

FEMICIDE

Volume VIII

Abuse and Femicide of the
Older Woman

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PREFACE

Although violence against and murder of older women is a widespread phenomenon across the world, it receives little targeted attention. The simple fact that women get older than men, and as a result must live alone longer, makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, fraud, robbery and even physical abuse. As such, the abuse and femicide of older women is one of the most widespread unpunished crimes, affecting women of all backgrounds, cultures and countries. In many societies, elderly widows are physically and mentally abused, robbed of their right to inherit their assets - eventually losing their societal status. Due to poor education and no independent income, they are financially insecure and dependent on their children or relatives.

FEMICIDE Volume VIII aims to analyse the ways in which women, over the age of 55, are psychologically and physically mistreated all around the globe, often resulting in death.

For this issue of FEMICIDE, we are extremely grateful to academic researchers Prof. Myrna Dawson, Prof. Janice Joseph, Garima Jain, Prof. Shalva Weil, Dr. Marie-Antoinette Sossou and Dr. Joseph Yogtiba, and the Prevalence study of violence and abuse against older women (AVOW) Team for their reports on the abuse and femicide of older women in Canada, African countries, India, Israel, Austria, Ghana, Belgium, Finland, Lithuania and Portugal, respectively. We would also like to express our gratitude to Femicidio.net and Women's Aid who have, again, provided us with reports covering Spain and the UK.

In May 2017, during the 26th Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, Austria, the ACUNS Femicide Team arranged a High Level and Side Event during the conference. Both events focused on data collection practices of femicides, with speakers from UN Agencies and Offices, Permanent Missions, NGOs and academic researchers. The events were well attended and filled with dynamic discussion. Moreover, the following resolution was adopted:

"The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice ... Also urges Member States to take measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish acts of violence against women and girls, in particular gender-related killing, in accordance with national laws, and to act at all levels to end impunity for those responsible for committing such heinous crimes against women and girls;"

In Vienna, Austria, on November 24th, 2017, the International Day to Eliminate Violence Against Women, a symposium will take place to raise awareness about the violence against older women. The symposium is organised by the Academic Council on the United Nations System, Organization of the Families of Asia and the Pacific (OFAP), UNODC, NGO Committee on Ageing in Vienna, NGO CSW, Soroptomist International and the Permanent Missions of Argentina, Belarus, Costa Rica, Italy, Norway, Slovenia and Spain to the International Organizations in Vienna.

The symposium will bring together stakeholders, such as international organisations, Member States, academia, civil society, including women's organisations, to highlight the extreme violence against older women and stress the political and social responsibilities to combat these criminal acts. The key objectives will be to identify and discuss the extreme forms of violence against older women throughout the world with a focus on the most common kind of crimes and regional differences; the role of criminal justice in curbing impunity; and recommended programmes of action for national governments, international organisations, and civil society.

Extreme violence against the older woman is a global issue, which occurs in different forms in different regions. We hope that FEMICIDE VIII helps to underline the urgency of the vulnerable situation of the older woman and results in substantial changes in policy and attitudes.

- Helen Hemblade and Michael Platzer

FACT FILE: VIOLENCE AGAINST OLDER WOMEN

Age International

A study on intimate partner violence against older women found that the older the woman is, the harder it is to cope and engage in help-seeking behaviour.¹ Furthermore, a 2013 meta-study showed that only 17% of sexual violence studies worldwide took women aged over 49 into account.² Only 17% of 133 countries reported any survey data on elder abuse in 2014. Only 34% of countries have services in place that can investigate cases of elder abuse and only 59% have laws to prevent elder abuse.³

A Worldwide Issue

In **Mozambique**, 62% of older women surveyed had experienced some form of abuse in the past six months (2011). This broke down to: economic abuse (47%), emotional and psychological abuse (37%), witchcraft accusations (21%), physical abuse (11%) and sexual abuse (5%). Only 3 out of 10 older women officially reported such cases.⁴ 2,585 older women were killed in **Tanzania** in 2009 after being accused of being a witch. In the Mwanza region alone, 698 older women were killed; that is two killings every two to three days.⁵

According to an EU Prevalence Study in 2011, 28.1% of older women in **Finland, Austria, Belgium, Lithuania and Portugal**, experienced some kind of violence or abuse in 2011. In most cases perpetrators were partners/spouses: however, older women were also abused by their adult children or children-in-law. 3.1% of woman also experienced sexual violence.⁶

83% of women surveyed in **Peru**, reported experiencing at least one form of violence or abuse since the age of 50. In **Mozambique** this was 75%, and in **Kyrgyzstan** it was 39%.⁷

14% of older women surveyed in **Moldova**, in 2016, had been humiliated or threatened. 10% had been victims of financial abuse and 4.5% had been subjected to physical violence.⁸

Older women in **Thailand** are 5 times more likely than older men to have been abused by family members.⁹

A 2010 study in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** showed that 15% of people seeking help after experiencing sexual violence were aged 55 and over. Women over 49 experienced rates of sexual violence on par with the rest of the population, despite representing less than 10% of the overall population.¹⁰

The Inadequate Global Response

Of 131 government reports on violence against women, only 13 recognised that older women were also at risk of violence.¹¹ A 2013 UN report highlighted the fact that domestic violence legislation does not, in general, specifically include older women.¹² Many countries have no domestic violence legislation at all (for example **Kenya, Tunisia, Myanmar and the Russian Federation**). Those that do, often exclude economic violence - a form of violence that women are often subjected to in older age.¹³

Original text: <https://www.ageinternational.org.uk/policy-and-research/gender-inequality/violence-against-older-women-factfile/>

1 Nagele B et al, Intimate Partner Violence Against Older Women, 2010, page 62-63

2 WHO, Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women, 2013, page 16

3 WHO, UNODC, UNDP, Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014

4 Machafa S, Violence and violation of rights against older women, HelpAge International, December 2011

5 Data from police reports, February 2009, extracted from the media by the Legal Human Rights Centre, Tanzania

6 Daphne III AVOW study quoted in UNDESA, Neglect, Abuse and Violence Against Older Women, 2013, page 12

7 HelpAge International, Developing an indicator-based framework for monitoring older people's human rights: panel, survey and key findings for Peru, Mozambique and Kyrgyzstan, 2012

8 HelpAge International, Breaking the silence: Elder abuse in the Republic of Moldova, 2016

9 Chompund, M, Charoenyooth, C, &Palmer, MH, "Prevalence, associated factors and predictors of elder abuse in Thailand", Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research, 14(1), pages 283-296

10 "Now the World Is Without Me": An investigation of sexual violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, A Report by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative With Support from Oxfam America, April 2010

11 E/CN.6/2015/NGO/258

12 Neglect, Abuse and Violence against Older Women, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013

13 The World Bank's Women, Business and the Law online database.

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PART I

Femicide and Abuse of the Older Woman

“Elder abuse is a worldwide concern that touches on human rights, gender equality, domestic violence and population ageing. The feminisation of ageing and its consequences is troubling, particularly given that older women as a group experience unique and compounding disadvantages. Older women face triple jeopardy in that they are part of three different marginalized groups: they are elderly, abused, and female. Gender discrimination across the lifespan therefore has a cumulative effective, and neglect, abuse and violence across the lifespan results in a high lifetime rate of suffering from abuse for older women.”

Initial statement of the WHOSEFVA
(Working with Healthcare Organizations
to Support Elderly Female Victims
of Abuse) Project

1.1 VICTIMISATION OF ELDERLY WOMEN, “WITCHES” AND WIDOWS

Dr. Michael Platzer

Elder abuse is a widespread phenomenon in all countries. However, the simple fact that more women than men over 60 live alone makes this population group more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. The inequality and structural discrimination against women aggravates the problem. In many societies, women are not allowed by law to inherit their husband's assets, often they do not have a proper education and nor do they have marketable skills. Many older women are financially insecure, and are dependent on their children or husband's relatives for their livelihood. In some societies, widows are stigmatised, becoming “non-persons”, and are among the most vulnerable and destitute. Urbanisation and the break-up of multi-generational support systems have also broken the traditional respect and feelings of obligation toward the widowed grandmother in all regions of the world. Moreover, violence against women remains the least punished crime in all jurisdictions. While some countries have dedicated resources to crimes against the elderly, (burglaries, assault, theft, and fraudulent schemes) few have seriously examined the physical and mental abuse suffered at the hands of immediate members of the family or in-laws. These crimes can range from the horrific (Sati, the burning of widows) to dislodging the widow from the family home into a home for the elderly, physical isolation, verbal abuse and gradual impoverishment and dependence.

Of course, the criminal justice system can do only such much to prevent the mistreatment of elderly widows. Much depends on the religious, cultural, community and personal values of the society toward widows.

SOUTH ASIA

India has the largest recorded number of widows in the world at 33 million. 54% of women aged 60 and above are widows (Chen, 2000). In the dominant Hindu society, a widow may be physically alive but socially dead (in many parts of South Asia, widows are expected to wear white and shun all coloured garments and jewellery). It is, in fact, difficult for a widow to inherit her deceased husband's property against the rights claimed by her deceased husband's family. In India, widows' deprivation and stigmatisation are exacerbated by ritual and religious practices. Sati (widow burning), although

criminalised by law, still occurs. Remarriage may be forbidden in the higher castes or remarriage, where permitted, may be restricted to a family member (usually the deceased's brother). A widow, upon remarriage, may be required to relinquish all property rights. Thousands of widows are disowned by their relatives and thrown out of their homes in the context of land-grabbing. Their options, given a lack of education and training, are mostly limited to becoming exploited, domestic labourers or turning to begging or prostitution.

Witch-hunting, despite the Indian Prevention of Witch Practices Act, still occurs in North and Central India - thousands are killed each year. A widow's very right to inherit becomes her death sentence when the husband's family asks her to relinquish the property. For such a heinous crime, the punishment is only six months' imprisonment or a fine of 1,000 rupees but the law is rarely enforced. Law enforcement has arrested only 2% of the culprits.

Thousands of India's widows live in abject poverty. The international media has made sensationalist documentaries about the widows abandoned by their families at the temple shrines of Varanasi, Maltura, and Tirupati. In Vrindavan alone, an estimated 20,000 widows struggle to survive: chanting and begging for alms from pilgrims and tourists. Some of the older widows may have lived the greater part of their lives in these temples.

In spite of the 1956 Hindu Succession Act, widows' lives are still determined by local customary law, which does not permit them to inherit. Legislation criminalising child marriage, the battery of one's own wife or sati has not succeeded in eliminating such traditions which persist in the rural areas of some Indian states.

In Bangladesh, the Muslim widow is theoretically better-off than the Indian Hindu widow. Under Sharia Law, the widow is entitled to one-eighth of her husband's estate. However, illiterate poor widows in rural areas are regularly deprived of their rightful inheritance (Ishrat, 1995). In one survey only 25% of widows sampled received their rightful share from their parents and only 32% from their husband's estate. Polygamy enables second wives to be brought into a marriage when the first

wife is considered too old for sex or childbearing. The daughters of poor widows represent an economic liability and are often given away to older, frail, disabled men, thus ensuring serial widowhood.

Widows' daughters who are without male protectors and not enrolled in schools in Nepal and Bangladesh are particularly vulnerable to being trafficked to the brothels in India. Poor homeless Bangladeshi widows come to the cities in search of jobs as domestic servants and are forced to leave their children behind in the hope that their meagre income which they send home will be used to feed, clothe and educate their children. Anecdotal evidence points to a direct link between widowhood and child prostitution.

In Pakistan, the Honour Codes oppress all women with a blanket of silence hiding the cruelty, imprisonment, even death inflicted upon widows who are suspected of bringing dishonour to the family. Similar "Hudood" ordinances exist in Saudi Arabia, Jordan and other Islamic countries. The mourning rituals in some of these countries verge on the barbaric, requiring women to wear uncomfortable "mourning clothes", being kept in a hut or separate part of the house, and not allowed to appear in public. They may be denied food and can even be physically abused by their in-laws.

The United Nations estimates that there are several million war widows in Afghanistan who are the sole survivors for their families (Report of Secretary General, 2001). The Taliban forbids women to work outside the house or even leave the house unaccompanied by a male relative. The Taliban has also decreed that food aid must be collected by a male relative. Thus, the children of widowed mothers suffer malnutrition and ill health (International Herald Tribune). The plight of these war widows has been brought to the attention of international community, but without effective remedies to relieve these desperate war widows, they are reduced to begging in the streets and exposed to more violence.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The situation is similar in parts of Asia which have been ravaged by war, namely, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, and East Timor. One-third of East Timor's

population has been killed, disappeared, or died of war-induced famine. In many cases, widows have sought refuge in the hills or were moved at gunpoint to camps in West Timor, and often became victims of rape. Fearing retaliation or ostracism by their communities and families, they have been reluctant to report these crimes.

The war in Cambodia left widows in charge of their rural homes, in some regions 35% of households are headed by widows. Due to widespread poverty, many widows are forced to become sex workers or to sell their daughters to trafficking agencies for money. In neighbouring Myanmar, widows are also struggling to bring up their children and to care for the sick and disabled victims of their internal civil war. The dearth of alternatives has led many of the young widows to move across to Thailand and become part of their thriving sex industry. Some destitute widows sell their daughters to trafficking agencies for money.

PACIFIC

Media reports have revealed disturbing mutilation and murder of women accused of "witchcraft" in Papua New Guinea (500 cases have been reported). Suspected witches have been thrown from cliffs, tortured, dragged behind cars, and burned alive (Zocca, 2008). Victims are mainly widows or other elderly women who do not have children or relatives to protect them, women born out of wedlock or women who do not have high standing in the family (Report, Mangoo, 2012). Perpetrators are rarely arrested. Elderly women in Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines suffer fates similar to the United States and Europe.

AFRICA

Africa suffers from all of the above victimisations of widows, as well as, degrading rituals such as sexual cleansing by male members, the practice of "levirate" (widows must marry their dead husband's brother), accusations of witchcraft, banishment (to "witch camps"), even murder, and the effects of armed conflicts (especially in South Sudan, Central African Republic, Congo, western Chad, northern Cameroon, Liberia, Sierra Leone, north eastern Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Angola, and Mozambique). While modern laws, international

treaties, and even constitutional guarantees should provide protection for women, impunity is, in fact, the reality. The customary codes, patriarchal nature of society, and the particular vulnerability of women to natural disasters, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, untreated health problems, lack of education and skills, but also the structural-adjustment policies, that resulted in the destruction of small scale agricultural plots, have reduced widows to begging on the streets and putting their children into child labour.

60% of adult women were widowed by the wars in Angola and Mozambique. The genocide in Rwanda created 500,000 widows. Even years after the mass raping of the war widows, these women now suffer and die of HIV. Moreover, intergenerational violence is now continuing because of the vulnerability of their girls, who cannot go to school. Similar reports come from Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, and northern Uganda.

According to the World Widows Report, published by the Loomba Foundation, widows know no peace in Angola, Botswana, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe (World Widows Report 2016). Women have been accused of being witches, to obtain their property in Tanzania, Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, and South Africa (ACUNS, FEMICIDE, 2012). Many of these women flee with their children to towns to seek refuge. In Ghana there are “witch” camps where widows seek mutual protection (Reiterer, 2013). According to Action Aid, there are six witch camps located in Northern Ghana: Gambaga, Kuku, Gnani, Bonyase, Nabuli, and Kpatinga. An Action Aid survey of these camps found more than 70% of these women were accused of being witches after their husbands died (Action Aid). Women who are accused of witchcraft suffer sometimes fatal violence, torture, and banishment with only the clothes left on their backs. According to expert reports, accusations of sorcery are a convenient disguise for premeditated killings based more on a person’s dislike for another, jealousy, envy, greed, rivalry or revenge, especially targeting women from other tribes or communities (Report Mangoo, 2012). According to the Tanzania Human Rights Centre (Thomas Reuters, 2017), over 500 killings take place each year in Tanzania. In Zimbabwe, 42 cases of murder of women accused

of witchcraft took place involving women over 50. A particularly vile custom in some African countries is that widows are forced to drink the water that their husbands’ corpses have been washed in. The worst irony is that women accused of practicing sorcery can actually be prosecuted under various provisions of the criminal legislation, although no actual harm needs to be proven, only the intention of doing harm.

Help Age International and other Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) are seeking to educate local communities about the harmful consequences of witchcraft allegations, misconception about HIV and other illnesses which local people cannot explain. Community members have been trained as paralegal advisors to provide legal advice on land, inheritance and marriage rights (Help Age). In addition, influencing the behaviour of traditional healers and local law enforcement, and working with local government officials, religious leaders, and the media have been priorities. The Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions recommends that all killings of alleged witches be treated as murder.

LATIN AMERICA

Women in Latin America suffer the phenomenon of “machismo” or male chauvinism, are kept in subordinate positions, and discriminated against particularly in education and employment positions. This ultimately has a cumulative effect when their beauty has faded and their husbands die. Many widows are then impoverished, suffer loneliness, and low self-esteem and depression due to the lack of support systems. Indigenous women are now particularly vulnerable as their traditional ways of life are being destroyed by the invasion of miners, loggers, and unscrupulous men who have come into their natural habitat.

Armed conflict in Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, and Venezuela has also resulted in thousands of war widows. During the “violencia” in Guatemala, 15,000 indigenous men were killed. In Chile and Argentina, many men “disappeared”, leaving their families without knowledge of their beloved ones and without economic support. In many of the regions of Latin America, where drug cartels

or organised gangs terrorise the population, innocents are killed or forced into criminal activities. These populations, often living in impoverished neighbourhoods, are then invaded by police, para-military, or vigilantes who cause more deaths. The vulnerable widows are exploited by these "mafia" and forced to hand over protection money. Others flee with their children to "El Norte".

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Since the collapse of communism and the social support system, many elderly women have been impoverished and suffer from psychological depression, family violence and suicides. Men succumb to alcoholism and now die much earlier than decades before (life expectancy is now 58 years from 62 years in 1980). Thus, there are more widows now than in the past. In addition, there are soldiers' widows in Russia from the wars in Afghanistan and Chechnya. With the breakdown of law and order and respect for the elderly, robbery, assault, and rape of defenceless women has increased. The low pensions that women were given in the Soviet Union (it was unpaid for many years after the collapse of the USSR) and in Eastern Europe, aggravated by the fact that many women lost their jobs as a result of economic restructuring and their benefits (canteens, childcare), meant there is a large group of very vulnerable elderly women.

Many widows in Eastern European and the Baltic states are ethnic Russians who migrated in the post-World War II years from throughout the Soviet Union, and now in their old age are losing their rights to property, citizenship and basic assistance. Moreover, the new emphasis on a market economy, glamour, and fancy life style has left the older woman excluded and invisible.

UNITED STATES

Elder abuse is a hidden, yet growing problem in the United States. Research estimates that approximately one in ten older adults living in their homes experience elder abuse each year (Acierno et al, 2010). At the same time, elder abuse is significantly underreported, for reasons of shame or fear. While the number of older persons will increase, due to the post World War II "baby boom", the U.S. Government Accountability Office (US. GAO, 2011) has said that resources

directed to elder abuse are not keeping pace with the growing volume and complexity of cases.

A landmark national study of residents (mean age of 79 years) of long-term care facilities where investigation of sexual abuse was detected found that the most likely perpetrators were facility staff (43%) or another resident (41%) (Ramsey-Klawnsnik, 2008). In home care situations, women have been subject to rape, sexual molestation, sadistic sexual activity, attempted penetration of the vagina or anus, fondling of breasts or genitals, oral-genital contact, invasive genital touching while providing personal care, and unnecessary digital rectal examination by spouses, intimate partners, male relatives, or home care givers. Although possible but less likely are strangers, acquaintances, visitors in facilities, online predators, and sexual predators released from prison. When abused by a spouse, partner or family member, there is often a history of domestic violence or incest. In almost all cases, the women have a diminished ability to flee or resist physical attack (suffer cognitive impairment, dementia in particular) and are in a dependent situation.

Advanced age does not protect one from sexual assault, but rather increases the risk in many ways because of the disabilities and vulnerabilities of older women. The US National Center on Elder Abuse defines sexual abuse as any "non-consenting sexual contact" including, rape, sodomy, coerced nudity, sexually explicit photographing, touching genitals, biting breasts, neck or buttocks, sadism, torture and traumatisation. Most of the older victims are female (although male victims have been reported in almost every study). Genital injuries occur with more frequency and severity in post-menopausal women than younger rape victims (Poulos & Sheridan, 2008). Older victims are also more likely to be admitted to a hospital following an assault (Eckert & Sugar, 2008). Most perpetrators have special access to victims as family members, intimate partners, fellow residents, or care providers. Persons who sexually offend family members exhibit characteristics of mental illness, substance abuse, domineering or sadistic personalities, sexual deviancy, and sexist views of wives as property (Ramsey-Klawnsnik, 2003).

Victims of elder sexual abuse are reluctant to report, especially if the perpetrator is a family member, for fear of further harm, misinterpretation of disclosure as part of dementia, and unsympathetic responses by the police. The US National Institute for Justice research has shown that the older a victim, the less likely the offender was found guilty (Schofield, 2006)

Financial abuse of elderly women often occurs in combination with physical or psychological abuse. As in developing countries, family members have often sought to inherit or control the assets of elderly women by using undue influence to transfer deeds to property, titles to vehicles, bank accounts, retirement accounts, use credit cards, or even forge signatures of their mothers. In addition, professional scammers solicit money under false pretences (sweepstake scams, computer based scams, debt and tax scams) and take advantage of older women who are lonely, vulnerable, gullible or cognitively impaired. Younger men have been known to romance older women with the intention of acquiring her assets and then abandon her after the assets are acquired. Predatory lenders have pressured older homeowners to take out home equity loans at exorbitant rates and financial advisers have encouraged elderly women to invest in dubious schemes. Unscrupulous home repair people do not provide the services they are paid to do. Paid caregivers “steal time” by engaging in personal activities while being paid to provide care and ignoring the needs of the person who pays them. Elderly women living alone are particularly vulnerable to theft of pocket books and battery on the street and breaking and entry of their homes and robbery of their valuables. Identity theft by paid care givers and nursing home employees can be even more devastating in terms of losing control of their bank accounts and liquid assets.

These different forms of financial abuse not only deplete the older adult’s income and assets but diminish their ability to pay for medications, medical supplies, health care and other health-related needs. This theft affects the health conditions of elderly women, impaired cognition, physical disability, and mental health. The conditions most consistently cited as risks for financial abuse are sex, dependency, and increased age (between 70 and 89 years).

African Americans in the United States who are below the poverty line and reside in households with non-spousal family members are nearly six times more vulnerable to exploitation than non-African Americans. Family members with addictions take money or property to support their habits. But many times it is unclear in terms of compensation for caregiving or family members who are in possession of the assets or bank accounts do not understand that the money should be spent only for the older person.

There are red flags indicative of financial abuse such as sudden changes in bank accounts, unexplained withdrawals of large sums of money, inclusion of additional names on an elder’s bank account, abrupt changes in a will, sudden transfer of assets to a family member, discovery of elder’s signature being forged, unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions.

Response to the Abuse of Elderly Women

Many of these afflictions apply to elderly women in almost all countries. So what can be done? The United Nations has promoted the Madrid Plan of Action on Aging of 2002, and each year the General Assembly calls upon Member States to implement the Plan on a national level and set up units to protect their senior citizens. In 2011, the United Nations designated 15 June as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The 23 June has been declared International Widows Day and the General Assembly reminded us that millions of widows endure extreme poverty, ostracism, violence, homelessness, ill health and discrimination in law and custom. In 2016, Ban ki-Moon sought to link the plight of widows to the “2030 Sustainable Development Agenda with its pledge to leave no one behind has a particular resonance for widows, who are among the most marginalised and isolated”. But there is no specific mention of widows or older women neither in the Sustainable Development Goals nor in the 174 indicators.

The Global Fund for Widows and Widows for Peace through Development and Widow’s Rights International prepared a report for the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, “Widowhood: An Economic, Social, and Humanitarian Crisis: the Solution to Sustainable

Development". While the elderly undoubtedly deserve our respect and make substantial contributions by working longer and also taking care of grandchildren, their political influence remains limited because the percentage of the elderly, even in developed countries does not exceed twenty percent. Perhaps, when the next generation reaches 60 or 70 years of age, the power relations will change. However, for disadvantaged women, the cultural and embedded discrimination against women may not change. It may be hoped that laws to protect women already on the books may be enforced more and more and that police, medical personnel, social workers, and judges become more sensitised. Media and non-governmental organisations continue to press for recognition of the plight of abandoned widows and fight against the discrimination against the older women.

The UN Population Fund has identified the sexual health problems of older women (particularly in connection with mourning rites and conflict violence) but UNFPA has not been able to fund research and programs for these affected women. Their extreme vulnerability to HIV/AIDS has not received enough attention. UNHCR has developed special projects for refugee women, but not targeted the special needs of widows as a separate group- nor recognised their personal status (such as flight from a forced remarriage or feared violence from their family or community as legitimate grounds for asylum). Women's inheritance rights and the extreme hardship widows face in entering the poverty eradication has finally slowly entered into development discussions.

The World Bank Development Report "Voices of the Poor" now includes a special section on widowhood. In 2001, a first International Conference on Widows was organised in London. It recommended that legal reforms in inheritance and landownership rights be enacted and enforced; action be taken to end cruel, dehumanising, repugnant and discriminatory practices widows must endure; customary, religious, and modern laws reinforcing discriminatory practices be abolished; laws be strengthened to ensure the punishment of perpetrators of violence against the elderly; continuous sensitisation of law enforcement personnel, judges, magistrates, religious leaders

and traditional leaders; independent research be undertaken into the extent of violations against widows; multi-sectoral schemes be developed to protect, empower, and support the elderly in society.

In theory, modern laws, international treaties and government constitutions guarantee equality and the protection of women against violence; in reality, customs and the patriarchal nature of society still allow for impunity. Funds for the prevention, training and protection against elder abuse are limited in all countries; even less money is provided for research on causes of elderly abuse, what works to prevent violence, and how to prosecute the perpetrators. Even at the United Nations, there has been a reluctance to draw attention to the plight of elderly women in human rights documents or in the development agenda. Worse still, many states have entered reservations on the articles of the Convention of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) pertaining to personal status law, inheritance and land rights – issues which most affect widows.

In 2016, 130 million widows still live in desperate poverty, and many suffer horrible violations of their rights. The Secretary-General asks us to make widows more visible in our societies and support them in living productive, equal and fulfilling lives. The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda with its motto to "leave no one behind" has a particular resonance for widows, who are among the most marginalised and isolated. There is still much work to be done before the victimisation of older women and widows will be eradicated.

Resources

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1.2 PATTERNS IN FEMICIDE OF OLDER WOMEN IN ONTARIO, CANADA, 1974-2012

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In June 2017, a former nurse in Ontario, Canada, was sentenced to life for eight murders of elderly nursing home residents. Now regarded as one of the most prolific serial killers in Canadian history, her case highlighted how the elderly are vulnerable to various forms of victimisation, a phenomenon often neglected in violence prevention research. The gender distribution of her victims – nine women and five men – is consistent with existing research that show elderly women are more likely to be victims of abuse than elderly men – not surprising given women also tend to live longer, but often do so in poverty with chronic health/disability issues, isolation and other factors exacerbating their marginalisation (Yan and Brownell, 2015). However, in contrast to the above case and similar to women's experiences of abuse early in their life course, elderly women are more at risk from those they know, particularly male partners, than from acquaintances, strangers, or professional caregivers. This is also true with respect to the most extreme form of violence against women – femicide – although little is currently known about patterns in femicide of older women. Given the increasing aging population and, as a result, the growing population at risk, it is necessary to begin to understand these crimes to better inform the development of appropriate preventions.

To address this gap, the current population-based study draws from data documenting femicide in Canada's most populous province between 1974 and 2012 collected from official data sources.¹ Patterns in killings of older women in Ontario are described and compared to femicides involving their younger counterparts.² To identify the best

approaches to violence prevention for older women, it is important to understand, not only patterns in their own victimisation, but also how the characteristics and circumstances of their deaths might differ (or not) from femicides that involve younger women. The total sample analysed comprised 2,025 femicides: 17% or 335 victims were aged 60 and older and 83% or 1,690 cases involved younger women aged 18 to 54 years.³ As such, almost one in five femicides involved older women.

As described below, there were more differences than similarities in the killings of older and younger femicide victims across most of the characteristics examined (see also Table 1 and 2). In many instances, this stems in part from the two groups of femicide victims being at different life stages and/or from changing relationship trends in society that would arguably be more evident among younger victims. Regardless of the reason for these differences, understanding how their deaths differ can contribute to our knowledge base about factors that exacerbate the risk of femicide for older women particularly and provide information needed to develop more nuanced and appropriate intervention and prevention measures for this group of women.

examined. In this sample, missing information ranged from none missing to 80% missing. As such, the analysis focused primarily on those variables for which information was available in more than 50% of the cases, focusing on valid percentages. However, it is argued that understanding patterns for some factors, even if based on limited information, can contribute to more focused interventions because, when comparing two groups for which missing information is similar, differences in patterns can still be identified. As such, percentages for cases with information only are reported below for prior criminal record and prior psychiatric history for victims and perpetrators, but should be seen as minimum estimates only.

3 The sample is restricted to those aged 18 and older to compare the killings of younger and older adult women.

1 Data sources for the ongoing study include coroners' data, police/prosecutor files, court reports and media sources.

2 As is often the case when using official data sources, missing information varies depending upon the characteristics being

Table 1: Victim and perpetrator characteristics and type of victim-perpetrator relationship in cases involving older and younger femicide victims (Ontario, 1974-2012)

Variables	Older Women (N=335)	Younger Women (N=1,690)
<i>Victim characteristics</i>		
Age (mean)	72 years	35 years
Married and/or living with a partner	57%	55%
Widowed	32%	2%
Divorced/separated	8%	21%
Single/never married	3%	17%
Children/dependents	91%	78%
Employed, full or part-time	14%	62%
Unemployed	3%	17%
Out of labour force	84%	22%
White	77%	66%
Prior criminal record	< 1%	8%
Psychiatric history	9%	6%
<i>Perpetrator characteristics</i>		
Male	92%	98%
Age (mean)	48 years	36 years
Married and/or living with a partner	60%	53%
Divorced/separated	7%	26%
Single/never married	33%	21%
Children/dependents	76%	73%
Employed, full or part-time	22%	63%
Unemployed	25%	27%
Out of labour force	53%	10%
White	70%	64%
Prior criminal record – violent	10%	19%
Prior criminal record – non-violent	7%	13%
Psychiatric history	25%	12%
<i>Victim-perpetrator relationship</i>		
Current/former spouse/partner	34%	62%
Estranged partner	2%	20%
Parent	11%	2%
Other family/kin	12%	4%
Strangers	11%	6%
Friends	7%	4%
Housemates/roommates	6%	1%
Neighbours	4%	1%
Acquaintances	4%	4%
Other	11%	16%

Femicides of older women

Socio-demographic characteristics of victims

As shown in Table 1, among victims aged 60 and older, the average age was 72 years with the oldest victims aged 96. The average age for younger victim group was 35 years. For both victim groups, the majority were married and/or living with their partners (57% and 55%); however, as might be expected, the next largest marital status for older women was widowed (32%) compared to divorced/separated (21%) and single/never married (17%) for younger victims. The majority of both older and younger victims had children (91% and 78% respectively). Only a small proportion of older victims were employed in formal occupations (14%), but almost two-thirds of the younger victims were employed, fulltime/part-time (62%). Beyond the 3% of unemployed older victims, most were out of the labour force altogether (84%; e.g. homemakers, students, retired, disabled). While both older and younger victims were most often white (77% and 66%)¹, there were higher proportions of indigenous (10%) and visible minority populations (10%)² among younger victims.³ Although few victims had prior criminal records, significantly fewer older women had criminal records (less than 1%) than younger victims (8%). Psychiatric histories were also uncommon in both groups (9% compared to 6%).⁴

Socio-demographic characteristics of perpetrators

Among solved cases, 92% of the perpetrators were male in femicides of older women with an average age of 48 years whereas perpetrators in cases

involving younger women were almost exclusively male (98%) and significantly younger (36 years). Similar to their victims, most perpetrators were married and/or living with a partner (60% and 53%), but there was a higher proportion of divorced/separated perpetrators in younger victim cases. Single/never married perpetrators were significantly more common in femicides of older women (33%) compared to younger victims (21%). About three-quarters of all perpetrators had children.

While 22% of perpetrators were formally employed in older victim cases, a significantly higher proportion were working full- or part-time (63%) in cases involving younger femicide victims. Again, likely reflecting life stages, about five times the number of perpetrators were out of the labour force in older compared to younger victim cases. Like their victims, the majority of perpetrators were white (70% and 64%), but there were higher proportions of indigenous and visible minority perpetrators in the younger victim group (7% and 12%, respectively). Where information was available, one in 10 perpetrators (10%) who killed older women had a prior violent record and another 7% had non-violent records. About one quarter had a history of psychiatric treatment. In contrast, more perpetrators in femicides involving younger victims had prior records for violent (19%) or non-violent crimes (13%) compared to cases involving older femicide victims, but a much lower proportion had a history of psychiatric treatment (12%). Although differences were not as vast as some of the other characteristics, they remained significant.

Patterns in the relationship between victims and perpetrators

Victim-perpetrator relationships are often a key factor in understanding femicide and, although the proportion varies by world region, intimate femicides typically represent the majority of cases internationally. Consistent with this trend, the majority of femicides of older women were intimate femicides (34%), but typically these involved current partners (32%) rather than former partners (2%). In contrast, there were two striking differences in the proportion of intimate femicides among younger femicide victims. First, almost twice as many younger victims (62%) were killed by current/former partners compared to older victims (34%)

¹ We acknowledge that this captures a diverse group of women; however, consistent with other research, data on race/ethnic identity is problematic and inconsistent, precluding more refined race/ethnic comparisons.

² Used by Statistics Canada and defined by the Employment Equity Act, the term “visible minority” refers to “persons, other than Aboriginal/indigenous peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” and consist mainly of the following groups: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Arab, West Asian, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Japanese, and Korean (see <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/concepts/definitions/minority01>).

³ These distributions are not shown in Table 1.

⁴ It is important to underscore once again that these two variables – criminal record and psychiatric history – were missing information in more than half the cases so numbers are underestimated.

Second, while both younger and older victims were more likely to be killed by current partners (42% and 32% respectively), younger victims were 10 times more likely to be killed by estranged partners than older victims (20% and 2% respectively). Other relationship types that were common among older victims: one in 10 perpetrators (11%), primarily male (94%), were children of the victims as well as other kin (12%) and strangers (11%). These relationships were less common among younger femicide victims as shown in Table 1.

Table 2: Characteristics of incident and court outcomes, older and younger femicide victims (Ontario, 1974-2012)

Variables	Older Women (N=335)	Younger Women (N=1,690)
<i>Characteristics of the incident</i>		
Only victim	77%	80%
Lone perpetrator	98%	95%
No witnesses	76%	65%
Child witnesses	3%	13%
Other family witnesses	4%	4%
Non-family, neighbour witnesses	7%	9%
Other victims as witnesses	3%	2%
Other witnesses	7%	7%
Victim substance use	15%	38%
Perpetrator substance use	42%	54%
Victim killed in home	80%	65%
Victim killed in bedroom of home	24%	20%
Victim killed in institution	7%	<1%
Method, beating	26%	17%
Method, stabbing	25%	30%
Method, shooting	21%	26%
'Overkill' present	37%	39%
Evidence of sexual violence	13%	24%
Victim left nude/partially unclothed	19%	35%
Perpetrator tried to conceal crime	15%	24%
Perpetrator remained at scene	57%	41%
Perpetrator confessed to crime	92%	85%
Perpetrator commit suicide	26%	20%
Perpetrator attempted suicide	6%	8%
Case remains unsolved	7%	7%
First degree murder charged laid	39%	51%
Second degree murder charge laid	46%	41%
Plead guilty to the charge	60%	51%
Conviction, first-degree murder	12%	18%
Conviction, second-degree murder	28%	42%
Conviction, manslaughter	29%	26%
Conviction, other (e.g. neglect)	1%	3%
Not criminally responsible	30%	11%
Average sentence length	12 years	14 years

Characteristics of the femicide incident and patterns in court outcomes

Table 2 shifts the focus to incident characteristics beginning with the number of victims and perpetrators that were typically involved in femicides. Results show that femicide victims were most often the sole victim (77% and 80%) and their cases almost exclusively involved lone perpetrators (98% and 95%). Although not common in either group, witnesses were more often present for older rather than younger femicide victims. When witnesses were present, children were more than four times as likely to be witnesses in femicides of younger victims, suggesting that adult witnesses may be more likely in cases involving older victims. While only 15 percent of older women were known to be using substances, primarily alcohol, at the time of their killing, almost three times as many perpetrators had been (42%). In contrast, substance use appeared to play a greater role in cases involving younger femicide victims with more than twice as many victims (38%) and a much greater proportion of perpetrators (54%) using alcohol/drugs at the time of the killing. Both older and younger victims were most likely to be killed in their homes or one they shared with their killers (80% and 65%) and most often the killings occurred in their bedrooms. However, significantly fewer young women were killed at home, suggesting that their deaths may be more public in nature. Although proportions were small for both groups, compared to older women, fewer younger victims were killed in institutions. Among older victims, most were killed in nursing homes, hospitals, or group homes.

Older victims were most often beaten to death (26%) or stabbed (25%) and one in five were shot (21%; primarily long guns). In contrast, the most common method used in the killing of younger victims was stabbings (30%), followed by shootings (26%) and then beatings (16%), the latter of which was significantly more common for older victims. Consistent with the concept of 'overkill', multiple methods (i.e. beating and stabbing) or repeated use of one method (i.e. multiple stab wounds) were almost equally likely in both types of femicides (37% and 39%). Although data were limited, there were significantly more cases that involved sexual violence among younger victims (24%) than older victims of femicide (13%). Similarly, there were more younger victims left nude/partially unclothed (35%), than

older victims (19%). Fewer perpetrators in femicides of older women (15%) attempted to conceal their crimes compared to younger victim cases (24%) whereas more perpetrators in older victim cases remained at the scene (57%) and confessed to the killing at some point (92%) compared to perpetrators in younger victim cases (41% and 85%). Finally, just over one in four perpetrators of older women (26%) committed suicide following the femicide compared to one in five (20%) of the perpetrators in femicides of younger victims.

Criminal justice responses to femicide of older women

Similar proportions (7%) of both groups of femicide cases remain unsolved; however, an examination of outcomes in the femicides that did not end in the suicide of the perpetrator demonstrates a clear pattern in criminal justice responses to killings of older and younger femicide victims. Consistent with other types of homicide, most cases in both groups resulted in an initial charge of murder, either first- or second-degree, but significantly more perpetrators who killed younger victims were charged with the more serious first-degree murder (51%) compared to those who killed older victims (39%). Further, while perpetrators of younger women were less likely to plead guilty (51% compared to 60%), they were still more likely to be convicted of murder, either first- or second-degree, but most commonly the latter (42%). In contrast, in cases involving older victims, convictions for second-degree murder (28%) and the lesser offense of manslaughter (29%) were common, but so too were perpetrators found not fit to stand trial or not criminally responsible by reason of mental disorder (30%). The average sentence length was 12 years compared to 14 years for those convicted in cases involving older and younger femicide victims, respectively.

Discussion

There is a dearth of reliable research on femicides of older women. This population-based study demonstrates that the lethal victimisation of older women differs significantly from that of younger women in the characteristics of those involved, the circumstances surrounding their deaths and the criminal justice responses. While some patterns are similar, there are significant

differences in the degree of variation in, or presence of, most of the variables examined. As argued above, some of these differences are attributable to different life stages or changing relational lifestyles more common among younger generations. Regardless, any variations in deaths of older and younger women remain important to developing more focused prevention efforts for both groups. In the sections below, some differences are highlighted to underscore various priorities for future research and prevention efforts. The section concludes with the identification of some significant data gaps that require more immediate efforts to improve reliability and validity of information.

Identifying research and prevention priorities for femicide of older women

First, while most perpetrators in femicide cases are married and/or living with their partners, who are also often their victims, a significantly higher number of older (33%) than younger women (21%) were killed by single/never married perpetrators. This finding contrasts with traditional theories such as opportunity perspectives which suggest that older women should have reduced risk of femicide, particularly from strangers, because their day-to-day activities are more concentrated in time and in their homes, arguably limiting contact with potential offenders. The current study found that older women are more likely to be killed by strangers than their younger counterparts, suggesting that opportunities are not restricted primarily to activities, particularly in public spaces, but also to vulnerabilities, in private and public, that may stem from “women’s ability to marshal resources for their own protection” (Gartner and McCarthy, 1991: 292). Research has shown that many older women often live alone, in poverty and isolation, and with chronic illnesses/disabilities and, therefore, are also likely more limited in resources and the ability to protect themselves. This finding also underscores the fact that, although older women still have more to fear from male partners than any other type of perpetrator, prevention efforts need to recognise the more varied relationships that older women often share with their killers – for example, strangers as well as their, primarily male, adult children.

Second, the results demonstrated that most victims and perpetrators in cases of femicide were white,

but this was significantly more evident among older victims largely due to greater proportions of indigenous and visible minority populations involved in femicide of younger victims. The reasons for this are unclear, but likely stem in part from two demographic patterns: (1) indigenous women and men are a younger population; and (2) the increasing diversity of the Canadian population, particularly in Ontario, which may be more clearly reflected in younger generations. Age has been linked to victimisation with rates being higher among young adults and declining as age increases (Perreault, 2015). It has also been documented that the indigenous population in Canada is considerably younger than the non-Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada 2015). As such, it would be expected that the proportion of indigenous victims and perpetrators would also be higher in cases involving younger femicide victims. Canada is also witnessing a rapidly-changing population in recent decades due to declines in fertility and increases in immigration. Changes in the population have not been experienced evenly across the country, however (Statistics Canada 2010). Ontario, and particularly its urban centre of Toronto, is one region that has experienced a growing diversity of racial/ethnic groups or visible minorities. Arguably this diversity would be more clearly reflected among younger populations (Statistics Canada 2010), so it would also be expected that victims and perpetrators in femicides involving younger women would also be more diverse as shown in this study. As such, prevention efforts that seek to reduce violence against women, and particularly femicide, must increasingly attend to the growing diversity of the population while recognising that older women are currently less represented among this group today, but will not remain so over time.

Third, there has been much attention recently to the role of separation and estrangement as one of the most common risk factors for intimate femicide and rightly so – it consistently ranks as one of the top risk factors worldwide although often conditional on other factors as well (Stöckl et al. 2014). This study shows that the role of separation/estrangement appears to be conditional depending on the age group examined because, on the surface at least, older women appear to have more to fear from current than estranged partners. It is possible that some of these cases occurred because the woman

stated her intention to leave or was trying to do so when killed and, as such, separation may have played a role. However, the same could be argued in cases involving younger victims, but they remain at much greater risk from estranged partners. For older women, then, prevention efforts that continue to, or more often, recognise that some women are currently in relationships with their abusers and may want – or need – to remain so are crucial. It has already been argued that prevention needs to recognise that leaving a relationship is not always the only, or preferred, option and this is perhaps more true for older women. However, further research would have to explore this contention further.

Fourth, unexpectedly and concerning is what appear to be lighter sentences for those who kill older femicide victims. First-degree murder charges were significantly more likely in cases involving younger compared to older victims. It might be argued that initial charges are less important than subsequent convictions and sentences if not for the fact that initial charges often determine later outcomes. For example, the higher proportion of first-degree murder charges may, in fact, explain at least in part the fewer perpetrators who pled guilty in cases of femicide involving younger victims. In other words, more serious charges may deter some from pleading guilty because, even when pleas are negotiated, penalties often remain severe. In addition, despite their greater likelihood to plead not guilty, perpetrators in cases involving younger victims were significantly more likely to be convicted of murder and to receive longer sentences than those who killed older women. One might speculate, in the Canadian context at least, that the greater presence of sexual assault in cases of younger victims can partially explain this difference because sexual assault as part of a homicide is to automatically lead to a first-degree murder charge. In fact, some researchers have suggested that the role of sexual violence in killings of women might explain what has been found to be a 'female victim effect' (e.g. Richards et al., 2014). That is, penalties in cases involving female, rather than male, victims are often more severe which may have less to do with gender of the victim and more to do with the role of sexual violence as an aggravating factor. However, given the emphasis in much of this research on capital sentencing in the United States, until further research examines the role of sexual

violence in conviction and sentencing, its role in the perceived downgrading in seriousness of femicides of older women must remain speculation.

Finally, and related to the above, is the finding that mental illness is, or appears to be seen as, a more significant factor in femicides of older women. Although based on limited data, psychiatric histories were twice as common among perpetrators of older rather than younger women. Perpetrators in cases of femicide of older women were also almost three times more likely to be found not criminally responsible (or unfit to stand trial) compared to those who killed younger women. Given these patterns, future research should identify what relationships these perpetrators had with their victims and, if primarily male partners, what prevention efforts can be enhanced when perpetrators have sought treatment. In addition, health care professionals who may be in contact with older women with older male partners should be more attuned to the role of mental illness in increasing their risk of victimisation, particularly if the male is the primary caregiver (Salari 2007). However, more information about mental health is required before more concrete conclusions can be reached as discussed below. In relation to the perceived role of mental illness in criminal justice responses, the potential overrepresentation of perpetrators who were found not criminally responsible among femicide of older women should also be explored. What types of mental illnesses were evident? What evidence was presented to support the claim of not criminally responsible?

Addressing data gaps needed for informed prevention

The larger ongoing study from which the data for the current analysis were drawn are unique in the time covered – almost four decades – and in the number of variables examined (Dawson, 2016). Furthermore, in light of recent discussions about the importance of disaggregating data by, at minimum, the gender, age, and relationship of those involved (e.g. Walby, 2017), the level of detail provided for many of the variables examined is unprecedented. However, no data are perfect and this is particularly the case when drawing from official criminal justice data sources given that information is not collected with research in mind and, therefore, is often missing for many important social science

questions. As such, data collection efforts require more attention, and perhaps innovation, with respect to how one might collect more reliable and valid information as well as what we want to capture by doing so. Only two brief examples are provided below although many more are crucial to discussions of data reliability and validity when documenting trends and patterns in femicide.

Arguably providing the most potential for prevention efforts to reduce the risk of older women to femicide, more detailed knowledge about the psychiatric histories of those involved is needed. Even though data are limited, it is clear that those who killed older women had significantly greater histories of psychiatric treatment and, supporting this pattern, were also more likely to commit suicide following the femicide. Understanding whether there has been an official diagnosis, for what, and what level of treatment the perpetrator had received are important questions, particularly for those interested in prevention. In addition, if the victim was an intimate partner, whether she was fully aware of the mental health issues and/or had been provided information about her potential risk and how she might protect herself are key prevention elements to be considered.

Second, and not examined here due to the high proportion of missing data and the complexities involved in understanding this factor, more concerted efforts need to identify the motivations behind, or circumstances surrounding, the killings of older (and younger) women. A significant body of literature has shown that it is not possible to identify a priori motivation or intent for criminal acts (e.g. Campbell and Runyan 1998). Recently, however, given that several Latin American countries have established legislation identifying specific punishments for femicide and, in some jurisdictions, have established femicide as its own offense, efforts have been made to identify whether and what gender-based indicators can distinguish femicide from homicide. Specifically, the Latin American Protocol for the Investigation of Gender-Related Killings of Women (Femicide/Feminicide) documents in a detailed and comprehensive manner how a femicide might be identified, including gender-related motives. Further, with respect to precursors or motivations for older femicide victims, some research has shown that femicide-suicides among

older couples are more often premeditated, and motivated by ill health, compared to cases involving younger couples, in which the perpetrators may more often be motivated by jealousy, leading to a loss of control (Dawson 2005). While there are valid critiques of this ‘crime of passion’ argument which views complex acts too simplistically (Dawson 2006), it does underscore that different life stages may also lead to different motivations for femicide that require further exploration.

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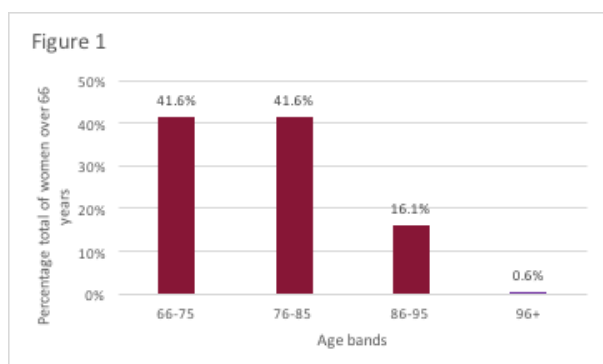
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1.3 FEMICIDE OF ELDERLY WOMEN IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Deirdre Brennan with Hilary Fisher, both of Women’s Aid, and Karen Ingala Smith of Nia

Hilary Fisher is Director of Research, Policy and Campaigns, and Deirdre Brennan is a Research and Development Officer, both at Women’s Aid Federation. The charity works at both local and national levels to ensure women’s safety from domestic violence and promotes policies and practices to prevent domestic violence. Karen Ingala Smith is Chief Executive at Nia, a London-based charity championing an integrated approach to addressing all forms of men’s violence against women and girls.

The Femicide Census is a database currently containing information on over 1,000 women killed by men in England and Wales since 2009. The Femicide Census was developed in partnership by Karen Ingala Smith and Women’s Aid, with support from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP and Deloitte LLP. While the Femicide Census collects data on women, aged 14 years and over, the focus of this paper is on the femicide of elderly women, those aged 66 years and over only. All quotes in this article have been taken directly from news reports on cases of femicide. Names, and other details relating to the identity of victims and perpetrators in specific cases, have been removed. Between 1 January 2009 and 31 December 2016 1,048 women are known to have been killed by men in England and Wales, 161 of those women were aged over 66 years. The chart below highlights the breakdown of this age group:



Context of Violence

The Femicide Census gathers data on all women killed by men. These killings have been contextualised by their violence.¹ The table below outlines the number of elderly women killed per respective context:

Primary Context of Violence	Number of Women	Total as a percentage
Domestic - Intimate partner violence	42	26.1%
Domestic - Child-parent	33	20.5%
In the course of other crime - robbery or burglary	24	14.9%
Domestic - Extended family	15	9.3%
“Mercy killing”*	11	6.8%
Unknown	9	5.6%
Financial gain	7	4.3%
Other - Mental health	5	3.1%
Assisted suicide or suicide pact*	4	2.5%
Sexually motivated	3	1.9%
Other	3	1.9%
IPV collateral	3	1.9%
Resulting from an offence of arson	2	1.2%
Grand Total	161	100%

*These women were killed by either their current or former partner, or their son, but were contextualised separately as they were interpreted within these contexts by state agencies and in news reports.

The largest group of older women killed were killed by their partner or spouse (26%), and a fifth of them (21%) were killed by their sons. The rate of child-parent killings increases considerably in the over-66 age category. By comparison, among all women on the Census, less than a tenth (7.3%) were killed by their sons. A further 15% of women over 66 years of age were killed in the course of a robbery or burglary, mostly in their own homes.

Killed in the Course of a Robbery or Burglary ‘[The perpetrator] did not need to enter my mother’s house that night. He chose to. Upon finding my mum at home, he easily could have left. Instead he chose to beat her and throw her against the wall. And when she screamed in pain, he chose to kick her, stamp on her, and jump on her head until she was unable to scream anymore.’

¹ For an explanation on the contextualisation of violence see “The Femicide Census: Redefining an Isolated Incident” (December 2016), available at: <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/femicide-census/>

A police statement that was published alongside an article on a case of an elderly woman killed during a burglary read, ‘Thankfully we still live in a society where to be attacked in your home is incredibly rare’. Yet it seems untrue to say that deaths of 24 women of similar age, killed during a similar incident, and killed mostly by a blunt instrument in their own homes, are ‘incredibly rare’ events.¹ These show that there is a need for further examination of the types of help and support available to older women who may be experiencing male violence, or be at risk of it within their home, and that there is a need too for a more coordinated framework of policy and practice to protect older women from male violence.

Intimate Partner Violence

Data in the UK on the prevalence of domestic abuse among older women is severely lacking. It appears that women in age groups above 66 years do not often use domestic abuse services as they are not represented to any great extent in statistics from domestic abuse refuges, community services or helplines. Additionally, the Crime Survey for England and Wales, compiled by the Office for National Statistics, currently only includes data on experiences of domestic abuse and sexual violence for those aged between 16 and 59 years. Yet it’s true that women of all ages experience domestic abuse – and so the small number of older women accessing services is worrying. The Femicide Census found that 55 women aged 66 and over were killed by their partner or ex-partner, proving that more needs to be done to intervene early and assist older women to get the support they need to live free from abuse.²

“Mercy Killing”

‘I did not want her to become a decrepit old hag’.

‘Devoted husband, 84, killed dementia-hit wife, 88, and himself because he could not cope with her going into a care home’.

1 In 2009, three women over 66 years of age were killed in a robbery or burglary, two in 2010, four in 2011, eight in 2012, two in 2013, two in 2014, one in 2015 and two in 2016.

2 The figure 55 includes all 42 women killed in the context of “Domestic – Intimate partner”, also the 9 women killed by their partners in the context “Mercy Killing” and the 4 women killed by their partners in the context “Assisted suicide or suicide pact”

“Loving son” bludgeoned 95-year-old mum to death after she pleaded with him to end her suffering’.

Within the eight-year period 2009–2016, four women were killed in an ‘alleged suicide pact or assisted suicide’, and 11 women were killed in the context of an alleged “mercy killing”. All of these women were aged 66 years or older: 13 were killed by their spouse or partner, and; two by their son. While these femicides could be contextualised as ‘Domestic – intimate partner femicide’ or ‘Domestic child-parent’, they have been isolated here to reflect the classification they received in coroner reports, police statements and in speculation in news reports. Killings of this type reflect the fact that **we are frequently reliant on the perpetrator’s narrative to determine what happened when a woman was killed.** These killings may have been preceded by years of abuse, but this can be completely overlooked in criminal proceedings when the perpetrator claims that the killing was carried out in response to the woman’s ‘suffering’. It is also a mistake for the media to rush to label the killing of older, ill or disabled women as “mercy killings” and to portray perpetrators as caring, loving individuals who acted out of compassion. It is hoped the findings from the Femicide Census will provide an opportunity for further research into the interpretations of domestic femicides.

Child-Parent Killings

‘Son found guilty of murdering mother after stabbing her 50 times’

The Femicide Census found that 78 women were killed by their sons between 2009 and 2016³, and women aged over 66 years represent 45% of those killings.⁴ Further to this, women over 66 years account for the majority (52%) of women killed by a male member of their extended family.⁵

3 76 femicides in the period 2009 – 2016 were contextualised as ‘Domestic – Child-parent’, however two women killed in the context of “Mercy Killing” were also killed by their sons, making the total 78.

4 Women killed by their sons between the period 2009 – 2016: Seven women aged 36–45, 16 women aged 46–55, 20 women aged 56–65, 12 women aged 66–75, 18 women aged 76–85, four women aged 86–95 and one woman aged 96+.

5 Women killed by a male member of their extended family between the period 2009 – 2016: two women aged 18–25, three women aged 26–35, three women aged 36–45, three women aged 46–55, three women aged 56–65, eight women aged 66–75, five women aged 76–85 and two women aged 86–95.

Data on the 78 men in the Femicide Census who killed their mothers are drawn from public sources and Domestic Homicide Reviews. They show that at least 48 of the men, 62% of perpetrator sons, had either one or more of the following: mental health issues, problematic substance use issues, or physical health issues. As shown in figure 2, mental health issues were very common amongst this group, as was the occurrence of both mental health and problematic substance use issues. Violence is not caused by problematic substance use or by mental health issues, and many who use substances or have mental health issues are not violent. But the prevalence of these types of health issues must be taken into account to understand the types of abuse experienced by older women from their sons, to understand other forms of domestic violence experienced by all women, and to integrate preventative steps into interventions. Financial abuse and coercion tactics similar to those perpetrated in intimate partner abuse could also be involved, but further research is necessary to understand the different nature and the form that abuse of mothers takes. The charity Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) and the organisation Adfam carried out joint research in this area in recent years. Not only did they find that mothers of abusive sons report effects similar to victims of intimate partner violence i.e. fear, lack of sleep and severe financial worries, but they also found a significant gap in access to support:

*'Knowing what to call Child Parent Violence (CPV) and how to conceptualise it was very problematic for parents. Most saw it as an extension of their child's substance use – with the corresponding assumption made that if treatment was found for the substance use, it would resolve the problem of CPV. Because of this, very few parents considered that they were experiencing domestic violence, and the thought of accessing dedicated domestic violence services only crossed the mind of a small handful.'*¹

¹ Adfam and AVA 'Between a rock and a hard place: how parents deal with children who use substances and perpetrate abuse', September

Next Steps

There is a significant need for further research on men's violence against women and femicide, and in particular to fill the gap in research on the experiences of abuse of older women by both their sons and partners. The Femicide Census Partnership will be publishing the follow up to its seminal report 'The Femicide Census: Redefining an Isolated Incident', in November 2017, looking at newly acquired data from 2016, and for the first time, including data collated on femicide in Northern Ireland.

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1.4 ELDERLY WOMEN IN INDIA: SOME NOTABLE INITIATIVES

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India is home to 13% of the world's elderly population.¹ The Global Report on Ageing estimates that worldwide, for every 100 women aged 60 and above, there are only 84 men.² While all elderly people face challenges, the situation is worse for elderly women. They face bias, discrimination which includes access to jobs and healthcare, denial of the right to own and inherit property, abuse, healthcare, pension and social security. Concurrently, the female genetic 'advantage'³ and women's improved access to health care and nutrition⁴, has led to the feminisation of ageing in India.⁵ This attitudinal change has created a need to focus on issues of elderly women, which has also been reiterated in the National Policy for Senior Citizens (2011).⁶ The primary objective of this paper is to document and disseminate good practices for aged women in India. This article first describes the challenges faced by elderly women and then highlights some initiatives taken to empower them.

Elderly Widows: Challenges

In India, elderly women are especially vulnerable⁷ due to factors like poverty, illiteracy, discriminatory cultural beliefs and stigma. *Poverty and illiteracy:* In India, the literacy rate of elderly women is 28% which is less than half the

literacy rate of elderly men (59.1%). Financially, partial and complete economic dependence is common among old women in India. Only 14% of old women in rural and 17% in urban India are economically independent.⁸ Research demonstrates that education level⁹ and economic dependence of elderly are risk factors¹⁰ for abuse.

Culture and Stigma: In India, widowed elderly women face various discriminatory cultural and religious practices like restriction on a diet and participation in auspicious functions, and wearing colourful clothes.¹¹ Furthermore, elderly women are by a large extent susceptible to abuse by their family members.¹²

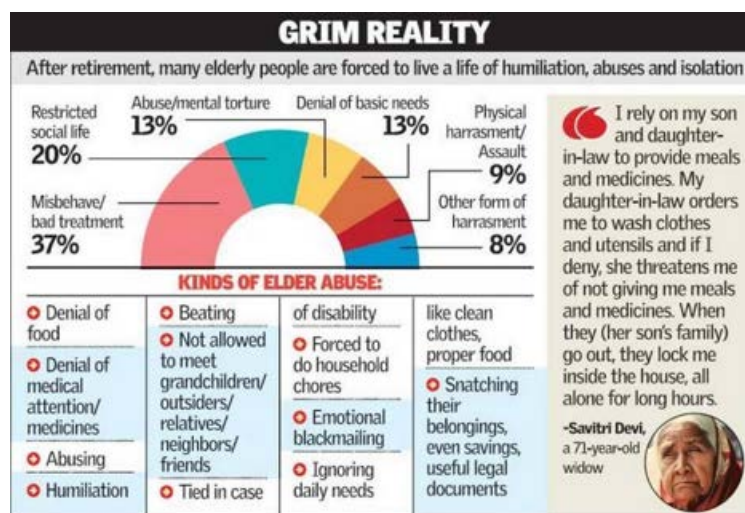


Figure 1: Abuse faced by Elderly men and women in India¹³

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2 WHO. World Report on Ageing and Health. Luxemburg: WHO publication, 2015 http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/186463/1/9789240694811_eng.pdf

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4 Supra Note 1

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12 Mishra, Rasmita, Chander Shekhar, and Jitendra Gouda. "Abuse Against Elderly Widows in India and Selected States: An Exploration from BKPAL Survey." Indian Journal of Gerontology 30, no. 2 (2016): 184-199.

13 Goswami, S., "The ugly truth about old age in India," The Hindu, June 15, 2016 <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-otherstates/the-ugly-truth-about-old-age-in-india/article14425067.ece1>

Notable Community Initiatives

To address the discussed challenges, the following notable initiatives are suggested:

1. Elderly Self Help Groups

Elderly Self Help Groups (ESHGs) is an initiative by HelpAge India.¹ Designed as a community initiative, the main objective of ESHGs is to inculcate saving habits amongst elderly members and provide financial support. An ESHG consists of 10-20 elderly members of 55 years and above, living in the same village/tola.² ESHGs ensure the socio-economic well-being of its members by providing loans and, increasing awareness about governmental schemes and initiatives by NGOs. HelpAge India has established 3445 ESHGs and empowered more than 45,000 elderly men and women.³

Figure 1: Formation and Functioning of ESHGs⁴



According to UNPF (2017), ESHGs have improved the well-being of elderly women by fostering independence. ESHGs have also enhanced their social well-being by promoting interaction with like-minded peers. Below is a case of an elderly woman who benefitted from ESHG:

1 Indo-German Social Security Programme. "Impact of Elderly Self-Help Groups on Quality of Life of Elders in Bihar", New Delhi: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, 2015 https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/ESHG_Impact_Assessment_2015.pdf

2 Ibid

3 Ibid

4 Ibid

Due to an accident, Kanchan Devi was unable to work for long hours. She contacted the ESHG of her village and requested a loan to buy a sewing machine. The group extended a loan of Rs.7500 at a nominal interest rate. By stitching clothes, she now earns Rs.2500 per month and contributes significantly to her family's income.⁵

A study conducted by the Indo-German Social Security Programme, revealed that, although ESHGs had a positive impact on loan taking, there was no significant improvement in the overall economic status of the elderly.⁶ Furthermore, its psychosocial impact on elderly women was also unclear. ESHGs address the need of only those elderly women who can work, but not of those women who are disabled or are not allowed to due to traditional norms. Therefore, ESHGs may not be an independent solution for India's elderly.

2. Widows of Vrindavan: Sulabh International

Approximately 5000 widows⁷ live in Vrindavan or the widow town. The majority of the destitute widows (70%) in Vrindavan are above 60 years old.⁸ These elderly widows are mostly illiterate and receive little or no pensions. They depend on donations by singing prayers in ashrams and temples.⁹ In Vrindavan, substandard conditions such as lack of adequate infrastructure, hygiene and vocational training for women living in old age homes are common¹⁰.

To address the above, the Supreme Court of India requested Sulabh International to initiate a community intervention.¹¹ The NGO began by providing a monthly allowance of Rs. 2000 to widows. Besides, the NGO also arranges for medical facilities in eight ashrams (homes) for approximately 800 widows. The medical facilities include weekly doctor visits and sponsored treatments for various illness. Sulabh International also encourages

5 Ibid

6 Indo-German Social Security Programme. "Old Age Protection", New Delhi: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, 2014 <https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2014-en-igssp-old-age-india.pdf>

7 National Commission for Women (NCW). "Study on Widows at Vrindavan", New Delhi: NCW, 2010 <http://ncw.nic.in/pdfRe-ports/WidowsAtVrindavanReport.pdf>

8 Ibid

9 Ibid

10 Ibid

11 Stree Shakti- The Parallel Force and UNFPA. "Innovative practices for care of elderly women in India", New Delhi: Stree Shakti- The Parallel Force, 2016 http://india.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Innovative%20Practices%20for%20Care%20of%20Elderly%20Women%20in%20India_final.pdf

widows to take up vocational and language courses for income generation and self-esteem development. A widow described her experience with Sulabh as “It was a pathbreaking experience for me when I learn [sic] how to read and write. It is a very good feeling when I write my name on a document instead of validating it with my fingerprint.”¹

3. The ‘Collective Power’ of unmarried women: Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan, Rajasthan

Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan (ENSS) is a collective of unmarried women in Rajasthan. ENSS was established in 1999 on the principle of ‘collective power,’ i.e., the belief that if abandoned unmarried women unite, they can reform social customs and policies.²

There are few social security schemes for widows/unmarried women and none for abandoned women. The Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme offers a minuscule monthly stipend of Rs.400, which is also often inaccessible due to corruption. According to UNDP (2008), 28% of elderly widows are eligible for a pension, but only 11% receive it. To tackle these problems, ENSS took a three-pronged approach:

- Increase in the membership base: the number of members of ENSS has grown from 425 in 1999 to approximately 45,000 in 2014.
- Raising social issues at the grassroots level: ENSS challenges the traditional norms that lead to women's oppression. The members approach panchayats and local governance to address social problems ranging from witch hunting to land grabbing.
- Working with government administration: the concerns of members are taken to the government, with specific emphasis on effective implementation of governmental schemes and policies.

Dhanni Bai's case illustrates how ENSS's approach has been successful:

After Dhanni Bai lost her husband, a man fraudulently took away her land using a fake registry. She repeatedly claimed that “this registry is a fake”. ENSS members helped Dhanni get a forensic report of the fake thumb impression used for the registry and thus helped Dhanni get her property back.

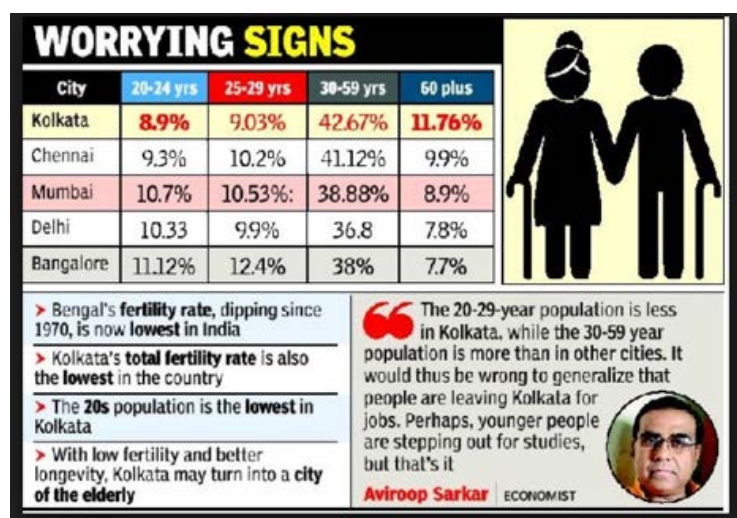
1 Maitri. “Life of Indian Widows of Vrindavan”, Maitri, March 7, 2011 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhQAXkzEOrc>

2 Supra Note 26

4. An Ageing City's New Hope: Calcutta Metropolitan

Institute of Gerontology (CMIG) Figure 2: Elderly

Population in major Indian cities³



A research-based institute called Calcutta Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology (CMIG) was established in 1988 with the objective to promote gerontology in India. Kolkata is home to largest number of elderly people in India, especially women. CMIG's survey in Kolkata revealed that 2.5 million elderly fall in the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category and about 75,000 elderly live in slums. CMIG formed a Community Developmental Model specifically for elderly women living BPL which includes:

- Holistic health care facilities: Conventional (medicines, physiotherapy) and non-conventional methods (yoga, meditation, magneto-therapy) for healthcare are offered. More importantly, mental health care facilities are also provided; including visits by mental health practitioners, exposure to sports activities and laughter clubs. Other significant contributions include: technological innovations to aid geriatric problems.
- Income generation: CMIG runs a small employment generation program where over 100 elderly people make and sell paper bags regularly.⁴

3 Sen, S, “Kolkata is ageing faster than other metros,” The Times of India, Oct 27, 2015 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/Kolkata-is-ageing-faster-than-other-metros/articleshow/49546289.cms>

4 Calcutta Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology (CMIG). “An-

c) Geriatric Care Professionals: CMIG launched courses like the 'Professional Geriatric Animator' course. These courses aim to increase the number of professionals in geriatric care.¹

CMIG was given a National Award by The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment for its contribution towards geriatric care.

Conclusion

The discussed initiatives illustrate that a variety of government or civil projects are dedicated towards health, economic empowerment, physical and social security. These initiatives showcase notable strategies to bring about change in the lives of elderly women. According to Population Census 2001 and 2011, the number of elderly females outnumbered elderly men in India. This poses a major challenge for policymakers as elderly women are more vulnerable than elderly men. While a lot remains to be done, this paper attempts to document some good practices and aims to encourage favourable policy changes as well as government and civil society initiatives.

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1.5 THE END OF DAYS: FEMICIDE OF ELDERLY WOMEN IN ISRAEL

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Femicide is the express killing of women because they are women. In any country, the question can be asked: is the femicide of the elderly different from the femicide of women in general because they are women? When elderly women are killed, they are often murdered either because they are elderly and because they are women, or both.

The definition of femicide differs from culture to culture, country to country, and state to state, and so does the definition of an 'elderly person.' In some cultures a woman is old after menopause; in other countries, a woman is considered an elderly woman at the age of 60, 65, or later. As life expectancy increases, and gender egalitarianism takes root, Western countries are attempting to re-define what constitutes an elderly person and readjusting the ages of pension and retirement. It is an irony that while female longevity is higher than male longevity; females are often forced to retire at an earlier age than men. In order to give an indication of the variation in attitudes to elderly women, concomitant with data on longevity, it is useful to point out that in 2017, the retirement age of women in China was 50 and in the United States it was 66.

In this article, I will examine femicide of elderly women in Israeli society; no scientific article has ever been written on this topic. I shall discuss the definition of elderly women in Israel and the incidences of their murder over a decade (2006-2015).

Definition of Elderly Women in Israel

Israel is a heterogeneous society of 8.3 million people in 2017 made up of different Jewish ethnic groups. 22% of the population in Israel are Muslim and Christian Arabs (the Christians constitute less than 10% of this percentage) and other minorities (e.g. Druze, Armenians, and so on). Definitions of what constitutes an elderly woman vary in different ethnic populations in Israel.

Life expectancy in Israel is among the highest in the world. The average life expectancy for men is 80.1 and 84.1 for women. Despite the fact that women live longer than men, women are still considered 'elderly' and ready for retirement at a younger age than men, as is the case in many other Western countries,. According to the Retirement Law passed in Israel's Knesset (Parliament) in 2004, the retirement age for males is 67 and for women 62 respectively. Women are required but not forced to retire at this age. From 2009-2017, the retirement age was 62.66. In 2017, the de facto retirement age of women rose to 63. Upon retirement, pensioners are entitled to "old age benefits". The National Insurance Institute of Israel states on its website that a male is eligible to receive benefits at 67, but that women's retirement age is based on her date of birth. For example, for women born before June 1940, it is 60; for women born 1947-1952, the retirement age is 62; for women born after 1955 the retirement age is currently being discussed by the Knesset's Finance Committee. In September 2016, the Committee for Examining Women's Pension Age recommended that the retirement age for women of 65 would be raised gradually over a 12-year period. Ironically, the committee's recommendations met fierce opposition, primarily from feminists in Israel. As a result, in 2017 the retirement age of 62 is still in place, but will undoubtedly be raised some time in the future.

Incidences of Murder of Elderly Women in Israel 2006-2015

In this study, femicides in Israel among women over the age of 18 were examined throughout the decade 2006-2015. From 2006-2015, there were 145 femicide out of 1,256 homicides in the same period. It is interesting to note that, despite the widespread belief that femicide is on the decrease due to increased reporting and awareness, in fact femicide in the past five years is higher than it was in the first five years of the decade: from 2006-2010 inclusive there were 63 femicide cases, while from 2011-2015 inclusive there were 82 incidents. These statistics on the number of femicides in Israel over the decade are not gathered from one source, but were collated by this researcher from police statistics, media reports and internet accounts (prominent amongst which is No2violence, an NGO devoted to combating violence

against women), but mistakes were found in all these sources. Therefore, this researcher did not rely on one data base alone, and took care to examine every single case of femicide throughout the decade and to compare the published and unpublished (police) data published.

Table 1 shows the numbers of femicides and the ages of the victims under and over the ages of 60 per year. In a larger study of femicide in Israel conducted by this author, ages were aggregated in tens such that, in relation to the elderly, statistics are available for ages 60 and over. This is in accordance with a global review of 50 studies on the prevalence of abuse among the elderly, which chose to examine data among women aged 60 and beyond (Yon et al., 2017).

Year	Under 60	60+	Total
2006	13	0	13
2007	10	3	13
2008	8	2	10
2009	7	1	8
2010	18	1	19
2011	18	0	18
2012	15	0	15
2013	13	4	17
2014	9	3	12
2015	19	1	20
2006-2015	130	15	145

As can be seen from Table 1, of the 145 cases of femicide in Israel in 10 years, 15 were femicides of elderly women over the age of 60. Although there are only one or two such cases per year (and sometimes none), the fact that just over 10% of all femicides in Israel are committed against elderly women is significant. The highest number of femicides of elderly women in one year was four in 2013. It is interesting that in the years of the highest incidences of femicide cases (2015, 2010 and 2011) there was not more than one case of femicide of an elderly woman, and in 2006, 2011 and 2012 there was not even a single case.

Conclusions

Elderly female femicide is rarely studied in general, and this is the first glimpse into the subject in Israel. As in other countries, it is difficult to ascertain who exactly falls within

the category of 'elderly woman.' In keeping with scientific global research, and in the interests of comparative material, our data focused on women over the age of 60.

In the decade 2006-2015, 10% of all femicides in Israel were perpetrated against elderly women. These murders were different from other femicides in Israel, which often occur in the first few years of a relationship, and are perpetrated out of jealousy, or a desire to retain the 'honour' of the family. With elderly femicides, these considerations do not come into play. The majority of victims were killed by men, who had been their lifetime partners. The murders took place across religious lines and occurred among Jewish, Christian and Muslim populations. As opposed to the stereotype of elderly women who live alone, most of these murdered elderly women in Israel were in living in at-risk conditions with their partners within their own domiciles for years; several had filed complaints before the murders against their partners concerning serious domestic violence.

As Fileborn (2016) showed in a pioneering study on the sexual abuse of elderly women, existing research underestimates the extent of the issues faced by the aged. Older women face particular barriers to disclosure, with their pleas being downplayed or dismissed. They also have difficulties accessing the justice system. Police and social workers in Israel and globally should pay more serious attention to the complaints filed by elderly women since they have nowhere else to go and they may be living at home at extreme risk.

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1.6 ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND VIOLENCE AGAINST ELDERLY WOMEN IN GHANA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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This article discusses abuse and neglect of elderly women in Ghana and the traditional practices that adversely affect their human rights. Their situation is characterised by pervasive poverty, illiteracy, widowhood, predominantly rural dwelling, and subjection to insidious cultural practices and superstitious beliefs. Increase in life expectancy and population trends point to significant increases in the numbers of the elderly women. Breakdown of the extended family support system and the waning of filial obligations are factors affecting their welfare. Accurate data on these abuses is lacking due to cultural inhibitions and non-reporting. Legislations and NGO programs are addressed to combat abuses.

The status of women in Ghana is determined by traditional values, cultural norms, and gender socialisation and patriarchy, which tend to discriminate against girls and women through their old age. Studies document various forms of abuse among elderly women as consequences of social acts based on discrimination (Mba, 2007; Munsur, Tareque, & Rahman, 2010). In Ghana, violence and abuse of women have been identified as public health and research priority issues. In a national survey, Pappoe and Ardayfio-Schandorf (1998) identified the main forms of abuse as wife-beating, forced marriages, rape (both within and outside of marriage), defilement, sexual harassment, psychological and physical abuse, and economic exploitation. The World Health Organization (2002) defined forms of elder abuse as physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, financial, and neglect (intentional or unintentional), and single or repeated acts, oftentimes, within relationships, in which "trust" is a cornerstone.

According to the CIA World Fact Book (2014), general life expectancy at birth in Ghana for women is 68.19 years. Most Ghanaians are rural

dwellers, and elderly women make up the majority of older adults in rural areas. The economic disparity between urban and rural Ghana, and the pervasiveness of poverty and deficits in formal services and amenities in rural Ghana, have been studied extensively (Mba, 2010; Tawiah, 2011; World Bank, 2011). The average elderly woman in Ghana is likely to be a rural dweller, widowed, living in an extended family household, and poor.

Elderly Ghanaian women are included as beneficiaries in policies and services intended for the general elderly population. However, with little or no education, or record of salaried employment, most elderly women have no retirement benefits, or any discernible income or resources for their maintenance (Mba, 2006). If engaged in productive work, elderly women are most likely to participate in low wage or uncompensated activities, such as subsistence crop cultivation, small-scale trading of buying and selling, and caring for grandchildren in the household. Mba (2007) found that in the rural areas of Ghana, elderly women were more likely to live in extended family households, while elderly men lived in nuclear households. This is a result of the longer life expectancy of women, their likelihood to outlive their spouses and be widowed and not to be able to remarry. With the breakdown of the extended family system as a source of support, the result of this trend is decreasing protection and care, and increasing isolation of rural elderly women. The traditional social welfare system, the extended family, has been eroded by modernisation and urbanisation (Mba, 2007). As a result, elderly women in Ghana today are increasingly vulnerable to poverty, poor health, and physical and emotional abuse.

Despite accurate data on the role and importance of elderly women in precolonial Ghana or Gold Coast (as it was then known), Mba (2007) and others alleged that their roles and statuses in society have been diminished consistent with colonialism and introduction of Christianity and Islam (Odotei, 2006; Perbi, 2006). Odotei (2006) asserted that elderly women occupied more respected, even revered statuses in precolonial tribal social structures of society. Among the prominent tribal groups, women occupied leadership positions as priestesses of important shrines (Odotei, 2006), and

they demonstrated legendary leadership in war as exemplified by Yaa Asantewaa, and brave militancy as in the Women's war (Aba Riots) of 1928 (Perbi, 2006).

However, these roles did not preclude elderly women's association with the age-old belief in witchcraft, or their mistreatment and social exclusion among some tribes. Increased marginalisation of women in Ghanaian society is illustrated by examples such as exclusion of "queen mothers" from the National House of Chiefs institution, although they are defined as "Chiefs" by the constitution of Ghana (Odotei, 2006). Perbi (2006) asserts that colonial rule erased the importance of women in Ghanaian society due to the introduction of Christianity and Islam.

Neglect and Abuse of Elderly Women in Ghana

Gender Center (1995) catalogued a variety of abuses suffered by Ghanaian women in general. It is surmised that these abuses occur with greater frequency and severity among elderly women, who rarely report, or even admit to, abuses, particularly those of a sexual nature. Abuse of elderly women, especially old widows, is among the most egregious of abuses suffered by women in Ghana. A survey conducted by the Gender Center revealed that 31% of widowed respondents had been asked to marry their deceased husbands' brothers, and they had to undergo widowhood rites that included shaving of their hair, ritual baths, and confinement with ropes around their necks (Pappoe & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1998).

Manifestation of violence against older women in Ghana fits three of Manjoo's (2012) framework of spheres, namely, intrafamily, community, and state. As Manjoo points out, intersectionality of factors and arenas of violence are inevitable, and in Ghana, cultural practices have the biggest influence in the context of family and state as sources of violence. Elderly widows in Ghana are, in some instances, deprived of their rightful possessions through systems of inheritance that allow them to be dispossessed of any resources they own. In parts of northern Ghana, elderly women can be accused of witchcraft and branded as witches or purveyors of social ills that befall their families or villages. Elderly women who are accused and

labelled as witches may be removed by NGOs and government representatives to "witch camps" to ensure their safety and protection from families and communities' inhumane and degrading treatment. However, once in the camps, their rights and dignity as human beings are denied and they live in deplorable conditions (ActionAid Ghana, 2014; Adinkrah, 2004; Atta-Quayson, 1999; Safo, 1997).

About 5,000 to 8,000 have been removed from their communities for protection but are then forced to live in dehumanising conditions in the camp settings (Adinkrah, 2004; Safo, 1997; Wiafe, 2001). Traditional ageism and poverty exacerbate vulnerability to mistreatment of elderly women (Manjoo, 2012).

Dr. Nana Apt, considered the mother of modern gerontology in Ghana and one of the most significant African scholars in this field, studied the elderly in Ghana extensively. She found that economically, the ability of modern families in Ghana to care for their elderly relatives in the urban context is seriously impaired by crowded housing and limited financial resources (Apt, 1995). Further, elderly parents have generally become economic appendages to their children's families, rather than integrated members with responsibility for economic activities (Apt, 1995).

Human Rights and Social Justice for Elderly Women in Ghana

Ghana is a signatory to relevant international conventions and charters such as The International Plan of Action on Ageing, promulgated in Madrid, Spain, in 2002, the African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, 1981, and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Although some of these, such as the Madrid Plan of Action, are not binding, the Government of Ghana subsequently enacted the National Ageing Policy: Ageing with Security and Dignity (2010), which created the Ghana National Council on Ageing. Measures based on this policy aim to physically and morally protect elderly women, and to pursue strategies that promote their general welfare and human rights (GSS, 2010). July 1 has been designated as "Senior Citizens Day" in Ghana, and the intention is to focus on contributions of the elderly to the

national development and issues related to their well-being, such as poverty reduction, through the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Program, and health improvement through the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS).

The National Ageing Policy specifically identifies areas to be addressed, including Ageing and Fundamental Human Rights, Ageing and Poverty, Ageing and Gender, provision of Legal Aid for poor older women, and a charge to the Ghana Statistical Service to include data on the elderly to supplement national census data. General Resolution 65/182 also specifically requires follow-up strategies and plans for the protection and welfare of the elderly in Ghana. The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I and GPRS II) primarily is for the social protection of poor, rural, disadvantaged, elderly women and other vulnerable groups in Ghanaian society. Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), notably HelpAge Ghana (HAG), work for the welfare of the elderly, including delivery services, administration of day centers, and facilities for capacity building, and provision of relief assistance for poor older persons (UNFPA, 2012). Despite these macro-economic and social programs promoted by the Ghanaian government, effective implementation in terms of financial commitment, resource allocation, training of personnel, and political commitment are roadblocks to actual progress and advancement of general well-being of elderly women in Ghana.

Conclusion

Historically, the plight and the deliberate discrimination and abuse of older women have been obscured under the guise of traditions and cultural belief systems for a long time. A fundamental progress in Ghana now is the general awareness and knowledge in the society of vulnerability and baseless prejudice against old women. Subsequently, a measure of responsibility is assumed in all spheres on both micro and macro levels (Manjoo, 2012).

The numbers of NGOs working independently and in collaboration with the government to address the problem of elder abuse and neglect, and to ensure elders' human rights and security, is significant for a developing country characterised by poverty, illiteracy, negative cultural practices, and traditional

beliefs. There is optimism that the problems of abuse and violence against elderly women will be reduced, or even eradicated, as future cohorts of elderly females become better educated, more resourceful, healthier, and more economically self-reliant. Furthermore, the government needs to strengthen its collaboration with NGOs to undertake mass social educational campaigns to educate the whole country on the well-being of the elderly population, including training and education of gerontological/geriatric professionals and human service providers to expand geriatric services to the elderly population in the country.

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1.7 ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST OLDER WOMEN LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY: A SYNOPSIS OF RESULTS FROM THE MULTI-NATIONAL AVOW STUDY

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Introduction

Elder abuse is a violation of human rights; abuse of older people is recognised as a global problem and is accepted as a complex phenomenon. For instance, a differentiation between personal and structural abuse and distinction of the social context in which abuse takes place is necessary (e.g. in public, in institutions or in private households). The Toronto declaration of the WHO defines elder abuse as “a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person.”

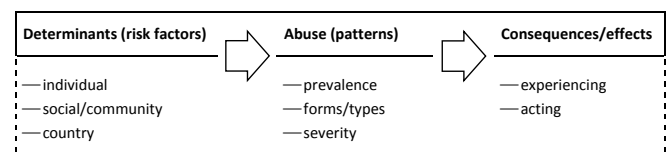
Abuse has many facets whereby abuse is categorised as several types: physical (intent to cause pain/injury), psychological/emotional (anguish or distress, verbal/non-verbal), sexual (non-consensual sexual contact of any kind), financial/material abuse (illegal/improper use of funds, property or assets), and neglect (refusal/failure by those responsible to provide essential daily living assistance and/or support), sometimes violation of personal civil or human rights (e.g. violation of privacy, right to autonomy, freedom) is included. Abusive behaviour by the perpetrator can be intentional or unintentional. Further, elder abuse can vary in severity taking into account the combination of intensity (frequency) and density (number of behavioural acts).

Abuse against older people is a taboo topic and insufficiently noticed, despite generally acknowledged social change, which is linked to far-reaching and profound societal changes, such as the age structure and feminisation of age (e.g. growing population of older women living at home). This background is relevant for elder abuse because functional impairments and cognitive complaints increase with age. Coincidentally, the importance

of additional situations such as dependence on social contacts and networks increases with health restrictions. The living conditions of older people can be characterised by marginalisation. With increasing dependencies, older women in particular are at risk of being exposed to external compulsion in their social relations, which in extreme cases can lead to violence and abuse.

Although there are primary studies, literature reviews and meta-analyses available using samples of older women, only some of them have the focus on violence. Therefore the objective of the present paper is to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and awareness about domestic abuse and violence against older women living in the community. In order to obtain the most comprehensive picture, at least three elements are required: first, the primary concern is the prevalence and establishing patterns of the phenomenon. Second, the determinants or risk factors of abuse should be tracked and third, some of the effects and consequences of abuse should be investigated.

Figure 1: Determinants and consequences of domestic abuse against older women



Since these elements can be best explored by experiences among community-dwelling older women, the following research questions were addressed by a multi-national study:

1. What is the prevalence and what are the patterns of abuse for older women living in the community?
2. What are the most common risk factors of domestic abuse in older women?

3. What are the consequences and effects of abuse for these women?

With regard to prevalence and patterns of abuse, particular attention was paid to different types and severity levels of abuse. As far as the risk factors are concerned, possible determinants can be viewed at different levels (individual, social/community, country). Consequences of abuse are differentiated under aspects of behavioural actions and psychological processes.

Methods

Measures

The EU-funded prevalence study Abuse and Violence against Older Women (AVOW) was based on the above-mentioned conceptual distinctions. A survey instrument was developed, adapted from the literature. Abuse types were operationalised with 34 questions, each asking how often abusive acts against an older woman were committed by someone close to the individual in the last 12 months. Respondents could self-report on a four-point frequency scale.

Additionally, for the description of the consequences of domestic abuse, emotional consequences (e.g. tension, anger or hatred) of the most serious incident and an instrument measuring subjective quality of life were included. Moreover, help seeking behaviour (formal or informal) or reasons for not reporting the incident were added. Finally, background factors were included, e.g. individual age, educational attainment, health status, coping styles, social/family status, leisure time activities, living area and country.

Data collection

The study was undertaken in five European countries during 2010, based on random sampling. In total, N=2,880 older community-dwelling women from Austria, Belgium, Finland, Lithuania, and Portugal answered the questions; from n=436 to n=687 per country.

Population sample

The target population comprised women aged 60 years or older (mean age=74.4, median=70.0, SD=8.2). Half of the respondents were married or cohabiting (50.5%), one third were widowed (31.8%), and 17.7% were single or divorced. 45.4%

of respondents reported less than nine years, and 54.7% had 10 or more years of completed education.

Results

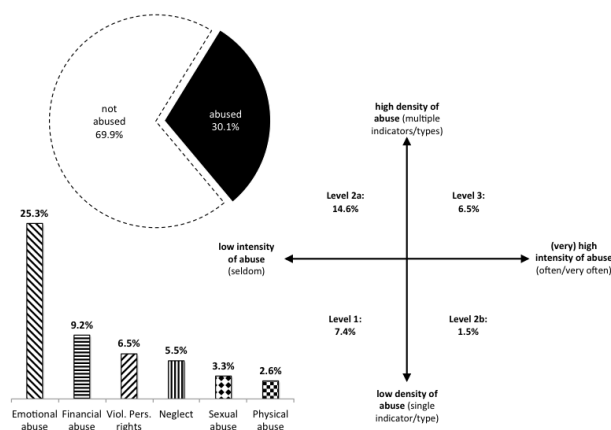
In this section, the main results of the AVOW study in relation to the research questions is reported. For more details, refer to original articles will be made.

Prevalence and patterns

A total of 30.1% of older women aged 60 years or older reported they had experienced at least one kind of abuse in the previous 12 months by someone who was close to them. Regarding different types of elder abuse, overall, emotional abuse was reported most frequently (25.3%). 9.2% of older women reported financial abuse, 6.5% violation of personal rights, 5.5% neglect, 3.3% sexual and 2.6% physical abuse.

In terms of severity, 7.4% experienced level 1 abuse (single indicator/type, seldom), 16.1% reported level 2 (single incident/type, (very) often or multiple indicator/types, seldom), and 6.5% of older women faced the most serious level of abuse (multiple indicator/types, each at least monthly) which represents the most vulnerable group of older women.

Figure 2: Patterns of abuse against older women: prevalence, types, and levels



41.4% of older women who reported experience of abuse indicated that their current partner or spouse was the perpetrator. In 27.7% of cases, the perpetrator was identified as a child (or child-in-law). In 16.5%, the perpetrator(s) were other relatives, in 13.9% other people well known to the woman and in 3.8% of cases abuse was initiated by a paid home help or caregiver.

Risk factors

Analysis of risk factors revealed that there were determinants at individual and social/community levels that were significantly associated with abuse and greater severity of abuse against older women. The following older women had a higher risk of most severe abuse (level 3): married women with poor physical and mental health who adopted a behavioural disengagement coping strategy to solve problems, lonely women, and those who managed poorly with their household income. These older women had a risk for high abuse (level 2): the younger old (60-69 years), married women, women with poor mental health who adopted a behavioural disengagement coping strategy, and lonely women. In contrast, low abuse (level 1) barely differentiated individuals from older women who were not abused at all.

Table 1: Likelihood of older abuse severity (odd ratios)

		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
		... vs. not abused		
Individual level				
Age group	60-69 years	ns	3.00*	ns
	70-79 years	ns	2.11*	ns
	80+ (reference)	-	-	-
Marital status	married	ns	1.57*	1.97*
Physical health	poor	ns	ns	2.25*
Mental health	poor	ns	1.23*	1.75*
Coping strategy	behavioural disengagement	ns	1.43*	1.77*
Relationships level				
Household size		ns	ns	ns
Manage income	badly	.58*	ns	2.55*
	averagely	-	ns	ns
	easily (reference)	-	-	-
Loneliness		ns	1.35*	1.83*

Note: * p<0.05, ns = not significant; Cox & Snell R²=15.6%, Nagelkerke R²=18.6%

Additional correlations appeared between country-level factors and severity of abuse, albeit weakly. Higher levels of abuse of older women were significantly (p<0.05) related with a lower education level for older people in a country (Spearman r=0.129), a higher old age dependency ratio (r=0.126), higher gender inequality (r=0.084), and higher population density of a country (r=0.104). Socio-economic parameters such as GDP per capita, risk of poverty, and social protection expenditures were not significantly related.

Consequences and effects

Just under half (45.7%) of the older victims had spoken with someone else about the most serious incident of abuse in the past twelve months, but of those who did so this was more often to their informal network (e.g. 15.0% to family, 12.5% to friends) than to formal institutions (e.g. 7.7% to a medical doctor/nurse/priest, 6.1% to counselling/police/lawyer). This reporting behaviour varied for types of abuse, e.g. 63.2% reported if physical abuse, 54.2% if a personal rights violation happened. Moreover, reporting frequency differed significantly according to the severity of abuse. The reporting took place at 22.1% for level 1, 47.1% for level 2 and 55.8% for level 3 abuse. Almost half (47.7%) said that the support received following reporting was helpful. On average, however, the majority (54.3%) of older abused women did not talk about the incident and reasons for not reporting varied by type and severity of abuse.

Irrespective of whether the incident was reported or not, abuse indicated many emotional implications for victims like tension, anger/hatred, feelings of powerlessness, sleeping difficulties/nightmares, depressive feelings, fear, concentration difficulties, shame, difficulties in relationships with others or guilt. In all of these consequences, again, there were significant and quite considerable differences depending on the types of abuse – particularly in the case of sleeping problems, difficulty concentrating, feelings of shame – as well as for severity of abuse.

Domestic abuse against older women also resulted in significantly lower quality of life compared to those not abused. Negative effects were greater in cases of neglect, physical or financial abuse, violation of personal rights, and sexual abuse. In addition, quality of life decreased significantly and gradually higher levels of abuse severity.

Table 2: Consequences of domestic abuse on quality of life

		Mean difference in quality of life
Abuse	Total	-0.34*
Abuse forms	Emotional	-0.28*
	Financial	-0.44*
	Personal rights	-0.47*
	Neglect	-0.77*
	Sexual	-0.40*
	Physical	-0.72*
Abuse levels	Low (level 1)	-0.11*
	Medium (level 2)	-0.32*
	High (level 3)	-0.65*

Note: Reference category: no abuse; * $p < 0.05$

Conclusions

This multi-national study revealed a self-reported prevalence rate of abuse against older community-dwelling older women of 30.1%. When distinguishing between different types and levels of abuse, a complex pattern and more nuanced picture appeared. The results call for an in-depth understanding of abuse against older women.

Particularly, it showed details of the most vulnerable group of older women with the highest potential risk of abuse. The level of severity of elder abuse is clearly associated with individual, social/community and country-level factors. This supports the hypothesis that structural inequalities increase the risk of abuse among older women. Because elder abuse occurs within a social context (family, local networks), not only individual determinants of elder abuse need to be included in considerations.

As one important consequence, elder abuse is clearly associated with many emotional burdens and lower quality of life for victims. There is not only differentiation by types of abuse (e.g. physical abuse, neglect) but quality of life also decreases gradually with increased severity level of abuse. Particular attention should be given to the issue of lack of reporting or talking about abusive incidents by victims. Raising awareness that elder abuse is neither trivial nor "normal" is a major recommendation.

The study indicates that older women need to be considered as a heterogeneous group with different needs. Standardised initiatives to counter elder abuse will likely not succeed. According to this nuanced picture, different interventions by various actors, at different stages and action contexts need to be developed to prevent and combat elder abuse. Comprehensive and multi-faceted efforts should address the complicated and multiple layers of the phenomenon in order to find appropriate solutions to this complex social and public health problem, by integrating health promotion, risk prevention and public health strategies.

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1.8 BRIEF ANALYSIS OF FEMICIDE OF WOMEN OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE IN SPAIN

REPORT 2010-2015

Femicidio.net, Madrid/Spain

Femicidio.net documents and produces reports and statistics on the murders of women committed by men in Spain since 2010, based on a classification of femicides and other types of murders, with a global perspective. The definitions were taken from the main authors of the feminist academy that have developed the theory, concept and category of femicide.

The cases are recorded in **Geofemicidio**, an online database that produces 18 reports and graphics on the types of femicide and other murders in three territorial levels (Autonomous Community, province and municipality) classified by, among others, month of year; relationship between perpetrator and victim; motive and scene of the crime; weapons used by the perpetrator; perpetrator and victim profile (age, nationality and occupation). In addition, the database contains a "hemerographic" (press) file of the cases and judicial sentences.

This report is part of a data extraction from Femicides and other murders of women in Spain. Annual Report 2015 (Special UN Edition - ACUNS Vienna 2017).

1. FEMICIDE IN SPAIN: 86% of all women murdered in the period 2010-2015 were victims of femicide, and the remaining 14% of murders, by motives other than gender violence.

Between 2010 and 2015, 681 women were killed in Spain by men. According to the register of cases at **Femicidio.net**, 586 femicides (86%) and 95 murders of women were committed. Of the total, 354 were recognised as official figures (52%), due to the fact that the Organic Law 1/2004 on Measures of Integral Protection against Gender Violence only takes into account the murders of women by a partner or ex-partner.

2. PREVALENCE AND NUMBER OF CASES BY AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES:

This report contains data on women aged 60 and over who were killed between 2010 and 2015.

1.8 BREVE RADIOGRAFÍA DEL FEMINICIDIO DE MUJERES MAYORES DE 60 AÑOS EN ESPAÑA.

RESUMEN DE DATOS 2010-2015

Femicidio.net, Madrid/Spain

En España desde el 2010 **Femicidio.net** documenta y elabora informes y estadísticas de los asesinatos de mujeres cometidos por hombres, basados en una clasificación propia de feminicios y otros tipos de asesinatos, con una perspectiva global, cuyas definiciones fueron tomadas de las principales autoras de la academia feminista que han desarrollado la teoría, el concepto y la categoría de femicidio/feminicidio.

Los casos se registran en **Geofemicidio**, una base de datos online que elabora 18 informes y gráficos entre los que destacan: los tipos de feminicidio y otros asesinatos en los tres niveles territoriales (Comunidad Autónoma, provincia y municipio), por meses del año, la relación del victimario con la víctima, el móvil y el escenario del crimen, armas utilizadas por el victimario, perfil del victimario y de la víctima (edad, nacionalidad y ocupación), entre otros. Además, la base de datos contiene archivo hemerográfico de los casos y sentencias judiciales.

Este informe forma parte de una extracción de datos de Femicides and other murders of women in Spain. Annual Report 2015.

1. EL FEMINICIDIO EN ESPAÑA

El 86% de todas las mujeres asesinadas en el periodo 2010-2015 fueron víctimas de feminicidio, y el 14% restante de asesinatos por móviles ajenos a la violencia de género.

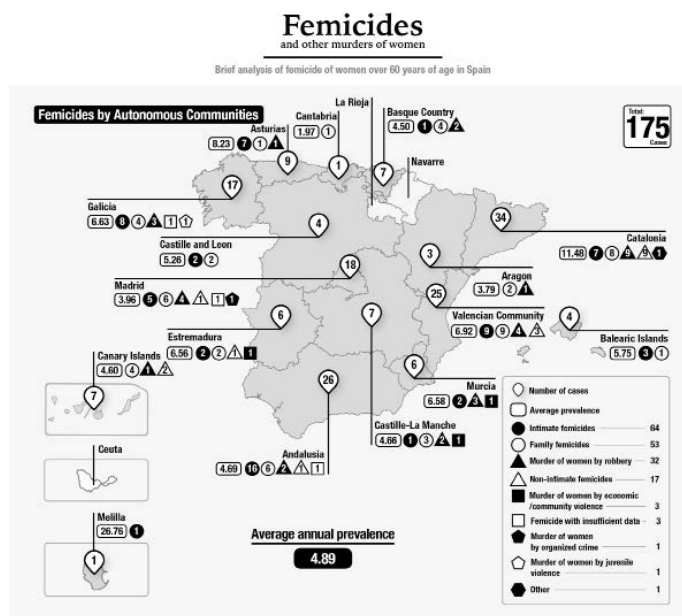
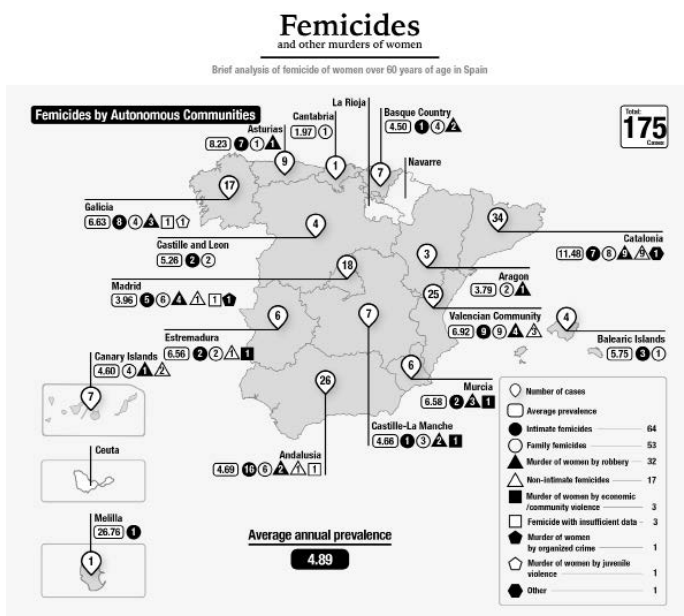
Entre 2010 y 2015, en España fueron asesinadas 681 mujeres a manos de hombres. Según el registro de casos de **Femicidio.net**, se cometieron 586 feminicios (86%) y 95 asesinatos de mujeres. Del total, 354 fueron reconocidos como cifras oficiales (52%) debido a que la Ley Orgánica 1/2004 de Medidas de Protección Integral contra la Violencia de Género solo reconoce los asesinatos de mujeres por violencia de género en el marco de la pareja o expareja.

2. PREVALENCIA Y NÚMERO DE CASOS POR COMUNIDADES AUTÓNOMAS

En este informe se recogen los datos de las mujeres mayores de 60 años asesinadas entre 2010 y 2015.

- Between 2010 and 2015, 175 femicides and other murders of women over the age of 60 were documented, accounting for 25.7 % of the 681 murdered women of all ages.

- Entre 2010 y 2015 se documentaron 175 feminicidios y otros asesinatos de mujeres mayores de 60 años que representan el 25,7% de las 681 mujeres asesinadas de todas las edades.



- The prevalence rate of women over 60 years of age in this period is 4.9 women murdered per million, higher than the prevalence of total cases (4.4). The Autonomous Communities or Autonomous Cities with a higher prevalence rate are: Melilla (26.76), Catalonia (11.48) and Asturias (8.23). With a single case documented, the Autonomous City of Melilla doubles the rate of the Autonomous Community of Catalonia, with 18 cases (due to the difference in size and population density between both territories).

- La tasa de prevalencia de mujeres mayores de 60 años en ese periodo es de 4,9 mujeres asesinadas por millón, más elevada que la prevalencia del total de casos (4,4). Las Comunidades o Ciudades Autónomas con una mayor tasa de prevalencia son: Melilla (26,76), Catalunya (11,48) y Asturias (8,23). Con un solo caso documentado, la Ciudad Autónoma de Melilla duplica la tasa de la Comunidad Autónoma de Catalunya, con 18 casos (debido a la diferencia en el tamaño y la densidad de población entre ambos territorios).

- The Autonomous Communities with the lowest prevalence rate are: Cantabria (1.97 women killed per million), Aragon (3.79) and Madrid (3.96).

- Las Comunidades Autónomas que registran la tasa de prevalencia más baja son: Cantabria (1,97 mujeres asesinadas por millón), Aragón (3,79) y Madrid (3,96).

- The only territories in which no cases were recorded between 2010 and 2015 are Ceuta, Navarra and La Rioja.

3. TIPOS DE FEMINICIDIO Y OTROS ASESINATO DE MUJERES

De las 175 mujeres mayores de 60 años asesinadas, más del 95% de los casos fueron clasificados con las siguientes tipologías:

3. TYPES OF FEMICIDE AND OTHER MURDERS OF WOMEN

Of the 175 murdered women over 60 years of age, more than 95% of the cases were classified within the following typologies:

- **Intimate femicide** (Carried out by a man with whom the victim had in the past or present had an intimate, emotional or sexual bond: husbands, ex-husband, boyfriend, ex-boyfriend, or lover.): Sixty-four cases (36.57%). Of these, 61 are official figures and three are unofficial. There is an under-registration of three intimate femicides not counted as official by the Delegation of Government for Gender Violence, which represents 4.68% of the intimate femicides in this report.

- **Family femicide** (In the context of a kinship relationship between victim and perpetrator, excluding the category exclusive to intimate femicide): Fifty-three cases (30.28%). Of these, 33 sons murdered their mothers, 7 grandchildren murdered their grandmothers and 5 ex sons-in law murdered their ex mothers-in-law.

- **Non-intimate femicide** (Carried out by a man with whom the victim did not have an affective relationship. We include in this category cases where a woman who suffers a sexual assault, consummated or attempted, is later murdered; the perpetrator can be known or unknown to the victim): **Seventeen cases** (9.71%), committed by neighbours, caregivers and strangers, among others.

- The most relevant type of murder is the **murder of women by robbery**, 32 cases in the period 2010-2015, which represent 18.28% of the total number of cases.

- Femicides / murders without sufficient data: three cases (1.71%)

- **Femicidio íntimo** (cometido por un hombre con el que la víctima tiene o ha tenido un lazo íntimo, emocional o sexual: maridos, ex paridos, novios, ex novios o amantes); con 64 casos (36,57%). De estos, 61 son cifras oficiales y tres no oficiales. Existe un subregistro de tres feminidios íntimos no contabilizados como oficiales por la Delegación de Gobierno para la Violencia de Género, que representa al 4,68% de los feminidios íntimos de este informe.

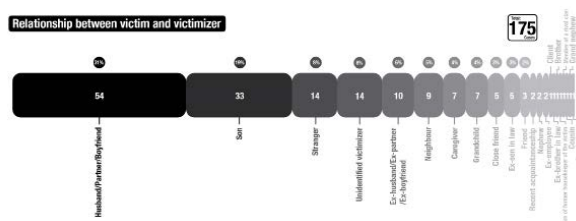
- **Femicidio familiar** (en el marco de una relación de parentesco por consanguinidad, afinidad o adopción entre víctima y victimario, excluyendo feminidios íntimos); con 53 casos (30,28%). De estos, 33 hijos asesinaron a sus madres, siete nietos a sus abuelas y cinco exyernos a sus exsuegras.

- **Femicidio no íntimo** (cometido por un hombre con el que la víctima no tenía ningún tipo de relación afectiva, incluyendo casos de tentativa o agresión sexual consumada previa al asesinato; el victimario puede ser conocido o desconocido de la víctima): 17 casos (9,71%), cometidos por vecinos, cuidadores y desconocidos, entre otros.

- El tipo de asesinato más relevante es el asesinato de mujeres por robo, 32 casos registrados en el periodo 2010-2015 que representan al 18,28% del total de casos.

- Femicidios/asesinatos sin datos suficientes: tres casos (1,71%).

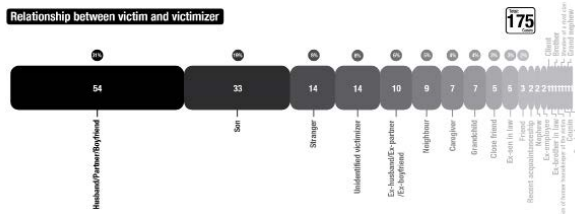
4. RELACIÓN DEL VICTIMARIO CON LA VÍCTIMA



- El 31% de los victimarios conocidos eran la pareja actual de la víctima (marido o pareja), a los que le siguen los hijos, con un 19% del total. El tercer tipo de relación más común es la de desconocidos (8%), hombres (identificados y detenidos) sin ningún tipo de relación con la víctima. Le siguen los victimarios sin identificar de casos no resueltos (8%), las exparejas (6%), los vecinos (5%) y los cuidadores (4%) y nietos (4%). El resto de victimarios concentra el 15% y se reconocen en relaciones como: allegados, amigos, conocidos recientes, exempleados y otros familiares como exyernos, etc.

-Un dato importante para destacar es que al menos el 84% de los victimarios eran conocidos de las mujeres mayores asesinadas, un porcentaje mayor que el de todas las mujeres asesinadas (681 casos) entre 2010 y 2015 registradas por Femicidio.net (82%).

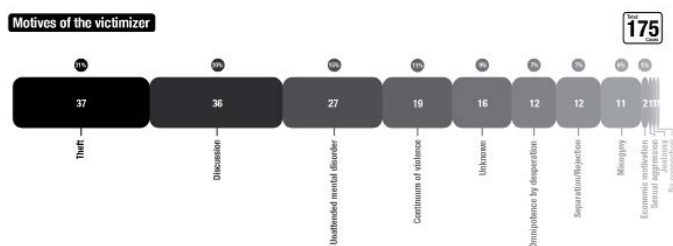
4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VICTIMISER AND VICTIM



- 31% of the known perpetrators were the victim's current partner (husband or partner), followed by the victims' children, with 19% of the total. The third most common type of relationship is unknown (8%), men (identified and detained) without any relationship to the victim, followed by unidentified perpetrators from unsolved cases (8%), ex partners (6%), neighbours (5%), caregivers (4%) and grandchildren (4%). The rest of the victimisers make up 15% and are recognised in relationships such as: relatives, friends, recent acquaintances, ex-employees and other relatives such as ex sons-in-law, etc.

- An important fact to note is that at least 84% of the perpetrators were known to the murdered women over 60, a percentage higher than that of all women murdered (681 cases) between 2010 and 2015 registered by Femicidio.net (82%).

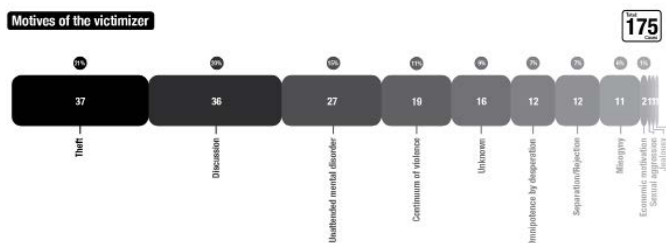
5. GROUNDS: GENDER AND OTHER TYPES OF CRIMINAL MOTIVES



- 21% of the victims were murdered by a perpetrator motivated by robbery, making this the motive that represents the highest percentage on this chart, 37 cases, of which 32 are murders by robbery. In 20% of cases (36), the crime was perpetrated after an argument and in 15% the reason is linked to an unmonitored mental or psychiatric disorder. In one of every 10 cases (11%), there is a continuum of violence prior to murder, which places femicide as the culmination of a series of violent acts sustained by the victim over a long period of time.

- The motive is unknown in 9% of crimes. Another 7% have been classified as "omnipotence produced by despair", which defines 12 cases in which the perpetrator, overwhelmed by a desperate situation, took the life of the woman he cared for either in sickness or for other reasons in which the victim needed some type of assistance (partner or son in all cases). The same percentage (7%) corresponds

5. MOTIVOS: MÓVILES DE GÉNERO Y OTROS TIPOS DE MÓVIL DEL CRIMEN



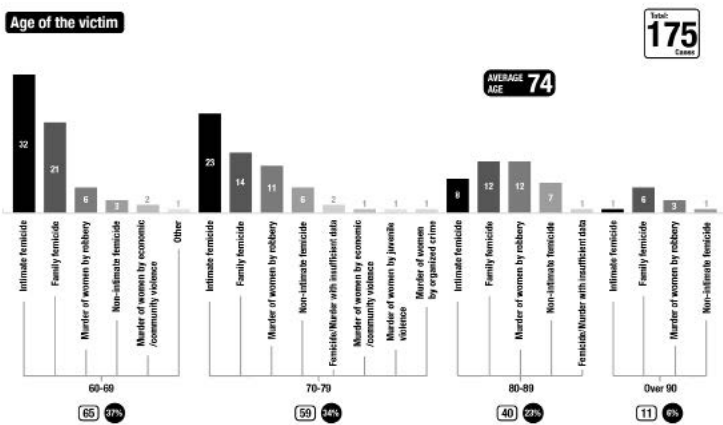
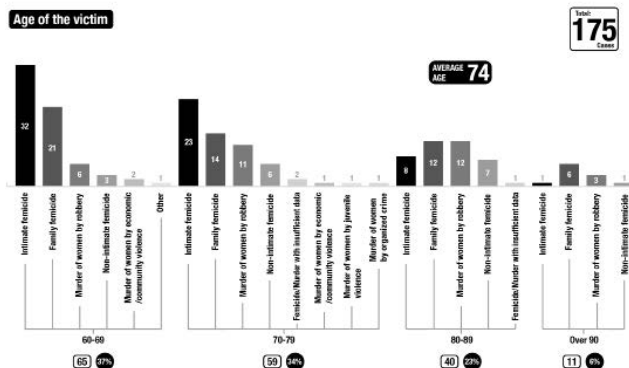
- El 21% de las víctimas fueron asesinadas por un victimario con motivaciones de robo, es el móvil que representa al porcentaje más alto en este gráfico, 37 casos, de los cuales 32 de estos son asesinatos por robo. En un 20% de los casos (36), el crimen se perpetró tras una discusión y en un 15% el móvil está vinculado a un trastorno mental o psiquiátrico desatendido. En uno de cada 10 casos (11%), se registra un continuo de violencia previo al asesinato, que sitúa al feminicidio como la culminación de una serie de violencias soportadas por la víctima en un periodo temporal largo.

- Se desconoce el móvil en el 9% de los crímenes. En otro 7% se ha clasificado como "omnipotencia por desesperación". Se trata de 12 casos en los que el victimario, sobrepasado por una situación que le desesperaba, le quitó la vida a la mujer a la que cuidaba o acompañaba por enfermedad u otras razones en las que esta necesitaba algún tipo de asistencia (pareja o hijo en todos los casos). El mismo porcentaje (un 7%) corresponde a victimarios que cometieron el crimen en un proceso de "separación" o tras el "rechazo" de la víctima. Otro 6%, con el móvil de "misoginia", corresponde a un feminicida serial que trabajaba en un geriátrico y que mató a siete ancianas (casos que clasificamos como feminicidios no íntimos), crímenes cometidos con una gran saña. Además, se conocen casos con móvil económico, agresión sexual, celos y por conexión con otras víctimas de feminicidios, sumando cada una menos del 1% del móvil vinculado al crimen.

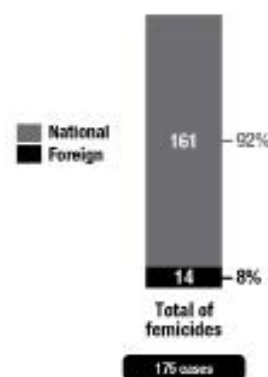
to perpetrators who committed the crime in a process of "separation" or after "rejection" from the victim. 6%, categorised as "misogyny", corresponds to the case of a serial femicide who worked in a geriatric and who killed 7 elderly women (cases that we classified as non-intimate femicides); these crimes were committed with great viciousness. In addition, there are cases motivated by economic reasons, sexual assault, jealousy and connection with other femicide victims, totalling at least 1% for each of the mobiles.

6. PROFILE OF THE VICTIM: AGE, OCCUPATION AND NATIONALITY

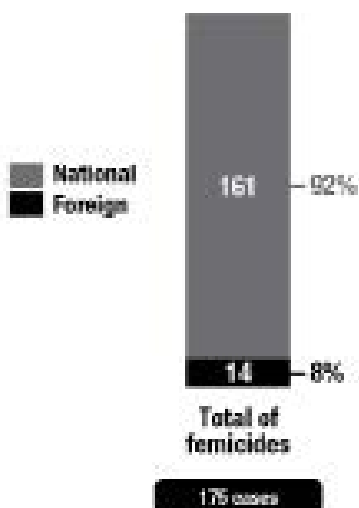
6 . PERFIL DE LA VÍCTIMA: EDAD, OCUPACIÓN Y NACIONALIDAD



Nationality of the victim

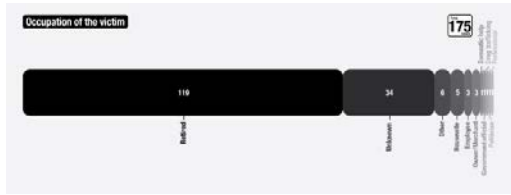


Nationality of the victim



- La media de edad de las mujeres mayores de 60 años asesinadas entre 2010 y 2015 es de 73,7 años (casi 26 años más que la media de los victimarios, 48 años). Se identifican dos perfiles principales de víctima: las mujeres asesinadas por sus parejas y las mujeres asesinadas por otros miembros de la familia, especialmente, sus propios hijos y sus nietos, como pudimos observar en el punto 5 de este informe.

- En cuanto a su ocupación, el 68% de las mujeres asesinadas estaba jubilada (119 casos), mientras



- The average age of women over 60 years of age killed between 2010 and 2015 is 73.7 years (almost 26 years more than the average age of the perpetrator: 48 years). Two main victim profiles are identified: women murdered by their partners and women murdered by other family members, especially their own children and grandchildren, as we noted in point 5 of this report.

- Regarding their occupation, 68% of the women killed were retired (119 cases), while the occupation of 19.4% of them (34 cases) is unknown. In addition, 2.9% were housewives (5 cases), 1.7% were employed and another 1.7% were owners or merchants. There are also cases of murdered women whose occupation was domestic employee, government official, politician, professional or drug trafficker.

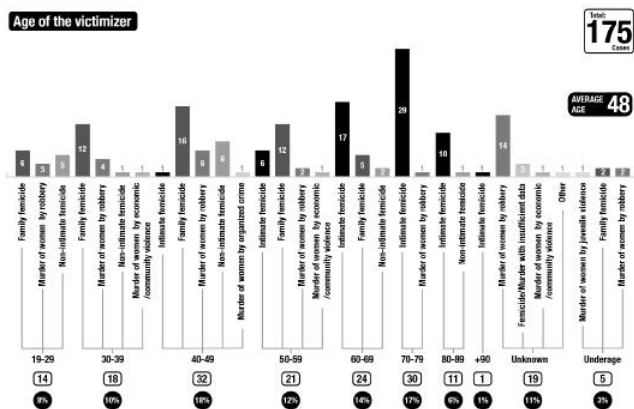
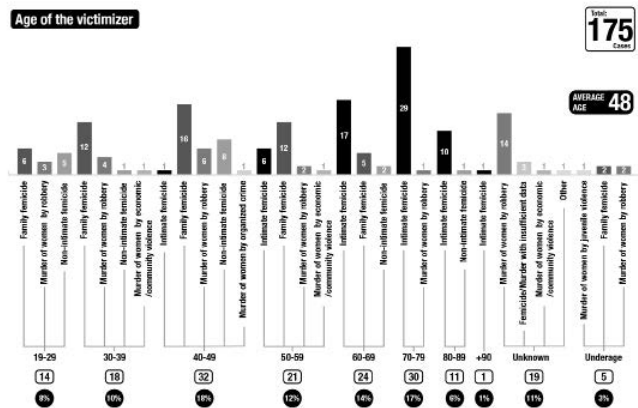
- 92% of victims over 60 years of age were Spanish nationals, while 14 women (the remaining 8%) were foreigners. However, the total percentage of foreign women murdered is much higher, as foreign women represent 30% of the 681 cases registered between 2010 and 2015.

7. PROFILE OF THE PERPETRATOR: AGE, OCCUPATION AND NATIONALITY

que se desconoce la ocupación del 19,4% de ellas (34 casos). Además, un 2,9% era ama de casa (cinco casos), un 1,7% era empleada y otro 1,7% era propietaria o comerciante. Se registran también casos de mujeres asesinadas cuya ocupación era empleada doméstica, funcionaria del gobierno, política, profesional o narcotraficante.

- El 92% de las víctimas mayores de 60 años eran de nacionalidad española mientras que 14 mujeres (el 8% restante) eran extranjeras. El porcentaje de mujeres extranjeras asesinadas del total de víctimas es mucho más elevado ya que las extranjeras representan el 30% de los 681 casos registrados entre 2010 y 2015.

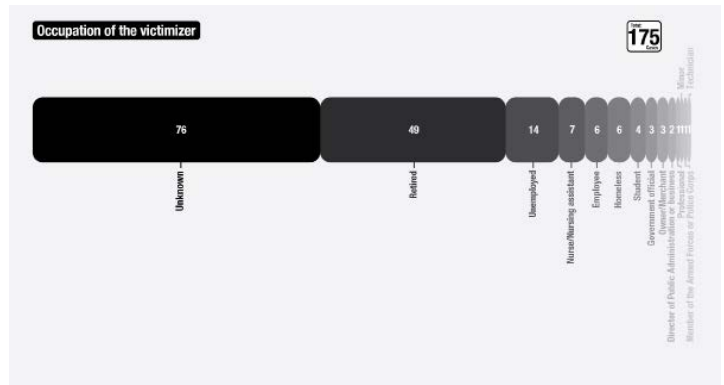
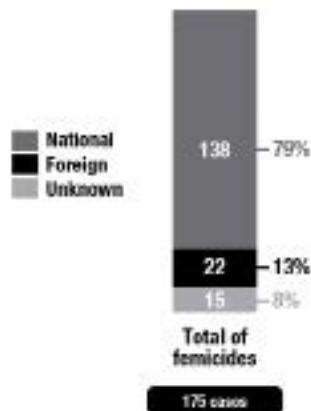
7. PERFIL DEL VICTIMARIO: EDAD, OCUPACIÓN Y NACIONALIDAD



Nationality of the victimizer



Nationality of the victimizer



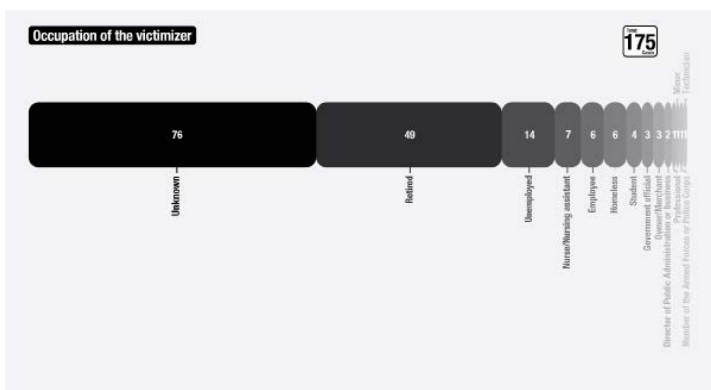
- La media de edad de los victimarios identificados es de 48 años. De las franjas de edad que cubren los victimarios, la que más casos registra es entre los 40 y los 49 años, con 32 casos. De ellos, el 50% (16 casos) son feminicidios familiares y otro 25% (ocho mujeres) fueron feminicidios no íntimos. La segunda franja de edad con más casos está entre los 70 y los 79 años y de los 30 casos que registra, 29 son feminicidios íntimos (el 96,7% del total).

- En cuanto a la ocupación de los victimarios, se desconoce el 43,4% de ellas (en 76 casos), mientras que las más comunes son las de jubilado (28% con 49 casos), desempleado (8% con 14 casos) y enfermero o auxiliar de enfermería (4% con siete casos).

- El 12,6% de los victimarios era extranjero (22 casos de los 175) y se desconoce el estatus legal del 8,6% de los autores (en 15 de los casos), aunque se ha confirmado que el 78,9% de ellos (138 victimarios) eran españoles. En comparación con la serie 2010-2015 el 65% eran españoles frente a un 29% de origen extranjero.

- De los victimarios, 33 cometieron suicidios consumados (el 18,9% de los casos) y 17 intentos de suicidio (el 9,71%). Los suicidios consumados de los victimarios se concentran entre feminicidios íntimos (26 casos que suponen el 78,8% del total de suicidios) y los feminicidios familiares (con siete casos que aportan el 21,2% restante). Los intentos de suicidio se distribuyen de forma parecida: doce de los 17 se registraron en feminicidios íntimos (el 70,6%) y el 29,4% restante corresponde a los intentos de suicidio de victimarios de feminicidios familiares.

- El 27,4% de los victimarios registrados se encuentran en prisión preventiva (48 de los 175 casos), mientras que el 26,3% se encuentra condenado (46 casos) y el caso se cerró tras el suicidio o la muerte del



- The average age of identified perpetrator is 48 years old. In regards to the age ranges of the victimisers, the most recorded cases are those between 40 and 49 years, which represent 32 cases. Of these, 50% (16 cases) are family femicides, while 25% (8 women) were non-intimate femicides. The second age group with the highest number of cases is between the ages of 70 and 79, with a total of 30 recorded cases, 29 of which are intimate femicides (96.7% of the total).

- Regarding the occupation of the victimisers, it is unknown in 43.4% (in 76 cases), while the most common are those who are retired (28%, with 49 cases), unemployed (8%, with 14 cases) and nurses or nursing assistants (4%, with 7 cases).

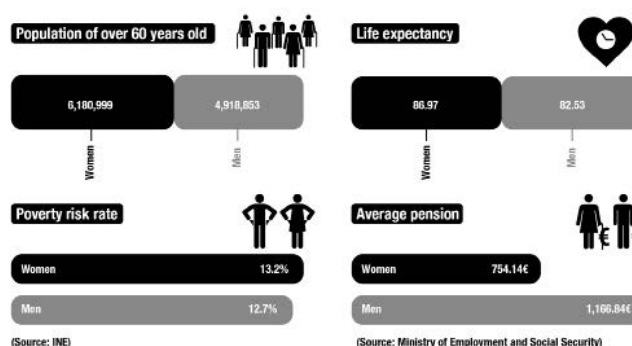
- 12.6% of the perpetrators were foreigners (22 cases out of 175) and the legal status of 8.6% of the perpetrators (15 cases) is unknown, although it has been confirmed that 78.9% of them (138 perpetrators) were Spanish. Compared to the 2010-2015 series, 65% were Spanish versus 29%, foreign.

- Of the perpetrators, 33 committed completed suicides (18.9% of cases) and 17, suicide attempts (9.71%). The completed suicides of the perpetrators are concentrated among intimate femicides (26 cases involving 78.8% of all suicides) and family femicides (with 7 cases accounting for the remaining 21.2%). Suicide attempts are similarly distributed: 12 out of 17 were recorded as intimate femicide (70.6%) and the remaining 29.4% correspond to suicide attempts from perpetrators of family femicides.

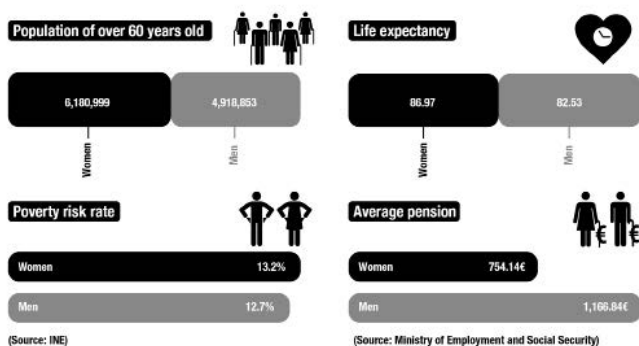
- 27.4% of the registered perpetrators are in pre-trial detention (48 of 175 cases), while 26.3% are convicted (46 cases). The case was closed after the suicide or the death of the perpetrator in 21.7% of the cases (38 of them). In addition, there are 13 perpetrators still unidentified (7.4%) and 4.6% are in psychiatric detention after a judicial sentence (8 cases).

victimario en un 21,7% de los casos (38 de ellos). Además, hay 13 victimarios aún sin identificar (el 7,4%) y un 4,6% se encuentran en internamiento psiquiátrico tras una sentencia judicial (ocho casos).

Demographic profile of women and men over 60 years old



Demographic profile of women and men over 60 years old



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1.9 MURDER OF OLDER WOMEN: WITCHCRAFT-RELATED FEMICIDES IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Janice Joseph, Stockton University, New Jersey/US

Janice Joseph, Ph.D. is a Distinguished Professor of the Criminal Justice Program at Stockton University. She is the Editor of the Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice, a scholarly criminal justice journal and serves on the editorial boards of several criminal justice journals. Her broad research interests include gangs, youth violence, juvenile delinquency, violence against women, and women and criminal justice.

The classical period of witch-hunts in Early Modern Europe and Colonial North America took place from 1450 to 1750, spanning the upheavals of the Reformation and the Thirty Years' War. An estimated 35,000 to 100,000 persons were executed. The true extent of this phenomenon is unknown because most the murders are not reported. However, it is generally believed that compared to men, women were disproportionately accused of witchcraft. In addition, most people who were murdered on charges of witchcraft were elderly women. The practice of witch-hunts that occurred in early modern Europe continues today in other parts of the world, including Africa. This paper will examine the nature, extent and the reasons for the femicide of elderly women accused of witchcraft.

Femicide

Femicide is the killing of a female because she is a female. Feminists advocate for the term "femicide" because it removes the gender-neutral nature of homicide. According to Russell and van de Ven (1976), the word femicide was introduced because "we must realise that a lot of homicide is in fact femicide. We must recognise the sexual politics of murder." Caputi and Russell (1998) view femicides as the most extreme form of terrorism against women, motivated by hatred, contempt, pleasure, or a sense of ownership. In general, femicide is a form of gender-based homicide. It is the most serious and lethal form of violence against women. It is a form of sexist terrorism and a hate crime against women. It occurs in every sphere of life and among any age group.

Murder of Elderly Women Accused of Witchcraft in Africa

Witchcraft is deeply rooted in African history. Although witch hunting and witchcraft itself are illegal in some parts of Africa today, many African

countries still believe in the existence and powers of witches. Such beliefs have resulted in the persecution, murder, and social isolation of those who are believed to be or who identify themselves as witches. The fear of witches has resulted in periodic witch-hunts during which the alleged witches are murdered or seriously harmed. Its form of femicide is referred to as the "Africa's hidden war on women". This practice can be found in Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Kenya, and other countries in Africa.

Extent of the Femicides

Information on Tanzania indicates that between 2005 and 2011, around 3,000 people were murdered after they were accused of being witches. Also, in 2012, in Tanzania more than 630 people, mostly women, were accused of witchcraft and systematically murdered; in 2013, the number was 765 and in 2015, it was 425 persons (no data were available for 2014). In northern Ghana, hundreds of women accused of witchcraft by their relatives or members of their community are either murdered or forced to live in 'witch camps' that house 800 women. At least 20 elderly people, mostly women, were killed in Mozambique between 2010 and 2011 over witchcraft allegations, and many others were physically, sexually and psychologically abused, and deprived of food assistance. Between 2010 and 2011, in Zimbabwe, more than 20 elderly women were murdered after being accused of witchcraft. Many others were physically, sexually, psychologically abused, or banished. Likewise, in Burkina Faso, hundreds of elderly women accused of witchcraft (called *les mangeuses d'ames*, or soul eaters) were either killed or banished. In Kenya in 2012, more than 50 people aged 60 years and over were murdered because of witchcraft accusations.

Reasons for the gendered and age-specific nature of witchcraft-related femicides

There are several reasons why these women are murdered. The physical appearance of these women seems to attribute the presence of evil. There is also the notion that witchcraft, femininity, and old age are linked or related. In South Africa, for example, there is the belief that because a woman loses some of her complexion, shape and become

disfigured when she is old, she is a person who can become a witch. Witchcraft accusations and murder against older women may be the result of economic pressures and poverty and the subordination of women to men. In Tanzania, the victims are often singled out because of their physical features, particularly reddened eyes, which are caused by cooking in small, poorly ventilated homes. Women, who are labelled witches are sometimes used as scapegoats, because of their gender and age, and are blamed for a host of misfortunes, such as droughts, family tragedies, impotence, infertility and illnesses, and HIV/AIDS. Many of these victims are vulnerable to physical attacks because of their physical and visual disability or they are suffering from the after effects of leprosy. In Nigeria, elderly women are abused and murdered because they are believed to have “the evil propensity to harm innocent persons, possess the magical powers to fly at night and travel far and wide to kill innocent people; cause disease in humans, sudden death, impotence, sickness in animals, bad luck, and other such misfortunes.” In addition, witchcraft accusations and murder of women are attempts to control the behaviour of women. In many African countries, these victims are murdered viciously. Reports indicate that suspected witches are burnt, stoned, and shot. They are also poisoned with deadly substances, tortured before they are killed, or dismembered before they are killed .

Recommendations

The murder of elderly women accused of witchcraft is a violation of human rights. It is, therefore, imperative that these countries protect the rights of elderly women. In several countries in Africa, there are laws against this horrible practice. Nigeria, for example, recently passed a law making witchcraft accusation a crime. In South Africa, the Witchcraft Suppression Acts makes it a crime for a person to accuse another person of being a witch. Tanzania’s Witchcraft Ordinance criminalises all aspects of witchcraft, including possessing witchcraft materials. Occasionally there are arrests, prosecutions and conviction of witch killers. Recently in Zambia, nine persons were sentenced to a total of 315 years imprisonment for killing and burning seven

people accused of witchcraft. However, these laws have not halted or stopped this murderous act because most of the perpetrators are not punished.

All the countries should criminalise witch hunts. It is important that community groups lobby the governments to protect the rights of their citizens by severely punish those who accuse, hurt and murder others based on accusations of witchcraft. Most importantly, witchcraft-related violence should be treated as hate crimes by criminal courts in African countries. The criminal justice system must always take severe action against perpetrators who murder elderly women because of witchcraft accusations.

Legal efforts must be combined with increased social awareness. Public awareness is also imperative to address this problem. It is important for members of these societies to understand that witchcraft is superstition and is not based on reality, science or common sense and that it is very harmful. Educational programs should be established in the schools and the universities and awareness information can be distributed in the communities. The media, such as newspaper, television, and the internet are excellent tools to provide the appropriate information about witchcraft accusations. More importantly, elderly women in these countries should be educated about their rights.

In 2018, Liberia plans to host new UN human rights office that will help the country’s government better address the accusations of witchcraft and ritualistic killings. The United Nations Human Rights Council will hold a special two day workshop on witchcraft-related human rights violations on September 21 and 22, 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland. It will consist of UN Experts, academics and members of civil society to discuss the violence associated with such beliefs and practices and groups that are vulnerable to witchcraft violence. It will highlight the various manifestations of witchcraft beliefs and practice, including accusations, stigma, and ritual killings and identify good practice in combatting such practices. This is a very important and vital approach to gaining international attention and awareness of the problem and to seek a solution.

Conclusion

The femicide of elderly women because of witch accusations remains a contemporary problem in many African countries. This practice is a form of gender-based violence and a violation of the human rights of the victims. The irrational beliefs associated with witchcraft need immediate attention and solution. This problem needs to be addressed at the local, regional and national levels in each country in Africa where it is a problem. Elderly women should not be marginalised but be integrated into the social fabric of the African society. Despite the fact that this practice has been around for a very long time, with political will, social and cultural changes, it can be eliminated from all African countries.

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PART II

ACUNS Side and High Level Events Establishing a Femicide Watch Session 26 of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), Vienna, May 2017

"... this Commission adopted a very important resolution on gender-related killings of women and this resolution is calling all UN member states to collect data, to analyse data and to publish data on gender-related killings with possible cooperation with non-governmental organisations, persons from academia, independent institutions ... I am now trying to build this mechanism on a Femicide Watch that will in each country look into each case of femicide to see what is coming out through the analysis of these cases, because those are not only numbers, we aren't speaking only about statistical data. We are speaking about tragic stories in which those horrible forms of violence are ongoing and we are not yet at the point of efficient prevention of gender-related killings."

Dubravka Šimonović,
United Nations Special Rapporteur
on Violence against Women, its
Causes and Consequences

2.1 ACUNS SIDE EVENT: COLLECTION OF DATA ON GENDER-RELATED KILLING OF WOMEN AND GIRLS: PROMISING PRACTICES

2.1.1 Opening remarks by H.E. Maria Assunta Accili, Ambassador of Italy to the International Organisations in Vienna

I am particularly glad to be here with you today. I am grateful to ACUNS for the invitation. I have the distinct pleasure to be sitting with a number of ladies on this table. I am sorry that there are no men. I think that it would be more than appropriate for gentleman to discuss this issue more than for ladies. I see a few interesting heads around us. I mean men's heads and I congratulate you for joining us. The issue of violence against women and girls is absolutely heinous and I will only say a few words to introduce this debate, which I will leave then to the panellists. I will say that violence against women represents a serious social problem, still rooted in too many countries.

According to UN Women, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lives and around two thirds of victims of intimate partner or family related homicides are women. In order to eradicate violence in personal relationships it is necessary first and foremost I would say to clearly define it as a crime, which is not the case in several instances, unfortunately. Second, it is necessary to work on prevention through education. I usually say that the problem will be solved through mothers that educate appropriately their male child. Families and schools have a strong responsibility and must be at the forefront against all types of violence, prejudices and discrimination. Combating violence against women is a crucial task for each society which is committed to the full protection of fundamental human rights. Today, we discuss collection of data on gender-related killing of women and girls. There are promising practices that will be explored by our panellists and I urge the international community to join hands in first and foremost sharing information then intelligence and good practices in order to face an issue that it is becoming increasingly relevant because of economic, not only cultural reasons, which we all are aware of.

2.1.2 Statement by Angela Me, Chief Research and Trend Analysis Branch, UNODC

And I have to say also talking about men, I think we

need to thank a man that really is pushing the issue of homicide in the CCPCJ, but not only in the UN and so Michael Platzer I think that we need to thank you! So because we know this is a serious event, I am sure that many of you have been participating. And so what I would like to do in five minutes is to try to convince you that if we want to better inform policy against femicide we need better data and so we need to invest on a more, I would say, gender sensitive crime statistic system. I wanted to show you that when we look globally, we look at the issue of homicide and traditionally, this is the picture that we would have had for many years and then you see, here is homicide by sex and then the great majority of victims of homicide are men. Well, we stop here. Then we say we need to do a lot of prevention to protect men and boys against femicide and if we don't have additional information that's where we will put our priorities. I think even in gender statistics, in general, sex disaggregation of data is becoming now, mainstream in mostly all our areas. But those who deal with gender issues and gender statistics know very well that sex disaggregated data is not enough and this is an example. We need to move from sex disaggregated data to gender sensitive statistical system, particularly on crime. So if you want to go beyond this and then look at the type, we look at the intimate partner and family violence which is all homicides in relation to the family context where we see, actually, that the majority of the victims are women. So the kind of policy that we will take and the kind of response that we will take in this case will be completely different. But if we go even further and look at the homicide by only intimate partners, we clearly see that the majority and basically all the victims are women. I think that in the context of looking at crime and violence, it is so important to have gender sensitive statistics.

But I wanted to focus a bit on the global estimate that we have done for our last issue of the Global Homicide Study. The one on family is based on 53 countries and the one on intimate partners is based on 36 countries. So you see that the further we go to look for information that can really drive good policies, the less data is available. I wanted to really ask you all here to really help us to make sure that we move from 36 countries to all of the countries. What do we need to do? How can we help the countries? And again, this is an example that goes

beyond homicide and femicide, particularly in Latin America. Many countries have adopted offences, specifically related to femicide so we went to Latin American colleagues and we said now we have data that are specific to femicide and they told us, well, no, because if you only look at those data, you underestimate. Because even still where there are offences related to femicide, it is sometimes easier to process cases again under homicide offences. So even looking at the femicide offences percent would underestimate the problem of femicide. It is really important that this goes into the regular crime statistics system a better information system that can help us to guide this information. I wanted also to show you that not only by type, but also by age, the story changes. Here, there are the victims of homicide only of girls and boys, those between 0 and 14 years of age and again you see that compared to the global picture the story is different. There is not really a big difference between women and men and in Asia, for example, there are more girls killed than boys. Going back to what we can do, one of the instruments that we are promoting is the international specification of crime for statistical purposes. This is not a tool for statisticians and it is not only limited to the fact that statisticians like to deal with data and so on. This is really a tool that if implemented in each police station, in each prosecution house, in each court and prison, can really help us to disaggregate the data that we have on homicide, but also other types of crimes so that we can have regular data collection. If we ask whether we have more or less violence against women today or yesterday, I am afraid we cannot answer that question, because we don't have enough information to assess these trends at a global level. We can do it with the femicide.

I want to conclude, just to say a couple of additional points that we need also to go beyond the data on femicide, on violence against women and I think as the Ambassador was saying we have always focused and we have reached now the level where we know quite a bit about the level of violence and the victims, because we have always focused on data collection on women. I think we also need now to move to the next step and actually move to a data collection that targets men to understand the reason, to understand the vulnerability of men to be a perpetrator of violence against women and

particularly for the femicide. I think what would be interesting is to actually hear the voice of the perpetrators of femicide so that it can really help us to understand what are the causes to prevent it.

2.1.3 Statement by Anna Alvazzi del Frate, Research Director, Small Arms Survey

I am very pleased to join this panel and to share a bit of my experience that it is based on many years of working with the data to try to monitor trends in violent deaths. Violent deaths that include the homicide, the crime prevention approach, the public health approach and also looking at conflict related deaths. Obviously, the biggest challenge, as Angela has already mentioned, is to try to figure out the proportions of male and female victims, not to mention looking at age distribution. All the details that would accompany the information are very, very hard to obtain. The issue of gender is not only about looking at women. It is really to get more information on both sexes and to try really to address adequate policies and programmes that could help prevent violence for both sexes. You can imagine that in the global data collections, for example the UNODC maintains until a few years ago, there were less than half of the countries that could provide sex disaggregated data for homicide so from approximately 200 countries you would have only 100 that were able to share internationally numbers for male and female victims of homicide. So this is now slowly improving and an excellent opportunity is represented by the Agenda 2030 by the Sustainable Development Goals. The target of violence reduction for both goal 16, overall reduction of violence and related deaths and specifically goal 5, it is said for the reduction of violence against women (not sure what this sentence is trying to say but it doesn't make sense). They both call for the data revolution. A data revolution would really mean looking at how to build the capacity locally and the ownership of the methodologies and the statistics that are necessary to advance in this type of accurate data collection that would adequately represent the proportion of male and female victims of violence.

Another important aspect is the contribution of knowledge, shared knowledge of these things. It is true, as Angela said, that we have now advanced in

knowing more or less the levels, but we had also to learn that sometimes, especially in the area of violence against women, more reports do not mean more violence, but they may, actually, mean more awareness and more understanding of the problem. In the area of killings, especially of femicide, it is important to make a distinction between the cause and between attributing the gender based nature of the killing and this is especially in countries with relatively low levels of violence where this type of killing may represent actually the majority of the events of violence against women. So all these different elements put together may represent a challenge, but actually, also an opportunity, especially under the push of the Sustainable Development Goals. We hope that together and with the help of UNODC that the SDGs [sic] will be successful.

2.1.4 Statement by Tiziana Zannini, Director for general and social affairs in the Department for gender equality, Prime Minister's Office, Italy

It is a great pleasure for me to be here to represent Italy, whose national Government has placed the prevention, fight, prosecution and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls at the top of its priority agenda for many years now.

Italy is fully aware that, if we really want to develop effective policies, we need reliable data. Therefore, in 2015, the Italian Government entrusted the Italian National Statistics Office with the carrying out of the second national survey on the prevalence of violence against women in Italy. The survey confirmed the alarming data which is not very different from that coming from other countries in the world. This means, as we all know, that violence against women has no borders. Instead, it is a global scourge needing global responses, starting from the harmonisation of the different approaches of the states to the collection of data on violence in accordance with the Istanbul Convention.

To this end, in 2015, the Italian Government chose to send a strong message of zero tolerance towards all forms of violence against women by adopting an Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and thus increasing the amount of economic resources allocated for its prevention and assistance to victims. Indeed, the Extraordinary Plan provided

for the allocation of about 40 million Euros for 4 years and is now in the process of being updated.

Recognising the importance of data for gender equality policy planning and taking into account the difficulties in appropriately measuring violence against women in our country, mainly due to the existing fragmentation of available data, Italy decided to adopt a comprehensive approach on data collection. Therefore, it established, within the framework of the Plan, a specific National Database on gender-based violence aimed at appropriately measuring violence against women and collecting all the existing and new data coming from all involved public Administrations, through the allocation of a 2-million-euro fund.

Following the signature of a specific Memorandum of Understanding between the Italian Government and the National Statistics Institute, on 25 November 2016, the structure of the National Database is currently being defined with the aim of ensuring, from now on, the collection of regular, high-quality, standardised, and coordinated data on violence against women.

Such data will play an essential role not only to measure the prevalence of the phenomenon in our country, but also to better understand its root causes, monitor its trend as well as the effectiveness of protection actions for victims and ultimately be able to devise informed and even more effective policies in the future.

In order to ensure reliability of data we need to involve all relevant stakeholders, ranging from public administrations, such as the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, Health, Defence, Labour and Social Policies, to NGOs and experts and operators working in this field. This is what Italy is doing through the creation of an integrated system on violence against women envisaging the carrying out and periodic updating of:

- A specific survey on the prevalence, frequency, severity, causes and consequences, and risk factors of violence to be carried out every 4 years;
- A qualitative and quantitative survey on gender-based violence and stereotypes to be carried out on Italian citizens as well as on operators working in social and health services.

In compliance with the above mentioned memorandum, the integrated system will allow the annual collection of harmonised data on victims assisted in shelters and anti-violence centres, as well as of data coming from the toll-free helpline (1522) and hospitals, social and public services. With a view to monitoring the effectiveness of prevention, protection and prosecution actions as well as to follow judicial proceedings and reporting trends, police and justice statistics will be collected annually, as well as data on the perpetrators' criminal record and the relationship between victims and perpetrators.

In our hands is the unprecedented opportunity to end all forms of violence against women and transform gender relations irreversibly for the next generation. Let us fully understand this phenomenon and adopt informed and truly effective policies to spare the women of tomorrow such a horrible crime.

2.1.5 Statement by Ani Jilozian, Coalition to stop violence against women, Armenia

It is an honour and privilege to be among you and among such extraordinary women on this panel and I am also honoured to be representing Armenia here. Gender-related killings are the most extreme manifestation of violence against women and constitute a gross violation of women's rights to life, humane treatment, personal liberty and non-discrimination. Femicide, as we know, is deeply rooted in historical power imbalances that are embedded in society and inextricably linked to harmful gender stereotypes and norms that are also legitimised violence. It occurs more frequently and in environments where gender-based violence is accepted and normalised by societal norms and there is a lack of political will at the highest levels of government to prosecute those responsible. This is why the Coalition to Stop Violence against Women in Armenia decided to shed light on this issue last year and publish Armenia's first Femicide Report.

Trends and data show that the highest level of femicide corresponds to regions with the highest overall rates of lethal violence; however, this is not the case with post-Soviet countries, many of which have disproportionately high rates of femicide with respect to intentional homicide. Statistics on intimate-partner homicide are not easily attainable

in the former Soviet Union, including Armenia, as most state agencies do not disaggregate data on violence in the family based on gender and there are serious gaps in our understanding of this phenomenon and no systematic processes for accurately documenting domestic abuse. There is also no systematic process for fully investigating cases, making appropriate referrals and issuing protection orders. Today, there exists a dearth of information on domestic homicides and no national agency in Armenia that collects comprehensive data on this issue. National statistics exclude assaults leading to death, assistance with suicides, justified killing or non-intentional killing and even when data is available the links between homicide and prior violence cannot be easily made and they may not be formally documented. There are cases in which medical examiners, for instance, have been known to work in a corrupt manner and to accept bribes to cover up such crimes. Thus, the actual number of women in Armenia killed by intimate partners and family members each year remains unknown.

In Armenia, at least 30 women died at the hands of intimate partners and family members in the period of 2010 – 2015. Since then at least another 10 women have been killed by intimate partners and family members. In the absence of population based statistics and accurate statistics we are limited to verbal accounts and newspaper articles. Thus, the data we present is an underestimate of the true number of domestic violence related fatalities in the country as cases are mistakenly classified as suicide, accidents or unresolved. Strengthening surveillance and screening requires homicide data to be aggregated by sex as we know, and important information included in reports about the victim-perpetrator relationship as well as the circumstances around the death.

Relevant agencies need to cooperate on such reports and infringe appropriately to identify instances of femicide as they occur and there should be standardised guidelines and categories for identifying and documenting such cases. International agencies had determined the gender dimensions of importance when measuring femicide. These include the sex of the victim, sex of the perpetrator, relationship between the perpetrator and the victim, the type of violence whether that be physical, sexual or both and

whether there was a gender motivation. As we know storytelling and personal narratives are the building blocks to public perceptions on this issue and have the capacity to significantly influence the way the public perceives such social issues. Therefore when possible, quantitative data should be shared alongside qualitative narratives. Again, this is where women's NGOs can play a valuable role. It is these organisations that can use innovative methods, such as verbal autopsies which involve interviews with individuals close to the victim to determine the circumstances around the death and how it can be prevented. In an effort to crack down on femicide and gender-based violence, anecdotal accounts have been gathered by a few groups including the Coalition in Armenia. These accounts have put into question police responses to suicide and undocumented cases, suggesting that these crimes are purposefully covered up by family members and authorities alike. Creative methods of data collection are especially important for limited resource settings like Armenia where there are incomplete and missing reports and the inability or unwillingness of authorities to tackle the issue. However, the role of women's NGOs is limited. Although alternative methods such as proxy reviews and proxy interviews and verbal autopsies can be used to develop an understanding on the nature of femicide, ultimately, significantly improving the surveillance and the data collection process requires the existence of national homicide data bases that maintain national level collection of data on homicides from police, mortuary, court and medical records.

Accurate information on femicide is absolutely crucial to understanding its characteristics and developing sound evidence to enhance security for women and to punish perpetrators. The poor quality of data and the gaps in information systems are not only barriers to adequately investigating femicides and responding to them, they are also barriers to developing meaningful strategies to prevent such deaths and advocate for improved policies. You can find the Coalition's Femicide Report at the following link (http://coalitionagainstviolence.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Femicide_Report_ENG.pdf?be05b6)

2.1.6 Statement by Nerea Novo, Spanish civil society observatory feminicidio.net

Today, femicide is a concept, is a category and is also a paradigm to study and analyse violence against women and murders of women. Its global dimension makes it very unique as an international crime, because it is not genocide. It does not affect political or ethnic or religious groups, it affects women, it affects half of humanity, more than half of humanity. So how is it possible if we are half of humanity and we don't know yet how many women are being killed for being women in the 21st century? We don't have to go that far to confirm that, because in the European Union not a single country has a record of every single type of femicide in the 21st century. What does it mean? What does not knowing how many women are killed for being women tell us about our societies? The background forces us to look at the states and the historical deaths that have occurred with women in general. We need violence against women to be a matter of state in all countries around the world and we can't fight against male, chauvinist, violence without economic endowment, without resources, without a clear political will and with less governing bodies. Nor it can be combated without the active participation and leading role of the organised civil society. We are murdered for being women, a fact that it is not recognised by states which don't take the responsibility of guaranteeing the right of a life free of violence for women.

Only 354 of our 681 cases, a little bit more than 50% of our cases, are officially recognised as gender-based violence, because we in Spain recognise officially intimate femicides and child femicides in the hands of their own fathers. But, what about the other 47% of murders of women? We count them all and we distinguished between femicides and murders and by doing that we discovered that we have more kinds of cases where gender-based violence is developed by the victimiser. One of my colleagues said here that only documenting femicides would underestimate violence against women and that is so true. We collect information on murders of women, on robbery and only by doing that we know that they have 65 years average, much more than our average victim, and that 40% of them are retired and that is something we only can know by collecting data on all of them. We give all we have

every day so we can de-patriarchalise our lives on a daily basis. By coming to Vienna to present our project we try as well to de-patriarchalise the United Nations a little bit. This is with or without male panellists. So that's the reason why we do consider your proposal as a Special Rapporteur for creating a femicide watch as a key element in the next few years hopefully. This needs to be an international, independent world recognised observatory that must be created as soon as possible because women are not being killed by distinction of ethnicity or religious and social class. It happens in the northern countries as in the southern countries in war and in peace. So in *Femicidio.net* we began documenting this in 2010, we, as I said before, had 681 cases and so far not a single region in Spain is free of femicides since 2010. We gather all that in a database and basically we collect more than 50 fields for each of these cases which include the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator obviously, but also the motif. We consider one of the most important things in distinguishing types of femicides is the relationship and the motif of the victimiser. Obviously, jealousy and separations are always a great contributing factor, but we also consider, for example, that family femicides have been considered a part of intimate femicides as well. We have been collecting intimate partners and all the family members as only one type of femicide and we have to split it and when we analyse family femicides. We have 90 family femicides since 2010 and 50 of them are mothers killed by their own sons so that's not comparable with a femicide by an intimate partner and that's something we need to discuss and we need to include in our data.

Another thing we want to include and also Dubravka has already introduced this is the importance of the origins of the victims and the victimisers. Because in Spain we have 35.8 women killed, born outside Spain and their victimisers were born out of Spain just in 25% of the occasions. We need to look at the data and not tell the data what we need to know and I think that's going to be the revolution of the data- how we are going to move away from reporting statistics that reflect what we want to say and towards reporting genuine statistics straight from the data.

2.1.7 Statement by Margaret Martin, Women's Aid, Ireland

Women's Aid works to protect women and children and we have been deeply aware of the level of danger and risk to women and children's safety for many years. 1996 was a very bloody year for women in Ireland. By May, 8 women had been killed, more than the total for the previous year. By the end of the year, 11 more women were killed. These 19 femicides represented 45% of all murder cases for that year.

We knew we needed to record these killings. Over the following 20 years our Femicide Monitoring Project tracked homicides of women in newspaper records and periodically checked our figures with the Irish Police Force to ensure their accuracy. We have never received any funding for this work but our commitment to showing the dark truth about violence against women never wavered. In 2016 we published *Behind Closed Doors* which showed that the majority of women were killed in their own homes and by someone known to them. It also provided data on: the method of killing of women: 31% stabbed, 26% strangled, 21% beaten to death, 13% shot and 9% killed by other means. The victims' ages which range from teenagers to women over 60 with the highest number of women killed aged between 26-35. Women's relationships with the perpetrator, where known. Where the cases have been resolved:

89 women (54%) were murdered by a current or former male intimate partner. 54 women (33%) were killed by a male relative or acquaintance and 21 women were murdered by a stranger. Every day on the Women's Aid 24hr National Freephone Helpline we hear from women who live on a knife edge of fear and it would be wrong to underestimate the scale and impact of violence against women.

In addition to the number of women killed, there were 8 cases where a total of 16 children were killed alongside their mothers by the perpetrator. There were 21 cases where other people: friends, sisters, brothers, mothers and husbands were either killed or injured by the perpetrator. Other data showed that: Sexual violence/rape was reported in 22 cases. In 13 cases, it was reported that the victim was talking

about or in the process of leaving the relationship.

In 7 cases there were references to women being involved in prostitution and in 2 cases it was reported that the victim was pregnant at the time of their death. 164 (79%) of cases have been resolved either through a court process or because it was a murder suicide. 12 cases (6%) are awaiting trial and there are 33 cases (15%) where no-one has been held accountable.

There have been 22 murder-suicides in Ireland where a man has killed a woman and then taken his own life. In 21 of these cases, women were killed by a partner or an ex-partner. In the other case the perpetrator was the woman's son. In 4 of the cases the man killed the woman and her children, resulting in the deaths of 9 children in total. When we come to look at women killed by intimate partners, we know that 68 women (76%) were killed by a current partner and 21 women (24%) were killed by a former partner, giving a total of 89 women.

We listed the names of each woman who was killed, her age, when she was killed and the relationship with her killer. Chris Cawley, whose sister Celine Cawley, was killed in 2008, contacted Women's Aid after reading the report and asked our help in identifying the charges, convictions and the sentences imposed. Our data showed that 75% of intimate partners and 69% of other men were found guilty of murder. He is trying to ensure that men who murder their partners cannot benefit financially by inheriting property owned by their wife or partner in Ireland.

Through the Irish Observatory on Violence against Women, we recommended to our Minister for Justice and Equality, Frances Fitzgerald, that Ireland commences the review of all domestic violence homicides. We believe that this can facilitate a refining of risk factors and safety plans; raise awareness among stakeholders and offer direction for improvement in protection for women and children. Last November we were informed that the Analysis Unit of An Garda Síochán (Irish Police) would conduct an analysis of domestic related homicides over the period 2007 to 2016 to identify any trends and patterns that may exist and that the analysis will include data from the State Pathologist's Office. We look forward to seeing this work when it becomes available.

Lethal violence is at the most severe end of the spectrum of violence against women and we are very encouraged by Dubravka Šimonović's call on all States to focus on gender related killings. Ireland, through our work, has 20 years of information and we are happy to share our experience. It is available on our website.

REMEMBERING AND REFLECTING

At our launch we took the opportunity to publically pause, to remember and to reflect on each of the women and children's lives lost to male violence and we stood in solidarity with families, friends and communities of women murdered and with women currently living with abuse. We remembered those women murdered in cases where no perpetrator has been charged as well as the other cases yet to come to trial.

At our launch each of the 209 women were represented by a dove, with a small dove for each of the 16 children and a special poem written by the Irish Chair of Poetry, Paul Meehan, was read during the remembrance ceremony.

I'd like to end with her words:

You hold her forever in memory
on the palm of your hand,
between heart line and life line

between heaven and earth
between then and now
between once and never
between here and there

between heart line and life line
between heart line and life line

2.1.8 Discussant: Dr. Dubravka Šimonović, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences

I am extremely glad to be here, attending this panel and I would like to thank Mr. Michael Platzer and ACUNS and all co-sponsors of this panel for organising it and for the publication of this book. I think that they did a great job so we have a man as a head of this whole initiative related to femicide here in Vienna and I am very glad to be in that process contributing in my role as a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences. It is very important to learn from all our panellists where we are and where we are going. We have started a long journey in how to prevent femicides, how to prevent gender-related killings in our countries. So let me ask you- how many of you know here the number of women killed in your country, the number of femicides? As a Special Rapporteur, I am travelling to different countries and I am posing the same question and many times I am receiving answers from different persons from ministries. Yes, we do have data. But then when you go into such data, you see that there are different methods of collection of data, at the end there are no data that we can compare at the countries level, regional level or global level. And in the future we should really have comparable data to see where we are and how to look into data in order to prevent such cases in the future. For that reason, when I started with my mandate in 2015, I was invited to select the different priorities and I have a long list of 10 or even more priorities, but I selected a momentous priority- prevention of femicides.

With respect to femicides, it is very important to know that almost all our countries have a collection of data on homicides and this is something that UNODC is doing and what was presented by Mrs. Angela Me as a challenge now- how to turn the collection of data on homicides into the collection of data on femicides. And it is a challenge, because only from 50 something countries we do have data that could be relatively comparable. If you also look at the global agenda now with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda and Goal 5 and also Goal 16, we have the possibility to really focus on good collection of data on gender-related killings of women and also the use of this data in

order to see how to prevent them. Here, I would also like to mention the resolution adopted by this Commission and later on by the General Assembly on gender-related killings of women. And this is a very important contribution of this Commission and all of you that have participated during this process, from the governmental side, NGOs or academia. In that resolution there is a clear call for all member states to collect, disaggregate, analyse and report on gender-related killings of women. So now this is in a GA Resolution. It is also in the Sustainable Development Agenda, this specific target on elimination of violence against women and in Goal 16 on collection of data on homicides. But however, I am an independent expert so I am a little bit more open with respect to what are challenges here and we are seeing that at the UN level there are different bodies that are using different kinds of perspectives, how to focus on violence against women and the collection of data in order to prevent such violence.

There are also a number of states, for example Italy, that are now investing a lot into the collection of data on all forms of violence against women. But if you look at data collection on violence against women, we can see that for example, the Fundamental Rights Agency from the European Union collected data on 28 countries on different forms of violence against women and this is very important to see the comparative picture of different countries. But femicides aren't there. Because, if you go around and collect data with this kind of prevalent question, you aren't collecting data on femicides. So for femicides we need a different model for how to collect such data. For that reason, when I selected femicide as a priority, I was asked by the delegation: what are good practices and how can we do it? I then looked up to see what are good practices and what was presented here is something that we can see as a good practice that should create the possibility of having comparable data on femicide. I have also published a report that was presented to the General Assembly in New York on modalities, how to establish a Femicide Watch at the national level. The basic idea is to first collect data on gender-related killings of women and all killings that are related to sex or gender of the person killed. In order to have such data, we have to explore all different homicides and killings of women, not only intimate partner femicides. The Argentinian movement "Ni Una Menos" is an excellent one. It really moved in the right direction with respect to

the collection of data on femicides, but in some countries now from the Latin American side, they do have criminal offence femicide or feminicidio, but in this respect they collect official data at the court level on prosecuted cases, but not on unprosecuted cases. So we are seeing a challenge here. And when I am travelling to different countries, I am seeing different challenges. For example, when I was in Georgia, I saw a good initiative coming from the Ombudsman person there. He started an initiative to collect as an independent institution, data on gender-related killings and to go into an analysis of such data. When I met the delegation last year in New York during the Commission on the Status of Women, first they told me there was a problem, because we do not have a definition of femicide in our criminal legislation and then I told them – this is not a problem. We do not need a definition, because those cases aren't the homicide cases. We just need to collect cases and then look into cases to analyse what happened in each and every case. And this is the whole proposal- to have different national bodies. It could be independent institutions. It could be intergovernmental bodies. But it could also be non-governmental organisations which would look into concrete cases and at what was mentioned by my colleagues here coming from NGOs. It should be a qualitative analysis to see in each case what was missing, what was not done properly, what was problematic, what is systematic, whether it is a problem with legislation, or a problem with maybe protection. Maybe it is a problem with police officers that are not reacting properly or maybe public prosecutors. We are seeing from jurisprudence coming out at the international level that there are cases showing what our systemic gaps are. But nevertheless, each country is different and in order to see the gaps, I think that this type of analysis should be done at the national level in order to use data as a tool for prevention in order to see from each case what happened, to see the whole story that was explained by our panellists here and then to go into the direction of really addressing systemic gaps, to changing and to preventing such cases in the future. I would also like to mention that in the Doha Declaration, it addresses gender mainstreaming. I know that the delegations now are discussing gender mainstreaming in the criminal justice system. It is important to see that in that Declaration there is a clear reference to the CEDAW Convention, to modern strategies developed by

UNODC and also this resolution on gender-related killings of women. So now it is important for us to see how to proceed further, because we do have a framework, we do have what is needed in order to go in the direction of collecting comparable data.

There are also challenges, because it was also mentioned by panellists that some countries are collecting femicide data on intimate partner femicides, but not on other femicides and in order to go in the direction of possible comparable data in the future, I have suggested that countries should have two big categories. One should be intimate partner or family related killings and the second would be the rest. Here, countries could make a disaggregation in respect of their national particulars because there are different countries in Latin America, Africa and Europe. We also need to consider attempted murders, suicides and what is happening with perpetrators. In some parts of the world impunity is a huge problem. Perpetrators are not punished so we have to have a clear collection of data in respect to perpetrators. I hope that with this we are going in the right direction and maybe just to mention that in some other countries that I have visited, like Australia, I have seen homicide review panels that are now going beyond the review of only homicides with respect to causes of deaths. They are now looking into those other circumstances related to death that are leading in the direction of what we are aiming for with this Femicide Watch. What is really needed is to change in law or in practice in order to prevent such cases. I was also in Israel and there the government is also collecting data on intimate partner femicides and it would be important to expand this to other cases. So I am saying that I am seeing movement from NGOs and from independent institutions. I am also happy that UNODC is moving in the direction of collecting data on femicides and I hope that in the future when we come here in the next few years, we will be in a position to really have comparable data and to see which measures could really prevent femicides.

2.2 ACUNS HIGH-LEVEL EVENT: ESTABLISHING FEMICIDE WATCHES IN EVERY COUNTRY OF THE WORLD

2.2.1 Opening remarks by Dr. Dubravka Šimonović, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences

I would like to welcome you all. I see some faces from the previous panel and we have some new faces so let me briefly introduce myself. I am a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences and I would like to repeat my thank you to ACUNS and others sponsors of this panel, Mr. Platzer who is here with us, the team for organising this important panel. This mandate of a Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences was established by the Commission on Human Rights in 1994 in order to send a clear message that violence against women is a human rights violation and that it should be integrated in UN Human Rights Agenda. And from that period, 1994 up to now, we are seeing development and we are seeing now clear recognition of violence against women as a form of discrimination against women and human rights violation. We are seeing under United Nations Human Rights framework, composed of UN treaties in this area of human rights – CEDAW Convention is having a prominent role, Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and General Recommendation No.19 on the elimination of violence against women is crucial for addressing all form of violence. I am very glad that as a Special Rapporteur I am now cooperating with CEDAW Committee in updating this General Recommendation No.19 that will provide additional guidelines to member states in this area of addressing violence against women.

When I started with my mandate, I selected a number of priorities and among those priorities I selected prevention of femicide. I would like to mention that my predecessor, Mrs. Rashida Manjoo, who was a Special Rapporteur before me, published a report on gender-related killings of women and that report was a very important step in the current direction. Using her report, I am now, building on that report. I have called all United Nations member states to establish a femicide watch at the national level and to publish each year on the 25th of November, the Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women, data on the number of women killed due to their sex or

their gender. So all possible gender-related killings should be publicly announced and I have also suggested that at the national level all states should establish a national body. A national body could look into those gender-related killing and here I am proposing a flexible model, knowing that there are many differences around the world in different countries. In some countries we already have observatories on violence against women that are already collecting data on violence against women. In some other countries we do have inter-ministerial committees. There are different possibilities for countries so it is possible to establish a new body or to give this role to an already existing body that it is collecting data on different forms of violence against women. First step for that kind of body would be collection and publication of gender-related killings of women. With respect to this first step it would be also important to see how we are then using such data. The main concern or objective is to have comparable data, because currently we don't have comparable data with respect to different regions and at the global level there is no possibility for us to state what the exact numbers are. If we look at the SDG Agenda, as I was already mentioning, under the SDG Agenda there is a call for collection of data on homicides and they hope that in the future those indicators that are established to collect data on homicides will go in the direction of full collection of data on femicides. We aren't yet there because it is extremely complicated to collect data on femicides. You need to collect data on the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim in order to see if we are talking about intimate-partner femicides, family-related femicides or other types of femicides, because there are also other possibilities, for example, related to witchcraft accusations or some other ongoing form of violence against women in different countries. I have then published a report to the General Assembly on ways to establish a femicide watch and I have really tried to be as flexible as possible, with the aim to get comparable data. Here, I would like to mention the very important work already done by UNODC and the collection of data on homicides that are now also pulling out specifics related to femicide with respect to a certain number of countries that are reporting. But we are not yet at the level that all UN member states are reporting and I hope in the future we will get there.

I would briefly repeat that this Commission adopted a very important resolution on gender-related killings of women and this resolution is calling all UN member states to collect data, to analyse data and to publish data on gender-related killings with possible cooperation with non-governmental organisations, persons from academia, independent institutions. So the framework is already there. Based on that framework I am now trying to build this mechanism on a femicide watch that will in each country look into each case of femicide and look what happened in that case to see what is coming out through the analysis of these cases, because those are not only numbers, we aren't speaking only about statistical data. We are speaking about tragic stories in which those horrible forms of violence are ongoing and we are not yet at the point of efficient prevention of gender-related killings. And I hope that from the analysis of a number of cases we will see what are the systemic problems, what issues arise as to the possible prevention of such cases.

We are seeing that in many cases victims are calling police officers and in many cases police officers aren't responding properly. Maybe they aren't trained. Maybe they aren't recognising what is happening. In many cases they are issuing reciprocal protection orders to victims and to perpetrators, because they are seeing them both as perpetrators – one of verbal violence and the other one of physical violence. So we have to see how to change this in the future. There are possibilities related to non-availability of shelters. In a number of countries there are no shelters that could immediately give a safe place to women victims of violence. Then we have to see if it is a problem also may be related to public prosecution of such cases, and the efficiency of protection orders, because protection orders are also an important tool related to civil and criminal law. Protection orders could expel a perpetrator from the home, but if those orders are not really enforced, if they are really not protecting victims, they aren't providing safety and we are seeing at the end gender-related killings. So I think that in each country it is really for national experts and possible NGOs to look into a number of cases and then to see what are those systemic problems. At this stage when I have to travel to different countries, I have seen and I have suggested that we have to see how to establish such Femicide Watches from now on. There is a possibility, for example, for a government to decide and to designate an already existing body

or to establish an intergovernmental commission that will do this type of analysis, collection of data and analysis of cases. Another possibility is to designate this to an independent institution that already exists, such as to Ombudsman persons. There are different Ombudsman persons on human rights, Commission on human rights or even Ombudsman on gender equality that do have power to request data from police officers, from judiciary, from different sources and then to look into cases. They also have the ability to expand their work with respect to inclusion of non-governmental organisations. There are also possibilities for NGOs to start that process, because if no one else is starting then NGOs are really doing a lot already and they are able to start the process and to collect data. We are seeing from a number of countries that NGOs have already started by publishing data on the Internet. For example, when I visited Australia, there is a NGO there that counted the year to year number of women killed due to gender-related killings and that number was 74 per year. That was published on a public website and later the government came out with data that was almost similar. So now it is a good example for countries where NGOs started that process and the government is also following. But the government is also now looking into the direction of how to expand homicide review panels into this idea of Femicide Watches.

In some other countries, we have heard in previous panels an NGO from Armenia which is doing just that. In Georgia a public defender or Ombudsman person started to act as a femicide watch. In Argentina when I visited with this "Ni Una Menos", a huge movement against femicides, I was informed by a public defender that he is starting the Femicide Watch and that he will follow those recommendations from my report. He even sent me an email to ask me how they should count killings – is it from the 25th November until next year 25th November or is it throughout the year from 1st January until the end of the year? And this is a question for all of us; how are we going to collect such comparable data in the future? We have to agree on this. In this respect I have called states to cooperate with each other on the compilation of such data. I have suggested that it would be maybe better to use the calendar year in order to have clear data with respect to the year.

2.2.3 Statement by Aldo Lale-Demoz, Deputy Executive Director of UNODC, Division for Operations

I represent UNODC and I wish to join the cause, I wish to join others to express our deep concern about the global prevalence of violence against women and its impact, of course, on individuals, on families and on communities at large. Women worldwide experience a continuum of violence which too often escalates into gender-related killings, precisely of women and of girls. Within the constraints described just a few minutes ago via the Special Rapporteur we have tried to get some data together and we have published figures on gender-related killings in 2016. These figures suggest that women make up the majority, of course, of victims of homicide, perpetrated worldwide by intimate partners or family members at the rate of 60% in 53 countries. An even higher figure of 78% was found for intimate-partner homicides within 36 countries, which by the way hardly differs across regions.

I welcome the efforts by the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women to address the challenge of gender-related killing. Her initiative to establish a Femicide Watches or observatories in countries of the world has the potential to generate precisely important information and data that is required for comprehensive and evidence based policy making as well as approaches to prevent and respond to such horrendous killing. I should like to highlight the good working relationships between the UNODC and the Special Rapporteur, but also with other UN agencies as well as with civil society organisations. All of whom have contributed to the ongoing support that UNODC is providing to member states in enhancing crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women including gender-based killing. I should like to stress also that we at UNODC have, of course, quite a number of years of experience in working on violence against women and our office supports member states in implementing specifically SDG 5.2 on violence against women and relevant international standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice. In particular, Madame Chair, UNODC supports countries in other efforts to criminalise, to investigate, to prosecute and to punish such violence. To ensure equal access to justice, protection and remedies for victims and survivors, we are working

on implementing effective prevention strategies. I recall also that in 2013 and 2015 the General Assembly approved a resolution calling for stronger action against gender-related killing of women and girls. And in line with those resolutions we have supported the intergovernmental processes that led to the adoption of recommendations to more effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-related killings. Our office continues to raise awareness of the issues and supports member states in developing and implementing strategies and policies to address and prevent such killings. While UNODC was also mandated to conduct a Global Study on Gender-Related Killings, unfortunately to date donors have not yet come to the fore to enable us to do this global study. This is still a pending matter, a very important pending matter.

Well, what we have at our disposal are examples of UNODC publications and technical assistance tools developing close cooperation with many partner agencies and for example, the brochure on UN Recommendations on Action against Gender-Related Killings, publications on essential service packages for promoting a multi-sectorial approach as well as more detailed handbooks and training curricula for police and for prosecutors and a model implementation plan for criminal justice systems. All these tools complement those already available and developed by other UN entities and other parties and have proven useful in projects to support reforms in different parts of the world.

I should like to highlight that at UNODC our experience in criminal justice shows that the system works best when it combines health, social and other sectors and when there is a common effort to protect and empower women and to hold perpetrators accountable. This is why UNODC is working very closely with UN WOMEN, UNFPA, WHO and other partners to promote comprehensive, multi-sectorial responses as well as to provide essential police, justice, health and social services both at the global level, and countries [sic]. UNODC has also increased its collaboration with OHCHR, UN WOMEN, UNDP and other partners on promoting women's access to justice. This year our office will be launching a joint practitioner's manual and an initiative to strengthen women's access to justice in at least 15 countries.

Let me conclude, Madam Chair, by alliterating in front of all of you, UNODC's absolute commitment to continue supporting member states who wish to end violence against women. On a daily basis and in the context of our technical assistance programme, we promote evidence-based gender-sensitive criminal laws, policies and responses by police, by legal aid providers, by prosecutors, by judges and by other criminal justice officials. We shall continue to commit to enhance essential police and justice services to address gender-based violence and to prevent gender-related killing.

2.2.4 Statement by Malami Abubakar SAN, Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Thank you most sincerely for the opportunity and I thank the organisers for the invitation to participate at this event which focuses on a very important topic at international and domestic levels. I see it as a very important component of this 26th session of the CCPCJ as we generally look at strategies for preventing various types of crimes through pro-active national and international practices.

The issue of violence against women and girls is one which has engaged the attention of all jurisdictions for decades as national law institutions seek new and more effective ways of protecting the rights of women and children. We all agree that this is the most vulnerable segment of the population, particularly in respect of the issue of violence against women. Data collection in this area is significant and indeed beneficial for two critical reasons. Firstly, accurate and properly presented data helps to quickly identify trends in criminal behaviour and those guide state and non-state institutions in the pro-active steps needed to check such criminal behaviour and punish perpetrators of violence against women and girls. Secondly, profile data collection helps to humanise victims to the extent that we do not simply dismiss cases of such acts of violence as mere statistics without a humane element. The topic is quite instructive [sic] in Nigeria especially against the backdrop of our recent experiences in the anti-terror fight in our north-east region where Boko Haram unleashed a campaign of terror which increasingly targeted women, girls and children as victims of war and violence.

Between 2010 and 2015 we increasingly saw cases of killings, abductions and kidnapping of women and children by the group. The world, of course, was horrified by the April 2014 abduction of 274 Chibok girls by Boko Haram in addition to other atrocities committed against other groups of women and children. Due to the efforts of the present government in Nigeria we have succeeded in securing the release of about 203 of the girls so far while efforts are on to secure the release of the rest. We have also seen inhumane use of girls as suicide bombers by Boko Haram against some targets and in the north-east region, Emana, which not only violates the innocence of girls as young as 10 and 12, but has also resulted in their pre-mature death. These are severe cases of violence against women and demonstrate the bestiality of terrorist groups and their utter disregard of human life.

But, of course, beyond these incidents of violence arising from our terror we also have been concerned as a nation about other acts of violence against women and girls arising from other settings such as acts of domestic violence, rape and abuse, human-trafficking and harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation which in light of contemporary realities are unjustifiable and abusive of rights of women and girls. We have recognised the need to address these acts of violence against female population through various administrative and legislative actions. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1995 had indeed identified discrimination against women among others and indeed make it unlawful as a constitutional provision. Administratively, we have the Ministry of Women Affairs which is a ministry dedicated by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to address issues that have to do with women including prevention of violence and other associated things. We equally have other agencies of government including a national agency for the prohibition of trafficking in persons which is an administrative part of government. It is vested with the responsibility to prohibit trafficking of persons and indeed provide protection to women and children as victims of trafficking and associated prostitution. On the legislative side, we have the constitutional provisions that are embedded in our constitution and we equally have in place the child rights and very importantly the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act of 2015. The Violence against

Persons Prohibition Act was originally proposed to enact specific provisions seeking to protect women and girls from gender-based violence and as a bold attempt to domesticate Nigeria's obligations on the international law and our constitutional duty to protect all persons in Nigeria. In the course of its passage it was resolved to expand its scope in order to protect all members of society who may also become vulnerable to acts of violence. To a larger extent, however, its focus is still largely on protection of women and girls against acts of violence including from physical abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, financial and domestic abuse, acid attacks against persons, stalking, intimidation, discrimination and harmful traditional practices. They seek to eliminate violence in private and public places and provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims, for example, comprehensive medical care for victims of violence, rehabilitation and compensation for everyone and punishment for offenders. Our current focus in driving the implementation of this Act is now to ensure that all states in Nigeria also adopt it as their legislation in order to ensure countywide application.

In taking these administrative and legislative strategies forward, we of course recognise the need for adequate data collection in order to better deploy resources most financial and humane. It is in this regard that we are considering having in place legislation that will make it a matter of obligation on agencies of government – the key into the provision of data as it relates to violence against women and children. It is in this regard that we consider perhaps an international template for data. However, we have seen obstacles in acts of collecting data in this area. Primarily among these obstacles is the issue of the reluctance of victims to report incidents promptly especially where they occur in the domestic settings due to prevalent cultural and societal inhibitions relating to stigmatisation within the fault of the societal norms. The second obstacle, of course, is the inadequate number of counsellors who can interact with victims in appropriate cases in Emana that give the victims the confidence to interact and share information. Thirdly, we are aware that some of these cases, especially those attributable to harmful traditional practices, occur in rural areas where law-enforcement agencies and advocates may not necessarily always have access. Other than the cases which occur in conflict areas

of the north-east prior to the recent dissemination of Boko-Haram, may not have been accurately captured in all cases due to the complex situation at the time. We are, however, hopeful that with the increase in the scope and extent of advocacy in this area and increasing awareness of the evils of violence against women and girls as well as improvement in the collection of data concerning such cases, we shall be making progress in reducing such cases of violence through advocacy and punishment, especially now that the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act has been enacted.

Let me conclude by emphasising once more the continuance of the international collaboration and cooperation in this area as violence against women and girls is not necessarily restricted to national bodies as we see in cases of human trafficking or the abduction of females by terrorists while they may be transported across international boundaries and subjected to inhumane treatment beyond the original jurisdictions from where they were first taken. We must therefore continue this international bridge of cooperation and support by way of developing internationally accepted conventions and indeed creating obligations relating to the gathering of data and making it an obligation indeed to generate that data for international consideration for policy making. I am confident that this event will have to promote this imperative for the sharing of experiences and building capacity for improved data collection and pro-active responses to better protect women and girls across borders. Once more, I thank you for the opportunity to be part of this side event and commend all who have been part of it for their participation.

2.2.5 Statement by Vadim Pisarevich, Head of the Department for Global Policies and Humanitarian Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus

It gives me great pleasure to stand as a panellist at this important side-event. First of all, I would like to extend high appreciation to my fellow panellists for their very interesting and informative presentations.

Violence against women is undoubtedly a serious global challenge, as it is a serious challenge for each and every country in the world. This seriousness has certainly been testified by the fact that the

issue has been reflected in the key United Nations document of our time – the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically, in the context of Goal 5, which is devoted to gender equality. In other words, it implies that overall success in achieving sustainable development worldwide is impossible without each and every country's progress in eliminating violence against women. Let me first briefly tell you about how the situation with combatting violence against women stands in my country, Belarus. After that I will touch upon the issue of Femicide Watches.

We pay great attention to fighting violence against women domestically. As a matter of fact, at this moment we do not have a law that specifically deals with the issue of domestic violence and violence against women. Yet, there is certainly legislation in place that covers both issues. The most relevant and important is the Law on the Basics of Prevention of Offenses, effective since 2014. Furthermore, the issue of violence against women has been addressed in our two key programme documents, namely, the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2017 – 2020 and the National Human Rights Plan for 2016 – 2019.

These plans have been drafted in partnership with our civil society and the UN Country Team. The Government works closely with these partners in their implementation. In our efforts we put much emphasis on working with families and communities to prevent domestic violence and violence against women. Currently, an inter-agency group that brings together experts from a number of relevant ministries and agencies are working on a draft law that will address the issue of domestic violence, which will certainly include violence against women.

In general, we see that domestic violence and violence against women are declining in Belarus. We also understand that we are not fully aware of the real situation. This is so because too often violence against women goes undetected, as victims, for various reasons, prefer not to report it. Therefore, the problem certainly remains and the Government is willing to effectively address it. Last October, Belarus presented its 8th periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in Geneva. We have

received both some positive assessments of our national work as well as practical recommendations aimed at increasing our efforts and their effect in preventing violence against women. The Government stands ready to address most of those recommendations, including in cooperation with civil society and international partners. One recommendation is to consider joining the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention. In general, we see the value of this tool in terms of strengthening our national response against domestic violence and violence against women.

On 27 March we held an international seminar on the Istanbul Convention, which also featured an interesting discussion on the initiative of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to establish Femicide Watches. The participants stressed that femicide, gender-related killings of women, represents the extreme form of violence against women. Information was provided that Belarus annually registers around 100 killings of women by intimate partners that can be classified as femicide. Although the number of femicide cases has been waning in recent years in the country, the participants spoke in favour of making the public more aware of violence against women and gender-related killings of women. The tool of Femicide Watches certainly would well serve that purpose. Government representatives, civil society, and international partners like UNDP and UNFPA agreed to continue discussing the issue.

2.2.6 Statement by Lucia Annibali, Legal Advisor to the Department for Gender Equality in the Prime Minister's Office, Italy

Oggi ho il compito di illustrarvi alcune delle azioni poste in essere dal Dipartimento per le pari opportunità in materia di contrasto alla violenza sessuale e di genere. Nel mese di settembre 2016, in attuazione del Piano d'azione straordinario contro la violenza sessuale e di genere, adottato con Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri (DPCM) del 7 luglio 2015, si è insediata la Cabina di regia interistituzionale. Si tratta di un organismo di indirizzo politico la cui finalità è definire un percorso strategico e finanziario delle politiche in tema di violenza

sulle donne, al fine di garantire uniformità ed efficacia delle azioni sull'intero territorio nazionale. Per la realizzazione delle azioni contenute nel Piano, sono stati allocati circa 40 milioni di euro. A supporto della Cabina di regia, nel mese di novembre 2016 si è insediato l'Osservatorio nazionale sul fenomeno della violenza del quale fanno parte, oltre a componenti istituzionali, le maggiori associazioni di settore che si occupano delle vittime di violenza. L'Osservatorio ha il compito di realizzare studi e ricerche, formulare proposte di intervento alla Cabina di regia, monitorare l'attuazione del Piano, operare una valutazione sull'impatto delle politiche in tema di contrasto alla violenza maschile sulle donne, anche attraverso l'individuazione di buone prassi presenti sul territorio nazionale. A seguito della riunione di insediamento dell'Osservatorio, si sono costituiti tre gruppi di lavoro tematici:

1) Gruppo di lavoro n.1, il cui scopo è proporre alla Cabina di regia eventuali modifiche del complessivo quadro giuridico di riferimento della violenza di genere, in particolare relativamente a:

- a) definizione dei requisiti minimi dei centri antiviolenza e delle case-rifugio.
- b) maggiore flessibilità per le programmazioni regionali nell'utilizzo delle risorse ripartite annualmente dallo Stato in favore dei centri antiviolenza e delle case rifugio, oltre al potenziamento di quelli esistenti.
- c) finanziamento di iniziative regionali rivolte al

fenomeno della violenza sulle donne, che prescinde da quello destinato ai centri antiviolenza e case rifugio. Il gruppo sta riflettendo anche sulla individuazione di una base normativa per il nuovo Piano antiviolenza al fine di prevedere, dopo l'attuale Piano d'azione straordinario, l'adozione di piani ordinari, di durata triennale, da parte dell'autorità politica.

2) Gruppo di lavoro n. 2, con l'obiettivo di redigere linee guida nazionali in tema di soccorso e assistenza alle donne vittime di violenza che accedono ai Pronto Soccorso presenti all'interno delle strutture ospedaliere. Sul territorio nazionale esistono infatti numerose esperienze, ma diverse tra loro per principi, obiettivi e strumenti di lavoro. Il gruppo sta provvedendo ad una riflessione generale sui principali modelli esistenti, evitando di sposarne uno o più, ma tentando di enucleare

dei principi generali che possano costituire il contenuto minimo di linee guida nazionali.

3) Gruppo di lavoro n. 3, il cui scopo è definire il futuro quadro strategico di riferimento sulla violenza di genere, considerata la scadenza dell'attuale Piano d'azione straordinario prevista per il 7 luglio 2017. La preparazione del nuovo Piano dovrà tenere conto delle lezioni apprese nell'attuazione del Piano d'azione straordinario in scadenza, cercando di essere il più aderente possibile ai dettami della Convenzione di Istanbul relativi a prevenzione, protezione, perseguimento dei colpevoli, politiche integrate. La nuova Strategia si impegnerà a riconoscere e sostenere anche il ruolo dei centri che si occupano del recupero degli autori di violenza ed, in generale, di tutti quei temi emergenti o non pienamente considerati nel precedente Piano. A tal fine la nuova Strategia mirerà a responsabilizzare pienamente e direttamente tutti i livelli di governo coinvolti (Ministeri, Regioni ed enti locali), identificando per ciascuno di essi, in modo chiaro, le azioni, gli interventi, le funzioni, i compiti e gli impegni da assumere. Il Dipartimento per le pari opportunità avrà il ruolo di coordinamento istituzionale, oltre ad esercitare le funzioni di intervento diretto o indiretto di sua competenza. I gruppi si sono riuniti a partire dal mese di febbraio 2017 e stanno proseguendo nei lavori. Le proposte elaborate da ciascun gruppo saranno sottoposte all'approvazione della Cabina di regia politica.

English translation

Today I have the task of illustrating some of the actions taken by the Department for Equal Opportunities on Gender and Gender Violence. In September 2016, part of the implementation of the Special Action Plan on Sexual and Gender Violence adopted by the Decree of the Prime Minister of the Council of Ministers (DPCM) on July 7, 2015, the Interinstitutional Director's Cabinet was established. It is a policy-oriented body whose purpose is to define a strategic and financial pathway to women's violence policies, in order to ensure uniformity and effectiveness of actions across the national territory. For the realisation of the actions contained in the Plan, approximately 40 million euros have been allocated.

In November 2016, the National Observatory on the phenomenon of violence was set up in support of the Cabin, and in addition to its institutional components, the largest industry associations dealing with victims of violence. The Observatory has the task of realising studies and research, formulating proposals for intervention for the Steering Committee, monitoring the implementation of the Plan, and evaluating the impact of policies on countering male violence on women, identification of good practices on national territory. Following the Observatory's meeting, three thematic working groups were set up:

1) Working Group no. 1, whose purpose is to propose to the Cabin to make any changes to the overall legal framework for gender violence, in particular regarding: a) Definition of the minimum requirements for anti-violence centres and homes for refugees. (b) Greater flexibility for regional programming in the use of resources allocated annually by the State to anti-violence centres and refugee homes, in addition to enhancing existing ones. c) Funding regional initiatives directed at the phenomenon of violence against women, regardless of the one used for anti-violence centres and refugee homes. The group is also reflecting on the identification of a regulatory basis for the new Anti-Violence Plan in order to provide, following the current Special Action Plan, the adoption of three-year, plain-language plans by the political authority.

2) Working Group no. 2, with the aim of drawing up national guidelines on rescue and assistance for women victims of violence accessing emergency departments within hospital facilities. There are numerous experiences in the national territory, but different from each other for principles, goals and tools of work. The group is providing a general reflection on the main existing models, without marrying them together, but attempting to enunciate general principles that may constitute the minimum content of national guidelines.

3) Working Group n. 3, the purpose of which is to define the future strategic framework of reference on gender violence, considering the expiry of the current Special Action Plan for 7 July 2017.

The preparation of the new Plan will have to take into account the lessons learned in the implementation of the overdue Action Plan expiring, trying to be as close as possible to the dictates of the Istanbul Convention on the prevention, protection, prosecution of perpetrators and integrated policies. The new Strategy will also work to recognise and support the role of centres for the recovery of the perpetrators of violence and, in general, of all those issues emerging or not fully considered in the previous Plan. To this end, the new Strategy will aim to fully and directly empower all levels of government involved (Ministries, Regions and Local Authorities), clearly identifying, for each of them, actions, interventions, functions, tasks and commitments to be taken. The Department for Equal Opportunities will have the role of institutional co-ordination, in addition to exercising the functions of direct or indirect intervention of its competence. The groups met from February 2017 and are continuing their work. The proposals prepared by each group will be submitted to the approval of the Political Directional Cabin.

2.2.7 Statement by H.E. Marcos Vega, Senior Advisor for International Cooperation against Terrorism and Organised Crime, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

Thank you Ms. Chair, for inviting me to this high level event, within the XXVI Session of CCPCJ, that focuses on this heinous crime and what is actually being done in our countries to prevent it and how to identify concrete steps for further, more effective action. I will briefly try to describe the situation in Spain, and the tools that we are using to combat femicide.

From a legal point of view the fight against femicide and violence against women has a very wide and comprehensive approach in Spain, with different governmental and administrative entities deeply engaged in combatting this crime.

I will first mention the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, through the Government Office for Gender-based Violence. This special Office has a permanently updated statistics portal of gender-based violence episodes and victims in Spain. Data uploaded in this portal include the

number of fatalities, their judicial status (that means whether women were under a threat and whether this threat had been denounced or not in court), as well as the most relevant socio-demographic data both of the victim and the aggressor: age, country of origin, type of relation between them, existence of children and other collateral victims of the aggression etc. This information is very relevant, I would say essential, in order to understand the magnitude of the problem that we are facing, and how it evolves.

The case of the children of the victim has been given special consideration since 2013. Sons and daughters under 18 years old of women killed by gender-based violence are considered victims themselves and of course the needs of these minors are considered a priority for the government office for gender-based violence. In this respect I can advise you that the Spanish parliament is on the way to approving, within the coming weeks, a new law granting these minors the right to receive an orphan's pension.

Furthermore, the National Observatory on Violence against Women, also within the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, conducts a close follow up of this issue, by preparing Annual Reports, Executive Studies and different research projects, covering virtually every aspect of femicide in Spain. The Ministry of Interior and the different law enforcement bodies are, of course, deeply engaged in the battle against femicide. In 2007, Spain was already fully aware of the magnitude of these crimes and the need to fight against them with a new, determined and comprehensive approach. Within this framework, the Secretary of State for Security launched on July 2007 the so called "VioGen System". It consists of a comprehensive follow up of every single gender-based violent case. This system brings together all different competent public bodies and institutions: police, judicial, prison authorities, social services, facilitating a quick exchange of information among them, generating a risk evaluation that will determine further actions to be taken, including of course the necessary measures in order to protect the victims. The protection of the victim is core to the whole system and goes to the elaboration of a tailor made personal protection plan for every single victim that includes all adequate measures for every case, including those of self-protection.

This tool has been widely used in Spain. Since its launch in July 2007 until April 30th this year, 454,087 gender-based violence cases have been registered within the System. From this amount, 53,728 cases have been labelled as "active" and have been the object of follow up with relevant measures taken. The balance so far of the VioGen System is really positive. To my knowledge, it is quite innovative in the sense that it actively and quickly involves all actors concerned in fighting this crime. And it has proved to be able to display vigorous protective measures for the victims and the potential victims.

Within the framework of the Ministry of Interior I would also like to underline that in October 2016 the ministry set up a National Team in charge of carrying out a detailed review and in depth analysis of every single femicide being committed in Spain. This team brings together members of the national police, the civil guard, prison authorities, state prosecutor, and government office for gender-based violence, judicial bodies and professional colleges like medical, lawyers etc.

The goal of this National Team is to obtain a deep, full and clear analysis of the circumstances and details of every gender-based crime. Why and how it happened and what has been done or not been done in order to prevent it. And what are the lessons to be learned from every case for the future. Prevention is the key factor in the fight against gender-based violence. By the earlier detection of risk situations and the implementation of adequate protection measures, many femicides can be avoided. Let's have a look at the statistics in 2016 in Spain. Last year there were 44 femicides. In 16 of these 44 cases, complaints were filed to the police. 13 complaints were made by the victims themselves, the other three by persons close to the victims. 11 victims out of 16 asked for and got protection measures from the authorities. The other 5 rejected these protection measures. These basic figures show very clearly that, although much work is being done, there is still a lot to be done in order to fully protect the persons at risk and to prevent femicide. From my point of view, the main challenges are the following:

1. To be fully aware of the magnitude of the problem and the necessary implication of all actors, men and women, governments and private sectors, law enforcement agencies and

social non-governmental organisations, individuals and media, in order to relentlessly combat femicide and gender-based violence in general.

2. Institutional cooperation, a multidisciplinary approach, training and specialisation of different actors, are key in order to improve the results of this fight.

3. International cooperation is also of paramount importance, both at the operational level, among law enforcement agencies, the judicial and different governmental authorities as well as promoting activities and events in different forums like the event that we are having here today, putting in common experiences, policies, lines of action and points of view.

4. Attention and care to the victims, the women as well as their children, minors and dependents of the victims must be granted before, during and after any episode of gender-based violence.

2.2.8 Statement by Amarsanaa Darisuren, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE

I am honoured to be invited to this important side event, among these distinguished speakers, to share with you some perspectives from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe on combating gender-related killings of women and girls.

For the OSCE, as the world's largest regional security organisation with 57 member states spanning the globe from Vancouver to Vladivostok, combating gender-based violence is a key area of work. Gender-based violence is a threat to the security of individuals as well as societies and therefore the OSCE works on prevention and response within its comprehensive approach to security, which encompasses the political-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension, and the human rights dimension.

In November last year, the OSCE Gender Section, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), the Office

of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) organised a symposium on combating femicide.

One statistic that was shared at the symposium was particularly convincing to show the scale of the issue and the importance of increasing efforts to combat femicide. According to UNODC, in 2012 over 43,000 women were killed by an intimate partner or family member worldwide. That's almost four times the number of people killed by terror worldwide that same year.

The exact number of women and girls affected remain unclear however, and the lack of data on violence against women in general and femicide specifically continues to be an important barrier to raise awareness on the scope of the issue and to develop more effective responses. The OSCE participating states committed themselves to combating gender-based violence through several Ministerial Council Decisions, which also urge them to collect, maintain and make public reliable, comparable, evidence based data and statistics regarding all forms of violence against women.

To get a better insight into the prevalence and forms of gender-based violence in the OSCE region, including for women who have experienced armed conflict, the OSCE is implementing a survey in 10 OSCE countries on the security and well-being of women. The survey is based on the questionnaire developed by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency which was applied in the 28 EU member states in 2014.

The survey will provide comparative evidence based on different forms of violence against women to be used for improved policy making and to support programmes by national actors and international stakeholders working to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. It will provide the largest comparable data set on violence against women in conflict and post conflict settings within Europe and the South Caucasus. Collecting information on gender-related killings of women is part of the research and so far has proven to be very challenging, highlighting the importance of putting in place a systematic method for collecting this data.

In addition to data collection, the use of this data to inform better policy making and implementation should be addressed from the start. OSCE promotes the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, or the so-called Istanbul Convention, which to date has been signed by 43 and ratified by 22 OSCE participating States. The Istanbul Convention provides a comprehensive framework which is monitored by a monitoring mechanism.

Today we have heard a number of promising initiatives and good practices in establishing the systematic collection of information on gender-related killings of women and girls. Regional organisations such as the OSCE can play a key role in supporting these practical approaches in two ways. First of all, in particular through our field operations, we can assist states by building the capacity and providing technical support to implement practical solutions. Secondly, by providing a regional platform for exchange and learning, we can promote the strengthening of commitments and the implementation of relevant international conventions and standards in the OSCE region. If we want to be effective in tackling a huge global problem like combating violence against women, we need broad partnerships, linking regional organisations, the UN, civil society and academia. I look forward to continuing and strengthening the cooperation with all organisations present here today, and beyond, and get closer to bringing security home for women and girls everywhere.

**2.2.9 Statement by Assanee Sangkhanate,
Acting Director, International Affairs Division, Office of
the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice of Thailand**

It is truly an honour for me to join you here today. When preparing for this session, I recalled the significant events some years ago in which Thailand contributed to raise awareness on femicide issues. The first one was the meeting of the open ended Intergovernmental

Expert Group on Gender-Related Killing of Women and Girls in Bangkok in November 2014. The second was the meeting on femicide and gender based violence against women and girls at the 13th Crime Congress in 2015 in Qatar. We had a lot of constructive discussions at that event. What strikes me the most is the discussion on the idea to engage convenience stores which are open 24/7 as an emergency shelter, a place to go to for women who face domestic violence and other violations. I would like to reiterate my colleague's final remark on that aforementioned conference; "that if our world today means having one life, it is worthy".

It has been two years since the 13th Crime Congress and certain progress has been made. Even though femicide cases in Thailand are rare, the government has recognised this problem and also instructed responsible public agencies, in particular the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Justice, to acknowledge femicide as a serious form of and result of violence against women and girls. Legislatively, in addition to enhancing the enacted protection of Victims of Domestic Violence Act in 2007, a year before that of Guatemala, this Act not only protects victims of violence, but also cures the perpetrators and restores family relationships. The current statistics reveal that more than 62% of victims of domestic violence in Thailand are spouses while 33% are children, adopted children and other family members. However, it is well known that these figures were highly underreported because of the myth that domestic violence of family or husband and wife matters is the Asian way of dealing with conflicts in the family. And unfortunately, I have to admit that at this stage there hasn't yet been a systematic statistic in Thailand on femicide, even though there have been increasing reports of men killing their wives as a result of jealousy and this is the one area that we will be seriously working on at the moment.

I would like to reaffirm that prevention is the key and it is, of course, an effective investment. First and foremost, we need statistics and reliable data so as to deal with this issue effectively. We need investigative gathering of data and gender segregated data on

crimes to mention the depth of the problem as well as the impact of femicide on Thai society. Secondly, we need cohesive cooperation between public agencies and civil society organisations to tackle this issue. In my perspective, local and national private agencies are very competent in making public campaigns to stop violence against women. Recently, we have seen ladies parking at areas, at gas stations across the country. Recently, we have seen many department stores provide specific floors for ladies guarded by women staff. We have seen a women only couch on a train. This is quite a development in my country. And the violent incidents are identified. We often see the rescue team from the private agency and we work hand in hand with the public officials. The joint cooperation as such has proved to overcome problems of the agencies and also helped to alleviate the difficulty of limited resources of the private sector. Last but not least, we need to recognise the significant role of the social media in fighting femicide. Social media can play a pro-active role in preventing the problem. Also, it can be employed as a platform for crime and violence reporting. In Thailand, we have seen several Facebook pages established by private communities which aim to report incidents, many of which are violence and crimes or otherwise. Once these incidents are posted online, many internet users turn themselves into online investigators and online police to help catch the criminals. Therefore with proper management, social media can be another effective mechanism to fight femicide.

To conclude my remarks, as a son to a mother, as an elder brother to a younger sister, I personally understand the core values that women bring to strengthen families. Women are mothers, sisters, wives, daughters, teachers, politicians, soldiers, engineers, diplomats and above all human beings. Taking away the lives of fellow human beings just because of their gender or for any other reason is unacceptable. After all, we know for certain that our work can help prevent femicide and protect women, and ultimately makes the world a better place and benefits humanity as a whole.

PART III

Further Reading on Abuse and Femicide of Elder Women

“Older women, due to their age and related physical, social and economic disadvantages are indeed particularly vulnerable to violence. But the ways that older women’s rights are abused and the forms of violence affecting them have been so far seriously overlooked and neglected.”

Ms. Rashida Manjoo,
United Nations Special Rapporteur
on violence against women (2009-2015),
June 2016

3.1 EXCERPTS FROM “CHALLENGES FACING OLDER WOMEN – THE FEMINISATION OF AGING”

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women

If not addressed, the feminisation of aging has the potential to become one of the biggest challenges to gender equality of this century; therefore, these issues need targeted action by governments and international organisations.

In September 2016, we witnessed the launch of the most ambitious universal effort since the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted with 17 global goals (SDGs) for a more sustainable, equitable world. There are gender-equality targets throughout the agenda as well as Goal 5, which specifically focuses on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Gender, aging, and poverty are interrelated. Throughout a woman’s lifetime, her socioeconomic status is rooted in a division of labour that assumes her primary involvement in society to be in reproductive labour, unpaid household work, and caregiving. This perpetuates unequal power relations in the home and means that women earn less and save less for their elderly years. The cumulative effects of this disparity across a woman’s life render her particularly vulnerable to poverty, discrimination, violence, and marginalisation in old age.

There is a critical need to address violence against older women. Yet, for many developing countries, data on violence against women are measured only for women of reproductive age: 15 to 49 years. This gap in data collection by the Demographic and Health Surveys reinforces the stereotype of women’s value being linked to reproductive function. It is therefore important to introduce ways to measure violence beyond this age group in order to ensure that all women are counted and that the appropriate responses are developed.

We need to amend laws that discriminate against women with regard to property and inheritance rights; create for older women employment opportunities as well as adequate employment benefits; and support paid family care leave. We need to educate health care providers to address the specific needs of elderly women, provide mental health services that target older women, provide long-term care coverage for women, and ensure that we include older women in programs to prevent gender-based violence.

The treatment of older women is a priority issue that affects us all and might serve as an indicator of our success in living out the aspirations of the new agenda. The goal and promise of the SDGs are a remarkable opportunity for our global community to work together, recognising the changing demographics and taking action to create conditions in which all women will thrive. We at UN Women are committed to help create this reality.

The full article was featured in the AARP International Journal, September 2016: <http://journal.aarpinternational.org/a/b/2016/02/challenges-facing-older-women>

3.2 OLD AGE – A DOUBLE WHAMMY FOR WOMEN?

Silke Staab, UN Women

After a lifetime of providing unpaid care for friends and family, older women often live in poverty with no one to care for them. Ageing is inevitable, but its gendered injustices are not. On this year's International Day of Older Persons, it's time to shine a spotlight on ending pensioner poverty, and providing decent elder care services for all.

Over the first half of the current century, the global population aged 60 years and over is projected to double, reaching 2 billion by 2050. This raises important questions. Can health and pension systems live up to the challenge of population ageing? Who will care for the growing number of frail elderly persons? These are hot political issues in many developed countries. But two thirds of the world's elderly actually live in the developing world and, by 2050, this share will have risen to nearly 80%. The challenge of providing income security and care for all older persons is daunting where poverty is widespread, health systems already overburdened, and kinship, family and community support increasingly stretched.

Ageing has a female face, but policies have been slow to respond to the rights of older women. Not only do women live longer than men, making them over-represented among the elderly, but they also face greater economic hardship. Because of a lifetime of discrimination, women end up with fewer savings and assets that could help them maintain an adequate standard of living in old age. In addition, pension systems grossly fail to protect them from poverty.

Globally, only about half of people above the retirement age enjoy access to an old-age pension. In most countries, women are less likely than men to receive one and, where they do their benefit, levels are usually lower. In urban China, poverty rates among older women are three to four times higher than among older men; and in the European Union, older women are 37 per cent more likely than men to live in poverty. [1].

But gender inequality in old age is as much about cash as it is about care. Prevailing gender norms

and the fact that women tend to outlive the men they marry, mean that they provide the bulk of unpaid care for ageing spouses. They also play an important role in caring for grandchildren, enabling their parents to engage in paid work or taking their place as primary caregivers when children are orphaned by HIV/AIDS or left behind in the context of migration. While many older women take pride in this work, there is little social recognition and reward and the costs to their own physical and emotional well-being can be high.

It is ironic that women who often spend a lifetime caring for others end up poor, because of pension systems that fail to recognize this work, and have no one to rely on when they themselves become frail. But old age does not have to be a double whammy for women. UN Women's flagship report *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016* shows that putting in place the right policies can make a big difference. Universal social pensions can be a powerful tool for providing basic income security and closing gender gaps in pension coverage: they establish the right to an old age pension for all elderly—women and men— independent of their employment histories and family status.

Providing these benefits is affordable even in low-income countries. Bolivia, Botswana and Mauritius have proven this point and studies estimate that in most sub-Saharan African countries such schemes would cost only around 1 per cent of GDP. The gains can be enormous and transcend generations. In South Africa, widely available social pensions have not only reduced poverty among older people, but also led to improvements in long-term nutrition and school attendance among the children they live with.

Affordable elderly care services are at least as important as pensions. Yet, such services are still rudimentary even in affluent countries, reflecting the fact that women's unpaid elderly care work is still taken for granted. It is essential to assume collective responsibility for the care of our elderly by expanding public services and support mechanisms, to ensure the rights of both carers and cared-for, with options ranging from home-based care to more institutionally based day care, residential and nursing homes.

Putting these measures in place will require political commitment as well as a significant investment of resources. But let's be clear: relying on women's unpaid care work while relegating them to poverty in old age cannot be the alternative.

Article source: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/9/experts-take-old-age-a-double-whammy-for-women>

Notes

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Silvia Perel-Levin, Chair of NGO Committee on Ageing-Geneva

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WUNRN

July 2017

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Witchcraft Accusations – Older Women – Power Point & Video

WUNRN

April 2016

<http://wunrn.com/2016/04/witchcraft-accusations-older-women-power-point-video/>

Abuse of Older Women Overlooked and Underreported

Inter Press Service News Agency

2014

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/08/abuse-of-older-women-overlooked-and-underreported/>

“Elder abuse remains a taboo in many societies. It often happens inconspicuously and in many cases goes unnoticed, but we know that it occurs frequently and in all types of settings. No community or country in the world is immune”

-- Ms. Rosa Kornfeld-Matte, United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons (2014 – present), June 2017

“No woman should lose her rights when she loses her husband but an estimated 11.5 million widows live in poverty, and 81 million have suffered physical abuse”

-- Ban Ki-moon, Former UN Secretary General, International Widows Day

“Femicide is the extreme end point on a continuum of violence against women. Femicide occurs because the continuum of violence against women continues to be accepted, tolerated and justified.”

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