20 years of research and action to end violence against women in Nicaragua

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1st prevalence study on VAWG in Central America

488 women interviewed in Leon, Nicaragua
1 out of 2 women experienced physical or sexual abuse by an intimate partner

1 out of 4 experienced violence in the last year
LAW 230 against family violence:
• passed in 1996
• recognizes psychological injuries, family violence as an aggravating circumstance
• Includes restraining orders for prevention
20 year follow-up study in Leon, Nicaragua, using same methods and sampling frame
1400 women aged 15-64 were interviewed using WHO instrument
Qualitative interviews with community men and women, service providers, government officials and women’s rights activists
Physical IPV was reduced by nearly half in 20 years

- Lifetime physical violence: 52% in 1995, 28% in 2016
- 12 months physical violence: 27% in 1995, 8% in 2016
- Lifetime sexual violence: 22% in 1995, 15% in 2016
- Lifetime emotional violence: 71% in 1995, 43% in 2016
Is this a real decrease, or related to other demographic trends?
Demographic changes among women in Leon, Nicaragua between 1995-2016

- 30 years +: 40% (1995) - 53% (2016)
- Rural Residence: 18% (1995) - 35% (2016)
A global scavenger hunt to find original questionnaires.

Multivariate analysis on a pooled data set with 1995 and 2016 data was used to control for potential confounders, such as age, education, residence and parity.
Pooled analysis of the two datasets indicates a true decrease in physical partner violence

*Adjusted Odds Ratios (AOR) controlling for age, education, parity, family support*
Sexual violence remains very high

- Sex for work: 4%
- Sex for grades: 2%
- Harassed on bus: 26%
- Sexual electronic content: 14%
- Rape: 6%
- Attempted rape: 9%
- Any sexual violence (partner + non partner): 46%
Why did violence decrease in Leon?
Aware of Law 779 | Helps women who suffer violence | Protects women’s rights | Punishes men who hit women
---|---|---|---
90 | 52 | 55 | 32

Women know that violence against women and girls is against the law.
More women seek help for violence

Courts Police Hospital Health Center Women’s House

1995 2016

- Courts: 14% 33%
- Police: 7% 9%
- Hospital: 5% 4%
- Health Center: 33%
- Women’s House: 7% 9%

More women looked for help in 2016 compared to 1995.
Women no longer think that violence is justified.

Reasons why a husband is justified in beating his wife

- Leaves house without permission: 14%
- Neglects children or housework: 15%
- Refuses to have sex: 7%
- At least one reason: 38%

Data sources:
- 1998 (DHS)
- 2006 (DHS)
- 2016 (Candies + 20)
Violence against women and girls can be prevented...
Since 2016 access to justice and services for women has disappeared

- Women’s police stations
  - 2015: 50
  - 2016-19: 0
- Funding for women’s organizations
- Collaboration between government and civil society
- “Domestic violence is a family matter”
As of April, 2018

325 killed
700 imprisoned
60,000 in exile
Public protest criminalized