

From national to local: for a gendered approach to crime prevention

Plenary I

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Question/Comment No. 1

[Ecuador]: Do you have experience in developing indicators or measures of the causes and effects of violence in urban settings? What are the known indicators? Are there differences in measures between men and women? This information and these types of data would allow us to develop more appropriate, targeted intervention strategies.

Reactions No. 1

[B.H.]: We have not undertaken work that has explicitly sought to document and compare the different impacts of violence in urban settings on men and women. However we do support projects that specifically target women and girls. We know that certain factors can explain boys' violent behaviours toward girls. For example, the *Earl's Court* projects (Ontario, Canada) and another at the University of British Columbia, have examined this question.

[M.S.]: Some research has been done in the United Kingdom, such as the work of the group *STACO*, and in Canada the work of Cormack in British Columbia. However in all this research, there is still controversy around the measures and methodologies that are used to collect and document the impacts of violence.

Question/Comment No. 2

[Chile]: In Chile, we have particularly focussed on domestic violence. Yet hearing what is being done elsewhere in the world, I believe that we remain in the 1970's... The data we have collected reveal that many women are subject to violence in the home, more than to violence in public spheres. What links do you see between private and public violence? ... And how do you view the relationship between drug-related problems, such as the grip of drug markets on cities and their strong influence on fear and violence experienced by women?

Reactions No. 2

[B.H.]: In Canada, the work of many groups focuses on children who have witnessed family violence in order to break the very strong cycle of violence. For example, we know that the girls of mothers who have been subjected to domestic violence are more susceptible to becoming victims of violence themselves. Meanwhile, we also know that boys who have witnessed family violence are more likely to use violent behaviour as well. **Witnessing family violence at a young age is an important indicator of children, boys and girls, becoming a victim or victimizer. It is necessary to offer new models of intervention for children and youth in order to reduce the impact of this indicator.** For more information, see the web site of Canada's *National Strategy on Community Safety and Crime Prevention*.

[<http://www.prevention.gc.ca/index.html>]

[A.M.]: Violence against women can be seen as on a continuum from private to public. Women's insecurity is a result of all of the forms of violence on this continuum, whether committed by a man that is known or unknown to them. For example, will a woman who is abused in her home feel safer when she is on the street? Not really. **The separation of private and public violence is a false distinction to make. We must look at the overall impact of all of these forms of violence on women's freedom of movement, their feeling of safety, etc.**

[S.S.]: Yes, it really is a matter of a continuum of violence. **We need to document this continuum by conducting both qualitative and quantitative victimization surveys.** Data collected will help us to better understand women's realities and to respond better to the involved factors, both in the private and public spheres.

Question/Comment No. 3

[Peru]: In Peru, the collection of data has allowed us to produce statistics on violence against women, violence in general, and the gender differences in the use and experience of violence. We have learned a lot from these statistics that have been compiled. For example, we know that violence has many forms and can affect different groups of women. Cultural factors, such as living in a rural area or belonging to an ethno-cultural community, play a large role in the degree to which violence is accepted and normalized. A survey revealed the following elements: violence is increasing; violence affects both poor and well-off women; women are increasingly denouncing the violence that they are subjected to; women are often discouraged from reporting their aggressors either because of fear of reprisal, or sanctions imposed on aggressors are considered to be too light or minimal.

Reactions No. 3

[A.M.]: Did your study include questions exploring the impact of different forms of violence on women's feeling of safety?

[Peru]: Our study focussed on violence against women in general however we are in the process of developing indicators of safety.

[M.S.]: An international study of violence against women is actually underway. This research aims to identify women's fear in relation to their experience of crime. Part of conducting this research involved designating a resource person to act as a process facilitator who would accompany survey respondents throughout the process of describing and identifying the violence they have experienced. This is an excellent model.

Furthermore, we can use statistics from a variety of sources. In addition to information gathered by women themselves, we also compile data from hospitals, women's shelters, health professionals, etc.

Question/Comment No. 4

[Workers' union, Montreal]: Knowing that women already encounter problems in denouncing poor working conditions and sexual harassment, how can we make large enterprises more sensitive to problems caused by violence?

Reactions No. 4

[B.H.]: Whether they are clients or employees, women must talk about violence. We must find means and mechanisms of reparation (compensation, legal actions, etc.) against large enterprises that contribute to a violent and unsafe work environment. For example, in the case of a property owner of buildings which are poorly lit... **We must be able to have judicial recourse, education and awareness-building, as well as more women on the administrative councils of large enterprises.** All of these things would certainly help a lot.

[A.M.]: **In Québec, there is a "healthy and safe workplace" law. We must try to integrate the issue of women's safety to it.** For example, through safety walks on Laurier Street in Montreal, we identified an automatic banking machine whose location was not very safe for women to use. After sharing our concerns with the owners, they installed a glass wall to improve visibility at the bank machine so that passers-by could see what was going on inside. We also proposed that the telephone used for bank transactions could be used by bank clients in case of emergency. **We must have more dialogue and partnerships with private enterprise.**

Question/Comment No. 5

[NGO, British Columbia, Canada]: Thank you for drawing attention to the gap that exists between national strategies and local realities. We must include women's and girls' security in *Canada's National Strategy for Community Safety and Crime Prevention...* This inclusion could allow local groups to have better access to funding. Presently, it is very difficult to have a financial framework and support for our project in British Columbia...

Reaction no. 5

[M.S.]: **The ICPC should integrate a gender approach into its mandate.** To the present, the organization has preferred to remain neutral and to not focus on gender differences. It would certainly be much better if a gender approach was integrated into the organization's mandate.

Question/Comment No. 6

[Costa Rica]: It is important to make the links. We will have a feminist gathering in Costa Rica at the end of 2002 in order to integrate the diverse types of violence towards women. We hope to integrate these concerns into all public policies. It will make it much easier to obtain funding for these types of projects, as well as to denounce political violence. My question relates to the integration of the concept of "femicide", a term to categorize and integrate the issue of gender into law. What do you think of this word femicide (analogous to homicide)?

Reactions No. 6

[B.H.]: I'm thinking. I've never used this word.

[M.S.]: I have already used this word. It is useful for helping people specifically recognize the murder of women; for example, the number of women killed in general (fewer than men) and those murders that are committed by people who are close or known to the female victim (more likely than in cases where men are killed).

Question/Comment No. 7

[South Africa]: First off, I would like to commend the Organizing Committee for having invited men to participate in decision-making on issues that affect women. My question is on the traditional approaches such as those used in South Africa. How have you been able to involve traditional clan and community leaders and other traditional practices and approaches of leadership into women's safety strategies?

Reaction no. 7

[A.M.]: This question will be addressed this afternoon and tomorrow when we touch on the themes of empowerment and local leadership.

Question/Comment No. 8

[International Council of Women]: The number of elderly people is increasing. Do you have data on violence and safety particularly within elderly populations? I know that there is a program in Australia, can you give more details?

Reactions No. 8

[B.H.]: Canadian data on elder abuse show that older women do indeed experience violence at home, from a partner or institutional care workers. We must work to inform older women of how they can reduce their vulnerability to violence. We must also conduct further analysis in order to better understand gender-specific problems and differences for this age group. For example, we tell elderly women to hide their hand bag, but we do not know if elderly men run a risk of being victimized in similar ways.

[M.S.]: I recommend you consult the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime's web site. [<http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org>]

Question/Comment No. 9

[City of San Salvador]: A recent earthquake has significantly set back the local economy and has undermined all citizens' feeling of safety. We know that 35% of women are household leaders and that they were greatly affected by the earthquake. Poverty is becoming feminized. We have created strategies for integrating women and encouraging their participation in municipal development. We must make the links in order to improve the quality of life and human development, however national policies are not sensitive to municipal realities. We must now re-think the links between public, social and economic policies, domestic and private violence, and *machismo*. There are many obstacles when we attempt to work at this level since our preoccupation for violence against women attacks the very foundation of machismo in our society. We have to remember that it is the rule of machismo itself that forces women to remain economically dependent on men and continuously works against the denunciation of violence.