



infoSEGURA



CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE LIFE CYCLE, 2020



- Preliminary considerations

- Progress and challenges

- The Continuum of Violence:
 - Intrafamily y domestic violence
 - Sexual Violence
 - Disappearances
 - Femicide
 - Human Trafficking
 - Other vulnerabilities

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Concepts and analytical approach

Violence against Women

Violence against women is "any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or the private sphere."

Source: Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women. (Belém do Pará), 1994.

Continuum of violence

This refers to an inertia and continuity of violence in the lives of women, in which there seems to be a continuum in their histories where the norm and the constant is violence directed toward them, always and everywhere.

Source: UNDP and USAID, 2016.

Life Cycle Approach

Related Factors	Context - based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involuntary migration Food requirements Absenteeism or neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School dropout Involuntary migration Quality of employment Adolescent pregnancy Monoparental households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involuntary return Involuntary displacement Remittances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involuntary migration Quality of employment Remittances
	Institutional Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impunity for VAW incidents Care through dedicated helplines VAW protection mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutional trust: Police, Judges, Health, Educ. Impunity for VAW incidents Satisfaction with VAW response services Care through dedicated helplines VAW protection mechanisms 		
	Increased frequency of VAW incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abuse of girls and adolescents Sexual abuse of girls Domestic violence Threats Trafficking Injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obstetric violence Abuse of girls and adolescents Sexual Abuse Intrafamily/domestic violence Intimate partner or ex-partner violence Femicide or violent death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats Trafficking Suicide (femicidal suicide) Extortion Rape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Abuse Intrafamily/domestic violence Threats Suicide (femicidal suicide) Extortion Rape Abuse against

Age in years: 1, 3, 5, 8, 16, 24, 32, 48, 64, 80

Early life-cycle, early childhood or early-learning | Youth | Adult | Older women

The Continuum of Violence Against Women: **a citizen security and human rights issue**



Why is it urgent to generate robust evidence of Violence against Women?

1. It is the outcome of a system that is based on **unequal power relations** between men and women (SDG 5).

2. Exposure to a series of **specific risks** and other forms of **discrimination and social exclusion** leads to high and multiple vulnerability.

3. There is urgent need for **gender-sensitive indicators**, in order to characterize this situation, and design effective **public policies**.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES Legal framework, information management and victimization

Legal Framework Timeline

<p>🕒 1984</p> <p>Costa Rica. Approved Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.</p>	<p>🕒 1990</p> <p>Costa Rica. Law Promoting women's social equality</p>	<p>🕒 1995</p> <p>Costa Rica. • Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women. • Against Sexual Harassment in Employment and Education.</p>	<p>🕒 1996</p> <p>Costa Rica. Contra la violencia doméstica El Salvador. Law against intrafamily violence. Guatemala. Law for the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Family Violence.</p>	<p>🕒 1997</p> <p>Honduras. Law against Domestic Violence. Dominican Republic. Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents.</p>	<p>🕒 2000</p> <p>Honduras. Law for equal opportunities for Women Belize. • Criminal Code (Amendment) Act. • Domestic Violence Act. Chapter 178.</p>
<p>🕒 2003</p> <p>Dominican Republic. • Safe houses created for women, children and adolescents who are victims of intrafamily or domestic violence. • Law on illegal migrant smuggling and Human Trafficking Belize. Protection against sexual harassment Act. Chapter 107.</p>	<p>🕒 2005</p> <p>Guatemala. Amendment to Article 194 of the Criminal Code on human trafficking.</p>	<p>🕒 2007</p> <p>Costa Rica. Penalizing the violence against women. Belize. Domestic Violence Act.</p>	<p>🕒 2008</p> <p>Belize. Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act. Costa Rica. Creation of the National System for the attention and prevention of violence against women and domestic violence. Guatemala. Law against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women.</p>	<p>🕒 2009</p> <p>Guatemala. Ley against the Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Human Trafficking.</p>	<p>🕒 2010</p> <p>Dominican Republic. • New Constitution of the Republic, condemns intrafamily and gender-based violence. • New Constitution of the Republic, condemns intrafamily and gender-based violence.</p>
<p>🕒 2011</p> <p>El Salvador. Special Comprehensive Law for a Life Free from Violence for Women. Dominican Republic. Law for access facilitating to justice for women victims of violence.</p>	<p>🕒 2012</p> <p>Costa Rica. Law to promote public policies for comprehensive combat against human trafficking. Honduras. Law against Human Trafficking. Guatemala. Specialized Courts for Femicide and other forms of violence against women in Alta Verapaz and Huehuetenango.</p>	<p>🕒 2013</p> <p>Guatemala. • Specialized Courts for Femicide and other forms of violence against women in Escuintla and Izabal. • Specialized Jurisdictional Courts authority expanded in Guatemala. Honduras. Law typifying femicide</p>	<p>🕒 2014</p> <p>El Salvador. Special Law against Human Trafficking. Guatemala. Specialized Courts for Femicide and other forms of violence against women in Quiché and Petén. Honduras. • Reform to Penal Code article 118-A on the offense of femicide. • Second National Plan against Violence against women 2014-2022.</p>	<p>🕒 2015</p> <p>Guatemala. Specialized Jurisdictional Courts authority expanded. Honduras. Reform Organic budget law to include gender in general budget provisions.</p>	<p>🕒 2016</p> <p>El Salvador. Created Specialized Courts for a Life Free from Violence and Discrimination for Women. Costa Rica. Law 9.406 on Improper relations. Honduras. Reform to Public Ministry Law article 44-A creating Violent Deaths of Women and Femicide Investigation Unit.</p>
<p>🕒 2017</p> <p>El Salvador. Statutory prohibition of Child Marriage. Belize. National Gender- based Violence Plan of Action.</p>	<p>🕒 2018</p> <p>El Salvador. Created the National Office for Women, Children, Adolescents, LGBTI Population and other groups in conditions of vulnerability at the FGR.</p>	<p>🕒 2019</p> <p>Dominican Republic. Gender Equality and Equity 2020– 2030 (PLANEG III).</p>	<p>🕒 2020</p> <p>Costa Rica. Law 9.877 Law Against Street Sexual Harassment (life and travel free of sexual harassment). Belize. Cybercrime Act. El Salvador. Creation of Second Courts of Instruction in San Salvador and Cojutepeque. Honduras. New 2020 Criminal Code of Honduras becomes effective.</p>	<p>🕒 2016-2020</p> <p>Guatemala. Special Courts for Femicide and other forms of violence against women in the rest of the departments.</p>	<p>🕒 2021</p> <p>Costa Rica. Approved at second discussion of file 21.793 to amend Law Penalizing VAW.</p>

Progress in generating data for measuring and exposing violence against women

1. Notable progress made in obtaining statistical data and basic disaggregation such as sex and age, although there are challenges in having gender-based disaggregated variables.

2. El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica have comprehensive laws to address violence against women, prevention, sanction and eradication.

3. Countries have progressed in typifying the crime of femicide/femicide, in the region, Belize is the only country that has not taken this step.

Brechas de información importantes para medir y visibilizar la violencia contra las mujeres a lo largo del ciclo de vida

1. The definitions of the offenses differ in each country, a particular challenge in measuring femicide/feminicide.
2. Data statistical data within and between countries are not comparable.
3. Limited gathering of gender-based variables, limiting understanding of the phenomena and how to address them.
4. Data are non-existent or limited for certain offenses and/or exhibits inconsistencies, observations "Not available" in addition to delays in availability of the information.
5. The IT systems, where they exist, run into the additional issue of confidential data about persons under protection, and at times under threat.
6. Low level of integration between the criminal justice institutions (not functioning as a system).
7. Lack of relevant data for assessing institution performance.
8. Restrictions to the traceability leads to the unavailability of precise indicators on impunity and imprecise indicators about annual flow.

► Data corresponding to violence actually experienced by women are persistently underrepresented.

An example of the differences in available disaggregation is that of homicide, where 44 variables are available, whereas this drops to 18 when typifying the offense of femicide/feminicide.

There are fewer countries with data and the variables that are available for homicides involving men and women drops from 44 to 18 when typifying the crime of femicide/feminicide.

Variables available for crime of Homicide by country

	El Salvador	Guatemala	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Belize	Honduras
Weapon/method	●	●	●	●	●	●
Age of victim	●	●	●	●	●	●
Time of event	●	●	●	●	●	●
Place of occurrence	●	●	●	●	●	●
Month	●	●	●	●	●	●
Municipality	●	●	●	●	●	●
Relationship to perpetrator	●	●	●	●	●	●
Area occurred	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pregnant	●	●	●	●	●	●
Circumstance of event	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ethnicity	●	●	●	●	●	●
Disability	●	●	●	●	●	●
Typification femicide/feminicide	●	●	●	●	●	●

Variables available for crime of Femicide/feminicide by country

	El Salvador	Guatemala	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic
Weapon/method	●	●	●	●
Age of victim	●	●	●	●
Time of event	●	●	●	●
Place of occurrence	●	●	●	●
Month	●	●	●	●
Municipality	●	●	●	●
Relationship to perpetrator	●	●	●	●
Area occurred	●	●	●	●
Pregnant	●	●	●	●
Circumstance of event	●	●	●	●
Ethnicity	●	●	●	●
Disability	●	●	●	●

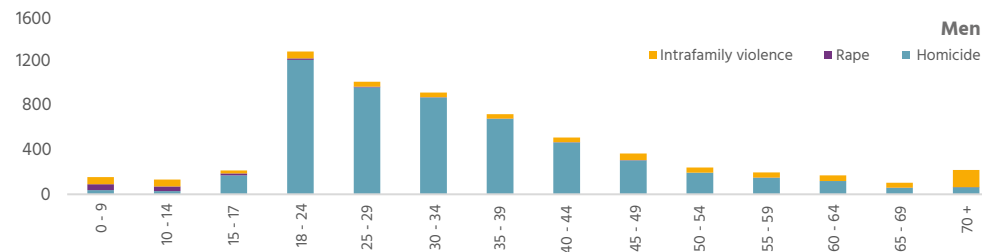
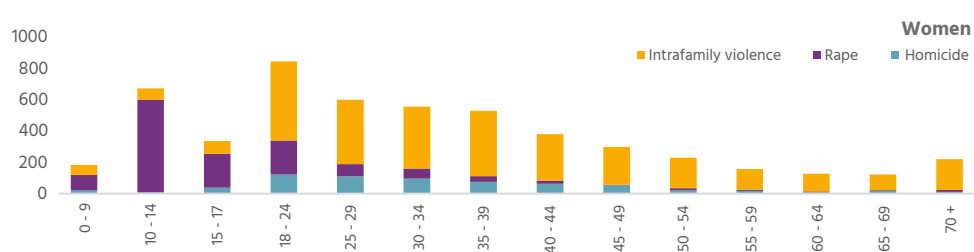
THE CONTINUUM OF VIOLENCE

A differentiated analysis of incidence of crime

► The continuum of violence affects women differently than men.

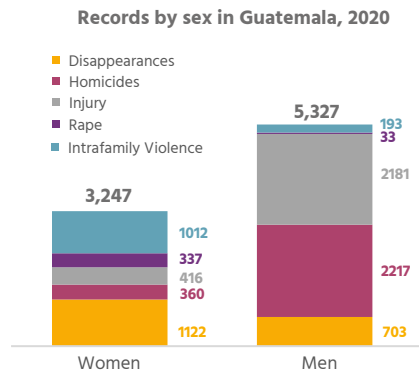
- Sexual violence tends to be recurring and has long-term effects for survivors.
- Domestic/intrafamily violence is present throughout women's lives and the primary victims are youth.
- There is still uncertainty about the precise impact the pandemic has had and will have on the continuum of violence against women and girls.

Continuum of violence Guatemala-Honduras, 2020



► **Violence affects women to a different extent than men.**

Different types of violence affect women and men differently. Records of crimes involving women primarily correspond to disappearances, sexual violence and intrafamily violence, whereas in the case of men they mostly involve homicide and injuries.

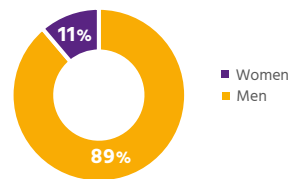


Source: Sexual Crime: 2020 Public Ministry, data validation by SNIVCM-INE pending. Disappearances/Homicides/Intrafamily Violence: 2020 data provided by PNC, INE validation pending.

► **The region has the highest rates of sexual- and homicidal violence against women.**

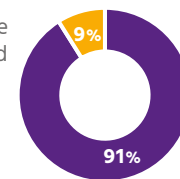
Violent death by homicide

In 2020, there were 1,007 women victims of violent death in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.



Sexual Crime

In 2020, there were almost 15 thousand reports of sexual crime, about 9 in 10 victims were women.



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura with data provided by PNC, El Salvador (homicides & sexual crime); MP, Guatemala (homicides & sexual crime); OIJ, Costa Rica (homicides & rape, statutory rape and indecent assault); BPD, Belize (homicides & rape & illegal sexual relations), Honduras (homicide & sexual crime).

How does the continuum of violence against women manifest? Analysis of the other sides of violence against women

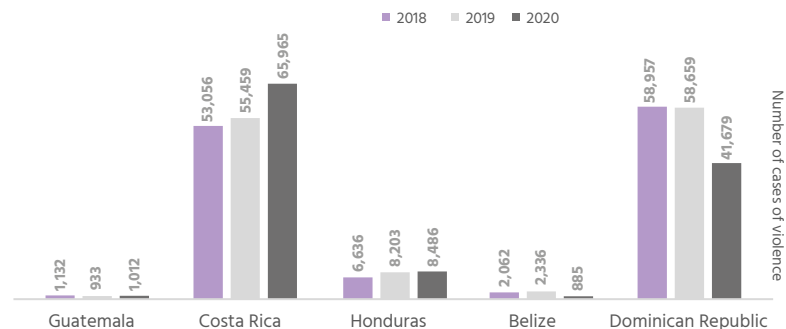
Domestic Violence

Domestic violence or intrafamily violence is abuse or physical, psychological, sexual or other aggression inflicted by individuals in the family, generally directed at more vulnerable members who are also members: girls, women and older women.

► **Reports of intrafamily violence have declined. This is not necessarily in response to a reduction in this type of violence, rather a drop in reporting due to mobility restrictions enforced during 2020.**

- In 2019, a total of 118,027 reported cases of intrafamily violence in Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic.
- This is 6% less than the previous year. This decline is not necessarily due to a drop in cases, rather it may be the consequence of the mobility restrictions enforced in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Records of domestic/intrafamily violence by country, 2018-2020



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on Judiciary Costa Rica, PGR Dominican Republic, BPD Belize, PNC Guatemala and MP Honduras.

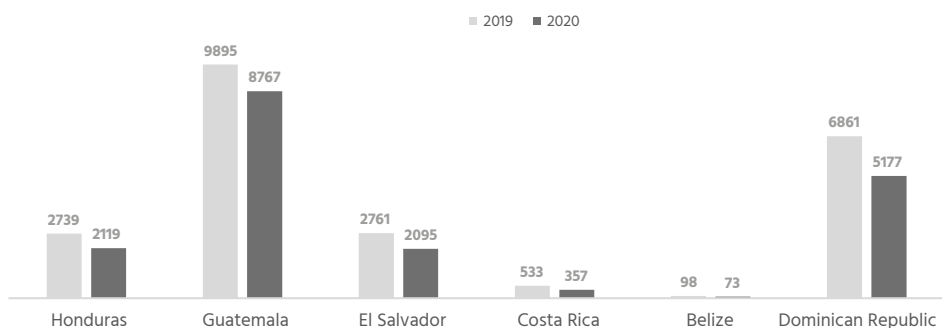
Sexual violence

Sexual violence is defined as: "any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work."

► **The records of sexual crime show a downward trend in 2020.**

- Records of sexual crime in El Salvador, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Belize and Honduras exhibit a 24% decline on average in 2020, as compared to the previous year.
- This decline could be associated with increased difficulty in reporting due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

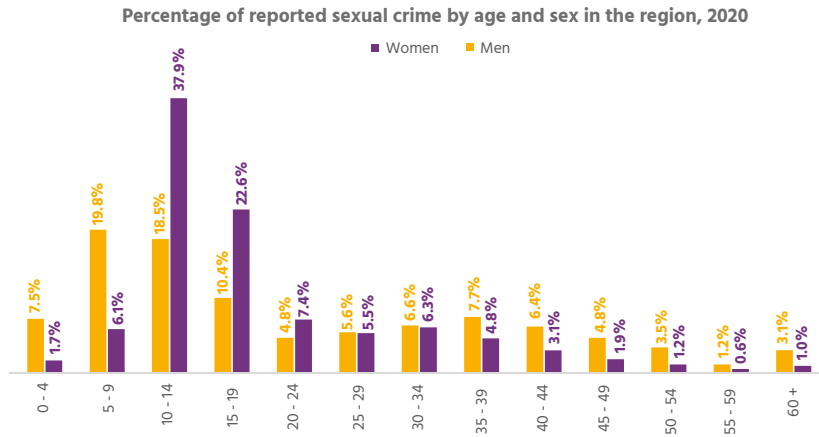
Records of sexual crime involving women by country, 2018-2020



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura with data provided by PNC, El Salvador (sexual crime); MP and SNIVCM-INE, Guatemala (rape or aggravated rape); PGR, Dominican Republic (sexual crime); BPD, Belize (Rape & illegal sexual relations); OIJ, Costa Rica (rape, statutory rape & indecent assault); MP, Honduras (sexual crime).

► **The primary victims of sexual violence are women under the age of 20.**

- 7 in 10 victims of sexual crimes are women under the age of 20.
- Improvements are needed in gathering data on the age of the victims. In the case of men, 50% of complaints report no age for the injured party, while in women, this is so in 29% of the cases.

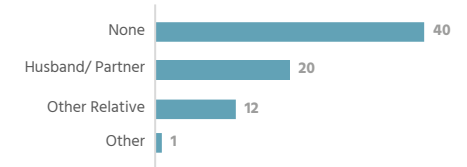


Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on PNC, Guatemala; MP, Honduras; OIJ, Costa Rica; BPD, Belize. *Omitted 2,787 records that lacked information on sex. *Percentages have been calculated for the total number of cases recorded in the sex variable for males and females.

► **In most information on sexual crimes there is nothing on the relationship between victim and perpetrator.**

- As for Belize, there is information on the relationship in all recorded cases.
- In 27% of cases, sexual crimes were committed by the current partner or an ex-partner, while over half of perpetrators (55%) had no relationship with the victim.

Victim-perpetrator relationship, sexual crime against women, Belize, 2020



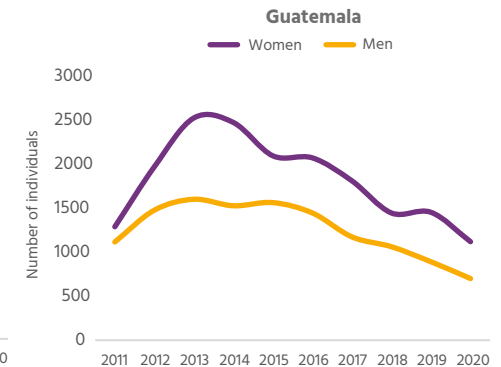
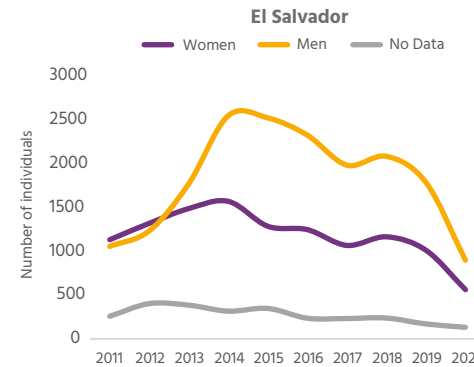
Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on BPD, 2020

Disappearances

"In general, by missing persons, what is meant are individuals of whom their families have no news and/or who, on the basis of reliable information, have been reported missing as a result of an armed conflict (international or non-international) or of internal violence (internal disturbances or any other situation that might require action by a neutral and independent body)."

► **Disappearances have declined over the last decade.**

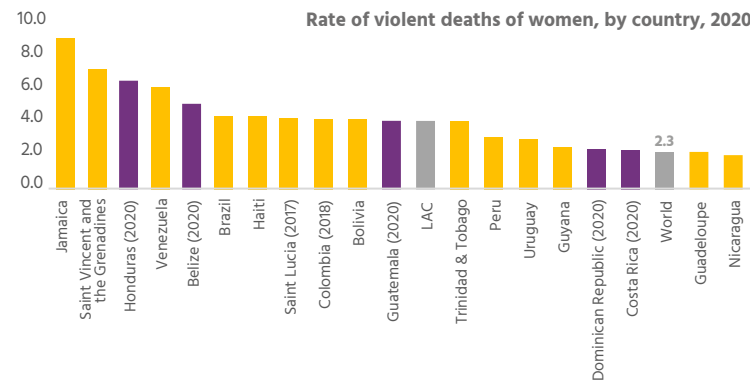
- In El Salvador, 35% of disappearances involved women, whereas in Guatemala the figure was 61%, during 2020.
- In 2020, disappearances of women registered a decline in El Salvador and in Guatemala, 44% and 23% respectively.
- In 2020, the total number of disappearances was almost three times greater than homicides of women and feminicides in El Salvador, while in Guatemala it was more than double. Furthermore, there is a positive correlation to the number of homicides of women.



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on FGR El Salvador; INE & PNC Guatemala, 2018

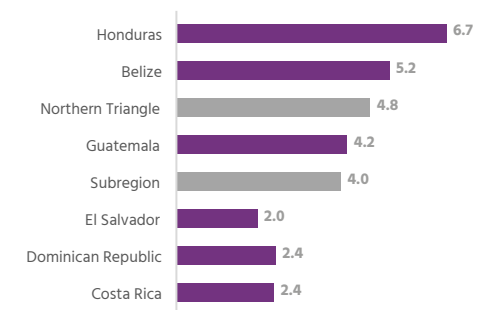
Femicide/Feminicide

Femicide/feminicide is "[...] the violent death of women based on gender, whether within the family, domestic partnership, or in any other interpersonal relationship; in the community, by any person, or perpetrated or tolerated by the State or its agents, by action or omission."



Note: Rate per 100,000 women Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on official data and UNODC

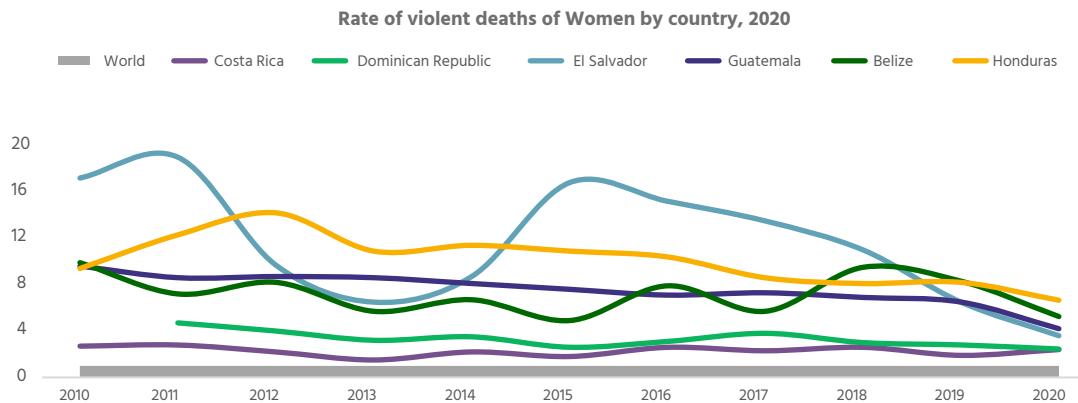
Rate of violent deaths of women by country, 2020



Source: Committee of Experts on the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI), 2008.

▶ **Although records show a drop in violent deaths of women over the past decade, this is still higher than the world rate (2.3 per 100,000 women).**

All of the countries in the subregion except for Costa Rica, registered a downturn in rates in violent deaths of women in 2020.

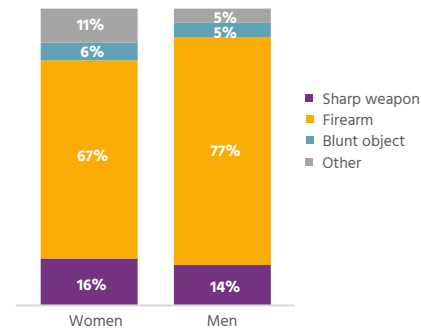


Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on El Salvador, DIA; Guatemala INE-PNC, Honduras, preliminary data by the Working Group on Violent Deaths: National Police, Public Ministry/Forensic Medicine Administration, National Registry of Persons, Coexistence and Citizen Security Observatories National Statistics Institute. IUDPAS/UNAH. Technical Inter- Institutional Coordination Unit (UTECI)/Sub-Secretary for Inter-Institutional Affairs; Costa Rica, OIJ; the Dominican Republic, OSC-DR; Belize, BPD.

▶ **The difference in the types of weapons used in violent deaths of women indicate that they involve greater cruelty.**

In violent deaths, firearms are used the most, in both men and women. However, in the case of women, the percentage of other weapons used is higher

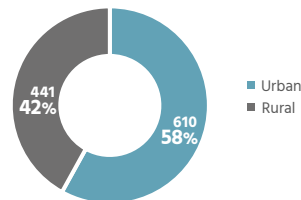
Violent deaths by weapon, 2020



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on El Salvador, PNC & DIA; Guatemala INE-PNC, Honduras, preliminary data by the Working Group on Violent Deaths: National Police, Public Ministry/Forensic Medicine Administration, National Registry of Persons, Coexistence and Citizen Security Observatories National Statistics Institute. IUDPAS/UNAH. Technical Inter-Institutional Coordination Unit (UTECI)/ Sub-Secretary for Inter- Institutional Affairs; Costa Rica, OIJ; the Dominican Republic, OSC-DR.

▶ **Homicides of women are more frequent in urban areas (58%).**

Homicides of women by place of occurrence (2020)

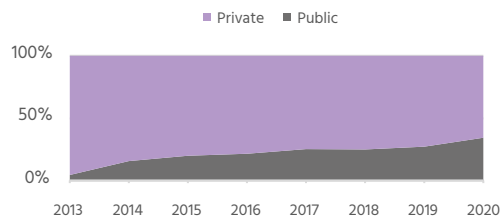


Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on PNC, Guatemala; MP, Honduras; PNC, El Salvador

▶ **1 in 3 women were victims of homicide in a private space.**

- Between 2013 and 2020, Honduras exhibits an upward trend in deaths of women in private spaces.
- Most violent deaths of women are committed in public areas. However, only 1 in 10 men are victims of homicide in private spaces, whereas this proportion rises to one in three in the case of women.

Violent deaths of women by place of occurrence in Honduras, 2020

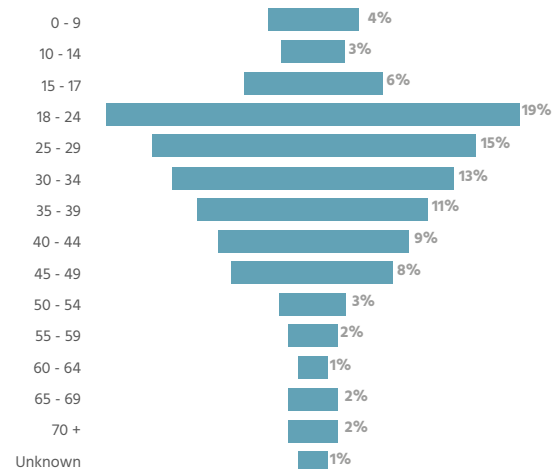


Source: Provisional data by Working Group on Violent Deaths: National Police, Public Ministry/Forensic Medicine Administration, National Registry of Persons, Coexistence and Citizen Security Observatories National Statistics Institute. IUDPAS/UNAH. Technical Inter-Institutional Coordination Unit (UTECI)/Sub-Secretary for Inter-Institutional Affairs.

▶ **In 2020, women ages 18 to 24 were the primary victims of lethal violence.**

Women risk becoming victims of lethal violence starting at 15 years of age, and this begins to decline significantly starting at 50.

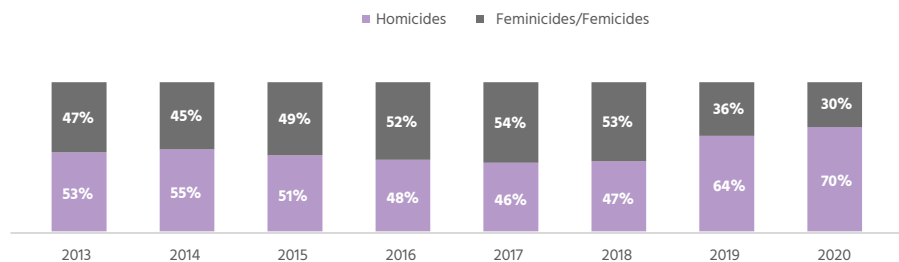
Violent deaths of women by age, 2020



Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on PNC, Guatemala; MP, Honduras; PNC, El Salvador

► **A lower percentage of violent deaths of women was typified as femicide/feminicide in 2020 as compared to previous years. This has been the trend since 2017.**

Femicides/feminicides and violent deaths of women, 2013-2020



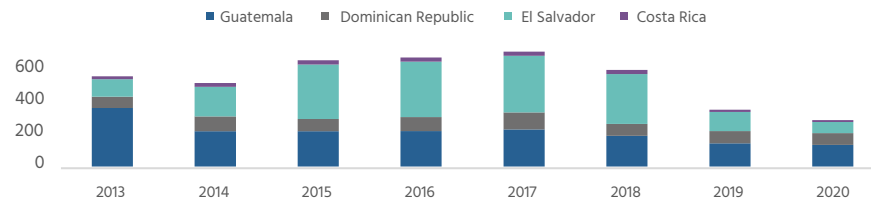
Source: Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on El Salvador, PNC & FGR; Guatemala, MP-PNC; Costa Rica, Adjunct Prosecutor for Gender; Dominican Republic, OSC-DR.

► **There are conceptual differences between countries in determining and typifying offenses as femicide/feminicide.**

The number of femicides/femicides declined in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic in 2020 as compared to 2019.

There was a 14% reduction in Costa Rica, 42% in El Salvador, 7% in Guatemala, and 4% in the Dominican Republic.

Number of femicides/femicides by country, 2013-2020



Source: Source: Prepared by InfoSegura based on El Salvador, PNC & FGR; Guatemala, MP-PNC; Costa Rica, Adjunct Prosecutor for Gender; Dominican Republic, OSC-DR.

Human trafficking

Human trafficking is "[...] the recruitment, transport, transfer, harboring or, receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having authority over another, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."

Source: UNODC,2007.

► **In Guatemala, cases of trafficking in women dropped by 26% in 2020, compared to the previous year.**

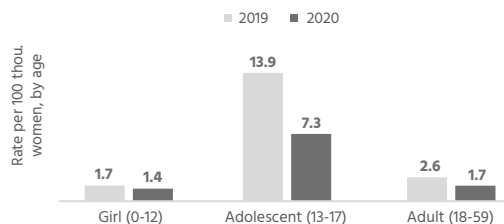
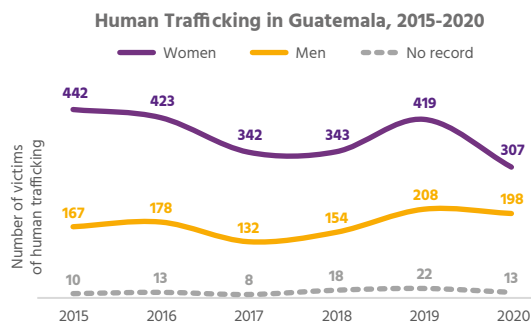
- In 2020, Guatemala registered a total 518 cases of Human Trafficking, 59% of them involved women.
- The observed trend in cases involving women is slightly low, despite registering a spike in 2019.

Source: Public Ministry, as per reports generated 27 Feb 2021.

► **Victims of human trafficking tend to be adolescent females ages 13 to 17.**

Nearly half (44%) of the cases have no record of the age of victims. Nevertheless, cases where this information is included reveal that 55% of female victims of trafficking were girls and adolescents under the age of 17.

Source: Public Ministry, as per reports generated 27 Feb 2021. Demographic projections based on the 2018 CENSUS.



Other vulnerabilities

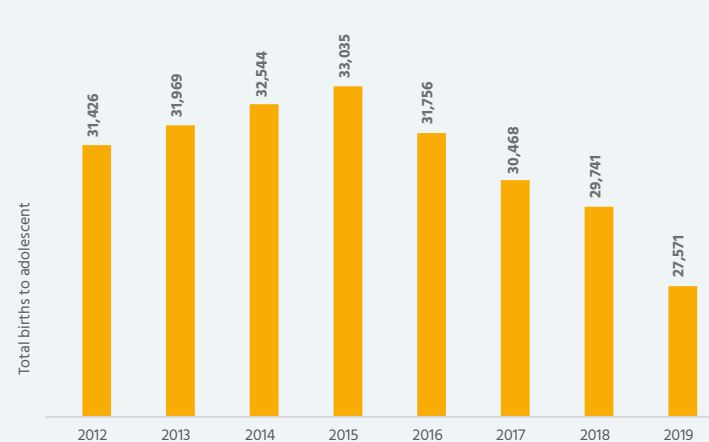
Violence against women and girls can take on diverse and multiple forms according to the living situation and the combination of conditions of vulnerability that they experience.

Source: InfoSegura - UNDP/RBLAC 2020. The Hidden Side of Insecurity: Violence against Women in Central America and the Dominican Republic

► **Forced pregnancy and sexual abuse in girls and adolescents is part of the violence they experience throughout their life cycle.**

In 2019, in Honduras a 12.3% drop in total births to adolescent mothers is registered (3,855 fewer births), as compared to figures from 2012.

Births to adolescent mothers in Honduras, 2012-2019



Source: Secretariat of Health of Honduras