that permeate the legal and institutional frameworks of the region, which in turn contributes to perpetuating gender-based violence that particularly affects women, children and LGBTIQ+ persons. Additionally, the inefficiencies and lack of results has brought about high public mistrust in the judicial system. The Justice Sector Strengthening Activity addresses one of the most urgent challenges.

Justice Sector Strengthening Activity

Total investment: \$31 millones de dólares

Period: 2013 – 2020

Location: El Salvador

Implementer: Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc

Target: Victims of violence who resort to the justice system • Supreme Court of Justice • Office of the Attorney General • Office of the Prosecutor General • National Judicial Council • National Police

Background and Objective

The Justice Sector Strengthening Activity (JSSA) began in 2013 in a political and social context in which problems of insecurity and impunity led the legislative assembly of El Salvador to approve "extraordinary measures" to combat violence.²⁵⁶ The project, which builds on the progress and results of a previous initiative,²⁵⁷ aims to promote collaboration

²⁵⁵ Interviews carried out for this study include Giovanna Hércules, Checchi and Company Consulting; Gracia Lopez, Project Manager; Maria Antonieta Zalaya, USAID Office of Democracy, Governance and Security; Orlando Hidalgo, Head of Monitoring and Evaluation; and Annie Valencia, USAID Gender Specialist.

²⁵⁶ The "Mejoramiento del Sector de Justicia" project was also implemented by Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.

²⁵⁷ The "Mejoramiento del Sector de Justicia" project was also implemented by Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.

between institutions that investigate crimes to improve criminal proceedings, develop stronger cases, and reduce impunity.

The JSSA project sought to increase the effectiveness of the police, prosecution, forensic science departments, and the judicial sector in six municipalities with high crime rates (focusing on the differing needs of each). Initially, the project did not incorporate a gender perspective, but was adjusted after the creation of the LEIV, which created a specialized jurisdiction to handle cases of violence against women and included forming specialized national courts for the issue. The specific objectives that had a gender perspective were:



To achieve these objectives, the project developed a diagnostic tool to evaluate the regulatory framework and services provided by the institutions within the National System for Addressing Violence. Based on this, the training models were designed with specific needs of judicial officials in mind.

Project Scope

According to USAID interviews (2019-2020), the project promoted collaboration between criminal investigation institutions to improve criminal proceedings, develop stronger cases, and reduce impunity. Examples of this collaboration include the establishment of joint investigative teams between the Attorney General's Office and the National Police in 15 municipalities, as well as the creation of inter-institutional committees in the six project municipalities. A coordination protocol was also developed to clarify institutional roles between these two actors, thus improving response at crime scenes.

One of the most impressive results of the project was the effectiveness of these committees in the prioritized municipalities. They contributed to an 85% improvement of crime scene arrival times and significantly reduced times for producing autopsy results.²⁵⁸

The JSSA project established 52 new victim care centers, including nine victim care units, three centers for victims of sexual abuse, 13 institutional units for specialized care for women in situations of violence, and 27 learning and play areas for children. A series of workshops were also conducted to train care center staff on topics including: gender-sensitive legal reasoning, crimes included under LEIV, protocols for investigating feminicide, and gender-sensitive victim care. According to Gracia López, USAID's manager for JSSA, although the project focused on serving women and girls, the

²⁵⁸ Interview with Gracia López, Project Manager. 2020 (X. Ortiz, Interviewer).

workshops also included some examples of how to serve the LGBTIQ+ community.²⁵⁹

The project likewise provided technical assistance for developing service channels for victims of violence, including specifically for crimes such as feminicide, sexual violence, and domestic violence. Along these lines, JSSA also provided equipment for several new and specialized courts in a new jurisdiction that began operating in 2017. The project equipped three specific areas: a play corner (to be used in conjunction with the Gesell Chamber), a space for attending to women in crisis, and an area for interviewing victims, thereby preventing re-victimization by the authorities.

The project also prioritized collaboration between local organizations; in 2017, the Place-Based Justice Strategy was designed, dividing efforts at the national level between six municipalities. This strategy was created to improve coordination with the government's PESS initiative as part of the violence prevention program that prioritized intervention in municipalities with high rates of violence.

Gender Perspective

The following shows the progress and opportunities of this project:

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporation of service channels for victims of domestic violence in a project focused on strengthening the judicial sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach victim care as an integral and broad-based part of the projects including all institutions related to citizen security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensively reinforce institutional capacities to achieve better results, including the Ministry of Health, which forms part of the care process for victims of violence, but is not normally included in the training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the start of implementation, when LEIV was passed, the project supported the creation of conditions to make victim care units operational, outfitting and equipping them. This enabled more effective implementation and led to the development of two models of care that are currently in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalize on the experience of the project, especially relating to the operation of the comprehensive care centers to develop local skills to accompany new regulations or laws in the process of implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematize and share project information on the design, operation, and implementation of established models
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of efficient care centers with trained staff for gender-based violence victims 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish standardized use of criteria or mechanisms to attend to victims of violence Replicate the concept of coordinating services offered to victims of violence through integrated centers at the national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardize and disseminate the criteria used to care for victims and integrate inter-institutional mechanisms aimed at reducing re-victimization

259 Interview with Gracia López, Project Manager. 2020 (X. Ortiz, Interviewer).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mention of the LGBTIQ+ community in some of the workshops on care for victims of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the gender perspective, including the LGBTIQ+ community in care protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the team that designs models and provides victim care to ensure the inclusion of care protocols for LGBTIQ+ victims of violence and prevent re-victimization • Work with the Legislative Assembly to enact victim-centered legislative reforms that include the LGBTIQ+ community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation and strengthening of local victim assistance networks in collaboration with civil society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the sustainability of civil society initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programs to strengthen civil society to include topics such as governance, management and leadership, budget and implementation systems, human resources, finance, and project implementation, among others, to improve the potential for sustainability

Promoting Justice (PROJUSTICIA)²⁶⁰

Total investment: \$64 million USD

Period: 2008- 2019

Location: Mexico

Implementer: Tetra Tech DPK

Target: Government • Justice Centers • Public Ministry • Journalists • Civil society organizations

Background and Objective

PROJUSTICIA was launched in 2008 as part of a criminal procedure reform with the establishment of the New Adversarial Criminal Justice System (NJSP).²⁶¹ This transformation was in response to growing pressure from civil society as a result of the country's explosive increase in violence and impunity. The reform mandated that all Mexican state and federal jurisdictions improve their transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency in the criminal justice process and ensure attention to the human rights of victims of violence.

PROJUSTICIA was originally implemented by the organization Justice for Sustainable Peace and later, in 2015, the project continued through Tetra Tech DPK, an international development company that implements a range of projects aimed at improving quality of life. Tetra Tech DPK

²⁶⁰ Interviews were conducted for this study with: Jania Arguet, Communications Director; Ana María, Monitoring and Evaluation; and Susana Camacho, Regulatory Area of Tetra Tech.

²⁶¹ In 2008, the Mexican government adopted constitutional reforms requiring the national adoption of a new adversarial criminal justice system (NSJP), meaning that all state and federal jurisdictions implemented justice reforms by June 2016, including improvements in transparency, efficacy and efficiency of criminal justice processes, due process and care for victims of crimes.

led the implementation of PROJUSTICIA, working with institutions and training human rights offices, prosecutors' offices, courts, and the Precautionary Measure State Supervisory Parole and Protection Units (UMECAS. in Spanish) on the NSJP. Tetra Tech DPK also collaborated with civil society organizations and universities to implement activities related to alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in criminal matters (MASC), partnering with Women's Justice Centers and other entities serving gender-based violence victims throughout the country.

Within the specific objectives, PROJUSTICIA aimed to:



The project sought to respond to various forms of violence that are exacerbated by a justice system ill-equipped to deal with insecurity. It included a broad-based gender perspective that Tetra Tech defined as having interconnected actions that integrated a gender approach in different areas of work. In particular, the project contained different components to strengthen the state's response to female victims of gender-based violence in various states and developed a "Model for Access to Effective Justice in Crimes of Violence against Women" to professionalize official responses at a national level in investigating and prosecuting gender-based crimes.

Project Scope

PROJUSTICIA was specifically designed to include gender perspective as an essential part of the project and one that would be developed across all its different initiatives. To achieve this, it was necessary to include feedback from organizations that specialize on gender issues such as Equis Justicia para Mujeres, the Red Mesa de Mujeres, and Documenta. The organizations collaborated to include a differentiated approach according to the specific needs that affect various population groups.²⁶² Likewise, PROJUSTICIA established as part of its objectives an adequate response to the needs of people with disabilities and the indigenous population. PROJUSTICIA has since been restructured to rest on four pillars, including gender mainstreaming:

1. Regulatory: focused on advocacy within national and local chambers supporting the national citizen security agenda and laws
2. Access to justice: focused on alternative and restorative justice, as well victims of violence
3. Communication: focused on understanding the NSJP and communicating its benefits in close partnership with civil society
4. Monitoring and evaluation: across the board in all aspects of the project

²⁶² According to one of the interviews for this project, PROJUSTICIA defined differentiated approach as a methodology that helps different discrimination and exclusion factors to be visible in a way that establishes actions based on these elements and generates strategies to work on them.

As of 2017, the regulatory department—composed exclusively of women—added the task of incorporating a gender perspective throughout the entire project. For this, the department received training and was in charge of facilitating internal awareness courses and justice workshops with a gender perspective, including induction for new team members. Program activities include the following:

- Support local system strategies through a network at Women's Justice Centers composed of “community promoters,” who are survivors trained to raise awareness on issues of access to justice and the culture of citizen reporting, rights of women, and existing services (using educational podcasts as the primary tool)
- Creation of the Institutional Integrity System in Women's Justice Centers (SII-CEJUM), which seeks to generate an ethical organizational culture (both institutionally and individually), improve care processes, and ensure efficient responses to female victims of violence
- Creation and implementation of the Model for Access to Effective Justice for Crimes Against Women, to include protocols, implementation guides, and learning processes for NSJP operation
- Development of a crime resolution protocol, the 100-Day Challenge, to work and chart a strategic path to accelerate and improve resolution processes
- Training to strengthen and professionalize NSJP's judicial staff, with a differentiated approach in access to justice
- Development of tools, alliances, and agreements for civil society to participate in monitoring judicial actions

Among the results of the PROJUSTICIA project, the following stand out:

- The Institutional Integrity System in the Women's Justice Centers became public policy, which lent continuity to the project and ensured an evaluation mechanism where the work of the centers could be reviewed in detail; By 2019, 45% of CJMs were certified.
- The Model for Access to Effective Justice for Violence Against Women contained a protocol and basic guide for Women's Justice Center operators, establishing guidelines for action and protection for female victims of violence. An investigation and implementation guide was also created for frequently occurring crimes investigated by Women's Justice Centers to include a gender perspective within the adversarial criminal process.
- Seven specialized certification courses on gender-based violence and access to justice for women were provided to 308 CJM workers.
- Implementation of 100-Day Challenges was successful; operational teams exceeded their goals by increasing the resolution rate above 500% in five Mexican states for offenses related to family and gender-based violence.
- Two response protocols were developed for persons with disabilities.
- A professional certification program was undertaken for interpreters to improve translation services for non-Spanish speaking indigenous persons who interact with the criminal justice system.
- Educational organizations and civil society organizations worked together to monitor justice agencies, including reporting on precautionary measures, detention conditions, and access to justice for vulnerable groups. This resulted in two formal collaboration agreements, 10 alliances, and 31 products on the topic (such as manuals and reports).²⁶³

263 USAID Mexico (2020). Promoviendo la Justicia Tareas 3 y 4 Reporte final 2015-2019. USAID Mexico. Available at: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00M4X2.pdf

Gender Perspective

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation process for the PROJUSTICIA team on gender mainstreaming and inclusion issues in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that orientation addresses gender perspective from a non-binary and intersectional approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate orientation with organizations specialized in including a comprehensive and intersectional gender perspective for development projects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice from experts on including a gender perspective in the project design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the inclusion of gender mainstreaming in all project activities, not only those that have an objective relating to gender issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a gender mainstreaming department from the project design stage onward, ensuring that each element is inclusive within citizen security initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a regulatory department to monitor the gender strategy within the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that a gender and inclusion department is established from project design so that the perspective is incorporated from the design in each activity 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of an intersectional perspective in some of the project's activities, such as training indigenous language interpreters in the justice system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster an intersectional perspective in all project activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish continuing education processes that are measurable and mandatory for all design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Converting SII-CEJUM into public policy, ensuring the continuity of Women's Justice Centers' (CJM) certifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale up and promote the training and evaluation of different organizations involved in citizen security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share CJM's training and evaluation model among different citizen security agencies to adapt its certification and apply it to different organizations

Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia²⁶⁴

Total investment: \$24 million USD

Period: 2015-2020

Location: Mexico

Implementer: At-Risk Youth • National Institute for Women • local municipalities • CONAVIM staff • CJM staff • Civil society

Background and Objective

The Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia (JPV) activity began in 2015 to improve government crime prevention responses by strengthening public security institutions in different states across

²⁶⁴ Those interviewed to study this project: José Lobo, Program Director; Vanessa Maya, Gender Specialist, Chemonics; Indira Villegas, Director of Violence Prevention, USAID.

the country.

At the time of its design, target states in Mexico showed a high tendency for youth to be recruited by criminal gangs and to commit crimes. Those states also reported the highest number of feminicides in the country (Nuevo León) or the highest number of intentional homicides of women (Chihuahua, Michoacán and Baja California Norte). To prevent this violence, JPV sought to improve coordination between local governments, CSOs, and academia. The main objective was to contribute to reinforcing abilities of different levels of government to design, implement, and evaluate public policies for the prevention of crime and violence. The project objective was to reduce levels of violence through the adaptation and implementation of local prevention systems based on three main components:²⁶⁵



The project also focused on encouraging participation from the private sector, government, and civil society organizations in meeting prevention needs at the community level. Activities were classified according to three different mechanisms:

- Creating partnerships with civil society to implement gender-based violence prevention programs
- Providing technical assistance to civil society organizations to improve and strengthen their gender-based interventions
- Generating direct inputs that contribute to improving gender-sensitive public policies

JPV worked jointly with civil society organizations, academia, private sector groups, and government agencies to coordinate efforts with key institutions dedicated to crime prevention. According to data from the Foreign Aid Exchange, JPV is among the security projects with the largest cumulative budget in Mexico, totaling more than \$23 million between 2015 and 2020.

Project Scope

A gender mainstreaming strategy was included in JPV design guidelines from the start. However, it wasn't until 2017 that JPV began to implement specific actions geared toward the prevention of violence against women and girls. Initiatives to prevent and address sexual and domestic violence were outlined in the different municipalities active in the project. For the design of these interventions, JPV identified organizations that worked on various gender-based violence prevention and care issues, and organized working groups with civil society and key government institutions on the

²⁶⁵ A local prevention system is a group of interconnected actors from the public sector, academia, civil society, and the private sector, who work together to reduce violence and crime. The indicators for the reduction of violence and crime focus on improving the perception of security. USAID. (2018). El Programa de USAID Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia. Available at: <https://www.chemonics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ONE-PAGER-JPV-USAID-2018-spanish.pdf>



matter.²⁶⁶ These mapping sessions were dedicated to identifying models for working with women who suffer domestic violence, as well as models directed at young people who have witnessed violence. From there, joint strategies were developed to work on project implementation.

From an administrative standpoint, Chemonics Inc. implemented a gender perspective in its hiring and training of personnel, including on issues of workplace harassment.

To conduct training and technical assistance activities, JPV signed memoranda of understanding with various CSOs and citizen security program implementers. These alliances included Youth Transforming Youth, implemented by the organization Supera in Monterrey, presented in this chapter.

One of the most relevant technical assistance strategies utilized was the Care Model for Children and Youth Subjected to Family Violence, which provided information and tools on domestic violence to female heads of households. It also works on the issue with children in the Centers of Justice in Mexico. The model was developed in alliance with the PROJUSTICIA project previously covered in this chapter.

Other highlighted activities include the Safe Corridor for Women in Ciudad Juárez, an initiative focused on preventing and addressing urban violence against women in the historic downtown area, and the Safe Cities for Women project, a model that looked to mitigate gender-based violence in high-crime urban areas by promoting citizen participation and building alliances to restore citizen security.

Among the key results were various trainings, including 32 of the 49 Women's Justice Centers in the Care Model for Children and Youth Subjected to Family Violence; 34 individuals in the prevention of sexual violence against children; and 1,045 women on how to lead local care programs on domestic and

²⁶⁶ These working groups included organizations such as: Equis: Justicia para las Mujeres, el Instituto de Liderazgo Simone de Beauvoir, Género y Desarrollo A.C. (Gendes), UN Women, and CONAVIM.

other forms of gender-based violence. Additionally, the project restored 46 public spaces through murals, park cleaning, and cultural events, among other activities.

Gender Perspective

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementer included a gender perspective in its recruitment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that processes include a non-binary and intersectional gender perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train human resources, design, and implementing teams to include a comprehensive and inclusive gender perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An alliance was developed with the PROJUSTICIA and Youth Transforming Youth projects, enhancing the training scope for Women's Justice Centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replicate training at the national or regional level in institutions like the CJMs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share learning at the regional level within the citizen security community of practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked in collaboration with civil society organizations with expertise in gender-based violence, prevention, and care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the strategies developed at the roundtables are implemented across the project and not only in specific activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate a department within the project to monitor gender mainstreaming in all activities

Social Reintegration Model for Juvenile Offenders²⁶⁷

Total investment: \$1 million USD

Period: 2013-2023

Location: Mexico

Implementer: Reinserta A.C.

Target: Teenagers and youth in conflict with the law in detention & rehabilitation centers

Background and Objective

Reinserta A.C. is a Mexican non-profit organization founded in 2013 that works with the penitentiary system to break the cycles of crime in the country. The Social Reintegration Model for Juvenile Offenders (ACLPR, in Spanish) is part of Reinserta's reintegration model and works with young people who are or were in conflict with the law to provide them necessary tools to stay away from crime and develop an active role in their communities.

ACLPR supports juveniles in detention and social reintegration centers in Mexico City and the State of Mexico to prevent recidivism in two stages. The process involves activities in art, culture, sports, economic empowerment, well-being, mental health, education, and self-care. Additionally, the project provides financial aid and various workshops for men and women who have left the detention centers and do not have a support network. According to the project implementers, a

²⁶⁷ Those interviewed to study this project: Cynthia Morado, Director, M&E; Mercedes Castañeda, Director of Operations, Reinserta; Marina Flores, Director of Operations, CRAJ; and Diego, Manager of M&E and CRAJ, Reinserta.

gender perspective has been an underlying focus in Reinserta. The specific needs of young men and women in conflict with the law are considered in all the activities of the reintegration model. The reintegration centers have been adapted for mothers in numerous ways, such as creating areas for their children to play safely.

Reinserta designed gender-inclusive monitoring and evaluation systems. From early design, the project considered the opinions of experts and specialized organizations to ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective. In the hiring process, Reinserta administration and human resources departments are governed by principles of non-discrimination and has standardized protocols for inclusion and human rights. Thus, interviews include specific questions on these issues, looking to establish teams trained in gender, diversity, and inclusion. In terms of new staff orientation, Reinserta has offered non-mandatory training on gender issues open to all foundation staff.

Project Scope

According to a 2019 evaluation of the project, ACLPR has had a positive impact on the protection, self-esteem, and behavioral resilience of youth. Teens who have participated significantly improve their social skills and ability to develop a crime-free life plan. As of 2018, 95% of participants had not relapsed.

Thanks to the project, participants have shown improvement in areas such as:

- Self-esteem level
- Impulse control
- Contribution to developing a positive life plan
- Acquisition of skills to obtain a job when leaving the center
- Development of artistic-sports-cultural skills

In a focus group for 12 participants at the Quinta del Bosque Juvenile Detention Center, they mentioned feeling an improvement since they began the project, especially in their mental health. They explained that they had developed greater emotional control and improved self-confidence, which had generated an openness to dialogue with their relatives and the development of an outside support network they did not previously have.

Gender Perspective

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinserta prioritized obtaining, documenting, and systematizing up-to-date information on teenagers to bring light to their situation in detention centers in Mexico 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that accurate information is used as the basis for designing interventions in the country and the region • Collect information inside corrections centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share processed information on interactive platforms that civil society and international organizations can access • Train implementation staff and prison centers on information collection processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of gender mainstreaming within the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure project activities have inclusive gender practices in all stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a department or staff member in charge of reviewing activity design with a gender perspective

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring with a gender perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that hiring guidelines include an intersectional perspective that considers ethnicity, race, diversity, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train the human resources team to include an intersectional gender perspective and ensure that the hiring and orientation process is inclusive at all levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops on gender for Reinserta staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make workshops mandatory to improve the scope of learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish processes of continuous, compulsory, and measurable learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A monitoring and evaluation strategy separating out basic indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure breakdown considers categories that capture the differentiated needs of indigenous women, people with disabilities, or the LGBTIQ+ community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review monitoring and evaluation strategies with experts on gender, diversity, and inclusion issues to establish baseline survey, information gathering, and analysis processes that are inclusive to all people

Systematic Gender-Based Violence in the Region

The systematic normalization of gender inequalities and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual preferences, among others, permeates Latin American society, cultivating a vicious cycle of violence. As seen throughout this study, many citizen security initiatives focus on addressing violence rather than preventing it. Working from within the educational process is a prevention strategy that can potentially eradicate violence in the long term and at a structural level. This is demonstrated through two projects in Mexico and Honduras working with youth on different issues that deconstruct the normalization of violence in order to promote diversity and inclusion through education and the eradication of violent patterns in youth.

Jóvenes transformando jóvenes²⁶⁸

Total investment: \$1.5 million USD

Period: 2017-2019

Location: Nuevo León, Mexico

Implementer: Supera A.C.

Target: Young adults ages 12-29 years old • Municipalities

Background and Objectives

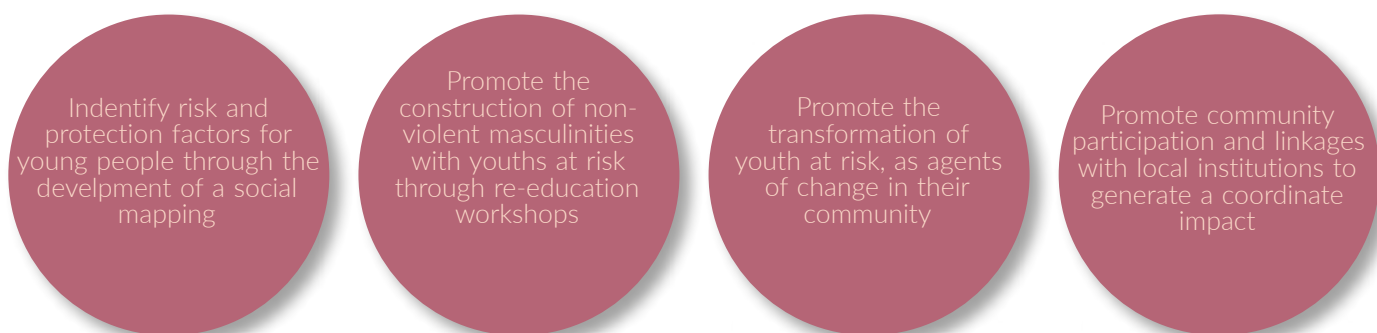
Responding to the increase in gender-based violence in the municipality of Guadalupe, Mexico, Youth Transforming Youth (JTJ, in Spanish) was launched in 2017 as one of the strategies to support civil

²⁶⁸ Those interviewed to study this project: Rafael Limones, Psychologist and Implementer; Miguel Díaz, General Director; Karina Frías, Doctor; and Marco Valencia, Specialist in Public Policies of Supera A.C.

society programs that address circumstances increasing the risk of violence. The project, supported by USAID, deployed a gender perspective to examine and combat structural factors contributing to violence at a municipal level.

Supera A.C., the implementer, works to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable communities in the state of Nuevo Leon through education promoting the empowerment of people, social inclusion, diversity, and gender equality.

Specifically, JTJ's objective was to reduce young people's exposure to violence and their tendency to commit crime. Using creative workshops, the project proposed a care model that identified risk factors that cause youth and gender-based violence in order to work on those with the affected population. Through the design and implementation of activities promoting transformative masculinities and women's empowerment in the community, the project sought to develop stronger and more resilient structures promoting gender equality and violence-free lives. The specific objectives included four components:



The project's target population was 80% men and 20% women between 12 and 29 years old. The entire benefitted population resided in marginalized communities in different cities of Nuevo León, Mexico.

Project Scope

Youth Transforming Youth's approach to the issue of citizen security was to address the phenomenon of structural violence. From the outset, Supera's hiring processes ensured that employees had a strong understanding of violence with a gender perspective. Likewise, implementers were trained by the Instituto de Liderazgo Simone de Beauvoir (Simone de Beauvoir Leadership Institute) on gender, human rights, and development issues, including transformative masculinities.

The project used a theory of change designed with a gender perspective and established indicators to identify the levels of propensity to violence from a historic, sociocultural and individual perspective. One of the methodologies used by YTY, specifically in workshops with men, is a framework called "Model on the Self-Perception of Juvenile Masculinity", which integrates two scales of measurement of transformative masculinities. This model uses an evidence-based measuring instrument to assess young people's perception of their masculinities, establish a baseline, and measure how they have changed with project implementation. Overall, the project had eight risk propensity scales for the commission of crimes. Results show that the propensity for violence in participating youth decreased by 30% after two years..

Some of the challenges faced by the implementation team include achieving a more widespread and sustained impact on public policy and welfare issues, as well as replicating the model in other communities to work on crime prevention.

Gender Perspective

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on transformative masculinities as a contribution to the eradication of structural violence in Mexico 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand scope and replicability to a larger area of intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build alliances with USAID projects and public institutions to share the project's methodology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing teams are trained on gender issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a non-binary gender perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce the training of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation team by including a comprehensive and inclusive gender perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive diagnostic to measure risk factors in the target population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the inclusion of intersectional measurement of discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add variables to the diagnostic tool and measurement scales
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of issues of violence against the LGBTIQ+ community in some workshops of the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an intersectional approach to violence against the LGBTIQ+ community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the model to include a non-binary gender perspective across the board

Ensuring Education²⁶⁹

Total investment: \$21 million USD
Period: 2017-2022
Location: Honduras
Implementer: DAI Global
Target: At risk school-age population

Background and Objective

The Ensuring Education project was launched in Honduras in 2017 to address structural violence within school environments, ultimately reducing violence at the community level.

The activity, ongoing until 2022, has two main objectives. First, to address factors that contribute to violence in schools, which impede access, learning, and retention; and second, to use the education processes to help prevent violence within communities. The project focuses on schools in five of the most violent cities in Honduras. Activities are linked to community support networks, the

²⁶⁹ Interview with Maria Rojas of DAI Honduras. 2020 (C. Ochoa, Interviewer).

Ministry of Education, and other local stakeholders to reduce violence, develop prevention and care methods, and form alliances with schools in the neighborhoods to support positive behavioral change among at-risk students.

Implementation includes a gender perspective to ensure the integration of specific methodologies considering gender disparities and general problems of exclusion within project activities. In particular, the focus is on activities to increase inclusion as an integral part of the school curriculum and procedures, as well as extracurricular activities. Four specific objectives were established to improve and contribute to:



Project Scope

This project is still ongoing and has to date identified several risk factors in school relationships from a gender perspective, which are currently being integrated into education strategies to mitigate them. Preliminary results of the project include:²⁷⁰

- Improving school capacities by creating safe and inclusive learning environments for students with a special emphasis on addressing the needs of students with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and the LGBTIQ+ community
- Strengthening local networks that increase school safety in order to create a response system
- Training Secretariat of Education personnel on gender-based violence
- Increase prevention by training educators and school counselors to identify and respond to violence

This activity has been important in ensuring student retention by reducing violent behavior inside and outside of schools. The project is building new skills for teachers, as well as technical staff of the Secretariat of Education to improve their fundamental understanding of primary and secondary prevention and how to respond to basic needs in the event of violence. In addition, it has developed extracurricular activities and sports-based learning projects while integrating a violence prevention focus into these efforts.

270 USAID/Honduras. 2019. "Honduras School-Based Violence Prevention Activity". USAID Mission (USAID/Honduras) Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy. Available at: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00TD55.pdf

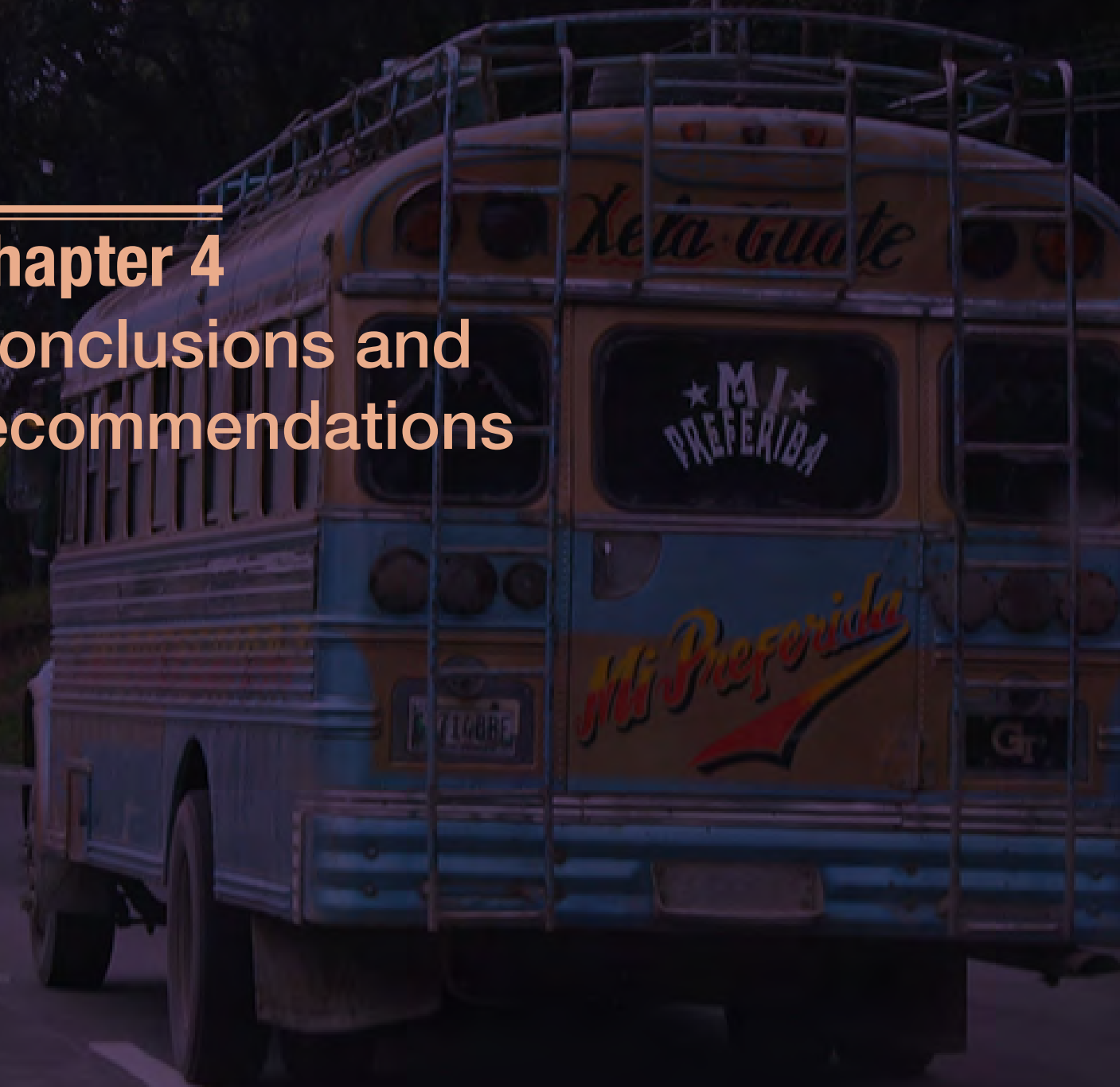
Gender Perspective

Progress	Opportunities	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAI Global establishes an explicit policy for gender-sensitive projects There is a gender and social inclusion specialist on the projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that this policy is transformed into practice in activities that promote gender equality throughout all stages of the projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inclusion of a gender perspective should be reviewed in annual work plans as part of the monitoring and evaluation process It is critical to ensure that they include gender-sensitive indicators from the baseline across all activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAI uses both language and standard practice to raise awareness among all staff on gender issues and inclusion There is a hotline for possible violations of ethical norms that include gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure knowledge of ethical standards guidelines among all permanent and temporary workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the different internal policies and guidelines to ensure all personnel know and implement them in their daily work inside and outside the organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAI's gender policy and internal regulations include gender-sensitive administrative processes for hiring employees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the notion that gender perspective is both cross-sectional and intersectional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate human resources and general staff to promote gender-inclusive perspectives that consider the needs of vulnerable population groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the performed activities is broken down by gender for technical assistance, and reports include a gender perspective in their analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote a non-binary gender perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the project to include a non-binary gender perspective in with a focus on strengthening the monitoring and evaluation strategy

Exchanging information on lessons learned from citizen security programs fosters the potential to advance gender perspectives within the field of citizen security. The different examples above show the progress that projects have made in integrating gender mainstreaming and the shared challenges in applying strategies. Establishing platforms for exchange and dialogue on these lessons is the first step to encourage evidence-based initiatives to be gender sensitive. Eliminating measures proven ineffectual will also be critical.

Chapter 4

Conclusions and recommendations





The inclusion of a gender perspective in programs that address citizen insecurity is an ongoing challenge for LAC in general, and for the countries covered in this study in particular. As we have seen throughout this report, the high incidence of crime and violence in the region has differentiated effects for distinct segments of the population, which requires specialized responses.

Throughout this report, PADF has presented specific recommendations for future citizen security programs to tackle the historically unattended challenges faced by key segments of society. The following is a summary of the recommendations proposed in this report by topic, including priority areas on the path to advancing inclusive and intersectional citizen security policies.

Inclusive and Representative Statistics

Documenting the incidence of crime and violence from a gender perspective is a fundamental step towards developing high-quality, evidence-based public policies.

Information must be, at a minimum, representative, timely, reliable, transparent, and accessible, so that different organizations are able to make accurate assessments, propose adequate responses, and evaluate the impact of their interventions. The gender perspective must be comprehensive and inclusive, and not reduced to simple binary information breakdown. To strengthen data and statistics systems, future projects should develop activities that:

- Ensure the incorporation of a gender perspective in all data systems, including the development of protocols and data collection instruments that reduce the re-victimization of individuals affected by crime and violence
- Review instruments, protocols, and variables for collecting data and statistics to guarantee that they are representative of all population groups
- Develop inter- and intra-institutional coordination methods that reinforce and consolidate official information systems
- Promote dialogue with independent observatories to standardize criteria and data comparability of all information systems
- Encourage specialized analysis and use of data through agreements with educational institutions and academia to improve understanding and visibility of the unique challenges faced by women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community in matters of security
- Generate regional forums for the exchange of best practices, prioritizing programs that have undergone evaluations and have demonstrated empirical results
- Promote the use of gender-sensitive technological tools, artificial intelligence, and big data, focused on predictive and preventive analysis of violence
- Train personnel in citizen security institutions, the health sector, and data/statistical agencies to ensure all parties understand gender-sensitive collection and use of information

Gender Mainstreaming Training

The impact crime and violence have on girls, women, and the LGBTIQ+ population is significantly aggravated by a lack of awareness among professionals and public servants responsible for violence prevention and victim protection.

Indeed, throughout this study we have seen that, despite progress in laws responding to these challenges, the justice sector takes actions that sometimes exacerbate vulnerable situations for those who face and report gender-based violence. Likewise, a lack of sensitivity among decision makers can lead to policy changes that end up worsening the dynamics of control, inequality, and even family conflict between victims and their aggressors.

- Considering the evidence, crime and violence prevention should be a top priority in citizen security initiative development. In this respect, training and raising awareness play a fundamental role for all citizen security system personnel in the public sector, as well as within civil society and international cooperation organizations. Future programs should:

- Develop education programs for all ages, including innovative and unique content for each age group such as information on new masculinities, prevention of violence, discrimination, and how to eliminate gender stereotypes
- Support initiatives to prevent gender-based violence from childhood in cooperation with education institutions, with special emphasis on developing materials and activities highlighting the serious consequences that violence has on girls, women, and the LGBTIQ+ community
- Promote continuous and systematic gender sensitivity training at the institutional level through provision of content developed from a prevention and victim protection perspective based on a non-binary gender concept, which permeates all levels of public administration; additionally, training programs must be mandatory, continuous, measurable, and replicable, and should be a requirement for civil service promotion

Institutional Strengthening and Public Policy

Since crime and violence are among the most important concerns for citizens in LAC, strengthening the tools used to respond to insecurity has become a priority for governments. In a context where demands for greater security dominate electoral campaigns and permeate the news, it is important to resist the temptation to meet these demands with gimmicky measures unsupported by evidence that ignore the specific consequences insecurity has for distinct population groups.

As described in this report, institutional frameworks responsible for implementing gender-sensitive security policies are fairly recent and have limited capacities for meaningful public policy creation and coordination. In light of the high incidence of crime and violence, the frameworks have shown limited ability to effectively prevent and protect victims. The security sector will benefit significantly if future projects and programs consider the following recommendations:

- Strengthen the role of institutions responsible for the gender agenda, providing them with technical and administrative skills to guide, coordinate, and promote effective public policies
- Promote inter-institutional coordination to enhance initiatives developed at the local level, allowing for more coherent and less redundant policies
- Promote equal opportunity within institutions, ensuring that women and the LGBTIQ+ community have equal access to leadership positions and participate in decision-making processes; this should be complemented with training and outreach mechanisms for all personnel on the importance of incorporating gender mainstreaming into institutional activities
- Support the development of mandatory and permanent training programs for all personnel involved in violence prevention and victim protection; content must address equity, human rights, and non-discrimination, including specialized information on the treatment of the LGBTIQ+ community and the need for interpreters to serve indigenous populations; content should also be developed for police, judicial, health, protection and prison personnel to deploy an inclusive gender perspective in their day-to-day work
- Generate capacities for gender-sensitive budget analyses and evaluations, prioritizing evidence-based initiatives that contain measurable goals; these efforts should include both decision-makers and legislative members who participate in budget proposal evaluations presented by the executive branch
- Encourage the exchange of experiences and best practices at the national and international level, particularly focused on evidence-based initiative development and implementation
- Contribute to institutional strengthening by developing minimum standards regarding gender

for any organization; future programs would be able to pair with institutions to analyze their procedures, improve protocols, and promote gender mainstreaming in all activities

Differentiated and Inclusive Programming

The rising incidence of femicide, high domestic violence rates (exacerbated by the pandemic), fear of becoming a victim of sexual violence on the streets and in neighborhoods, and invisible frequency of hate crimes against members of the LGBTIQ+ community constitute just a few of the many types of violence that large segments of the population face on a daily basis in the region.

As we have seen, insecurity has differing impacts and specific challenges that must be taken into account when seeking solutions that improve citizen well-being as a whole. Future programs designed to inclusively address security challenges would benefit from including any of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that all those involved in citizen security programs are knowledgeable on the distinct effects and consequences different population groups experience in reality; particularly, raise awareness about the serious consequences that crime and violence have on girls, women, and the LGBTIQ+ community
- Promote and prioritize violence prevention program development that includes gender mainstreaming in each stage of the project cycle (proposal, conceptualization, planning, recruitment of an implementation team, activity development, evaluation of results, etc.); initiatives must incorporate precise indicators to ensure a gender perspective is applied pragmatically in each of these stages, ensuring compliance with standards of quality, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness
- Encourage and support innovative programs that prioritize a gender-centered approach to citizen security; are adapted to local contexts; and consider the different needs of women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community
- Develop specialized, gender-centered support protocols and adequately train prevention staff, victim assistance workers, police, and courts to promote a better understanding on the subject; train these actors on inclusive, human rights-centered interventions that are supported by evidence and ultimately and effectively protect those filing complaints
- Promote gender-sensitive rehabilitation programs for persons in conflict with the law, including on life skills and economic independence without perpetuating gender stereotypes

Prevention and Victim Assistance

Since gender-based violence can, in its most extreme form, cause a victim's death, preventing it can literally save lives. The pandemic nature of femicide, coupled with a growing number of gender-based violence complaints, reveals the urgent need to intensify efforts to minimize situations that contribute to persistent gender-based violence.

When prevention is not enough, victims of violence require rapid, discreet, efficient, and effective protection. Prevention protocols must both safeguard the lives of those filing reports, as well as guarantee respect for their most basic human rights in the process. Those tasked with prevention and victim assistance should take into account the following recommendations:

- Promote evidence-based education program development focused on promoting new masculinities and non-discrimination practices
- Support program development aimed at strengthening life skills, decision-making, and economic independence of vulnerable groups; initiatives must include a perspective that avoids reproducing gender stereotypes while providing tools to effectively break cycles of violence
- Collaborate in developing methods and tools that facilitate reporting violence, guarantee victim integrity, and provide adequate protection; any solution must consider the cultural reality and availability of resources in communities in order to be sensitive to existing conditions for vulnerable segments of the population
- Strengthen victims' knowledge of legal tools so they can access them quickly in times of need
- Increase, improve, and make more accessible support for victims at a local level, which includes the availability and awareness of safe and discreet shelter housing
- Promote human rights awareness and gender sensitivities among members of the police, as well as the healthcare, judicial, and corrections systems

Legal Frameworks and Access to Justice

As analyzed in this study, El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico have made progress in strengthening their regulatory frameworks to be gender-inclusive. Yet, despite legal decisions that guarantee non-discrimination or criminalize femicide, survivors of violent crimes rarely have access to the legal system, do not receive adequate protection from the state, and in general, almost never see convictions against their offenders.

Timely and adequate access to justice is a fundamental requirement for most countries in the region, who have promised compliance with various international protocols and frameworks. The following recommendations will allow all states to move in a promising direction:

- Promote gender sensitivity training for law enforcement officials, including content on human rights, non-discrimination, and a gender-sensitive administration of justice
- Develop continuing education programs on diversity, equity, and inclusion for judicial officials, with special modules for police and corrections officers
- Reinforce legal tools that effectively and opportunistically protect victims' lives; promote the exchange of experiences at the regional level and adopt successful evidence-based interventions, prioritizing those that reduce imminent danger for victims of gender-based violence
- Improve and refine victim assistance protocols, with special emphasis on reducing re-victimization when reporting a crime; adequately address the specific needs of different population groups when planning assistance
- Promote the use of new technologies to facilitate access to justice, including the elimination of face-to-face confrontations between victims and perpetrators and allowing all legal notifications to be digital instead of in-person; this is especially relevant in cases where the state does not have a presence in or access to large areas of the country

Gender-Sensitive Crisis Response

In recognition of challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that national governments include strategies that account for the vulnerability of violence victims in future

emergency response planning. These strategies should prioritize prevention, consider the specific dangers faced by different population groups, and include an intersectional gender perspective. In doing so, future projects could accompany governments in preparing emergency plans and protocols for effective crisis management and, at a minimum, establish exceptions to travel restrictions for victims of violence. The following is also suggested:

- Designate services attending to violence as essential and ensure their continuity during crises and quarantines
- Prioritize the ease of access to and continuity of judicial services through alternative methods, such as virtual assistance
- Provide additional support and funding to shelters for victims of violence
- Provide free legal and psychosocial access through telephone and virtual hotlines
- Promote the integration of preventive approaches to gender-based violence in virtual work and education environments

An aerial photograph of a large, open plaza paved with cobblestones. In the upper center, there is a circular fountain with water spraying upwards. Several groups of people are walking across the plaza. In the upper right, a person is sitting on the ground. In the center, a group of four children are walking together. To their right, a man and a woman are walking. In the lower right, two women and a man are walking. The text "Bibliography and annexes" is overlaid on the left side of the image, underlined.

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Annex I - Sources of information

Name	Position/Organization	Method	Country
Ana Céspedes	Secretariat of the Interior (Department of Democratic Strengthening)	Interview	México
Fernando M	Directorate of Democratic Strengthening	Interview	México
Martín Iñiguez	Directorate General of Social Fabric	Interview	México
Indira Villegas	USAID	Interview	México
Thania Argueta	Department of Citizen Services (CDMX)	Interview	México
Martina Contreras Salazar	Deputy Directorate for the Cultural Sector	Interview	México
Nadine Gasman	President, INMUJERES	Interview	México
Carlos Juárez	Instituto de Economía y la Paz	Interview	México
Christel Rosales	Mexico Evalúa (Department of Justice)	Interview	México
Antia Mendoza	Citizen security specialist	Interview	México
Victor Manuel Pérez	UNODC	Interview	México
Verónica Jasso	Fundación Idea	Interview	México

Javier Contreras	CONAVIM	Interview	México
María Paz barajas	UN Women	Interview	México
Adrián Morales	Fundación Idea	Focus Group	México
Alfredo Peña	México Unido contra la Delincuencia	Focus Group	México
Antia Mendoza	Citizen Security, Police Reform, and Gender Perspective	Focus Group	México
Ari Vega Morales	Almas Cautivas	Focus Group	México
Cynthia Morado	Reinserta	Focus Group	México
Diohema Anlleu	Juconi	Focus Group	México
Ernesto López Portillo	Insyde	Focus Group	México
Estefanía Medina	Impunidad Cero y Tejin (rights of indigenous women)	Focus Group	México
Giulia Luzi	Serapaz	Focus Group	México
Pilar Garibay	Red Nacional de Refugios	Focus Group	México
Pola Salmun	Memory and Tolerance creator, Department of Gender	Focus Group	México

Raquel Aguirre	Dirección de La Cana (reintegration of women deprived of freedom)	Focus Group	México
Sergio Correa García	Academia en Cepolcrim	Focus Group	México
Tania Angélica Galván	INMUJERES	Focus Group	México
Thania Hernández	Equis Justicia	Grupo Focal	México
Verónica del Refugio	INACIPE	Focus Group	México
Astrid Jiménez	Coordinación de equipos Tribunales Especializados de una Vida Libre de Violencia contra la Mujer	Interview	El Salvador
María Antonieta Josa de Parada	President, National Council of the Judiciary	Interview	El Salvador
Ricardo Iraheta	Coordinación Consejo Nacional de la Judicatura	Interview	El Salvador
Verónica González	Área social y género del Consejo Nacional de la Judicatura	Interview	El Salvador
Edgardo Amaya	Information and Analysis Department, Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública (MJSP)	Interview and Focus Group	El Salvador
Marina de Ortega	Unidad de la Mujer, Niñez, Adolescencia, Población LGBTI y Grupos en Condición de Vulnerabilidad de la Fiscalía General de la República	Interview	El Salvador
Ricardo Santamaría	Dirección Ministerio de Justicia y Seguridad Pública (MJSP)	Interview	El Salvador
Enrique Valdéz	Department of Behavioral Sciences, Institute of Legal Medicine	Interview	El Salvador

Blanca Henríquez	Gender Division, National Civil Police	Interview	El Salvador
Rosy Ribera	Office of Victim Assistance, MJSP	Interview	El Salvador
Xochilt Bendeck	Rectoría para una Vida Libre de Violencia Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer ISDEMU	Interview	El Salvador
Silvia Juárez	Coordinación del Programa hacia una vida libre de violencia	Interview	El Salvador
Bianka Rodríguez	Office of COMCAVIS TRANS	Interview	El Salvador
Margarita de Serrano	Ministry of Health	Focus Group	El Salvador
Marta Bessy Chacón	Attorney General of the Republic	Focus Group	El Salvador
Verónica Lissette González Penado	National Council of the Judiciary	Focus Group	El Salvador
Victoria Sánchez y Lorena Cuellar	Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women	Focus Group	El Salvador
Marina Hayde de Martínez	Attorney General of the Republic	Focus Group	El Salvador
Martha Evelyn Batres y Hermelinda Bolaños	Legislative Assembly	Focus Group	El Salvador
Ruth Marina Gómez de Escobar	Association of Women for Dignity and Life (Las Dignas)	Focus Group	El Salvador
Kerlin Belloso	Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho (FESPAD).	Focus Group	El Salvador

Carolina Quinteros	Fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo	Focus Group	El Salvador
Miriam Rojas	DAI	Interview	Honduras
Carmela Lanza	PNUD	Interview	Honduras
Migdonia Ayestas	IUDPAS	Interview	Honduras
Vilma López	Supreme Court Justice	Interview	Honduras
Zelena Rodríguez	PADF, Honduras	Interview	Honduras
Sulma Funez	Plan International	Interview	Honduras
Suyapa Castro	ASONOG	Focus Group	Honduras
Stefany Samantha Brizuela	ASONOG	Focus Group	Honduras
Melissa Raudales	CIPRODEH	Focus Group	Honduras
Rosa Levada Padilla	OIM	Focus Group	Honduras
Evelyn Buellar	CEM-H	Focus Group	Honduras
Karen Valladares	FONAMIH	Focus Group	Honduras

Laura Rey	World Vision	Focus Group	Honduras
Jessica Sauliu	GSC	Focus Group	Honduras
Raquel Rodas	JPIC	Focus Group	Honduras
Rocío Santos	CDM	Focus Group	Honduras
Sara Judith Orellana	Caritas de Honduras	Focus Group	Honduras
Belkis Soraya García	ACI Participa	Focus Group	Honduras
Nabia Casco	Red de mujeres	Focus Group	Honduras
Susana Elisa Gonzalez Garay	Red de mujeres rurales	Focus Group	Honduras
Elza Lagos Rivera	FDW	Focus Group	Honduras
Tamara Medina	Save the Children Proyecto CREO	Focus Group	Honduras
Hedme Castro	ACI PARTICIPA	Focus Group	Honduras
Ivonne Cruz Mejia	GIZ HN	Focus Group	Honduras
Reyna Saray Sevilla	PADF Honduras	Focus Group	Honduras

Entrevistas a personal de USAID y a equipo de implementación de programas de USAID

Name	Program	Implementer	Title	Country
Jania Argueta	PROJUST	Tetra Tech	Communications Director	México
Ana Maria	PROJUST	Tetra Tech	Department of Monitoring and Evaluation	México
Susana Camacho	PROJUST	Tetra Tech	Policy Department	México
Cynthia Morado	ACLPR	Reinserta	Director of M&E	México
Mercedes Castañeda	ACLPR	Reinserta	Directora Operativa Reinserta	México
Marina Flores	ACLPR	Reinserta	Operational Director, CRAJ	México
Rafael Limones	Youth Transforming Youth	Supera	Psychologist and Implementer	México
Miguel Díaz	Youth Transforming Youth	Supera	General Director	México
Karina Frias	Youth Transforming Youth	Supera	Doctor	México
Marco Valencia	Youth Transforming Youth	Supera	Public Policy Specialist	México
Jose Lobo	Youth Transforming Youth	Chemonics	Program Director	México

Vanessa Maya	Youth Transforming Youth	Chemonics	Gender Specialist	México
Indira Villegas	Youth Transforming Youth	USAID	Director, Juntos para la Prevención de la Violencia	México
Annie Valencia	Gender	USAID	Gender Specialist	El Salvador
Orlando Hidalgo	Monitoring and Evaluation	USAID	Monitoring and Evaluation Manager	El Salvador
María Antonieta Zelaya	Office of Democracy and Governance and Security	USAID	Democracy and Governance and Security Team	El Salvador
Gracia López	Strengthening the Justice Sector	USAID	Project Manager, Strengthening the Justice Sector	El Salvador
Giovanna Hércules	Strengthening the Justice Sector	Checchi and Company Consulting	Checchi Team	El Salvador
Margarita De Lobo	Infosegura	USAID	Project Manager, InfoSegura, Office of Governance and Democracy	El Salvador
Marcela Smutt	Infosegura	Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD)	Regional Coordinator of InfoSegura Project	El Salvador
Margarita Sánchez	Gender Specialist on Monitoring, Evaluating, and Learning Initiative	Iniciativa de USAID de Monitoreo, Evaluación y Aprendizaje	Gender Specialist on Monitoring, Evaluating, and Learning Initiative	El Salvador

Annex II – Webinar series and community of practice

To share and cultivate the project's findings and recommendations, PADF organized three events entitled "Citizen Security for All: Gender and Security in El Salvador, Honduras, and Mexico."

In response to the consequences and restrictions created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the events were conducted online through Zoom and PADF's Facebook Live page.

The seminars boasted more than 1,000 participants from 17 countries. Each seminar was recorded and is available on the website of the community of practice promoted by this project.

Each session presented local research, discussed findings, and shared recommendations with representatives of government agencies, civil society, and international cooperation organizations. The details of each meeting are below.



El Salvador



Ciclo de Webinars: Seguridad Ciudadana para todas las personas. Gender and Security in El Salvador

Date: August 13th, 2020

Presentación: Xenia Ortiz, Consultora de PADF

Moderators: Carolina Quinteros, PADF Gender and Human Rights Researcher

Commentators: Jeannette Aguilar, Consultant on Security and Violence; Edgardo Amaya, DIA Director of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security; and Iris Tejada, CRISTOSAL Researcher

Honduras



Ciclo de Webinars: Seguridad Ciudadana para todas las personas. Gender and Security in Honduras

Date: August 20th, 2020

Presentation: Carlos Ochoa, Consultor de PADF

Moderator: Camila Payan, Directora Regional para México y Centroamérica de PADF

Commentators: Carla Madrid, SOMOS-CDC Economic Empowerment Manager; Carmela Lanza, UNDP InfoSegura National Coordinator; Ivonne Cruz Mejía, GIZ Specialist; and Laura Rey, Plan International

México



Ciclo de Webinars: Seguridad Ciudadana para todas las personas. Gender and Security in Mexico

Date: September 10th, 2020

Presentation: Virginie Martin-Onraët, PADF Consultant

Moderator: Valeria Uribe, Director, PADF Mexico

Commentators: Javier Contreras, Executive Secretary of the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women of Mexico City; Pola Salmún, Director of International Relations for the Remembrance and Tolerance Museum; and Ari Vera, President of the International Network Corpora for Freedom.

To support the project, PADF also organized and made available a public community of practice for knowledge and resource exchange. The platform seeks to provide a space for key stakeholders to discuss approaches that address and make visible the consequences and challenges that insecurity has on different population groups, especially women, girls, and the LGBTIQ+ community.

The community of practice is envisioned as a sustainable space where these conversations can continue and information can be shared, even as the project ends.

As of January 2021, there are 275 members of the community. As part of outreach efforts, other programs with similar objectives will also be invited to make use of this portal so as to share relevant information on the subject.

The Community of Practice is available through this link: www.facebook.com/groups/generoyseguridad.

SEGURIDAD CIUDADANA PARA TODAS LAS PERSONAS

Género y Seguridad en México

VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO

¿Sabías qué?



¿QUÉ ESTAMOS HACIENDO?

La Fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo (PADF), se encuentra desarrollando en El Salvador, Honduras y México el estudio regional "**Seguridad ciudadana para todas las personas**".



La investigación, aborda particularmente las consecuencias que la inseguridad ejerce en mujeres, niñas y población LGBTIQ y cómo éstas son invisibilizadas.



El objetivo final es contribuir a la elaboración y desarrollo de futuras políticas públicas e iniciativas que aborden la seguridad ciudadana de forma integral e incluyente con especial énfasis en la incorporación de una perspectiva de género.

HALLAZGOS

México ha realizado algunos esfuerzos para establecer un marco legal e institucional para prevenir, atender y sancionar la violencia de género en el país.



La tipificación del feminicidio en 2012, la creación del Sistema Nacional de Estadísticas que documenta la violencia de género, la inclusión explícita en la Ley Federal de la homofobia como forma de discriminación, y el establecimiento de Refugios y Centros de Justicia para las Mujeres son algunos ejemplos de este avance.



A pesar de los avances, aún persisten importantes desafíos. México es el segundo país en América Latina con mayor número de casos de crímenes de odio por homofobia y más de la mitad del territorio nacional se encuentra formalmente declarado en Alerta de Violencia de Género en contra las Mujeres.

México encabeza la lista de países de la región con el más alto índice de impunidad. Como consecuencia, la probabilidad de que una víctima denuncie un delito y éste se esclarezca es de sólo 1.3%. La falta de leyes y protocolos de atención de violencias, los limitados registros, estadísticas y datos representativos y confiables restringen el diseño, la implementación y evaluación de programas que aborden de manera incluyente la seguridad ciudadana con perspectiva de género.

DESAFÍOS

A través de esta investigación, hemos identificado algunas áreas prioritarias para el desarrollo de futuros proyectos que aborden la inseguridad desde un punto de vista integral, incorporando explícitamente una perspectiva de género.



SEGURIDAD CIUDADANA PARA TODAS LAS PERSONAS

Género y Seguridad en El Salvador

VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO

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El objetivo final es contribuir con recomendaciones concretas a la elaboración de futuras políticas públicas, programas y proyectos para que aborden la seguridad ciudadana de forma integral, con especial énfasis en la incorporación de una perspectiva de género.

SEGURIDAD CIUDADANA PARA TODAS LAS PERSONAS

Género y Seguridad en El Salvador

VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO

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HALLAZGOS

Con la introducción paulatina de algunas normas dirigidas a salvaguardar explícitamente los derechos de las mujeres, y la adhesión a instrumentos internacionales que garantizan implícitamente el respeto de los derechos humanos sin distinción, El Salvador cuenta hoy en día con:



Un **marco legal** que reconoce desde el punto de vista formal el impacto que la inseguridad ejerce sobre distintos segmentos de la población.



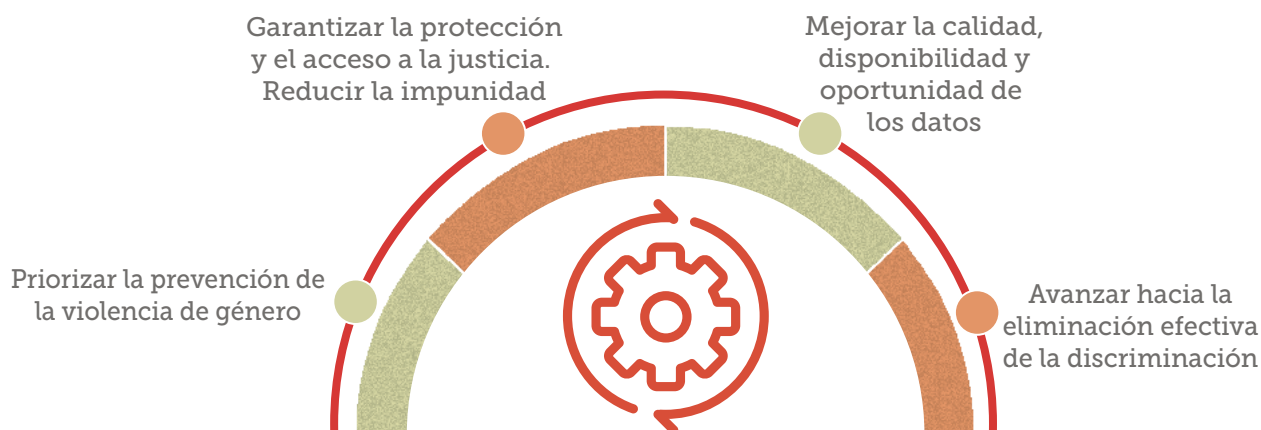
Iniciativas dirigidas a mejorar la calidad y disponibilidad de información relacionada con la violencia, así como la **creación de instituciones especializadas** en la protección de víctimas, los que en su conjunto representan el interés del Estado por abordar alguno de los desafíos que la inseguridad representa para mujeres, niñas y población LGBTIQ.

A pesar de estos avances, algunos estudios demuestran que siete de cada diez mujeres, y nueve de cada diez miembros de la comunidad LGBTIQ serán víctimas de algún tipo de violencia durante su vida en El Salvador.

Aun así, las estadísticas oficiales no incorporan una perspectiva de género transversal que permita visibilizar, documentar y comprender adecuadamente el impacto que el crimen y la violencia ejercen específicamente sobre estos segmentos de la población.

DESAFÍOS

Tomando en cuenta los hallazgos de este estudio, hemos identificado algunas áreas prioritarias para el desarrollo de futuros proyectos que aborden la inseguridad desde un punto de vista integral, incorporando explícitamente una perspectiva de género.



OPORTUNIDADES



Estadísticas y datos

- Robustecer el sistema nacional de información con perspectiva de género visibilizando las consecuencias del crimen e inseguridad en mujeres, niñas y personas de la comunidad LGBTIQ.
- Colaborar a dar mayor transparencia, oportunidad, credibilidad y disponibilidad de los datos.
- Promover la generación de conocimiento especializado en materia de violencia de género e impulsar un diálogo entre el gobierno, academia y sociedad civil.



Atención a víctimas

- Ampliar y fortalecer los mecanismos de protección de personas víctimas de violencia de género incluyendo la implementación de sistemas de respuesta las 24 horas del día.
- Promover la simplificación, coordinación y armonización de los procedimientos de denuncia para que protejan la identidad de las víctimas, reduzcan la revictimización y garanticen la protección del derecho a la vida.
- Diseñar campañas de sensibilización y prevención del crimen y la violencia con perspectiva de género incluyendo el acoso sexual, laboral, trata de personas, violencia doméstica, y callejera, entre otros delitos.



Políticas y programas

- Fortalecer el diseño de políticas y programas basadas en evidencia y sujetos a evaluación independiente.
- Diseñar programas participativos que atiendan los desafíos específicos que enfrenta la comunidad LGBTIQ en materia de seguridad.

- Privilegiar el desarrollo de programas dirigidos a la prevención de todo tipo de violencia de género.
- Promover el intercambio de experiencias y buenas prácticas. Replicar programas exitosos, particularmente aquellos dirigidos a reducir el crimen y la violencia y generar oportunidades de desarrollo.



Fortalecimiento institucional

- Aumentar las capacidades técnicas y operativas de las instituciones encargadas de la prevención de la violencia y protección de víctimas a nivel nacional.
- Promover la capacitación permanente del personal policial, judicial y administrativo, con especial énfasis en la reducción de la violencia de género, la eliminación de la discriminación y la protección de las víctimas.
- Proveer a las entidades correspondientes de recursos permanentes y adecuados que garanticen su funcionamiento. Promover el desarrollo de proyectos basados en resultados.



Marco legal

- Promover el desarrollo de normas dirigidas a reducir la incidencia de la violencia de género.
- Fomentar el conocimiento de la normativa vigente por parte de las instancias clave con miras a reducir la impunidad y alcanzar justicia para las víctimas.
- Promover el debate técnico y desideologizado con respecto a la interrupción del embarazo para reformar el código penal y alinearlos con las recomendaciones del CEDAW.
- Avanzar hacia el reconocimiento legal de los derechos de la población LGBTIQ.



SEGURIDAD CIUDADANA PARA TODAS LAS PERSONAS

Género y Seguridad en Honduras

VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO

¿Sabías qué?



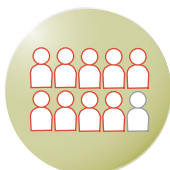
En 2018 Honduras registró **235 femicidios** alcanzando la segunda tasa más alta de América Latina | **5.1** cada 100.000 hab (CEPALSTAT, 2020)

En enero de 2020 se reportó **un femicidio cada 23 horas**.

El **55%** de estos casos se produjo en manos de parejas sentimentales o compañeros de vida (UNAH/IUDPAS, 2020)

El **90%** de todas las muertes violentas es causado por **hombres** (UNAH/IUDPAS, 2020)

El **32%** de las **mujeres** han experimentado violencia física antes de los 18 años y el **16,2%** han sido víctimas de violencia sexual (EVCNNA, 2017)



Desde el 2009 se registran en promedio **58 denuncias diarias** por violencia doméstica (CDM, 2019)

El **22%** de las resoluciones judiciales terminan con una sentencia favorable para la víctima. El **72%** de las denuncias se extinguen antes de alcanzar sentencia (CDM, 2019)

Al menos **325 personas LGBTIQ** han sido asesinadas en los **últimos 10 años**.

El **90%** de los casos queda impune (CONADEH, 2019)

La población **LGBTIQ en las cárceles** es recluida junto con los enfermos mentales (Observatorio Cattrachas)



Entre enero y mayo del 2020 se reportaron más de **40.000 casos de agresión física contra mujeres**, siendo abril el mes que mayor número de denuncias, con casi **10.000** (UNFPA, 2020)

"En Honduras, las mujeres no nos sentimos seguras ni en nuestra propia casa."



Vilma. Grupo focal Seguridad Ciudadana para todas las personas.

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El objetivo final es contribuir con recomendaciones concretas a la elaboración de futuras políticas públicas, programas y proyectos para que aborden la seguridad ciudadana de forma integral, con especial énfasis en la incorporación de una perspectiva de género.

HALLAZGOS

La modernización de su marco normativo, junto a un ambicioso programa destinado a mejorar las capacidades técnicas y humanas de la policía han permitido al país mostrar algunos resultados promisorios en su lucha por disminuir la violencia e inseguridad.



Durante la última década, Honduras ha logrado reducir su tasa de homicidios de:



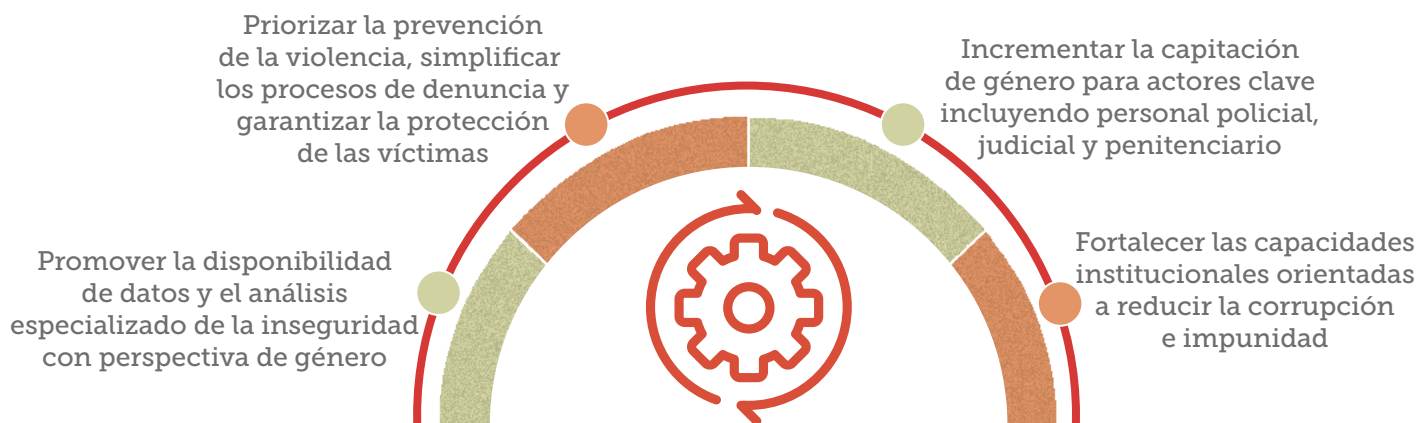
A pesar de este avance dos de sus principales centros urbanos **-San Pedro Sula y Tegucigalpa-** se encuentran entre las **50 ciudades más violentas del mundo.**

Las consecuencias para niñas, mujeres y población LGBTIQ son particularmente graves.

Algunas estimaciones señalan que alrededor de 4% de la población ha sido desplazada internamente producto de la violencia. Con todo, la escasez de datos con perspectiva de género dificulta seriamente el diseño y evaluación de programas que aborden las consecuencias que el crimen y violencia ejercen sobre esta población.

DESAFÍOS

Tomando en cuenta los hallazgos de este estudio, hemos identificado algunas áreas prioritarias para el desarrollo de futuros proyectos que aborden la inseguridad desde un punto de vista integral, incorporando explícitamente una perspectiva de género.



OPORTUNIDADES



Estadísticas y datos

- Apoyar el fortalecimiento de los sistemas de datos y estadísticas, tanto estatales como independientes, que permitan contar con información actualizada, transparente y confiable en materia de seguridad ciudadana y género.
- Promover un análisis especializado e independiente de los datos sobre crimen y violencia con perspectiva de género.
- Promover espacios de sensibilización, inclusión y diálogo entre actores clave del sector seguridad.



Atención a víctimas

- Promover mecanismos de denuncia que garanticen la protección inmediata y efectiva de las víctimas de violencia de género incluyendo el establecimiento de protocolos que eviten la revictimización, garanticen la confidencialidad, detengan la violencia y proteja a las víctimas de represalias por parte de sus agresores.
- Colaborar al desarrollo de campañas nacionales sobre prevención y reducción de la violencia de género en todas sus formas.
- Impulsar el desarrollo de mecanismos de acompañamiento de víctimas que les permitan continuar con los procesos de denuncias sin temor a represalias.



Marco legal

- Colaborar al establecimiento procedimientos expeditos que reduzcan la revictimización y garanticen un mayor acceso a la justicia.
- Fomentar la introducción de herramientas legales que permitan a los jueces otorgar medidas cautelares inmediatas en casos de peligro inminente de las víctimas.

- Impulsar el desarrollo de normas que aborden de forma efectiva la violencia basada en identidad de género.
- Promover iniciativas de justicia restaurativa para casos de jóvenes en conflicto con la ley, privilegiando la mediación y conciliación como forma de alcanzar reparación por sobre el encarcelamiento.



Fortalecimiento institucional

- Apoyar el diseño cursos especializados en temas de seguridad ciudadana y género dirigidos a la capacitación y sensibilización de funcionarios públicos, miembros del poder judicial, personal policial, academia, sociedad civil y todas las personas involucradas en la prevención y protección del crimen y la violencia.
- Considerar la creación de unidades especializadas en protección de víctimas de violencia, dotarlas de personal capacitado y capacidades técnicas adecuada para su funcionamiento.
- Garantizar la sostenibilidad de las iniciativas a través de presupuestos permanentes, sujetos a fiscalización, evaluación y mejora continua.



Políticas y programas

- Desarrollar programas focalizados en la protección de derechos de mujeres, niñas y personas LGBTIQ.
- Privilegiar iniciativas basadas en evidencia que incluyan entre sus objetivos específicos la entrega de herramientas, conocimientos y oportunidades para mujeres, niñas y personas LGBTIQ.
- Impulsar políticas dirigidas a la reincorporación efectiva de personas infractoras de ley desde una perspectiva integral y diferenciada en términos de género atendiendo los factores de riesgo que pueden impulsar conductas delictuales.



