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Violation of Gender Equality as a Criminogenic Factor of Rural Criminality

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Abstract: *Equality between women and men is a fundamental value that ensures equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities, in family and professional terms, equal economic independence of women and men and equality in decision-making, thus contributing to the eradication of gender-based violence and improving the quality of life. It is unfortunate that, worldwide, gender inequality in relation to women is increasingly advancing, penetrating into all layers of society. Gender inequality, manifested through physical, sexual and emotional abuse, seriously affects the freedom of rural women. Violation of gender equality, has not only psychological and economic consequences, but unfortunately, it also has serious consequences on women's health. Although, throughout the development of society, significant advances have been made in all fields of science to improve the quality of life, the origins of gender imbalance, especially in relation to women, who have remained rooted and historically influenced by the patriarchal structure. While several researchers have studied the issue of gender inequality in the last decade, they have not focused on a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon in relation to rural development. At the current stage, modern society needs effective and well-founded measures to encourage respect for women's rights and promote gender equality.*

Keywords: *rural crime; gender equality; violence; stereotypes; criminogenic factor.*

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Introduction

During the state's institutions forming, the origins of gender imbalance, especially in relation to women, were historically rooted and influenced by the patriarchal structure. The patriarchal structure has traditionally exalted the role of men in communities, with women always placed in a subordinate position. Communities, in the broadest sense, have often been seen as a union of people formed on the basis of common living conditions, interests, traditions, history, culture, as well as other factors that determine its social identity (Semigina et al., 2020). These conditions of living in communities are highlighted more in the rural environment.

Throughout time, communities, especially rural ones, have always been patriarchal. This laid the foundation for male dominance in the family, thus leading to the concentration of wealth and power in their hands. In turn, the woman was positioned on a lower level, being forced to depend on the man. The basic unifying feature of all that is rural in the world, regardless of region, is that rural settlements have small populations and low population density. There is therefore a great diversity of social, economic and cultural characteristics both within and between rural communities around the world (Donnermeyer, 2017).

In the Western world, there has always been a clear dichotomy between urban and rural environment. In rural areas, communities are smaller and residents know each other much better than in urban areas. This closeness and familiarity between members of the rural community creates an environment where social norms are strict and well-defined. Women, to avoid stigma or criticism from the community, often tolerate deviant behaviors and go to great lengths to camouflage such behaviors, thus preventing their discovery.

This tendency to hide internal family problems is motivated by the fear of being ostracized or judged by the community. That is the reason for which rural women are reluctant to address the competent bodies when their rights are violated (Nagy & Piper, 2019). They prefer to handle situations discreetly, hoping to keep up appearances and protect the family's reputation. This behavior perpetuates the cycle of gender violence and inequality, as the lack of reporting of abuse makes it difficult for authorities to intervene and provide the necessary support for victims.

The urban-rural dichotomy is therefore not only reflected in differences in infrastructure and access to resources, but also in the way the social issues such as domestic violence and gender inequality are treated and perceived.

The role of the Istanbul Convention in reducing gender-based violence

At the European level, the issue of preventing and effectively combating gender inequality is of particular relevance, a fact confirmed including by the adoption of the Istanbul Convention (COE, 2011). The Istanbul Convention, officially known as the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, is a major legal instrument aimed at addressing gender-based violence in a comprehensive manner.

Adopted in 2011 and entered into force in 2014, the Istanbul Convention sets minimum legal standards for preventing violence, protecting victims and prosecuting perpetrators. This obliges the signatory states to implement appropriate measures in all these areas, contributing to the creation of a unitary and efficient legal framework at European level.

One of the distinctive features of the Convention is its holistic approach, which includes not only protection and assistance measures for victims, but also prevention and education initiatives to change the mindsets and behaviors that perpetuate gender-based violence. For example, states are required to promote change in sociocultural attitudes that minimize or tolerate violence against women and to provide specialized training for professionals in various sectors, including police, justice and health.

The implementation of the Istanbul Convention has had a significant impact in many European countries, prompting essential legislative and institutional reforms. For example, many Member States have adopted specific laws against domestic violence and created specialized services to support victims, such as shelters and emergency telephone lines. Public awareness campaigns and educational programs have also been initiated to promote gender equality and combat gender stereotypes.

However, the effective implementation of the Convention varies between Member States and challenges remain, including in terms of allocated resources and inter-institutional coordination. To ensure uniform and effective implementation, it is essential for states to continue collaboration and sharing of good practices, as well as be subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

The Republic of Moldova signed the Istanbul Convention on February 6, 2017, marking an important commitment in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. This step was followed by an internal legislative process to align national legislation with the provisions of the convention. Effective ratification took place on January 31, 2022, and the Convention entered into force for the Republic of

Moldova on May 1, 2022 (Criveţ, 2022). The ratification process was accompanied by public consultations and assessments of the needs of women affected by violence, especially in the context of the Covid-19 crisis, which highlighted their additional vulnerabilities (COE, 2022).

By ratifying this convention, the Republic of Moldova has committed to implement effective standards and mechanisms to prevent and combat gender-based violence, including through legislative changes and strengthening of support services for victims. The adoption of the Istanbul Convention underlines Europe's commitment to prevent and combat gender inequality and violence against women. This is a major step towards creating a safer and fairer society where women's rights are protected and respected.

Unfortunately, at the national level, this subject is underestimated. This phenomenon is confirmed by the fact that the field of preventing and combating gender imbalance is not found in policy documents and operational procedures. Moreover, the issue of gender inequality is not in the list of strategic priorities for the next period.

Although the authorities of the Republic of Moldova consider that they have made important progress in the development of the system for preventing and combating gender inequality, these advances have not been fully aligned with the practices and provisions of the Istanbul Convention. For example, despite the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in 2022, there are still significant gaps in the effective implementation of the necessary measures to protect victims of domestic violence and to prevent gender-based violence. According to a report published by La Strada Moldova, in collaboration with UN Women Moldova, the full implementation of the provisions of the Istanbul Convention requires legislative adjustments and concrete measures to ensure the effective protection of victims (Criveţ, 2022). The report highlights the need for legislative changes to effectively protect women and children from violence, including through the establishment of clear reporting and assistance mechanisms.

Also, GREVIO (Group of Experts for Action Against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence) emphasized in its evaluation report that the Republic of Moldova must improve inter-institutional coordination and allocate adequate resources for the full implementation of the convention. The lack of financial and human resources, as well as the insufficient training of personnel in the fields of justice, health and social assistance, are major obstacles to the achievement of the Convention's objectives (COE, 2022).

Furthermore, despite the efforts made by the authorities and non-governmental organizations to raise awareness and improve access to services for victims, significant challenges remain in changing mindsets and deeply rooted gender stereotypes in society. These challenges underscore the importance of long-term education and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting gender equality and deterring of gender-based violence.

Gender stereotypes in modern society

Gender stereotypes in modern society continue to deeply influence all aspects of family life. From the earliest days of family formation, the upbringing of boys has emphasized traits such as will, physical strength, dominance, and sometimes aggression (Marmot, 2007). This gender-based differential education has been extensively studied in the literature. Research demonstrates that boys are encouraged to show aggression and assert themselves, being prepared for leadership and power roles in society (Kimmel et al., 2005). In turn, girls are frequently taught to tolerate domestic violence and adapt to the situations created, maintaining the appearance of family well-being. Traditional gender roles are supposed to perpetuate norms of subordination and acceptance of violence (Bem, 1993). Finally, these practices contribute to the maintenance of gender inequalities (Ridgeway, 2011). These studies further demonstrate that gendered socialization contributes to the perpetuation of gender inequality and domestic violence.

Furthermore, research indicates that exposure to such gender stereotypes in childhood can have long-term consequences for adult perceptions and behaviors. According to studies there is a clear link between gender education and the perpetuation of domestic violence. In the study of 1998, Heise explains that women who have been taught to tolerate violence are much more likely to stay in abusive relationships. This is due to the cementing of cultural norms that make them accept abuse as an inevitable part of family relationships (Abramsky et al., 2011).

On the other hand, the 2010 World Health Organization report shows that men who have been encouraged to show aggression are more likely to commit acts of domestic violence. Cultural and gender norms that promote aggressive and dominant male behavior contribute significantly to high rates of violence against women. These behaviors are often perpetuated through childhood socialization, where boys are taught to demonstrate power and control through aggression.

These findings suggest that to reduce domestic violence, it is essential to address and change gender norms and stereotypes from childhood, promoting equality and mutual respect in all relationships.

This perpetuation of gender inequality is problematic not only at the individual level but also at the societal level. Gender inequality contributes to a range of social, economic and public health problems. Women who are victims of domestic violence are at greater risk of suffering from physical and mental health problems (Duvvury et al., 2013). The economic impact of domestic violence is felt in lost productivity and health costs, with significant consequences for the individual and society. Domestic violence causes increased use of health services and economic losses due to absenteeism and reduced productivity.

Gender stereotypes deeply influence family life and contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequalities. It is essential that educational interventions and public policies aim at deconstructing these stereotypes and promoting gender equality in order to create a fairer and more equitable society.

The most extreme and widespread manifestation of gender inequality worldwide, affecting the well-being and productivity of communities across generations, is gender-based violence. According to World Bank estimates, 1 out of 3 women have experienced gender-based violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence by another person in their lifetime (World Bank, 2023). Gender-based violence against women reflects dominant patriarchal gender norms and gender inequalities, being mostly perpetrated by men (Flood, 2019).

It is regrettable that the violation of gender equality is a complex and widespread social problem, accepted by both men and women, which perpetuates gender stereotypes. Thus, it becomes an integrated part of the social structure (Rushton et al., 2020). Women from disadvantaged and poor groups are at greater risk of gender-based violence (Almaza AS et. al., 2024).

The UN defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to cause physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including the threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether or not they take place in public or private life" (UN, 1993). This definition emphasizes the seriousness and scope of the problem, recognizing the multiple forms that gender-based violence can take.

According to a global report by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and UN Women, the number of women and girls intentionally killed in 2022 reached almost 89,000, the highest annual number recorded during the last 20 years. Although the total number of homicides globally began to decline after 2021, the number of women homicides did not follow the same downward trend. Most of these crimes are gender-based, and more than half

of all women homicides, defined as femicides, are committed by intimate partners or other family members. (UNDOC and UN Women, 2022)

These data reflect a worrying and persistent phenomenon of extreme violence against women, which underlines the need for urgent and effective interventions to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The implementation of educational, legislative and victim support measures is essential to reduce these acts of violence and to protect the rights and safety of women in all settings, whether public or private.

According to the data of the Women's Law Center, in the Republic of Moldova 45 women were victims of femicide during the period of 2022-2023, being killed as a result of gender-based violence or just because they were women. This highlights the urgent need to combat this scourge, present in all countries without exception (UN Moldova, 2024).

Each country has developed its own domestic regulations to combat gender inequality in relation to women. At European level, there are forward-looking legislative approaches to combating violence against women and domestic violence, which aims to effectively combat violence across the European Union (Directive UE 2022/0066, 2022).

The doctrine argues that the lack of legal unification worldwide underlines the need for harmonized regulation that promotes gender equality and reduces violence against women. A universal commitment is needed from all governments, in addition to legislation, in order to allocate funds to finance women's organizations created to solve this problem and help victims (Pilar et al., 2024).

Gender-based intimate partner violence is primarily an asymmetric problem of men's violence against women, and women's violence is not equivalent to men's in terms of frequency, severity, consequences, and sense of safety and well-being of the victim (Dobash & Dobash, 2004).

Emerging from the continued increase in cases of gender violations in recent years, the World Health Organization and UN Women have developed a comprehensive framework for the prevention of violence against women, called "RESPECT Women: Preventing Violence Against Women – Implementation Package". This framework aims to raise awareness among decision makers and provide practical guidelines for the implementation of measures to prevent gender-based violence (UN Women, 2020).

Studies and surveys on gender-based violence in rural areas

A systematic review of research examining similarities and differences in gender-based violence between rural and urban areas found that rates of violence are similar in both settings. However, gender-based violence in rural areas is more chronic and severe, leading to a higher number of homicides related to this type of violence. Survivors of gender-based violence in rural areas may have worse psychosocial and physical outcomes due to lack of availability, accessibility and quality of victim services (Edwards, 2015).

Studies on gender-based violence in rural areas have shown that victims face obstacles related to the geographical and social isolation of localities, which prevent them from accessing qualified healthcare, support from the authorities or social services (Harris & Woodlock, 2022; Peek-Asa et al. (2011). Victims are geographically isolated and have to travel long distances to get the help they need. Despite the fact that the inviolability of the person is a legal guarantee of personal security and of the freedom of each individual to determine his or her place of residence at his or her discretion, not to be under constant guard and supervision, regrettably, the partners of these women often take steps to further isolate them by asking them to fulfill their housework or move to more remote, sparsely populated localities (Osoianu & Ostavciuc, 2023; Edwards, 2015).

In rural areas, small communities where residents know each other well create additional barriers for victims of gender-based violence. These barriers are related to privacy, historically rooted customs and long distances to law enforcement institutions and service providers. Lack of transport is also a significant factor complicating access to aid (Eastman & Bunch, 2007; Edwards, 2015; Peek-Asa, et al., 2011).

In rural communities, privacy and confidentiality are difficult to maintain. Each person knows details about others' lives, which discourages victims from reporting abuse for fear of stigma and social judgment. In addition, the traditional norms and customs ingrained in these communities emphasize gender roles and the acceptance of domestic violence as part of family life. This causes victims to tolerate abusive situations instead of help seeking.

Due to limited population, women have no anonymity or privacy when seeking help from the authorities. In some cases, when violence is reported, it is overlooked by rural police, thus discouraging future reporting and facilitating domestic violence (Harris & Woodlock, 2022).

Moreover, moral norms, such as conscience, leniency, family relations and relevant procedural norms that specifically indicate the circle of persons against whom no one can be forced to testify, contribute to the emergence and perpetuation of this phenomenon. Criminal procedural law comes with effective guarantees, by granting the right to refuse to make statements, and for all this the person is not held responsible (Ostavciuc & Osoianu, 2023).

Some studies have shown that women are not always willing to disclose gender-based violence to professionals, even when asked (Edin & Högberg, 2002). Only the use of appropriate methods and common practices can lead to detection of abuses (Rhodes et al., 2007). Victims need the help of social employees to be able to express themselves because of experiences that are shameful and difficult to discuss (Goicolea et al., 2023).

According to some studies, teenagers are more exposed to the risk of being victims of gender-based violence compared to people of an older age (Rizzo et al., 2023).

Long distances to law enforcement institutions and service providers are another major challenge. In rural areas, resources are limited and unevenly distributed, and access to specialized services is difficult. For example, victims of gender-based violence often have to travel considerable distances to reach a shelter or support center. Lack of transportation compounds this problem, making it nearly impossible for many women to leave abusive situations.

A report by the World Health Organization points out that geographical barriers and the lack of adequate infrastructure contribute significantly to the persistence of gender-based violence in rural areas. In rural communities, long distances to law enforcement and emergency services are a major obstacle for victims of domestic violence. The lack of adequate transportation further complicates the situation, making it difficult to quickly access needed help (RHIhub, 2024).

Studies show that in many cases, police and emergency services are not consistently available or accessible in rural areas. This is due in part to limited resources and their uneven distribution. For example, GBV support centers and shelters are rarely located in rural areas, requiring victims to travel considerable distances to access these essential services.

Lack of adequate infrastructure not only hinders access to services, but also contributes to the isolation of victims. Women experiencing domestic violence in rural areas are often isolated not only physically but also socially, making them even more vulnerable and less able to seek help.

This isolation is exacerbated by social and cultural norms that discourage reporting violence and seeking help.

The reports also highlight that without an adequate support infrastructure, interventions in cases of domestic violence are often delayed or ineffective. For example, the lack of specialized training of emergency personnel and police in handling gender-based violence cases can lead to inadequate responses and perpetuate the cycle of violence.

In rural areas, there is a substantial difference between the living conditions of the population, access to health, justice and other services, compared to urban areas (Kim et al., 2024). Rural areas are more geographically dispersed and have a low population density. At the community level, there are no social services established to provide assistance by qualified staff at all levels, in close collaboration with area-specific medical services, according to international standards (Lile et al., 2018).

In the Republic of Moldova, as in most post-Soviet states, gender imbalance is relatively tolerated due to stereotypes and prejudices deeply rooted in the culture of rural communities (UN Moldova, 2021). Country report on gender equality attests that some outdated norms are still maintained among the population. According to the data of the Gender Equality Index for the Republic of Moldova from 2021, "almost 62% of the population believes that it is the duty of men to bring money into the house, this stereotype being more pronounced among men (68.6%) than women (55 .7%)" (GEI Moldova, 2021).

In addition, the data shows that the Republic of Moldova, along with Kosovo and Armenia, has the lowest female employment rate in the European Union, the Eastern Partnership and the Balkans region. For female survivors of domestic violence, financial barriers are among the main reasons they choose to stay in an abusive relationship. This is one of the reasons why women who have managed to gain their freedom face limited options (limited access to justice, jobs and social housing) and eventually give in and return to their old relationship.

According to a report made by the news portal TVR Moldova, published on October 25, 2023, over 70% of girls and women in the Republic of Moldova have suffered at least one form of violence throughout their lives due to gender inequality, most of the victims being from rural environment. According to the same report, referring to data from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, every day 137 women around the world are killed by their partners (Redacția TVR Moldova, 2023).

A study developed within the framework of the United Nations Organization Project "Consolidation of the National Statistical System", in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics and with the support of the United Nations Development Program, UN Women and UNECE, shows that in the Republic of Moldova, 68% of women from the rural areas were subjected to some form of violence, compared to 57% of urban women. The same study highlights that only 66% of women reported physical or sexual violence from their partner to the competent authorities (National Statistical System, 2011).

According to the data of the study "Men and Gender Equality in the Republic of Moldova", it was found that violence against women remains deeply rooted in gender imbalance. Thus, 90% of the men interviewed in this representative survey of perceptions believe that for a woman the most important role is to take care of the house and the family. More than 60% of men believe that when women are employed, they are actually filling the jobs that are reserved for men (Study SocioPolis, 2015).

According to the same study, 27.7% of men believe that a woman must tolerate violence in order to preserve her family, an opinion also supported by 17.5% of women. According to the data of an opinion poll conducted between November 30 and December 8, 2023, online, on a sample of 316 people (257 women and 59 men) from the rural areas of the Republic of Moldova, most respondents consider gender inequality and cruelty to be normal to family members or to which they themselves were subjected.

At the same time, 89.8% of men and 62.9% of women believe that women's position in society is inferior to men's, as her role is to educate children and be a housewife. The majority of survey participants (94.8% men and 86.3% women) believe that gender inequality is more evident in rural areas, and 81% of men and 89.8% of women believe that gender inequality in rural areas is a phenomenon tolerated by women.

Another anonymous opinion poll, conducted online between November 1 and 6, 2023, in which 384 rural women participated, showed that:

- 77.1% were subjected to some form of gender-based violence at least once in their life;
- 59.5% did not report the violence they were subjected to;
- 77.5% continued to live with the aggressor (Opinion survey, 2023).

As a result of this survey, an alarming factor is the very high number of women who have been subjected to some form of domestic violence at least once in their lives. This fact proves that about eight out of ten women

were victims of some form of gender-based violence. Moreover, most of these women continued to live with the aggressor in the same home. The only justification why women, after being subjected to the act of domestic violence, continue to live with the aggressor is that they have nowhere to go, mostly due to unsatisfactory material conditions. The aggressor, taking advantage of the poor material condition of the victim, continues to assault the life partner.

Recently, with the modernization of society, a significant change can be observed in the position of women in society, as well as in the distribution of roles and styles of family relationships. Women began to occupy more prominent roles in various fields, from politics and business to science and the arts, leading to a redefinition of gender dynamics in both the public and private spheres.

In the past, gender roles were well defined, with men dominating the public and economic spheres, while women were primarily responsible for the household and children raising. However, economic, social and cultural changes during the recent decades have led to a reassessment of these roles. Women began to have greater access to education and employment opportunities, which allowed them to actively participate in economic life and claim leadership roles.

Studies show that women bring valuable perspectives and skills to various fields, contributing to innovation and economic growth. For example, according to a report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, increased involvement of women in the labor market is associated with increased productivity and economic prosperity (UN Women, 2015). In addition, women's involvement in political and economic decision-making has been correlated with the development of more inclusive and equitable policies.

At the family level, the distribution of roles and relationship styles has diversified. Men and women increasingly share domestic and childcare responsibilities, reflecting a transition towards egalitarian partnership models. These changes are supported by social policies that promote work-life balance, such as parental leave for both parents and flexible work schemes.

Despite these advances, challenges related to gender stereotypes and resistance to change in certain segments of society still persist. However, the overall trend points to a gradual blurring of traditional gender roles as men and women work more closely together to build relationships based on equality and mutual respect.

This fact is also confirmed by the Global Gender Gap Report 2023 study, in which the Republic of Moldova ranked 19th in The Global Gender

Gap Index 2023, out of the 146 countries evaluated. This level is clearly higher than the neighboring countries Romania and Ukraine, which ranked 88th and 66th respectively.

However, despite these advances, gender inequalities persist and gender stereotypes still prevail in society. During election campaigns, women candidates are subjected to slander, hatred, sexist discourse, gender discrimination and violence against women. Women remain underrepresented in the labor market due to the persistence of patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted stereotypes. Moreover, rural women face even more serious problems due to multiple forms of discrimination (UN Women Moldova, 2021).

The causes of gender-based violence are often complex, but the most common explanation is that they result from an imbalance of power and control. This imbalance is rooted in cultural values and norms that promote certain toxic behaviors. As a result, it often takes the form of physical and sexual abuse, but can also involve emotional and psychological abuse (Manea, 2023).

Conclusions

Recent studies and surveys highlight that gender inequality remains a persistent and complex problem, rooted in the social and cultural structures of rural communities. Although the Republic of Moldova has made significant progress in terms of gender equality, ranking 19th in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023, this progress is not enough to prevent gender-based discrimination and violence.

Deep-rooted stereotypes in the rural environment of the Republic of Moldova continue to affect the daily life of women, limiting their access to education, work and social services. Moreover, gender-based violence remains an alarming phenomenon, with high rates of physical, sexual and psychological abuse. Lack of access to adequate resources and support contributes to the perpetuation of these problems, with victims often forced to remain in abusive relationships due to economic and social dependence on their abusers.

The results of the surveys highlighted the fact that stereotypes and prejudices of gender imbalance are deeply rooted and unconsciously perpetuated by customs, and gender-based violence continues to be perceived as a strictly private issue. These customs and stereotypes have an early start in each person's life, being thus accepted as a normality that is difficult to change later. The existence of gender-based violence in the rural environment of the Republic of Moldova, to a large extent, is a consequence

of traditional education, based on customs, where aggressive behavior is seen as the only way to solve existing problems.

In order to reduce gender inequality and domestic violence, especially in rural areas of the Republic of Moldova, we propose the following concentric actions to be applied in the short and long term in rural areas:

- ***full implementation of the Istanbul Convention in national legislation.*** In this context, a more rigorous implementation of the standards of the Istanbul Convention is necessary, especially on the dimension of the development and implementation of protection and assistance measures for victims of domestic violence. The practical transposition of the preventive standards of the phenomenon of discrimination based on gender is necessary by enshrining preventive measures in public policy documents and national strategies.
- ***education and awareness.*** The progressive development of modules and didactic materials in educational programs at all learning levels, by taking into account the specifics and causes of behavioral stereotypes in rural environments that determine gender discrimination and family violence.
- ***protection and support for victims.*** Creation and assistance of support centers for victims of gender-based violence in all regions, including rural areas. These centers must provide legal, psychological and medical assistance as well as temporary shelters for victims.
- ***access to economic resources.*** Facilitating women's access to economic resources through vocational training programs, microfinance and entrepreneurship support. This will help reduce economic dependence on abusers and allow women to build independent and secure lives.
- ***interinstitutional collaboration.*** Improving collaboration between different institutions such as the police, social services, the health system, including through public-private partnerships to provide an integrated and effective response to cases of gender-based violence. Training and continuous professional training of staff from specialized institutions is necessary in order to increase the performance of preventive measures and to adequately respond to the needs of victims.
- ***monitoring and evaluation.*** Establishing a system for monitoring and evaluating policies and programs aimed at preventing and combating gender-based violence. The data collected must be used to adjust and improve interventions, thus ensuring that the measures

implemented are effective and respond to the real needs of the population.

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