



UN Women Submission to the forthcoming Report of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences on “Femicide to be presented at the 76th session of the General Assembly”

UN Women welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission for the forthcoming report on femicide to be presented at the 76th session of the General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences.

Preventing and eliminating femicide or gender related killings of women and girls as with all forms of violence against women and girls is a key priority of UN Women. Over the last decade UN Women has provided thought leadership to the conceptualization of femicide, in strengthening data collection efforts as well as in leading important processes to strengthen investigations and address the high levels of impunity, through the development of a Model Protocol to guide investigations and prosecutions (together with the OHCHR), as well as subsequent legal, policy reforms and capacity-building. Furthermore, UN Women has collaborated with MESCEVI, the Belém Do Para monitoring mechanism to develop the Interamerican Model Law on Femicide which has influenced legislation in the Latin America region and led to a strengthening of victims’ rights including reparations.

Through the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, a global, multi-year partnership to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), UN Women is working with UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and other agencies in the UN system to implement comprehensive, multi-stakeholder, evidence- based interventions to prevent and respond to VAWG. This includes programmes with a specific focus on preventing femicide/femicide in five countries in Latin America, including Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico as well as a regional programme for the Latin America region.

Through this submission, UN Women seeks to contribute up-to-date inputs to the Special Rapporteur on measures undertaken and data on femicide based on the work that our offices are aware of, involved in or leading in the field including through the Spotlight Initiative which we hope will be useful to the drafting of the Global Femicide Report.

UN Women commends the Special Rapporteur for making the issue of femicide a key thematic priority within her mandate and we welcome the opportunity to contribute this submission to support the work of the Special Rapporteur.

- 1. On the existence, or progress in the creation, of a national femicide watch and/or femicide observatory and/or observatory on violence against women with a femicide watch role; observatories at Ombudspersons’ office or Equality Bodies; academic institutions and/or NGOs, or any plans to create one.**

In the Western Balkans and Turkey, under the “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds” programme, UN Women with the support of the EU and in partnership with a consortium of three women’s civil society organizations (CSOs) Knowledge Hub, FemPlatz and Women’s Research Center for Education and Communication, is implementing a project in Serbia, “Eradicating and Preventing Femicide in Serbia” which included targeted advocacy efforts with relevant institutions including national and provincial Ombudspersons’ office to establish a system for data collection and monitoring of femicide in Serbia under their auspices. Ensuring full commitment of Ombudspersons’ offices and further steps in adopting and institutionalizing a system for data collection which will serve to understand the causes and consequences of femicide and plan measures to prevent it is yet to be fully achieved.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Agency for Gender Equality initiated activities in 2021 towards the creation of a Femicide Watch body. A data analysis on incidence of femicide in BiH is currently underway and will also incorporate a definition of the Femicide Watch body and provide recommendations for next steps. UN Women is supporting this initiative by providing existing research on VAWG to contribute to the analysis as well as by facilitating collaboration with other Femicide Watch initiatives in the region.

In Latin America, numerous countries have established national femicide observatories and/or institutions or bodies that monitor or collect data on femicides including civil society observatories. For instance, in Argentina, the first femicide observatory to be established was the “Adriana Marisel Zambrano” observatory, coordinated by the NGO, La Casa del Encuentro which focuses on registering femicides, based upon information published in the media.¹ Furthermore, the Supreme Court of Justice has a mandate to collect data on femicides under Law 26.485- by collecting data from national and provincial courts² and resolution DPA N° 000049/2016 of 15 November 2016 established the Femicide Observatory to collect, produce, analyze and communicate data and information on femicides nationally.³

In Uruguay, Law N° 19.580 established a National Observatory on Gender Violence with a mandate to monitor, collect, produce, register and permanently systematize data and information on violence against Women including femicide to inform the design, implementation, management and evaluation of policies.⁴ In Brazil, the National Justice Council created the Judiciary Human Rights Observatory⁵ to guide the new management of the Judiciary (2020-2022) which collects data on the SDG’s including feminicide, domestic violence and other forms of VAWG⁶. Finally, Ecuador, does not currently have an observatory on femicide/VAWG, however, the Comprehensive Organic Law to prevent and eradicate VAW (2018) established the creation of an Observatory, which will be developed within the Spotlight Initiative.

In Mexico, the government has established various inter-institutional mechanisms that monitor statistical information with a gender perspective and specifically on violence against women and girls. UNW participates as an advisor in the Statistical Working Group, within the framework of the National System to Prevent, Address, Punish, and Eradicate Violence against Women and Girls and in the Specialized Technical Committee on Information with a Gender Perspective lead by INEGI, the National Statistics Institute. These are the national mechanisms in which the advances and guidelines to produce gender statistics in the country are defined. In these sessions, progress was made in agreements to improve administrative records and the measurement of women's homicides and for the monitoring of the SDG’s indicators on VAWG. Furthermore, given the need to have information during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Inter-Institutional Group of Strategies against Violence against women, girls and adolescents (GIEV) was created in which all federal agencies participate in a coordinated group with a systemic perspective of substantive equality, human rights and local action.

¹ <http://www.lacasadencuentro.org/femicidios02.html>

² For more information please see: <https://www.csin.gov.ar/omrecopilacion/omfemicidio/homefemicidio.html>

³ More information available at <http://www.dpn.gob.ar/observatorio-femicidios.php>

⁴ <https://www.gub.uy/observatorio-violencia-genero>

⁵ <https://www.cnj.jus.br/observatorio/observatorio-direitos-humanos/>

⁶ <https://www.cnj.jus.br/programas-e-acoas/agenda-2030/liods-cnj-laboratorio-de-inovacao-inteligencia-e-ods/paineis/>

2. On other measures including research and studies undertaken to analyse femicide or gender related killings of women and girls, or homicides of women by intimate partners or family members and other femicides. If available, please share a copy of such studies.

UN Women has been collaborating with the Federal Government in Mexico, the Women's Ministry, Congress, and other key actors since 2007 on a series of research studies and publications on femicide which are both a national and a regional reference on femicide data analysis. Please see annex 1 for a full list of these publications. The latest edition, published in December 2020, "*Femicide violence in Mexico. Approaches and trends*" provides an analysis of data on femicides, homicides and VAWG as per the definition of femicide violence in the General law of VAWG, and following the guidelines of the Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (femicide/femicide) on the different official sources across the criminal justice system. This includes the analysis of death certificates from the open investigations and the penal cases initiated in the justice system. Additionally, it analyses information on injuries, as a crucial source of information for secondary prevention. The study makes key recommendations to strengthen administrative data collection processes, as well as important considerations for public policy.⁷ It is important to note that since the first of these studies was published, the importance of documenting femicide violence in the country as well as the need to investigate all violent deaths of women (homicides, suicides, and accidents) with a gender perspective has been established by the judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights "González y otros vs. Mexico", better known as "Campo Algodonero" which outlined the systemic violence experienced by women, the context in which it occurs and the urgent need for states to fulfil their responsibility in guaranteeing the safety of women. More recently, the Supreme Court of Justice made two emblematic judgments in the Mariana Lima and Karla Pontigo cases which further established the obligation to investigate violent deaths, identifying the gender reasons behind the lethal intent.⁸

In Brazil, two sources of data on gender-related killings of women and girls have been used for statistics purposes: SIM (Mortality Information System) and police records. Both have limitations that hinder the measurement of femicides.⁹ The SIM does not provide information on the motivations of the violence or on who committed it, so the possibilities of identifying gender-related reasons are very limited. The Atlas of Violence (IPEA, FBSP), an annual publication that uses SIM for the analysis of homicides, uses the variable of place of death (residence) as a proxy to femicides in the context of domestic and family violence. Despite the validity of this methodology, it excludes femicides (including those perpetrated by intimate partners) that occur elsewhere. Police records are even more limited. On the one hand, not all subnational governments have adopted the "femicide" category in police records and, on the other hand, there is no quality control or standardization in the use of police classification, so it is not possible to know how it is being used.¹⁰ The National Council of Justice (CNJ) also collects data on the justice system including the total number of lawsuits initiated or closed, but do not provide a disaggregation of

⁷ <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020-nuevo/diciembre-2020/violencia-femicida>

⁸ <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020-nuevo/diciembre-2020/violencia-femicida>

⁹ Law 13.104/2015 amended the Penal Code to include femicides as a qualified form of homicide, defined as the killing of woman when the crime involves domestic and family violence or other form of disparagement or discrimination against a woman.

¹⁰ According to the Brazilian Public Security Forum, eight Federation Units do not adopt the classification of femicides in their records. Another problem with the police record stems from the fact that the identification of characteristics associated with gender-related killing is not, in many cases, done immediately, depending on the police investigation that may take months or years to complete. Thus, the statistics that are based on the initial record may contain distortions in relation to the quantitative of femicides that are determined through police investigation. Methodologically, the distortion could be corrected by updating the information in the database, but there is no verification system that allows checking if these changes are made.

type of violence and whether protection measures were granted/denied and the reasons for this. In summary, the data currently available on femicides in Brazil are inaccurate and partial. The solution to the problem must consider that only numerical indicators are not enough to understand the phenomenon and that it is urgent to formulate more rigorous research with both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, with national samples that allow the standardized collection of information to describe the characteristics associated with GBV from content analysis of police documents, expert reports and legal proceedings.

In the Western Balkans and Turkey, as part of the “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds programme, UN Women worked with three women’s CSOs to conduct ground-breaking, interdisciplinary, and thoughtful research entitled “Social and Institutional Responses to Femicide in Serbia”, in two volumes. The first volume¹¹ represents a study on the phenomenology and etiology of femicide in Serbia, analysing the social and institutional responses to femicide cases (covering cases from 2015, 2016, and 2017, country-wide), while the second volume¹² presents an analysis of the capacities of relevant stakeholders to effectively prevent and eradicate femicide, along with the proposed model for quantitative femicide data collection. During Phase II of the project, additional qualitative research was conducted on femicide cases by applying the Phase I methodology for years 2018 and 2019, as well as further research on attempted femicides for period 2015-2019. By expanding the period before and after the adoption of the Law on Preventing Domestic Violence in Serbia (adopted in July 2017), the research/project has provided a comprehensive overview of the context of the femicide/attempted femicide, relationship between the perpetrator and victim, and the response of the institutions, especially in cases where previous violence was reported to the relevant institutions, and the impact of the law. Thus, to address and improve prevention and prosecution of femicide cases in Serbia, the projects have addressed the issues of lack of data and evidence-based knowledge on the complex causes and practical mechanisms that can be effective in femicide prevention, which has and will be used to improve policies and practices on combating VAW, and it has also addressed the issues of lack of capacities of stakeholders relevant for the femicide prevention and prosecution.

UN Women and UNODC have launched a global consultation on a common statistical framework on Gender-Related Killings of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide). The UN Statistical Commission in 2019 made a request to develop a statistical framework on gender-related killings of women and girls (femicide/feminicide), based on the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS) with a close collaboration between both agencies. Through the Global Centre of Excellence on Gender Statistics (CEGS) and the Center of Excellence of UNODC there has been a technical consultation conducted over the last years, a preliminary statistical framework has been developed which is now being consulted on with stakeholders at national and international levels in order to collect technical feedback from a broad range of experts and sectors.

Finally, UN Women’s Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, through the Spotlight Initiative, is undertaking a study of femicide/feminicide and other forms of violence against women and girls using Big data analysis tools. This will include the analysis of news reports of femicides and reports of cases of violence against women (web, different digital sources) in at least 3 countries in Latin America, as well as the analysis of narratives on social media and an analysis of comments and data on services for violence against women and girls through Twitter.

¹¹ http://femplatz.org/library/publications/2019-11_Femicid_monografija_Prva_publicacija_E_primerak.pdf

¹² http://femplatz.org/library/publications/2019-11_Femicid_monografija_Druga_publicacija_E_primerak.pdf

3. On the results of analysis of femicide cases, including the review of previous court cases and recommendations and actions undertaken in this respect.

Femicide in Serbia remains a regular and unaddressed crime. Analysis of the final judgments of the murders of women issued in 2015, 2016, and 2017 and available in the research “Social and Institutional Responses to Femicide in Serbia Volume I”, shows that 74% of femicides are perpetrated by partner or in family contexts, while in 49.3% of these cases women were killed by an intimate partner. 68% of femicides are perpetrated in the home of the victim or perpetrator. The research shows that court proceedings are focused on the perpetrator, while the victim is almost invisible. In many cases, there is little or no data on the victim’s education, employment status, marital status or children, or if they have reported previous violence to relevant institutions. Almost half of victims who were reported to have suffered partner violence and abuse, had not previously reported violence or asked for support from the relevant institutions. The results also highlight discrepancies in court practice in classifying the criminal act of murder, and that prison sentences are in many cases lenient. There is therefore significant need to strengthen legal and criminal justice responses to femicide in Serbia.

During Phase II of the “Eradicating and Preventing Femicide in Serbia” project, 29 final court decisions on femicide in 2018-2019 were analysed, from 14 higher courts in Serbia. Overall, 55,2% of cases were classified as murder, while only 10,3% were classified as aggravated murder, which also influences the severity of the punishment. 51,7% of femicides were committed in urban areas and 44,8% in rural areas (difference in comparison for attempted femicide). Most femicides were committed in partners home (41,4%), 34,5% in victim’s home, while 13,8% (four analysed cases) in public spaces. Data on the methods used for committing the crime reveal high levels of brutality against the victim. In addition, 30 final court decisions for attempted femicide in the period 2018-2019 from 12 higher courts in Serbia were analysed. The majority of cases were perpetrated in urban areas (61%). In 30,3% of the cases, the attempted femicide was in victim’s home, 27,3% in partners home, while 21,2% were perpetrated in public places (park, street). The majority of perpetrators (66,7%) had no prior criminal convictions. In 68% of cases, the perpetrator was a current or ex-husband/partner of the woman.

In Mexico, the most recent study on gender related killings in Mexico, “Femicide violence in Mexico. Approaches and Trends¹³”, highlighted important trends and considerations for policy makers including the increased use of firearms to murder women both at home and on public spaces/streets which points to the need to strengthen crime prevention responses and to ensure a gender perspective is incorporated into strategies focused on tackling the proliferation of weapons. Furthermore, the study found that the proportion of killings of women that took place in the home have significantly decreased. In 2004 they accounted for more than half of killings of women and in 2019 the figure went down to 30%. In contrast, the proportion of killings that took place in public spaces reached 52% in 2019. 1 in 5 killings of women took place in sports areas, farms, shopping areas, recreation centres, schools, workplaces or other similar places. It is also important to note that a growing number of victims are young women aged 20-24 years (4.5 women per hundred thousand). The report makes a number of policy recommendations including:

- The need to harmonize the legal definitions of femicide and all forms of violence against women and girls in laws and penal codes at the federal and local levels as well as to strengthen coordination between the federal and local governments and across the three branches of government.
- Strengthen public policies to prevent VAWG and economic empowerment of women to achieve greater autonomy of women, as well as to eliminate the risks that they increasingly face in public

¹³ <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020-nuevo/diciembre-2020/violencia-femicida>

spaces, because of their increased participation in public life, particularly in the labor market, in the field of political participation and their work in the community.

- Standardize and strengthen the response protocols of institutions in the justice sector to improve access to justice and to reduce impunity.
- Improve the provision of support services for women and girls who are victims of violence and strengthen the capacity of these services to ensure the secondary prevention, including through increasing the use of protection orders and strengthening of referrals from the health sector to law enforcement when women with VAWG related injuries are identified.

In Ecuador, there is a "Statistical Register of Femicide" established through the "Statistical Strengthening Group of the Special Commission on Security, Justice, Crime and Transparency Statistics". This register has data on the cases that enter the justice system. The information is updated on a weekly basis, which provides data for decision-making. In order to monitor the causes of femicide and other forms of violent death against women, on November 26, 2020, Resolution 127-2020 was approved, through which "a mechanism for monitoring the deadlines and terms in which judicial proceedings are carried out in the crime of femicide and violent deaths against women, in accordance with the parameters established in Ecuadorian legislation." Finally, in Argentina, the Federal Council on Femicide prevention and research was established in February 2021 through Executive Order 123/2021 following a surge in cases reported by the media in 2020 and early 2021, for a comprehensive approach to the prevention of femicides and transfemicides.¹⁴

4. On concrete measures taken to improve support to victims of violence and to prevent femicide, (risk assessment, efficiency of protection orders), in connection with the information gathered via femicide watches or observatories.

In Serbia, during Phase II of the *Eradicating and Preventing Femicide* project, three protocols for femicide investigation were developed and customized for the Serbian context. These include the protocol for prosecution, the protocol for social policy, and the protocol for health professionals. The special protocol for public prosecution highlights a list of indicators for risk assessment, which should be considered as high risk of femicide; a list of questions to consider when the violent crime is not reported as domestic violence; aspects to consider during prosecution of femicide and burden of proof. The protocol for social policy provides guidance for more standardized interviews by professionals in the social welfare system as well as information and suggestions in providing support to children in cases of femicide. The protocol for health professionals focuses on emergency health units and their role in prevention.

The "Social and Institutional Responses to Femicide in Serbia" research also included a capacity assessment of the key relevant institutions for the prevention and eradication of femicide in Serbia (police, prosecution, judiciary, centres for social welfare, health-care institutions). Professionals identified a number of key obstacles in their work including: i) being overburdened with other tasks, ii) bad legislative framework and complicated procedures, iii) lack of knowledge and trainings for the adequate risk assessment, iv) lack of cooperation and unsatisfactory communication between the different institutions. An interesting finding was that only 10% of the research participants assessed gender stereotypes and prejudices of professionals as a key obstacle to work on cases of VAWG more effectively. The capacity assessment also showed that

¹⁴ <https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/241015/20210222>

responders from all institutions assess that the police has the greatest capacities and deliver the best results in the prevention of VAW (51% of respondents), followed by social welfare centres (23%), while those assessed with the least capacities were public prosecution (17%) and the judiciary (6%). The second volume of the study develops a model for femicide data collection and a set of recommendations for relevant stakeholders with a view to better risk assessment and effective intervention in the prevention of femicide. The model was reviewed and validated jointly by the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Justice, following an in-depth assessment of the procedures of general and specialist service providers and an analysis of the attitudes of convicted perpetrators of femicide.

In Brazil, in 2020 the National Council of Public Prosecutors (CNMP) and the National Council of Justice (CNJ) issued a joint resolution to adopt and recommend the use of a National Risk Assessment Form by the police, as well as by the Judiciary and the Public Prosecution Service.¹⁵

In Mexico, as part of the Spotlight Initiative work is underway to transform legal frameworks to ensure compliance with international human rights standards on women's rights to support victims of violence and prevent femicide cases. This has involved the review of more than 389 bills, to reform and harmonize legislation in Chihuahua, Guerrero, and the State of Mexico and consultation processes with the collaboration of 120 national and local CSOs and women's movements. This has resulted in the approval of the reform to the Law on Discrimination in the State of Chihuahua, which prohibits differentiated treatment and includes a gender perspective as well as affirmative actions, the elimination of stereotypes, and equal opportunities. Furthermore, a recently approved reform by the Human Rights Commission of the Chihuahua Congress will lead to the implementation of an early warning system to identify femicide violence risks in the early phases which will enable authorities to put in place prevention measures.

At the federal level, the reform of thirteen laws proposed by the Spotlight Initiative is currently under review with the Mexican Congress. These proposals include provisions to facilitate the adoption process of orphans due to femicide, guaranteeing their safety and the elimination of filial rights of femicide parents. Moreover, they include aggravating penalties for perpetrators of femicides against girls and establishing the obligation of law enforcement agencies to develop specialized protocols to investigate the crime of family violence. The most important proposal that the Spotlight Initiative is promoting is a Constitutional Reform that will allow both Chambers of the Legislative Branch to define, as a minimum, the criminal types and their sanctions related to violence against women and girls that will be applicable in the whole country despite the fact that Mexico is a federal system. This proposed reform is inspired by lessons learnt through comparative law analysis from Brazil and Argentina.

In Ecuador, UN Women is supporting the conceptual development and cost estimation of the "Early Warning System for Femicide Cases. Furthermore, the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion for Children and Adolescents in Situation of Orphans due to femicide is implemented (Executive Decree No. 696 of March 8, 2019). The purpose of this bonus is to contribute to the repair and reconstruction of your life in the family and social sphere, guaranteeing the exercise of your rights. In Argentina in July 2020, the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity launched a special programme aimed at providing immediate assistance including special assistance and to families of femicide and transfemicide victims. The program consists of money transfers and special assistance.¹⁶

¹⁵ <https://atos.cnj.jus.br/files/original215815202003045e6024773b7dc.pdf>

¹⁶ https://www.argentina.gob.ar/generos/plan_nacional_de_accion_contra_las_violencias_por_motivos_de_genero/programa-para-el-apoyo-urgente-y-la-asistencia-integral-inmediata-ante-casos-de-femicidio

5. On good practices and challenges in implementing an evidence-based response to the prevention of femicide.

Strengthening the justice sector response, particularly that of law enforcement, to crimes of violence against women and girls ('VAWG') continues to be a major challenge. Only a minority of VAWG cases are ever reported to the police by survivors and of these cases, a smaller percentage result in charges brought against perpetrators, and even fewer in convictions. A positive initial contact experience with police is crucial for VAWG survivors. To respond to this need, in January 2021, UN Women, in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) and the International Association of Women Police (IAWP) launched a new [*Handbook on Gender-Responsive Police Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence*](#). The Handbook provides operational guidance on how police can be gender-responsive when using investigative tools by applying, for instance, the power and control framework to their risk assessments. Using this information, police are in a stronger position to inform the victim/survivor of potential further violence and the protection measures required to prevent the escalation of violence. Furthermore, the Handbook also provides guidance on the key policing competencies needed for victim/survivor-centered approaches, including managing bias and active listening. It also proposes police strategies for prevention including engagement and partnerships with communities particularly those in positions of vulnerability and civil society advocates as well as with other authorities to develop common approaches and solutions to issues such as perpetrator focused investigations of VAWG. In parallel, the Handbook provides recommendations for key performance indicators for police to apply that will help to ensure the meaningful participation of victims/survivors in the police response to VAWG.

UN Women has made a significant contribution to the understanding around definitions, investigation, and responses to femicide/feminicide in the Latin American Region. In partnership with OHCHR, UN Women developed the Latin American Model Protocol for the investigation of gender-related killings of women (hereafter, the Latin American Model Protocol), which has resulted in numerous countries in the region adjusting their criminal procedural laws. To date, the protocol has been adopted by Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, El Salvador (pending approval), Panama and Ecuador, Colombia, and Uruguay (in the approval phase). It has also been adapted at subnational level in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico.

UN Women is working with the Specialist Gender Network of the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors (REG-AIAMP) to further support adoption or adaptation of the Latin American Model Protocol and to promote the standards of investigation established. Formed in 2016, the REG-AIAMP is a network of public prosecutors from 22 countries from Ibero-America that work together to strategically and comprehensively address VAWG in the criminal justice system with a strong focus on femicide/feminicide through promoting alignment to international human rights standards, exchanging information, good practices and lessons learned amongst the member institutions to strengthen gender responsive approaches and to improve women's access to justice. To support the work of the REG-AIAMP, UN Women has developed a monitoring tool to track progress in the implementation of the Model Protocol. UN Women has also worked with OHCHR with the Spotlight Initiative to develop an online training for prosecutors and criminal justice professionals on the Latin American Model Protocol.

Furthermore, UN Women in partnership with REG-AIAMP and the EUROsocial+ Program has mapped measures and initiatives undertaken by public prosecutors and the criminal justice system more broadly to adapt services and responses to victims-survivors of VAWG in the COVID-19 context. The publication [*"Recommendations to guarantee the access of women survivors of of gender violence to justice during Covid-19"*](#), highlights good practices and promising practices as well as a series of recommendations to guarantee the continuity of access to justice for women survivors of gender-based violence during the pandemic.

UN Women Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean also worked with MESCEVI to develop the Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of the Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide) (hereafter, the Model Law), which was adopted by the Committee of Experts of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women follow-up mechanism – MESECVI - in December 2018. 18 countries in Latin America have incorporated femicide/feminicide as a distinct crime in their laws: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. Normative changes influenced by the Model Law were observed in the reform of the Chilean femicide law; in the adoption of a criminal law on femicide/feminicide in Brazil; in legislative initiatives or reforms aimed at increasing sanctions in Mexico and Honduras. In El Salvador, as well as in Oaxaca (Mexico), legal modifications were introduced, aiming at improving protection measures for female victims / survivors.

Through the Spotlight Initiative, UN Women is working with MESECVI to advance further in the implementation of the standards established in these regional instruments by developing an implementation guidance to accompany the model law as well as undertaking numerous comparative legal analyses to further strengthen legal frameworks in the region including a comparative analysis of criminal procedural law to promote reforms in line with the standards of the model protocol; a comparative analysis of the issue of reparations to identify good practices to guide the development of recommendations and to ensure that the legal frameworks in countries in the region provide adequate and effective reparations to ensure the restoration of the rights of women victims-survivors and their families; a mapping of free legal advice services for victims of VAWG to identify promising practices in countries or organizations in the region that provide free legal services to women victims of violence and their families; an analysis of laws and policies on online violence against women and girls with a view to making recommendations and establishing standards to strengthen prevention, protection and sanctions for these forms of violence. In phase II of the Spotlight Initiative, an advocacy strategy will be implemented to promote legal reforms and policies in line with the recommendations of all of the legal analyses that are currently underway.

In Mexico as part of the Spotlight Initiative, UN Women in partnership with Oxfam Mexico, has set up a project to make cash transfers to women who have completed their care process in shelters in the states of Chihuahua, State of Mexico, and Guerrero, three states where rates of femicide and VAWG are very high. The project is a promising practice that seeks to prevent femicides given that when women leave shelters they often don't have the financial means to support themselves or their families and may be at risk of further violence. The objective of the project is to provide women with adequate financial resources to allow them to be economically independent to support themselves and children to start a new life.

In Uruguay, electronic tagging technologies have been used to strengthen protection of victims at high risk of IPV to accompany protection orders that have been granted by the courts which in Uruguay had very low compliance levels (only 16% in 2012). An evaluation of the initiative was very positive and found that during the period that the electronic tagging was used, there had been no cases of violence or femicide despite the fact that in 44% of the cases, alarms had been activated because the perpetrator had attempted to approach the victim. The initiative was considered a promising practice and the use of the electronic tagging device has been extended nationally.¹⁷

¹⁷ <https://transparenciapresupuestaria.opp.gub.uy/inicio/registro-nacional-de-evaluaciones/evaluaci%C3%B3n-did-programa-tecnolog%C3%ADas-de-verificaci%C3%B3n-de-presencia-y-localizaci%C3%B3n-de-personas-en-caso>

6. On data, if available, on femicides or intimate-partner and family-related homicides of women and men in the past 3 years, including during the Covid-19 pandemic (indicating the time period e.g. since March 2020 to the end of December 2020) and its comparison with such data before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Mexico, the most recent study on Femicide, *Femicide violence in Mexico. Approaches and trends* found that between 1990 and 2019, more than 56 000 killings of women have been perpetrated. The highest numbers of killings were in 2018 and 2019 with very similar figures, 3,752 and 3,750 respectively or an average of 10 women every day. In 2020, 3,764 women were killed, this includes 970 that have been classified as femicides and 2,794 intentional homicides. This is a 2% decrease compared to 2019 when 3,840 victims were registered but nonetheless an increase in 2% between 2018 and 2020.¹⁸

In Brazil, during the 1st semester of 2020 when the pandemic started - there was an increase of 1.5% of homicides against women compared to the same period in 2019. In the first semester of 2019 1.834 cases were recorded compared to 1861 cases during the 1st semester of 2020 and there was a 1.9% increase in cases of femicide over the same period with 648 cases identified in the first semester of 2020 compared to 636 cases identified in the 1st semester 2019.¹⁹

In Guatemala, the number of femicides registered decreased from 701 in 2019 to 452 in 2020, and up to April 2021, 135 cases have been registered, however, at the same time there has been an increase in the number of cases of disappeared women from 2 or 3 per week to 4 per day which suggests that femicides are possibly being classified as other categories of violence against women, such as disappearances.²⁰

In Argentina, data from the Supreme Court of Justice has recorded 255 cases of femicide (including 4 transfemicides) in 2018²¹ compared to 252 cases (including 3 transfemicides) in 2019.²² Data from the National Ombudsman's Office registers 253 cases of femicide in 2018²³ (including 6 transfemicides) compared to 250 (including 10 femicides) in 2019²⁴ and 261 femicides (including 8 transfemicides) in 2020²⁵. Finally, the Casa del Encuentro Femicide Observatory "Adriana Marisel Zambrano" has identified 273 cases in 2018, 299 in 2019 and 300 cases in 2020.²⁶

In Uruguay, on 30 December 2019, a state of national emergency regarding gender-based violence was declared. Data from the National Observatory of Gender Violence found that 12,382 women had accessed GBV services in 2019.²⁷ A joint study carried out by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Social Development found that femicide rates had increased considerably as of 2016, from 1.2 to 1.7 per 100,000

¹⁸ Please see annex 2 for a breakdown of data between 2018-2020.

¹⁹ NGO Forum Brasileiro de Segurança Pública (FBSP) publishes annually a report based on administrative data, available [here](#).

²⁰ Women's Observatory of the Public Prosecutor <http://observatorio.mp.gob.gt/portal-estadistico/>

²¹ <https://www.csjn.gov.ar/omrecopilacion/docs/informefemicidios2018.pdf>

²² <https://www.cij.gov.ar/nota-37461-La-Oficina-de-la-Mujer-de-la-Corte-Suprema-de-Justicia-de-la-Nacion-presenta-la-actualizacion-del-Registro-Nacional-de-Femicidios.html#:~:text=%E2%80%9CSe%20identificaron%20252%20v%C3%ADctimas%20directas,16%20v%C3%ADctimas%20de%20femicidio%20vinculado.>

²³ http://www.dpn.gov.ar/documentos/Observatorio_Femicidios_-_Informe_Final_2018.pdf

²⁴ http://www.dpn.gov.ar/documentos/Observatorio_Femicidios_-_Informe_Final_2019.pdf

²⁵ http://www.dpn.gov.ar/documentos/Observatorio_Femicidios_-_Informe_Final_2020.pdf

²⁶ <http://lacasadelencuentro.org/femicidios03.html>

²⁷ <https://www.gub.uy/comunicacion/publicaciones/respuesta-la-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-inmujeres-mides>

women in 2018.²⁸ In 2019, there were 16 deaths registered as femicides. 68.8% of the victims had not filed any prior complaints, 31.2% of them had reported previous assaults and in 4 cases protection measures were granted. One of the relevant points of the data presented is that most of the femicides (69%) of that year occurred in the home; in second place and with a much lower percentage (25%) they occurred on public spaces. The data indicates that between January and October 2019, , 32,721 complaints were filed, that is an average of 108 complaints per day or one complaint every 13 minutes in Uruguay.²⁹

²⁸ Femicidios en Uruguay. Análisis para la homogenización de criterios y su categorización. División Políticas de Género del Ministerio del interior, División Violencia Basada en Género del Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social. Diciembre de 2019.

²⁹ Observatorio Nacional sobre Violencia y Criminalidad. Presentación 29 de Noviembre 2019 por el día Internacional de lucha contra todas las formas de violencia hacia la mujer. Ministerio del Interior. Del 100% de las denuncias por violencia doméstica, un 48,8% lo hicieron por violencia psicológica, un 45,9% por violencia física, un 2,9% por violencia sexual, 2,4% por violencia patrimonial o económica y un 0,3% por identidad sexual de género u orientación sexual.

Annex 1.

Mexico studies on femicide:

1. Comisión Especial para el Seguimiento de los Femicidios, ONU Mujeres, INMUJERES, *Femicidio en México. Aproximación, tendencias y cambios, 1985-2009*, ONU Mujeres, INMUJERES, LXI Legislatura, Cámara de Diputados, México, 2011. Disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones?topic=8d3b9cad853e44ee8ecb34c0c6c61a83>
2. Comisión Especial para el Seguimiento de los Femicidios, ONU Mujeres, INMUJERES, *Violencia feminicida en México. Características, tendencias y nuevas expresiones en las entidades federativas, 1985-2010*, ONU Mujeres, INMUJERES, LXI Legislatura, Cámara de Diputados, México, 2012. Disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones?topic=8d3b9cad853e44ee8ecb34c0c6c61a83>
3. SEGOB, INMUJERES, ONU Mujeres, *La violencia feminicida en México, aproximaciones y tendencias 1985-2016*, SEGOB, ONU Mujeres, INMUJERES, México, 2017. Disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones?topic=8d3b9cad853e44ee8ecb34c0c6c61a83>
4. ONU Mujeres, “Violencia y femicidio de niñas y adolescentes en México” México, 2019 Disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2019/03/violencia-y-femicidio-ninas-y-adolescentes>
5. CONAVIM, INMUJERES ONU Mujeres “Violencia feminicida en México. Aproximaciones y tendencias” Diciembre 2020 Disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2020-nuevo/diciembre-2020/violencia-feminicida>
6. Unión Europea, ONU Mujeres, *Hacia un sistema integrado de información estadística sobre impartición de justicia con perspectiva de género y derechos humanos. Aportes desde la experiencia mexicana*. México 2017 disponible en: <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/digiteca/publicaciones/2017/07/justicia-con-perspectiva-de-genero-y-derechos-humanos>

Annex 2: Mexico Femicide data: a comparative analysis from 2018 to 2020³⁰

Comparative. Criminal incidence													
2018													
Number of alleged victims	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Jan-Dec 2018
Femicides	70	69	72	79	64	79	84	65	78	85	69	100	914
Intentional homicides	210	197	236	217	248	233	222	247	257	220	217	259	2,763
Sum of Femicides and Intentional Homicides	280	266	308	296	312	312	306	312	335	305	286	359	3,677
2019													
Number of alleged victims	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Jan-Dec 2019
Femicides	72	70	82	68	82	77	88	94	90	70	81	95	969
Intentional homicides	230	204	230	249	247	236	241	249	259	222	249	255	2,871
Sum of Femicides and Intentional Homicides	302	274	312	317	329	313	329	343	349	292	330	350	3,840
2020													
Number of alleged victims	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Jan-Dec 2020

³⁰ The Presumed female victims of the crimes registered in the investigation files initiated before the Public Ministry are considered and are provided month by month by the Attorney General's Offices of the 32 states. In other words, they are alleged criminal acts registered in investigation folders initiated. Source: Own elaboration, based on the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System. Information on violence against women. Criminal incidence and emergency calls 911. Information cut off February 28, 2021. Viewed at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GMOd1xhgo051I_hMNEP-IVdpOdSkY-aH/view

Femicides	75	93	77	72	75	97	77	74	79	81	88	82	970
Intentional homicides	261	219	261	267	232	214	237	226	252	241	172	212	2,794
Sum of Femicides and Intentional Homicides	336	312	338	339	307	311	314	300	331	322	260	294	3,764