



Training : "Fighting violence against women in public and private spaces"

Iztapalapa, Mexico, 13 - 17 December 2022

International program: "CARING TERRITORIES FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE"

Report

Context and objectives:

The training was organized in the framework of the international program "[Caring Territories for women victims of violence](#)" coordinated by the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis, its [Observatory on Violence against Women](#) and by the [UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights](#).

The event was held in Iztapalapa, one of the 16 Municipalities of Mexico City and active member of the UCLG-CSIPDHR. The over 950,000 women living in Iztapalapa, **face gender-based violence daily in both public and private spaces**. According to a report published in 2021 by the Mayor's Office, between 2015 to 2020, reported crimes of intimate-partner and family violence increased by 47.5%, and women and girls were the main victims.

The Mayor's Office of Iztapalapa and its Mayor, Clara Brugada Molina, [have placed the defense of women's rights and a feminism municipalism at the center of local public policies](#).

The type of feminist municipalism promoted by Iztapalapa has given impetus to a radical transformation in the City, by **promoting comprehensive approaches to eradicate gender-based violence**. These range from protection to participation and empowerment of women in public spaces, to specific measures focused on intimate-partner violence in the domestic context.

The training aimed at **exchanging experiences among Local Governments** on policies, programs and strategies to fight violence against women; as well as **at building the capacity** of Local Governments to develop public policies on this subject.

In addition, the training aimed to foster **networking among Local Governments** committed to the fight against gender-based violence in the framework of UCLG, notably through the development of **learning tools and international advocacy**.

The training focused on the experiences of the Latin American region in the following thematic areas: i) **intimate-partner violence**; ii) **femicide**; iii) **violence in public spaces**; and iv) **assessments, data and local observatories**.

The five days of the event were organized around open exchanges on practical experiences of Local Governments. Moreover, the training included specific sessions on theoretical analysis of the thematic areas by representatives of academia, civil society, international organizations and national institutions. Also, several field visits were organized to discover the initiatives implemented by the Mayor's Office of Iztapalapa (Annex 1: agenda).

Most of the training activities were carried out in the [Utopias](#) of Iztapalapa, 11 venues built by the Mayor's Office for citizens with activities on **local democracy, environmental culture, solidarity, care and the right to the city**, including initiatives for and with women.

Co-organizadores:

Municipality of Iztapalapa: Rocio LOMBERA, Cabinet Advisor to the Mayor; Ximena GUZMAN, Private Secretary to the Mayor; Lidia RODRIGUEZ, General Director of Inclusion and Social Welfare; Angelica OLIVARES, Inclusion Coordinator; Fabiola ROJAS, Head of Departmental Unit for the Promotion of Women's Rights and Equality.

Department of Seine-Sainte-Denis: Ernestine RONAI, Head of the Observatory of Violence against Women of the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis; Amelie VIDEAU, Coordinator of the International Observatory of Violence against Women of the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis; Cyril BENOIT, International Directorate of the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis.

Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights of United Cities and Local Governments: Amanda FLÉTY MARTÍNEZ, Coordinator; Benedetta COSCO, Policy Officer.

Local Government representatives who participated in the training:

- **Samer AQWARI**, Member of the Municipal Council of Jenin (Palestine).
- **Clara BRUGADA MOLINA**, Mayor of Iztapalapa (Mexico)
- **Gissela CHALÁ REINOSO**, Second Vice Mayor of Quito (Ecuador)
- **Xóchitl CRUZ**, Resilience Coordinator, Ciudad Juárez (Mexico)
- **Eva MIERI**, Municipal Councilor of Quilmes (Argentina)
- **Virginia PALMA ERPEL**, Municipal Councilor of Santiago (Chile)
- **María Auxiliadora PÉREZ RUIZ**, Municipal Councilor of Nicoya (Costa Rica) and representative of the National Union of Local Governments of Costa Rica
- **Karen POBLETE**, Municipal Councilor of Villa Alemana (Chile)
- **Alexandra QUINTERO BENAVIDES**, Director for the Elimination of Violence against Women of Bogotá (Colombia)
- **Javiera TOLEDO MUÑOZ**, Mayor of Villa Alemana (Chile)
- **Alina YAPOR CASTILLO**, Responsible for gender policies of the Dominican Federation of Municipalities, FEDOMU (Dominican Republic)

Institutional, academic, civil society and UN representatives:

- **Selene ALDANA SANTANA**, Sociologist, UNAM.
- **Magela Romero ALMODÓVAR**, Professor of the Department of Sociology of the University of Havana
- **Jean-Pierre ASVAZADOURIAN**, French Ambassador to Mexico
- **Cynthia Marcela BRIONES OSORIO**, in charge of investigation of the crime of femicide, Prosecutor's Office of Mexico City
- **Rocío CULEBRO**, member of the team of the Historical Clarification Mechanism of the Truth Commission
- **Arnaud DAUPHIN**, Deputy Director of the French Development Agency (AFD) in Mexico
- **Tamam EQNAWI**, Director of Al Najada, partner association of the Observatory on violence against women in Jenin
- **Lourdes GARCÍA**, Professor at the Faculty of Architecture and Coordinator of the Social Habitat Laboratory: participation and gender - LAHAS of UNAM
- **María Isabela GONZÁLEZ and Yadira CORTÉS**, Red Mesa de Mujeres de Ciudad Juárez (Ciudad Juárez Women's Roundtable Network)
- **Karen MARTINELY**, feminist activist of the Municipality of Nezahualcoyotl
- **Roberto MURUGUÍA HUERTA**, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- **Norma Don Juan PÉREZ**, Member of the National Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Women (Conami)
- **Liliana RAINERO**, Architect and former Director of CISCESA Ciudades Feministas (CISCESA Feminist Cities)
- Mohammed SAADAT, Ambassador of Palestine in Mexico
- Paula SOTO VILLAGRÁN, Researcher at UAM Iztapalapa, Mexico City

Report of the activities

Day 1: intimate-partner violence

The first day of the training, on December 13, began with an Opening Plenary in the presence of the **Mayor of Iztapalapa, Clara Brugada; the French Ambassador to Mexico, Jean-Pierre Asvazadourian**; as well as representatives of the **French Development Agency (AFD), the Department of Seine Saint Denis and UCLG**. The plenary was held in the [Utopia Boat](#), a newly built cultural, educational and recreational complex of Iztapalapa.

The Mayor stressed the need to seize the ongoing democratic transformation in Iztapalapa to promote safe and free Cities for all the women around the world, and that the training represents a laboratory for this. The Mayor also proposed the creation of an international school for Mayors focused on the integration of the gender perspective into local policies.

The representatives of Seine-Saint-Denis, ADF and UCLG pointed out that **women's political participation and leadership are not compatible with gender-based violence**, and that international cooperation initiatives at local level such as the program "*Caring Territories for women victims of violence*" represent the first step to advance women's rights worldwide. The French Ambassador to Mexico stressed that there is still a long way to go in the fight against

violence against women, and expressed its willingness to work in France, Mexico and around the world to achieve more equal and inclusive public spaces.



Opening Plenary @CISDP

After the Opening Plenary, **Ernestine Ronai**, Head of the Observatory of Violence against Women of the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis, and **Magela Romero Almodovar**, Professor of the Department of Sociology at the University of Havana, presented the first session of the day on "*Intimate-partner violence: the key role of numbers for local policies*". Both of them presented relevant data on their experiences on violence against women in each of their countries. Ernestine Ronai highlighted how **the feminist struggle in France gave rise to social and political changes** for the incursion of the role of women in the public and private spheres. Ernestine stressed that violence against women undermines women's participation in social, economic and political life and **that this kind of violence is an expression of male domination over women**, of men's desire for control and power over the victims. She also presented the work carried out at the Observatory of Seine-Saint-Denis, notably in relation to the ***Cycle of Violence in Intimate Relationships*** tool. This tool aims at describing the different phases of violence: the "**tension phase**", the "**aggression phase**"; the "**justification phase**" (the aggressor justifies himself by taking responsibility for the violence); and the "**remission phase**" (the aggressor ceases violence for some time so as not to lose his prey). Within these phases, the Observatory has analyzed extremely diverse forms of violence, including "**cyber violence**", i.e. the control of the victim's cell phone or social networks, the use of geolocation applications; as well as the sharing of intimate photos of the partner. This new form of violence follows the same objective of **humiliation and control** as other the other forms of violence (psychological, sexual, physical, economic-administrative, etc).

Similarly, based on the victims' narratives, the Observatory identified the "**aggressor's strategy**". The strategy consists of: i) **isolation of the victim**, controlling any type of communication with her family, media or friends; ii) **humiliation or devaluation of the victim**; iii) **family terrorism, shouting, use of physical force to prevent her from seeking help**; iv) **inverted guilt or justification** of the aggression by blaming the victim; v) **search for allies and impunity**; and vi) **manipulation – especially in relation to the children - to prevent the victim to lodge formal complaints**.

Classifying violence into phases and strategies allows to identify some key risk factors to prevent it. The work of the Observatory has allowed it to position itself as a space that has advanced public policies against violence against women; experimenting new mechanisms and extending them to the national level.

Professor Magela presented the results of community interventions in Cuba, based on the creation of formal and informal networks; as well as local and territorial strategies for the eradication of gender-based violence. The results of this work highlighted the **key role of the academic feminist community in Cuba, which followed a series of local development projects** carried out in 5 peripheral communities of Havana, with families in vulnerable conditions. Magela emphasized that the communities had to build their own models of prevention and attention to protect women victims of violence; as well as **the importance of collecting or adapting existing data and assessments to a gender perspective**. The interventions were based on a methodology of "**exploratory walks**" - led mainly by women - to identify risk in public spaces and within social services. The interventions also included specialized training for civil servants working with the victims; as well as for the promoters and the key stakeholders working in the communities. In addition, a feminist library with printed and digital material on gender-based violence was set-up.

During the open debate after the session, participants talked about how the impact of gender-based violence is also a **global public health, political and social problem**. The problem increased during the pandemic, as women spent more time with their aggressors, and difficult economic situations also negatively affected intimate relationships. Participants also emphasized that **identifying the causes of violence without isolating them from the reality of communities and social movements in the region can contribute to properly address them**.



Ernestine Ronai and Magela Almodóvar @CISDP

The second session of the day focused on the experiences of Local Governments on "**Policies and strategies against intimate-partner violence**" and started with the presentation of Amélie Videau, coordinator of the International Observatory of Seine-Saint-Denis. Amélie discussed on how **to build public policies with the support of other stakeholders and institutions**

(police, judiciary system, local associations, etc.) in order to train professionals to guide and support the victims; and to encourage women to "**disclosure violence**". Amélie also mentioned that **access to housing** for victims of violence represents an essential component for their protection, and that Seine-Saint-Denis set-up a multistakeholder program for social housing called "*A roof for them*" which allowed to allocate to more than 300 women with children. This program allows the victims to become independent and leave the aggressor more quickly. However, **access to housing is not enough to ensure their economic empowerment and reintegration, which requires more comprehensive approaches**. For instance, **psychological counseling has played a key role in the recovery of victims**, who often present symptoms of trauma, depression or panic attacks. In this sense, more than 600 women, spread over 13 municipalities, have benefited from psychological care service in Seine-Saint-Denis. Special actions were developed with young people: the "**Pow'her**" shelter was opened for victims of sexual and sexist violence between 15 and 25 years of age; and the prevention program "**Youth against sexism**" was also created to raise awareness of gender-based violence in schools through cultural and artistic activities and trainings.

Eva Mieri, Councilor of Quilmes, underlined that the State must be "debureaucratized and depatriarchalized" to address gender-based violence. Quilmes provides training based on the [Micaela law](#), named after a 24-year-old feminist activist who "*went out dancing one night and never came back*", and which is implemented both at the municipal and national levels. Quilmes also works with the **Circuit of Attention to Women**, which provides support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year (in person and remotely) in order **to prevent the phenomenon of "re-victimization"** and to facilitate bureaucratic procedures for the implementation of precautionary measures. Given the need to establish more structural dialogue mechanisms between the national and municipal levels, **a MUTUAL ASSISTANCE GROUP (GAM) was created to develop workshops for reflection and training for women at local level to raise awareness on the tools for support of victims at the national level**. Eva also stressed that psychological violence is one of the most serious forms of violence, as well as gender-based violence in politics.

Javiera Toledo, Mayor of Villa Alemana, mentioned the importance of promoting local policies with a gender perspective: out of the 150,000 inhabitants of Villa Alemana, 70,000 are women, and more than 53% of the population finds itself in a vulnerable situation due to violence and poverty. A municipal protocol was created to attend, protect and empower women victims of harassment; and gender mainstreaming was promoted in all areas of government. The Municipality also promoted a series of **non-sexist education** programs in public schools; and set-up participatory democracy mechanisms and tools in all the Municipality in order to overcome patriarchal "vertical work". An important axis of Villa Alemana is the development of the **Integral Women's Center**, where women victims of violence **are offered reactive, preventive and restorative guidance and services**. The objective of this space is that the women of the Municipality "**know where to go if something happens to them**". This center brings together different entities - including state services – to meet their needs: health care, legal support, children care, labor insertion etc.



Panelists of the second session @CISDP

In the afternoon, participants learned about the *Siemprevivas Program*, an inter-institutional initiative of Iztapalapa to address family and intimate violence against women. The community workers of Quetzalcóatl (which is part of Iztapalapa) explained that the program is implemented directly with Iztapalapa' families **to generate a process of reflection with all their members on the way they live together and treat each other**; and to jointly develop strategies that allow them to have family relationships based **on mutual care and no-violence**. This initiative also includes spaces for comprehensive care for women: the *Casas de las Siemprevivas*. The participants visited the *Casas de las Siemprevivas de Quetzalcóatl*, where they can access different rights such as health, education, culture, sports and work.



Visitas de campo en Quetzalcóatl @CISDP

Day 2: Violence in public spaces

The second day, December 14, began with a session on "**Public spaces for all: policies aiming at reclaiming spaces for women in cities**". Paula Soto, researcher at the [UAM of Iztapalapa](#) spoke about "spatial violence", affirming that gender and sex are important elements to study and understand the violence that people experience in different spaces, especially women and girls. For example, she used the expression "**geography of fear**" to indicate locations where the fear of transit, inhabiting, being and living is most evident. Along the same lines, Paula mentioned the notion of "**sensory landscape**", i.e. public and private spaces and which that can generate emotions such as vulnerability or insecurity. **Architect Liliana Rainero**, spoke about the links between feminist cities and the "**Right to the City**", referring to the fact that girls and women are not passive urban dwellers, and that architecture and urban infrastructures must recognize their different needs. **Not taking women into account in urban planning undermines their quality of life and can lead to the abandonment of public spaces and recreational activities**. Liliana also stressed the importance of "**geo-referencing insecurity**" and called for the recognition of gender-based violence as a priority issue of security in the governmental agenda in order to make women's rights visible through campaigns, protests, urban installations, film debates or radio programs.

Lourdes García, Professor at Universidad Autónoma de México, mentioned the need to incorporate the feminist perspective in the design and planning of cities and housing in Mexico, specifying that the availability of public and private spaces for women does not automatically address violence against women, if women themselves do not participate in their creation. In this sense, Lourdes affirmed **that violence is "continuous"**, that it can be experienced at the same time in private and public spaces. She concluded her presentation by calling for the adoption of public policies with a feminist perspective (**feminist urbanism**) to put women at the center of all urban planning policies towards safe and caring Cities.

The session ended with a debate on the importance of **political continuity** in policies and programs and the key role of the political willingness to invest on prevention and protection of women victims of violence. Participants also raised the importance of awareness-raising among public servants so that they can apply feminist approaches in each stage of the public policy cycle (design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation).



Session on violence in public spaces @CISDP

The second day of training continued with a session on the practical experiences of local governments in Chile, Ecuador and Costa Rica on "*Policies and strategies for safe public spaces for women*". The first speaker was **Virginia Palma Erpel, Councilor of Santiago de Chile**, presented some programs and strategies that have been implemented in Santiago, such as the **Ordinance against Street Sexual Harassment** and the **Caring System**. The latter was born due to the economic and mental health crisis that women have faced during the pandemic, and the lack of formal recognition of their care work at home, which has often prevented them from receiving any kind of remuneration. The implementation of a **Caring System** responds to the increasing importance of "care" that local and national governments in Chile are reflecting in public policies. The Caring System seeks to articulate community activities, municipal programs, the education and health systems for the economic empowerment of women and for training programs for caregivers. Among other things, the System consists of temporarily supporting the caregivers to have time for self-care or other activities. The initiative also provides the possibility for women who are trained in the care service to have a **long-term economic income**, promoting the labor insertion through training and / or certification of skills. In this way, the Caring System benefits two groups of women: the caregivers and other women who need care services. This allows women to foster their economic autonomy, but also to get out of situations of violence they are victims of. The initiative also targets **people with disabilities and the elderly, seeking to adjust each measure to the specific needs of the beneficiary population**.



Virginia Erpel presenting the initiatives of Santiago de Chile @CISDP

Gissela Chalá, Deputy Mayor of the Metropolitan District of Quito, stated that the Constitution of Ecuador is one of the few to recognize the **Right to the City**. Such a right implies rethinking cities within the framework of **social justice**, where the diverse experiences and people are heard, attended to and "embraced" in the urban space. For this reason, Quito has implemented training activities for its public servants with a **HumanRights-based approach** and has set-up a series of spaces and mechanisms for listening and assistance. For example, the **anti-trafficking table** is a measure that serves women and girls who have been victims of sexual crimes; which also provides a space to exchange and train caregivers and civil servants to adequately support them. The notion of **Right to the City** implies that urban spaces need to include marginalized populations such as children, the elderly, or people living in poverty. This

notion has contributed to opening up deeper collective reflections in Quito on how cities have been constructed for a specific kind of population: white, male, heterosexual people with purchasing power. Gissela also highlighted the notion of **social production** of the city that is being experimented in Quito, which translates into **new territorial models against spatial segregation**; into policies of *Buen Vivir* and care; and in gender-mainstreaming through specific mechanisms such as the Commission for Equality, Gender and Social Inclusion.

Gissela also shared a reflection on women's mobility and the "**Zero Harassment**" campaign against sexual harassment in transportation. She highlighted that this kind of initiatives should go further and invert the so-called "*pyramid of needs*", **putting women at the center of mobility plans**. This includes prioritizing pedestrian transit before public transport and cars; but also includes adapting fares and maps, especially from the "peripheries", where the most vulnerable populations, including women, usually live. Finally, the Vice Mayor took up the idea of *Utopias* promoted by Iztapalapa, calling for the promotion of economies of care, respect for Human Rights and dignity for all.



Gissela Chalá presenting the initiatives of Quito @CISDP

During her presentation, **María Auxiliadora Pérez Rúa, Councilor of Nicoya**, presented alternative ways to trigger behavioral change in relation to gender-based violence in Costa Rica. For example, the "**Score a goal against machismo**" campaign has sought to break with the ideas and stereotypes linked to sex/gender that keep women away from public spaces and sporting events such as soccer matches. The campaign was seeking to integrate girls in mixed tournaments; as well as to train sports leagues to make stadiums "a safe and familiar space". María Auxiliadora also mentioned the importance of gender violence in politics, and the implementation at the local level of successful national frameworks and laws such as the Costa Rica's "**Law to prevent, address, punish and eradicate violence against women in politics**".

Alina Yapor Castillo, in charge of gender policies of the Dominican Federation of Municipalities, highlighted the numerous institutional tools that exist at the national level, such as shelters, women's offices, a judicial commission specialized in gender.

She also stressed that, despite the great number, these tools and instruments are rarely implemented and are often undermined by religious beliefs. The financial resources dedicated to the functioning of institutions for victims remain scarce, the training of professionals is insufficient and the change of personnel with political mandates affects the continuity of local policies. The protection of girls is also a major problem in the Dominican Republic, which is one of the countries with the highest number of pregnancies among girls. **Forced marriages and sexual exploitation by parents have also been identified as a solution to escape poverty.** In the face of these problems, Alina concluded her intervention by emphasizing th necessary to take care that the legal frameworks of the "secular state" are applied at the local and national level.



Javiera Toledo; Gissela Chalá; María Auxiliadora Pérez; Alina Yapor Castillo; Virginia Palma Erpel @CISDP

In the afternoon, the Mayor's Office of Iztapalapa presented some of the Municipality's initiatives to fight against violence in public space and public transport through the cooperation of other local and federal actor, such as the Mexico City Transport Directorate and the police. The training participants observed an awareness-raising activity against harassment on buses, which is part of the "**Free of Violence Streets**" initiative. Participants also learned about the "**Safe Business for Women**" initiative, which aims to create a network of local businesses that provide safe spaces where women who feel at risk can seek refuge. Finally, participants visited one of the "**Caminos de Mujeres Libres y Seguras**", 145 paths intervened with permanent lighting, gender-focused murals and improvement of the urban image to guarantee women's right to use and enjoy the city and its spaces. Participants also met the artists who paint the murals and take care of their maintenance along with the community.

Day 3: Femicide

The third day of the training - December 15 – started with a symbolic moment on **femicide** in Mexico. Yadira Cortés, from the organization **Red Mesa de Mujeres de Ciudad Juárez**, presented the history of the Red, which was born after the discovery of 8 dead girls in a cotton field in 2009. This fact gave rise to the "**Campo algodnero**" sentence, which explicitly recognized government's responsibility in the event. The Red's objective is to develop public policies proposals to achieve the fulfillment of women's rights and generate a **gender equality culture** in Mexico. The Red also promotes **mechanisms for dialogue and accountability** through a monitoring program and an inter-institutional cooperation with the three levels of government (local, federal and municipal) through gender-sensitive approaches. **The Red believes that the precursor to feminicidal violence is family and intimate violence.** For this reason, it also implements training programs for women defenders and civil servants working with women; and has set up 9 Justice Centers throughout the country. Moreover, the Red carries out memory and prevention initiatives through Memorials of missing victims, upon the permission of the families. To conclude, Yadira highlighted the following priorities to tackle in addressing femicide at local level: i) make the sanctions effective and "credible" by fostering **government's accountability**; ii) develop **prevention, care and healthy relationships**; iii) **promote trust** in order to ensure that women are not afraid to demand access to justice.



First session on femicide in Mexico @CISDP

Karen Martinely Carranza, a feminist activist from the Municipality of Nezahualcoyotl, told the story of her feminist activism, which started because of her daughter Renata Martinely, who was a victim of child femicide by her mother's ex-partner. Karen described the **deficiencies and obstacles in the judicial process and in relation to access to justice** at the municipal and state levels. More specifically, she highlighted that State's justice failed her three times: firstly, not following up her first complaint against the ex-partner who sexually harassed her daughter and who then became her murderer; secondly, by providing a wrong opinion during the investigation of her daughter's murder; and lastly, with the slowness of the judicial process.

Currently, Renata's case is closed because the death of the femicide without being sentenced, **which did not allow to leave judicial precedents** in the Municipality and to do justice for Renata. For this reason, Karen stressed **the importance of feminist social movements, solidarity and memorials to raise awareness among the inhabitants and to push authorities to assume their responsibilities.**

Norma Don Juan Pérez, member of the National Coordinating Committee of Indigenous Women (CONAMI) and native of the Náhuatl people, presented the "community gender emergency" initiative. This initiative arose in CONAMI in 2013 following the annual counts of homicides of women carried out by associations, observatories and feminist activists, which had highlighted a clear **lack of data on indigenous women.** Therefore, the emergency initiative aims at **addressing gender-based violence from an intercultural perspective,** respecting the knowledge and diversity of indigenous women; but also at identifying the specific forms of violence that they experience in urban and rural spaces. Norma emphasized that indigenous women **have already experienced violence historically, and that it had been exacerbated by other forms of oppression such as colonialism, which have made them invisible as a strategy to violate not only women, but also their people and cultures.**



Presentation of CONAMI by Norma Pérez @CISDP

Rocío Culebro, member of the team of the Historical Clarification Mechanism of the Truth Commission of Mexico, presented her research work on enforced disappearance and femicide. She stressed **the importance of culture, which can trigger behavioral change on the long term** towards respect, care and solidarity. Culture can lay groundwork for enhanced visibility and follow-up of all cases of gender-based violence. Rocío also affirmed the importance of **investigating from a gender perspective** and that **governments should be more present in the preventive and judicial part of cases of gender-based violence** to avoid impunity and recidivism, putting violence as a priority issue in political agenda but also judicial agenda. **Prevention through judicial means implies acting against all the actors involved in the femicide chain, and not only the murderer** (for instance, Rocío mentioned that sometimes cab drivers are accomplices of femicides).

The second session of the day on " *Policies, actions and strategies to prevent and eradicate femicides*" was opened by **Cinthy Briones, from the Mexico City Prosecutor's Office**, who presented some of the mechanisms for investigating femicide, such as the *Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Gender Violence Crimes* and its *Protocol for action*. Cinthya highlighted the transversal approach that they applied in the investigations. This approach gives a special attention to collect data and to identify traces of violence on the victim's body (traces of defense, gynecological examinations linked to sexual assault, elements that indicate a reaction in the face of imminent danger etc); **including by better investigating situations that may resemble suicide and which are often femicides**. As of November 2022, the Prosecutor's Office had validated 65 femicides, which made **it possible to activate a system of sanctions and investigations that have contributed to address the issue of femicide at local and national level more broadly**. Cinthya concluded her presentation by mentioning the importance of **data dissemination; and of the official recognition of femicides to guarantee access to justice**.

Along the same lines, **Alexandra Quintero Benavides, Director for the Elimination of Violence against Women of Bogotá**, presented the "*Articulated System of Early Alerts for the Prevention of Femicide*" (SAAT). The SAAT seeks to collect, verify and analyze information on women who have been victims of violence in order to provide them with an adequate and targeted follow-up with a view to prevent femicide. SAAT is a system aimed at **risk identification, risk management and risk reduction** through three actions: i) monitoring and information management with the support of judicial services; ii) legal follow-up; and iii) inter-institutional coordination. The SAAT has made it possible to advance public policies against gender-based violence through the cross-referencing of information; the effective assignment of each case to the adequate institutions; and their follow-up through in-depth analysis and working groups. **This methodology allows to possible to alert the different authorities involved in the same case** (judges, prosecutors, police, etc.); and the risk assessment is carried out through various interviews during the entire duration of the case.



Session on local public policies on femicide @CISDP

Ernestine Ronai, from the Observatory of Seine-Saint-Denis, mentioned that the police and the justice system represent only a part of the solution, and that other types of awareness-

raising tools and initiatives (silent marches, press, etc.) are also key to address femicide. Ernestine also stressed the necessity to consider that in cases of femicide, **the children of the murdered women - whether present or not during the act - are also victims of violence**. In this sense, Seine-Saint-Denis has created a protocol in cooperation with the justice and health systems which allows the children to spend up to 8 days in the pediatric psychiatry department for psychological support.

In 2008, the Observatory of Seine-Saint-Denis investigated on the causes of the femicides, and **highlighted three possible situations** which can lead to it: i) the woman called the police and the police never arrived; ii) women considered that the situation was not dangerous, and did not lodge a complaint; iii) the man murdered the woman while visiting the children. Local tools such as the "*Téléphone grand danger*" (panic button) or the Protection Order allow to prevent escalation; but **the protection of children is also essential for them not to become additional victims of gender-based violence**. This is why the Observatory has developed protection measures (*Mesure d'accompagnement protégé et Espace de rencontre protégée*) during the children's visits, which currently take place in the presence of professionals to avoid meetings between the "aggressor father" and the mother.

Ernestine stressed that **identifying risk and danger implies thinking about possible situations in which a woman is isolated and without a safety net**. She concluded her intervention by affirming that, in order to address femicides, Local Governments have to believe and support women as soon as they reveal to have experienced any kind of violence. **There is no such thing as "small violence", as all forms of violence can escalate in a catastrophe**.

Finally, **Roberto Munguía Huerta, from UNODC**, presented a [statistical framework](#) that UNODC has developed with UN Women through data from different sources, countries and levels of government to measure "Gender-related killings of women and girls". The objective of the tool is to **establish a standard framework for femicide's measurement and classification**. This kind of framework did not exist yet exist, although every 11 minutes in the world a woman/girl is killed by a family member. Roberto spoke of the challenges in the implementation of this framework, since the **definitions of feminicide or femicide in the world are not always the same, generating a problem of lack of data and comparison**.

The session ended with a round of questions, triggering a collective reflection on the **importance of identification of the multiple forms of violence** that affect women; as well as on the key role of public policies and justice system to support the hard work of awareness-raising and grassroots activism that have allowed to make gender-based violence visible.



Utopía Teotongo, Iztapalapa @CISDP

In the afternoon, the participants visited the **Iztapalapa Women's Justice Center**, a space where specialized, comprehensive and inter-institutional services are provided to women, girls (and children up to 12 years of age) who are victims of family and gender-based violence. The Center develops prevention actions (awareness raising; dissemination of information; community work); but its first objective is to attend women and girls who are victims of violence through social; health and psychological support; as well as legal support. The center brings together all the services and actors involved in the "protection ecosystem": the Prosecutor's Office and the Police to initiate the investigation; a civil courtroom to process urgent civil measures; and a temporary shelter for victims open 24 hours a day, all year round.



Civil servants of the Centro de Justicia @CISDP

Day 4: Data, assessments and local observatories on gender-based violence

Friday, December 16, the last day of the training, participants attended the weekly meeting of the **Security Cabinet of Iztapalapa, a coordination mechanism between the government of Mexico City and the Mayor's Office of Iztapalapa to address violence**. The Cabinet focuses on the production and collection of data; on geo-referencing tools, records and analysis that support the design and implementation of comprehensive and inter-institutional public policies against violence. The work of the Cabinet has achieved a reduction of almost 60% in high impact crimes in Iztapalapa. During the meeting, officials from the Mayor's Office presented an analysis of the crime of rape in Iztapalapa, mentioning that 2022 has been the year with the most complaints. At the same time, in 2022 Iztapalapa has also witnessed a decrease of rapes, demonstrating that formal complaints allows the activation a system of protection measures and monitoring procedures for women, which also have a positive impact to prevent recidivism.

On the same day, during the session "*The importance of georeferencing and data analysis to fight against violence against women*", **Selene Aldana, Professor at UNAM**, presented her research work on the Hull House commune in Chicago, comparing it to the Utopias of Iztapalapa. The Hull House attracted single working class women who shared costs and household chores, which allowed them to survive on their low wages. Selene emphasized how the Hull House gave impulse to demographic information mapping techniques and social indicators to assess the socio-economic conditions of urban areas and their inhabitants – including women - which represent the basis for current diagnosis and assessments to design public policies at local level.

Samer Aqwari, member of the Municipal Council of Jenin (Palestinian Territories); and Tamam Eqnawi, Director of Al Najada Association, member of the Steering Committee of the Observatory of violence against women in Jenin (one of the pilot territories of the international program "Caring Territories for Women Victims of Violence") presented the assessment carried out jointly by different partners to assess the initiatives targeting women victims of violence om Jenin. This assessment will facilitate the implementation of a local action plan to fight gender-based violence. The action plan will include measures for the prevention of violence against women, awareness-raising against, and trainings for professionals.

The two Jenin representatives mentioned that **women are the main victims of armed conflicts around the world, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no exception**. The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories has consequences for violence against women and their protection. For example, with all the checkpoints installed, the Israeli army is able to block the territory and turn it into an "archipelago" with great restrictions on movement; which prevents the removal of a woman from her violent partner. This territorial fragmentation is also legal, since civil law is not unified in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip or East Jerusalem. **The legal fragmentation has consequences for women's rights, including on their rights related to marriage, "honor killings" and divorce.**

Finally, the two Palestinian representatives also highlighted the key role of feminist movements in the promotion of women's rights and analyzed the different forms of violence with a specific focus on rape, femicide and "honor crimes" and their recognition by local authorities in Palestine.

Ernestine Ronai, from the Observatory of Seine-Saint-Denis presented the methodology to collect data and develop intersectoral policies on violence against women adopted by the Observatory. She also explained that the objectives of an Observatory on gender-based

violence should be: i) **to observe and unveil the extent of violence against women** in a City/Territory through data and studies ii) **to generate a space for reflection and exchange for stakeholders working on the protection of victims** (local services, state services, associations, etc.) iii) **to build public policies, evaluate them and improve them**. These objectives allow to bring together different institutions and to leverage data collection to enhance the work of the stakeholders involved; and to develop a relationship of trust and collaboration; build a common language and promote an institutional culture of cooperation.

The training concluded with the **adoption of a Declaration of Commitment** signed by the Local Representatives to fight against gender-based violence at the local level through knowledge sharing, networking and advocacy.



Closing ceremony @CISDP

Read the text of the Declaration (translated from Spanish) here:

Following the initiative of the Observatory on Violence against Women of the Department of Seine-Saint-Denis, the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights and the Municipality of Iztapalapa, we, the representatives of the Local Governments present here, commit ourselves to work as a network to foster caring territories for women victims of violence, in all their plurality and diversity. We also call on other territories to join this effort and work together towards feminist municipalism. Together, we will collaborate to promote tools, public policies, and training meetings and to advance through an International Observatory on Violence against Women.

We believe you, we listen to you, we care for you and we want to be always alive, always free and always equal.

Gathered in Iztapalapa on the occasion of the seminar "Fighting violence against women in the private space and in the public space" (December 13-17, 2022).



The signatories of the Declaration are:

- **Clara Brugada Molina**, Mayor of Iztapalapa (Mexico)
- **Javiera Toledo Muñoz**, Mayor of Villa Alemana (Chile)
- **Gissela Chalá Reinoso**, Second Vice Mayor of Quito (Ecuador)
- **Eva Mieri**, Municipal Councillor of Quilmes (Argentina)
- **Virginia Palma Erpel**, Municipal Councillor of Santiago (Chile)
- **Samer Aqwari**, Member of the Municipal Council of Jenin (Palestinian Territories)
- **María Auxiliadora Pérez Ruiz**, Councillor of the Municipal Council of Nicoya and representative of the National Union of Local Governments of Costa Rica (Costa-Rica)
- **Alina Yapor Castillo**, **Gender Policy Officer, Dominican Federation of Municipalities**, FEDOMU (Dominican Republic)
- **Ernestine Ronai**, **Head of the Observatory on Violence against Women**, Department of Seine-Saint-Denis (France)
- **Amanda Fléty Martínez**, **Coordinator of the UCLG-CSIPDHR**