

The Femicide Epidemic Continues in Honduras



Ana Silvia Monzon, of the feminist radio program Voces de Mujeres, and Patricia Ardon, of Sinergia No'j, practice their interview skills and share what they've learned at the Mesoamerican Workshop on Communication for Rural and Indigenous Women in Guatemala City last October in partnership with JASS and SIF.

A recent article published by [the Honduras Weekly](#) draws attention to the rising levels of violence against women in Honduras, following the recent discovery of the bodies of 12 women nationwide murdered by unknown assailants.

According to Human Rights Commissioner Ramón Custodio, approximately 2,400 women have died violently in Honduras since 2002, based on data from the country's [National Institute for Women](#) (INAM).

Femicide, also known as gendercide, is the mass murder of women simply due to their gender. One femicide case is registered every 48 hours in Honduras. While the word "femicide" is relatively new in Honduras, sexual violence against women in the country has a long history, made worse by the fact that many of these crimes go unsolved or unpunished.

The problem of violence against women in Honduras, and throughout Central America, is complex. The tireless work and effort of grassroots organizers, researchers, policy-makers and advocates over the past two decades have put violence against women and girls on the map as a critical issue to be addressed. However, a lack of rigorous evaluations has resulted in the absence of data to support recommendations for best practices in the field. There is also a lack of consensus regarding what constitutes standard indicators to monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of programs aimed at prevention and response.

The need to address this gap has been asserted by USAID and the UN. [In a previous post](#), we discussed the efforts by the United Nations to combat gender-based violence with the creation of UN Women. This new agency, launched in February 2011, deals with women's issues and the global pursuit of gender equality.

The Association for Women in Development ([AWID](#)) has also been active in speaking out against femicide with their own [Women Human Rights Defenders \(WHRD\) Initiative](#). AWID's WHRD Initiative aims to raise awareness of violations of women's rights, strengthen mechanisms for their protection, and contribute to more effective responses to women who are at risk.

Seattle International Foundation is deeply committed to supporting organizations that advance women's rights in Central America. [SIF recently announced \\$150,000 in grants](#) to support women's leadership in the region. SIF also supported Sinergia No'j and Just Associates' (JASS) [3-day workshop](#) in Guatemala to train more than 20 indigenous women leaders from Central America. SIF also supports the Central American Women's Fund ([FCAM](#)), dedicated to the empowerment of young, female leaders working in a variety of issue areas and actively engaging women in public policy and advocacy against gender specific violence in the region. SIF is proud to partner with these organizations throughout Central America who are working tirelessly to draw attention to this issue and seek justice and reform.

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