

# The UNiTE campaign, “Orange the World in 2020”: activities to eradicate violence against women and girls

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## RESUMEN

From November 25 to December 10 of last year, the 16-day campaign of activities to end violence against women and girls was carried out, which the United Nations Secretary-General has promoted since 2008. Derived from my participation in the 2020 campaign, in this document, I present some data about the current state of violence suffered by women; of the progress and pending issues that we still have in Mexico in this matter.

### Keywords:

*UNWomen; UNiTE Campaign; Orange the World; violence against women and girls.*

The annual international *UNiTE by 2030 to End Violence Against Women* campaign is a 16-day campaign that begins on November 25, the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women*<sup>1</sup>, and ends on December 1, *International Human Rights Day*<sup>2</sup>, in which we carry out activities to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. The campaign was created by the Women's Global Leadership Institute of the Center for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. In recognition of the society's initiative, as of 2008, the Secretary-General of the United Nations leads the campaign managed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality, UN Women under the name: *UNiTE to end violence against women*.

Taking action to eliminate violence against women and girls is an international necessity because the violence suffered by women stems from gender-specific human rights violations. Unfortunately, the evidence tells us that much of this violence is carried out because the aggressors believe they can do it. And in many cases, this belief is so ingrained and normalized that it is not even seen.

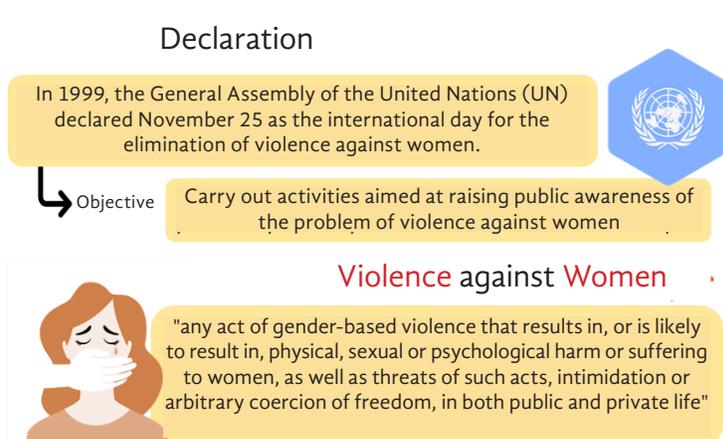


Figure 1. Source: Made by the authors with data from the United Nations Organization (UN). 1993

As can be seen in Figure 2, violence against women can be anywhere, but data from Mexico<sup>3</sup> is cited.

- 1 The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is commemorated every November 25, since in 1960 the murder of the Mirabal sisters, political activists from the Dominican Republic, occurred.
- 2 Human Rights Day is celebrated every December 10, the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- 3 It is possible to consult data about violence against women and girls worldwide in the United Nations Women. (nd). "Facts and figures: Ending violence against women".

- 66% of women have suffered at least one incident of violence of any kind throughout their lives, INEGI (2020).
- 44% of women suffered violence from their partner, INEGI (2020).
- The data on Female Deaths Presumed as Homicide (DFPH) for the period 1985-2019 show that the highest rate of DFPH was recorded in 2019 (5.7 DFPH per one hundred thousand women).<sup>4</sup>

The 16-day campaign for the eradication of violence against women and girls promoted by the United Nations (UN) aims to transform the reality of violence in which women and girls live, achieve gender equality, the right to a life free from violence, and all other human rights. At this point, I must emphasize that, in conditions of violence, the right to education, to health, to food, to employment, to housing, to social security, simply cannot be achieved.

This year the *UNiTE* campaign had as its global theme "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!" In other words, in addition to financing actions against gender violence, in 2020 it was called to prevent, to respond with access to services, to collect and analyze information on the reality of violence in which women live.

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4 Ministry of the Interior, the National Institute for Women, UN Women, and the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (2020). Femicide violence in Mexico: approaches and trends.

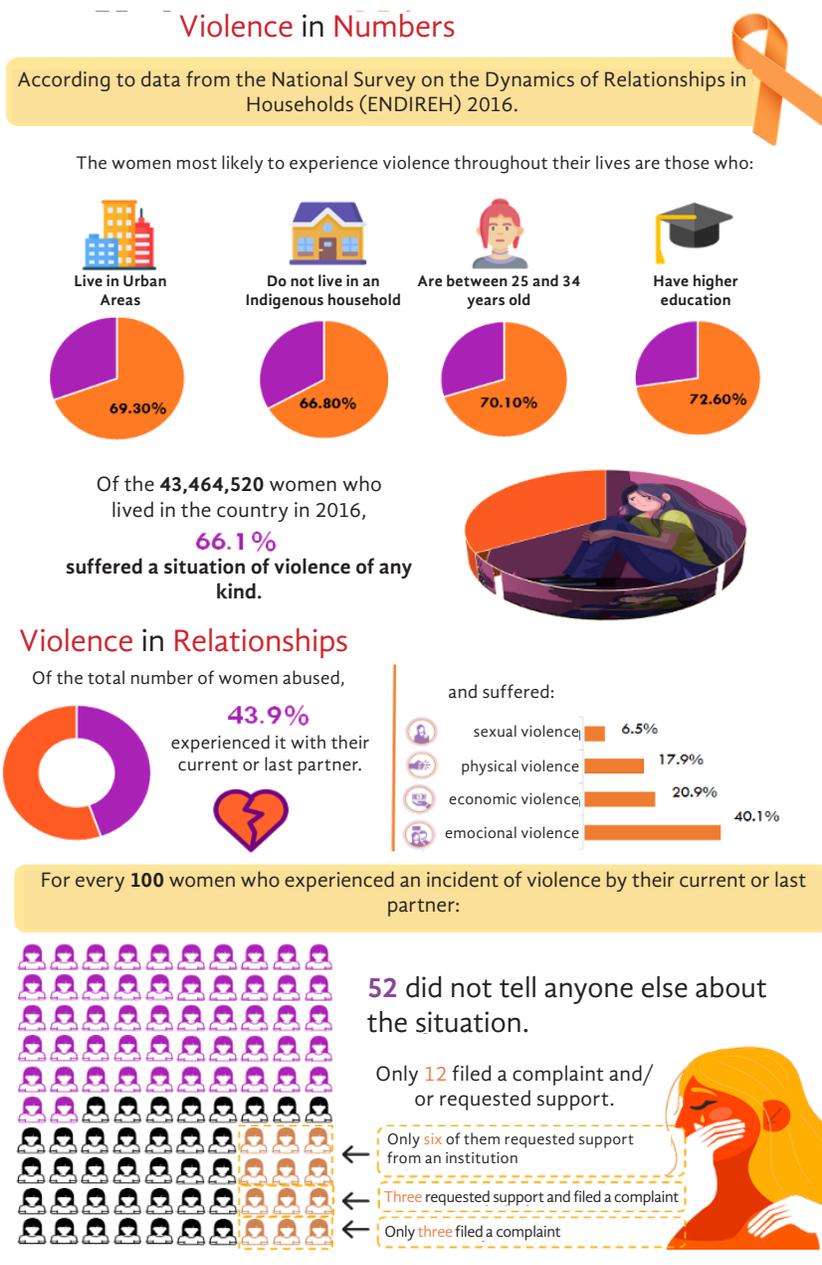


Figure 2. Source: Own elaboration with data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (2020) Images: Freepik, Flaticon

In educational institutions, civil society, the private and public sectors of Mexico and around the world, in response to the UN call, conversations, reflections, and content of many types were generated, ranging from cartoons, infographics, stories, plays, talks, and conferences. The confinement to contain the COVID-19 pandemic did not impede taking part in the activities

of the UNiTE campaign, quite the contrary. The enthusiasm of our activism was greater because in times of pandemic we saw how violence against women and girls was exacerbated.

Particularly at the Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco, activism, in virtual mode, consisted of a cycle of conferences where the issue of the human right of women to live a life free of violence was addressed, a workshop to create infographics with a gender perspective and the participation of the CONEVAL's executive secretary with the conference "Social and gender gaps in Mexico and Tabasco, and the effects of Covid-19".

Thanks to the virtuality in which many of the actions undertaken in 2020 were developed, I was able to join the activities undertaken by the government, civil society, and educational institutions from other states and other countries to address issues as acute and painful as:

- Femicide violence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, physical violence, psychological violence, economic and patrimonial violence, labor violence, political and institutional violence, and access to justice and reparation of damage to women survivors of violence.
- Inequality and gender gaps in salary matters, in academic, political, and business spaces.
- The risk and vulnerability in which young women, older adult women, indigenous women, migrant women, and minority women live due to violence of different types.

A topic that particularly concerned us during the day was the violence caused, or rather, the violence that was revealed and exacerbated by the confinement derived from the covid-19 pandemic. UN Women itself has dimensioned violence against women as the other pandemic, which is growing in the shadow of the covid-19 crisis and the economic crisis that the world is experiencing as a result.<sup>5</sup> In this sense, we were concerned with topics such as:

- Domestic Violence,
- insufficient resources to deal with situations of violence,
- the impact of the pandemic on women's employment,
- the precariousness in which women work,
- women's vulnerability due to lack of social security,

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5 United Nations Women. (April 6, 2020) and United Nations Women. (2020)

- women's morbidities and mortality factors,
- the risk and vulnerability in which women work in the front line of the fight against covid-19,
- wage gaps in jobs in the care sector recognized by the market, such as jobs in education, health, domestic services, maintenance and support, food services, to name just a few.

Another issue that concerned us was the crisis of care work, historically unpaid and unrecognized work, but that women do every day and that in Mexico is estimated to amount to almost 22.8% of GDP.<sup>6</sup> In this sense, we were concerned with the analysis of the unequal distribution between men and women of care work, which in a pandemic even began to put at risk the future of girls and adolescents who have been called to take care of these tasks instead of their education.

All the problems that, although it may not seem like it, are generated as a result of gender conditions and become generators of violence, although not necessarily sexual or femicide, in the end, they are violent and threaten freedom, equal rights and opportunities, integrity, the physical and mental health of women and girls.

Dismantling gender violence is urgent, due to the dimension and social damage it is generating, but above all for justice. Our generation is called to transformation, to watch over and demand the transformation of the State so that it can guarantee equality between women and men, respect for the integrity, dignity, and life of women and girls. The activism that we are called to carry out is for the respect and guarantee of the inalienable, universal, and indivisible human rights of women and girls.

In Mexico, there is a set of laws to guarantee a life free of violence and gender equality, of which the following stand out: the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence, the Law on Equality between Women and Men, the Law to Confront the Trafficking of Women and Girls, and the Law to Promote the Rights of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents.

Some institutions deal with this, such as the National System to Prevent, Address, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women (2007), and the respective State Systems, which are based on the General Law of Access to Women to a Life Free of Violence, the National Institute for Women (Inmujeres) and its state counterparts, the National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence against Women (CONAVIM), the National Institute

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6 National Institute of Statistics and Geography (2019).

for Social Development (Indesol) through of the Support Program for Women in Federal Entities (PAIMEF), among others.

However, as part of the academic community, I must point out that we have work to do. In Actuary and Economics matters, the areas of knowledge that concern me, we must formulate a macroeconomic theory that accounts for and revalues the unpaid care work of women; design and implement a universal income that guarantees the right to care and be cared for; as well as advancing in the reform of the social security system with a gender perspective that prevents economic and patrimonial violence against women.

I reiterate that the guarantee of Human Rights is the way to dismantle the conditions of oppression and violence that women and girls suffer. For which, support is required from all of society, from men and women helping to access a balanced and harmonious coexistence, without prejudice and the privileges of men over women. Likewise, the transformation of the State, institutions, and public policies is required to achieve the desired equality.

The 16 days of activism to end violence against women and girls of the *UNiTE 2020* campaign concludes with faith in the activism that women and men around the world are carrying out; *not to fight*, but to permanently *eliminate* violence against women and girls.

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