



**Republic of Colombia’s Compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: Gender-Based Violence and Access to Justice**

**Submitted by The Advocates for Human Rights,**  
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

**for the 138 Session of the Human Rights Committee**  
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Founded in 1983, **The Advocates for Human Rights** (“The Advocates”) is a volunteer-based non-governmental organization committed to the impartial promotion and protection of international human rights standards and the rule of law. The Advocates conducts a range of programs to promote human rights in the United States and around the world, including monitoring and fact finding, direct legal representation, education and training, and publication. The Advocates is the primary provider of legal services to low-income asylum seekers in the Upper Midwest region of the United States.

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **For Colombia’s women, the likelihood of experiencing violence at the hands of a partner or ex-partner remains high.** Prevalence rates of intimate partner violence are some of the highest in the world. In 2022, Colombia’s National Institute of Legal and Forensic Medicine reported **47,771 cases of domestic violence/intimate partner violence.**<sup>1</sup>
2. **Colombia must take further steps to prevent and protect women from violence and potential femicide.** Only in 2022, CSOs reported **619 femicides** in the country.<sup>2</sup>
3. **Colombia’s response to violence against women is highly dependent upon the institution of the Family Commissioners (Comisarías de Familia).** The country has aimed to legally amend the overburden and high responsibilities the Family Commissioners endured with The Law 2126 of 2021. However, the **Colombian Government must provide further resources and capacity to implement the structural changes placed by this norm**, especially as some municipalities do not have enough resources to provide sufficient funding and personnel to the offices of Family Commissioners.

## II. Violence Against Women, Including Domestic Violence (List of Issues paragraph 8)

4. In its List of Issues, the Human Rights Committee (“The Committee”) requested information about the specific actions and measures the State has taken to “prevent, combat and punish all acts of violence against women.”<sup>3</sup> Particularly, the Committee required specific information about the “comprehensive reparation and appropriate protection measures for all victims, including the number of victims who have received psychosocial support and reparation measures and the number of shelters throughout the country, their capacity and the budget allocated to them.”<sup>4</sup> The request from the Committee followed a lack of information from the Colombia’s State Report on concrete information about the prevention of acts of violence, such as sexual violence and domestic violence. The State centered its information provision on investigation and prosecution protocols.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Procuraduría General de la Nación, Boletín 280-23: 3mujeres cada hora, 128 al día y 47 mil en el 2017, fueron víctimas de violencia intrafamiliar (6 March 2023), Also available online at <https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/Pages/3-mujeres-cada-hora-128-al-dia-y-47-mil-en-2022-fueron-victimas-de-violencia-intrafamiliar-procuraduria.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Observatorio Femicidios Colombia. *Informe Annual 202: Vivas nos queremos*. Red Feminista Antimilitarista. (November 2022) p.1. Also available online at <https://observatoriofemicidioscolombia.org/attachments/article/512/Informe%202023-1.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Human Rights Committee, List of issues on relation to the eighth periodic report of Colombia, (10 October 2022), CCPR/C/COL/Q/8, ¶8.

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Committee, List of issues on relation to the eighth periodic report of Colombia, (10 October 2022), CCPR/C/COL/Q/8, ¶8.

<sup>5</sup> Human Rights Committee, Eighth periodic report submitted by Colombia under article 40 of the Covenant, due in 2020, (7 September 2021), CCPR/C/COL/8, ¶ 35, 36, 37.

5. In its State response to the List of Issues,<sup>6</sup> Colombia also identified multiple programs within the Health Ministry aimed to fulfill the rights of women. Among those are: (i) the establishment of hotlines and support lines for women victims of violence, including emergency telephone lines and centers for care and counseling; (ii) the implementation of medical care protocols to provide counseling and treatment to women victims of violence, including psychological and medical care; (iii) the coordination with other institutions and organizations to ensure comprehensive care and protection of women victims of violence; and (iv) development of communication campaigns to disseminate information on gender violence and promote the reporting of cases of violence.<sup>7</sup> The State did not detail the nature of the coordination with other public institutions, or whether they were providing – or allocating the resources or facilitating the conditions – sufficient care and protection of women victims of violence. Notably, the overall response on actions to prevent and protect women from violence, including domestic violence, omitted to mention further and specialized institutions, such as the Family Commissioners.
6. The Colombian legal system and including the Law 2126 of 2022, assigns to the Family Commissioner offices the mandate to provide “specialized and interdisciplinary care to prevent, protect, restore, repair and guarantee the rights of those who are at risk, are or have been victims of gender-based violence in the family context [domestic violence] and/or victims of other violence in the family context.”<sup>8</sup> Colombia’s failure to provide information about the achievements and barriers that the state apparatus has endured with the Family Commissioners institution constitutes a missing piece of Colombia’s fulfilment of its obligation to prevent, protect and guarantee the rights of women in its jurisdiction, especially when they endure violence and especially domestic violence.
7. The State Response to the List of Issues also detailed actions by the *Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas* (UARIV) on psychosocial programs related to violence against women and children, and adolescents.<sup>9</sup> Noting the importance of the work of the UARIV, it is essential to highlight that the UARIV is a state agency created under the Law 1448 (Law of Victims of Land Restitution) and has a mandate on the reparation of the victims of the armed conflict.
8. Colombia still endures violence against women and based on gender. Domestic violence still systemically impacts women in Colombia. According to governmental data by Colombia’s National Institute of Legal and Forensic Medicine, in 2022, **47,771 domestic**

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<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Committee, Eighth periodic report submitted by Colombia under article 40 of the Covenant, due in 2020, (7 September 2021), CCPR/C/COL/8, ¶ 35, 36, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Comité de Derechos Humanos, Respuestas de Colombia a la lista de cuestiones relativa a su octavo informe periódico (3 de abril de 2023), CCPR/C/COL/RQ/8, ¶28.

<sup>8</sup> Colombian Congress, Law 2126 of 2021, *Por La Cual Se Regula La Creación, Conformación Y Funcionamiento De Las Comisarías De Familia, Se Establece El Órgano Rector Y Se Dictan Otras Disposiciones*, (August 4 2021), art. 2. Also available online at <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=168066>

<sup>9</sup> Comité de Derechos Humanos, Respuestas de Colombia a la lista de cuestiones relativa a su octavo informe periódico (3 de abril de 2023), CCPR/C/COL/RQ/8, ¶29.

**violence cases were reported.** The number of cases increased by 7,713 cases compared to 2021.<sup>10</sup>

9. Through its Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Colombian Government has implemented the Integrated Information System on Gender-Based Violence (*Sistema Integrado de Información de Violencias de Género-SIVIGE*). In 2021, *SIVIGE* reported **58,614 cases of physical violence, 27,585 cases of sexual violence, and 10,021 cases of physiological violence.**<sup>11</sup> Regarding gender-based violence, The National Ombudsman Office (*Defensoria del Pueblo*) in 2021 provided assistance in “3,646 cases of gender-based violence, that is, ten cases of this phenomenon per day. Most of these cases were psychological violence with 2,451 cases recorded. Physical violence follows in numbers with 1,597 cases. Records present economic violence with 1,001 reported cases, sexual violence with 693 reported cases and patrimonial violence with 678 reported cases. On several occasions, the reporting women were victims of various types of gender-based violence.”<sup>12</sup>
10. Regarding the crime of femicide, NGOs like the *Observatorio Femicidios Colombia* report that, in 2022, at least **619 femicides were committed in the country.**<sup>13</sup> The *Observatorio Femicidios Colombia* stated that in the last five years, **3111 cases of femicide have been reported in the country.**<sup>14</sup> At least 35% of femicides were committed in rural areas compared to 65% in urban areas.<sup>15</sup> In this matter, local news outlets have observed that in Colombia, **“a woman is murdered every eight hours, and eight women are victims of domestic or sexual violence by the hour.”**<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Procuraduría General de la Nación, Boletín 280-23: 3mujeres cada hora, 128 al día y 47 mil en el 2017, fueron víctimas de violencia intrafamiliar (6 March 2023), Also available online at <https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/Pages/3-mujeres-cada-hora-128-al-dia-y-47-mil-en-2022-fueron-victimas-de-violencia-intrafamiliar-procuraduria.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> Sistema Integrado de Información de Violencias de Género-SIVIGE, *Casos de Violencia de Género atendidos en el Sistema de Salud reportados al Sistema de Vigilancia en Salud Pública, SIVIGILA*. (Sourced February 2023), also available at: <https://www.sispro.gov.co/observatorios/onviolenciasgenero/Paginas/home.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> Defensoría del Pueblo . En 2021 Defensoría del Pueblo atendió diariamente 10 casos de violencia de género. (8 de marzo de 2022), Also available online at <https://www.defensoria.gov.co/es/nube/comunicados/10791/En-2021-Defensor%20C3%ADa-del-Pueblo-atendi%20C3%B3-diariamente-10-casos-de-violencia-de-g%20C3%A9nero-D%20C3%ADa-de-la-Mujer-8M-Defensor%20C3%ADa-violencia-de-g%20C3%A9nero.htm>; González, Ana María Anichiarico González, et al. *Avances y obstáculos para el cumplimiento de las medidas de protección de la Ley 1257 de 2008 en Colombia durante el año 2021. Una visión multidisciplinaria a debates contemporáneos en Ciencias Sociales*, 15. Also available online at [https://www.uniautonoma.edu.co/sites/default/files/publicacion/libro\\_uniautonoma\\_2022\\_vf\\_compressed.pdf#page=15](https://www.uniautonoma.edu.co/sites/default/files/publicacion/libro_uniautonoma_2022_vf_compressed.pdf#page=15)

<sup>13</sup> Observatorio Femicidios Colombia. *Informe Annual 2022: Vivas nos queremos..* Red Feminista Antimilitarista. (November 2022) p.1. Also available online at <https://observatoriofemicidioscolombia.org/attachments/article/512/Informe%202023-1.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p.1.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid p.9.

<sup>16</sup> María Isabel Ortiz & Mauricio Roa Muñoz, *En Promedio, cada ocho horas es asesinada una mujer en Colombia* (27 November 2022). Also available online at <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/investigacion/violencia-contra-la-mujer-en-colombia-una-mujer-es-asesinada-cada-8-horas-721041>

11. The data presented above demonstrates that Colombia must undertake further measures to prevent and alleviate violence against women and gender-based violence, as it continues to be present in the lives of many women in the country. Further, the Colombian Government needs to take deeper steps to dismantle the systemic discrimination against women and provide safe and accessible spaces to women and girls in the country.

### **III. Access to Justice, and the Right to an Effective Remedy (List of Issues paragraphs 8 and 20)**

12. In its List of Issues, the Human Rights Committee requested that the Colombian State provide “aggregated statistical information on the number of complaints [in violence against women, including sexual violence and specifically acts of sexual violence committed in the context of the conflict] and the number, status and outcomes of the investigations that were opened by the Attorney General’s Office during the reporting period.”<sup>17</sup> The Committee also required information on “on the measures put in place to guarantee the independence of the main supervisory bodies, particularly the Attorney General’s Office.”<sup>18</sup>

13. In its State Response to the List of Issues, Colombia stated, “[t]he Ministry of Justice has implemented the strategy “Weaving Justice: University Network for Equality, Inclusion and Transparency”, in which 136 law schools with legal clinics participate. The purpose of this network is to mobilize universities to incorporate gender issues in the training of future lawyers, detection, and accompaniment in situations of violence against women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) people. Also, accompaniment is provided to Family Commissioners, territorial authorities, police inspections, conciliation centers and other actors in the justice sector.”<sup>19</sup> This statement mentioned the Family Commissioners –the only time – without further explaining the importance of the Family Commissioners at the local level for preventing violence against women and protecting victims or individuals at risk.

14. While there is a data omission of Colombia in its State Response to the List of Issues regarding the Family Commissioners, Colombia indicated some relevant information in its State Report. In the State Report, Colombia presented the implementation of trainings for justice officials as a policy development.<sup>20</sup> Colombia listed the (i) “strengthening the administrative and management capacity of institutions with a territorial presence that are involved in preventing and responding to gender-based violence and in matters relating to rural women’s access to land, including family commissioners’ offices [...]” and “[e]nsuring that family commissioners’ offices [...] have the technical capacities and tools

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<sup>17</sup> Human Rights Committee, List of issues on relation to the eighth periodic report of Colombia, (10 October 2022), CCPR/C/COL/Q/8, ¶ 8

<sup>18</sup> Human Rights Committee, List of issues on relation to the eighth periodic report of Colombia, (10 October 2022), CCPR/C/COL/Q/8, ¶ 20.

<sup>19</sup> Comité de Derechos Humanos, Respuestas de Colombia a la lista de cuestiones relativa a su octavo informe periódico (3 de abril de 2023), CCPR/C/COL/RQ/8, ¶20.

<sup>20</sup> Human Rights Committee, Eighth periodic report submitted by Colombia under article 40 of the Covenant, due in 2020, (7 September 2021), CCPR/C/COL/8, ¶141.

to be able to: make an adequate assessment of the risk to life and personal integrity posed by gender-based violence within the family; monitor protection and care measures; provide comprehensive and high-quality care to victims of violence; [...] know and disseminate care procedures and protocols; and apply criteria for inclusive services to women, especially rural women.”<sup>21</sup>

15. Acknowledging that Colombia has implemented multiple legislative measures to enhance the prevention and protection system for victims of domestic violence, such as Law 2126 of 2021.<sup>22</sup> With this law, Colombia has intended to address multiple systemic failures in its prevention and protection system. This alternative report presents shortcomings in legislation and policy implementation on the prevention, protection and access to justice for women enduring gender-based violence and violence against women.

*The Family Commissioner offices lack the budget and technical resources to fulfill their mandate regarding gender-based violence and violence against women.*

16. The Law 2126 of 2021 developed a new structure and mandates for the Family Commissioner, the institution in charge of preventing violence against women and gender violence and protecting the victims of such.<sup>23</sup> This Law established that municipal (local) administrations should structure and provide the required professionals to the Family Commissioners Offices.<sup>24</sup>
17. The Office of the Delegated Attorney General for the Defense of the Rights of Children, Adolescents, the Family and Women (*Procuraduría delegada para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Infancia, la Adolescencia, la Familia y la Mujer*) reported that only 52% of **668 Family Commissioners** offices have a completed team of professionals to support victims of domestic violence, and only 40% count with spaces to provide intimate spaces to victims.<sup>25</sup> According to testimonies collected by national media, many victims are reluctant to request institutional support from the Family Commissioners Offices due to the lack of privacy due to the deficiency of installations.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Human Rights Committee, Eighth periodic report submitted by Colombia under article 40 of the Covenant, due in 2020, (7 September 2021), CCPR/C/COL/8, ¶141.

<sup>22</sup> Colombian Congress, Law 2126 of 2021, *Por La Cual Se Regula La Creación, Conformación Y Funcionamiento De Las Comisarías De Familia, Se Establece El Órgano Rector Y Se Dictan Otras Disposiciones*, (August 4 2021), Also available online at <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=168066>

<sup>23</sup> Colombian Congress, Law 2126 of 2021, *Por La Cual Se Regula La Creación, Conformación Y Funcionamiento De Las Comisarías De Familia, Se Establece El Órgano Rector Y Se Dictan Otras Disposiciones*, (August 4 2021), Art., Also available online at <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=168066>

<sup>24</sup> Ambito Juridico, *Corresponde A Los Municipios Consolidar La Institucionalidad De La Comisaría De Familia*, (15 September 2022), Also available online at <https://www.ambitojuridico.com/noticias/administrativo/corresponde-los-municipios-consolidar-la-institucionalidad-de-la-comisaria>

<sup>25</sup> Procuraduría General de la Nación, *Comisarias de Familia. Verificación del avance y fortalecimiento de infraestructura, equipo interdisciplinario y salud ocupacional (2021)*, Also available online at <https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/portal/media/docs/ComisariasdeFamiliaVerificaciondelavance2021.pdf>; *EL TIEMPO: Redacción Justicia, La Falta de plata que tiene en jaque a las Comisarias de Familia*, (4 November 2022), Also available online at <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/investigacion/procuraduria-pide-ayuda-a-alcaldes-para-fortalecer-comisarias-de-familia-715058>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

18. In this same matter, the organization *SISMA Mujer* has reported that Family Commissioners Offices have “roofs [that] have partially collapsed and continue to collapse, as well [as] Family Commissioner offices with humidity in the walls and with parts of the floors affected.”<sup>27</sup> Most of these offices are placed in rural zones outside of the country capital Bogotá, in municipalities like *San Martín, Cubarral and Puerto López in Meta*.<sup>28</sup> In their report, *SISMA Mujer* also observed that the Family Commissioner offices “have great limitations and needs regarding equipment and technological tools. They do not have sufficient availability of the main tools they need for their work, which are computers and printers, and in the cases where they do exist, they are usually in fair or poor condition.”<sup>29</sup>
19. In the case of implementing the protection order for women experiencing violence, under the Law 1258 of 2008, practitioners have found that women are impacted by a lack of personnel in the Family Commissioner offices compared to the number of requests that the offices receive.<sup>30</sup> Studies also identified the lack of permanent personnel with training on gender as a barrier to providing effective protection to women victims of domestic violence/ intimate partner violence.<sup>31</sup>

*The current legal framework restricts women’s access to justice and protection regarding gender-based violence and violence against women.*

20. The Law 2126 of 2021 continues the restriction of giving the mandate to the Family Commissioner offices to protect women under a “family-focused” lens. The Law 2126 establishes potential perpetrators of domestic violence as the former or current husbands, domestic partners; co-parents of their children; and “**persons with whom the victim has maintained a romantic relation, whether cohabitation or not, of a permanent nature, characterized by a clear and unequivocal vocation of stability,**” among others.<sup>32</sup> This last highlighted category imposes potential discriminatory requisites to women to obtain institutional support, access to justice, and remedy, as it establishes additional characteristics to the relationship: “the permanent nature and the clear and unequivocal vocation of stability” and leaves on the margin and unprotected women who suffered violence from other kinds of romantic partners, such as boyfriends and girlfriends. This understanding is also enshrined in the Colombian Criminal Code in its article 229 and by the interpretation of the Supreme Court of Justice of the country.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Corporación Sisma Mujer, *Diagnostico Participativo. Comisarias de Familia de 12 municipios del Departamento del Meta*, (2022) p. 51. Also available online at <https://www.sismamujer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/A.-1.5.-I-Documento-diagnostico-participativo.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. p. 50, 51, P.50.

<sup>29</sup> p.51, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Erika Beatriz Cubillos Quintero, *Representaciones Sociales sobre la Violencia Intrafamiliar–De Pareja: ¿Violencia Institucional? Una Mirada Desde La Atención E Implementación De Las Medidas De Protección De La Ley 1257 De 2008. Estudio De Caso: Comisarias De Familia De La Localidad De Suba* [Master Tesis], Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, (2020) P. 62, Also available online at <https://repository.javeriana.edu.co/handle/10554/50576>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 62.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. art.5.

<sup>33</sup> Jorge Rafael Vaca Espinosa, *El supuesto cambio en la interpretación del tipo penal de violencia intrafamiliar*, *Ambito Juridico*, (21 February 2023), Also available online at

21. CSOs have described the Colombia legal system as having “victims of first and second category,” explaining that “there is no crime of ‘violence against women’, so the criminal treatment of a case when people are married, live together or have children is different from the treatment of attacks by a boyfriend on his girlfriend, for example. This is because the first case can be reported for domestic violence, but in the second, only for personal injury, in which the penalty (when achieved) will depend on the disability that generates the blow and, in addition, it is a reconcilable offense, subject of claim withdraw, and that is not investigated ex officio.”<sup>34</sup>
22. Likewise, despite the implementation of the legal framework that advances the protection of women, such as the Law 1257 of 2008 and the Law 2126 of 2021,<sup>35</sup> the Colombian Government must implement further actions to prevent domestic violence and violence against women and to provide protection, justice, and remedy to victims. According to civil society organizations, the Colombian Government is currently implementing at least thirty-three laws that aim to prevent and protect women from violence.<sup>36</sup>
23. **The barriers women endure while accessing justice because of the lack of gender lens in the analysis of family matters was noted by the Constitutional Court on the judgment T-028-23 (2023).** The Court observed that all judges in the country must incorporate a gender lens into the case under their revision and acknowledge the systemic discrimination women endure as a marginalized group.<sup>37</sup> The Constitutional Court ruled that the “Superior Council of the Judiciary [*Consejo Superior de la Judicatura*] must require mandatory attendance of all family jurisdiction judges in the country to the gender training offered by the Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School and the Gender Commission of the Judicial Branch.”<sup>38</sup>

### *Femicides and Access to justice and Reparation*

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<https://www.ambitojuridico.com/noticias/analisis/el-supuesto-cambio-en-la-interpretacion-del-tipo-penal-de-violencia-intrafamiliar>

<sup>34</sup> Maria Isabel Ortiz & Mauricio Roa Muñoz, *En Promedio, cada ocho horas es asesinada una mujer en Colombia* (27 November 2022), Also available online at <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/investigacion/violencia-contra-la-mujer-en-colombia-una-mujer-es-asesinada-cada-8-horas-721041>

<sup>35</sup> Colombian Congress, *Law 1257 of 2008 which rules are issued for awareness, prevention and punishment of forms of violence and discrimination against women, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, Law 294 of 1996 and other provisions are amended*, (4 December 2008), Also available online at <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=34054>

<sup>36</sup> Maria Isabel Ortiz & Mauricio Roa Muñoz, *En Promedio, cada ocho horas es asesinada una mujer en Colombia* (27 November 2022), Also available online at <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/investigacion/violencia-contra-la-mujer-en-colombia-una-mujer-es-asesinada-cada-8-horas-721041>

<sup>37</sup> Colombian Constitutional Court, Press Release, *Jueces de familia deben asistir a las capacitaciones sobre género de la Escuela Judicial Rodrigo Lara Bonilla y la Comisión de Género de la Rama Judicial*, (27 March 2023). Also available online at <https://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/noticia.php?Jueces-de-familia-deben-asistir-a-las-capacitaciones-sobre-genero-de-la-Escuela-Judicial-Rodrigo-Lara-Bonilla-y-la-Comision-de-Genero-de-la-Rama-Judicial-9484>

<sup>38</sup> Colombian Constitutional Court, Press Release, *Jueces de familia deben asistir a las capacitaciones sobre género de la Escuela Judicial Rodrigo Lara Bonilla y la Comisión de Género de la Rama Judicial*, (27 March 2023). Also available online at <https://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/noticia.php?Jueces-de-familia-deben-asistir-a-las-capacitaciones-sobre-genero-de-la-Escuela-Judicial-Rodrigo-Lara-Bonilla-y-la-Comision-de-Genero-de-la-Rama-Judicial-9484>



24. **Regarding femicides, reported cases could be and are higher, as in many cases, families of the victims have denounced that judicial authorities fail to investigate crimes against women as femicides.** Instead, judicial authorities categorize femicides as suicides, ignoring the voices and perspectives of the families of the victims. In many of these cases, justice is delayed or, more often, forever denied.<sup>39</sup>

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

23. This stakeholder report suggests the following recommendations for the Government of Colombia:

- Provide the maximum available resources to fund Family Commissioners Offices and allocate sufficient resources to municipalities in charge of structuring such Offices, especially those in rural areas.
- Take steps and provide all the maximum available resources to ensure that victims have access to specialized assistance and services that fulfill the specific needs of women victims of violence.
- Increase funding to Municipal Family Commissioners Offices to ensure they have all the specialized and interdisciplinary team required to support victims.
- Continue implementing the Law 2126 of 2021 and supporting municipalities and Family Commissioners Offices in their financial and technical needs, especially in their awareness-raising campaigns on discrimination and violence against women and gender-based violence, as well on gender stereotypes.
- Take steps to remove the stigma and barriers to accessing institutional protection and the right to justice for victims of domestic violence and violence against women and based on gender.
- Strengthen judicial mechanisms to ensure trauma-based, victim-based, and gender-based lenses to the investigation and sanctions of violence against women such as the crimes of femicide and domestic violence.
- Take all necessary steps to implement the Constitutional Court order to the *Consejo Superior de la Judicatura* that establishes that all Colombian family judges must participate on trainings on gender-based violence and a gender lens to justice.
- Revise and Amend the Colombian Legislation – such as the article 5 of Law 2126 of 2021, the article 229 of the Colombian Criminal Code and the article 1 Law 1959 of 2019– that restricts the access to justice and protection of victims of **intimate partner violence to include and protect victims in romantic relationships that**

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<sup>39</sup> Vanguardia, *Tras un año de la misteriosa muerte de Paula Andrea Martínez, el caso sigue sin resolverse*, (18 de February de 2022), Also available online at <https://www.vanguardia.com/judicial/tras-un-ano-de-la-misteriosa-muerte-de-paula-andrea-martinez-el-caso-sigue-sin-resolverse-FN4870520>; Semana, *Con #JusticiaPorPaulaAndrea quieren saber qué pasó con la estudiante de Medicina*, (5 March 2021). Also available online at <https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/con-justiciaporpaulaandrea-quieren-saber-que-paso-con-la-estudiante-de-medicina/202157/>

**might not fulfill the requirement of permanent character and unequivocal vocation for stability.**

- Intensify efforts to prevent and address femicides in the country and take all necessary steps to provide justice to the victims. Including undertake protocols to ensure that the voices and information of **families of the femicide victims are heard and substantially considered on the investigations of such crimes.**