



TAKE ACTION

DONATE

WHY DOES GUATEMALA HAVE ONE OF THE HIGHEST RATES OF FEMICIDE IN THE WORLD?



March to protest violence against women in Guatemala.

The good news is that we know one of the main causes of gender based violence in Guatemala. Under normal circumstances, identifying such a cause would be a great step forward, as it would enable the police, courts, and other authorities to make substantial progress in protecting women from violence.

visited on 7/22/2019

The bad news is that the main cause of femicide that Amnesty International has identified is government inaction and the resulting impunity—human rights abusers can literally get away with murder in Guatemala, especially when their victims are women. Amnesty found that less than 4 percent of homicide cases result in the conviction of those responsible. This low rate, in turn, is largely the result of insufficient and ineffective investigations.

Worse yet, those Guatemalan individuals and organizations that press for justice in these cases become targets of violence themselves. Rosa Franco, for example, has faced numerous death threats during the eleven years she has spent searching for justice for her daughter, Maria Isabel. Once again, the perpetrators know that they can get away with threats and violence.

In 2008, Guatemala passed a law establishing special tribunals and sentencing guidelines for violence against women. On the surface, such a law says that the Guatemalan government values the lives of women. **The reality of continuing violence and flawed investigations, however, sends a clear message to both the perpetrators and the victims that women's lives do not matter.**

Good laws are an important step, but government authorities must have the determination and the resources to carry them out by punishing violators.

Unfortunately, this problem is not unique to Guatemala. The neighboring countries of El Salvador and Honduras, for example, also face epidemic levels of femicide and impunity.