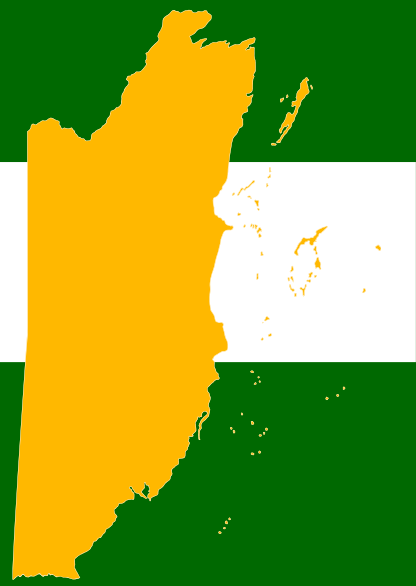
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS & ENTERPRISE

BELIZE CRIME OBSERVATORY



Belize

Violence Against Women and Girls, 2025

- Preliminary Considerations
- Advances and Challenges
- The continuum of Violence:
  - Domestic Violence
  - Sexual Violence
  - Femicide/Feminicide

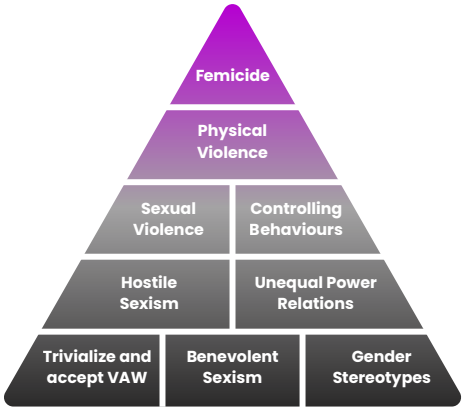
Data Source: Belize Police Department through the Joint Intelligence Coordinating Center

Insights on Violence Against Women and Girls

- In Belize, women and girls continue to be the main victims of both Domestic and Sexual Violence.
- Intimate partner violence continues to be a main arising concern within the continuum of violence.
- A significant percentage of Domestic Violence reports were because of common assault.
- A large percentage of the victims of Sexual Violence are girls of age less than 20 years.
- Most male and female victims were murdered with a firearm. Yet, the proportion of female victims were less than male victims.
- Violence Against Women and Girls continue to prove to be of concern hence, Belize is actively strengthening its legislative framework against Domestic Violence. Key initiatives are survivor-centered, focused on immediate support, particularly during nights and weekends.

Preliminary Considerations

Concepts and Approaches for Analysis



Graphic adapted by the Belize Crime Observatory with information published by Women's Health

What is Violence Against Women and Girls?

Violence Against Women and Girls is understood to be "any action or conduct, based on gender, that causes death, harm or physical, sexual, or psychological suffering to women, both in the public and private spheres."

Source: The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against women, better known as the Belém do Pará Convention, 1994

Continuum of Violence

"The attainment of the Sustainable development Goals (SDGs), and its promise – to leave no one behind – cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to violence against women and girls.... [Rape is an] extreme manifestation of the continuum of violence against women and girls."

UN Deputy Secretary General (Nov. 2019)

Why is it necessary to generate robust information on Violence Against Women and Girls?

1 It is the result of a system that is based on unequal power relations between the sexes.

2 Exposure to a series of specific risks coupled with other forms of discrimination and social exclusion to generate high and multiple vulnerability.

3 It is urgent to develop gender sensitive indicators that make it possible to characterize this reality and design effective public policies.

Advances and Challenges

Legal framework, information management and victimization

Belize's Policy and Legal Framework

1996
- Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act

2000
- Families and Children Act Revised

2002
- Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy

2007
- New Domestic Violence Act

2013
- Trafficking in Persons Act
- Revised National Gender Policy

2014
- Criminal Code Amendments

2017
- National Gender-based Violence Plan of Action

2020
- •Cybercrime Act
- Spotlight Project Intervention

2022
- Domestic Violence in Belize Motion of Parliament

2023
- Anti Human Trafficking Geo-Spatial Mapping exercise

2024
- Revised National Gender Policy 2025-2030

2024
- Amendment of Belize Marriage Act

2025
- Signed Regional Agreement to Strengthen Responses to Domestic Violence

2025
- Amendment of Justices of the Peace Bill
- Amendment of Domestic Violence Bill

5 Gaps Being Addressed

1. Enhancing the capture and reporting of multidimensional data
2. Strengthening the capacity and applying a more gender-sensitive approach to information management
3. Promoting and supporting data sharing for improved surveillance and intervention
4. Enhancing the Interagency data sharing to improve evidence-based decisions and policies
5. Maximizing the availability of data in specific offences such as Human Trafficking, Missing Person, etc.

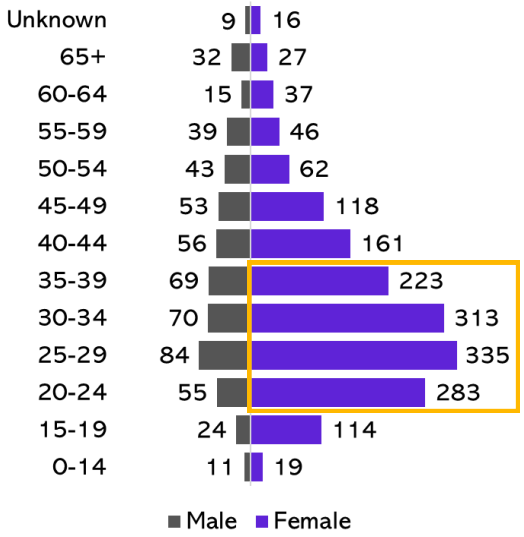
Continuum of Violence

How is the continuum of violence against women and girls manifested?

Domestic Violence

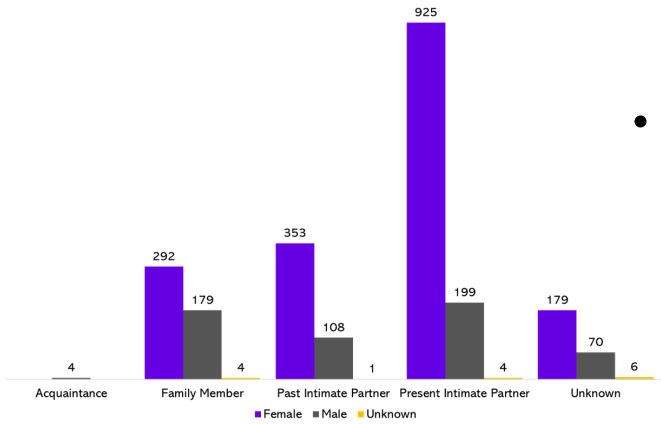
Domestic Violence in Belize Law refers to "...physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or financial abuse committed by a person against a spouse, child, de facto spouse, or any other person who is a member of the household of the applicant or the respondent."
Domestic Violence Act, 2007 (Belize)

Domestic Violence by age and sex, 2025



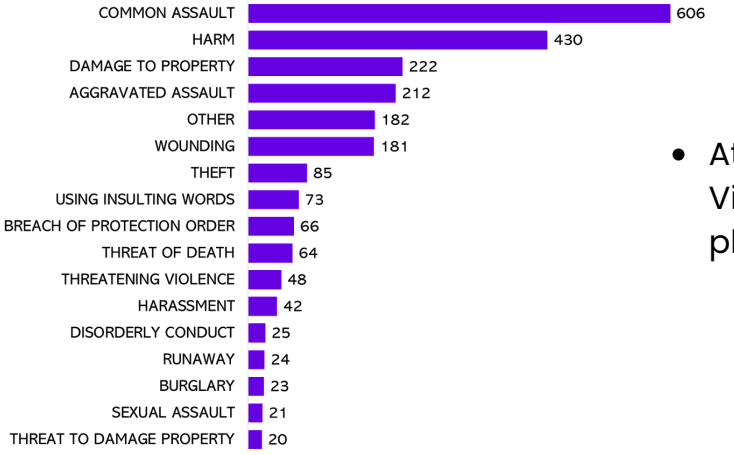
- During 2025, women and girls were the main victims of Domestic Violence accounting for 75% of the reports.
- 66% of all reports were filed by women aged 20 to 39 years.

Domestic Violence by age and sex, 2025



- 7 in 10 Domestic Violence reports were levied against a present or past intimate partner.

Domestic Violence by crime or offence, 2025



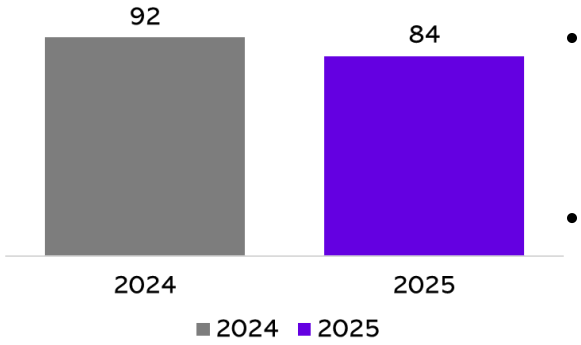
- At least 6 in 10 Domestic Violence reports involved physical abuse.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is any act, attempted or threatened, that is sexual in nature and carried out without the consent of the victim. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual abuse and harassment, exploitation, and forced prostitution. It can happen within marriages, especially when there is a lack of consent for sexual activity by one of the spouses."

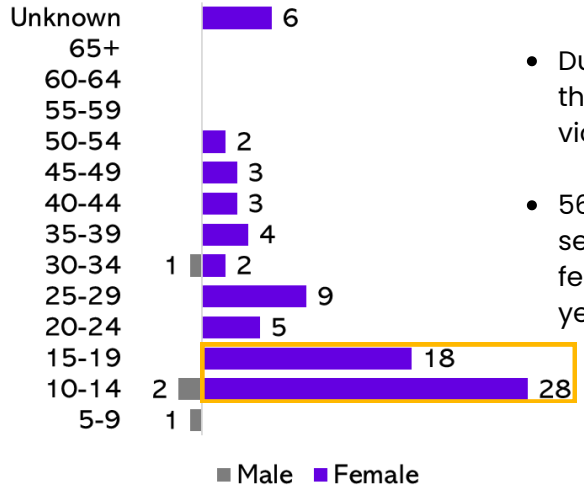
UNCHR, The UN Refugee Agency (2023)

Sexual Violence Cases, 2024 vs. 2025



- Cases of sexual violence in major crimes category decreased by 9% (8 cases) when compared to 2024.
- Sexual Violence cases accounted for 8% in the major crimes category.

Sexual Violence by Age and Sex, 2025



- During 2025, 95% (80) of the victims of sexual violence were females.
- 56% (46) of all victims of sexual violence were females aged 10 to 19 years.

Femicide/Feminicide

Femicide is generally understood to involve intentional murder of women, but broader definitions include any killing of women or girls. Femicide differs from male homicide in specific ways. For example, most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involve ongoing abuse in the home, threats or intimidation, sexual violence, or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner.

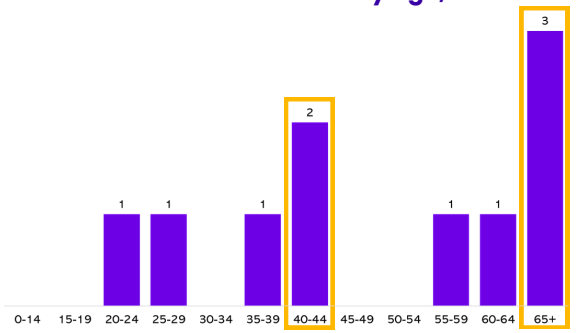
Understanding and addressing violence against women, WHO (2012)

Note: Femicides is not legally defined in Belize but instead we characterize the offences based on international standard definition.

In 2025, 30% of the females who were murdered were victims of gender-related murders or femicides.

- 2 in 10 of the females were murdered by a present or past intimate partner.
- 1 in 10 of the females were murdered by current or past in laws.
- 4 in 10 of the females were murdered with a firearm.

Female Murder Victims by age, 2025

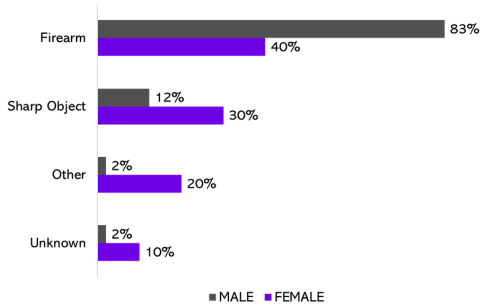


Murder Victims by sex, 2025



- Females accounted for 11% of the murder victims in 2025.

Murder weapons used by sex, 2025



- Most male and female victims were murdered with a firearm. Yet, the proportion of female victims were less than male victims.
- During 2025, ages over 60 years accounted for 30% of the female murder victims.