

Feminist Reflections on Economic Violence.

**"IF OUR LIVES DON'T MATTER,  
PRODUCE WITHOUT US!"**



Alejandra Santillana Ortíz | Flora Partenio | Corina Rodríguez Enríquez

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AND CORINA RODRÍGUEZ ENRÍQUEZ

BUENOS AIRES, 2021



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“If our lives don’t matter, produce without us”. Feminist Reflections on Economic Violence. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: 2021.

53 p.: 21 x 14,8 cm. -

Publisher: Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung ConoSur,  
Santiago del Estero 1148, 1075,  
Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, Argentina.  
[www.rosalux-ba.org](http://www.rosalux-ba.org)

Authors: Alejandra Santillana Ortiz, Flora Partenio and Corina Rodríguez Enríquez

Editors: Alex Wischnewski and Juliana Díaz Lozano, April 2021

Translation from Spanish: Liz Mason-Deese

Layout: Editorial El Colectivo

Graphics: Che Alejandra

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This publication was financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the German Federal Foreign Office. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung.



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## Prologue

### **Unraveling violences to transform the world we have**

Why do we still need to continue analyzing how patriarchal violences function? The feminist movement, with its growth and its power was able to politicize everyday life, and show that the violences that we suffer, as women and LGTBIQ+ people, are not individual issues, but rooted in the inequalities of a historical system. Additionally, we have learned that patriarchal violences must be written in the plural, because they have many forms – including physical, psychological, sexual, labor, and economic violence – and all those modes are interlinked and take root in our bodies, minds, and emotions.

The global expansion of feminism – especially forceful in Latin America – also managed to put forth a key idea: that patriarchal violences have a material origin, rooted in the capitalist mode of economic production. The phrase “if our lives don’t matter, produce without us,” accounts for the centrality of the exploitation of women and sexual dissidents’ bodies and time, as the invisibilized support system holding up capitalist production. And, its counterpart, the devalorization of the lives of those who appear as disposable bodies in capital’s

dynamic, based on the logic of human trafficking, feminicides, labor hyper-exploitation, the feminization of poverty, and social exclusion.

As the flip side of that same process, feminisms have argued that is that non-recognized, invisibilized, or under-valued labor, that women continue carrying out despite the crisis, even beyond the market and the state, that guarantees that lives and communities are sustained. It is that same work of support and organization that women and sexual dissidents have carried out of being on the front lines defending their communities against extractivist projects, mega-projects, and contaminating enterprises that attack the very possibility of continuing to reproduce life in a certain place. In these cases, we see how the powers concentrated behind those initiatives persecute, criminalize, and murder women land defenders who are defending their peoples and nature in resistance to the capitalist advance in each territory.

All of these lessons came together in the international feminist strikes of March 8, which have spread to ever more parts of the world and been accompanied by massive mobilizations. The call to carry out a strike of all feminine and feminized work, building on the slogan “we move the world, now we will stop it,” signals the economic importance of care work, at the same time as it becomes a strike protesting against the multiple forms of violence that we suffer.

As part of that process, we invite you to read a complex text, that, we think is fundamental for understanding the systematic roots of violence. The authors of this book write in dialogue with and rooted in popular and feminist struggles in Argentina, Ecuador, and Peru. Connecting different disciplines, macro-level analysis, as well as situated experiences, quantitative and qualitative elements, this work addresses vital questions:

How is violence interwoven with the economic system? What forms do those patriarchal violences take? What aspects of those violences are affected by the pandemic? What tools do we have for resisting patriarchal capitalism?

In the current moment with COVID-19 pandemic and the health and social crisis, the reflection on economic violences becomes even more important. The pandemic makes already existing inequalities even more visible, it deepens them, and further complicates the survival of the majorities across the world. In this scenario, beyond the disparities and insufficient public policies attempted by governments, it is once again women and dissident's invisible or little-recognized labor that sustains popular territories. The quarantines multiplied femicides and inter-household violence, and again it was the feminist organizations that played a central role in defending the victims and making demands on the state. Despite the isolation, and through a great effort, they maintained their articulations all around the world, international solidarities, demands and debates. In other words, the struggle has not stopped, and the scenario became more complicated, which leads us to multiply our efforts to refine our analyses of the world that we have to fight against.

This book is part of our efforts to systematize the lessons of feminist movements based on our collective reflections and struggles. We ask for a careful reading, that can nourish our practices to transform society into one in which we all can be free.

Juliana Díaz Lozano

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April 2021



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## **1. Introduction**

The world is witnessing a moment in which systemic violence is shown to be one of the elements shaping the existence of our societies. The text that we present here forms part of the debate about economic violence and its relations to other forms of violence (especially the connection between economic violence and patriarchal violences).

This article is framed within the perspective of feminisms from the Global South and focuses on the link between economics and multiple forms of violence. It examines different dimensions and forms of violence, focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean, and, at the same time, it seeks to use Latin American examples as a window for viewing the rest of the world, fostering a North-South dialogue. The text draws on diverse sources, including quantitative and qualitative

ones, that will allow the reader to more profoundly delve into the complexity of the term of “violence” through feminist studies. It also explores other forms of violence (institutional, labor, political, media, digital, etc.) and their roots in different (physical, symbolic, sexual, psychological, patrimonial, etc.) expressions. This conceptualization is useful for analyzing the relationships between economic and physical violence, and how different forms of violence against women, children, and LGTBQ+ people are articulated.\* These forms acquire more extreme manifestations of violence, such as feminicides,\*\* transfemicides, and hate crimes.

Each section explores examples from the Global South, through a reading that pays special attention to the impacts of the international division of labor and violence. While this text focuses on analyzing the Latin American experience, the articulation between economics and violence refers to a transfer of value from the Global South, both through the extraction of raw materials, as well as through the labor power used in the Global North (which is directly related to global care chains). This perspective helps develop an understanding of the

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\* In methodological terms, this document draws on a quantitative review of secondary sources, to which Victoria Agosta, member of our team at DAWN, contributed. The fieldwork about the situation of Erika, Juana, and Andrea Alejandro, trans women and non-binary comrades from Guayaquil was carried out by Sara Rojas Salvador.

\*\* As is known, the term femicide was developed by Diana Russell in the 1970s alluding to the sexual politics of the murders of women committed by men, motivated by contempt, hate, the exercise of power, or sense of ownership over a woman. Years later, the Mexican Marcela Lagarde would introduce the concept of feminicide to the “set of crimes against humanity that includes crimes, kidnappings, disappearances of women and girls in the face of institutional collapse,” that is, that expands responsibility to the state for the murder of women, whether due to action or omission. Later, both concepts were problematized and enriched in feminist debates. Here we use the concept “feminicide” recuperating the line formulated by Julia Estela Monárrez Fragoso regarding the diverse representations of feminicide and the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez between 1993 and 2005. Similarly, we draw on the materialist feminist analysis of Jules Falquet (2017) that refers to this concept to reflect on the neoliberal reorganization of violence, without falling into an atemporal and universalizing vision.

production of violences as a global phenomenon, as the alliance between capitalism, patriarchy, and coloniality constitutes a global order. It questions the hegemonic account of violence, which seeks to show it as an isolated and dispersed problem, and proposes understanding it as an element that is territorially differentiated, but produced as part of the system. Finally, we provide a brief update in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, without losing sight of the pre-existing capitalist, patriarchal, and colonial “normality.”

“If our lives don’t matter, then produce without us,” these words traveled as a slogan across the streets of Latin America and the Caribbean in March 2018. It was the feminist movement that raised it as a shout, slogan, graffiti; the profound articulation between patriarchy and capitalism in the March 8 international care strike. It is significant that, faced with the alarming rates of feminicides on our continent,\* the movement has synthesized the struggle to remain alive and simultaneously rendered visible the—productive and reproductive—work that guarantees the reproduction of capital. A few months later, in May 2018, under the slogan “Abort the patriarchy and its laws of the market,” young women in Chile carried out a massive “feminist strike” of university students that denounced both consequences of applying neoliberal policies to education and the abuse, sexual harassment, and violence carried out by male professors and students in those institutions (Richard, 2019).

The recent massive mobilizations of feminist movements on the streets have denounced domination, exploitation, and oppression; as well as the intimate relations between the different forms of violence that structure our lives. In that sense, we ask: How have capitalism’s economic violences and sexist violences operated in recent years? What connections and webs do we find between them and their materialization in women’s lives? How is the extreme defense of the neoliberal

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\* According to the report published by Small Arms Survey and cited by UN Women, 14 of the 25 countries in the world with the highest rates of femicide are Latin American. For more information, see <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/about-us/highlights/2016/highlight-rn63.html>

educational model linked to the forms of reorganization of violence against women, children, and LGTBIQ+ persons in the pandemic? How do they appear and what do they mean in the current context of the pandemic, obligatory quarantine, and multidimensional crisis?

This text aims to contribute to analyses about the systemic relationship between patriarchy, capitalism, and coloniality through a discussion of different forms of violence. In a general manner, it accounts for the persistent and historical influence that the capitalist model has had on the production of violence, that is accentuated with the application of neoliberalism in Latin America, and with the generalized situation of the health, economic, ecological, and care crisis that we are facing.

## **2. Imbrication between Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Coloniality in Latin America: Contextualizing Violences**

The development of capitalism as a mode of production and social order has been characterized by the concentration of wealth by capitalist monopolies; by wars, militarization, and the destruction of life fabrics; by forced exoduses; by looting and dispossession in Indigenous territories holding enormous amounts of natural wealth; by a phase of extending the working day and, at the same time, labor precarization and uncertainty; by the constant devaluation wages since the application of structural adjustment policies (starting in the mid 1970s in some countries with the implantation of civilian-military dictatorships in the Southern Cone, and not until well into the 1980s in others); by an invariable organization of care work falling primarily to women, that has been aggravated during the crisis due to the increase in the burden of domestic work and unpaid care work.

Since the 1990s, a new phase of primitive accumulation can be observed at the global scale, through two principal mechanisms: the use of repressive state force and debt. Similarly, the advance of the privatization of natural resources and public services has reinforced gender inequalities and the negative impacts of the sexual division of labor on women (Sen, 2015). All of these elements have shaped societies that

are organized around structural and systemic violences, in which economic and sexist violences are some of its major correlates.

The aggressive increase in violence against women (femicides, cruelty, trafficking, etc.)—that makes violence a sign of this stage of capitalism—must be added to the already existing sexual division of labor. This war against life, and against women, thus reveals the historical project of capital and patriarchy: the forced mandate to occupy the role of carers, that not only enables the material reproduction of the labor force, but also plays a central role in emotionally sustaining the working class. Thanks to feminism we know that “what they call love is unpaid labor” (Federici, 2018; Dalla Costa, 2009). If our emotional care work is what enables minimizing the madness that capitalism imprints on the working class, any attempt to free ourselves from the obligatory mandate of social reproduction, even the slightest breath of free air and possibility of not being controlled, is met with violence and cruelty, against our bodies, against our ability to have control over our own decisions, control over the opportunities we find to resolve economic problems, ultimately, control over our right to live and to decide how to do so.

In effect, the place that women occupy in capitalism has meant the development of permanent mechanisms so that we fulfill our role in reproducing and sustaining the labor force. These mechanisms are not only based on the obligatory nature of sustaining the care and reproduction of life, but also in the obligation to fulfill the manifest destiny of maternity. Throughout the development of capitalist forces, these mechanisms that submit us to the reproductive role have incorporated the female labor force into the field of the productive (always in conditions of greater exploitation and precarization in relation to men), and they have a patriarchal correlate in the disciplining of women’s lives and control over our bodies.

Feminisms have contributed to an analysis of capitalism both by problematizing its origins, how it functions, and its dynamics, as well as in a renewed and comprehensive reading of Marxism. Feminist



theory and research has made several contributions to understanding the intimate link between capitalism and patriarchy: 1) they reveal that the existence of capitalism is only possible through the sexual division of labor (that establishes that waged productive labor is the only labor that truly exists and that unpaid reproductive labor is an intrinsic act naturally carried out by women, and thus not labor); 2) they show the importance of unpaid labor, which enables the reproduction of the labor force and, therefore, the relationship of interdependence and ecodependency for the sustainability of life; 3) they expose how care work transfers value to and subsidizes the profit rate and capital accumulation; and 4) they explain the emergence of a new patriarchal order that uses culture, politics, and economics to establish women and the feminine in a subordinated and secondary role, with less value than men and the masculine. These frames of analysis have points of contact with feminist studies of the 1980s, that, in the Global South, have been theorized from the perspective of so-called “Third World women” and have constructed a critical view of “development” and its impact on the configuration of the international sexual division of labor (Benería and Sen, 1982). These views have built an alternative analytical framework to the UN’s analysis of “women in development.” At the beginning of the new millennium, the analysis of feminisms of the South\* has allowed for detecting how economic, ecological, gender, and digital justice intersect and are being put at risk.

With the consolidation of this order, and its perpetual crisis, the feminine, the feminized, and women no longer only have less social value, but we lose any social value we once had. Our existences and bodies are disposable and it is necessary to apply a “pedagogy of cruelty” (Segato, 2018) to them that establishes, through fear and terror,

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\* This refers to the construction of a conceptual framework developed by the network of feminist activists and academics Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), whose critical task was delineating an interrelated, and not isolated, perspective on the political economy of globalization, political ecology, political restructuring and social transformation, the political economy of conflict and violence against women, and health care and sexual and reproductive rights (Sen and Durano, 2015).

a disciplining message: a reminder of the domestic and subordinated place that we occupy in the capitalist and patriarchal system:

“These are high intensity crimes of modern colonial patriarchy, against what destabilizes it, against everything that seems to conspire against it and challenge its control, against everything that slides outside of its aegis, the various daily strategies and tactics with which many of us, either on purpose or inadvertently, slip and slide away from patriarchal vigilance and disobey it” (Segato, 2016: 96).

As we can see, this historical project of domination needs to combine consensus and coercion to sustain itself at the global level. Thus, the production of violence dwells in its own nature, exacerbated by the phase in which we find ourselves: a moment similar to that of the primitive accumulation of capital, which places the absolute surplus value of waged and reproductive work in the center (Federici, 2018), and simultaneously a process of data extractivism and automatization that not only seeks to increase the profit rates of transnational multi-millionaires, but also to render invisible the materiality of labor and labor rights (Partenio, 2020; Gurumurthy, 2020). In this sense, the model imposed by platform capitalism creates a game change on the scene, in which companies accumulate through the dispossession of data (the new petroleum of the twenty-first century); and in which people all around the world are dispossessed of the data that they share daily. This new dynamic of extractivism is transforming economic activities (Gurumurthy, 2020).

Neoliberalism reinforces this character of capitalism. We can recall that neoliberalism has been constituted as a project of the global elite to increase the profit rate through three means: differential land rent\*

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\* Marx defines differential land rent as “the result of varying productivity of equal amounts of capital invested in equal areas of land of different fertility, so that differential rent was determined by the difference between the yield from the capital invested in the worst, rentless soil and that from the capital invested in superior soil” (Marx 1894, Capital Vol. III Part VI, Chapter 40). This means that the profits that are part of differential rent come from successive capital investments made on the same parcel of land, in which each investment delivers less

and accumulation by dispossession; deterioration and precarization of the working class through wage depreciation; and unpaid domestic and care work carried out primarily by women, which enables businesses to save money and functions as a subsidy for the accumulation and profit rate of capital. Research on accumulation by dispossession carried out by critical feminists of the Global South shows that it is the women, nature, and people of impoverished countries who make up the foundation over which processes of capitalist accumulation have been established. Their subordination and exploitation continue to be essential premises for the reproduction of the neoliberal model, therefore it is fundamental to understand the interactions, both historically and currently, between the sexual, social, and international divisions of labor (Samuel and Gunasekara, 2019). In this sense, we can return to feminist analyses about the political economy of war—with regional specificities—and the ways in which wars magnify and remodel gender identities. From this perspective, it is important to understand that violence is in the center of social organization and that gender relations and violence are mutually constitutive (Confortini, 2006).

In Latin America, the reprimarization of the economy\* and the aggressive expansion of extractivism (along with the deterioration of working conditions and rights in cities and increased levels of exploitation and precarization) have opened up a new wave of control, which not only comes from capital, but also from the generalized crisis of states and political systems. In parallel, the role of the state and the lobby of ultraconservative groups in controlling our bodies is reinforced, aiming to sustain the reproduction of the labor force for capitalism (Corrêa and Kalil, 2020; Torres Santamaría, 2020).

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productivity than the previous one until the final investment has a labor productivity corresponding to the market price.

\* Maristella Svampa (2011) defines reprimarization as the consolidation of a productive profile that is highly specialized in extractive activities, consolidation of export enclaves and economic concentration, understanding extractivism as something more than the exploitation of traditional natural resources, as it also includes the agricultural industries and biofuels, as well as infrastructure projects designed to facilitates the trade of those goods (editors’ note).

This scenario produces what Segato calls *informal conflictivity* and *non-conventional warfare*. And it takes on a specific form in Latin America: the articulation between organized crime, paramilitary forces and official forces that act as paramilitaries, the advance of drug trafficking in vast territories and the presence of private security forces at the service of corporations. This cartography of war and conflictivity presents three characteristics: conflicts “don’t have a start and a finish, and they don’t occur within clear temporal and spatial limits,” they emerge from corporate forms of violence, and they are expressed in a special way on the body of women and feminized bodies (Segato, 2014).

Corporate violence has a profound impact on the production of subjectivities that legitimate sustaining capitalism:

“In this extreme and apocalyptic phase in which plundering, displacing, uprooting, enslaving, and exploiting to the maximum are the path of accumulations, the goal that orients the historical project of capital, it is crucially instrumental to reduce human empathy and train people so that they are able to execute, tolerate, and co-exist with acts of everyday cruelty” (Segato, 2016: 99).

Another approach that we want to recognize is that which includes economic violence and sexist violences within analysis of public policies and different road maps that countries adopt to address the “itinerary of violence” (Rodríguez and Pautassi, 2016: 8). The research into the implications and costs for the implementation or absence of policies for preventing and eradicating sexist violence deserves special attention. While there are controversial elements to this type of analysis (because it is based on estimates of the fiscal costs to states and situates the discussion about violence against women within the sphere of monetary values), we consider it worthwhile to engage some elements that can help us better understand the economic consequences of the implementation or lack thereof, of these types of policies in impoverished countries such as those in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Many of the measures included in the road maps for addressing violence do not take into account women’s actual lives or the difficulties they encounter when reporting a crime or figuring out what to do (the lack of time, economic resources, and networks that allow for making decisions, etc.) At the Latin American level, one of the most important issues that makes it difficult to address sexist violence is the absence of policies of reparation in situations of feminicide. There are only a few “countries that have established permanent measures for the children of the victims, as in the case of the monetary pension for gender violence” (Rodríguez and Pautassi, 2016: 8). Additionally, it is difficult to estimate the fiscal and economic cost, due to the lack of existing information and the type of legislation regarding violence against women (that does not always incorporate the variety and specificity of different forms of violence).

In the case of Argentina, the state concentrated its efforts on providing leave to public sector workers, pensions for the children of victims of gender violence, training a specialized body of lawyers in issues of gender-based violence, and, more recently, the implementation of Micaela’s Law\* for all public servants of the three branches of government, including the judiciary. Another effort focused on strengthening the “economic autonomy of women who had been victims of violence and who were in situations of socio-economic vulnerability” (Rodríguez and Pautassi, 2016: 5). However, the programs designed to address those objectives were under stress due to budgetary disputes and the restructuring of socio-labor inclusion programs carried out under the last four years of neoliberal government. These four initiatives “not only do not require excessive fiscal costs, but rather, by having a low fiscal impact seek to alert state officials to the fact that it is feasible to implement them. Strictly speaking, they can fulfill their obligations to women, children, and adolescents without the argument that a greater

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\* The law was passed in January 2019 and establishes obligatory training in issues of gender and gender and gender-based violence for everyone who holds public office, in the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches of the national government: <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/generos/ley-micaela>

fiscal effort being an impediment” (Rodríguez and Pautassi, 2016: 42). This shows us that (besides the urgency and necessity of the struggle to prevent and eradicate sexist violences) states are perfectly capable of taking on the economic costs for implementing these measures.

### **3. Configuration of the map of violence**

In the following subsections, we will analyze the forms of articulation between economic and patriarchal violence based on concrete examples of dispossession and exploitation, widening income gaps, formation of global North-South care chains, corporate capture of the state and disinvestment\* in the public sector, fiscal and tax injustice, dynamics of tax avoidance and the evasion and the expansion of illicit financial flows from the South to the North. In terms of the concentration of wealth, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the numbers have continued to grow at an alarming rate, since the beginning of the isolation and confinement measures, the richest people have increased their wealth by US \$48,200 million. This is the equivalent of the third of the total stimulus packages of all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean combined (OXFAM, 2020). In turn, the study has demonstrated that there are eight new billionaires in the region.

This cartography of violences has direct and indirect impacts on the lives of women, children, youth, and LGTBIQ+ groups, reinforces the international sexual and racial division of labor, and deepens inequalities that have been exposed during the pandemic. The fact is, as trans-feminist compañeras of Guayaquil reflect, beyond the wounds left by pandemic abandonment, “there in my land, we are forgotten all the time” (Juana). They confirm that during this quarantine, “we have not received a single cent either before or during or after the pandemic. Nor any type of emotional aid” (Erika).

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\* We refer to disinvestment as part of structural adjustment policies and a dynamic with which the Astate withdraws from or stops investing in socially important public infrastructure, programs, etc.





### ***3.1 Land Grabs and Exploitation of Natural Resources***

Land ownership is one of the indicators used to look at the concentration of wealth and consolidation of the profit rate in the world. Who owns the land and how much these owners hoard is directly related to the profits of the world's elites, and even more so when speaking of continents whose accumulation pattern is based on the primary export model and extractivist rent. Pioneering feminist research has demonstrated that only a low percentage of women in Latin America in general (and in the Indigenous-campesino sector, in particular) have access to land ownership, control, and property titles (Deere and León, 2001). These authors have shown the impacts of so-called “neo-liberal counter-reforms” that inaugurated a new phase of restructuring the agricultural sector in Latin American states and led to the growing privatization and/or individualization of land rights. This point is key to linking the concept of patriarchal violence with patrimonial violence as a form of economic violence.\*

Additionally, this type of violence tends to compromise different aspects of access and control to land and habitat. For example, those that

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\* It is important to mention certain legislative advances in some countries, in which there are laws for the Comprehensive Protection to Prevent, Punish, and Eradicate Violence against Women and that recognize “economic and patrimonial” violence understood as “the impairment of women’s economic and patrimonial resources, through: the disturbance of the possession, ownership, or property of their assets; the loss, subtraction, destruction, retention, or undue distraction of objects, work instruments, personal documents, goods, values, and patrimonial rights; the limitation of economic resources designated to satisfying their needs or deprivation of the indispensable means to live a dignified life, the limitation or control of their incomes, as well as the perception of a lower wage for the same work within the same work place. For more see, <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/derechoshumanos/proteccion/genero/tipos-de-violencia> Or what we can find in Article 10 of the Organic Law for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women in Ecuador, which includes economic and patrimonial violence: [https://www.igualdad.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2018/05/ley\\_prevenir\\_y\\_erradicar\\_violencia\\_mujeres.pdf](https://www.igualdad.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2018/05/ley_prevenir_y_erradicar_violencia_mujeres.pdf) In this sense, it is important to analyze the games between existing legislation, funding, and the implementation of prevention measures.

are the consequence of armed conflicts, that lead to forced displacements of populations, women, and girls. If we look at the dramatic case of the war in Colombia, research by national and international experts generally does not address the intrinsic causes of gender-based violence against women. Their studies, while valuable, only focus on a traditional definition of sexual violence (rape, sexual assault, forced prostitution, etc.). In fact, gender-based violence against women is hardly ever considered in its broader conception, since analyses tend to ignore the economic, social, political, and cultural aspects related to the situation of women in war. In this sense, Montañó and Holstine (2019) emphasize the importance of dismantling traditional narratives, such as those stating that economic policies are “neutral in regards to gender and gender-based violence”; in the case of the measures taken by the Colombian government, their determinations had a negative impact on woman by renewing old alliances between land-owners and paramilitaries, which led to new displacements.

### ***3.2 World of Work: Increasing Precarization and Loss of Social Protection***

As we mentioned at the beginning, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the working conditions and rights of male and female workers in cities have deteriorated at an ever greater, as the levels of exploitation and precarization have increased. In the face of this situation, trends toward delaborization\* continue, creating opportunities for income generation for youth in general, and women and migrants in particular, in highly nonregulated sectors of the digital economy. This worrisome situation has been aggravated in countries such as Argentina, Ecuador, and even in Chile and Brazil, where there have been attempts at and even concrete advances in labor reforms. In these projects, the most dangerous element is that they attempt to create new categories like the “self-employed worker,” “autonomous worker,”

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\* Delaborization is the externalization of labor contracting and carrying out the jobs themselves of a company through “contracts of a mercantile or civil nature that allow for a reduction of social costs and loss of workers’ rights” (Edo, 2017).

“freelancer,” but these figures reinforce the total erasure of the labor relation and, at the same time, create that idea of the “false autonomous” or “independent contractors.” At the same time, the expansion of new types of digital employment and the differential impact they have on women demonstrates a palpable and clear situation: the main reasons for which women workers choose these modalities (whether through tele-work, platforms, self-employment, or as “entrepreneurs”) is due to the lack of policies of co-responsibility for care and the need to combine their responsibilities of paid and unpaid work (Scaserra and Partenio, 2020).

Of those mentioned above, the drive toward so-called “female entrepreneurship,” which has become a banner of international events, economic forums, and the discourse of large corporations, would merit its own chapter. While it returns to the spirit of policies aimed at the “economic development” of women from peripheral countries through micro-credit policies, this agenda resumed its course in 2018 with the Women-20 event that brought together “women leaders,” businesswomen, and women heads of state from the countries that make up the G-20 in its meeting in Argentina. According to these narratives, “labor inclusion, digital inclusion, financial inclusion” and “rural development” of women “in situations of social vulnerability” would be possible through promoting “entrepreneurship.” It was proposed as an individual solution, based on personal achievements and merits and rooted in a “paradigm of the entrepreneur” (Partenio and Pita, 2020). It is important to underscore that “entrepreneurship” was raised in the antipodes of the experiences of social, solidarity, and self-managed economy that have been maintained in Latin America and the Caribbean for at least twenty years.

These labor modalities (that increased during the pandemic), far from creating new forms of economic autonomy, intensified labor precarization. This panorama occurs in a region in which the levels of informality, non-registered employment, low wages, and unemployment continue to be high, especially for women.

As we can see in the ILO's statistical data, both the composition of labor and wages show enormous inequalities.

Latin America (16 countries): Components of informal employment by geographic area and sex, 2017 (percentages)

Total		Workers with informal employment					Workers with formal employment
		Total	In the informal sector	Outside the informal sector			
				Total	In the formal sector	In the household sector	
National							
Total	100	50.6	37.6	13	9	4.1	49.4
Men	100	51	40.8	10.2	9.2	1	49
Women	100	50.2	33.1	17	8.6	8.5	49.8
Urban							
Total	100	44.6	31.7	12.9	9	3.9	55.4
Men	100	44.2	34.5	9.7	9.2	0.5	55.8
Women	100	45.2	28.1	17.1	8.7	8.4	54.8
Rural							
Total	100	76.8	63.2	13.7	8.9	4.7	23.2
Men	100	75.9	63.8	12.1	9.4	2.7	24.1
Women	100	78.8	61.9	16.9	8	8.9	21.2

Source: ILO (2019).

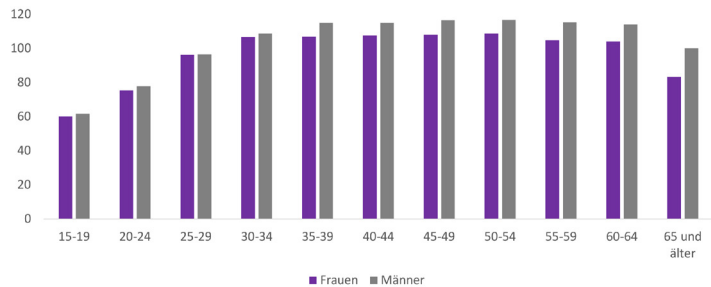
# Latin America (16 countries): Informal employment by geographic area and sex, 2017 (percentages)

Geographic area and sex	National			Urban			Rural		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Latin America	50.6	51	50.2	44.6	44.2	45.2	76.8	75.9	78.8
Occupational Category									
Employees	41	43.1	35	35.7	37	32.4	74.7	76.6	64.7
Waged	34.2	35.1	33	30.2	29.7	30.7	61	63.1	55.8
Self-employed	81.6	80.9	82.6	79.5	78.8	80.5	87.4	85.9	90.9
Auxiliary Family Workers	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Miembros de cooperativas y otros	35.7	32.7	40.1	31.3	23.2	40.7	43.6	45.8	38.6

Source: ILO (2019)

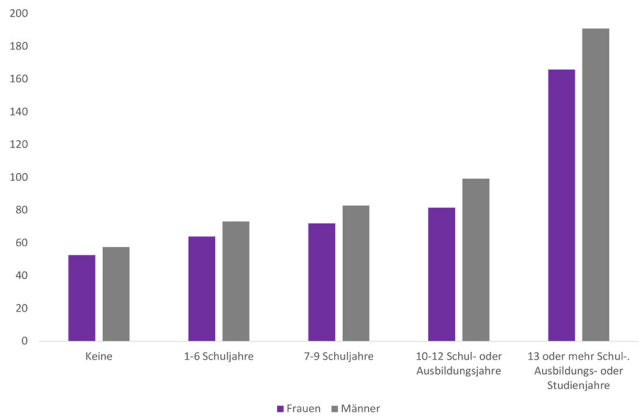


Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries) Relative wages by hour for men and women according to age group, 2017



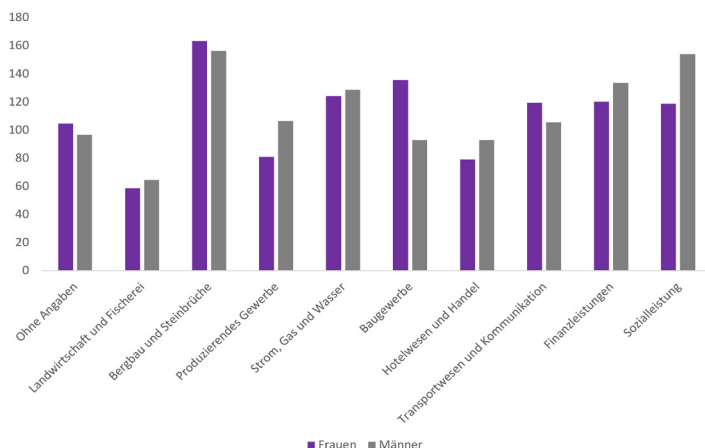
Source: ILO (2019).

Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries) Relative wages by hour for men and women according to education level, 2017



Source: ILO (2019).

## Latin America and the Caribbean (17 countries) Relative wages by hour for men and women according to economic sector, 2017



Source: ILO (2019).

This scenario was made more complex and aggravated by the advance of pension reforms in some countries and the increased privatization of the sector in other countries. Regarding this point, it is crucial to analyze the dynamic that the international division of labor acquired in relation to the design and reach of social protection policies. In an earlier paper (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2020), we analyzed how social protection systems are a key element for facing social risks. Their development has been very different in different countries and regions and their differences come from their designs, the capacity of states to carry them out, and the context in which they operate (that is, the economic dynamics, characteristics of labor markets, and social structures of each country, including their gender regimes). In much of the Global South, the development of social protection systems was incomplete, insufficient, segmented, and disarticulated. An ILO study from 2017, shows that, in 2015, merely 42.5% of the world's population had access to at least one benefit of social protection. This percentages increases to 84.1% in the case of Europe and Central Asia, and is reduced to 12.9% in Sub-Saharan Africa.

How is access to paid labor related to one's chances of being able to rely on minimum social protection guarantees? How have these schemes affected women and LGTBQ+ people? The existence of gender gaps in social protection has been a historical characteristic, even in schemes that developed more robust institutions and broader coverage. The social protection systems constructed in basis of people's position in the labor market replicated the gender gap in employment. On one hand, women have historically faced greater obstacles in accessing the benefits of social protection and/or they have access to fewer benefits, due to having less or worse insertion in the labor market, their overrepresentation in informal employment, and their access to lower wages on average. On the other hand, women's immense dedication to unpaid domestic and care work has persisted as a space completely devoid of any social protection. Along the same lines, rural women, migrant women, sex workers, and workers in private households particularly face structural barriers in accessing social protection (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2020).

One sector that finds itself in some of the worst conditions is the trans and travesti population, lacking access to social protection coverage and minimum health care benefits in the present, as well as guaranteed access to retirement and pensions in the future. In these cases, the layers of violence that they suffer become interwoven and articulated among one another due to the lack of access to rights (in terms of education, labor, health care, housing, etc.) and the lack of protection policies.

The pension situation has been aggravated in countries that have recently entered into new cycles of debt with the IMF, because it has imposed strong conditions on sovereign policies and demands for reform (of which the pension system is one of the favored adjustment measures). Cases such as Argentina and Ecuador after 2018 are tangible examples. One point that should be highlighted is that, as global studies show, social protection is threatened in moments of crisis when repaying public creditors is prioritized. Proposals emerging from civil

society should be taken up in this sense and “the practice of demanding lending conditions that obligate states to reduce their systems of social protection” should be reconsidered (Coalición Mundial para los Pisos de Protección Social, 2018).

While some of the region’s governments carried out certain measures, the partial progress toward the universalization of social protection benefits has encountered historical obstacles and new tendencies. Along this line, it is important to point out two challenges that especially affect those in the informal sector, particularly women. On one hand, the tendency toward the privatization of social protection (primarily, although not only, in areas of health care and education, including the promotion of public-private partnerships to construct basic social infrastructure and even provide services). On the other hand, funding for social protection has been severely challenged by the austerity paradigm in fiscal policies. Many countries in the Global South are facing the following fateful combination of situations: tax structures that bring in little revenue and do so in a regressive way (in large part because rich individuals, large national companies, and transnational corporations utilize multiple mechanisms of tax abuse and evasion), recurrent fiscal deficits that are addressed with austerity policies and debt, and the need to privatize social services and/or attract resources from the private sector to be able to face the demands that arise from social risks in austerity contexts (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2020). These mechanisms impact the forms of social dis-protection and are combined with limits to accessing economic resources, which shape the web of economic and patriarchal violence.

### *3.3. Forms of Tax Avoidance and Evasion and Expansion of Illicit Financial Flows*

The expansion of networks of illicit financial flows has had serious impacts on gender justice, labor rights, and social justice. These funds are fed in part by resources that come from illicit activities (corruption, drug trafficking, illegal arms sells, human trafficking), but also by money from tax evasion and avoidance. Transnational corporations

have a large degree of responsibility for fueling these mechanisms, and operate in a differential way in draining resources from countries from the Global North and South. How are forms of economic violence tied up with patriarchal violence in this case?

In studies on illicit financial flows (Grondona, et al., 2016), we have analyzed how they form by manipulating the prices of commercial transactions or international investment operations. These mechanisms contemplate a complex web in which the under-invoicing\* of exports and the over-invoicing\*\* of imports are combined, as the "undervaluing of incoming investments" and the "overvaluing of outgoing investments. It is interesting to note that the flows that arise from these legal activities, but with illicit origins (that can in themselves constitute crimes), circulate by the same mechanisms through which resources coming from directly illegal activities move.

In this regard, regulations correspond to two different moments in which a crime is committed and can compromise two distinct organizational structures. In this case, the original crime that generated the assets can be identified (for example, evasion classified as a fiscal crime, human trafficking, drug trafficking) and later the laundering of assets obtained through crime, based on which profits obtained illicitly are introduced into the legal economic-financial system.

These criminal activities can include extreme violations of women's human rights, as in the case of trafficking. In these cases, women and girls are bought, kidnapped, or deceived with false job offers, transported across borders without controls and using coercion to subject them to exploitation. In some cases, these situations occur when women attempt to migrate. In these networks, it is important to detect the mechanisms in which "the feminization of migration is linked to tendencies of trafficking and the feminization of trafficking. Laws that

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\* The shipment and tax declaration of merchandise abroad at a lower price, which is used as a maneuver to fraudulently minimize the tax burden.

\*\* The declaration on the corresponding invoice (for imports) of a purchase price higher than the actual price paid in the transaction.

restrict migration, combined with the corruption of state officials in charge of the area, tend to create fertile ground for human trafficking” (Grondona et al., 2016: 11). There is a series of factors that contribute to women’s vulnerability to trafficking rings: poverty (and the associated feminization of poverty) and unemployment, cultural contexts that tolerate or promote violence against women, in which they have limited access to crucial resources (economic means, social relationships and networks, information and knowledge), and the demand for a cheap labor force in feminized economic sectors.

At the beginning of this document, we mentioned the importance of analyzing the articulation between economics and violence based on the transfers of value from the Global South, both through the extraction of raw materials and the labor force used in the Global North. The aforementioned examples demonstrate the complex web of illicit flows that enable these transfers.

### ***3.4 Corporate Capture of the State and Defunding Public Services***

The need felt by many governments to provide favorable tax treatment to multinational corporations (as a way of attracting foreign direct investment) along with tax evasion by companies means that those governments lose a considerable quantity of public income. When a state cannot mobilize sufficient resources and repeatedly presents a budget deficit, it can only provide insufficient and low quality services (for example, in education, health care, sanitation, public transportation, social infrastructure, etc.). Evidence shows that when the fiscal margin is limited in this way, gender inequalities are maintained, or even get worse, which also limits improvements in women’s lives and the reduction of gendered differences. Additionally, the fact that 76% of unpaid labor at the global level is carried out by women, shows that the dismantling of the public common (correlating with the corporate capture of states) is translated into greater levels of over-exploitation of women (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2018).

States' loss of resources due to the aforementioned activities is at the root of defunding and public policies that push for austerity policies. Rather than calling for the development of mechanisms to regulate, control, and monitor these flows, emphasis is placed on reducing states' spending. In turn, this becomes burdensome in terms of access to and investment in public services. States withdraw their obligations, providing ever fewer services of increasingly worse quality, which significantly impacts women and girls. If we focus on care services, the public offer is seriously affected by these cuts and the lack of investment in infrastructure.

This scenario of social demand (for guaranteeing basic social rights that are increasingly left unsatisfied) feeds a narrative that supports the incorporation of private funding for public provisioning. Thus, the private sector appears as a key actor in funding for development, which is constituted as the necessary alternative under the argument that the state does not have resources and that, when it does, it uses them inefficiently or wastes them in proselytizing\* and corruption. This is how the corporate capture of states takes place, in decision-making spaces and in public policies. In this way, public policies progressively stop serving public interests and, instead, are transformed into a platform for expanding private businesses.

The renewed form that this capture takes in development funding strategies and discourse is that of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), whose promotion is based on the assumption that governments cannot invest to expand access to basic public goods or that they are not willing to do so. However, there is evidence regarding the negative effects of PPPs, including: i) a shift in the development agenda's priorities, which become oriented more toward areas that could be profitable than those most important for addressing social needs; ii) a greater net cost for states, which are the guarantors of last resort for private

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\* The insistent attempt by a person, political movement, force, or institution to try to convince other people to follow or support a cause, doctrine, ideology, or religion through public events, demonstrations, or campaigns, generally with electoral goals.

investments and, in some cases, even have to compensate private companies if projects do not meet the expected levels of profitability; iii) a greater cost for access to social services provided by the PPPs that often incorporate fees and co-payments, which has a relatively greater impact on women who tend to have lower levels of income; iv) the violation of labor rights in the context of enterprises carried out under this modality; v) the lack of transparency and accountability throughout the whole process (from awarding investments to providing services).

Currently, the paradigm of PPPs is not only promoted in the national sphere, but also by the United Nations' development system. It is presented as the best way to encourage investment in areas that are especially important for women's lives and human rights, such as social infrastructure and social services, despite the strong evidence showing the aforementioned impacts.

In more general terms, corporate power's threat to the fulfillment of women's human rights has the following key dimensions, which we have identified in previous studies (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2018):

- The growing drive toward competitiveness and productivity's negative impact on women's labor conditions.
- The impact of corporate lobbying and tax evasion, that limits public revenue and the space for enacting policies.
- The wide-spread belief that corporations are (or can be) sensitive to gender issues and the repetition of the complicated discourse of corporate social responsibility.

What have been the costs of achieving productivity and competitiveness? In the 1980s, the development strategy implemented in many Latin American countries (especially in Mexico and Central America), based on factories designed for export known as "maquilas," has demonstrated that their production generated a minimal improvement in employment, a limited contribution to economic growth, and no benefit in technology transfer to local production systems. While the "maquilas" have opened up economic





opportunities to some women who otherwise would not have had any opportunities, those opportunities have been characterized by precarious labor conditions and generally low wages. Likewise, this predominately female workforce was disciplined using different violent practices to prevent unionization and collective organization, such as layoffs, intimidation, rapes, and sexual harassment. In certain border areas, many female maquila workers are found among the cases of femicide. In addition to this panorama of violence that took place in border territories, the economic strategy in itself proved to be unsustainable, since most of the foreign investment migrated to other regions of the world (South Asia and China) when economic incentives were more attractive (for example, labor legislation, workforce capacities, available infrastructure, tax breaks). In sum, women's low wages and poor labor conditions functioned as an important advantage for companies (Rodríguez Enríquez, 2018). Competitiveness lies in the permanent transfers and subsidies from states to companies and in women's labor and wage conditions. Per the norm with capitalist development, the female labor force is used as an advantage and subsidy both for the profit rate and for capitalist accumulation. Companies take advantage of women's subordinated role in the social order in order to gain more profit.

Although experiences and results vary among countries, economic structures, characteristics of the labor market and groups of women and men, the main conclusion is that the least negative (or most successful) experiences were those in which private sector investment was more solid and was accompanied by public policies in areas of social services, social infrastructure, and policies to maintain incomes.

#### **4. Cartography of Violence in the Pandemic**

Finally, as research on situations of violence during the obligatory quarantine and crisis (worsened by the pandemic, the second wave of neoliberalism in Latin America, and the governmental strategy of #StayAtHome), there has been an increase in these forms of violence.

In countries such as Ecuador, where there were revolts, strikes, and insurrections against austerity policies in October 2019, the government and business elites took advantage of the quarantine to apply more neoliberal policies. During these months of the pandemic, they effectively implemented budget cuts that impacted health care and education, as well as measures for the prevention and eradication of sexist violence. The Ecuadorian state reduced its budget directed toward those activities from 20 million dollars in 2019 to 4.7 million in 2020. However, the amount spent on the National Police increased by 50 million dollars and weapons and equipment were bought for the country's Armed Forces. And the situation is no better in countries with progressive governments: in Mexico, the National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women had its budget cut by 37 million Mexican pesos (almost 2 million dollars) and the federal policy was canceled, which gave greater powers to states and municipalities.

Similarly, many countries that signed agreements with the IMF ended up paying interests on their debt and contracting new debt, while their health care systems and workers collapsed in the midst of a health crisis.

In respect to the world of work, the narrative of the crisis and how to resolve it has meant that, in countries with openly neoliberal governments, the austerity agenda takes material form in new legal frameworks that encourage labor flexibilization and precarization. For example, in 2020, there were over a million new unemployed people due to layoff policies. If we add to this the closure of public programs for small children and the elderly, and the improvised strategy of education through the Internet that does not take into account technology gaps in rural areas, the scenario is one of the greater delegation of care to the household sphere and more unpaid work carried out by women. This has created heavy pressure on the world of social reproduction, that deepens the sexual division of labor and differential forms of responding to the crisis. For example,

the survey by UN Women, “Gender in Times of Covid. Effects of the Emergency on Women’s Lives: Economy and Care,” indicates that 76% of the women interviewed in Ecuador have increased their workload, and 56% are solely dedicated to the education of their children at home. These numbers are even more alarming if we compare them to the contribution of unpaid work to the GDP: 20% and almost exclusively carried out by women. During these months of the pandemic, 48 of every 100 women in Ecuador have lost their jobs. Of the women who still have waged labor, 57 of every 100 report that their wages have decreased.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated tripartite crisis (of health, the economy, and care), analyses of the unfair distribution of unpaid care and domestic work have become even more important. Additionally, research into the way in which the sexual division of labor has been reinforced in the face of the advance and expansion of tele-work and remote work in contexts of confinement and/or social isolation is also important.

The brutality of the patriarchy, which is maintained by the enormous burden of work and intensification of the unpaid work that women carry out, becomes clear. In the scenario of the pandemic, the patriarchy is, among other things, the transfer of value of this unpaid care work to the country’s economy as a whole. But, additionally, in a context of structural adjustment and the state’s indebtedness to the IMF, the correlate of capitalist patriarchy is the aggressive targeting of women for indebtedness and the increase in their dependence on the financial system, as well as on private arrangements with men.

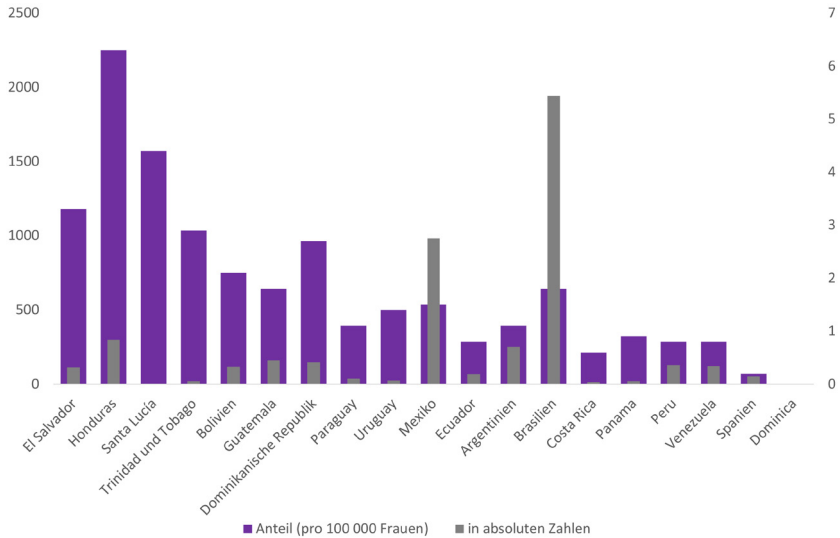
Additionally, the ultra-conservative alliances of religious groups that, violating the secular character of the state, determine policies relating to sexual and reproductive rights, sexual education, and misogynist imaginaries that continue seeing women as objects or as ethically suspicious incomplete beings that require guardianship. As Ailynn Torres Santamaría argues, health crisis are often terrains restricting:



“sexual and reproductive rights for children, adolescents, and women. These rights are threatened due to the redirecting of medical resources, women’s fear of contagion if they access health services, the even greater scarcity of contraception and impossibility of making use of (formal and informal) services to interrupt undesired pregnancies or those that are nonviable due to reasons of the mother or the fetus’s health” (Torres Santamaría 2020: 6).

This “semantics of fear” is taken advantage of by the culture of patriarchal violence “arguing that the pandemic is punishment for feminist advances” (ibid., 7) and, at the same time, removing the focus from the dismantling of the public common. However, the failure of the #StayAtHome strategy (applied by most governments in the region) as the only measure implemented by governments to decrease the rate of contagion and mortality, while they subordinated policies to prevent and eradicate sexist violence, has been notorious. In Mexico, between January and July 2020, 240,000 women were murdered, that is, there was a 7.7% increase in comparison with the same period in 2019 (Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública de México); in Ecuador, between January 1 and November 16, 2020, there were 101 feminicides (including five transfeminicides); in Argentina, there were 168.

## Latin America, the Caribbean, and Spain (19 countries): Femicide or femicide, last year available (in absolute numbers and rates per 100,000 women)



Source: CEPALSTATS, 2020.

In regards to the situation of LGTBIQ+ groups, even before the pandemic, their living conditions were already alarming and much of the population was unhoused and engaged in sex work; during the pandemic this precarization has intensified.

“It was very difficult for all of us because we were used to going out to work and earning our money but now we can’t and we were all stuck inside there, without money and sometimes this led to fights and arguments” (Juana, transfeminist, Guayaquil).

Many were forced to diversify and multiply their economic activities to survive:

“(…) I have had to look for other income sources because there is not enough business. I have to sell things like face masks,

hand sanitizer, and other odds and ends that people ask me for. (...) We all did a little of everything, selling food, selling face masks and hand sanitizer” (Erika, transfeminist, Guayaquil).

In the interviews with transfeminist and non-binary transfeminist compañeras, they highlight that the criminalization of poverty and non-cis-hetero sex-gender identities add to the helplessness of the LGTBIQ+ population at the hands of the state through the work of the police, and this leads to the destructuring of the already precarious webs that are sustained by family spheres:

“I tried to work on the track, whether spending one day or the weekends there because I have not been able to stay locked up at home without going out and without earning anything because I help my mom and my younger siblings. (...) Additionally, the damn police take advantage of the quarantine and all of that to bother us, beat us, demand money, or rob our things (...) I am worried that something will happen to my mom or she will get sick and I won’t be able to help her because I don’t have any money” (Juana, Guayaquil).

As we have seen throughout this document, the existence of systematic strategy of religious and ultra-conservative groups prior to the pandemic is explained by a process of the fascistization of society, that is, by an “emergence of fascist characteristics in several areas of social life”<sup>\*</sup> that is combined with a policy that administers and decides which lives matter and which do not. This hierarchalization of bodies and subjects situates popular and impoverished sectors, youth, dissident sex-gender identities, women, and all of those traversed by processes of feminization, as disposable and suspicious, as that which can be violated. It becomes clear that today the neoliberal project and savage capitalism, as well as the action of the elites (oligarchy and bourgeoisie), can only be implemented through coercion, violence, and a constant threat to life. Imperialist security policy for the region is articulated with a crisis of hegemony of the dominant classes and with

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<sup>\*</sup> An argument put forward by Antifascist Action of Ecuador. For more, see: <https://antifascistasecuador.org/la-fascistizacion-de-la-sociedad-debates-y-apuntes-1/>

what a Colombian *compañera* calls the “disciplining of the young, precarious, and dispossessed generations”<sup>\*</sup> who are intimidated by the police and paramilitary groups through fear, death, and impunity. In this health crisis, it becomes clear that security policies and state control fail to prevent contagion, but they are effective at maintaining a state of exception that is no longer extraordinary, but rather is activated as a mechanism whenever the elites and governments need to control or avoid insurrectional processes on the continent (Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico are some of the countries where the population has risen up massively in the streets for several days). At the same time, a debate has been opened recently about the role of police forces, their systematic abuse of power and violation of human rights, and their poor role in protecting and caring for society.

Finally, just as sexist violence is not in quarantine, during the pandemic, in many countries there has been a strengthening of the extractivist model and looting of Indigenous peoples and nations, their territories and fabrics of life, which constitute an updated form of colonization. Oil, mining, hydroelectric, and agribusiness companies invade the communitarian logics and maintain accumulation by dispossession and differential land rent. It is the Indigenous and campesina women, the guardians of the seeds, the waters, and the forests, who are on the front lines against this advance of the extractive frontier and the consequences of the violent dynamics of territorial control deployed by the police and transnational corporations.

In short, this emergency shows that the looting and dispossession of the working class, reinforced over the last four decades, deepens the international, sexual, and racial division of labor. Precarization, over-exploitation, and the lack of labor rights for broad sectors of the population are part of the long memory of this dependent capitalism. If it is necessary to obey in order to survive, staying at home equals a new adjustment in control over life. The popular sectors who live off

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\* Sandra Rátiva Gaona, PhD student at the UABP.



of what they earn day by day or weekly, cannot stop working because they will not survive. But when they go out to survive, they are fined or arrested by police forces. As we have shown, this situation is exacerbated for women and the LGTBIQ+ population, whose burden of unpaid work has increased during the pandemic due to the reinforcing of the sexual division of labor within households as a result of confinement and a consequence of the dismantling of the public systems of health care, education, and social security in contexts of crisis (that correspond to states’ neoliberal delegation of care to the sphere of the private domestic). The management of the multidimensional crisis that we are experiencing renders visible the differences between men, women, and feminized bodies and identities. Despite this fact, it is true that the crisis not managed from above, but from below:

“Nobody ever remembers the whores and even less so during the crisis, we were waiting for them to give us hand, because there are a lot of us in the house and there were days that we didn’t have enough to eat, but we helped each other out or our neighbors gave us a hand” (Juana, Guayaquil).

If, for women, sustaining life implies resolving issues of food, health, and care for their families and environments in conditions of precarization, excessive burdens, unemployment, homelessness, and defunding of the public-common; for men, management of the crisis reinforces a *machista* subjectivity that is translated into frustration, rage, and abandonment. Consequently, violence against women and the LGTBIQ+ population increases, and is enabled by the state through impunity in order to reproduce the capitalist, colonial, and patriarchal “old normality.”

## **5. Articulation between Sexist Violence and Economic Violence: Clues for Imagining Other Feminist Practices**

This article not only addressed the semantic power of the term “economic violence,” but also the epistemological and political possibilities that it opens up in terms of analytical-discursive material. Likewise,

it analyzed the nuances, advantages, and differences established with concepts such as *marginalization*, *inequality*, and *economic exclusion*. The paper analyzed how views that point to “victimization” are questioned and how critical readings of women’s *economic empowerment* (for example, based on individual solutions to unemployment such as “entrepreneurship”) are elaborated. In this sense, as Sen and Mukherjee (2014) proclaim “there is no empowerment without rights, there are no rights without politics” and empowerment cannot be spoken of in a reductionist way, since it requires “the capacity to act on various dimensions” (juridical, labor, political, and economic, as in the case of universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and reproductive rights). Thus, by omitting other rights and “not recognizing the multiple interdependent and indivisible human rights of women, the objective of empowerment is distorted and development is compartmentalized” (2014: 188).

In this final section, we reflect on how this reading can contribute to feminist practice. In this sense, we ask: how does it (or should it) change feminist practice? Throughout this document, we have analyzed the imbrications between economic violence and sexist violence and their impacts on the lives of women and the LGTBQ+ population. This problematization starts from the consideration that capitalism, patriarchy, and coloniality configure one single system of exploitation, oppression, and domination, and that while they present specificities, they must be analyzed simultaneously to account for the totality. It is in the very heart of the system where violences are produced, in that place where: “the state is in debt with the trans population, negritudes, and people who have historically been discriminated against and made invisible” (Andrea Alejandro, non-binary transfeminist, Guayaquil).

The text that is presented here attempts to conduct a reading of violences as part of the development of capitalism and the long memory of exploitation and looting of the working class, intensified in conjunctures of structural adjustment and crisis, and of patriarchy as

a historical order that shapes a government of necropolitics\* (Valencia, 2010) that produces violence to maintain the social reproduction of the system.

Thinking from this perspective contributes to constructing a holistic view that recognizes the multiple causes and implications of violences, a view that brings together particularities, but understands violence as a systemic and structural historic social phenomenon and not as a series of extraordinary and anomalous events. Understanding how sexist and economic violences jointly emerge, operate, and are legitimated contributes to the construction of theoretical tools, as well as tools for struggle and everyday practices that radically question the white feminisms of business rhetoric and corporate power, and strengthen the anti-systemic feminist potency that seeks to transform the given order as a whole.

In a scenario in which the lives of women and LGTBIQ+ people are threatened, it is essential to analyze power relations based on gender along with other social inequalities, how “they are interwoven in other systems of power such as international economic relations, military conflicts, and political ecology” (Sen and Durano, 2015). Not only because this perspective allows for observing how each system of power shapes and intersects with the rest, but also because this form of analysis enables us to recognize and “challenges those systems” based on political practices and feminist construction.

We have analyzed living and working conditions in the pandemic from this perspective precisely because health crises are scenarios of isolation and restrictions on the sexual and reproductive rights of girls, adolescents, women, and LGTBIQ+ persons, in which forms of violence intensify. That is why policies that restrict access to economic

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\* Sayak Valencia uses this term to reflect on the transition of politics and how it is organized in gore capitalism. According to Valencia, there is a shift from biopolitics (Foucault) to necropolitics, which refers to “the processes of management of the population through death and its spectacularization.” See, <https://artishockrevista.com/2018/02/13/la-necropolitica-lo-cuir-chicano-segun-sayak-valencia/>

justice and gender justice are completely interconnected with the forms of corporate capture of the state and disinvestment in public services (especially public health). As we said earlier, if we take into account the data that affirms that the majority of unpaid domestic and care labor at the global level is carried out by women, the dismantling of the public common – as a correlate of the corporate capture of states – is translated into greater levels of over-exploitation of women. This reading leads us to the necessary articulation of struggles for economic justice and gender justice when it comes to guaranteeing the right of women and gestating persons to make their own decisions about their bodies and maternity, and to be able to access public health policies that support sexual and reproductive rights.

In this document, we have recuperated a reading based on inter-linkages to analyze how economic, ecological, and gender justice are linked in Latin America (Bidegain and Llavaneras, 2013), drawing on a perspective that centers our practices of the sustainability of life. For that reason, the analysis of an extractivist capitalism must contemplate the web of dimensions of different dynamics of extraction of resources, data, land, finance, and time that impacts our lives.

And “despite the horror, the violence, and abandonment, LGTBIQ+ collectives are the ones who force the system to conceive other normalities and realities in a holistic way” (Sara Rojas). Accounting for this immediate memory that is articulated with the long history allows us to put our conceptions of violence into tension and imagine a new normality, one in which, perhaps, justice and care are at the center of life and dignity.

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## **- ROSA-LUXEMBURG-STIFTUNG -**

The Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung is an internationally operating, left-wing non-profit organization providing civic education. It is affiliated with Germany's DIE LINKE (Left Party). Active since 1990, the foundation has been committed to the analysis of social and political processes and developments worldwide. The Stiftung works in the context of the growing multiple crises facing our current political and economic system. In cooperation with other progressive organizations around the globe, the Stiftung focuses on democratic and social participation, the empowerment of disadvantaged groups, and alternative economic and social development. The Stiftung's international activities aim to provide civic education by means of academic analyses, public programs, and projects conducted together with partner institutions. The Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung works towards a more just world and a system based on international solidarity.

The Global Feminism Program started in 2019. It accompanies the construction of transnational feminist networks that have a left, intersectional, antipatriarchal, anticapitalist and socio-ecological perspective, many of which are strongly rooted in the Global South.

<https://rosalux-ba.org/en/feminismos-internacionalistas/>

What is the connection between economics and violence from the perspective of feminist movements and theory from the Global South? This text helps construct an understanding of different forms of violence, not as isolated events, but rather as a global phenomenon, which is territorially anchored in the alliance between capitalism, patriarchy, and coloniality.

This analysis becomes urgent in the context of a social and health crisis that has led to increased extractivism, wealth concentration, the precarization of life and digital and state control of the population. With the pandemic, and the measures adopted in response, violence has been exacerbated in all spheres of life: institutional, labor, political, media, digital, environmental; and in all its different expression: physical, economic, symbolic, sexual, psychological, those primarily suffered by women, children, and LGBTQI+ persons.

In this scenario, the theoretical and political contributions that make it possible to privilege the popular management of the crisis and the power of anti-capitalist feminisms for constructing other possible worlds are more important than ever.