

# Drivers of gender-based violence in migration in Latin America

William Robert Avis  
University of Birmingham  
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**What are the drivers of gender-based violence in migration in the Latin America?**

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## 1. Summary

**This rapid evidence review collates available evidence on drivers of gender-based violence (GBV)<sup>1</sup> in migration in Latin America.** The review acknowledges that there are many forms of GBV and that this can influence the decision to migrate as well as experiences of migration. Given the prevalence of mixed migration flows in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and their dynamic and intersecting nature, most countries are simultaneously points of origin, transit, destination, and return.

**This report is the second in a three-part series, with associated reports collating evidence on migration in LAC (flows, causes and issues), and donor activity and migration in LACs.** The report provides a broad overview of LAC migration and data pertaining to women on the move in the region. It explores how GBV impacts throughout the migrant cycle, from decision to migrate through to arrival at destination (though accepting that migratory journeys are often multifaceted and open ended). It explores how gender impacts upon the experiences of migration and how gender exerts an influence on the consequences of migration.

**The reasons people migrate from LAC countries are complex, based on a variety of interconnected factors.** They include poverty, instability, corruption (in their home countries), and impunity for perpetrators of violent offenders.

**The Migration Data Portal** highlights that gender has a significant impact on the migration experiences of persons of all genders. Furthermore, “gender inequalities contribute to heightened risks of human rights violations, and reduced socio-economic outcomes, especially affecting women, girls and gender-diverse persons”.

**At mid-year 2020 there were an estimated 7.32 million female international migrants in LAC, accounting for 49.5% of all international migrants in the region (there were 7.47 male international migrants – 50.5%).** This is slightly higher than the global average for the same period where female migrants comprised somewhat less than half, 135 million or 48.1%, of the global international migrant stock (UN DESA, 2020).

**While many of the push factors to migrate have been present for years, the demographics of arrivals at the south-western border of the United States are shifting.** As more women and children seek refuge from violence and inequity, it’s clear that gender-based violence as a driver is having a significant impact.

**Escaping sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) is a clear influencing factor in the migration of many women and girls (and some men and boys).** However, experiences of SGBV can continue during transit and in host/receiving countries. Research has also illustrated the increased vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities in humanitarian and refugee settings.

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<sup>1</sup> GBV is defined as any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty” (see also box 1).

**The boundaries between different types of migration are blurred, for example, people moving to secure well-paid employment may find themselves in exploitative situations.** The term ‘human trafficking’ refers to a situation where a person is moved by others through use of force, deception, coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or through giving payments or benefits, for the purpose of exploitation.

**Migrant girls and women experience more sexual violence because they can be subjected to trafficking for commercial purposes, forced sex work, and labour abuse and abuse of power that manifests in sexual assault,** among other forms.

**Cases of trafficking for labour exploitation have been on the rise in the region; for example, in South America, going from 29% in 2014 with 32% of victims being women and girls (CEDAW, 2020: 7).** Of the detected victims of trafficking, 12% were men 51% women 31% girls and 6% boys (UNODC, 2018: 76). Of those detected victims of trafficking, 58% were trafficked for sexual exploitation, 32% for forced labour and 10% for other purposes (UNODC, 2018: 77).

**Once a migrant or refugee has made their journey and is residing in a new city, region or country, gender and age characteristics continue to influence their experiences and the effects their migration has.** The consequences of migration can be considered in terms of impacts on individuals themselves, and on receiving/destination and sending/home communities, cities, countries and regions (Birchall, 2016: 22).

**Among the most obvious risks, survivors do not know their rights, the services they can access, and the protection system and institutional framework of the destination (CEDAW, 2020: 13).** Lack of information, fear of punitive State systems that promote victim blaming, a lack of protection, stigmatisation processes, language limitations, and a lack of prevention mechanisms allow many women and girls to fall into trafficking networks (CEDAW, 2020).

**As circumstances at the southern border of the United States demonstrate, gender-based violence has a direct influence on migration flows across the region and is deeply tangled with cyclical challenges of inequity and poverty.** For those who choose to seek assistance or flee their communities, high rates of re-victimisation and bias further obstruct access to justice and safety.

## 2. Latin American Migration

**The reasons people migrate from LAC countries are complex, based on a variety of interconnected factors.** They include poverty, instability, corruption (in their home countries), and impunity for perpetrators of violent offences. These factors collectively form the “push factors” that drive individuals to migrate. The Latin American region has the highest levels of inequality in the world, with wide gaps in standards of living between countries, regions, sectors and socioeconomic spheres (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022).

**There are also more nuanced drivers that help create an environment which people either choose to leave or are forced to leave.** These include low educational attainment, the influence of remittances, and family reunification (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022: 10).

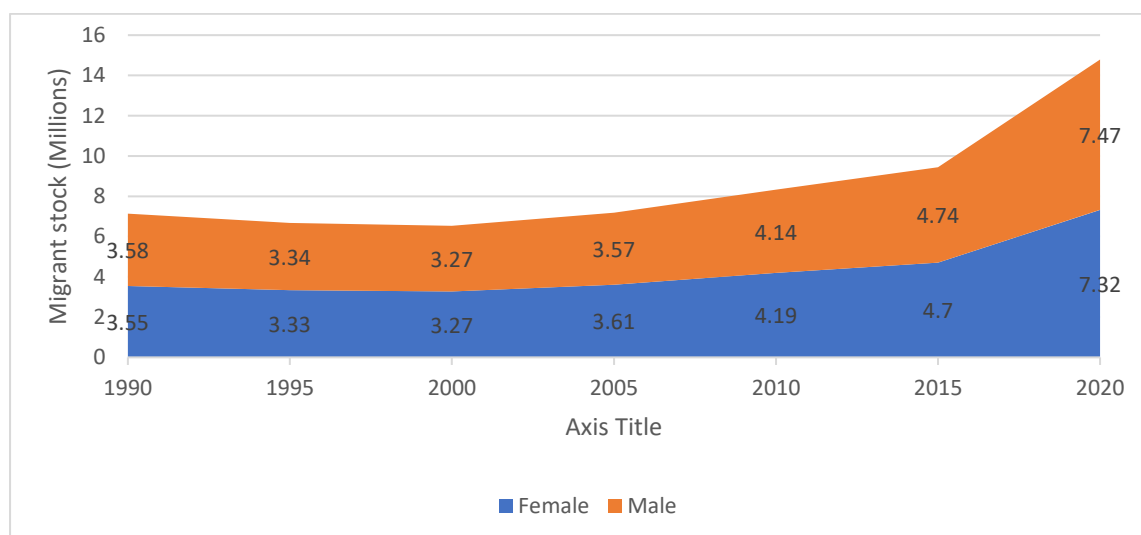
The Migration Data Portal<sup>2</sup> highlights that gender has a significant impact on the migration experiences of persons of all genders. They further note: “gender inequalities contribute to heightened risks of human rights violations, and reduced socio-economic outcomes, especially affecting women, girls and gender-diverse persons”.

## 2.1 Female migrants

**Gender and migration are intersecting factors that mutually affect each other. Migration can have positive and negative effects on migrants depending on their individual characteristics and conditions.** Likewise, an individual’s gender influences their experience of migration, including the risks and vulnerabilities involved in their journey (IOM, ND).

**At mid-year 2020 there were an estimated 7.32 million female international migrants in LAC, accounting for 49.5% of all international migrants in the region (there were 7.47 male international migrants – 50.5%).** This is slightly higher than the global average for the same period where female migrants comprised somewhat less than half, 135 million or 48.1%, of the global international migrant stock (UN DESA, 2020).

**Figure 1:** LAC migrants by sex (mid-year 1990 to mid-year 2020)



Source: Author’s own based on data from UN DESA, 2020

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/themes/gender-and-migration#:~:text=Gender%20and%20migration&text=Gender%20has%20a%20big%20impact,girls%20and%20gender%2Ddiverse%20persons.>

### **Box 1: Gender Based Violence**

Gender-based violence, according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), is defined as “any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e. gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty” (IASC, 2015: 5).

IOM recognises that each person has a gender identity, which refers to their "deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth, or the gender attributed to them by society. It includes the personal sense of the body which may involve a desire for modification of appearance or function of the body by medical, surgical or other means” (IOM, 2021: 4).

## **2.2 Girls and adolescents**

**Girls and adolescents represent around 20% of the flow of female human mobility in the region (UNDP, 2020).** Among the most vulnerable groups are unaccompanied and/or separated girls and adolescents, including those traveling with young children (their own or siblings), pregnant girls, girls at risk, or girls living in the street. Their situation tends to be less visible because very little information has been collected on the specific needs and threats they face, as they are less likely to seek help and support (UNICEF 2023: 1).

## **3. Migration cycle and violence**

**Migration does not cause GBV. However, during their journey, some migrants face situations where they are more vulnerable to violence.** Numerous factors influence a person’s risks and vulnerabilities throughout their migration journey. Alongside gender, a key factor is whether the migration route is safe and regular (IOM, ND).

**Unsafe or irregular migration routes increase the risks of GBV, including human trafficking. Migrant women, girls and LGBTQI individuals are disproportionately targeted by human traffickers.** According to IOM (ND) drawing on the 2019 Trafficking In Persons Report, traffickers in the Caribbean target migrant women, particularly from Jamaica, Guyana, and the Dominican Republic. In Costa Rica, LGBTQI persons, particularly transgender Costa Ricans, are vulnerable to sex traffickers. Women and girls from Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and other Latin American countries have been identified in Costa Rica as victims of sex trafficking and domestic servitude (IOM, ND).

**GBV affects women and girls in multiple ways. Studies show that the risk of GBV is present throughout the entire cycle of forced displacement, in countries of origin, transit, and destination (UNHCR, 2023).**

**In their countries of origin, forcibly displaced women are often subject to sexual violence, exploitation and abuse, forcing them to flee for protection (UNHCR, 2023).**

**During migration and within humanitarian settings, migrant women and girls are exposed to different forms of SGBV and to higher vulnerabilities compared with those men encounter.** During their journey, the lack of documentation and resources and the restrictions on regularly crossing borders force women to use increasingly dangerous routes with the presence of criminal groups and limited institutional response. Seventy-six percent of displaced women who arrived in the country of destination in the second half of 2021 felt unsafe during the journey, a significantly higher figure than those who crossed the border(s) five years ago (42%) (UNHCR, 2023: 50).

**Upon arrival in a new country, migrant women of all types often experience extreme poverty, a lack of support networks, xenophobia, the impact of uprooting on mental health, and barriers to accessing the asylum system or other regularisation procedures.** These factors, together with the hyper-sexualisation and objectification of women's bodies, increase their exposure to GBV. One in three women surveyed does not feel safe in their host country, and three out of five feel that COVID-19 has increased the risk of suffering GBV (UNHCR, 2023). Survivors of gender-based violence rarely approach service providers due to a lack of trust and fear of being revictimized, retaliated by the perpetrator, detained, or deported.

**More broadly, survivors of this kind of violence face challenges in accessing healthcare for reasons that not only include legal status, language barriers, discrimination, misinformation on the availability of healthcare services,** but also the growing spread of conservative views regarding sexual and reproductive health which pose a considerable threat to human rights (Calderón-Jaramillo et al., 2020).

## 2.1 Decision to migrate

**Sexual and gender-based violence forces many women, girls, and LGBTI persons to flee LAC countries, particularly El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras (“Northern Triangle countries”)** (Support Kind, 2017: 1). SGBV is often coupled with high levels of homicide, forced disappearances, and kidnapping in these countries. Family members, gangs, and drug traffickers most frequently perpetrate SGBV, but violence by police and other authorities is also widespread. Despite pervasive SGBV in the Northern Triangle (i.e., Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador), staggering impunity levels persist, with an average of less than 10% of cases resulting in conviction (Support Kind, 2017).

**Gangs in Northern Triangle countries employ sexual violence as a strategy to maintain control over territories and populations.** Rape is widespread and is employed by gang members to discipline girls, women, and their family members for failure to comply with the gang's demands and to demonstrate the gang's dominance over the community (Support Kind, 2017).

**This new migration context in the region (significant numbers migrating from Haiti, Venezuela and other countries) has led countries throughout the continent to adopt restrictive migration policies that increase the risks faced by the migrant population.** Venezuela is a country that approximately 5.1 million people<sup>18</sup> have left over the last four years, of which 84% have moved to Latin America or the Caribbean, and 21% are children and adolescent girls in need of protection (CEDAW, 2020: 10).

**Several countries in the region to take measures such as the imposition of visas (Ecuador, Peru and Chile) with requirements that are difficult to meet due particularly for migrants from Venezuela given the weakened institutional framework in Venezuela.** As a result of these requirements, irregular passages, cases of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, and population irregularity have all increased considerably (CEDAW, 2020: 10).

## 2.2 Violence in transit

**Those who flee their countries are also frequently subject to SGBV in transit,** including abuse by smugglers, traffickers, authorities, and other migrants, and their options for reporting these crimes and seeking assistance are severely limited.

**An estimated 6 of 10 migrant girls and women experience sexual violence in transit through Mexico, including violence at the hands of gangs and other criminal groups, smugglers and traffickers, police and migration officials, and other migrants (Support Kind, 2017).** Women and girls are frequently obligated to participate in sexual activity in exchange for protection, food, and shelter, or to be allowed to continue on their journey. Girls traveling alone and LGBTI persons are especially vulnerable to human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Few victims report SGBV or seek medical care, legal, or emotional assistance, and the vast majority of these crimes are never investigated or punished either enroute or in destination countries (Support Kind, 2017).

**IOM (2020) report that Venezuelan women, whether on their migratory journey or at their destination, are exposed in a generalised, systematic and constant manner to situations of sexual harassment on the street and demands for survival sex, among other forms of violence.** In addition, it has been recorded that there were more than 120 cases of women victims of femicide during the migration journey, from 2017 to mid-2019 (IOM, 2020: 2).

## 2.3 Violence in destination countries (re-victimisation)

**A significant number of women and girls experience further victimisation in their migration journey,** on top of the personal security concerns they already faced in their home communities. Whether seeking security elsewhere in the region or making the journey to the US border, kidnapping, coercion, sexual violence, and human trafficking are serious realities faced by female migrants already fleeing violence (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022: 11).

**The vast majority of victims of sexual violence in the context of migration are women and girls, according to a 2021 analysis from the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2021).** Most of these cases go unreported. But the information that does exist from law enforcement agencies, immigrant advocates, and migrant women themselves reflects a highly concerning pattern of revictimization and abuse.

**Between 60 and 80% of female migrants are raped as they travel through Mexico, according to a study by Amnesty International (2010).** When preparing to migrate, many females get a contraceptive shot, knowing they face a high likelihood of assault during the journey. UNODC (2021: 3-4) comment that sexual violence is a “common feature of all smuggling routes,” and sexual violence is used to “pay” for passage (transactional rape) or

“perpetrated for no purpose other than a demonstration of power, misogyny, racism, or sexual gratification”.

## 4. Gender and impacts upon the experiences migration

**Whilst there are many different reasons why people migrate, there are also diverse experiences of migration and displacement, influenced by a range of social, economic and political factors.** There are several areas where gender come into play as influential factors in migrants’ experiences (Birchall, 2016: 19).

**The structural and multidimensional nature of the crises in the region has had a disproportionate impact on women and girls, who face growing poverty, unemployment, displacement and migration, reduced autonomy and the burden of increased care work.** It also disproportionately affects children, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, LGBTIQ+ people and people with disabilities, among other vulnerable groups (Gender Based Violence AoR – Protection Cluster, 2022).

**The migration of women is determined by specific characteristics as a result of historical conditions of social discrimination, hunger and manifestations of violence throughout their lives.** This includes migratory experience during which women, adolescent girls and girls are exposed to greater risks. The hyper sexualisation level of migrant women, adolescent girls and girls has reached unexpected levels in the region (CEDAW, 2020: 13)

### Box 2: Gender Based Violence in LAC ( )

Four in 10 adolescent girls who have ever had a partner experienced violence at the hands of their male partner.

One in three girls and women ages 15 to 49 have experienced intimate partner violence in their lives.

Figures on the acceptance of inter personal violence tend to reflect that women and adolescent girls can “justify” violence. However, in general, social and gender norms in the region tend to naturalise violence against women and girls, leading to both low help-seeking behaviour and formal complaints.

Fourteen of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world are in LAC, the highest proportion being between ages 15 and 39. In some countries, the rates of femicide are high among adolescent girls, but national responses tend to focus on “women” as a non-age-specific population.

### 4.1 Sexual and gender based violence as a driver of migration

**While many of the push factors to migrate have been present for years, the demographics of arrivals at the southwestern border of the United States are shifting.**



As more women and children seek refuge from violence and inequity, it's clear that gender-based violence as a driver is having a significant impact (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022: 10).

**Escaping sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) is a clear influencing factor in the migration of many women and girls (and some men and boys).** However, experiences of SGBV can continue during transit and in host/receiving countries. Research has also illustrated the increased vulnerability of women and girls with disabilities in humanitarian and refugee settings (Birchall, 2016: 19).

**In Central America, the Caribbean and South America, women and girls constituted 80% of the trafficking victims identified in 2016.** In the case of Central America and the Caribbean, girls accounted for 55% and in South America for 37% of the victims identified in 2016 (CEDAW, 2020: 7)..

**Sexual exploitation is the most reported form of trafficking of women and girls in Latin America.** Women and girls account for 84% of the victims of this form of trafficking (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW, 2020: 7).

**Colombia:** In Colombia, gender-based and intra-family violence is the third largest event recorded among the Venezuelan population, quadrupling since 2017 (CEDAW, 2020: 9). Data on violence against girls and adolescents in the region reflects a concerning trend:

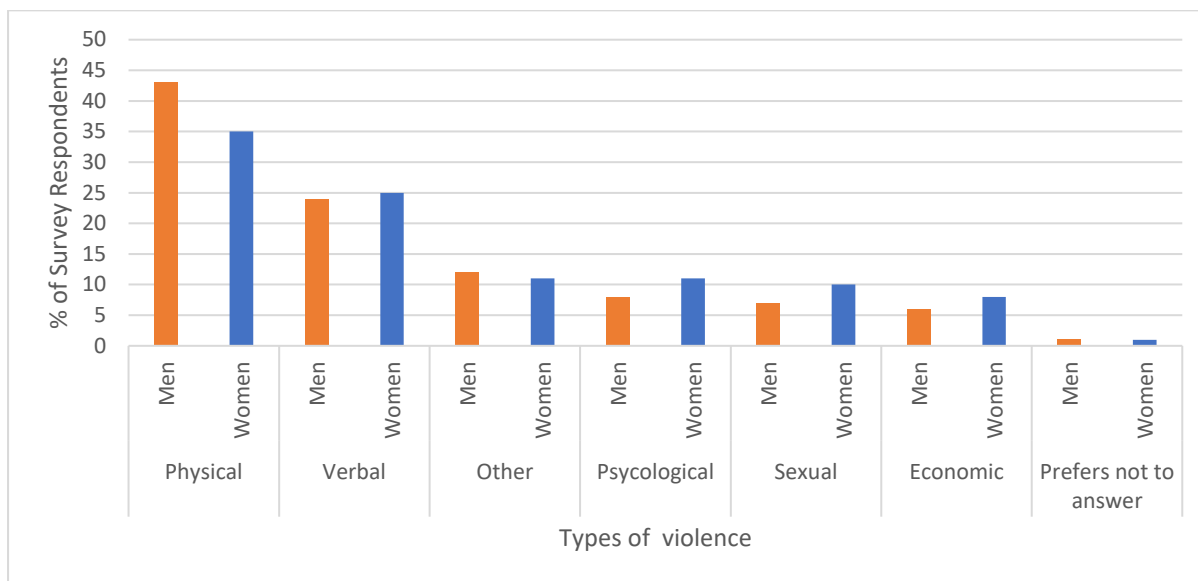
- 1.1 million adolescent girls have reported sexual violence. Sexual violence tends to be higher among adolescent girls ages 10 to 14 and perpetrators may be partners, non-partners or family members.
- In Colombia, 1,421 Venezuelan migrants and refugees were seen by health professionals for cases of SGBV in 2019. Nationally, the number of cases concerning Venezuelan migrants and refugees increased by 45%, from 645 in 2018 to 1421 in 2019 (Calderón-Jaramillo et al., 2020: 2).

**Venezuela:** In a study on violence experienced by Venezuelan migrants, the most frequently mentioned types of violence suffered by surveyed women were (IOM, 2020: 1):

- physical violence (35%),
- verbal violence (25%),
- psychological violence (11%),
- sexual violence (10%).

IOM (2020) report that Venezuelan women, whether on their migratory journey or at their destination, are exposed in a generalised, systematic and constant manner to situations of sexual harassment on the street and demands for survival sex, among other forms of violence. In addition, it has been recorded that there were more than 120 cases of women victims of femicide during the migration journey, from 2017 to mid-2019 (IOM, 2020: 2).

**Figure 2:** Types of violence experienced during the journey by Venezuelan women and men (% of surveyed)



Source: Author’s own based on data from [IOM, 2020: 3](#)

## 4.2 Labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking

**The boundaries between different types of migration are blurred, for example, people moving to secure well paid employment may find themselves in exploitative situations.** The term human trafficking refers to a situation where a person is moved by others through use of force, deception, coercion, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or through giving payments or benefits, for the purpose of exploitation. The type of exploitation can take different forms, but can include sexual exploitation, forced labour or removal of organs (Birchall, 2016). Human trafficking can take place within national borders or internationally. Most trafficking flows are interregional, and usually involve the movement of people from poor to more affluent countries (Birchall, 2016: 20).

**One example of migrant experience that can cross categories of migration types, including regular, irregular, forced and return, and has specific gender dimensions is that of domestic migrant workers.** Migrant domestic workers can greatly benefit from such employment which can allow them to contribute to the economic wellbeing of their families and home countries. But they often face serious challenges and find themselves in vulnerable and precarious situations (Birchall, 2016).

**Migrant girls and women experience more sexual violence because they can be subjected to trafficking for commercial purposes, forced sex work, and labour abuse and abuse of power that manifests in sexual assault,** among others (Calderón-Jaramillo et al., 2020).

**Cases of trafficking for labour exploitation have been on the rise in the region; for example, in South America, going from 29% in 2014 with 32% of victims being women and girls (CEDAW, 2020: 7).** Of the detected victims of trafficking, 12% were men 51%

women 31% girls and 6% boys (UNODC, 2018: 76). Of those detected victims of trafficking, 58% were trafficked for sexual exploitation, 32% for forced labour and 10% for other purposes (UNODC, 2018: 77).

### 4.3 Access to family reunification

#### **More women than men still migrate for marriage or family reunification purposes.**

Family reunification schemes tend to be set up using a male breadwinner model in which women can find themselves placed into a gendered form of dependency; assumed to be either economically inactive or employed in lesser skilled occupations, and seen as tied movers following the primary migrant (Birchall, 2016). Increasingly, receiving countries have introduced selective policies around family reunification. These can have gendered impacts. For example, where meeting a specified earnings floor is a requirement before an individual can bring his or her spouse to join them, this goal will be more achievable for male earners than female earners, given current global gender pay gaps. In this way, family reunification policies can increase inequalities, traditional gender roles and access to rights (Birchall, 2016).

### 4.4 Access to asylum and citizenship

**For refugee women and girls, there are other gendered challenges adding to their migration experiences.** Understanding and coping with the process of asylum application is difficult for most refugees, but for survivors of sexual and gender based violence and torture, this can be an extremely difficult task because the concept of persecution used to determine refugee status<sup>3</sup> has not been interpreted to include gender specific forms of harm (Birchall, 2016). Similarly, unaccompanied asylum seeking children face specific barriers in getting their claims heard and understood. Their reasons for claiming asylum, including recruitment as child soldiers, trafficking and sexual exploitation, also do not fall into traditionally considered types of persecution (Birchall, 2016).

**Current US refugee and asylum law does not recognise gender-based violence as its own category warranting protection.** According to the American Bar Association, US protections for victims of gender-based violence are built upon 20 years of advocacy and sometimes favourable legal opinions. These protections are tenuous, with any presidential administration able to roll back the decisions made under its predecessor (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022: 12).

### 4.5 Changing social norms and gender roles and relations

**Migration and displacement can bring shifts and challenges around the gendered behaviours, roles and norms that women, girls, men and boys are expected (and often expect themselves) to live up to (Birchall, 2016).** This may influence both decisions to migrate, consequences of migration and experiences of migration. For example, the

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<sup>3</sup> Article 1 of the 1951 Convention defines a refugee as someone who "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of [their] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail [themselves] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of [their] former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

experience of forced migration for men and boys can mean coming to terms with no longer being a provider or protector for their families. For women and girls, labour migration may bring new freedoms and opportunities to escape restrictive gender norms, but for both male and female labour migrants, may also bring greater expectations and pressures to provide for family's members left behind.

Calderón-Jaramillo et al. (2020), observed that migrants tend to be more exposed to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence due to the normalisation of such forms of violence in many LAC countries, particularly Colombian and Venezuelan cultures.

## 5. Gender and influence on the outcomes of migration

**Once a migrant or refugee has made their journey and is residing in a new city, region or country, gender and age characteristics continue to influence their experiences and the effects their migration has.** The consequences of migration can be considered in terms of impacts on individuals themselves, and on receiving/destination and sending/home communities, cities, countries and regions (Birchall, 2016: 22).

**Among the most obvious risks, survivors do not know their rights, the services they can access, and the protection system and institutional framework of the destination (CEDAW, 2020: 13).** Lack of information, fear of punitive State systems that promote victim blaming, a lack of protection, stigmatisation processes, language limitations, and a lack of prevention mechanisms allow many women and girls to fall into trafficking networks (CEDAW, 2020).

### 5.1 The gendered impacts of migration in receiving /destination areas

**As refugees and migrants adapt to new surroundings (both in parts of their home country or internationally) their lives changed in diverse ways.** Health and wellbeing, education prospects, employment, access to services – all are affected by migrant status; new inequalities are created, as well as positive opportunities (Birchall, 2016: 22).

**As noted earlier (and worth repeating here), circumstances at the southern border of the United States demonstrate, gender-based violence has a direct influence on migration flows across the region and is deeply tangled with cyclical challenges of inequity and poverty.** For those who choose to seek assistance or flee their communities, high rates of re-victimisation and bias further obstruct access to justice and safety (Gonnella-Platts et al., 2022: 3).

### 5.2 Impacts for individual migrants

**General wellbeing:** Not many studies have looked at the impact of migration on the wellbeing of individual migrants, and it is especially difficult to find evidence of this disaggregated by gender and/or age. There is some evidence to show that migrants who move from south to north rate their lives in more positive terms than people in their countries

of origin do. Migrants in the south tend to rate their lives as similar to, or worse than people in their home countries who didn't migrate (Birchall, 2016).

**Discrimination and racism:** In many receiving/destination countries, migrants and refugees experience racism and xenophobia. Large migratory flows and forced displacement can profoundly affect social cohesion among and between displaced persons, host communities, and communities to which displaced persons return. Forced displacement may undermine or strengthen social cohesion through several mechanisms, including the trauma or mobilisation effects of the displacement experience, and the impact of population inflows on goods, services, markets, jobs, and the environment (World Bank, 2023: 96).

Xenophobia in Central America has been shown to rise with the share of immigrants as a percentage of the overall population. The intensity of negative attitudes toward migration in the region also reflects historical tensions between host and migrant populations. There is dissonance between top-down narratives from government and political leaders and bottom-up narratives that spread through person-to-person contact, media, and social media channels (World Bank, 2023: 96).

**Employment:** There is clear evidence from receiving countries, both in the global south and north, on how migration can affect individuals' employment prospects, and there are strong gender dimensions to this. The tendency for women migrant workers to be clustered into part time, discontinuous or informal employment also affects their entitlement to social security and pensions (Birchall, 2016).

**Education:** Access to education is a problem for many migrant and refugee children and young people of both sexes. In protracted situations of conflict, refugees may spend their whole childhood in displacement, without schooling and without opportunities to gain the knowledge necessary to be able to contribute to the eventual rebuilding of their countries. Displaced girls are even less likely to attend school than boys (Birchall, 2016).

**Health:** The impact of the migration process on health varies according to several factors, including public policy, sexual behaviour and culture. Migration can impact negatively on health; low socioeconomic status creates vulnerability to ill health, and migratory journeys can involve trauma and violence in transit (Birchall, 2016).

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## 7. About this review

### 7.1 Suggested citation

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### 7.2 Review overview

This Knowledge for Development and Diplomacy (K4DD) Rapid Evidence Review is based on 6 days of desk-based research. The K4DD research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development.

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