



infoSEGURA



# BELIZE

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFECYCLE, 2021

- Preliminary considerations
- Advances and challenges
- The Continuum of Violence:
  - Domestic Violence
  - Sexual Violence
  - Femicide/feminicide



# PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

## Concepts and approaches for analysis



### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN BELIZE

This report focuses on three forms of violence against women and girls, which are the forms primarily tracked to monitor citizen security:

- 1 Murder (including femicides)**
- 2 Sexual Violence in the major crimes category**
- 3 Domestic violence**

Females are affected differently from their male counterparts by violence, especially in private spheres, and they may be confronted with a gamut of acts of violence in the domestic setting.

## What is violence against women?

Violence against Women is understood to be “any action or conduct, based on gender, that causes death, harm or physical, sexual or psychological suffering to women, both in the public and private spheres.”

Source: The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, better known as the Belém do Pará Convention, 1994

The dynamics of violence against women and girls have become more complex since the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated the risk factors that confront females.

### Domestic violence

Females (girls as young as 2 years of age) continue to comprise about 8 in every 10 survivors.

### Sexual violence

Female minors under the age of 16, too young to grant consent to sexual relations, make up the majority of victims.

### Femicides

One in three females whose lives were lost during 2020 were killed by a present or past intimate partner.



### RISK FACTORS

#### COVID-19 & unemployment, Sept 2021

Unemployment rates are much higher in females, and even more so among young females of the working age.

- 1 Overall, males continued to dominate the labour market**, with about 62 percent of all jobs being held by men.

- 2 Females, although making up only a third of the total labour force, were disproportionately affected, accounting for 63.3 percent of persons who lost their job due to COVID-19.**

- 3 Compared to September of 2020, unemployment rates decreased in all districts except for Toledo**, where a notable increase in unemployment was observed among young females aged 14 to 24.

Data source: Statistical Institute of Belize, Labour Force Survey 2021

# THE CONTINUUM OF PHYSICAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Wounding  
Harm  
Common assault

Non-sexual  
Violence

Rape  
Unlawful  
Sexual Violence  
Sexual  
Assault

Sexual  
violence

Femicides

Homicide

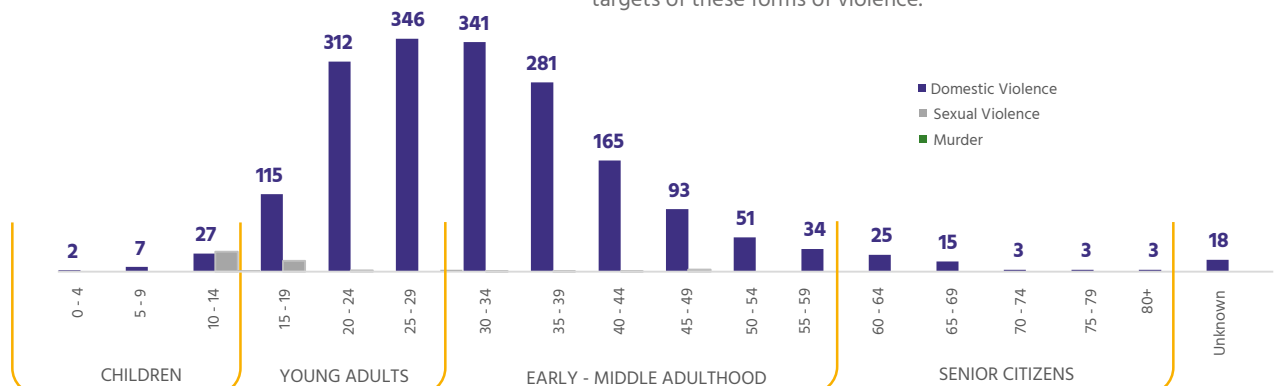
211.12

cases per 100,000 population in 2020  
**Domestic violence rate\***

Domestic violence

179.69

cases per 100,000 population in 2021  
**Domestic violence rate\***

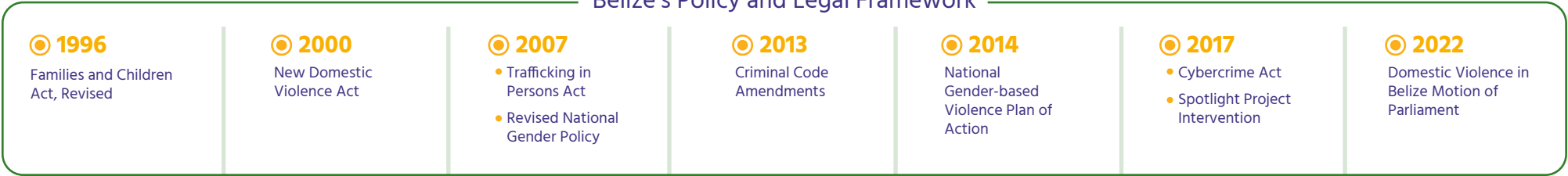


Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory

Domestic violence covers a range of physical, emotional, financial, and other forms of violence. Anyone can suffer harm due to acts of domestic violence, but females (women and girls) are still the most prevalent targets of domestic violence. Other principal forms of violence against women are sexual violence and gender-based killings. Children in the care or custody of women, too, may be targets of these forms of violence.

# ADVANCES AND CHALLENGES Legal framework, information management and victimization

## Belize's Policy and Legal Framework



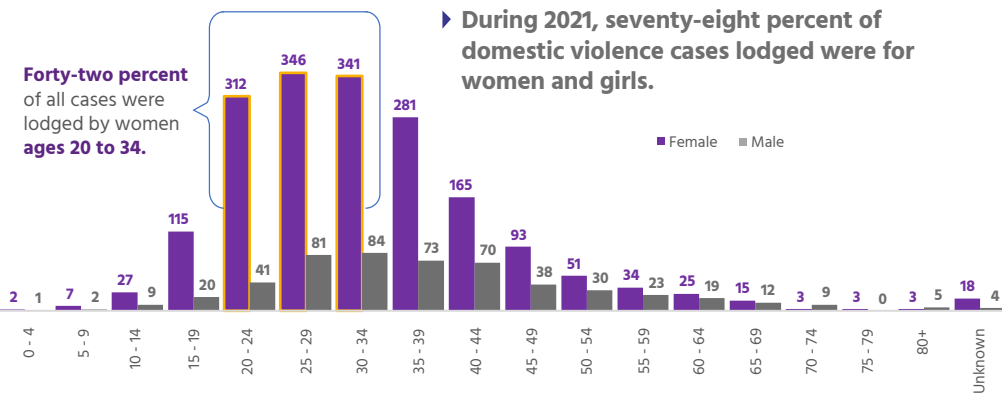
In January 2022, Parliament passed the Domestic Violence in Belize Motion, 2022, in which it committed to undertake legislative review aimed at filling gaps and putting in the necessary reforms for the response to Domestic Violence. Citing data published by the Belize Crime Observatory, that during January to November 2021, there were 2,155 reports of Domestic Violence to the police where 78% of these reports were made by females and 32% of these cases were open cases, the Parliamentary motion also prioritizes Domestic Violence as a significant national issue and pledges to take individual and collective actions to curb the problem.



## Domestic Violence

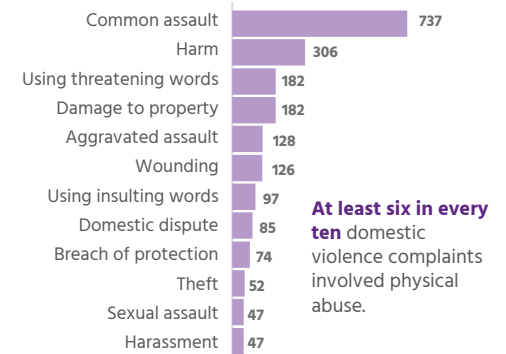
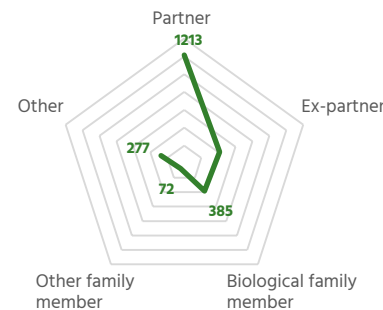
Domestic Violence in Belize Law refers to “...physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or financial abuse committed by a person against a spouse, child, de facto spouse, or any other person who is a member of the household of the applicant or the respondent.”

Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Belize)



Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory .

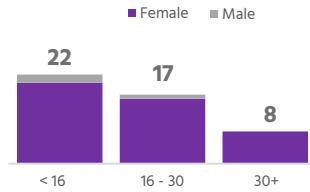
- In 2021, 96 percent of reports were for domestic violence incidents which were said to have occurred at a residence.
- Seven in every ten domestic violence complaints were levied against a present or past intimate partner.
- In half of the incidents, the complaints were levied against a partner.



Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory .

## Sexual assault in domestic violence situations

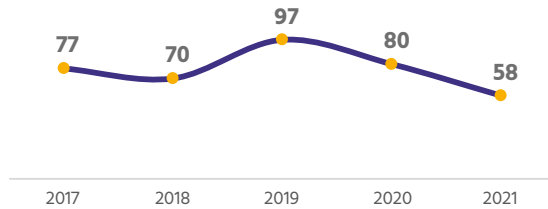
- In 2021, 94 percent of sexual assault reports linked to domestic violence were levied for female victims. Almost half were with respect to minors under the age of 16.



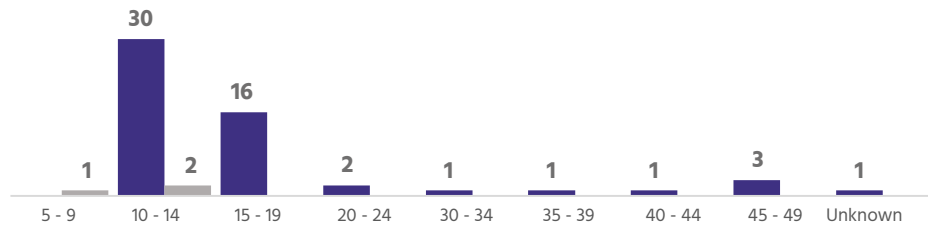
Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory.

## Sexual violence

- Cases of sexual violence in the major crimes category declined for the second consecutive year in 2021.



- In 2021, 95 percent of documented acts of sexual violence in the major crimes category were against females.

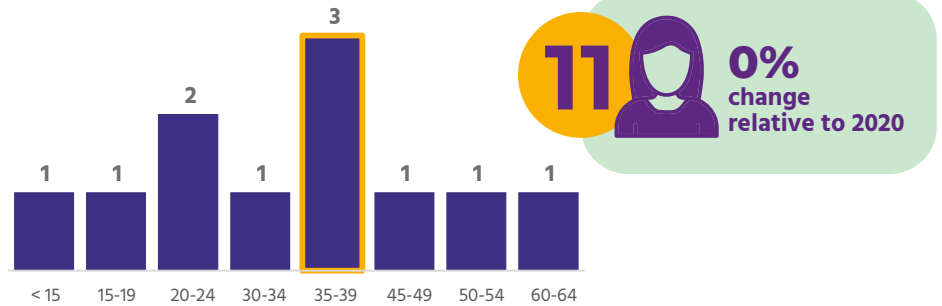
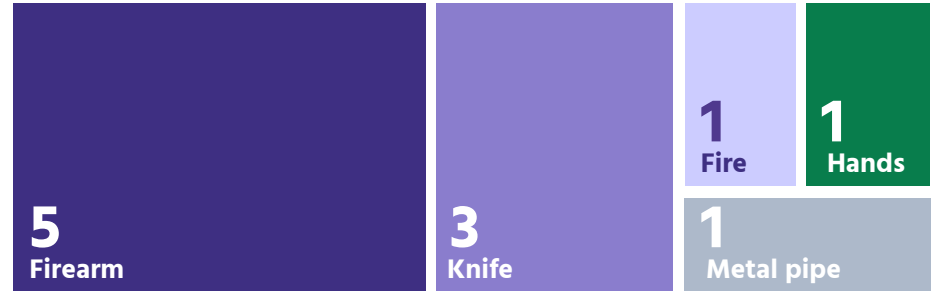


Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory.

## Femicides

- In 2021, 64 percent of females who were murdered were victims of gender-related murders or femicides.

- 7 of these killings were in the context of **double murders**;
- 3 of the women were **killed along with their son or daughter**;
- 5 in 10 of females were committed with **firearms**.



Data source: Belize Police Department, through the Belize Crime Observatory.

**Belize will not be safe until its women are safe!**

Gender-based violence is a silent pandemic!

JOIN THE FIGHT Call: **0-800-A-WAY-OUT** or **672-9628**

The Regional Campaign to Combat Violence against Women and Girls during the COVID-19 pandemic in Central America and the Dominican Republic

#StaySafe #SecureBelize

Logos: NWC, USAID, PIN, UN, SCLAN, infoSEGURA, NCFCC, SPECIAL ENVOY.

**ALERT** Call: **0-800-A-WAY-OUT** or **672-9628**

**94%** Sexual Violence cases were reported by women and girls (2020 Police data)

**84%** Domestic Violence cases were reported by women and girls (2020 Police data)

About **9 in every 10** male victims of sexual violence were **minors** under the age of 18 (2020 Police data)

The Regional Campaign to Combat Violence against Women and Girls during the COVID-19 pandemic in Central America and the Dominican Republic

#StaySafe #SecureBelize

Logos: NWC, USAID, PIN, UN, SCLAN, infoSEGURA, NCFCC, SPECIAL ENVOY.