



SPOTLIGHT ON PUBLICATIONS: FEMICIDE IN LATIN AMERICA



The publications included in this Spotlight provide an overview of the magnitude and dimensions of femicide in Latin America, including the important factors that produce and sustain this phenomenon such as socio-economic context, and discrimination. The publications also shed light on strategies used for tackling gender violence in the region, including legal frameworks and grassroots activism. The publications provide analysis at three different levels; regional (Latin America), sub-regional (Central America) and national case studies. A special emphasis has been placed on Central America because it is the region with the highest levels of femicide and also where the most promising legislation is being developed.

OVERVIEW OF FEMICIDE IN LATIN AMERICA

► [Dying Because They Are Women. Femicide/Feminicide: Extreme Gender Violence](#)

This issue of the Women's Health Journal, from the [Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network](#) is dedicated to an analysis of extreme gender violence including phenomena like internal armed conflict, immigration, human trafficking, prostitution, drug trafficking and the use and abuse of fire arms. It brings together articles from Latin American experts who share their analysis, insights and statistics on femicide from across the region, including case studies that will be of particular interest to other countries, such as social and institutional responses to femicide in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, the [Guatemalan Law Against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women](#), and a review of processes promoting legislation in Chile.

Full citation: Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network. 2009. Dying Because They Are Women. Femicide/Feminicide: Extreme Gender Violence. In: *Women's Health Journal* 2009 (1) 23-52.

► [No More! The Right of Women to Live a Life Free of Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

This report from the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean provides an overview of gender violence across Latin America and highlights key weaknesses in public policy and judicial systems for effectively eradicating violence against women. The report also explores the cultural and societal relations that sustain asymmetrical power relations and legitimise gender violence. Cases studies include experiences of sex workers in Argentina, intimate femicides in Chile and domestic violence in Puerto Rico. Practitioners and activists seeking to influence governments and promote appropriate legislation might be interested in the lessons offered on monitoring and follow-up mechanisms, including a model for setting up a regional observatory.

Full Citation: ECLAC. 2009. *No More! The Right of Women to Live a Life Free of Violence In Latin America and the Caribbean*. ECLAC, Santiago.



FEMICIDE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

► [Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women, Context and Realities](#)

This newsletter from the [Central America Women's Network \(CAWN\)](#) is a collection of articles by different female activists from Central America advocating for laws and institutions to eliminate gender violence in Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and El Salvador. These activists provide concise and thorough analyses of femicide in their countries, sharing statistics and contextual factors that can drive and reduce this phenomenon. The articles on Guatemala and Mexico might be of interest to practitioners who wish to reflect on the potential and limits of legislation within the current global context. The case study of El Salvador will be useful to those who wish to learn about issues of access to justice for victims and their families.

Full citation: Central America Women's Network. 2009. Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women, Context and Realities. In: *CAWN Newsletter* 24 (2).

► [I Regional Report: Situation and Analysis of Femicide in the Central American Region](#)

This report from the [Central American Council of Human Rights Ombudsman](#) is the result of a research initiative carried out to define an action plan for preventing and fighting against femicide in Central America. Drawing on Central American country data and international, regional and national legal frameworks and jurisprudence, the report provides an in-depth comparative analysis of cases of femicide from across the region, and evaluates the measures taken by governments and ombudsman offices to tackle extreme violence against women. In doing so, the report highlights the challenges, limits and opportunities of legislation and proposes strategies for fighting femicide in the region, which are addressed to different institutions from women's institutes, to the police and the judiciary.

Full citation: Central American Council on Human Rights Ombudsman. 2007. *I Regional Report: Situation and Analysis of Femicide in the Central American Region*. Central American Council on Human Rights Ombudsman, San Jose.

► [No More Killings! Women Respond to Femicides in Central America](#)

This article examines cases of femicide in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua and is the result of the author's collaboration with two Central American women's organisations – the [Central America Women's Network \(CAWN\)](#) and the [Centre for Women's Studies \(CEMH\)](#). It provides regional and national statistics, as well as information on victims and killers' profiles and the relationship between femicide and structural discrimination. It also tackles the issue of government impunity and how it can be challenged, providing examples from international initiatives and women's and grassroots organisations.

Full citation: Prieto-Carrón, M., Thomson, M., Macdonald, M. 2007. No More Killings! Women Respond to Femicides in Central America. In: *Gender and Development* 15 (1) 25-40.



NATIONAL CASE STUDIES

► [Guatemala's Femicide Law: Progress Against Impunity?](#)

This publication from the [Guatemala Human Rights Commission USA](#) describes the long process of lobbying by women's groups and the international community which led, in April 2009, to the implementation of the first and one of the most innovative laws against femicide in the region – the [Guatemalan Law Against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence Against Women](#). This law represented an important victory for women activists, and serves as a model for most of Latin America since it is the first to define femicide as a punishable crime. Despite not yet making a marked impact on national statistics, the law has achieved some notable successes including a shift in cultural perception of women, provision of healthcare, shelter and therapy to female victims of domestic violence and benchmark convictions. Policy and law-makers will find this publication very useful as it describes the flaws of Guatemalan legislation and presents a series of recommendations to strengthen the implementation process.

Full citation: Guatemala Human Rights Commission USA. 2009. *Guatemala's Femicide Law: Progress Against Impunity?* Guatemala Human Rights Commission USA, Washington, DC.

► [Making a Killing, Femicide, Free Trade and La Frontera](#)

This book from Alicia Gaspar de Alba, a border and gender studies expert, brings together relevant essays and testimonies on femicides in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. It aims to analyse the factors that cause and sanction femicide and the measures and actions that seek to protest against this gendered violence and transform social discourse. This publication provides interesting new perspectives on the causes of femicide. For instance, it draws the reader's attention to underlying economic factors such as corporate indifference, the role of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and government policies. Activists might be particularly interested in the review of social movements that have attempted to counter this phenomenon, especially grassroots activism and bi-national civil actions.

Full citation: Gaspar de Alba, A., Guzmán, G. 2010. *Making a Killing, Femicide, Free Trade and La Frontera*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

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FIND OUT MORE FROM [ELLA](#)

To learn more about gender and violence in Latin America, read the [ELLA Brief: Building Legal Frameworks to Address Femicide in Latin America](#) and the [ELLA Guide](#) on gender based violence, which has a full list of the knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA development issues, browse other [ELLA Themes](#).



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