

4.3.9. Victims of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)

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Colombia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1982⁷⁶⁶ and acceded the Inter-American Convention of Belem do Para in 1996.⁷⁶⁷ Colombia's principal national legal framework to combat violence against women and fulfil its international obligations is based on Law 1257 of 2008 and Law 294 of 1996.⁷⁶⁸

Gender-based violence is described as a 'critical problem' in Colombia by the OAS.⁷⁶⁹ As reported by ABColombia, a human and environmental rights advocacy project of a consortium of British and Irish organisations working in Colombia,⁷⁷⁰ violence against women in Colombia is perpetrated in public and private spheres, it can be political violence, conflict-related violence, physical, cultural and societal violence.⁷⁷¹ The Colombian National Institute of Health (Instituto Nacional de Salud, INS) reported 158 394 cases of gender-based violence (GBV) in 2023 (122 846 female victims), 164 141 GBV cases in 2024 (127 018 female victims) and 135 561 (102 585 female victims) cases by the end of October 2025.⁷⁷² The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) reported that out of the total number of GBV survivors reported in 2024, 76 % were women and 46 % children and adolescents.⁷⁷³ The GPC noted that GBV remains underreported, in part due to fear of reporting and social stigma.⁷⁷⁴ It is also reported by the UN that migrant women are at greater risk of experiencing gender-based violence.⁷⁷⁵

Sexual violence remains among the human rights violations of concern,⁷⁷⁶ particularly against women, children, and youth, and especially in post-conflict reintegration areas.⁷⁷⁷ Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and rural/peasant women, as well as female former combatants were particularly susceptible to sexual violence in rural areas and areas controlled by armed groups.⁷⁷⁸ The UN Secretary General Special Representative on Conflict Related Sexual Violence reported that in 2024, the UARIV recorded 1 009 cases of conflict-related sexual violence against women, 73 against men and 15 against persons with diverse sexual orientation or gender identity, representing an increase of 68 % from the previous year.⁷⁷⁹ The report noted that members of illegal armed groups as well as police and national armed forces were implicated in conflict-related sexual violence.⁷⁸⁰ The OHCHR reported on conflict-related GBV used strategically by armed groups for social and territorial control, including by targeting women human rights defenders.⁷⁸¹ It also noted the high incidence of sexual violence against indigenous persons and Afro-descendant persons, as well as against migrant and refugee women and girls.⁷⁸²

The ICRC reported that despite underreporting, incidence of sexual violence related to armed conflict was on the rise in 2024, and it was often used by armed groups to intimidate, punish and destroy the social fabric.⁷⁸³ In a specific incident documented in September 2024 in the department of Chocó, sources reported that the AGC had issued a '*plan feminicidio*' through which the armed group disseminated a list of at least 27 women's names and photographs, all of whom were alleged to have some relation with other criminal groups operating in the region, in a context marked by a rise of feminicides in the region, and territorial dispute between the AGC and the ELN.⁷⁸⁴ It also noted that femicides have been targeting women who are social and community leaders.⁷⁸⁵

The Colombian system to monitor gender-based violence (Sistema Integrado de Información de Violencias de Género - SIVIGE),⁷⁸⁶ reported 42 167 cases of sexual violence in 2023, 43 309 in 2024, and 24 013 in the first six months of 2025. The SIVIGE also reported 92 201 cases of GBV for the first six months of 2025, of which 42 790 were physical violence and 24 013 of sexual violence. The SIVIGE noted that 75,6 % of the reported GBV cases were women and girls, and that they represented 82,4 % of the sexual violence cases.⁷⁸⁷ 87,18 % of the victims of physical GBV recorded in the SIVIGE were related to their aggressor, and 59,16 % of the aggressors were either the partner (36,52 %) or ex-partner (22,64 %); 77,61 % of the incidents took place at the place of residence of the victim.⁷⁸⁸

The Colombian Observatory of Femicides (Observatorio Colombiano de Femicidios) recorded 707 femicides in 2023, 1 584 in 2024, and 971 between January and September 2025.⁷⁸⁹ Out of the 3 262 victims of femicides recorded between 2023 and 2025, in 1 100 cases the incidents were reported having taken place at the victim's place of residence, and 1 285 reported knowing the perpetrator.⁷⁹⁰

In November 2024, Colombia launched its first national action plan on women, peace, and security aimed at access to justice and GBV prevention with specific assistance for displaced, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian women.⁷⁹¹

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