



Gender-Based-Violence Report: Assessing the direct and indirect impact of violence on women that is amplified by state practices, perpetrator and victim!

Contents

Section I Overview:	2
Section II Literature Review:	4
Section III Data Analysis:	12
Section IV Conclusion:.....	19
Section V Recommendations:	21

Section I Overview:

The benchmark for civil war environment experienced a seize fire in 2013 after four year of prolonged violence between 2009-2012. The seize fire lasted one year only to be replenished by a prolong six-year state of violence that was disrupted in 2019 when the murder rates were reduced to below 30 per 100000. Evaluating 1,786 murders of males between 2006 to 2020, highlights roughly, 90% of males kill 90% of males, with 188 women, killed in the same period and 158¹ women killed between 2009 and June 2021. This highlights, the need to analyse the impact of major crimes like murder, rape, robbery, burglary, theft through a gender lens to explore the impact of male trauma amplifying gender base violence in our society.

The behaviour of perpetrators of violence reveals narcissistic actions that exploit without any guilt or shame that has led to actions of frequently demeaning, intimidating, belittling others that is grounded in a sense of entitlement² that starts with a charming personality. The victims spoke of being treated, "like a Queen" at first and as they moved into the house, things changed.

Children are always part of the conversation of gender-based violence, especially domestic violence, but fail to show up in Family Court data. The impact on children of violence is erased in domestic violence complaints, of the 6,623 reports of domestic violence between 2016 and 2018, 70% were dropped, a process that ignores the impact of violence on children.. Kenrick Longworth and mom, Lavern Longworth offer a good case model to explore the impact of violence on the brain of a child.

Structurally, we don't discuss the impact of violence on children because they may not have physical scars, but an important evaluation must take place. In this report we explore

1. The multiply layers of violence through a gender lens.

¹ [BCO GBV murder rates](#)

² [Narcissists 101](#)

2. Examine the impact of trauma on the perpetrator as a child.
3. State sanction perpetuate violence.

Interestingly while the cases were about women and male perpetrators, a lesbian couple and a male victim of gender base violence were documented, in addition, a total of 82 children lives were impacted as well. The average ages of the survivors of violence were 36 years old belonging largely to the millennial generation, (76%), Gen z (20%) and gen x (3.4%)³. What made the difference in their lives was a neighbour, family member, a medical provider guiding them to access services through mostly Haven House, human Development or Youth Enhancement Services receiving a mentioned in 59 cases collected on violence.

Most of the survivors of violence were economically dependent on the perpetrators for their economic livelihoods, perpetrators seem to leverage that need to build a foundation for control and weaponizing the socialised nurturing spirits of women, which puts the emotional needs of others before themselves.

³ [Generations](#)

Section II Literature Review:

The correlation of childhood trauma and its connection to intimate partner violence in Belize has never been explored by the system. As a result, prevention measures are inadequate for the survivors of domestic violence in particular and gender based violence as a whole. Its noteworthy the following;

studies have found that women who experienced sexual, emotional or physical abuse in childhood were more likely to experience violence in intimate relationships as compared to those without a history of childhood trauma⁴.

Equally, research on perpetrators of domestic violence have not been examined as well in the system, as we focus on psychosocial support, safe housing, legal action tools like restraining or occupation orders to support the victim of domestic violence. A study about perpetrators of violence tracked subjects for 16 years, published in 2013, found;

..boys who were abused or neglected are more likely to become abusive with their partners in adulthood than those who had not been abused⁵... It also found that being abused or neglected as a child is a predictor for juvenile violence and use of mental health services for both genders, and predictive of juvenile substance abuse for males⁶..

The case of Kendrick Longworth showed that generational violence model in Belize, in 2020.It was reported that he brutally assaulted three of his stepsons and left one dead. The father of the children, Mark Tuyul said,” “I feel hurt inside; he took away my son from me. I am trying to hold up from my other kids, but I don’t have the strength. I am terrified. I just hope this man faces justice⁷,” Longworth case is particularly interesting because, his mom, Lavern Longworth was charged, originally with life in prison⁸ for the killing of her common law husband after years

⁴ [Childhood trauma](#)

⁵ [Early child abuse](#)

⁶ [Maltreatment of children, 2013](#)

⁷ [Kenrick Longworth](#)

⁸ [Lavern Longworth](#)

of abuse in 2012, but in 2014⁹ her sentence was reduced to eight years after a Court of Appeal judgement argued battered woman's syndrome as a mitigating circumstance. When Lavern Longsworth was asked if her son's exposure to watching her mistreatment affected his childhood development process¹⁰. The mom replied, "It could be, ah no di say no to that!" but in the same breath says, "Ah no like the idea if he do it...ah no raise ah like that!" Suggesting that she has not acknowledged the impact of childhood violence her son witnessed, for he was raised in violence. Furthermore, the impact of violence on a child's mind has never been consistently linked to crime prevention strategies, vulnerability to the criminal justice system and adult violence. In the case of Kenrick Longsworth, there is a correlation, the question is, how could his behaviour be prevented as an adult.

Data from human development, highlights a glaring challenge of contention, if the state does not provide enough resources to support the mental health issues of children the burden is left on the victim to resolve, as individuals.

Children's appearance in the human development system between 2016 and 2020 revealed that 2,061 boys experience abuse in some form vs 4,477 girls. When data is compared with juveniles in conflict with the law, it shows 1,688 boys vs 356 girls. It's noteworthy, that juveniles that come in conflict with the law do not reflect a continuation of case management of those who are on record for abuse for the same period. While the data reflects, only information that is entered into the FAMCARE system, it begs the question what happens to children who grow up to be adults that experience trauma? There is no state report or academic research that have tracked the impact of abuse by gender to indicate levels of mental health issue. What we do know from US research is the following:

⁹ [Appeal decision 2014](#)

¹⁰ [Childhood](#)

It is estimated that nearly 60% of U.S. children have either experienced or witnessed violence, crime or abuse in the past year. Research shows that these traumatic events can greatly impact a child's developing brain and are major risk factors for lifelong health issues and early death. The more a child is exposed to trauma, the more connections are made in regions of the brain connected to fear, anxiety and impulsiveness. The good news is that the human brain is developing every second of the day, long into adulthood. **Stable, supportive relationships with adults and positive experiences can reshape the brain** and strengthen neural connections¹¹.

Interestingly, A UNICEF reference for Belize, aligns and points out that the sustain culture of violence in the family home include layers of violence that impact childhood development in Belize;

In Belize, 65 percent of children experience violent discipline in their homes. Of these children, 6 percent report experiencing severe forms of punishment and 52 percent of children up to age of 14 are subjected to psychological aggression¹².

This makes the point that domestic violence cannot be discussed without a broader discussion about gender based violence, particularly, of violence on children, juveniles and other marginalised populations. Violence does not happen without complicity by omission, inaction or indifference. The news report about the three children interviewed Anne Carcamo, the grandmother of the deceased child Mark Tuyul, stated

She had previously observed injuries on her grandchildren, allegedly at the hands of Longworth. "Everybody was in abuse, the children and mother. But when I talked to her [mother of the children], she didn't want to listen to anything I had to say. I regret not doing more, now this is how it ended up. She even cut off communication from us,"

The case is complex for it does not explore the duty of a mother in an abusive relationship, the state and immediate family in protecting vulnerable children from violence. It does not explore legislative limitation and court practices about addressing a mother's trauma and how it amplifies childhood trauma that may extend itself as a security problem, for the state in adulthood.

¹¹ [Childhood Brains](#)

¹² [UNICEF Belize](#)

Violence is not unique to children or men and is further complicated when mental health issues are added, in 2013, Felicia Chen, affected by severe depression drowned three of her four children, she was let out in 2018. Chen pleaded guilty to murdering Thomas, 3, Trinaya,1, and Triana Teul,4. She was sentence to three 8 years sentence to be run concurrently¹³.

While we talk about perpetrators, we don't explore the impact murdered children on duty bearers and how they survive afterwards. The graphic nature of these children death was described by the first responder in a cold factual way in 2013¹⁴;

"When we get out da di beach dehn mi di bring een di mother and I notice di policeman dehn run and when dehn run da way deh when I look I sih two a dehn come with the babies, one each, done dead. Then di next young man weh mi di help di BDF bring een di ma, he bring third baby weh da mi di baby itself, dehn mi done dead. Di lee baby face mi done, ih mi blue. Di policeman mi staat, you know, pump ahn but ih mi too late, she mi done kill dehn already. Dehn mi done drowned."

Children being murdered and experiencing act of violence comes in many forms a news report share the following stories in 2018¹⁵;

The recent crimes against children began on Wednesday, February 22nd, 2018 12-year-old, David Morrison was shot in Orange Street in Belize City around 11PM while watching TV inside his house with his brother. They heard several gunshots and shortly thereafter, realized that he was shot. Morrison was rushed to Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMHM) where he died a couple hours later.

17-month-old-baby Alyssa Nunez from Maskall Village in the Belize District reportedly clinging onto life at the Karl Heusner Memorial Hospital (KMHM) after being sexually and physical abused by her stepfather Everal Martinez.

March 5th at around 8PM another shooting incident in Port Loyola area in Belize City claimed the life of another child...21-year-old Ian Abraham, a mechanic who was repairing his car in front of his house was hit in the abdomen. Four-year-old Treshawn Golf, Abraham's nephew who was playing on the road side was shot in the head. They were both rushed to the KMHM, where they were admitted in a critical condition. However, the four-year-old child died later that night.

four-old baby girl fell ill so she (mother) took her to the hospital where it was discovered that she had been sexually abused.

shooting incident claimed the life of a 52-year-old Belize City mother, Bernadine Lauriano, and her 9-year-old daughter survived two gunshots

¹³ [Felicia Chen](#)

¹⁴ [First responder](#)

¹⁵ [San Pedro Sun](#)

Children losing their lives suggest a sustained decades civil war, Dr. Herbert Gayle 2010 report Male Social Participation in Urban Violence in Belize, points out,

Within two years (2002) Belize had its first major spike in murders 29 of 100,000 and went into social shock. The following year it declined somewhat but steadily rose to 32 of 100,000 by 2007 crossing the civil war benchmark¹⁶...

The report goes on to explain that as a society we are focus on direct violence, but ignore the lethality of structural and cultural violence. The key actors and scenarios of violence are as follows:

Direct: among youth; parents on their children; teachers on students, especially boys; sexual partners, men at least twice more likely to be the perpetrator; and the military and the police.

Structural: Middle class, businessmen, elites. Economies are often built on violent structures or oppression of the poor and young. We structure a society that ensures wealth for a few. Many became wealthy through crime then turn around and hinder the younger criminals from taking the same path.

Cultural: Priest/pastors, teachers, intellectuals, parents – those who socialize persons to be violent. Whoever glorifies violence in anyway promotes cultural violence. Child abuse is cultural in the region! Violence is also central to masculine identity. Males are beaten more and are expected to respond to insult with violence—and they are treated with violence if they are violent

Between 2009 and 2012, Belize, maintained its civil war benchmark for four years with numbers like, 30.79, 39.86, 37.34,42.55 respectively per 100000 murders, with 2013, offering a single year of reprieve. This pause in our murder rates was sustained with six years of crossing the civil war benchmark between 2014 and 2019, with numbers like 34.27, 32.31, 36.51, 36,61,35.95,32.80 respectively, murders per 100,000¹⁷.

Under structural and cultural violence in Belize, 89.5% of all murders happened to males between 2006-2020. More deeply between 2000 and 2007 there were 32,381 major crimes reported that include murder, rape, burglary, theft, robbery and carnal knowledge. Of that, Robbery, burglary and theft made up 31,168. The success rates of arrest was 30.7%. Herbert

¹⁶ [Herbert Gayle Report](#), p 48

¹⁷ [BCO](#)

Gayle Report of 2010 explained the lethality of structural and cultural violence through the lens of war, the report said;

In the Second World War 9 million people died each year. Certainly this was a very horrible war and we wished it never happened. Yet about 12 million children die each year from hunger and hunger related illnesses or chronic deprivation due mainly to the action of middle class policymakers around the world.

Cultural violence is even worse because it is in our system, in our social construct (Galtung, &2000). For example, when a gangster is killed, people who claim they are decent often exclaim: "What a relief! He was a nasty person." Notice the persons who always call for the death penalty; usually the same persons who are reluctant to give a job to a young man, and often they are church members. The major crisis for violence experts is that direct violence is often caused by structural violence and the latter takes a long time to form and an equally long time to change. We often reduce the direct violence but it is sustainable because the structures that created the direct violence were not addressed.

When state sanction violence, it demands that we ask about the impact of shortage of funding, the limitation of programme coverage and implementation and how that process is exacerbating the problems of gender base violence on individuals trapped with economic limitations. Additionally, the state has a long history of executing State of Emergencies in perceived violent areas of Belize.

It must be noted that the State of Emergency was first used in 1981 against the Civil unrest with the return of Assad Shoman and Bobby Leslie with the head of agreement; in 2007, when Belize was being threaten by Hurricane Felix; in 2018, a third S.O.E was instituted on September 5th, to mitigate the incidence of crime and violence but, an increased occurred nevertheless¹⁸. In 2020, fourth SOE was initiated in July with more than a hundred held, but only 50 detained for prison by August 7th, 2020. The Senate proceeded to extend the SOE for more two months¹⁹ that ended on October 5th, 2020²⁰.

¹⁸ [SOE 2018](#)

¹⁹ [SOE 2020](#)

²⁰ [SOE extended 2020](#)

Systemic violence and livelihood have a structural and cultural basis that is affected by suppression tactics of the state and its enforcement and protection mechanisms. The Ombudsman report in 2017, reported that 38% of its complaints was against the police department, In 2018 it was 42.5%, 36.3% in 2019²¹ and in 2020, the amount was 46.1%.

When analysis is expanded to explore the investigative success of the police department to address major crimes like murder, burglary, robbery, theft, carnal knowledge and rape for 2000-2007. The analysis found a 30.7% rate of success to investigate and charge suspects, reflecting inefficiencies in our enforcement system. Dominique Noralez, in her opinion piece made the point of inefficiencies when she said in her July, 2201 article in the Amandala,

when a crisis disproportionately hurts those who are already structurally marginalized, the structural neglect of these factors further entrenches preexisting inequalities.""I've said before that Belize is a punitive state, one whose budgetary policy tells me that it much prefers jailing me rather than tilting the social protection market in a way that is contextually relevant and gives me the best chance at learning to be a good citizen. There's much to ponder when Youth Support Services gets \$3.1 million in recurrent expenditure with a programmatic budget of just over 300,000 dollars and Prison Services gets \$6.4 million in recurrent expenditure²².

While the engagement of structural and cultural violence may intersect and disrupt incarcerated individuals basic needs to address economic security and while the reports from the ombudsman office reflect a small samples of systemic violence, together, the data reveals a relationship between public confidence in state systems, the struggle of addressing basic needs while incarcerated persons are behind bars and the struggle of families to feed their children as they await for their incarcerated love ones to be released from prison after the SOE ended in October. State and community attitude helps to shape a cycle of violence that starts with children and end with the poor judgements of adults. The lasting effects of having 2,210 murdered from 2000-

²¹ [Ombudsman Report 2019](#)

²² [Noralez, 2021](#)

2020 remains grossly underestimated in the state national's security plan and in how it deals with criminal violence. Short-term plans mean no long-term results at this time

Furthermore, the issue of meeting basic needs is summarized in UNICEF Belize data which points out that there is a deprivation problem that is directly related to poverty that affects adolescents and children. The site shares;

Belize has a high rate of poverty. While 42 percent of the general population is affected, up to 50 percent of Belizean children under age 15 are classified as poor--58 percent of Belize's youth under 18 are classified as multi-dimensionally poor.

UNICEF and ECLAC estimates that 6 out of 10 children in Belize lack at least one of these basic needs: adequate nutrition, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, adequate housing, and access to education and information.

While Belize's social protection system takes a life cycle approach with coverage spread over various age groups, many Belizean children still do not have access to social protection due to programme coverage gaps, implementation, and/or funding levels.²³

²³ [Poverty](#)

Section III Data Analysis:

This report sought to analyse 59 cases of domestic violence, but when women (59), perpetrators, (59) and children (82) were added to the analysis the total persons involved amounted to 200. When the data was further examine, a generational divide, revealed the average ages of survivors were 36 years old belonging largely to the millennial generation, (76%), Gen z (20%) and gen x (3.4%)²⁴.

Perpetrators of violence seem to display malignant narcissisms that is expressed in wide array of traits that include, but not limited to the following;

- grandiose fantasies and behavior, such as a preoccupation with thoughts of personal success, power, and attractiveness or sex appeal.
- little or no empathy for other people's emotions or feelings.
- a significant need for attention, admiration, and recognition.
- an inflated sense of self-importance, such as a tendency to exaggerate personal talent or achievements.
- a belief in personal specialness and superiority.
- a sense of entitlement.
- a tendency to take advantage of others or exploit people for personal gain
- arrogant or conceited behavior and attitudes.
- a tendency to envy others and believe others envy them²⁵.

When a perpetrator of violence has trouble dealing with change, they may feel humiliated, if made to feel slighted, have a hard time with insecurity and vulnerability, and react angrily when others don't seem to regard them with the admiration they need and feel they deserve. The basis of narcissistic behaviour of perpetrators of violence who exploit others without any guilt or shame; frequently demeans, intimidates, belittles others grounded in a sense of entitlement²⁶ that starts with a charming personality.

A prominent feature of victimizing is reflected in the following:

²⁴ [Generations](#)

²⁵ [Malignant narcissism](#)

²⁶ [Narcissists 101](#)

1. Victim forced to quit her job
2. Only wanted her, as a sex object
3. Perpetrator wanted to be worship like a king
4. Victim was not allowed to leave house
5. Perpetrator took money of victims and did not want to work, but drink.
6. Victim was convinced not to have an abortion
7. Victim was forced into performing a sex act for money.
8. Could not socialise with co-workers
9. Got upset about how she did house chores.
10. Perpetrator did not like family offer financial help to partner for higher education
11. He controlled her social media and speaking with family.
12. He took over the business, he threaten to kill her, then with deportation. She was hit in the head with a frying pan. She left one abusive man to fine another abusive man in Belize

Control seems to be the central theme in the narcissistic approach in the perpetration of violence that include sexual and physical acts. This control was grounded in psychological and physical violence with 60% of survivors reporting multiply layers of control. This included control over freedom of movement, reproductive decisions, not working, controlling individual expression of dress and reducing the person to a sexual object with the use of intimidation, complimented with 11.6% of cases involving alcohol complimented use by perpetrators.

While violence is universal cross ethnic lines, our sample size of 59 cases revealed that 57.6% of cases affected Creole survivor's vs 27.1% of Hispanic/Mestizos. The importance of exploring ethnicity as a factor for susceptibility to violence becomes an academic exercise to understand the social infrastructure of violence that is perpetuated among the various groups in Belize. While this sample is too small to establish a full picture of the socio-cultural challenges with trauma observed or transferred to children can come in the form of many stories,

“ he hit me in the head as I tried to leave as I explained to him I did not love him”

“He pulled a knife to my throat”

“he followed me, drive beside me as I was walking home and he slapped me in my own home”

“he forced me to stared and knocked me out, I was forced to have a miscarriage”

“ I was tossed out naked from my house.”

“was beaten in front of my children while pregnant, the baby died”

“was prevented from going shopping, picking up school reports, hit in the head and verbally abused, and beaten in the presence of her children.”

“he pulled a knife to her throat and told her she was her property,”

“children tried to stop abuse, he threatens to kill her and then told her neighbours she gave him an S.T.I

While women experience the incidence of violence, children are witnesses or pawns to that violence. Of the cases collected, there were 82 children involved in some shape or form. The extent to which a survivor of violence transfers her coping mechanism to her children, including how to manage violence in a relationship cannot be ascertain in this report. What was found is that it's possible, to experience repeated forms of violence's by separate partners, with rudimentary access to legal, but not mental health services, children become tertiary survivors of violence in a system barely providing rudimentary support services to victims of violence.

With 100% of cases reflecting the value of support from a neighbour, doctor, friend or family member to get help, the system still relies on the victim to use the system. Its noteworthy that over 6,623 complaints were lodged at the Family Court to get help, but 70% eventually drops between 2016-2018. The complex interaction between design of the system, the impact of trauma to navigate the court and the lack of a victim advocacy framework that support defence of right's needs, helps to de-legitimize the efficiency of the Family Court. Thought this report is about survivors of domestic violence, we cannot look at one without looking at the broader issue of gender-based violence and our justice framework as a country.

With complaints dropping 70% of the time between 2016 and 2018, the murder of women totalling 158 between 2009 and 2021, the abuse of children totalling 6,538 between 2016 and 2020, the murder of 2,210 persons between 2000 and 2020 and a success rate of investigation of 30.7% between 2000-2007; with Youth Support Services gets \$3.1 million in recurrent expenditure with a programmatic budget of just over 300,000 dollars and Prison Services gets \$6.4 million in recurrent expenditure and knowing 2% of the Belize Ministry of Health budget

was earmarked for mental health services in 2009²⁷, there is much to ponder, as the combined data creates examples of state failures towards its citizens.

It suggests Belize as a state, has operationalised the inductions of trauma directed at its citizens through, inadequate budget allocations, and geographic concentration of government services. In addition, S.O.E. approvals and police suppression tactics in a resource limited environment, failure to treat violence as a health epidemic, inadequate economic analysis of violence in an economy that produces only \$1.9B in GDP, combines to perpetuate trauma on not only against women and children, but marginalised populations like sex workers, LGBT victims of violence, disabled persons etc.

Economic analysis about the cost of violence is important when we consider 2,210 persons were murdered between 2000 to 2020, but data about children losing their lives remain absent; data about women losing their lives between 2000 and 2005 remain absent as well. It's important because we have over 31,381 persons affected by major crimes, but no data that includes how persons are affected by gender, sexual orientation and gender identity.

The state practices of instituting S.O.E's against gang members or person perceived as such, impact families livelihoods, it may not be 1,000 people arrested, but it might as well be that much affected when we look at our poverty rates and weak social safety nets as a country.

It was COMPOL on July 20th, 2021 on Open your Eyes, who noted that there was no racial profiling. He shared that it's to be expected that if you work in Belize City, it will be creole populations that will be in the majority, but Amandala article of 2017, counters that positions when it noted,

Creoles, who make up 50% of the inmate population, and Hispanics, who make up 25%, .. In the case of Creoles, the majority of those inmates who belong to that ethnic group are there for

²⁷ [Mental Health Budget, 2009](#)

murder and crimes of dishonesty: robbery, burglary, theft, etc., while the majority of Hispanic inmates are at the prison for immigration offences and crimes of dishonesty²⁸

Creoles made up 25.9% of the population of Belize vs Mestizos who are 53% of the population²⁹. In simply terms Croles are in the minority, but make up 2x the prison population size in 2017. Greater analysis about why Creoles make up half the incarcerated in 2017, requires us to look at the extent economic discrepancies, racial profiling and implicit bias, plays a role in the over representation of Creoles makes in the prison system. It begs further questions about the culture of racial profiling in police investigative practices, quota initiateds practices and the value of creating Units to promote a shock and awe to policing in Belize. Despite this, there is hope in our system, recently Bryton Codd and Greg Nunez took a constitutional case to court about stop and search practices in Belize. The order established the following:

1. A Declaration that the search of the Claimants' person carried out by officers of the Belize Police Department, on the 4th of August 2020, was in the absence of any reasonable suspicion or reasonable belief and, contravened Section 9 of the Belize Constitution;
2. A Declaration that the photographing of the Claimants' identification card constituted an unlawful and disproportionate interference with the Claimant's right guaranteed under Section 14 of the Belize Constitution to not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, except under the authority of a law which makes reasonable provision in accordance with section 9(2) of the Constitution; 25
3. A Declaration that the retention of the photograph of the Claimant's identification card further constituted an unlawful and disproportionate interference of his right guaranteed under 14 of the Belize Constitution to not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, except under the authority of a law which makes reasonable provision in accordance with Section 9(2) of the Constitution;
4. A Declaration that the actions of officers of the Police Department, on the 4th of August 2020 failed to recognize and treat Mr Gregg Nunez with the dignity and respect required by Section 3 of the Belize Constitution;
5. An injunction restraining the Defendants, their servants or agents or otherwise from taking and retaining photographs of persons not charged or convicted with an offence in the absence of any law authorizing and regulating the same;
6. An order that the Defendants, their servants or agents or others, destroy any photograph of the Claimants' identification cards;

²⁸ [Prison make up 2017](#)

²⁹ [Ethnic makeup](#)

7. Damages in the sum of \$5,000.00 to Mr Greg Nunez and \$3,000.00 for Mr Bryton Codd;
8. Vindictory damages to each Claimant in the sum of \$10,000.00; and
9. Costs in the sum of \$12,500.00 to each Claimant.

The optics of creating mechanism to help push forward the wheels of justice, is not the same in practice, as the persons accused have a right to be assumed innocent until found guilty. With budget allocation limited to investigate, a shortage of investigators, rudimentary formula to support victim advocacy, the economic needs of survivors and mental health issues and arbitrary practices of searches, compounds the ideal of designing a fair system. We have a long way to go to address a justice framework that educates and support survivors of violence, that has strong watch dogs for supporting victims of violence in investigations, that addresses implicit biases and addressing witness protection programs in more complex situations. Situations that can be corrupted by access to staff in the justice system. While the report analyses 59 cases of domestic violence, it could not be written without looking at the broader issues of systemic violence that impact our citizenship as a whole.

What was learnt about perpetrators of gender-based violence is that is can be systemic or induced by the state and enforced loosely by malignant narcissist who is skilled at manipulating the situation. One survivor reported that the perpetrator lied about the violence he inflicted, by saying” *we were both drunk and I was only defending myself*”. Interestingly, she reported the incident, the U.R.N. or unique registration number for her case file, and found out, it was lost. Perpetrators can be men or women amplifying systemic intimidation. In the next case, the man was the victim, he was stoned with dishes and struck over the eye lid with a knife that required 13 stitches. He asked his common law wife to leave with or without his son. She left and returned with the police saying he “*assaulted and kicked her, and was forced to leave with their son out the residence with nothing but the clothes on their back and she wanted the stuff she*

owed,” to her. The male survivor, recognized one of the officers as a sibling to the perpetrator, so he did not bother to tell his part of the story. Years later he is labelled as a domestic abuser, meanwhile his child’s mother insults him in public verbally. He has tried the court system over a dozen times, but has yet to be granted the justice which he says he deserves after losing his jobs due to the constant time off he has had to take for the legal matters. The male survivor states the system does not work because his perpetrators sister is a staff member of the Belize Family Court.

Systemic violence is perpetuated through State of Emergencies, suppression tactics, shortfalls in budget allocations to support victims of violence, legislative exclusion, the absence of court advocate to support victim, inefficient budget allocations between jailing and programs for young people, disparity in the delivery of human and justice services in rural vs urban areas all combine to discourage actual justice concerns for women, children and other marginalised population.

While the data was about women and intimate partner violence, it was also about how the shortages of resources leave the burden of security on the individuals while the state amplify various models of violence on the homes of women and their children who cannot meet their basic needs as citizens.

Section IV Conclusion:

Belize does not have a strong victim advocacy framework that prepares any survivors of gender-based violence in our justice system. It does offer temporary relief of safety to women who access the Court system, but long-term mental health care remains inadequate in the response.

There is a cycle of violence that is perpetrated by the system through short falls in budget allocations, suppression tactics, legislative protections, and the absence of enforcement and protection mechanism that is design to discourage survivors of violence to pursue justice.

The state current framework of investigating major crims require serious analysis when only 30.7% of its documented cases of major crimes leads to an arrest between 2000-2007. Long-term data gaps between arrest and convictions remain hard to assess as a centralised location for comparing progress remain hard to do when data for 2008-2020 have not be centralised in on place in the police department, like the joint intelligence coordination centre.

The relationship between children observing violence between their parents, direct abuse as children, juveniles in conflict with the law, the amount of men murdering men have not been explored to identify the lingering effects of violence in the streets.

There has been no study to look at the economic cost of violence to our economy, not attempts to collect data about the cost of discrimination or violence as it affects women and LGBT Belizeans and no discussion about coordinating systems to conduct livelihood analysis among marginalised populations in the Belize.

Imported police practices that promote implicit biases that include racial profiling, stop and searches, random record profiling, force confessions help to set a model of state sanction violence that exacerbate itself in families and communities.

Litigation and legal advocacy work is important to strengthen the design of the justice system. Our environment does benefit from the middle class challenging injustice, as it is experienced on the ground, few Belizeans, however, are in a position to carry out a challenge.

CSO's have been conducting work around enforcement and protection that is currently inadequately provided by the state. The United Belize Advocacy Movement, fills in the inadequate support for survivors of violence that the states have failed to address.

Systemic violence is perpetuated through State of Emergencies, suppression tactics, shortfalls in budget allocations to support victims of violence, legislative exclusion, the absence of court advocate to support victim, inefficient budget allocations between jailing and programs for young people, disparity in the delivery of human and justice services in rural vs urban areas all combine to discourage actual justice concerns for women, children and other marginalised population.

Belize as a state, has operationalised the inductions of trauma directed at its citizens through, inadequate budget allocations, and geographic concentration of government services. In addition, S.O.E. approvals and police suppression tactics in a resource limited environment, failure to treat violence as a health epidemic, inadequate economic analysis of violence in an economy that produces only \$1.9B in GDP, combines to perpetuate trauma on not only against women and children, but marginalised populations like sex workers, LGBT victims of violence, disabled persons etc.

Finally, no data is collected on persons with disabilities nor LGBT persons who are victims of violations or violence, hence, a culture of erasure remains the practice of the state when it designs plan of action to address anti-violence concerns.

Section V Recommendations:

1. To identify resources to conduct an economic study on the cost of violence and discrimination to the economy of Belize against women, children and L.G.B.T populations.
2. To conduct a KAP study of police officer's experiences of trauma in their work in serving the public.
3. To reform the domestic violence Act and criminal code to support victims of crime and violence in court and in legislation.
4. To work to create a legislative Unit to Review and update old laws as it affects marginalised populations to render them more consistent with the constitution.
5. Conduct an assessment to look at the rate of success of police department for investigating and charging suspects with major crimes like murder, rape, carnal knowledge, robbery, theft and burglary and identify its impact on women, children and L.G.B.T populations.
6. Evaluate the cost benefit analysis of implementing SOE's and suppression tactics.
7. Evaluate the complaints failure of the Family Court and its impact on public confidence.
8. Identify models of community rights enforcement and protection mechanisms to support persons affected by gender-based violence.
9. Identify capacity among CSO's to developed a victim advocacy framework that support survivors of violence.
10. Evaluate the impact of systemic violence on women and their families through an ethnic and rural lens.

