Affective Cartographies

Migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls in Latin America and the Caribbean

"migrating is like being born again"

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Table of contents

Introduction

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Being a girl or an adolescent girl is no simple task. It is a time of multiple socialization demands to access the adult world. However, being a migrant, displaced, or refugee girl or adolescent girl is even more complex, not only due to the difficulties stemming from sociocultural and economic standards, but also due to the uprooting that girls and adolescent girls are subjected to when they are forced to leave their country of origin.

This document entitled *"Affective Cartographies"Migrating is like being born again" Migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls in Latin America and the Caribbean* highlights the main needs and challenges for girls and adolescent girls, including forms of violence they experience during their processes of migration and forced displacement.

The document also provides inputs and evidence on the issues girls and adolescent girls face, their perspectives, interests, and proposals, which can be taken into account in the design and implementation of public policies from different intersectoral approaches.

The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) conducted this participatory study between November 2020 and June 2021, with the following objectives:

1. Document the main areas of concern and need experienced by girls and adolescent girls on the move, according to intersections of age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, and migratory status, among others.

2. Analyze the testimonies and experiences of these girls and adolescent girls, highlighting elements of both violations as well as agency in determining their rights.

3. Identify the most common types of gender-based violence (GBV), and the protection and risk factors faced by girls and adolescent girls in situations of human mobility.

4. Characterize various forms of self-perception and resilient imagination that these girls and adolescent girls have, according to the areas or spaces of daily life.

5. Determine effects or impacts of human mobility on the emotional health of girls and adolescent girls.

6. Elaborate recommendations for girls and adolescent girls to promote a programmatic response and advocacy actions on gender equality, international protection, migration, and human mobility.

The report was elaborated based on the experience of 393 migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls who participated in the research in nine countries of the region.

Figure 1. Study participants

Participants per country
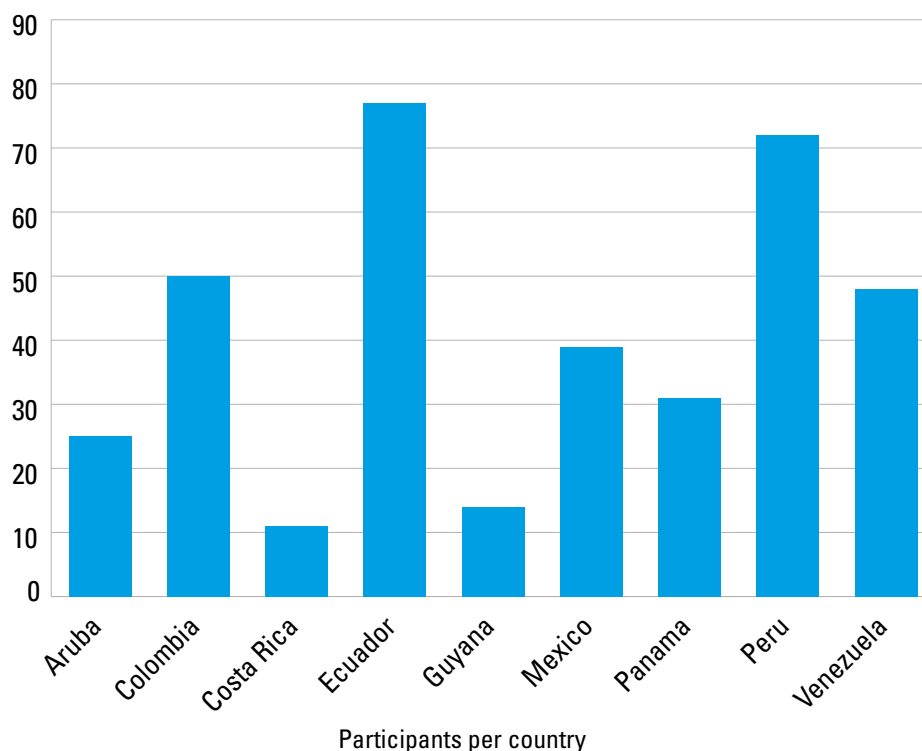
Source: HIAS.

Prior to this diagnosis, HIAS carried out programmatic actions in some Latin American and Caribbean countries that follow up on important national and international agreements on child protection *(see Figure 1).*

Both HIAS and UNICEF share their concern regarding the scarce role that migrant, refugee, and forcibly displaced girls and adolescent girls play in regional government discussions on platforms such as the Quito Process and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, among others.

In this regard, one of the most urgent objectives of the diagnosis is to highlight the concern for early marriages or unions in contexts of humanitarian crisis, in addition to other forms of GBV experienced by girls and adolescent girls on migratory routes, both in their country of origin, during transit, and upon arrival or return.

UNICEF estimates that there are 6.3 million migrant girls, boys, and adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Between 2015 and 2016, nearly 100,000 were unaccompanied girls, boys, and adolescents detained at the Mexican border. Around 30,000 were returned to countries of the Northern Triangle of Central America.

With the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, human mobility in the region increased considerably. Out of the 5.4 million people who have migrated from Venezuela, 25 percent are girls and boys (UNHCR), with girls being the most exposed to conditions of violence, labor and sexual exploitation, discrimination, and xenophobia (HIAS 2019).

This situation poses important challenges related to the response capacity of States based on the coordinated interaction of various sectors, to ensure that girls and adolescent girls are at the center of the migration policies in each of the countries included in the study.

The diagnosis highlights that being a migrant, displaced, and refugee girl or adolescent girl constitutes a difficult reality that is impacted by structural violence generated by some of the social norms framing daily life. For them, the situation of mobility configures a set of socio-emotional relationships that are influenced by perceptions and experiences occurring unexpectedly, hopes, or situations of abandonment and institutional helplessness. The cross-border reality that girls and adolescent girls experience is a crucial issue that determines their existence as "daughters of the road" (Mbomio, 2019).

The analysis offers a psychosocial characterization of the situation that surrounds girls and adolescent girls in internal, interpersonal, and institutional spheres. The objective is to recognize the situation in order to influence the design of socioeconomic and cultural policies that adjust to their individual and collective contexts.

The findings of this inquiry process were structured throughout several chapters:

Chapter I refers to the methodology used during the investigation and the techniques used to obtain the information in the development of the process. The second part exposes the aspects related to the deterritorialization cartography; that is, the migratory grief faced by the girls and adolescent girls who were part of the diagnostic interviews.

The third part focuses on presenting the areas that are most affected within an ecological and intersectorial model. In this model, violence against women and girls is determined by various factors and social norms that interact with and in relation to each other, as well as with the community sphere.

Chapter IV addresses the aspects that girls and adolescent girls identify as their basic needs to enjoy their fundamental rights and good living. This section delves into issues such as access to education, health, justice, housing, and recreation, among other civil, economic, social, and cultural rights.

The last section highlights aspects of the resilience strategies used by migrant, forcibly displaced and refugee girls and adolescent girls, their agency, or their *re-existence* (existing once again). Finally, the document presents conclusions and recommendations for programmatic action in the field of international protection of girls and adolescent girls.

Methodology
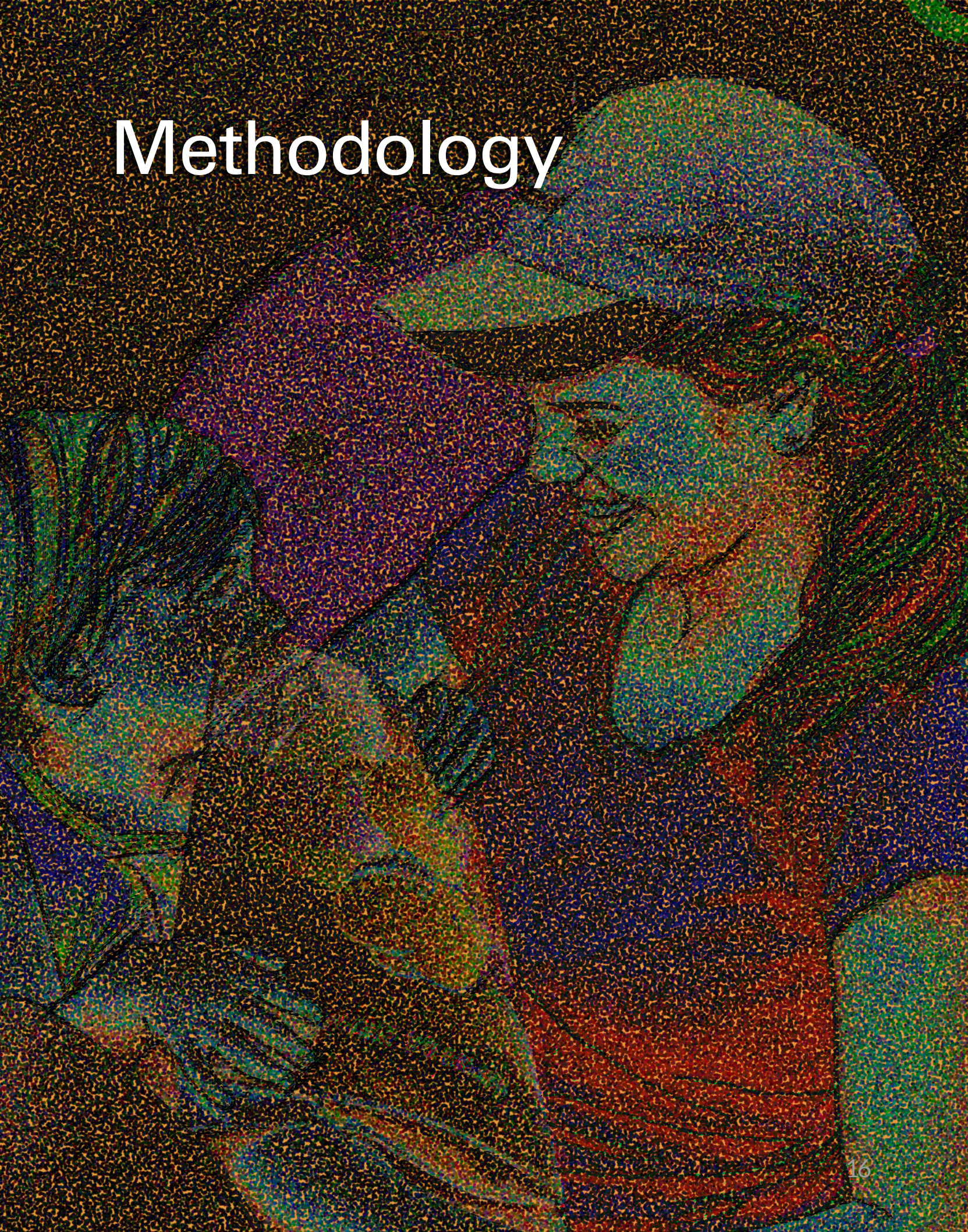
2. Methodology

During this stage of the research, a series of mechanisms and procedures were used to obtain information, such as approaches, tools, and participant samples or profiles.

The views and practices held by girls and adolescent girls concerning everyday life were a priority within the qualitative and participatory diagnosis. This strategy involved developing the approaches used *(see Table 1).*

2.1 Approaches

The development of the diagnosis started with a process of immersion in the available theoretical and practical knowledge, which allowed the girls and adolescent girls to be identified as political actors. In other words, as capable of producing knowledge based on their actions and feelings.

Diagram 1. Approaches used

Gender-generational

Rights

Intersectional

Intercultural

Cross-border
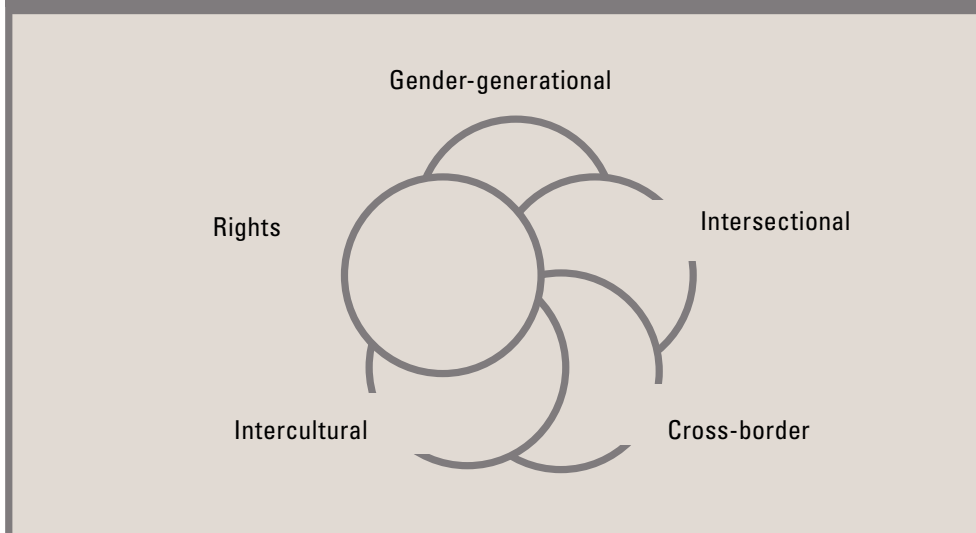
Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.
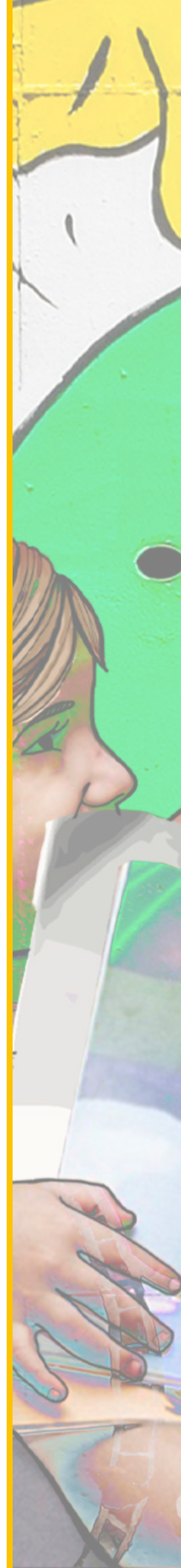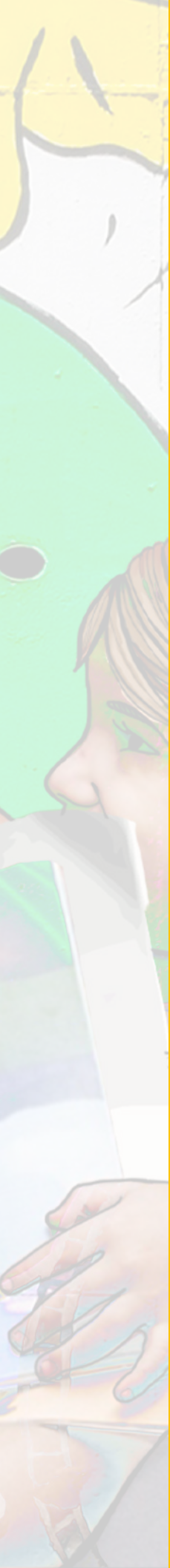
The theories that were considered highlight the understanding of the pluriverse of childhood and adolescence,[1] surrounded by oppressive conditions associated with the domination of the patriarchal adult world, racism, capitalism, heterosexism, and discrimination, among other systems that generate gender violence against girls and adolescent girls, in the emotional, physical, sexual, geographical, and economic spheres, among others.

Table 1 shows the epistemic intersections used in the methodology to address the "multiple faces of violence" (Young 2000) in everyday life.

Table 1. Description of approaches	
Intersectional	This approach proposed by black feminism combines a comprehensive analysis of the oppressive connections or links between race, gender, class, and sexuality, as structures that cannot be separated in the phenomena that surround violence according to its multiple manifestations. This means that dominance systems act interconnectedly and, therefore, discomfort or suffering, stigmatization, and discrimination cannot be remedied without a transformation of the multiple systems that create injustice and inequality.
	These intertwined perspectives present multiple dimensions of the phenomena experienced by girls and adolescent girls. In this regard, there are evident and specific pressures on those who occupy the places of greatest socio-emotional, legal, economic, political, and cultural contempt due to issues related to nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.
Gender-generational	This perspective revealed that the experiences of gender are connected with linear evolutionary logics that —rooted in an adult-centric outlook, where adulthood is powerful and valuable— confers a lower status to childhood and adolescence. Based on this premise, gender is configured according to rules, which are introduced early on. For girls and adolescent girls, this means the operation of a system of surveillance and punishment that is constantly turning against their life projects and their emancipation.
	These privileges of gender and age shape the perception that they have of themselves, framing space-time in relation to caring for others. This is detrimental to their needs, desires, and projects. This process of social preparation to become a woman is constantly intensified through violent practices in which any break or separation from the gender norm is rejected in the family, at school, in social networks, recreational spaces, and peer relationships, among others.

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1   The pluriverse concept is a critical decolonial notion that considers that the human experience coexists in plurality, not in the homogeneity of the unique universes posed by the dominant culture.

Table 1. Description of approaches	
Intercultural	This approach highlights the importance of having people of multiple origins connect with each other. Therefore, it focuses its strategy on joint communication and highlights common ties, for the mutual creation of coexistence and community. This perspective favors the configuration of a socioculturalfabric, based on values of inclusion that break with the tradition of denial, violence, stigmatization, and discrimination of those who are different. This approach also highlights the multiple experiences of being, saying, feeling, and doing, while also underscoring the strengths of each group participating in the community building process.
Rights	This viewpoint is institutional and focuses on the competences of the State to guarantee well-being and good living. As a gateway to the realities of girls and adolescent girls, it allows us to detect how barriers are constantly hindering the satisfaction of their basic needs. In view of this reality, short-term and long-term measures are required in terms of prevention, care, mitigation, and reparation of the damages caused by this exposure to structural violence, in the context of migration. This framework establishes a set of protection standards, commitments, or responsibilities, which the States have ratified locally and internationally. In this sense, this perspective encourages the continuous compliance, review, and expansion of these measures to safeguard the best interests of children in different spheres of action within the State, civil society, and international cooperation.
Cross-border	This reflexive outlook focuses on the experience of inhabiting different territories and the experience of simultaneously having "one foot here and the other there". Inhabiting the visible and invisible borders of the migratory cartography is an act of individual and collective resilience or resistance. This interpretation includes how legal, cultural, and socio-emotional norms define the ways girls and adolescent girls feel and think. They are part of a long exodus or constant diaspora seeking better options to free themselves from oppression and mistreatment. The cross-border approach redefines and transforms their vital alternatives to sustain themselves within the family and the community, creating multiple networks of support and sustenance. This cross-border condition also highlights the multiple experiences of breaking away from the established order in search of happiness or good living, transforming geographical, desire, or gender frontiers.

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.
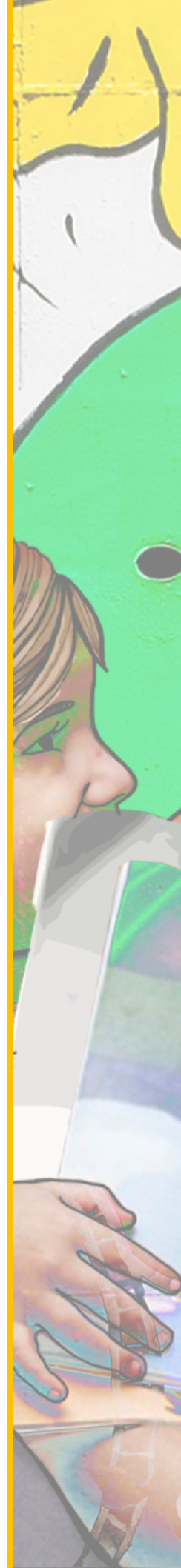
2.2 Techniques used and ethical considerations

The approaches described were developed through participatory research and actions. The tools generated an environment of confidentiality, communication, and mutual and entertaining creation , which was conducive to the meeting of and synergy among the participants.

For the development of the fieldwork, the study relied on the support of a team with experience working with girls and adolescent girls, which constituted a key point of empathy between the different aspects raised by the diagnosis.

Given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, part of the field study was carried out virtually or remotely. Face-to-face sessions that facilitated a more in-depth inquiry process were also held.

The research considered a series of ethical standards for informed consent and data protection, in compliance with the national and international protocols regulating the protection of girls and adolescent girls in every sense, during their participation in this study. Considering these rules, the names used are pseudonyms and sensitive data was excluded in the testimonies used in order to ensure the anonymity of the participants.[2]

The research team was made up of highly skilled professionals in the field of social sciences, with a background in psychology, law, and anthropology. It is important to highlight the skills displayed by these professionals in working with children and adolescents in different training, legal assistance, and psychosocial care programs, and during the implementation of the approaches proposed in the study.

The following section describes some of the techniques used in the study:

2.2.1 Group interviews: conversations in the form of a group discussion were conducted, and they included the participation of 5 to 12 girls per country. The girls met and shared their life experiences. These narratives were structured around three dimensions:

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2   For these purposes, the testimonies collected use fictional names. In addition, age is mentioned in cases where highlighting the analysis or the situation of violence is noteworthy.

Diagram 2. Dimensions of analysis

1.

Internal-Individual

Self-image, self-concept, and self-esteem

Gender belief systems: age, race, ethnicity, nationality, etc.

Practices around the body and sexuality

Meanings of the migrant process

Expectations and results of the migration process

Meanings of the place of residence

2.

Interpersonal-Community

Representative figures and emotional attachment; emotional disaffection

Violence, mistreatment in the family environment /friendship /love

Love experiences

Care experiences; care economy

Forced child marriage

Teen pregnancy

Family planning

Border context

3.

Institutional-Structural

Local response to the protection of rights

Perceived needs

Power and participation

Resource management

Emancipation processes

Social media, harassment

Access to services

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

A total of 72 group interviews were carried out, nine in each o the studied countries, ad they followed a criterion of division by age ranges (see *Figure 2)*.

2.2.2 Individual interviews: a total of 35 interviews were developed that delved into issues discussed during group sessions and provided an approximation to the contexts associated with experiences such as:

▶ Being an unaccompanied forcibly displaced or migrant person.

▶ Being pregnant or being an adolescent mother.

▶ Being a survivor of any type of sexual abuse or violence.

▶ Being exposed to situations linked to early union or forced child marriage.

2.2.3 Participatory observation: this common qualitative research tool was applied based on the analysis of eight cases that the HIAS team currently accompanies in the selected countries. During
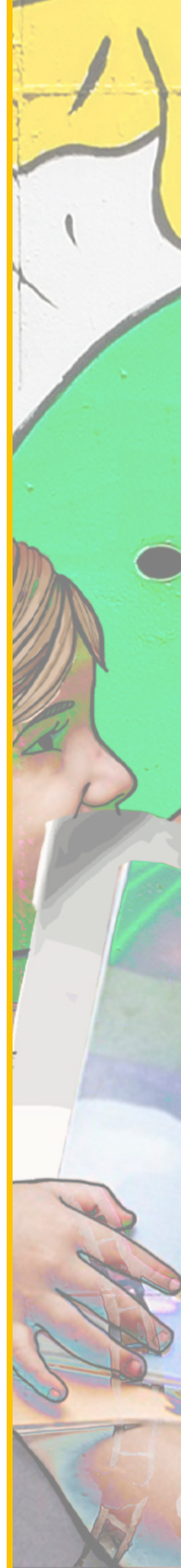
this observation, key factors that have an impact on gender violence experienced by girls and adolescent girls were detected. Case analysis was conducted using a clinical history-type tool that made it possible to analyze determining issues along the girls' migratory route. The use of this clinical history revealed the dynamics of expulsion, abuse of power, and lack of institutional responses.

2.2.4 Key actor interviews: 10 key actors and decision makers in the field of migration, support for refugees, and humanitarian response were interviewed. Regional gender and child protection experts were also consulted. These interviews focused on public policies for the inclusion of girls and adolescent girls into regulatory frameworks.

2.2.5 Group workshop: a day-long workshop was conducted with technical staff responsible for providing direct support to girls and adolescent girls at HIAS. During this analysis, the team discussed the aspects that they perceive and consider crucial in terms of the violation of the fundamental rights of the girls and adolescent girls that they accompany through pedagogical, legal, psychosocial support, and advocacy actions.

2.2.6 Documentary review: a total of 70 documents were reviewed which included research studies, laws, policies, protocols, and resolutions made by the States on migration, childhood, and adolescence. Most of these documents were analyzed using digital ethnography.

2.3 Sample

Snowball sampling was the technique used for the sample selection process, based on the records of accompaniment conducted by the HIAS and UNICEF team in the selected countries. Most of the participating girls and adolescent girls came from the Andean Region, with a considerable representation from Ecuador and Peru. In the case of Central America, the number of participants from Mexico and Panama stand out. Further analysis is necessary in the Hispanic, Anglo, and Francophone Caribbean. However, Aruba and Guyana offer a t meaningful overview of the region *(See Figure 1)*.

The qualitative sample was chosen using several socio-structural criteria: two age groups made up of girls in the age group of 7 to 9 years, and adolescent

girls in the age group of 10 to 17 years. The adolescent group was subdivided into three blocks of 10–11 years, 12–14 years, and 15–17 years.

The age group with the most representation was that of adolescents between 15 and 17 years of age (*See Figure 2*).

However, the size of the sample is proportionate if we consider a certain flexibility in the age ranges depending on the political, social, cultural, and economic context of being a girl or adolescent girl in the region.

Figure 2. Participants
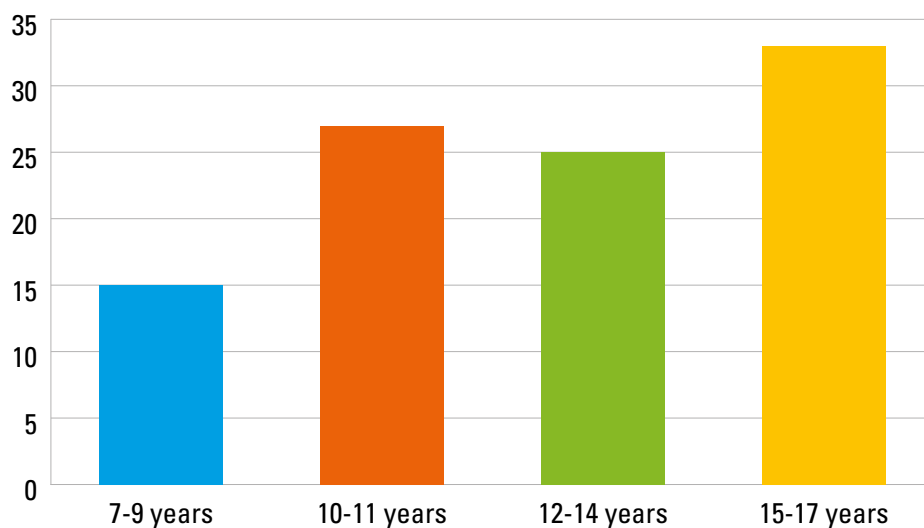
Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

In addition to their age, the following factors were contemplated for participant selection:

▶ Degrees of exposure to previous or ongoing experiences of GBV particularly associated with child abuse, sexual and labor exploitation, trafficking and smuggling, exposure to forced early unions, and early pregnancy.

▶ Unaccompanied migration or displacement process.

▶ Different types of migration: voluntary or forced; internal, international, pendular, or cross-border; irregular, regular, for labor purposes; return migration, etc.

▶ Different ethnic-racial origins, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.

23

The migratory origins of the girls and adolescent girls interviewed are shown below. Venezuela has the highest representation in the sample, followed by Colombia, Mexico, and Guatemala. Adolescent girls from Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua also participated *(see Figure 3)*.

Figure 3. Participants' countries of origin

Colombia 12%
El Salvador 5%
Guatemala 7%
Honduras 6%
Mexico 9%
Nicaragua 4%
Venezuela 57%
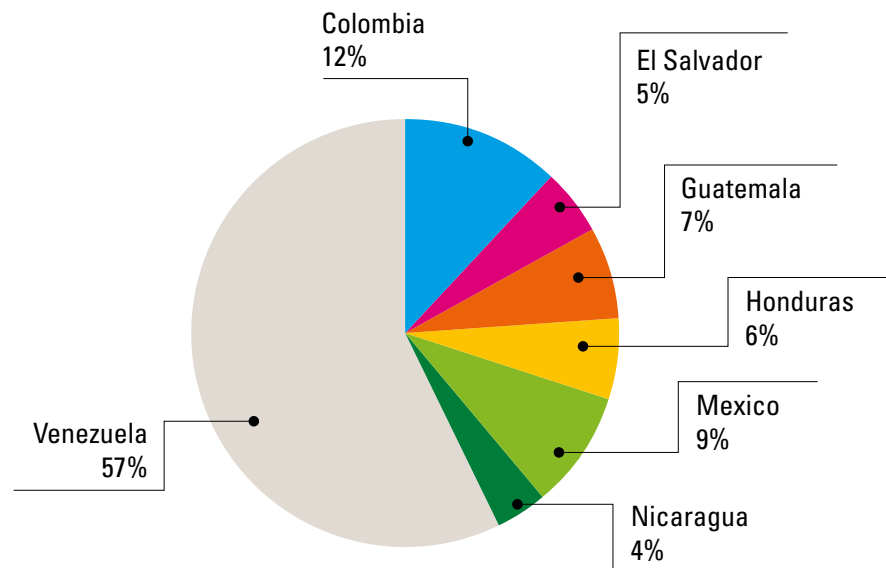
Source: Developed by the author.

The time spent in the migration process fluctuates between girls and adolescent girls that have been migrants for less than one year, up to those who have been on the move for 8 years or more. The largest group in the sample are those who have been migrants for 1 to 2 years *(see Figure 4)*.

According to the study, 55% of the participants have a regular migratory situation or are in the process of obtaining refugee status. At the same time, over 32% indicated that they do not have documents that prove their immigration status and the rest stated that they did not know what their migratory situation was. In terms of ethnic-racial origin, the highest representation was centered on girls and adolescent girls who self-identified as *mestizas*, although there was participation from Afro-descendant and indigenous girls and adolescent girls *(see Figure 5)*.

Regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, the sample included girls and adolescent girls identified within cis heterosexual parameters. However, there were some adolescent girls (15 in total) who self-identified within the field of sexual dissidence (lesbian, transsexual, or bisexual).

Figure 4. Time spent in migration

Time period	# of participants
More than 8 years	~12
5-7 years	~30
3-5 years	~50
1-2 years	~200
Less than 1 year	~100

# of participants
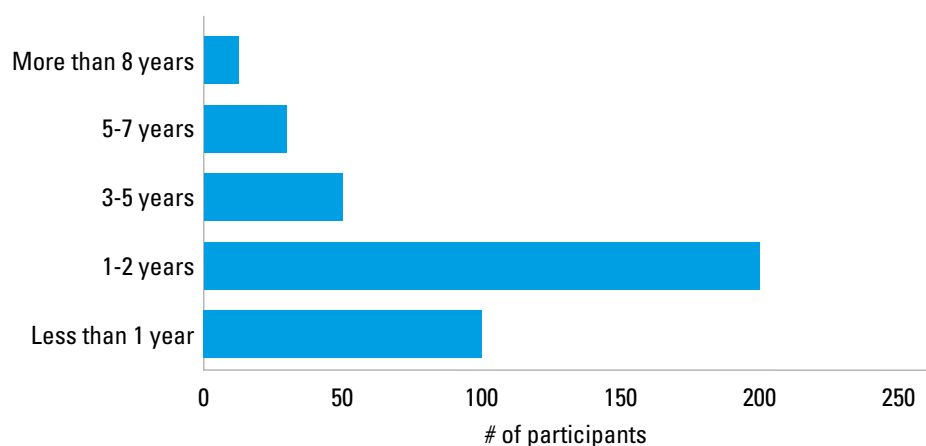
Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

Figure 5. Ethnic-racial origin

- Afro-descendant 10%
- Indigenous 8%
- White 12%
- Mestizo 70%
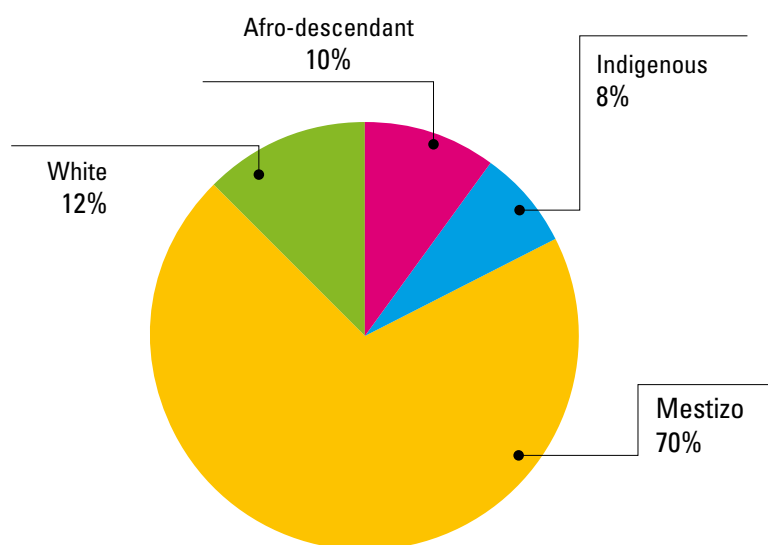
Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

Regarding access to education, most girls and adolescent girls attend school (66%) or are in the process of regularizing their school situation, which means that 34% of participants are not currently in school. Further, none of the participants living in shelters was receiving formal education.

Regarding the housing situation, most girls and adolescent girls live with close relatives in a house or room for rent. The significant number of people living per home stands out, with households of up to four to seven people in most of the cases studied. In Mexico, all the participants interviewed are currently in shelters.

25
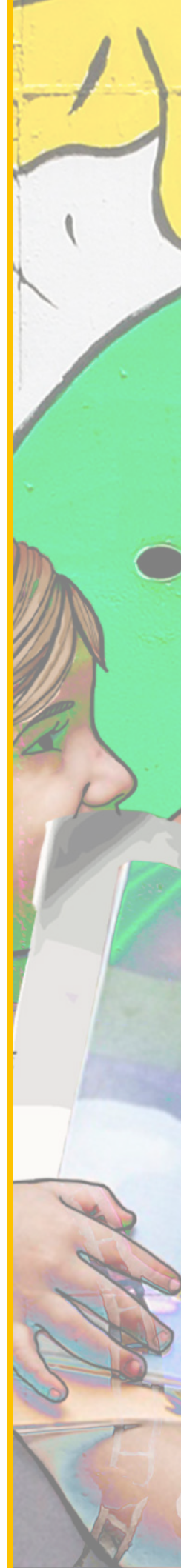
Deterritorialization and cartography of migratory grief

3. Deterritorialization and cartography of migratory grief

"The trip took me by surprise. They never told me anything. I didn't know how or where we were going. My dad just told be to grab a few things and put them in a bag. **I had to leave my grandma and my dog behind, and I still miss them so much.** *I don't know what became of my dog, and my grandma passed away. I cried so much for both of them [...]* **I was so afraid during the trip** *because the road was very dark, and we didn't have a place to sleep or to stop. Sometimes we would hear noises that would really scare me. I preferred to be awake, and I barely dared to sleep.* **It was a long trip.** *Many days went by. I don't know exactly how many. There were some women who were waiting for us with water and food to make the road easier, but* **you get really hungry.** *My dad even got mugged and the few things we had got stolen. We had to do everything at night so they wouldn't stop us at the border, but the scariest part for me was how deep the river was. We had to cross it at a place where it was raining a lot and* **I thought the current was going to drag me under [...] You're always expecting for something to go wrong [...] you could even be raped** *[...] I get the chills when I think about it. I still dream about all that [...]* **It was a long and exhausting trip, and we're not even there yet.** *I would just stay here, but* **my dad and my mom have to get together."**

(C. González. Personal communication; February 3, 2021).

The malaise experienced by the migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls participating in the diagnosis is marked by the lack of a territory of their own. Dispossession, expropriation, expulsion, and fleeing from the emotional and community geography coexist in the front lines.
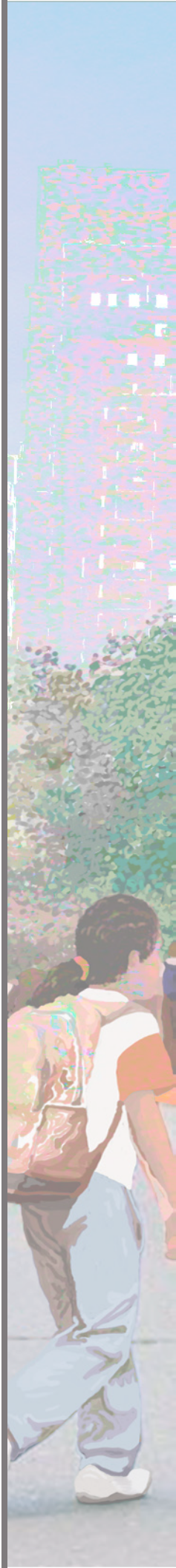
Therefore, the support networks that guarantee their safety and support are broken. Consequently, girls and adolescent girls find themselves at a crossroads due to political, military, socioeconomic, and cultural power struggles, both in the context of departure and arrival, as well as in cross-border or pendular spaces they transit. This cartography or emotional map is woven under challenges, wounds, or violence suffered by those who have no one to run away with, or where to go in search of support.

The dynamics explored reveal the impact of the emotional-cognitive rupture in the community fabric, in terms of losses that can leave a mark in our existence. The following paragraphs describe the relevant aspects of this affliction called migratory grief.

3.1 Meanings and expressions of migratory grief

The notion of migratory grief is used psychosocially to refer to the process of uprooting, suffering, and disconnection experienced by migrants regardless of the type of migration they are going through. In cases of forced migration and displacement, such grief is considerably intensified.

Migratory grief manifests as a tear in the emotional tissue linked to the discomfort resulting from exile. This separation of a person from their country or the place where they live throws off their time-space orientation, and affects their sense of belonging or roots, which the States redefine with policies that allow them to settle in the country of arrival or not.

The search for that sense of belonging or dignity in migration is draining since it implies a demand for socio-emotional and administrative management that increases the traumas and burdens associated with the excessive demand for care from the girls and adolescent girls interviewed. At the same time, migration also implies innovation and resilience, which are explored in Chapter VI.

Migratory grief for girls and adolescent girls becomes recurrent, which means it is an open process that affects their relationship with their environment, fragmenting their memory into two dimensions: "here" —the place where they arrive— and "there" —the place that they miss–. This perception of being foreigners is greatly reinforced by the bureaucratic procedures of the public administration that prevent the regularization or portability of documents that

may validate access to basic public services for girls and adolescent girls and their families.

Those whose migratory situation is not regular or who are not accompanied by close relatives are the ones who suffer the most from this disadvantageous condition at different levels. It is important to point out that perhaps adolescent mothers in an irregular migratory situation are in the most distressing position, which limits the possibility for intervention, since they fear the possibility of losing custody of their children.

Migratory grief also leaves girls and adolescent girls with a feeling of emptiness, helplessness, or loneliness. This feeling was described in nearly all the testimonies analyzed. They live through the process of migrating as something imposed on them by the adult world, over which they have nothing to say, feel, or think; something they must do or carry out. That is, they are subject to what the adult world determines they must do, without considering their participation or decision.

The following table describes the most significant features of migratory grief that were compiled from the in-depth group interviews conducted:

Table 2. Expressions of migratory grief in girls and adolescent girls	
Emotion	**Characterization**
Fear	This generalized feeling is associated with the perception of danger. This emotion wraps the body with the geographical territory from which they leave, the one they cross, and the place where they arrive as their final destination. Girls and adolescent girls experience constant processes of inferiorization for reasons of age, gender, race, and nationality, among others. Thus, a global and partial perception emerges, which deteriorates the relationship with themselves and with their environment. The principal fear of girls between the ages of 7 and 9 is of being robbed or kidnapped, while adolescent girls fear being raped or sexually assaulted. This emotion is reinforced by the scarce access to public services. This element is analyzed more in depth in the following chapters.
Restlessness	The experience of leaving home and literally "walking with a backpack on your back" generates a feeling of restlessness, uncertainty, and doubt regarding the immediate future.
	In several cases, especially for girls and adolescent girls that transit several territories, there is a feeling of anguish or anxiety that goes hand in hand with situations of depression and confinement. This feeling is more present in girls and adolescent girls living in shelters and in those who are unaccompanied.

Table 2. Expressions of migratory grief in girls and adolescent girls	
Emotion	**Characterization**
Restlessness	They experience exacerbated sadness and anger due to the context of "incarceration" they live in. Those who are in an irregular situation are severely impacted by this emotion that leads to mood and projection alterations. This experience is scarcely addressed by professionals, family members, or support networks who observe the constant state of shock in which girls and adolescent girls live. These sensations are disproportionate in those who flee from contexts associated with political, family, and intimate partner violence.
Nostalgia	It is an emotion related to longing, sadness, and a feeling of emptiness generated by leaving emotionally charged spaces, people (grandmothers, friendship network, etc.), objects, food, sounds, tones, and animals (mainly dogs were mentioned) who are part of the emotional fabric of girls and adolescent girls. Sadness, melancholy, and even depression are scarcely dealt with by protection systems. Girls and adolescent girls usually miss their bedroom, their privacy, their friends, and grandparents. They also miss the food, the clothes, and their dialects and language.
Loneliness	Adolescent girls expressed feeling lonely more often than girls. They often expressed that "nobody cares about what we feel". This is an experience derived from the lack of close networks that support their emotions and needs.

Social networks become the safe haven they resort to in order to mitigate that feeling of disconnection and abandonment. Many of them have experienced multiple family losses, particularly grandmothers. These losses —coupled with the uprooting they experience— activate the "void" and grief that surrounds the feeling of loneliness. |
| Confusion | It refers to a state of cognitive alteration that implies that girls and adolescent girls, particularly the youngest among them, are living with migration and/or displacement without "knowing what is going on". This generates positions of confusion and disorder regarding their daily performance. Not knowing implies that they must constantly overcome messages and activities that demand from them extremely rapid responses to the multiple strategies that adults use to reach their destination country.

Many interviewees mentioned irregular crossing trails as very shocking upon their arrival in Ecuador or Peru. The girls who walked state that during the trip they go through many experiences that require constant attention and being on alert as the usual way of living.

The confusion arises due to the fact that nobody tells them how, when, what, why, and for what purposes certain measures or decisions are made along the way. This, in turn, causes dejection and a feeling of being treated as "clumsy", increasing their feelings of inability regarding themselves. |

Table 2. Expressions of migratory grief in girls and adolescent girls	
Emotion	**Characterization**
Confusion	For those who migrate to countries with a different language, such as Aruba and Guyana, this level of confusion is even deeper, considerably affecting the sense of belonging. For girls and adolescent girls, not being able to express themselves in the "official language" constitutes a constant experience of frustration, confusion, and loneliness, among other emotions.
Not belonging	This feeling mobilizes the migrant experience of girls and adolescent girls when they arrive in places that do not have adequate inclusion policies so that they and their families can participate actively and effectively in the processes of reorganization of the socioeconomic scenario. The need to belong to or be part of a space is a basic need that is broken in the migratory process. This is especially true for girls and adolescent girls who must not only adapt to the new context, but they must also constantly and blindly obey the predisposed logic of adults in the family, school, and extracurricular contexts.
Frustration	The frustration is rooted in non-compliance or disappointment imposed by the socioeconomic and emotional reality within the context of arrival, in contrast to the fantasies or desires for progress at the time of departure. The migratory and/or displacement process seeks to obtain a "visa for a dream". In other words, upon arrival they expect that "everything will be better than before", because the intention is to overcome the situation experienced in their country of origin. This desire is constantly overshadowed by the context of exclusion experienced by girls and adolescent girls, especially when they travel in an irregular migratory situation, in addition to the disadvantages due to gender, age, nationality, and ethnic-racial origin, among others.
Learned helplessness	This condition was highlighted in some cases related to exposure to multiple situations of abuse in the country of origin and of arrival. This has to do with the increased perception of impairment produced by gender violence in everyday life. Feelings such as guilt, shame, and loneliness are related to this emotion. This is a perception learned from a context where aggressions are experienced as something natural or as something normalized by the family or sociocultural environment in which the migrant lives. This position is exacerbated in girls and adolescent girls living in environments determined by the presence of legal or paramilitary armed groups, citizen insecurity, and street harassment, leaving them with a sense of resignation and hopelessness in the face of the "here and now" and of the future.

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán
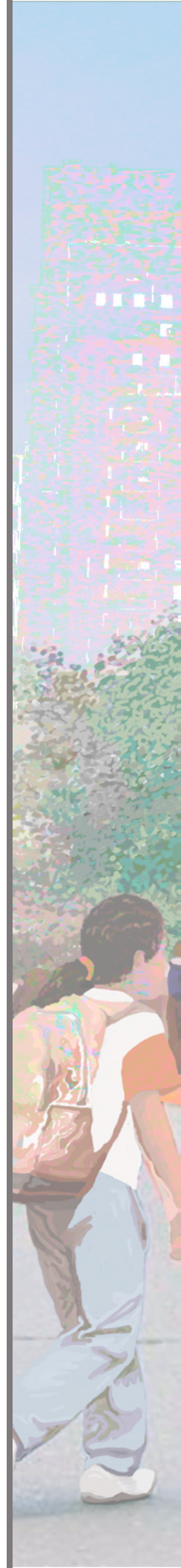
3.2 Migratory grief characteristics

For the interviewees, the processes of immigration procedures are not easy, quick, or respectful of their experiences. On the contrary, they live in the midst of the violence from institutions that do not take migratory grief into account, but rather reinforce it with bureaucratic practices that limit good living.

Migratory grief is about the hurt caused by the absence or loss of places, people, animals, objects, or things. In the participants, this absence intersects with gender mandates that involve self-denial, coupled with a minority status. This is determined by the central adult patriarchy that protects the subordination that they live daily. These experiences are also related to the experience of psychophysiological transformations that, together with the constant geographical changes, increase the feelings of loss, emptiness, and loneliness *(see Table 2)*.

In most of the cases explored, girls and adolescent girls lack the psychosocial support that would allow them to accept and integrate the migrant experience as a dynamic of creation, appreciation, and recognition at different levels. Rather, for the majority of those interviewed, rather than being a space for appropriation and expansion, the migrant, displacement, or refuge conditions becomes the "harsh whip" by which they are watched, judged, and attacked in spaces such as family, school, peer groups, social media, and recreation venues, among others.

The experience of diaspora or exodus that Venezuelan girls go through is lived as a long pilgrimage. They walk and go through places feeling that they are "neither from one place nor from another", but they do not lose the connection with their place of origin. As one participant put it: "I am Venezuelan, and that will not change. But little by little, one also learns to be from the places one crosses or the place where one arrives" (Acosta, K. Personal communication; February 12, 2021) *(see Diagram 3)*.

That experience "of the passage" or the trip progressively configures a hybrid and plural identity (or identities). This transforming element is not usually taken into account or potentiated by institutional support resources. Instead, welfare or paternalism prevail in the approach of the few policies girls and adolescent girls can access.

Diagram 3. Migratory grief in migrant girls and adolescent girls

Stages of
Migratory grief

Stage I Displacement	Stage II Tension build-up	Stage III Negotiation	Stage IV Acceptance
■ Shock ■ Stress ■ Denial ■ Avoidance ■ Idealization	■ Expectation ■ Sadness ■ Anger ■ Loneliness ■ Isolation	■ Review and adjustment ■ Preparation and exploration ■ Search for support ■ Activation of connections "here" and "there" ■ Exchanges – proposals for change	■ Openness ■ Adaptation ■ Coexistence ■ Recognition ■ Decision-making ■ Reparation

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

The political violence faced by the interviewees generates a deterioration in their concept of themselves, due to common situations of harassment, stigma, and discrimination. These facts —mixed with the stages of migratory grief— perpetuate learned helplessness *(see Table 2).*

Migratory grief shares common characteristics of any loss. However, its repetitive nature is typical of human mobility. This means that it is a type of grief without closure or end because the memory of what has been lived in the territory also moves to the new space.

The procedures of public administration and hegemonic models of coexistence determine the renewal of the stages of grief. Most of the interviewees expressed the coexistence, especially of Stages I and II as shown in Diagram 3. In some cases, elements of Stage III of the grieving process were observed. And in a few cases, there is an acceptance and adaptation

of the process of migratory grief since the country of arrival —and, even less so, the places where they are just "passing through"— do not have support structures for inclusion, recognition, and social participation.

Girls and adolescent girls must also go through administrative processes abroad that require proof of their identity in order to establish their legal status as "minors", which is understood as inferiority given the dependence on adult guardianship within the family.

Paradoxically, in these contexts they are treated as "adults" responsible for providing care. Both in families and in shelters, adolescents are prematurely assigned the obligation to fulfill tasks that emphasize their gender position. *These facts conceal the grieving process, which becomes a naturalized part of the* experience *of the girls and adolescent girls who were consulted.*
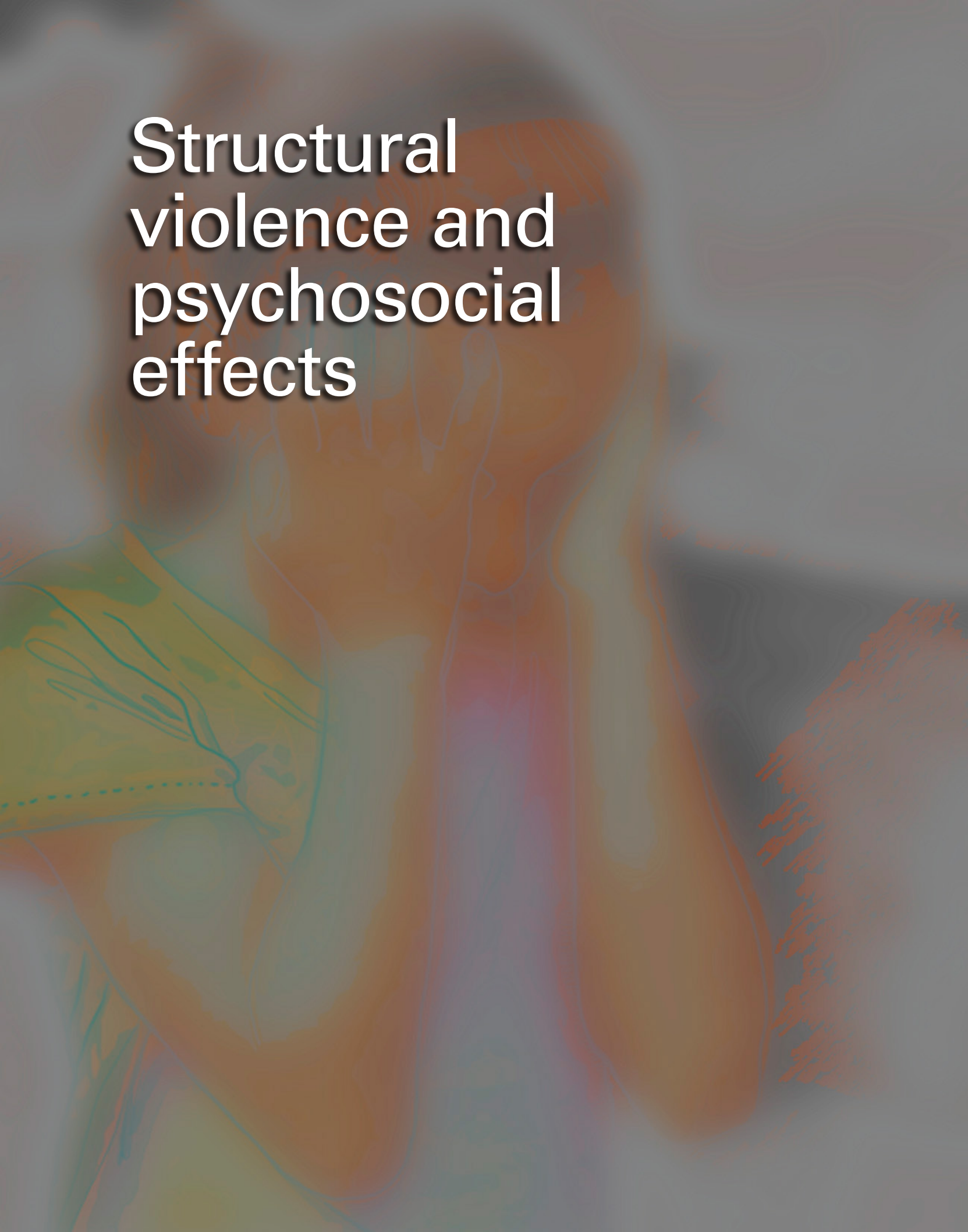
The interviewees do not have daily spaces for self-care and reparation from previous violence. During the migratory journey, they do not have resources or institutional mechanisms that contribute to their individual and collective affirmation.

During the course of the research, they significantly appreciated participating in the interviews because —for the first time— they felt heard and understood by professionals who understand and value their experiences.

Regarding the stages of migratory grief, girls and adolescent girls must put an end to the invisibility, concealment, and silence that mark their emotional paths. Every participant pointed out the need to strengthen ties of friendship, complicity, and support among those who live common experiences of migration, displacement, or refuge, as well as to establish links with the girls and adolescent girls in the country of arrival. "I would like to make more friends here. I'd like to get to know girls in the country better and be able to learn more about how things are here [….] It would be nice if the teachers were migrants too, so*….migrants too, that way, others would have a better understanding of what we are experiencing"…*" (A. Francisco. Personal communication; February 20, 2021).

Structural violence and psychosocial effects

4. Structural violence and psychosocial effects

"Being an adolescent woman means harassment"
(K. Martínez. Personal communication; March 3, 2021)

Girls and adolescent girls coexist in settings marked by injustices in their contexts of origin, during the crossing of borders, and in their places of destination. This structural violence is configured and sustained by discourses and practices of an individual, interrelated, and institutional nature, which prevent the fulfillment of their basic needs. These practices generate damage at the individual and collective level and have serious psychosocial effects on good living.

Structural violence relies on mechanisms or explicit and implicit principles that privilege one social group over another. As a result, the participants in the diagnosis are marked by the various forms of structural violence that can be direct and visible, or indirect and invisible due to age, gender, race, and nationality.

Structural violence is related to the hegemonic paradigms of the socioeconomic, military, political, and cultural organization of the countries studied; therefore, the violence experienced by girls and adolescent girls constitutes an invariable factor of migration and/or displacement. This is even more so when migration or displacement are forced. In other words, the configuration of the modern colonial world-system sustains logics of wealth under the oppression, exclusion, and inequality to which the people and communities of the global south are subjected. As a matter of fact, those who were interviewed are part of these "global care chains" that entail systematic aggression, not only against them but also against the family and the communal system that guarantees their coexistence.

The fieldwork explored four combined spheres of structural violence *(see Diagram 4).*

- ▶ Individual sphere: it refers to elements that configure the future of the girl or adolescent girl and the identities that they display as an individual-collective dimension. These internal aspects indicate how they perceive themselves; therefore, significant issues associated with self-concept were explored, as an element that describes the positions understood from the sociocultural, community, and institutional fields.

- ▶ Interrelational sphere: it emphasizes relationships with the close socio-emotional environment. This domain is decisive in the daily life of girls and adolescent girls because it is in the community geographic space where the types of abuse that determine their emotional distress happen. In this space, family networks and networks outside of the family are commonly created, bringing protective factors but also risk factors to their lives.

- ▶ Institutional sphere: it refers to public administration and its different instances as entities that are responsible for the constitutional guarantees for the exercise of their rights. This domain is of vital importance because it determines the economic, socio-political, and cultural support systems that may or may not promote well-being.

- ▶ Cross-border sphere: it refers to the cultural, military, and paramilitary ideological parameters that determine the organization of States at their borders. These structures regularly reinforce national identity through multiple social and historical processes in the shape of nationalism, often without considering the intrinsic permeability that comes with living in these geographic spaces in a pendular way; these are places that allow for survival, coexistence, and exchange. Far beyond the issues related to nationalism, xenophobia, and racism, different people support each other through forms of ancestral exchange that redefine the crossing of borders as part of their own identity.

The following sections detail the main findings regarding different types of structural violence.

Diagram 4. Spheres of structural violence

SPHERES OF
STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Individual

- Self-image, self-concept
- Dominant internalization patterns
- Body perceptions
- Meaning of being a girl or adolescent girl
- Meaning of exile
- Expectations and frustrations
- Exposure to migratory grief

Interrelational

- Figures of attachment and disaffection
- Codependency
- Mistreatment
- Dynamics of care
- Support and sustenance groups: social pressure and coexistence
- Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) practices
- Social network

Institutional

- Local protection response
- Violation of rights
- Access to basic services
- Power, participation, and lobbying
- Resource management
- Mass media

Cross-border

- Hybrid identities
- There and back; return
- "One foot here, one foot there" ticket
- Abuses during the transit or crossing of borders
- Support practices
- Re-existence and residence

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

4.1 Individual sphere

The individual sphere groups together aspects of the configuration of the self-concept of the participants in the diagnosis. It refers to the founding principles of the sense of "I", mediated by self-image and self-esteem rooted in the processes of internalization of socio-cultural norms and model relations of the cross-border environment.

As evident in Diagram 4, this sphere considered the meanings given to being a migrant, displaced, or refugee girl or adolescent girl, and to elements such as nationality, ethnicity, skin color, body aesthetics, etc.

Generally, most girls relate to an ambiguous or binary feeling, since the adult world idealizes this stage of life as a priority to prepare for the future, but it disables the present. This is to say that, in the "here and now" there are no daily policies that lead to good treatment, such as an intergenerational pact that facilitates being a woman from a perception of authority in relation to herself and her environment. In this regard, indigenous and Afro-descendant women, single mothers, survivors of domestic violence, unaccompanied women, and those without documents who face the greatest challenges in shaping a self-image centered on trust, autonomy, and initiative. These aspects are explored below.

4.1.1 Self-image and self-concept

The interview process captured the emotions indicated in the section on migratory grief. These are directly connected with the damage or trauma generated by the processes of inferiorization and lack of protection during a migrant journey.

In this respect, crucial aspects of the dominant culture stand out in practices that pose obstacles for the positive exploration of the multiple identities of girls and adolescent girls. In other words, they are not treated as such in families, assigning them care responsibilities between the ages of 7 and 9, and simultaneously increasing the pressure to structure an image of femininity.

In relation to public institutions —as emphasized in Section 2 of this Chapter— girls and adolescent girls are treated as foreigners or migrants and/or refugees, devoid of a sense of belonging to a community environment. This brings them face to face with the dilemma of having to survive constant attacks related to their aesthetics and their national or racial origins, etc. This set of mechanisms of symbolic violence sows in them feelings, thoughts, and acts of devaluation or rejection of themselves *(see Diagram 5).*

Diagram 5. Inhibitors of self-image for migrant girls and adolescent girls

Distrust	High operational-cognitive demands	Repression / Female genital mutilation / Peer pressure
Shame and doubt	Formal limits to process/assimilate their existential experiences	Barriers to psychosexual exploration
Guilt	Ignorance / Disinformation	Pleasure denial / Body denial
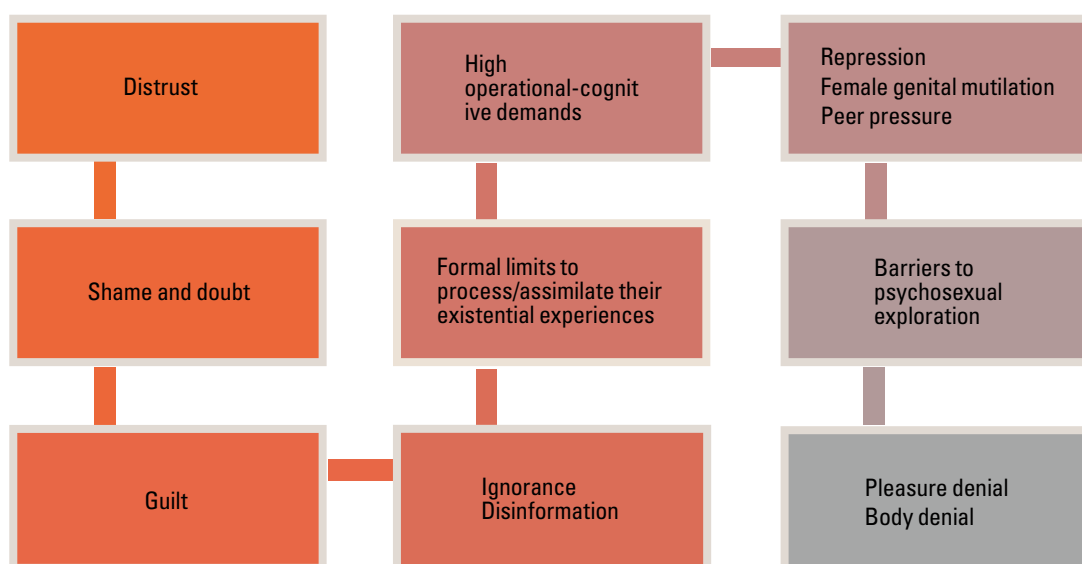
Source: Developed by the author.

The following are narrated testimonies that illustrate the meanings given to the identity of girls and adolescent girls. These meanings are rooted in the crucial pressure to their aesthetics based on ideals of white Western beauty and the imposition of the dynamics of care.

"For me, it means playing, doing my nails, helping around the house, and loving my mother." (7-year-old girl)

"It means being exposed to being criticized, being told how to dress, how to wear your hair, or if you should wear makeup or not. It is a hassle." (12-year-old adolescent girl)

"The strongest criticisms come from family, because if your hair is a certain way (curly) but the whole family has it straight, they'll iron and burn your hair a lot. They'll damage your hair [...] and a friend of mine had very ugly hair and she started to feel insecure about herself and started using baggy clothes and they started criticizing her body because nobody knew what it looked like since she was always covering it up. They would tell her she had to dress up, that she was ugly. Why do women have to dress up all the time?" (13-year-old adolescent girl)

The pace of girls' and adolescent girls' lives unfolds in a temporality marked by many responsibilities. This contradicts the traditional idea that childhood or adolescence is a "beautiful stage, free from responsibility, or without commitments". School, work in and out of the household, sports, art and recreation, and communication with family, friends, and boyfriends, are constant tasks strongly influenced by the use of social networks that generate exhaustion and stress.

Most of the adolescent girls participating in the study highlighted that they carry out a wide variety of activities common to caregiving, which are related to their gender position, both in and out of the household. They take on certain functions at a very early stage *(see Diagram 6).*

An interesting topic in the projection of girls and adolescent girls has to do with the people they admire. In this sense, the role of mothers, grandmothers, and aunts as central figures in their self-identification processes stands out. They are a source of inspiration and recognition: "My mother and my grandmother are very hardworking women who are always fighting for our future" (M., Brito. Personal communication; February 23, 2021).

After these family figures, they mention characters from the artistic sphere, such as singers and actresses. An interesting fact is that fictional characters and characters from their favorite shows highlight or accentuate issues related to the lack of food and poverty that coexist in neighborhoods and towns, as well as in the real context in which they live.

The interviews also showed that girls' and adolescent girls' favorite music is *perreo*, *reggaeton*, rap, salsa, vallenato, and bachata. Karol Sevilla and Karol G were the most mentioned singers, both of whom represent racial models that enhance the white/mestiza position of the "Latin American woman". Attorney Ana María Polo was brought up several times, with girls and adolescent girls considering her a bold and courageous woman who "defends those who cannot defend themselves".

The multiple meanings of being a girl or adolescent girl are adapted to the internalization of gender-generational, sexuality, and race norms that govern the self-concept. In this sense, the majority of the interviewees pointed out that being a girl implies having substantial differences with boys, especially because girls and adolescent girls must spend more time taking care of others and doing housework, while boys can enjoy the streets more, especially for sports-related activities.

Diagram 6. Time management

Time Management
"My time is not my own"

Talk/chat on the phone
- Family
- Friends
- Love relationships

Recreation
- Soap operas
- Reality shows
- Series and movies
- Playing with dolls
- Table games and outdoor games
- Entertainment with pets (dogs)
- Naps and strolls

Art and sports
- Football, basketball, volleyball, skating
- Dolls
- Dancing
- CrossFit
- Painting, photography and videos
- Theater, singing
- Gym
- Reading, writing
- Listening to music

Work at home
- Household cleaning
- Washing
- Cooking
- Looking after children
- Taking out the trash
- Grocery shopping
- Running errands

Studies
- Attend school (online, in person)
- Homework and extracurricular activities
- Leveling and validating studies
- Language and technical skills

Work outside the home
- Street vending
- Jewelry and food business
- Childcare
- House cleaning
- Animal Care
- Classes (daycare centers)
- Beauty salons

Social Networks
- See, listen and create content in digital platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Tik Tok, and podcasts, etc.
- Establish relations and contacts
- Search for information

Source: Jeannette Tineo Durán.

Girls and adolescent girls also acknowledge that boys do not go through processes of change as dramatic as menstruation, and the possibility of getting pregnant. This last element in the discourse of girls and adolescent girls highlights the fact that responsibility for pregnancy is placed solely on them since the expectation is that "boys always leave, they do not own up to their responsibility" (13-year-old pregnant adolescent girl).

On the other hand, the most pleasant thing about being a girl is getting attention, hugs, and support on a day-to-day basis. In fact, adolescent

girls complain because as they grow older, they stop receiving attention or physical displays of affection and their needs are not considered. One of the participants in Ecuador expressed it bluntly in these terms: "I am neither old enough to make decisions, nor young enough to be looked after" (13-year-old adolescent girl. Personal communication; January 15, 2021).

Adolescent girls feel deeply misunderstood and unheard in their families and their immediate environment. They point out in different ways that growing up physically imposes a social and family obligation to "mature" quickly, without considering their emotions and the drastic nature of their process of psychophysiological change. Further, "growing older" represents a paradox for them: they feel that they need protection, while the reality is that they are unprotected.

This mechanism reinforces codependency and activates notions such as the "take care of your body" speech, in terms of not getting pregnant or having sexual relations. Yet, this information comes only from a perspective of imposition and under forms of violent communication. This element implies being kept in a captive situation both inside and outside the house.

According to the findings of the fieldwork and in accordance with Figure 6, it is important to insist that the life of girls and adolescent girls develops in a continuity of time and space into which the adult world is constantly breaking through.

The understanding of time as a spiral weave does not exist in the experience of girls. The indoctrination they receive tells them to subscribe efficiently into the desirable femininity model. Therefore, the passage to adolescence is framed by ideals of reaching maturity, without considering or recognizing the adulthood that surrounds their daily practices.

As evident in Figure 6, most of the participants indicated that they must take on responsibilities daily. The older they are, the more demanding it becomes for them to provide care as an imposition and without listening to their needs, even while undergoing experiences of constant harassment. Thus, the perception of freedom in the experience of migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls is rare.

Figure 6 offers an overview of the dilemmas of the context to which girls and adolescent girls must adapt their actions. The interpretation of this graph aims to overcome the binary condition of a girl or adolescent. The idea is not compare them as separate groups, but rather to warn of the deeper hurt

or pain that adolescent girls experience, and the fear or mistrust that they feel. This is because their life experience faces a break between the ties of closeness or psycho-emotional support they rely on when they are girls and that no longer exist as they become adolescent girls.

Figure 6. Meanings of being a girl or adolescent girl
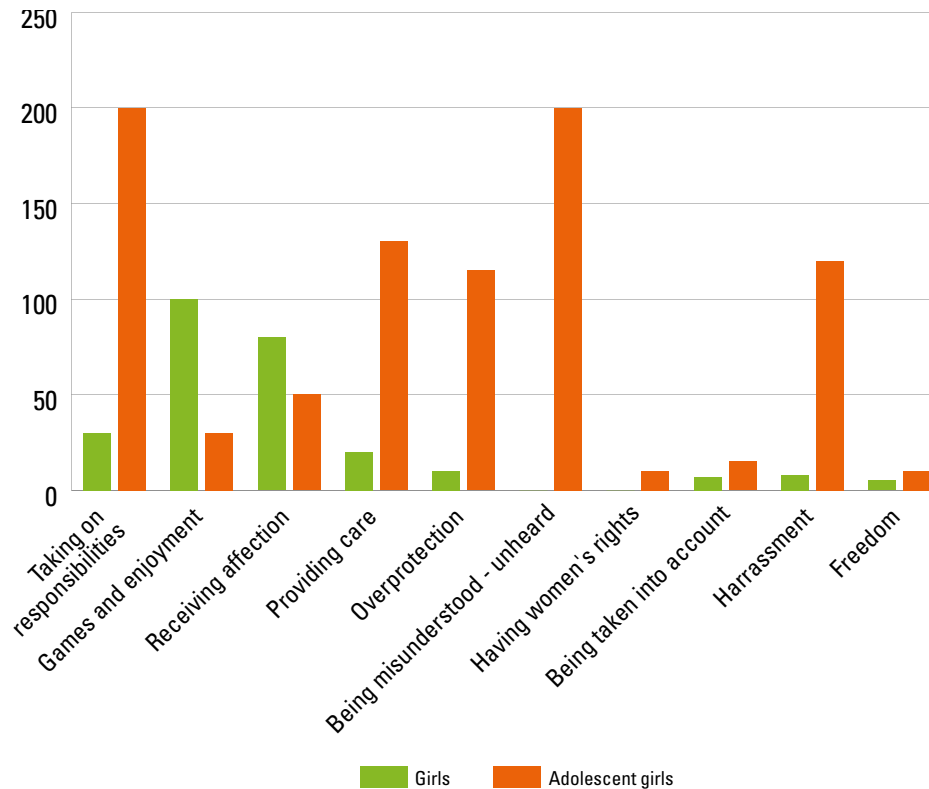
Source: Developed by the author.

In this regard, most adolescent girls agree with the following testimony: "It is a very complicated time, what we feel and say is not always understood. On top of that, even if they try, people don't listen to us seriously. They overprotect us a lot, we cannot go out, we do not have freedom, and we must always behave like they want us to behave." (M. Suárez. Personal communication; February 22, 2021).

Adolescent girls also pointed out that the process of psychophysical and social change demands an exercise of waiting or patience on their part to adjust to the different expectations and needs that emerge.

> *"For me it is normal. Nothing changes, but as I grow up I have to adjust to the changes and I have to be patient. Every time you grow up you change. Sometimes you don't like it, and you would like to change it. Then it goes*

away because you are becoming an adult, but you have to be patient:
that is the (key) word during adolescence for me." (A. Martínez. Personal
communication; March 5, 2021)

The girls mention aesthetics and body care as relevant; the use of a dress
and long hair, and playing dolls are the demands or mechanisms that prepare
themfor a desirable adolescence. *"It is a process during which we go through*
many obstacles. We learn to be more mature in order to become adults. We
must be very firm, it is not easy." (10-year-old girl)

The following box shows testimonies that demonstrate how the sense of
being a girl or adolescent girl is linked to the pressure of gender on age, or of
age on gender.

Diagram 7. Perception of being a girl or adolescent girl

10 perceptions about being a girl and adolescent girl

1 "They tell me that I have to do the house chores because I am the girl. My brothers don't have to, and they are older than I am."	**2** "The differences with boys bother me. They can do sports and go out on the street. I can't."
3 "You have to avoid people putting their hands on you […] Be responsible with your body."	**4** "The dresses you have to wear, even if you don't want to."
5 "I don't like that we have to stop playing with dolls."	**6** "It's hard because my mother says that I have to work. My sister and my older brother get everything, but she tells me I have to work."
7 "It's hard because we are observed all the time. There are always eyes on us."	**8** "The most unpleasant part is all the changes, like menstruation, zits, and lots of emotions at the same time."
9 "I don't like getting beaten or having my hair yanked."	**10** "They bully us too much, calling us ugly."

Source: Developed by the author.

Finally, this section also includes other testimonies about the emotional
ailment that self-image or self-concept determine. This imposes a daily

life marked by fear of the present and the future. Other examples mention independence, joy, and learning challenges, rooted in their wish to be themselves.

"You always need to look out for other people's gossip. What they think and say about you. That stresses me a lot." (12-year-old adolescent girl)

"The difference with boys is tremendous, because they always have more freedom to do what they want to do. It bothers me that I can't go to the park, go for a walk with my friends, or play sports that I like." (11-year-old adolescent girl)

"There is fun stuff that you learn, but there is a lot of fear. You are afraid, because there are doubts, questions [...] generally only the internet has information or can clarify doubts. Or you talk to other friends." (14-year-old adolescent girl)

"It is very difficult to learn to differentiate the good from the bad." (10-year-old girl)

"I don't like that afterwards you have to do a lot of chores and take care of the little ones. I see my sister, and she has to do many things at home in addition to studying. It's not the same for my brothers." (9-year-old girl)

"It's nice that they take care of me, they give me a lot of love. Especially my dad who looks after me and tells me that he likes girls more than he likes boys. He always looks after me, and always plays with me." (8-year-old girl)

"The most difficult thing is that sometimes you have children, the man abandons you and you have to raise your child by yourself." (14-year-old adolescent mother)

"I am experiencing myself as a new person. Now I can be more independent than before." (15-year-old adolescent girl)

"What I like the most is that I can play all the time, go to school, and take care of my puppy. I don't feel lonely with him." (8-year-old girl)

"I want to work, have a house and help my mother just like she does for us. I want to take care of her, and of my grandmother, too." (11-year-old adolescent girl)

"I complain about being a teenager. I'm used to the attention, to being looked after. I don't like that there are younger children, I feel bad because now I am the one who has to take care of them." (13-year-old adolescent girl)

"The nicest thing about being a girl is that you are full of dreams and you don't have to worry about anything. And that mom helps you a lot." (7-year-old girl)

"I feel very uncomfortable, because now I have to dress like this, covered up. I'm locked in my room, I don't see anyone and I don't go out. I don't like to be looked at or things like that. There are many places near my house, where they always stare at me. It has happened to me that I've been walking by and they have said very unpleasant things. Once I went out and that happened to me, and now I don't like going out." (14-year-old adolescent girl)

4.1.2 Meanings of being migrant, displaced, or a refugee

"I would never have left my country, but I wanted to be with my mother. I missed her a lot." (10-year-old girl)

The girls and adolescent girls perceive the migration project as the possibility to improve the living conditions of their families in the country of origin. For them, it is a plan in which most of the time they do not participate in terms of decision-making, and that takes them by surprise. For a considerable number of interviewees, migration is a "straitjacket" to which they must adapt, often with fears that they cannot communicate to anyone (*see Figure 7*).

The following section includes some of the participant testimonies provided in the study. They were collected as a group conversation; as such, participants are not directly identified to accentuate the collective continuity of the experiences lived.

"I have kept to myself the fear that I have felt traveling, leaving the house, without knowing where I was going. You just don't feel like talking to anyone, because they will always tell you the same thing: that nothing is wrong or that you are exaggerating. Or that you should calm down so you don't add more concerns. Sometimes they make fun of what you feel."

"I feel that there is a 50 and 50 chance in the decision. From the moment we leave the country, we are leaving against our will. Even if we don't feel good about it, we have to do it. That part is not something we decide, but it is for our own good. If we get caught up in being sad, it is our decision to keep on fighting. We have to tell ourselves that we are in this country, and we can improve."

"I already lived with my partner in Venezuela, before migrating. At the age of 13 I left home. It was horrible, I couldn't bear to live there anymore. I've been living with my son's father for 4 years (19 years old). My partner's mother was here and she sent us the tickets. My son's father had a passport, I only had an ID and I entered irregularly."

"I think it is definitely not something we decided. When we leave, it is not in our hands. It is something that others decide for us. Everything that happens during the trip, we just have to do what they tell us to do, and when we arrive in the country it's the same thing. Only sometimes do we have a say in asking to change schools if we don't like something, and they don't always listen to us."

"It is difficult because sometimes you want to make the decision and other times you want the decision to be made for you."

"I can decide who I want to date, but I like to consult my mother and find out what she thinks."

"Sometimes I can choose to go to the park to play, to watch some series or a movie, and sometimes I can get together with friends, too."

"I can hardly ever choose the toys I want because they always tell me that they are too expensive or that there is no money for toys."

"They don't let me dance, or do TikTok, which I love. They also don't let me have male friends. In my house there are many prohibitions set mainly by my father."

"They don't let me dress the way I want to. My mom always has an opinion on what clothes I can wear or not. For example, she doesn't let me wear black, she tells me that it is ugly and that it is not for me."

"There are sports that they won't let me practice."

For them, being migrants, displaced, or refugees are conditions that come about in the midst of fear, insecurity, and the expectation of future improvement.

When asked if they were consulted about the decision to migrate, 56 percent of the interviewees expressed that they did not have any information or made any decision about the process. In contrast, 26 percent stated that they have always been consulted or informed by adults close to them, and 13 percent said that they were only informed sometimes *(see Figure 7).*

Figure 7. Decision to migrate

N/A
8%

Always
26%

Never
53%

Sometimes
13%
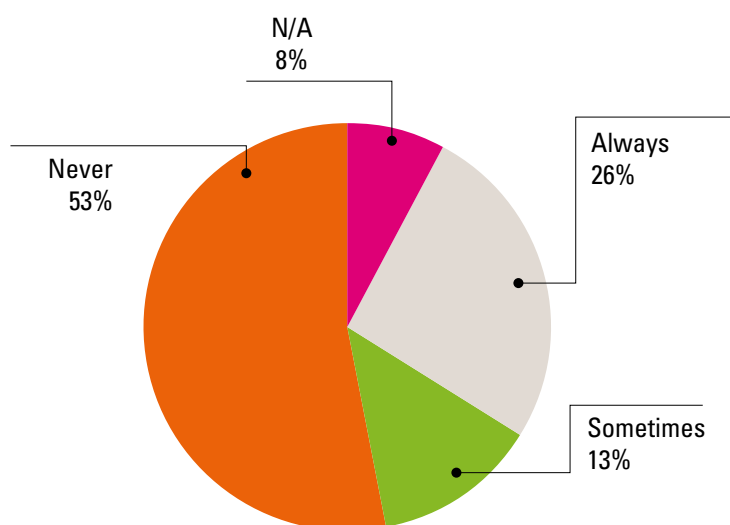
Source: Developed by the author.

The following table lists the aspects that girls and adolescent girls most liked and disliked when migrating and/or being displaced by force.

Table 3. Meanings of migration	
What they like the most/advantages	**What they disliked the most/difficulties**
1. Meeting different people. 2. People taking an interest in their culture. 3. Learning new stories about a place. 4. Reconnecting with family.	1. Not having the same opportunities as nationals. 2. Feeling like a stranger all the time. 3. The restrictions academic institutions impose to studying for foreigners (there are no quotas for scholarships, leveling, etc.)

Table 3. Meanings of migration	
What they like the most/advantages	**What they disliked the most/difficulties**
5. Food and music. 6. Traveling and seeing new places.	4. The legal situation, not having documents. When you reach legal age, the conditions to access education change. There is deportation, etc. 5. Separating from family (grandmothers, cousins, etc.), friends, and pets. 6. Not having a room of their own. 7. Not having friends. 8. *Bullying* in the street and at school. 9. Difficulty adapting to a culture that is not their own. 10. The complexity of adapting to the school system with different standards from those in their country of origin. 11. Leaving all they had behind (food, language, friends, objects, etc.) 12. Constant rejection due to being a foreigner. 13. Being unable to attend friends' get-togethers and gatherings back in their country.

Source: Developed by the author.

In the table above, the number of difficulties generated by migration is striking, in comparison with the advantages that girls and adolescent girls generally mention. The positive aspects usually relate to the element of novelty that migrating brings in terms of meeting or relating to different people and contexts, in which they too can learn new dynamics of interaction with their environment.

Pertaining to their dislikes or difficulties, not having privacy at home featured prominently, since most of them share a room with three or even up to five other people. In this sense, overcrowding is considerable in the stories that were studied, which is why being able to have a house or room of their own is one of their primary expectations, coupled with the desire to live on their own.

The feeling of being foreign is also highlighted in the testimonies analyzed, as it characterizes the migratory grief that accompanies the present condition of the participants in the diagnosis.

Figure 8. Typologies of fear

Not being able to study	
Not fitting in with the culture	
Military checks at the border	
Not seeing mother/grandparents/parents again	
Talking about what we lived	
Discrimination at school/on the street	
Prostitution	
Femicide	
Getting lost and not knowing how to get back home	
Hormonal changes	
Not having friends	
Kidnapping	
Theft	
Having your children taken away from you	
Deportation	
Rape	

0   20   40   60   80   100   120   140   160

Source: Developed by the author.

The Figure above is very descriptive of how their self-concept is mediated by elements of fear linked to the contexts of migration, forced displacement, and intertwined with gender.

Most of the situations have to do with discrimination, especially on the street and at school, followed by fear of rape. This fear rooted in the gender condition relates to stories that girls and adolescent girls hear both in the media and social networks, as well as in their immediate environment. Generally, they live in terror of being sexually assaulted by unknown people, neighbors, or relatives both in their country of origin, as well as during their cross-border passage, or in places of temporary or permanent residence.

Girls are very familiar with serious or extreme situations of violence, with femicide being one of the most common forms of violence: *"We know that many women are killed here* (referring to Peru)*. It always happens, there is a lot of news every day about it, but it is something that also happens in our country, and everywhere."*

54

Many of the unaccompanied adolescent girls living in shelters have a great fear of deportation. Some are also afraid that due to economically precarious situations they will have to resort to prostitution.

Additionally, it is important to emphasize that for some pregnant adolescent girls or adolescent mothers there is a growing fear that the State might take their children away from them, due to the irregular migratory situation in which they find themselves. Therefore, many times they decide not to go to health centers, exposing themselves to unsafe childbirth practices.

Due to the bureaucratic barriers they face in education, they fear that they will not be able to complete their studies, especially when they turn 18. This is the age when the laws protecting the universal right to education for children and adolescents no longer apply to them.

On the other hand, the fear of being kidnapped, being robbed, or getting lost on the way is equally relevant. Finally, it is worth highlighting the fear of not being able to create ties or bonds of friendship in the country of arrival, which is something crucial for their personal fulfillment.

4.1.3 Expectations, dreams, and achievements

> *"What I didn't like about leaving my Venezuela is that I haven't seen my family for a long time, I haven't been at home [...] I dream of standing up and seeing them all sitting down drinking coffee."*
>
> *"Getting to the U.S. to be better off."*
>
> *"To get a refugee status and that nothing happens to my family."*
>
> *"That they let us through."*
>
> *"I want to travel around the world."*

The main expectations of adolescent girls are related to studying, working, owning a car and a house, marrying, and having children. For girls, in addition to studying and working, the most important thing is to be able to get together with family members, pets, and friends from school in their country of origin. Some girls and adolescent girls also want to continue migrating and expanding their alternatives for economic improvement.

The countries most mentioned as a migratory destination were Germany, Canada, the United States, France, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Russia,

and Japan. Many of these choices are associated with places where close relatives live.

Girls and adolescent girls mentioned returning as a possibility *"if things change"*, as many of the Venezuelan and Colombian participants stated. On the contrary, others emphasize that they do not want to leave the current country: *"I feel good here. I like how they treat me, that there is not so much insecurity, I already have friends and I like my school."* This means that when the needs of the educational field and friendship are met for them, there is a sense of achievement of the migratory project.

Study and work projects are structuring factors in their expectations. Beyond the difficulties they currently face in accessing the educational system, girls and adolescent girls continue to place academic training as the main contributing element to their quality of life and that of their families.

As evident in Figure 9, the main expectation for most of the participants is to obtain a recognized refugee status, as a crucial element to access services *(see Figure 9)*.

Figure 9. Perspectives for the future
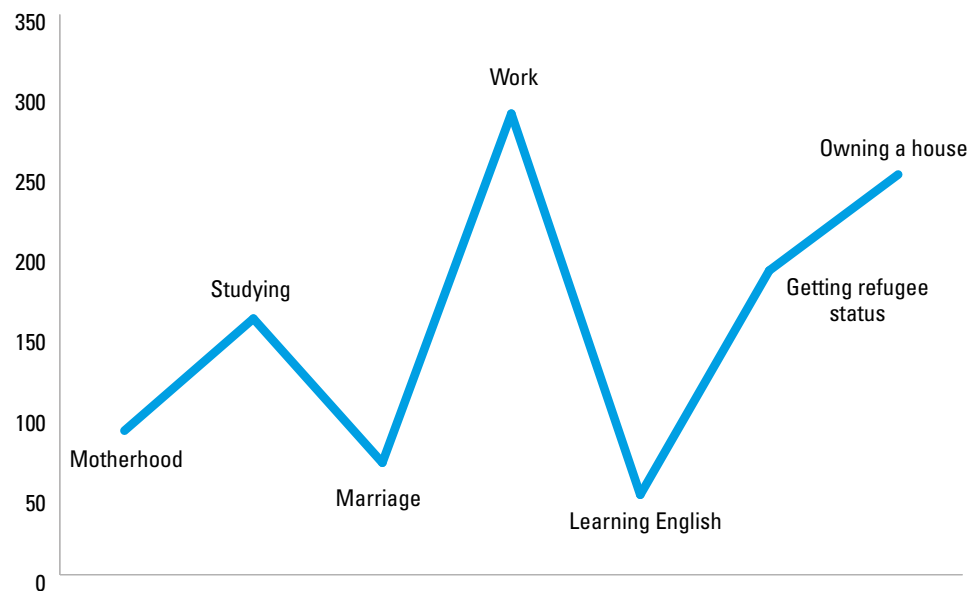
Source: Developed by the author.

The following Figure highlights the main professions that they would like to study.

Figure 10. Favorite professions
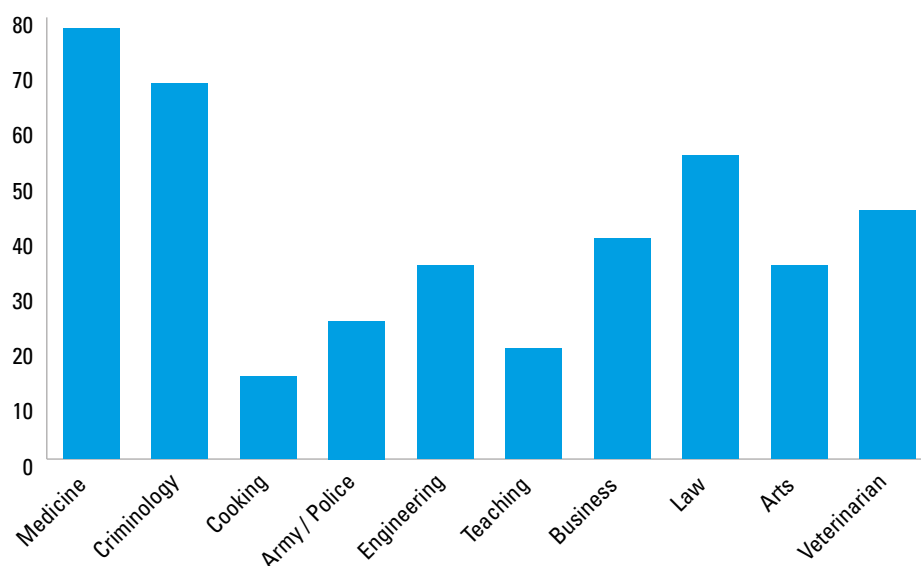
Source: Developed by the author.

Professions in the field of medicine and law are preferred. Veterinary medicine, the arts, business, and engineering are also significantly mentioned. To a lesser extent, but not less significantly, they mention military and police services. All these professions relate to caring for the family and contributing to their economic sustenance, and to offering defense and security in the context of migration and/or displacement and refuge.

An 11-year-old Afro-descendant adolescent girl stated: "*I would like to work in whatever is available to support my mother.*" This testimony reveals how gender and race in the labor market is determining from a very early age for Afro-descendant girls, in this perception that they must conform to "whatever is available".

The fieldwork also determined that most of the interviewees perceive that the migratory project contributes to their emancipation by bringing about better job opportunities, as expressed by 11-year-old Lucia: *"We migrants suffer discrimination, but we have better opportunities to work, that's why we migrate."*

Testimonies about the perspectives of autonomy through the generation of income for themselves and their families demonstrate how girls and adolescent girls embody the experiences of the adult world and coexist in intergenerational and gender dynamics, linked to care. In some examples, it is striking that the migratory process is seen as part of a continuous vital goal.

57

"I see myself out of the country. I don't know in which country, but I do see myself out of this country as well, studying and improving my family's economy, supporting my mother." (14-year-old adolescent girl)

Support for mothers and grandmothers is an aspect that is present in the stories analyzed. The aspiration to study in the future is directly linked to the present, specifically to the material conditions of exclusion; to the denial of rights they experience in their migrant, displaced, and/or refugee condition; and in the reflection or generational portrait of their mothers.

Family reunification and return aspects are also present among their wishes. However, it is also striking that, for some of the girls and adolescent girls interviewed, the main objective is to be able to live by themselves or with friends. This element is a consequence of the lack of privacy and of family violence.

Testimonies about the perception of the future
"I see myself in another country, with a career and progressing. With a car and a house."
"I want to live in the U.S., be a flight attendant because my mother wanted to do that and she wants me to do it. I want to buy a house for my mother."
"I would like to work and live by myself."
"I want to be a lawyer, buy a house, and have privacy."
"I want to be a singer, artist, dancer, or actress."
"I like robotic engineering. I also like to dance, sing, and paint."
"I want to be a doctor to go to another country, like Africa, and help other children."
"I want to study criminology and investigate murders and kidnappings."
"I want to study veterinary medicine to help animals."
"I want to be a lawyer to defend the rights of migrants from Venezuela."

"I want to be a famous actress and a professional entrepreneur."

"The only thing I dream or wish to do is to see my mother again."

"I want to do everything I can to work and help my mother."

"I see myself becoming famous on TikTok."

"I want to be a law graduate, have my own company, my own law firm. Maybe get married, maybe not. Have several houses in several countries. I would like to be a painter too. I would like to live with my best friend. She also likes law."

"I imagine myself working, having a house and helping my mother."

"I see myself studying communications, and spending time with my grandfather."

"I think that in 20 years I will be in or going back to Venezuela, if everything has changed already."

"I see myself going back home, back to Venezuela."

"I see myself with children, I want to be a mother."

The expectation of getting married was only mentioned by some of the adolescent girls. It was not a generalized position among the interviewees. For those who do want to get married, they believe that the ideal age is between 20 and 25 years of age, after completing higher education. Similarly, they mentioned the ideal age for having children is between 20 and 30 years of age.

The following section includes a detailed analysis of the fact that for many girls and adolescent girls, the notion of establishing a relationships and the confidence needed to create lasting bonds of trust are quite deteriorated, depending on the experiences of violence that sisters, mothers, and aunts have gone through in their families.

4.2 Interpersonal sphere

"I would not like to fall in love, because we have to clean things and cook, we cannot even leave the house." (Peru; 8-year-old girl)

"My mother is always upset, and she always hits me, everything I do annoys her." (7-year-old girl)

The interpersonal sphere was analyzed considering the dynamics of coexistence included in Diagram 8. These dynamics or links, including migration itself, retain the character of displacement, which varies in intensity and in the forms of contact, depending on the migratory path of the families.

According to interviews with unaccompanied girls and adolescent girls, they are the ones who live in greater contexts of disaffection and violation of their rights. At the same time, they are the ones who most appreciate or need the configuration of emotional networks during their migratory journey.

Diagram 8. Relationships with their close environment

Mothers - Fathers
Grandmothers
Sisters and brothers
Stepfathers/stepmothers
Uncles, aunts, cousins

Relationships with friends in the country of origin
Relations in the country of arrival
Relationships during the journey

Family

Friends

Erotic affections that they developed throughout their life
Lovers, boyfriends, or couples

Immediate environment
Geographical space
Relations with the neighbor-hood or the community with whom the journey is made

Love

Neighbors

Source: Developed by the author.

The interpersonal sphere is crucial, because it determines the levels of openness or repression lived with the figures of attachment or representative figures in the field of emotional containment. These primary ties play a crucial role in the configuration of the self-concept and they function as instruments

that guide the dominant sociocultural guidelines, determining defensive resources that facilitate or hinder the personal identification processes of girls and adolescent girls. These mechanisms function as a guideline for the configuration of the life plan of those consulted. The following diagram shows the violent aspects that structure this plan.

Diagram 9. Defensive mechanisms in the emotional environment

Repression: this refers to situations that induce or condition girls and adolescent girls to "erase" or keep silent about their experiences. When put in this position, they must acquire an external-internal language that makes it seem like "nothing is going on" around them and everything is normal or expected. All trauma or tension caused by migratory grief is prohibited.

Denial: this refers to verbal and non-verbal, physical and sexual messages that signal the annulment of their will, perceiving themselves as inferior or less than others; they do not have the right to consent or express their desire.

Compensation: forms of resistance or avoidance of migrant grief and violence, highlighting only "the good" or functional aspects of socialization patterns.

Isolation: withdrawal or abandonment of social relationships due to the constant harassment they face.

Regression: estrangement, lacking, or constant desire to return to moments or cycles of early childhood because they felt more cared for and protected in their environment.

Reactive training: state of alert where they are not at peace. The aggressions to which they are exposed generate aversion and normalization of the dangers of the road.

Source: Developed by the author.

"My mother hits us with a rubber flip-flop and won't let us go out, but that's the way it is."

"It depends on the problem, but I don't say anything to anyone. Maybe just my best friend."

"In my family they gossip a lot about everyone's personal things. They are constantly meddling in everyone else's business. It makes me very angry because they mess with me. Oh, my God! Why do they mess with me, if I never mess with them? They'll say things about you that are not true. Why do they do that? I don't know […] I prefer not to say anything. Sometimes I ignore them because they talk a lot. For instance, there is an aunt who

believes both of us are whores. She doesn't let us in the house. She thinks we are going to steal away the man who is there. Why? If we go to her house, we are not provoking him with the way we dress. If we go there wearing shorts, they'll say: 'The whores came to steal my husband.' As if he were good looking, but he's an idiot."

A violent communication script is the common denominator for the experiences they go through in family settings, love relationships and, to a lesser extent, in relationships with friends. However, even peer pressure mechanisms are present in these scenarios.

The forms of violence identified can be visible and direct. There are also indirect aggressions that operate on the emotional stage, including emotional dismissal, gaslighting,[3] constant pressure, and harassment. As one of the adolescent participants stated: *"Being an adolescent woman means enduring harassment all the time."* The main finding is that girls and adolescent girls coexist among relationships in which harsh criticism prevail and the constant judgment of their actions is common in violent communication *(see Diagram 10).*

Table 4 describes typologies of violence that occur in the emotional scenarios explored. These violent speeches and practices are of diverse verbal-emotional, physical, sexual, and economic natures. These acts occur especially at home, at school, on the street, and in recreational spaces, both in person and online. Forms of intimidation through cyberbullying are discussed in the next chapter.

Figure 11 shows who generates forms of aggression within the family or domestic relationships sphere.

The vertical axis shows the approximate number of girls or adolescent girls who directly mentioned experiencing each type of aggression. Evidently, verbal aggressions are common in all relationships, coming most recurrently from fathers, mothers, stepfathers, or stepmothers. The number of cases of physical aggressions is also considerable.

On the other hand, economic aggressions are perceived to come more often from male figures such as fathers or stepfathers. Sexual assault comes more from stepfathers, uncles, cousins, and partners, as is the case for those

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3   They do not have model spaces that provide a reference on how using their own voice is important for change and social transformation. Their place and participation as girls and adolescent girls is decisive for social transformation.

Diagram 10. Violent communication and migrant girls and adolescent girls

10 Caracteristics

Violent communication and migrant girls and adolescent girls

Adapted from M. Rosenberg's model

1 Recognition–value
Imposition, surveillance, and punishment is the predominant language at home, as well as the context of hierarchy and inequality in treatment.

2 Stepping into their shoes
Few people in their immediate environment empathize with what it means to be migrant girls or an adolescent girl.

3 Assertiveness and negotiation
They live in spaces where imposition is the norm. There is no room for disagreement, dissent, or negotiating what is appropriate considering their criteria.

4 Active listening
There are no mutual listening spaces. Emotional detachment or disregard of the girls' and adolescent girls' opinion is imposed.

5 Informed decision-making
Se carecen de espacios para contrarrestar los prejuicios, las visiones estereotipadas. Se fomentan actos de descuento y discriminación.

6 Testimonial relationship between saying–doing
Inconsistency with what is requested of girls and adolescent girls and what the adult world does. Behaviors, which are not sustained in adult practice, are required of them.

7 Provocations–threats and blackmail
Their emotional contacts are usually mediated by emotional-sexual control. Certain types of behaviors are demanded of them in order to fit in within the parameters of ideal femininity.

8 Being surrounded by inspiring contexts
Girls and adolescent girls describe that they inhabit spaces marked by insecurity, filth, and overcrowding. There is very little room for co-creation and the development of non-violent loving bonds.

9 Minimizing life experiences
It is common for their experiences to be ridiculed. There is constant teasing and there is a tendency to invalidate or downplay their emotions.

10 Considering their opinions–spokespersonship
They do not have model spaces that provide a reference on how using their own voice is important for change and social transformation. Their place and participation as girls and adolescent girls is decisive for social transformation

Source: Developed by the author. Adapted from M. Rosenberg's model.

participants who are or have been in common-law unions. These are aspects that require further study.

Figure 11. Domestic violence
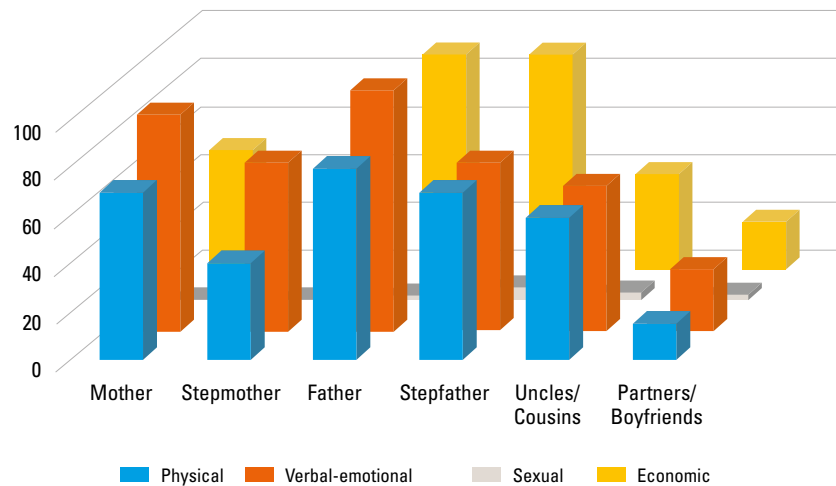
Source: Developed by the author.

Listed below are the typical or most common forms of violence mentioned by the participants, according to the four areas explored in this chapter: family, romantic relationships, friends, and neighbors.

Table 4. Expressions of direct aggression	
Family	1. Uneven distribution of housework.
	2. Little permission to go out and explore the environment.
	3. Surveillance and punishment system for behaviors not compliant with gender.
	4. Little space for communication through mutual listening. Reproaches, fights, and emotional dismissal prevail.
	5. Gender-based prohibition to participate in games or sports.
	6. Lack of financial resources for self-management.
	7. Constant prohibition of emotional-erotic relationships.
	8. Abandonment, lack of support, constant denial, and emotional neglect.
	9. Hitting and confinement, among other forms of physical abuse as a method of regulating the "disobedient" or "rebellious" behavior of girls and adolescent girls.
	10. Control of aesthetics, social networks, and spaces for relationships outside the family.
Friends–peer relations	1. Peer pressure to carry out activities.
	2. Hurtful comments against bod integrity.
	3. Configuration of group relationships that establish exclusions by nationality, race, aesthetics, etc.

Table 4. Expressions of direct aggression		
Friends–peer relations	4.	Determination of closed codes based on stigma.
	5.	Rumors and acts of disqualification due to sexual-emotional orientation.
	6.	Establishment of strict gender norms that determine what they can do or not do in spaces for recreation, family, romantic relationships, etc.
	7.	Grief over the breaking of ties or links formed during the migratory route and at the country of origin.
Partners–emotional sexual relationships	1.	Search for emotional support in adult male figures with expectations linked to romantic love.
	2.	Surveillance of social networks and cyberbullying.
	3.	Constant contemptuous observation of aesthetics (clothing, hair, weight, etc.)
	4.	Decisions about places where you can or cannot go.
	5.	Determination of friends-family members with whom you can relate or not.
	6.	Emotional blackmail linked to economic exchange and protection.
	7.	Derogatory comments about physical-moral appearance.
	8.	Emotional control through jealousy.
	9.	Control over when, how, and where to have sex.
	10.	Emotional deception, disloyalty with respect to romantic commitments and agreements.
Neighbors	1.	Rumors surrounding private life.
	2.	Constant monitoring of the activities of girls and adolescent girls and reporting to the adult members of the family.
	3.	Constant control of aesthetics.
	4.	Constant harassment and verbal aggressions.
	5.	Determination of the spaces they can or cannot use.
	6.	Acts of racism, xenophobia, and sexism in public spaces (shops, markets, streets, parks, etc.).
	7.	Degrading comments regarding their sexuality and body exposed on social networks.

Source: Developed by the author.

In the cases explored, these forms of violence along with migrant grief, establish a marked emotional disaffection that translates into serious consequences such as early pregnancies and unions.

The following is a summary of an emblematic story of structural-intrafamily violence, in which emotional insecurity and socioeconomic dependence are highlighted as a risk factor for early pregnancy and early unions among migrant adolescent girls.[4]

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4   HIAS Ecuador Team. *Case report file.* Personal communication; May 22, 2021.

Manú is 16 years old and has a six-month-old baby with her 30-year-old partner, who is also a Venezuelan migrant. She has two children —from a previous relationship— who have returned to Venezuela. Now Manú has a baby with this man, they live in a room that they rent together and have many financial difficulties to guarantee their sustenance, especially regarding access to services and care for the newborn. Manú is not attending school and her immediate plan is to take care of her baby and to generate income for their sustenance. Manú traveled alone from Venezuela to Ecuador a year ago. Her mother was ill and stayed in Venezuela. She has no ties to her father because he left home when she was a newborn. She describes this abandonment or violence as an open emotional wound.

Manú tried to work in her country, but was unsuccessful. She was forced to leave and start her migration route. Her final destination was Peru where she had a friend, but she met her current partner in Ecuador, which is why she prefers to stay in Ecuador. She traveled with other family groups who accompanied her on her trip. Now many adolescents are her support network, and she continues to be in contact with them, although most of them are no longer in the city she lives in. These separations are also relevant in her emotional history.

She met her partner through a friend she met on the trip. For Manú, her partner is an almost exclusive part of her support network. Moreover, based on her description, it is a relationship guided by emotional and economic codependency. She is marked by a history of emotional neglect and by the lack of socioeconomic opportunities in her home country. What she experienced in her native country is repeated and exacerbated in her current condition as a displaced adolescent mother-wife. She had to take on the duties of caring for her sick mother and generating economic resources for her sustenance and that of her younger siblings at an early age. On her cross-border route, she experienced situations she describes as "horrible"• involving agents of the State. Manú perceives her partner as a figure of authority, as "the father I never had." This generates a relationship marked by the disproportion of power, in which socio-emotional and economic precariousness frame their love, both in the mechanisms for choice and in the decision to remain in the relationship. She highlights the feeling of emptiness, loneliness, and sadness in her story with which she has had to take on adult tasks and responsibilities while being a child.

•She did not want to elaborate on what she meant by horrible, but the team observations in the field —both in this case and in others— made it possible to determine a connection with sexual harassment and abuse to which many of the unaccompanied girls and adolescent girls are subjected. This aspect requires further investigation in the future.

Several participants consulted are exposed to or are witnesses to the intimate partner violence that their mothers experience, regularly perpetrated by figures such as fathers and stepfathers. They are usually the ones who support their mothers, enduring considerable emotional weight and weariness, as a result of witnessing constant physical and emotional abuse. In these contexts, they are also often exposed to sexual abuse or assault.

The following testimony illustrates the connection between spousal domestic violence and sexual violence to which girls and adolescent girls are exposed in the country of origin and on the migratory route.[5] It also shows the depth of damage or trauma experienced by migrant and/or displaced adolescent girls, subjected to early experiences of sexual abuse and violence, leading to suicidal thoughts and acts.

I have not experienced any abuse, but it happened to my mother by her partner, and it was also one of the reasons why we came. It was horrible for me. He was a drug addict; I saw him using and told my mother. She would argue with him, and he would beat her. We even went to the clinic because he hurt my mother's eye. He tried to sexually abuse me, and that left a mark in me. We went to the public prosecution office because of what happened, but they did not arrest him. My mother spent eight years in that situation of violence with him. That is why we are now in Panama, but I don't feel safe here either.

I was 8 or 9 years old —now I am 13 years old— and I was living with my grandparents, my mother, and my brother. My father migrated to Colombia when I was very young. That day my brother stayed with my grandparents, their house was in front of the guy's house (the mother's boyfriend). My mother took me to his house and left me there, she left me there in my panties and a top because she was going to look for my clothes. She would take off my uniform to wash it at my grandparents' house so that it would be clean and I could go to school the next day. She left me on the bed with him, wrapped up until she came back [...] She went to wash my uniform and I stayed there watching TV with him. He began to rub my belly and I was naked, but he was also naked saying obscene things. I started screaming, I felt very nervous, I was paralyzed with fear. No one answered, the owner of the house was not

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5   Field notes. HIAS Panama team.

there. They were rented rooms. I was screaming "Help! Help!" Then the lady who rented out the rooms came, he dressed quickly, and I ran out and hugged the lady [...] My mother came and we went to the prosecutor's office and to the gynecologist. They found semen in my vagina. I was still a virgin, but there was semen. Later, my mother forgave him and she dropped the complaint and I asked her why she didn't report him. She said he was a good man. My father, who was in Colombia, sent us money monthly, but my mother spent it on her boyfriend. I told my dad, but I don't know if he did anything about it either. My mother stayed with this man who beat her, was unfaithful to her, and used drugs. I never felt safe with my family, I didn't feel my family took care of me because they never helped me or anything. That's why I wanted to migrate, to get out of there.

"Machiavellian" ideas of grabbing a knife crossed my mind several times. I would tell them that I was going to kill myself. Obviously, I was not going to do it. I am not capable. I would say that so they would get scared. Sometimes it would get them to stop fighting, and other times not even that would stop them, because obviously they knew that I was not going to kill myself.

I also wanted to grab a knife and kill him in his sleep many times [...] The resentment I had for the guy was huge. We went through horrible things. I don't have nice memories and I didn't receive help from anyone. Once, I grabbed a knife and cut my belly, my mother screamed desperately, but she stayed with him anyway [...]

For girls and adolescent girls, the perspective of love or emotional-sexual relationships is one of uncertainty, mistrust, and fear, framed by sexist violence. In several cases, a link between love and the abuse of power has been normalized. Most of the testimonies —even from girls between the ages of 7 and 9— denote pessimism because love is seen as a space of expected coercion, against which they have to develop self-defense mechanisms given the scant institutional support (an issue that is further explained in the following paragraph).

In the narratives explored, male figures are unreliable, which reveals the hostile environment in which they develop their daily interactions. The only difference that was mentioned was between adolescent boys or young men who live in the capital and those that come from the "interior", who are considered more respectful. Many girls and adolescent girls also expressed the difficulty

they have in establishing romantic relationships since their families regularly interfere or prohibit these ties. Therefore, they tend to keep them "hidden" or engage in them "without permission". Another difference in the romantic relationship sphere is that the vast majority prefer to have relationships with young or adult men who are 5 to 10 years older than they are.

Romantic Choices

Most adolescent girls prefer romantic relationships with partners who are 5 to 10 years their seniors.

Responsibility	Madurity
How old do you prefer your ideal partner to bel?	What characteristics do you prefer?

Same age

10+ years old

10 years old

2 years older

5 years

What attracts you from a partner?	What do you expect from a romantic relationship?
Economic Stability	Security

"I like them to be a little older because there is more stability and respect, and they have more to teach."

Source: Developed by the author.

"Love depends on the situation. It can be pleasant, but many times it is unpleasant because you have to stop doing what you like to do to please your boyfriend or husband."

"Yes, I have fallen in love. Currently I like someone, but love is also suffering. He lives in Chitré and I live in San Francisco. I would like to get to know him more. We saw each other and we liked each other, and he asked me for my number. Many boys have done it, but he caught my attention. He is from the interior, and I like the way boys from the interior treat me more than guys from the capital. He doesn't say ugly or vulgar things to me like the others, and that is why I liked him more."

"I am afraid to introduce him to my dad because my dad is very jealous."

"I don't believe what they tell me. I know they cheat. Many times they tell you something to get what they want and then they leave. I like to analyze who I fall in love with."

"I don't like very young people. I am very mature, and I am not naive either. I would like us to experience things together and do things together."

Regarding same-sex couples, thoughts were not homogeneous. For some, the position is overtly heterosexist: *"I think that's wrong, I wouldn't like them to be kissing around me"*. For others, the opinion is one of acceptance: *"I think it is okay. If a person is happy loving a person who is of the same sex, that is the important thing. I think that you have to respect that way of feeling. I don't see it as a bad thing."*

It is also striking that for most of the interviewees, the family or their close environment are not the spaces where affection or consensual and protected relationships are most openly discussed. In fact, most of the participants display a great lack of knowledge about the variety of contraceptive methods they can use, which raises concerns about the lack of information among participants who are pregnant and those who are mothers.

Figure 12 shows that social networks, internet search engines, television, and groups of friends are the spaces to learn about sexuality and reproduction.

Talking about these issues is not easy for girls. Nor do they feel that they are issues that concern them directly, as one participant expressed: *"I don't like*

to talk about these things. We don't talk about this at home because those are adult issues."

The subject of menstruation was difficult to address during the course of the interviews. This highlights the profound misinformation with which migrant girls and adolescent girls live and experience their relationship with their bodies, when this event often surprises them along the way.

Similarly, the relationship of rejection of their body is also concerning, especially due to issues related to fatphobia[6] as expressed in the violent harshness of Karina's testimony below, which describes the usual forms and the differences in the mistreatment exercised by boys toward girls.

Figure 12. Learning about sexuality
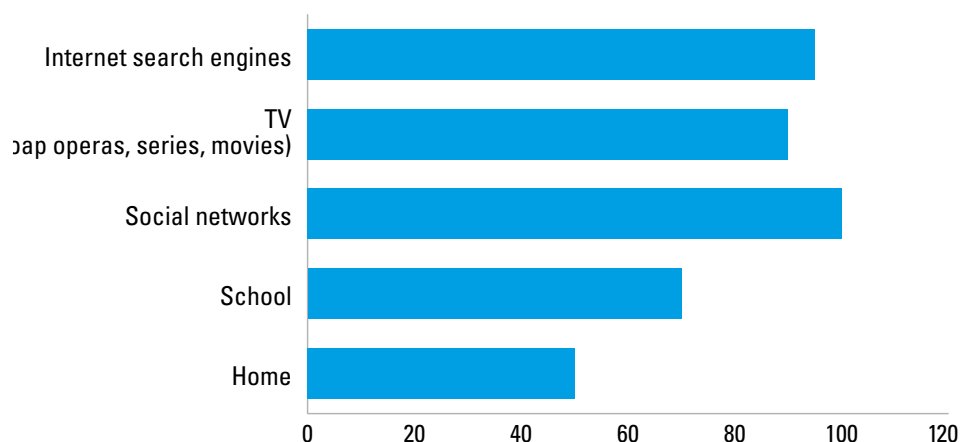
Source: Developed by the author.

> *"When I was going to change my clothes during sports, I would hide because I never liked my body to be seen. I never liked my body to be seen. I hid because there were girls, boys, and adults outside waiting... It hurt that the other girls didn't understand me and didn't get that I didn't want them to see my body. Once I forgot to hide because I was late with my homework and I just changed quickly. They started calling me fat and that hurt a lot. **From that day on, they started calling me a fat cow.** They believed themselves superior. I thought that since we were all girls, we could live*

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6   This concept alludes to the stereotypes and forms of stigma that determine fat women as undesirable or ugly, according to Western canons of beauty. We recommend the following link for a closer approach to this concept, retrieved from Escritura Feminista https://escriturafeminista.com/2019/04/30/gordofobia/

together in peace, but they did not take it that way. **I cried every night.** *The last day, I felt that I could give them all a piece of my mind [....] I was able to tell a girl to stop bothering me because she wanted to get me out of my seat, and since she was tiny I could tell her [...] But it was not like that with the rest of the kids, they were of the opposite sex [...]* **girls say mean things to you, but boys beat you up.**"

Finally, in this section it is important to bear in mind that many girls or adolescents do not feel comfortable in their assigned gender. These particular experiences of identity require a more in-depth analysis. However, it is important to consider that there is no homogeneity in the cis experience of gender, which must also be considered in the approaches to migration and childhood. *"I would have loved to be born a man. I have wished that since I was 10 years old. I know that. I don't like to be called* her*, I want to be called* him*. I used to cry every night because I was not born a man."*

4.3 Institutional sphere

The institutional or state sphere refers to the set of legal and political standards, including the budget established by governments to safeguard the protection of the rights of migrants. This macro-systemic element is a cornerstone of the micro-systemic scope analyzed above. This sphere was addressed with girls and adolescent girls, as well as with key actors, considering the following aspects:

Access to services

Knowledge - advocacy for rights

Prevention-care, mitigation, and reparation

Participation - spokespersonship decision-making

Source: Developed by the author.
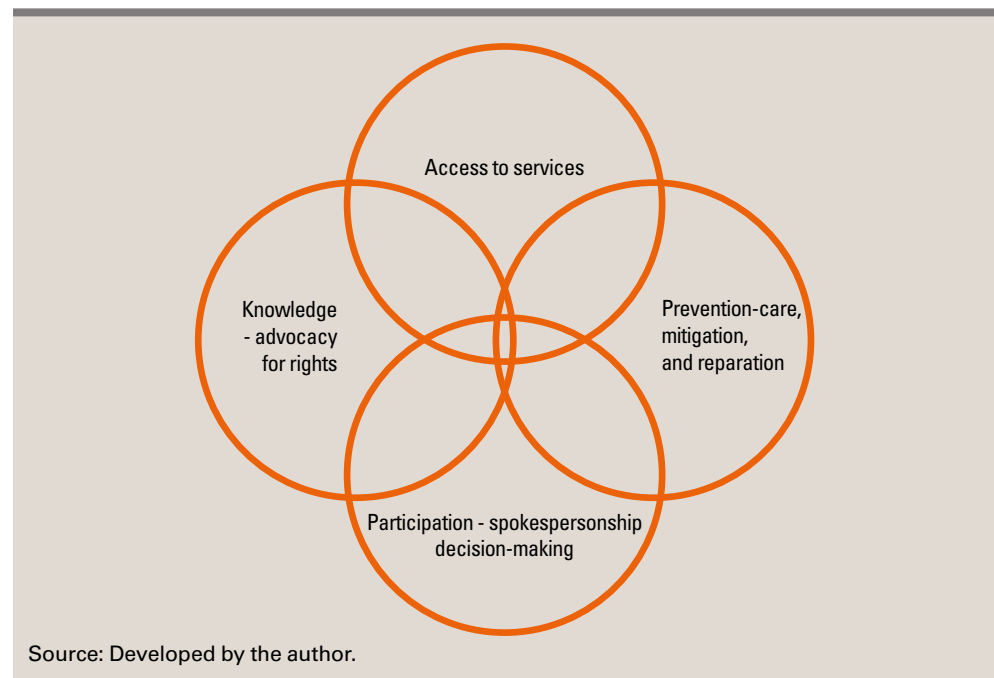
4.3.1 Information, knowledge, and advocacy for rights

This aspect refers to the access that girls and adolescent girls have to practical information in order to activate forms of defense of their rights. The most remarkable thing is that they do not have detailed information of the laws, policies, programs, and services to which they can resort to in case their rights are violated. However, in one way or another, all of them know that there are principles of equality, dignity, and non-discrimination that should be respected during the course of their individual and collective development.

Most interviewees identify family, friends, neighbors, and the police as spaces they can resort to for defending their rights. A common denominator is that most of them identify the adult women in their environment as the main allies in their support network. In this regard, they mentioned mothers, best friends, neighbors, and teachers in order of relevance. This last aspect is important because, in addition to the police, school indirectly plays a fundamental role in their establishment of a connection for complaints and enforcement of their rights. This also shows that those who do not attend school exhibit a greater lack of knowledge regarding the spaces for the defense of their rights.

The following testimonies illustrate the lack of information they have regarding their rights, but also their distrust in public instances, emphasizing that the most useful thing is personal defense.

> "I'm not sure what to do in those cases. I have seen on television that you could go to the police, and they have an emergency number, but I would not dare to call them directly."

> "I wouldn't do anything because sometimes you can get in trouble with the neighbors or with other people if you report it, so it's better not do it."

> "As my parents say, if someone hits me or tries to do something to me, all I do is what my father told me to do. If they come and hit me, all I do is hit them back [...] If they come to hit me, I'm going to defend myself by doing the same. I can bite them. I can slap them."

> "I would scream and maybe call the neighbors because they are good people, and my mom trusts them."

> "I live close to the police. If someone is going to do something to me, I'd call the police and hide, that's what I would do."

73

"There is nothing you can do, because nobody does anything about it."

"Reporting it would be useless."

"I feel that when I have a boyfriend or something like that, I want to learn self- defense."

In total, 36 percent of the participants stated that they do not feel safe activating some protection mechanism against the violations of their rights, saying that they fear to do so "because we do not know what may happen afterwards." A significant number of them expressed doubts about what to do or where to go for support; and 29 percent openly said that they would not file any type of complaint, while 21 percent did not respond to the question (*What would you do if you felt that you are the victim of some type of aggression or violence?*) precisely because they do not know what they could do if they suffered an attack. Only 14 percent said they would do something or take legal action in response to the abuse.

Figure 13. Activation of protection mechanisms

- Yes 14%
- No 29%
- Maybe 36%
- Doesn't respond 21%
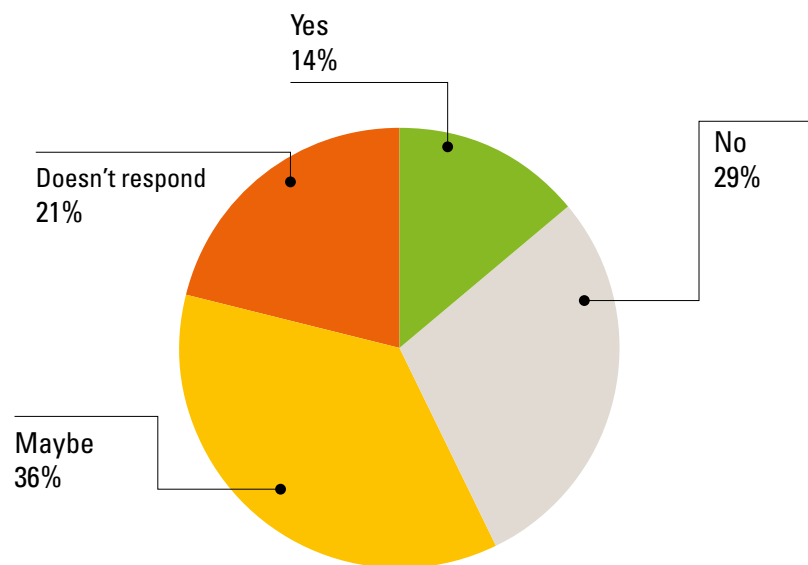
Source: Developed by the author.

Regarding what they would do, it is striking that most of them would resort to family, community, and friendship networks. Among the institutions mentioned, police and women's organizations were the most common. It is worth mentioning that child protection courts were not brought up. The health system was indirectly mentioned only in terms of "calling an ambulance".

Figure 14. Support network
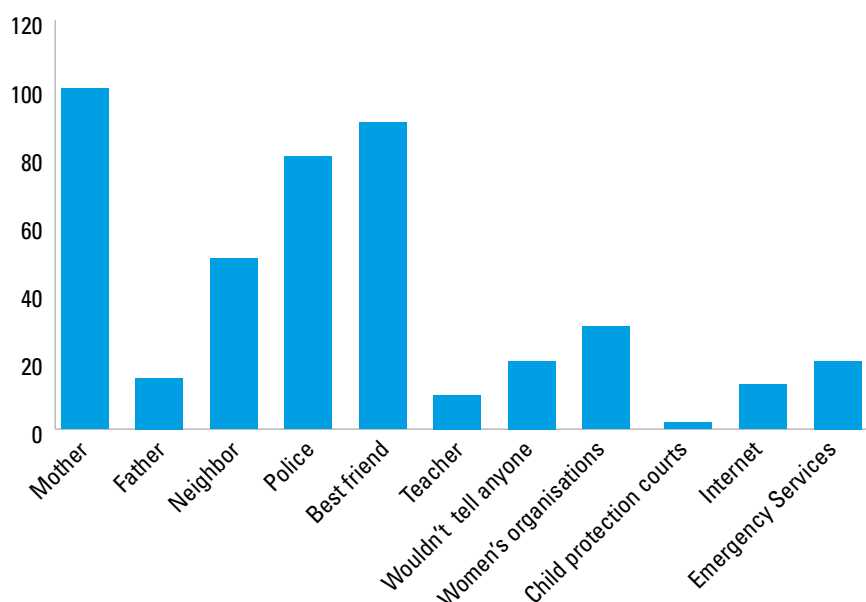
Source: Developed by author.

Regarding the rights that participants state as more important to defend in their daily lives are education, recreation, expressing their opinions and feelings, family reunification, and the use of information technologies. It is also interesting that going out and being able to have friends were also responses associated with the fulfillment of their basic needs *(see Figure 15)*.

Several girls and adolescent girls mentioned being able to continue their migration route as a basic human right for them and their families.[7]

In the testimonies explored, a significant number of interviewees do not have information tools on the processes they can follow to access the health, education, and justice systems. The phrase *"I need to study, but I don't know how to do it"* was a common response. Regarding the health system, several girls and adolescent girls stated that they have great difficulties in obtaining health records or cards that would allow them to attend periodic evaluations. Many of them reported constant events of mistreatment in the health system, which will be explored in a later section.

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7   The numbers shown in Figure 15 are the number of times that the right was mentioned or brought up by the girls and adolescent girls participating in the study.

Figure 15. Rights mentioned by girls and adolescent girls

Connecting / Using a cell phone
Helping mom around the house
Having therapy
Continuing their migratory route
Equal wages for women and men
Having friends
Saying what you feel/think
Saying "no"
Being physically respected
Being valued and heard
Dancing
Food
Housing
Being with mom and dad
Studying
Playing

0   50   100   150   200   250
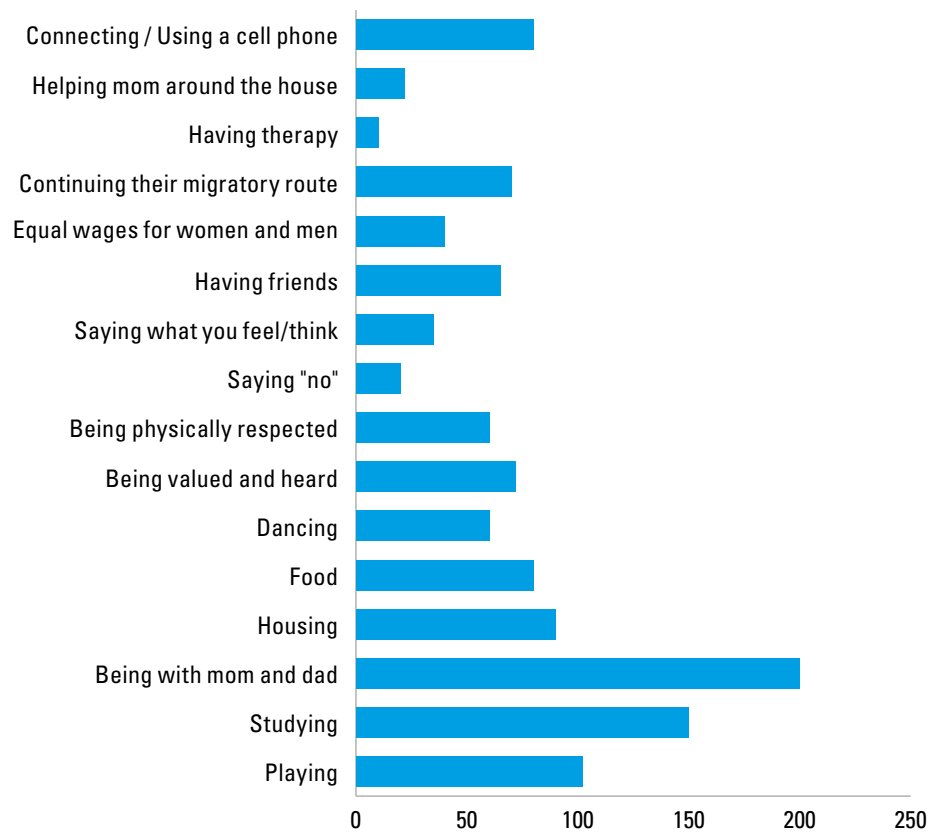
Source: Developed by the author.

4.3.2 Access to services: prevention, care, mitigation, and reparation

"In Colombia, the rights of migrant girls are unknown. There are rights, but they are not exercised, and they are not very clear either. In the health system for instance, if a Venezuelan girl arrives at a hospital, they do not treat her if she does not have papers, but if she does, they'll see her [...] If it weren't for what international organizations do, they would be helpless [...] People who work in schools, health posts, hospitals, etc., have no knowledge about the rights of children and adolescents, or of migrants in general. If there is no special residence permit, access to services and protection of rights become very difficult. Unaccompanied girls and adolescent girls are at much greater risk because they lack a family system that can at least support and accompany them in the complaints they could file [...] The ones who are here in Colombia believe they have no rights." (M. Martínez, Key actor. Personal communication; January 16, 2021)

Figure 16 illustrates that girls and adolescent girls do not have institutional resources to solve their problems. The limited access to public services is evident in most of the explored stories. The constant responses were "*I do not know"* or "*There are no institutional resources available"* in the area of residence. Both responses speak of the ineffective creation and application of policies with ample budgets for the protection of migrant, displaced, and refugee women, as expressed by one of the experts consulted in Mexico. *"There is no adequate investment to detect the blind spots in the path that girls and adolescent girls travel during their migratory routes."*

Figure 16. Availability of institutional resources
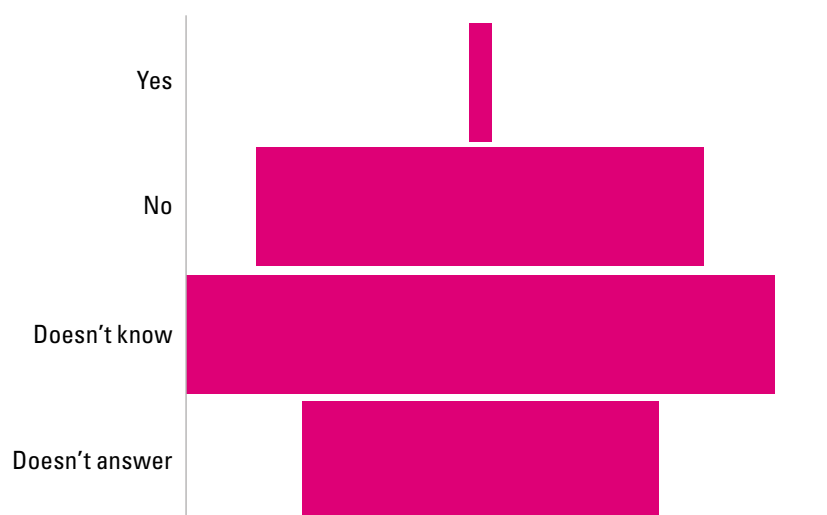
Source: Developed by the author.

In terms of housing, the most remarkable aspect is the scarcity of spaces for privacy and intimacy, as well as recreation and sports. Girls and adolescent girls do not have options for healthy recreation in their residential areas, nor do they have spaces for the exploration of extracurricular activities that encourage creativity or art. Many of the girls and adolescent girls expressed their desire to have training spaces for singing, dancing, painting, and acting.

With regards to food, many girls go hungry or do not have access to a variety of nutrients that would allow them a healthy psychophysiological development. Most of them indicated that they live in dirty places, without adequate roads and transportation systems.

The following testimony describes some situations related to the access to services, which translates into the absence of migrant and displaced

children in the priority political agenda. This means that legislation is not implemented, and that legal framework reforms adapted to the context are required. Qualified staff are also needed in care provision, inter-institutional coordination, as well as a large budget to respond to international standards and commitments that ensure the best interest of children.

> *"Another obstacle that affects their rights is the lack of a budget and the lack of staff in prosecutors' offices for the protection of children and adolescents, who are in charge of carrying out diagnoses and plans to restore their rights. This institutional change regarding who is responsible of providing support for children and adolescents with the reforms is a hindrance [...] Not having a clear policy aimed at children. There is no coordination between the different institutions [...] there is still a long way to go. The budget to make the rights protection system more robust and effective also has no political weight given the immigration policy that continues to be dominant. Many boys and girls who transit through Mexico—particularly the unaccompanied ones—have relatives in the United States and, as they do not have a regional reunification system, they enter a loop that does not solve the problem, but rather has children moving from country to country, and this is not including all the problems in the countries of origin [...] Until the border is no longer an obstacle for family reunification." (S. Martínez. Personal communication; May 4, 2021).*

Most of the girls interviewed are currently attending school but have significant concerns regarding the continuity of their studies once they come of age.

Another very relevant point that will be analyzed later is how particular situations of racism, xenophobia, and sexism experienced at school perpetuate violence suffered in the country of origin. However, school continues to be the space most commonly referred to by girls and adolescent girls as an institutional support structure.

On the other hand, public health is the field where more elements of exclusion were evidenced in the testimonies of the girls and adolescent girls, especially among those in an irregular migratory situation, since they do not have the cards or documents that the State validate for access to primary care services. There are also elements that show the absence of information measures related to Sexual and Reproductive Rights (SRR) that may allow adolescent girls, especially pregnant adolescent girls, to feel comfortable and confident

in the periodic check-ups of their pregnancies. Mental care services were also determined to be absent during their migratory routes.

> "My mother wanted to take me to the hospital to be checked because my head hurts a lot, but every time we go, they tell us that they can't treat me. She has fought a lot and only once did a nurse help us to reach a doctor. But they always say unpleasant things like that we, Venezuelans, have taken up all the space and that we are taking health care away from them. That is very upsetting, because you go there in pain or because you have a major problem, and you leave feeling more pain because of everything you have to hear."

> "I should go to family planning. I need to get a shot, but I don't like going to the gynecologist. Besides, the papers and the questions he asks are uncomfortable for me because I already told him that I don't like my body and stuff. The truth is, I have only gone once and I haven't returned, not even after the pregnancy. I do not know how I am doing inside."

> "It would be good to have psychologists to talk to because there are things that make me very angry. I live around a lot of violence, sometimes I don't even know why I feel like this. I have no one to talk to or who to ask for help to deal with all the aggressiveness I feel."

Access to justice is completely unknown to girls and adolescent girls. No case was identified in which any use of legal or judicial services was resorted to in order to protect their immigration rights. Only one girl out of all the participants mentioned that there is a Superior Court for Children that monitors the fulfillment of her rights. Participants only mentioned lawyers or legal support offered by non-governmental institutions.

In line with these same findings, the study detected that they do not have guaranteed public access to support services in the areas of health provision, legal counseling, and psychological support. Many of them said they did not know what they could do or where they could go in case of experiencing an aggression at home or outside. They also stated that they had not received any type of restorative support that would facilitate individual or collective processes for the restitution of rights. Although some families receive some type of bonus or support to mitigate issues regarding food, clothing, or health, they are usually welfare measures during specific times or seasons of the year such as Christmas, or seasons marked by atmospheric phenomena, among other special situations.

4.3.3 Social participation: spokespersonship and sense of agency

The most relevant challenge in this chapter is that girls and adolescent girls do not have family, interpersonal, and institutional systems or resources that promote, guarantee, and support the defense of their rights. None of the interviewees consulted is actively participating in community or local networks or groups that allow them to cultivate a sense of belonging and roots as migrants.

It is interesting that none of the interviewees knows of networks or spaces in their contexts, to integrate or form their own girl and adolescent girl groups. Beyond sporadic places of consultation or information gathering, such as the present diagnosis, they do not have environments or procedures for community participation that foster their sense of belonging as migrants. Nor was it evident that they came from previous participatory spaces in their country of origin. The present diagnosis even worked as an added value for them because it created virtual relationship groups. These spaces for dialogue made it possible to determine the qualities of leadership and collective or activist will that they manifested during the consultation process.

4.4 Cross-border sphere

"The most difficult situation for me was crossing through the illegal crossing. It was awful. Everything is dark, it's very scary, I came with my grandmother, and she was also very nervous." (8-year-old girl in Colombia)

"Migrating was a bit hard for me because I was 6 months pregnant. I worked for a few days on a farm where I gave birth with a midwife. It was not in a hospital. That is why my son is not registered. I thought they weren't going to believe me, that they were going to say, 'Oh, this one is here irregularly and now she gave birth!' Well, until I made the decision, because if I hadn't, they would take the child away from me." (15-year-old adolescent girl)

"I was very scared. We got to the river very late and we had to go through without boats. There was a rock and I thought it was an animal, so I didn't want to get close. I almost knocked my mother down, she almost went down the river [...] we got wet up to here—above the waist—and we fell many times, we could've drowned. I wouldn't stop crying because I was

very scared, my mom gave me candy so I wouldn't cry. I was younger, I wanted to see my father, but he couldn't go because his papers were stolen, he crossed illegally [...] that scared us." (10-year-old girl)

"We were thirsty, really thirsty. We had no water to drink. My youngest brother was crying and they gave us water, but he threw it up. Some people on the way gave us things to eat, but we said no because they taught us not to take things from strangers as we could be poisoned. That used to happen in Venezuela where we lived. They fed children to poison them, so we are very afraid to take water and food even though we needed it." (9-year-old girl)

"I came by bus and we went through the mountain. We went around, and around, and around, and around, and I had to close my eyes because it scared me and if I didn't close my eyes, I would get dizzy." (8-year-old girl)

This sphere cuts across all the others explored in the diagnosis. The internal, interpersonal, and institutional contexts are determined by the visible and invisible depths of the cross-border experience, along dividing geographic, emotional, gender, age, race, class, and nationality lines, which reinvigorate the migratory grief and violence that the girls and adolescent girls interviewed embody.

Girls start long travel processes. They go on for months and even years until they rejoin their family, friends, or romantic partners, with whom they wish to reconnect. Cross-border existence is not an accidental matter of "transiting" from one place to another. On the contrary, it is a deliberate process by the adult world that enables them to build skills related to coexistence, good and bad treatment all at once (Cinthia Quant, Gender Violence Officer at HIAS Aruba).

"It was impressive to listen to them. For us it was a contradictory space. On the one hand, it was beautiful because they all expressed their joy about feeling heard and respected in their opinions; on the other, we often had to pause before we could carry on, because it is painful and shocking for such a small girl to have to go through so much in getting here. In general, all the participants were very open to the experience of talking to us, because they felt a great need to feel heard and at ease [...] Feeling considered is the first thing for them. They feel that they do not have a space for them, to say what has happened to them neither before their trip, nor during or after it. They have a great need to talk about what they have experienced [...] It is important to keep in mind that some of them did not even know they

would be living here. They did not even know that they were going to travel by boat, with all that such a journey implies, and with all the fear and the terror it entails. They have no one to talk to about those experiences, apart from the separation from their friends, school, and family. The language issue is also very important. Here, they feel less understood and more discriminated against and alone because they do not know the language, and they highlighted this a lot." [Personal communication; May 3, 2021].

Understanding the pendular or cross-border complexity of girls and adolescent girls implies valuing that they are "daughters of the road" (Lucía Mbomio)[8] or "walkers", as they are often called in some contexts. In other words, they structure their identity by simultaneously experiencing being from different places or ultimately from none; the road configures the desire for meaning. The interviewees can leave a place, come back, constantly cross the borders established by the States. For them these borders do not exist as such, because their lives are organized on those very borders. For those who come and go constantly, as in the case in the regions of the Andes, Mexico, and Central America, it is a complex coexistence guided by uneasiness, fear, and constant risks. It is also important to know that along the way *"there are always people willing to help".* One element that many of them stressed is that despite how adverse or exhausting it can be to cross borders, there is always the chance of finding *"a better future".* Most of the testimonials agree with the following:

"Now I feel more at ease than in the insecurity that I used to live in. Despite how difficult it was to get here, I feel calmer and safer. I am less afraid that they will kill me or my family. If I had to do the journey again, I would do it, because now we are doing better than before. Now, although there are problems here too, I don't feel that my brother, my mother, or my father may just vanish any given day [...]".

The fears of the dangers in the road are diverse. Most of them are related to the lack of institutional, emotional, physical, economic, and sexual protection to which they are exposed along the way. Faced with these forms of violence, the feeling of guilt with which they usually live through these processes stands out, feeling that they did something wrong or acted improperly. This mechanism also expresses the lack of adaptable spaces or places for them

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8   This is a novel by Afro-Spanish writer Lucia Mbomio (2019) that offers an approximation to the complex race-gender-nationality relationship, as ways of living on the road between one place and another. The author describes characters that move between Spain, Latin America, and Equatorial Guinea.

during their journey, apart from certain shelters, where situations of exclusion and oppression are also replicated or intensified, and where they expressed feeling imprisoned.

Diagram 11. Cross-border violence

```
                    ┌─────────────┐
                    │ Paperwork at│
                    │ the border: │
                    │ documents   │
         ┌──────────┴─────────────┴──────────┐
         │                                    │
  ┌──────────────┐                    ┌──────────────────┐
  │ Animal abuse │                    │ Not seeing family│
  └──────────────┘                    │ and friends again│
                                      └──────────────────┘
┌─────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Not having a place  │          │ Request for sexual favors│
│ to eat, sleep; cold │          │ and harassment from      │
│ – adapting to food, │          │ acquaintances and        │
│ clothing, and customs│         │ strangers                │
└─────────────────────┘          └──────────────────────────┘
  ┌──────────────┐                    ┌──────────────────┐
  │ Not having   │                    │ Discrimination:  │
  │ anyone you   │                    │ racism,          │
  │ trust by     │                    │ xenophobia       │
  │ your side    │                    └──────────────────┘
  └──────────────┘              ┌────────────────────────┐
┌──────────────────┐            │ Menstruation and other │
│ Getting lost and │            │ psychophysiological    │
│ being unable to  │            │ ailments               │
│ get back to route│            └────────────────────────┘
└──────────────────┘   ┌──────────────┐
                       │ Kidnapping-  │
                       │ robbery and  │
                       │ rape         │
                       └──────────────┘
```

Source: Developed by the author.

The duration of the migrant trajectories for girls and adolescent girls, as mentioned above, can last between one and seven years. They are pilgrimages by land, water, and air. Those with the most violent histories are those who walk along very dangerous trails or paths due to possible interception by military and illegal groups. They generally use small rafts or boats, pack animals, trucks, buses, trains, etc. All these means represent a myriad of experiences characterized by insecurity, mistrust, fear, and loneliness.

Some of the girls and adolescent girls consulted stated that the worst part of the journey is that often they do not know what is happening or what is going to happen, and they have to trust people they do not know. Obviously, this situation is considerably more difficult for unaccompanied travelers.

Understanding the complexity of their cross-border histories requires more detailed insights, which this diagnosis does not address. However,
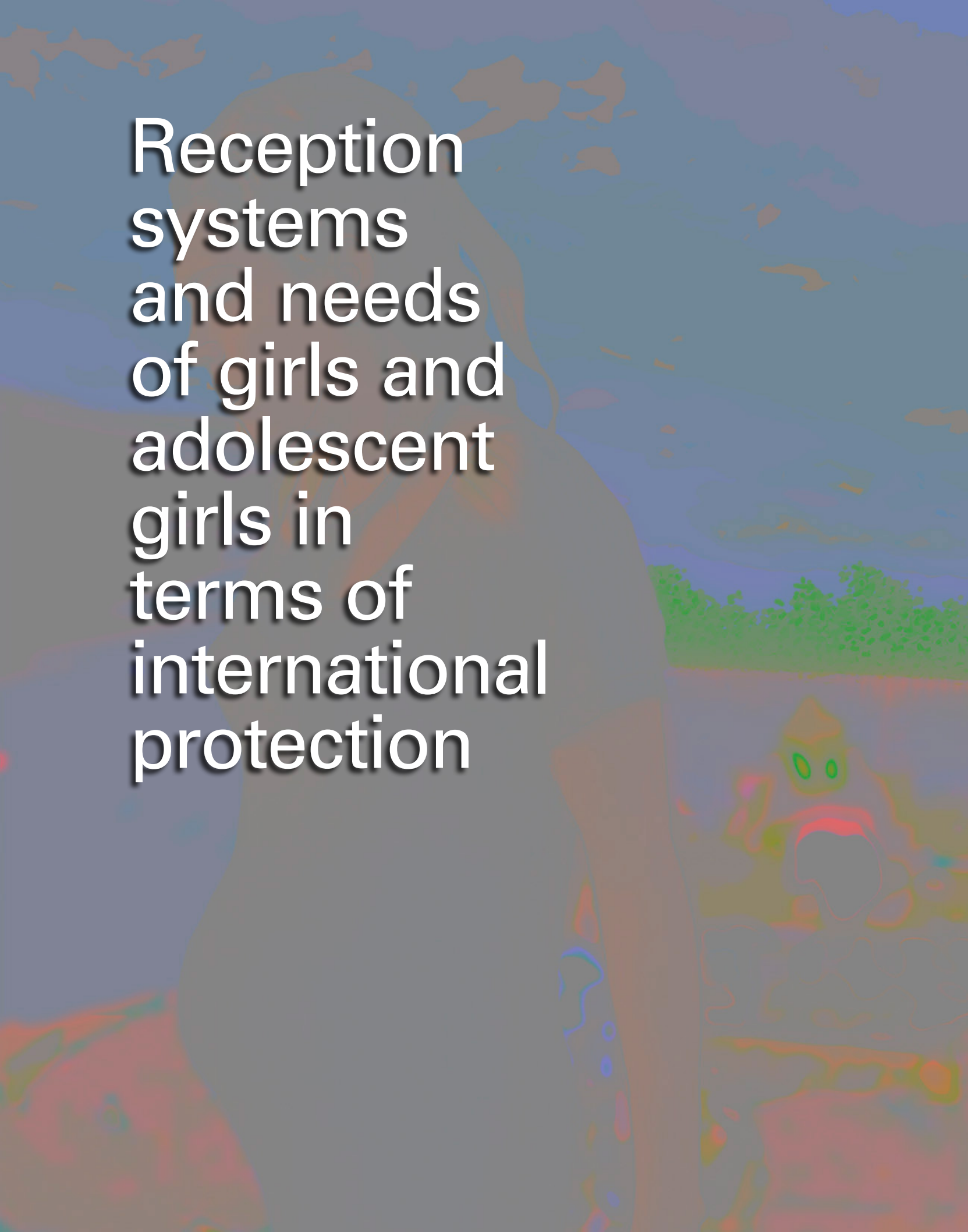
83

the inquiries conducted made it possible to identify the dramatic situations they go through, especially those living in shelters, as is the case for girls and adolescent girls at the Mexican border. These girls and adolescent girls coexist in confined or institutionalized situations, highly harmful situations that have been exacerbated in the context of the pandemic. As evident in the diagnosis, shelters are not safe spaces; quite the contrary, they reinforce violent gender patterns, especially in relation to care.

Many of the adolescent girls interviewed started their migration as girls. They faced the transition from being girls to being considered "women" or adult adolescents while on the road or in transit from one place to another. This condition also implied important adjustments for them in gender demands, especially in relation to ideals about their body, patterns of beauty, and multiple responsibilities or rituals that they must take on in terms of the cultural norms that guarantee their access to femininity. For indigenous and Afro-descendant girls and adolescent girls, these demands are even more pronounced. In any case, they are dimensions that require deeper intercultural approximations than those addressed in this document.

The following testimony shows how the journey across borders is not defined as a straight line, but in a spiral or ancestral motion in which the process unfolds.

> *"I liked the whole trip. As a little girl, when I lived in Venezuela, I thought that Peru was just around the corner. I had to go through many places, until I got here. I really liked the people. The ways in which they spoke were strange. I felt strange, but I started to like the road on the way here. At first, I didn't want to talk, I always felt weird, but I started to like how they dress, how they walk, their traditions. I like music a lot, and everything [...] It's so nice, I love the food, everything is very tasty and the places are incredible. Sometimes, I even talk like them already [...] the difficult thing is to leave your home because in Venezuela you have a house and when you get here, for a time, you have to live in many different ways, sharing a bed sometimes with up to 5 people [...] Making friends is very hard. They enrolled me in school as soon as we arrived and it was not easy because at the beginning, **I was alone all the time, I didn't talk to anyone,** I didn't want to talk to anyone because I always thought they were going to make fun of me. I isolated myself, until I was able to make a friend and that led me to meet other friends, and we all share our cultures, but not everyone thinks the same. I also went through difficult things along the way because there are always people who want to harm you."*

Reception systems and needs of girls and adolescent girls in terms of international protection

5. Reception systems and needs of girls and adolescent girls in terms of international protection

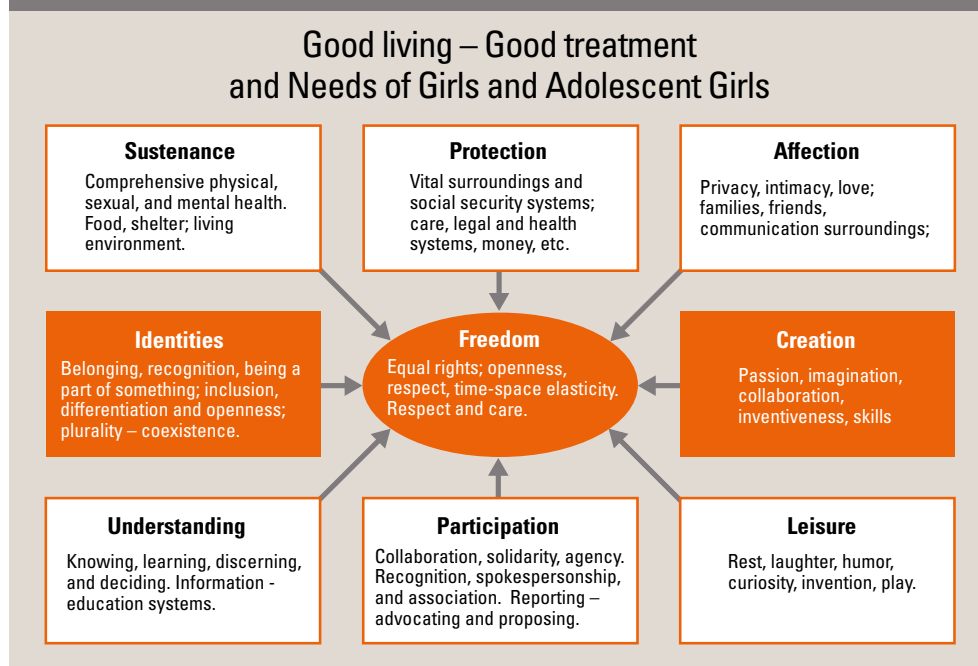*"I don't know what my rights are. We don't talk about that." (10-year-old girl)*

This section summarizes the most relevant needs identified within the spheres analyzed in the previous chapters. It addresses the generic and focused components surrounding the factors of satisfaction that girls and adolescent girls require to be and to have, considering the international protection standards regarding gender, childhood, and migration. Thus, the safeguards for an existence based on good living and good treatment as a life project stand out. (F. Sanz, 2016).

The insight in this section focuses on the urgencies and demands of the girls and adolescent girls consulted regarding subsistence, protection, and affection, according to the premises of freedom and creation so that their multiple identity-forming experiences unfold without restrictions in the internal, interpersonal, institutional, and cross-border spheres. With this goal in mind, it is essential for girls and adolescent girls to have tangible and intangible resources to expand their capacities for co-creation and participation, while considering rest and play in order to co-build a sense of community without the weight of the dominant culture on their back.

In the narrations of the girls and adolescent girls consulted, the global care chains are the only guidelines for "being a woman" available from childhood to adolescence. This indicates that transformations are required in the host system, that is within the set of governmental, non-governmental, and civil society actions that guarantee the exercise of the rights of migrants requesting international protection, which must consider the multiple intersections that play a role in good living.

Diagram 12. Basic needs of girls and adolescent girls

Good living – Good treatment and Needs of Girls and Adolescent Girls

Sustenance
Comprehensive physical, sexual, and mental health. Food, shelter; living environment.

Protection
Vital surroundings and social security systems; care, legal and health systems, money, etc.

Affection
Privacy, intimacy, love; families, friends, communication surroundings;

Identities
Belonging, recognition, being a part of something; inclusion, differentiation and openness; plurality – coexistence.

Freedom
Equal rights; openness, respect, time-space elasticity. Respect and care.

Creation
Passion, imagination, collaboration, inventiveness, skills

Understanding
Knowing, learning, discerning, and deciding. Information - education systems.

Participation
Collaboration, solidarity, agency. Recognition, spokespersonship, and association. Reporting – advocating and proposing.

Leisure
Rest, laughter, humor, curiosity, invention, play.

Source: Adapted from Max Neef's model on human-scale development.

This reception system is characterized by facilitating migratory/administrative procedures so that they can integrate in the country of arrival without facing any type of impairment in the exercise of their rights. In this regard and in addition to management and coordination, this system offers a set of measures to move the inclusion processes forward in the country of arrival. They also provide a set of solutions to health, education, housing, work, food, legal, and psychological care issues, as well as interpretation services, language teaching, leisure, and recreation, among others.

The adequate functioning of the reception systems implies the development of general programs for the refuge-seeking population, but it also requires the implementation of special programs that address the multiple and diverse realities that girls and adolescent girls live through. This is the main void highlighted both by the key actors and by the study participants.

> *"There is no qualified care for girls and adolescent girls, and their realities are significantly varied. They are all treated in the same way. Furthermore, they are seen through their families or according to adults. There is no attention directed to considering that they experience diverse realities of violence." (M. Montés. Personal communication; December 18, 2020).*

88

The following paragraphs contain a description of the needs in 10 key areas as indicated by the participants in the consultation and mentioned as relevant for the exercise of their rights.

5.1 Housing

> *"We had to come here because we didn't have a home, it was falling apart, we had no electricity, no food. There were always blackouts and I couldn't study." (Adolescent girl)*

In the matter of housing and cohabitation, the most relevant need highlighted by the participants stems from not having spaces for privacy and intimacy. They usually live with many people in the same house (between five and eight people). In several cases, four people from their family unit live together in a rented room. The overcrowding situation is the principal and most salient characteristic of their housing needs *(see Table 5).*

Table 5. Housing needs and challenges
1. Very few policies and support programs for low-cost rental or homeownership for migrant families.
2. Lack of privacy and intimacy in housing systems.
3. Deterioration of mental health and constant stress from overcrowded conditions.
4. Definition and hierarchization of domestic tasks according to gender.
5. Exposure to sexual harassment practices by family members.
6. Noisy, dirty, and precarious cohabitation spaces.
7. Lack of spaces defined for educational activities, games, and rest; and inadequate energy, gas, and water systems, among others.
8. Shelters working as "jail" systems, imposing care burdens on adolescent girls.•
9. Coexistence in extremely closed spaces, which increases the patterns or dynamics of violent communication.
10. Constant moves that alter the space-time relationship and limit the feeling of belonging.

• In the Mexican case, the shelter system requires a more in-depth analysis.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.2 Food

"There are many children where I live who sometimes don't have food and sometimes, we help them. Sometimes we don't have food and the neighbors help us." (8-year-old girl)

Hunger and the lack of food are some of the drivers of migration. For many girls and adolescent girls, it is all about finding food and "not starving", as one adolescent girl put it.

The diagnosis identified several needs, mostly associated with the lack of a food distribution policy that guarantees migrant families permanent, non-welfare, or charitable access to food.

Table 6. Food needs and challenges
1. Ineffective food support programs. Interviewees do not know how they work and how they are activated.
2. Distribution is only guaranteed within certain contexts.
3. Lack of educational programs on nutrition and food issues that can incorporate food traditions of the country of origin and the country of arrival.
4. Lack of spaces for the exchange of food between migrants and the native population.
5. Many girls and adolescent girls expressed that they go hungry. They also indicated there is often not enough money at home for food that adequately meets their demands for psychophysiological development.
6. The lack of food for them and their families puts them at risk of "doing whatever it takes to get food," as many of them stated.

Source: Developed by author.

5.3 Health

"I have two little lumps in my breasts. I feel healthy, but I am worried about what I have there. I don't know where to go for a check-up." (S. Martín. Personal communication; January 21, 2021)

The general perception of the interviewees is that, if there is no illness, there is no need to resort to the health system. In addition to this, there are barriers

linked to not carrying a health card, which is something related to having a regular immigration status: *"You need to have a residence permit. If you can't go to the hospital, they don't assist you"*, *"If you go without a card you risk being mistreated"*, *"Sometimes people will ask why we should get assistance, if they can't get it being locals."* These sort of testimonies about these forms of stigma and discrimination were frequent during the diagnosis.

The unmet needs identified in the area of health are related to specific ailments related to psychophysiological development, which are usually not attended to. Food and nutrition issues that are directly linked with the socioeconomic conditions of migrant families were also detected.

On the other hand, some aspects related to SRH were seen to be completely unknown to girls and adolescent girls, especially in terms of birth control. Ailments related to the physical and emotional exhaustion —including sexual assaults in the country of origin or during the journey— to which they are exposed during the migration process were also evident especially for those who do not receive any type of psychosocial support.

Table 7. Health needs and challenges
1. Bureaucratic procedures prevent access to emergency, primary, secondary, and tertiary care services.
2. Lack of health cards that facilitate access to the system.
3. Lack of updated protocols in accordance with the demands of migrant girls and adolescent girls and their pluralities.
4. Most of them do not know how the health system works, what services are offered, and how they can request these services.
5. There are no health programs oriented to relevant primary care information that migrant girls and adolescent girls need.
6. Health procedures in accordance to ancestral experiences, knowledge, or traditions are unknown or disrespected.
7. Specific procedures or referral routes that girls and adolescent girls can follow to request support in cases of violence are unknown.
8. There are no SRH resources adaptable to the demands of migrant girls and adolescent girls. There is a great need for information on SRH, and the basic aspects of birth control and protected sexual relations are unknown to them.
9. Lack of counseling in case of abuse in shelters or during migratory routes.
10. Lack of mechanisms to report bad practices, E&D in the health sector.

Table 7. Health needs and challenges
11. There is no evidence of referral mechanisms between the health and education sectors that would allow girls to meet their visual, hearing, nutrition needs, nor their needs for protection in cases of aggression within the family environment, among others.
12. Lack of interpretation services for those who do not speak the language of the country.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.4 Education

"There was no money to buy a school uniform and I went in shorts until they could buy a uniform for me. So, I was like that, wearing my own clothes and the teacher started saying that we Venezuelans were coming to steal her job and her rights. I said 'No, we don't do that. Ecuadorians are migrating to the United States, to Spain, and many countries, and they are not stealing work from anyone', and the teacher said I was wrong." (Adolescent girl)

"I remember that when I was in third grade, some children used to bother me a lot. They bullied me a lot when I just arrived. The teacher made fun of me because I couldn't read well, also because I spoke differently. From then on, the children began to call me a thief. A really mean kid, the meanest at school, he would say things like 'yesterday they robbed the bank, I'm sure you were involved', 'a Venezuelan killed an Ecuadorian, surely you were there.' One day, they started pouring water like this, on my head. Another day they put me against the blackboard and started writing ugly things on me and throwing water at me. They started hitting me and did horrible things to me. They tied me to the blackboard, they held my hands and my feet so I could not break free, too. Then another kid told them the teacher was coming, so they let me go. Since I sit in the front row because I need glasses, the teacher saw me crying and asked me what was wrong. I told her that they were bullying me. She scolded them, but nothing happened. They still bully me [...] I went to the DSC[9] to talk about what happened, but they didn't believe me. They believed them." (Adolescent girl)

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9   Department of Student Counseling. This area is responsible for providing comprehensive support to students. Its purpose is to provide psychoeducational and social support in accordance with the current Ecuadorian legal framework.

The previous testimony shows that for many migrant, displaced, and refugee girls, school is a place of cruelty where they have no systems to guarantee their protection. The drama of the previous stories, coming from 8-year-old and 10-year-old girls illustrates a common situation of gender violence to which they are subjected by a system that does not attribute legitimacy to their words. This, in turn, configures the institutional violence in which revictimization prevails.

Many girls and adolescent girls experience institutional violence at school due to various forms of harassment, stigma, and discrimination by classmates, teachers, and through the administrative regulations that govern schools. It is important to underline that in the context of the pandemic these issues of access and stigma have been transferred to the virtual environment, a situation demonstrated by the following experience: "With the pandemic, everything in school is harder because everything is online, and sometimes we don't have enough money to connect." It is also important to point out the additional family burdens associated with housing and food: *"Now it is harder for my parents because we used to have a school cafeteria, and that helped the family a lot. Now they are also more worried because there are three of us studying now and we are at home all the time."*

The following testimonies highlight the positive aspects valued by the girls and adolescent girls. On the one hand, school spaces are places that offer the possibility of building friendships and support bonds with the native people of the country. On the other hand, it was also evident that punishment, hitting, or fights tend to be recurrent in these spaces, without major consequences for those who commit aggressive acts.

Migration and displacement are not discussed at school. Nor do they address interculturality and coexistence, among other issues that directly affect the daily life of migrant families.

The interviewees identified four aspects as common violence in the school environment, namely: stigmatization and discrimination felt when being disparagingly referred to as "*venecas*"; procedures of enrollment and access to education dependent on their migratory status; teachers and students who do not understand or empathize with their realities; and the fact that the bathroom and the schoolyard are usually places where more bullying situations are reported. Finally, girls living in shelters, unaccompanied girls, and pregnant adolescent girls reported having the greatest difficulties in accessing education.

"A teacher hit me. My mother went to school to defend me and see if they would change me to a different class."

"I'm not attending school because when my mother went to ask for a space, they said they could not give me one because she had to have my Venezuelan transcripts, my grades."

"I have many Colombian classmates who are my friends and there are many Venezuelans. I like that."

"I have friends at school, that's what I like the most."

"I want to validate my high school diploma, but it is not easy. They ask us for papers."

"What I don't like is that they often call us 'venecas'."

"I would like more Venezuelan children to come to school."

"I don't like going to the bathroom on my own because sometimes they take advantage of it to say or do ugly things to you there."

"There should be more games and dynamics at school during class hours that help us to feel happier."

"The teachers should pay more attention to the fighting and they should prohibit the word 'veneca'."

"Sometimes if the bathroom is far away, there are men outside who are always looking around. That's a little scary. I don't like to go alone".

"I want to finish high school, but I don't know what I can do. I started looking into it, but that's when the pandemic started."

"For me it is difficult to think about school because now my priority is my son, what I need is a job and that is what I am trying to do as a priority."

"They don't talk about migration at my school, even though there are many Venezuelans like myself."

"There are many fights for bullying, for things that are said about the body or unpleasant words because one is Venezuelan."

"We need more talks or information at school about how to take care of our body, about not being afraid. There are girls who want to talk about something that happened to them, and they don't do it because people don't believe them, so the person who hurt them then hurts others even more."

"There are teachers in my school who are Nicaraguan. That's good because they understand me and help me. I like that a lot about my school."

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"A teacher told me that Venezuelans come here to take their jobs, food, and husbands."

The diagnosis highlights that, despite the needs summarized below, school is still one of the few institutions with which girls and adolescent girls maintain a greater degree of involvement.[10]

Table 8. Educational needs and challenges
1. Conditional access based on a regular or refugee immigration status.
2. Bureaucratic procedures for the validation or homologation of studies.
3. The teaching staff is unaware of migration realities and rights in this field.
4. Attacks and institutional aggressions go unpunished.
5. The school system is distant or scarcely related to the family-community structure of migrant girls and adolescent girls.
6. There is little information on SRR in the migrant and displacement context.
7. No migrant and refugee professionals who can provide a warmer and more qualified attention considering the realities of girls and adolescent girls.
8. Lack of norms that promote school coexistence, and that consider legal, intercultural, gender, and anti-racism perspectives.
9. Methodologies focused on mechanical learning, scarcely enjoyable or experiential that consider "happiness", as expressed by one of the participants.
10. The participation, voice, and decision-making of migrant girls and adolescent girls are not encouraged by the mechanisms provided by the school.
11. Access difficulties due to the lack of learning and interpretation mechanisms in contexts such as Aruba and Guyana, where other languages are spoken.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.5 Labor

Girls and adolescent girls carry out multiple tasks associated with caring for the family that are not recognized. At the same time, many of them carry out activities to support family income, which exposes them to labor exploitation.

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10   For this reason, this analysis turned out to be more thorough, in terms of the quantity and the variety of testimonies offered by the girls and adolescent girls, than the rest of the explored spheres.

Remunerated activities usually carried out by girls and adolescent girls are related to providing school reinforcement for other children, looking after other children so that their mothers can work, and street vending (food, jewelry, etc.). Some of them also sell in informally arranged stands for betting games (pools, sports, etc.). It is pregnant adolescent girls or adolescent single mothers who demand more regular options to access the labor market.

Those who have a remunerated job usually use the money as a contribution to family income and for expenses associated with personal hygiene and studies, among other things. Others send remittances to their grandmothers. This sphere requires further study beyond the scope of this diagnosis, however, some of the needs expressed in the economic sphere have been listed below.

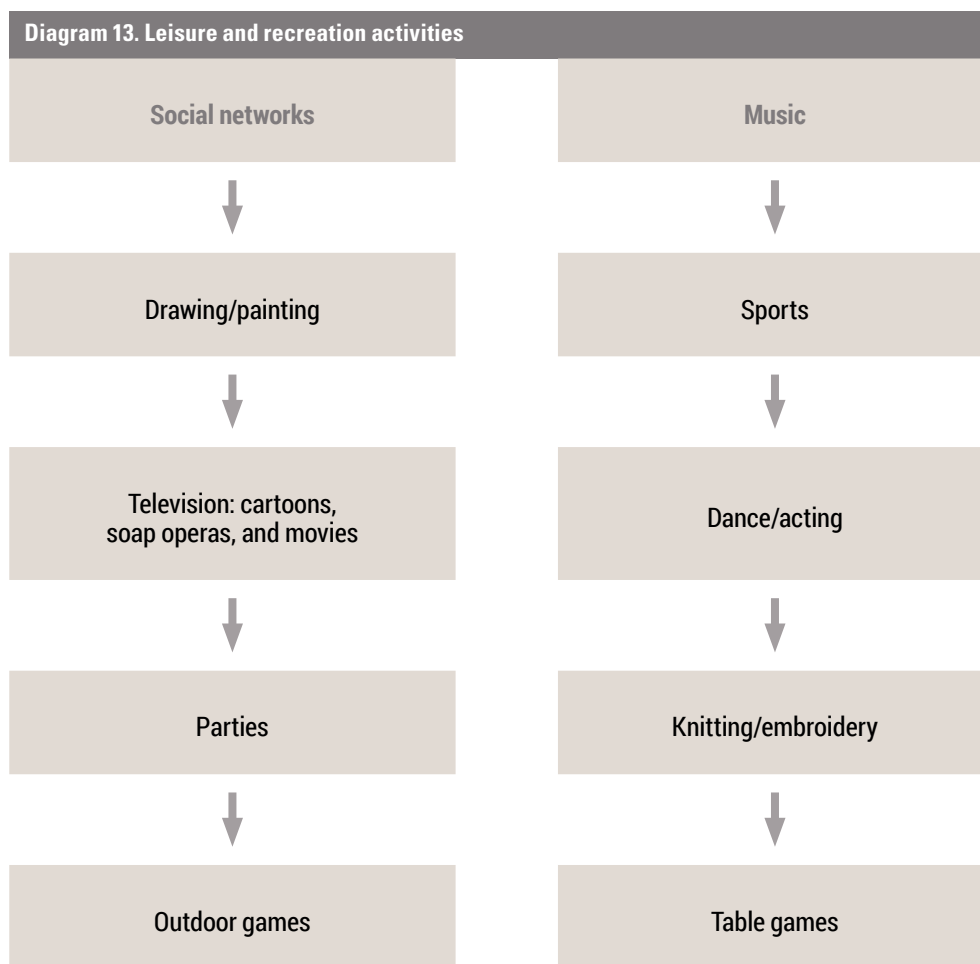| Table 9. Labor needs and challenges |
|---|
| 1. Lack of recognition of the workload or the contribution girls and adolescent girls make in the family environment. |
| 2. Exposure to dynamics of labor exploitation with harassment and xenophobic attacks. |
| 3. Scarce economic compensatory measures at home. Many girls and adolescent girls do not manage money to meet their minimal needs. |
| 4. Overemphasis on the labor sphere, due to the dynamics of educational training. |
| 5. Little recognition regarding rights not associated to labor, which should apply to their legal status as minors. |
| 6. Exposure to early unions to satisfy family economic needs. |
| 7. Disqualification and various forms of mistreatment in work environments, including within the family or at home. |
| 8. Little space for leisure, recreation, and social participation due to their involvement in housework. |
| 9. Sustaining ties of economic-emotional dependence on older adult figures. |
| 10. Disappointment and hopelessness regarding future options for economic improvement. |

Source: Developed by the author.

5.6 Leisure and recreation

Leisure and recreation activities are essential for the development of democratic values, participation, and good treatment. When approached

comprehensively, carrying out these activities contributes to the development of daily skills in health, education, art, etc. They are a fundamental determinant of psychophysiological, cognitive, and relational development.

Girls do not have spaces for leisure and enjoyment of their free time in their community, educational, or family settings. Apart from the parks or sports courts that were mostly identified as unsuitable for them, the use of the internet, through social networks, seems to be their most used means for entertainment. Activities that promote social, cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor skills were not mentioned as important in their daily routines. On the contrary, as indicated in the previous section, the labor sphere, in addition to education, occupies much of the interviewees' time.

Diagram 13. Leisure and recreation activities	
Social networks	**Music**
↓	↓
Drawing/painting	Sports
↓	↓
Television: cartoons, soap operas, and movies	Dance/acting
↓	↓
Parties	Knitting/embroidery
↓	↓
Outdoor games	Table games

Source: Develped by the author.

Girls between the ages of 7 and 9 have the most time to play with their pets, draw, or enjoy outdoor games. Adolescent girls indicated multiple difficulties in accessing games or sports considered to be "male" sports, or constant obstacles to entering courts or spaces that are occupied by men.

Figure 17. Social networks used

Network	Value
Facebook	~210
Instagram	~180
Tik tok	~80
Snapchat	~30
Youtube	~130
WhatsApp	~190
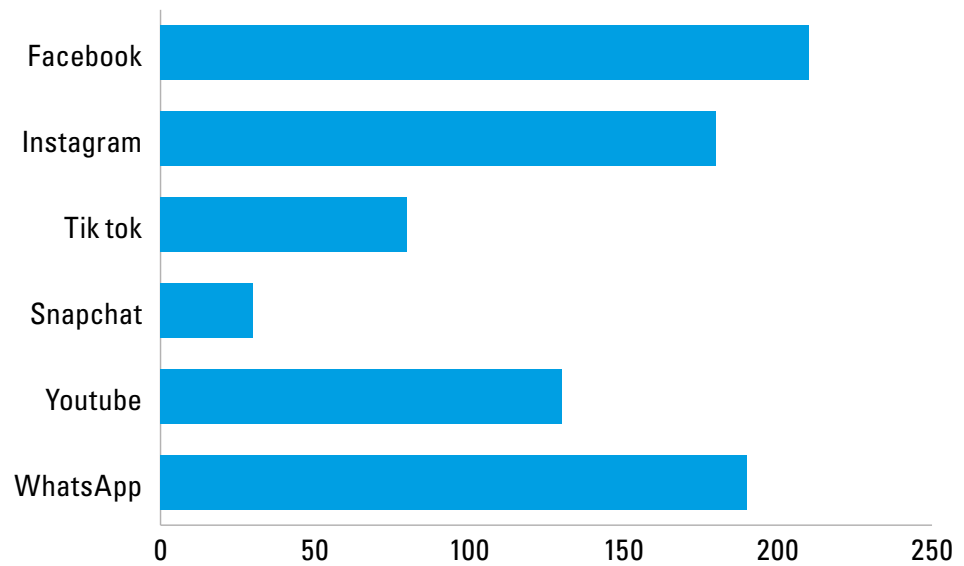
Source: Developed by the author.

The only places mentioned as available recreation spaces were the parks. However, in many cases they expressed fear because they are usually unsafe spaces, without appropriate conditions for girls and adolescent girls to be there without feeling afraid and being exposed to forms of harassment, drug use, xenophobia, etc. "There are few spaces to play", or "They always bother us", were constant statements during the interviews.

The analyzes also show that the spaces at home, in the community, or in the neighborhood are not arranged in a way to make girls and adolescent girls feel safe and comfortable carrying out recreational activities. This reaffirms a mental position of daily constraint and burden.

> "I like the park, but a bunch of guys hang out there and they start to bother you."

> "I don't go to the park. It's very far from where I live. I meet on the terrace with friends, and we look for things on our mobile device to entertain ourselves. I like to have more boys as friends than girls because women gossip. They talk about everything."

> "The only park around here is far away, and it's ugly and dirty. There are also men there smoking and there are no games there."

> "I prefer not to go out, it scares me. I like to listen to music, watch TV, or look at Facebook."

"I would like to attend handicraft workshops. The other day I went to one that they organized, and it had painting. I really enjoyed it."

"I play ball or sometimes I watch TV or play videogames. I play with my cousins at home because now I have a ball and I can play in the yard."

"There was a backyard in my house and we played there a lot but we can't anymore because an uncle came to cook food for sale, and he took over the backyard completely. We no longer have a place to play, so now we only play on our mobile phone."

"I like to play with my dog. It's what I enjoy the most."

Table 10. Leisure and recreation needs and challenges
1. Girls and adolescent girls are unaware of the municipality's available resources for art and recreation.
2. Friendship, dialogue, and communication through leisure activities between girls and adolescent girls and local people are not encouraged.
3. There are no safe spaces in nearby environments for outdoor activities that promote community coexistence between migrants and local people.
4. There is a lack of alternative and comprehensive views within the family environment about the importance of play in their social development.
5. They do not have access to municipal resources that promote mental and physical health, through sports, art, and culture, etc.
6. Recreation contexts are limited to social networks. Soap operas are usually one of the ways to induce patterns rooted in gender, class, and race.
7. The media and technology in general do not adapt their specialized programming to migrant girls and adolescent girls.
8. The few existing spaces for leisure—courts and parks—are mostly taken up or occupied by adult men.
9. Leisure activities (trips, walks, movies, etc.) are often privatized. They often involve an expense for the families. There are no coupons or discount policies that facilitate access to playgrounds. In fact, because they are considered foreigners, sometimes they must pay more to enter certain parks or tourist places in the countries of arrival.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.7 Justice

> *"You would think that if something happens you can go to the police, but they do nothing. They won't even help local people; imagine how it is for us Venezuelans. There even less likely to do anything." (Adolescent girl)*

The relationship with justice mechanisms requires specific research to further analyze the challenges listed below. The most noteworthy element in the stories is the lack of trust in the public entities in charge of safeguarding their rights, which might relate to the scarce application of international commitments on migration, refuge, and forced displacement.

Evidently, migrant girls and adolescent girls have a limited role as subjects of rights in the jurisprudence of the countries participating in the diagnosis. In this sense, the common denominator for interviewees is the need to reform the legislation to favor their inclusion, creating special measures or protocols for their care.

There is also an enormous lack of knowledge regarding the conditions they suffer in the migratory context; while at the same time, they are blamed for migrating, as stated by a key participant in the study: *"Understanding human mobility as a right is part of what influences compliance with jurisprudence. People continue to think about migration as a problem, viewing those who migrate as the ones to blame for the troubles that our countries are experiencing."* They also insisted that complexity stemming from age and gender is not sufficiently recognized in existing reception protocols.

> *"The seriousness of being a girl-woman is neither understood, nor respected. They face a high degree of defenselessness and vulnerability. There is no understanding regarding their unmet basic needs in connection to gender, age, and migration. These three aspects are not seen or taken into account when thinking about what they experience when crossing a border. They are locked up in transit places, returned, or kept in a total legal uncertainty, which aggravates the context of discrimination they start with in their country of origin." (C. Suarez. Personal communication; March 30, 2021)*

As mentioned in other chapters of this diagnosis, girls and adolescent girls realize that they have the right to a decent life based on their migratory and/or displacement reality. However, none of them knows which laws or mechanisms they could use to defend their rights.

Disinformation is a concerning element and shows family, school, and community environments do not have appropriate spaces for continuous learning on how to use or set in motion mechanisms for the protection of their rights.

With this in mind, even though there is extensive knowledge among girls and adolescent girls about the right that adult women close to them have to a life free of violence, they do not perceive the same for themselves. The stories explored show that the common perception is that the existing protection against GBV covers adult women, but not girls and adolescent girls.[11] On the other hand, the testimonies stated that the only way to respond to an attack is by "returning" the aggression; that is, finding mechanisms of personal self-defense.

It is also worth mentioning that girls and adolescent girls are exposed to forms of sexual abuse on the cross-border journey, and they do not know how to proceed in the face of this violation of rights. The following is a statement by one of the adolescent girls consulted:

"What I didn't like about my trip was that the guard stopped us on the road, and they asked us a lot of questions. They were saying that Venezuelan women were not ladies. In my case, I had to travel without my guardian and the truth is that I had very unpleasant moments. The man from the boat was hitting on me, and in a place where we had to stay, he tried to abuse me, not in a sexual way, but he did very unpleasant things. I haven't received guidance on where to report it."

Table 11. Needs and challenges in justice
1. Apart from the police, the girls and adolescent girls consulted do not know of any resources to turn to in the event of violence or abuse, in any area of their daily lives.
2. Although they know what their fundamental rights are, they do not mention any particular regulation in the country of origin or arrival to use in case of violation of their rights.

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11   This aspect requires further in-depth research or specific mapping to determine the practical relationship between children's rights and women's rights. In other words, how the rights of girls do not contemplate gender approaches and how they do not include a generational perspective, as they focus fundamentally on adult women. In the field of migration, nationalist, welfare, or paternalistic approaches could prevail, limiting the integration of both perspectives in current jurisprudence. This understanding of life cycles from an adult-centric patriarchal perspective requires a more in-depth look, depending on each context.

Table 11. Needs and challenges in justice

3. Girls and adolescent girls do not report acts of domestic violence for fear of being deported themselves or getting their family members deported.

4. Except for the legal support they receive from some local and international organizations, girls and adolescent girls are unprotected throughout the cross-border process they go through.

5. Girls and adolescent girls usually do not know if there are state or civil society organizations to which they can go to report any act of violence.

6. They have a deep distrust or fear of reporting a violation of their rights due to xenophobia and other forms of discrimination, to which they are constantly exposed in the countries of origin and arrival.

7. They do not recognize a possible recourse in the complaint, precisely because of the constant corruption to which they and their families are exposed during the cross-border process.

8. There is total ignorance of the instances or courts for children in the countries of departure and arrival.

9. Girls and adolescent girls identify the rights of women for adult women such as their mothers, their grandmothers, or their aunts. However, they do not consider that framework as their own or as containing their rights.

10. In many contexts, due to the tutelage status conferred to girls and adolescent girls, legal frameworks prevent them from making direct use of legal resources to defend their rights. In the event that aggressions occur in an intimate partner, family, or shelter context, access is even more difficult.

11. Public officers, who are usually adults, have little sensitivity to issues related to gender, childhood, and migration.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.8 Mass media and social networks

"My mom is helping me because I want to be an influencer, youtuber, and tiktoker. I want to talk about what happens to us because of being migrants and talk about fun things we can do." (S. García. Personal communication; March 23, 2021).

Girls and adolescent girls spend much of their time logged on to social media. The most used are Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube. These media platforms are regularly used for four main purposes:

- ▶ Maintaining emotional ties with family and friendship networks in the country of origin.

- ▶ Using media as a means of entertainment and fun.

- ▶ Studying or doing school homework.

- ▶ Responding to information needs that are not covered by the family, the community, and the institutions.

This variety of motivations turns the internet into the main ally in managing many issues in everyday life. It is also a space that often puts them at risk of receiving sexual, xenophobic, and racist attacks and assaults.

There is undoubtedly an ambiguous relationship in terms of the use of social networks. On the one hand, it helps girls and adolescent girls to maintain links and updated information; and on the other, they are exposed to multiple messages of hypersexualization of their bodies.

The ideals of beauty shown in the media they use are considerable, where characters very far from their race and class realities stand out. However, social networks also democratize the idea of "fame", leadership, and influence that they might exert at a social level.

Another predominant issue in the explored stories are the technological gaps that characterize their socio-family contexts. Girls and adolescent girls often do not have their own telephone and computers, resorting to cybercafe places where, in addition to discrimination, they experience digital security incidents. On the other hand, their family and their partners control the time and the content they view or share. For them it is important to have freedom to use the learning content in these media.

It is important to mention that none of the girls and adolescent girls consulted have received information external to their family, regarding measures to protect their digital identity. For the most part, it is the families that implement these parental controls, but in many cases under blackmail or intimidation schemes, as a means of reward or punishment for certain behaviors.

Within the subject of social networks, girls and adolescent girls highlighted the forms of harassment they experience from known and unknown people. Many of these forms of aggression cross over from the face-to-face educational sphere, for example, to the virtual platforms they use. Many of them, as well as their sisters or their friends, have experienced unpleasant situations that violate the right to sexual intimacy, as evident in the following stories:

"Weird requests are constantly coming in from strangers. Sometimes you accept them because you are curious or to meet new people and make friends. Then they say hello and ask questions about your body or your measurements. They also ask for photos and send photos of their penis."

"A couple of times I have received phrases or memes saying very ugly things about Venezuelans from people from school."

"A man was bothering my sister a lot on the Internet. He asked her to say things to him or to do sexual things for him in the camera."

"They once sent me unpleasant photos of a man touching himself. I told my mother and we blocked that mean man [...] I felt disgusted and afraid."

"My mom won't let me use social networks. She says that is not for me because I am very young, but I would like to have social networks to talk with my friends. Everyone does."

"They always post nasty things and say unpleasant things about your body. They'll tell you if you're ugly or pretty, they also curse a lot, out there, for everything."

"I don't have a cell phone, they are expensive. My mother lends me hers to talk to my grandmother and my cousins."

"I like to use it to amuse myself. I like to watch videos about stupid things so I don't have to think about anything and just laugh. I like memes."

Table 12. Needs and challenges in communication and social media
1. Limited access to information resources and technologies associated with cyberspace and curricular training.
2. Little information available about their needs and rights as migrant girls and adolescent girls and about digital protection.
3. Constant exposure to forms of sexting without consent.
4. Emotional control of partners or ex-partners regarding the use of social networks.
5. Little access to digital security and protection measures.
6. Dependence on partners, relatives, or acquaintances to access virtual information services with risks to their sexual safety.
7. Exposure to blackmail and forms of extortion against them and their families.

• It consists of the recording of a physical, verbal, or sexual aggression and its dissemination online through digital technologies (webpages, blogs, chats, social networks, etc.)

Source: Developed by the author.

5.9 The street

"I would like to be a boy. Females feel more locked up. They are afraid, they are more guarded. Men can walk down the street and people don't say anything to them." (11-year-old girl, Venezuela)

Street harassment was a constant in the stories analyzed. As the diagnosis determined, this is a form of gender violence that implies a prohibition of the use of public space by women, at all stages of their life cycle. It is a typical corrective practice of sexist violence, whose purpose is to create contexts of coercion to freedom of movement. Thus, girls and adolescent girls coexist in spaces marked by forms of subtle and direct aggression that touch on the following aspects *(see Diagram 14).*

The testimonies analyzed highlight how criticism of the body is constant. Fatphobia—rejection of overweight people—prevails in the comments. Certain traits of beauty or exotifications of their bodies were also highlighted due to their condition as foreigners. There are also degrading comments with stigmatization prototypes rooted in nationality. For instance, Venezuelan or Colombian women are called prostitutes, homewreckers, drug dealers, hit women, torturers, etc.

The same testimonies describe the way in which comments are made about the type of families they have, and the integrity of other women—such as their sisters and mothers—is attacked. In the same way, there are forms of harassment linked to the way of thinking and corporeality, being called names such as ugly or stupid.

There are forms of harassment that occur due to the relationships or the type of friendships that they establish within their environment, generating certain behaviors. Skin color is another factor for harassment, as it highlights features that generate rejection such as one's hair, buttocks, or mouth.

Diagram 14. Causes of street harassment

About their body

Types of families

Nationality

Beliefs

Types of bullying

Skin color

Cognitive system

Type of relationships
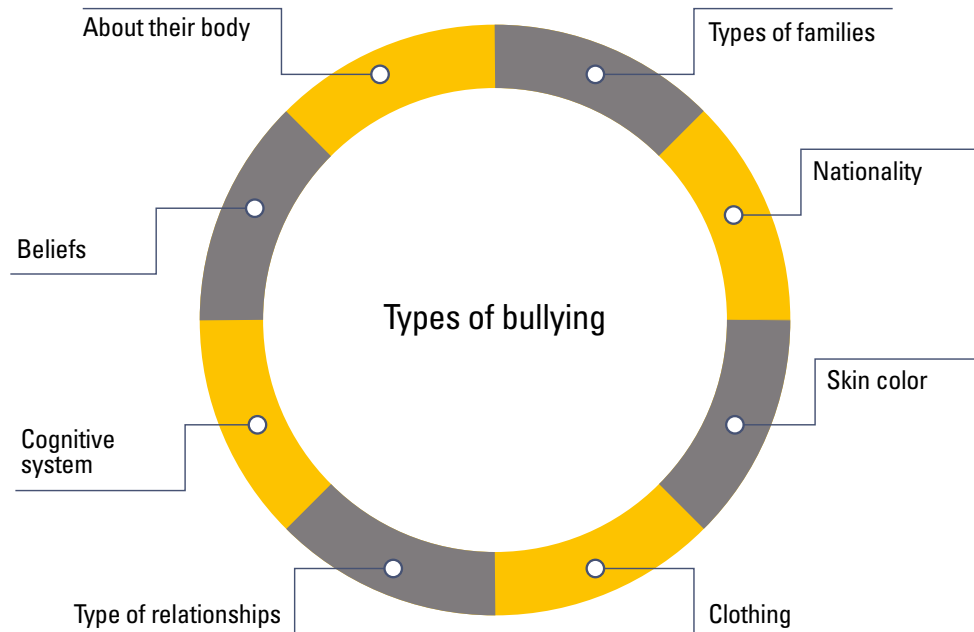
Clothing

Source: Developed by the author.

There are other forms of harassment linked to clothing. This aspect carries a profound gender brand, which often argues that girls and adolescent girls invite harassment by the way they dress. Many girls and adolescent girls have in fact internalized this pattern of guilt due to the aesthetics of gender, associated with the ideology of the "good" woman or the "bad" woman. In this regard, there are ideas that prevail such as the belief that harassment is caused by girls and adolescent girls "who dress inappropriately", and not by the macho culture that is implicit in these attacks.

Table 13. Needs and challenges on the street

1. There is no access to citizen security policies that take street harassment into consideration as a central axis; therefore, the consequences of such abuse are not prevented or addressed.
2. Increasing tendency to stay at home in order to avoid assault.

Table 13. Needs and challenges on the street

3. Restriction of movement for fear of being raped or inappropriately touched.

4. Increased understanding of home as the only place for female agency.

5. The search for male companionship to supply or counteract attacks, creating bonds of codependency with male authority figures.

6. Constant comments that affect self-esteem and self-image from a positive perspective, which generates self-rejection. The girls and adolescent girls most exposed to these situations are those who work in street sales.

7. Focus on the body, which means that anyone can give their opinion and say what they want, because it is an "object".

8. Normalization and acceptance of comments as a way to legitimize their physical appearance.

9. Risk of isolation and of fostering fear of using public spaces.

10. Implications for social participation because the space is perceived as uncomfortable and not their own; therefore, the perception is that there is nothing to do individually or collectively to transform the public and private spaces of the community.

Source: Developed by the author.

5.10 Social participation

"There are no groups for girls here, I don't know where to go or if there are any. But I would like there to be a dance group." (Adolescent girl)

"I do not know places where we can talk to each other and feel heard like here in this interview." (Adolescent girl)

"I would like to meet other girls like me, migrants, but also local girls, to talk about what happens to us." (Adolescent girl)

"I would like to create a group on WhatsApp to meet and do activities together, to support each other through the things that happen to us." (Adolescent girl)

The participants do not have association and collaboration practices to defend their rights. In general, they do not recognize any space available to implement forms of collective organization beyond informal spaces created at school or friendship networks for leisure purposes; nor do they participate

directly in community groups or networks that encourage social action in their oppressive realities.

The interviews conducted underscored that girls and adolescent girls do not have information or training resources that encourage their integration into child and youth network spaces in the communities where they live. Although they are interested in participating, they do not know how to go about it if they wish to undertake forms of organization among themselves. School, social networks, or the media do not have specific policies that encourage their participation in issues related to migration.

Table 14. Needs and challenges in social participation
1. Girls and adolescent girls do not know which networks or groups operate in their immediate environment and which they might join.
2. There is a motivation gap regarding the defense of their rights. Structural codependency in the adult world is considerable.
3. There are no friendly spaces in cross-border environments for girls and adolescent girls to acquire knowledge about their rights as migrants. Urgent actions do not include actions to defend their rights and search for collective solutions.
4. The focus is on the individual, neglecting the possibilities of interaction, co-creation, and collaboration between them.
5. The mainstreaming perspective in the accompaniment of girls and adolescent girls is welfare-centered and adult-centered, therefore they lack the resources to promote their management and decision-making power.
6. Girls and adolescent girls do not have generational references that promote their interest in getting involved in social transformation.
7. Their talents and leadership are not used to encourage their participation in advocacy and training activities in the school, health, and media spheres, among others.
8. Agencies and donors promote images of migrant children as "poor" and do not stimulate their imagination and power.
9. Models of femininity continue to focus on areas of care. These perceptions are widely disseminated by the media, religion, and schools, among others.
10. Authoritarian conceptions of families and educational environments limit the development of the potential for change led by girls and adolescent girls.

Source: Developed by the author.

Coping strategies in everyday life

6. Coping strategies in everyday life

"Migrating is like losing everything [...] it's like being born again." (Estefania, Venezuela. 11 years old)

Although this section contains relevant information, we recommend looking further at the actions conducted by girls and adolescent girls to face contexts of injustice, exclusion, and inequality, which define their individual and collective experiences during their migratory journey. The intention is to contribute to a resilient observation of the experience of being a migrant, displaced, or refugee girl or adolescent girl.

The resilient strategy brings together the forms of re-existence that demonstrate how, despite the harshness and cruelty of the migratory journey, girls and adolescent girls face multiple challenges to continue their routes willingly, in the midst of the material and symbolic border closure. It means that girls and adolescent girls are not passive subjects of the migrant process. On the contrary, they are an inspiring part of their families in the search for better living conditions, and they are executors of the migrant process. They live it with astuteness and a sense of survival.

The stories of the girls and adolescent girls that make the journey unaccompanied or pregnant and flee from situations of hunger, exclusion, violence, or sexual abuse in their countries of origin, are stories of bravery, paradoxically grounded in uprooting and courage. Despite the adverse context of migratory grief and the violence to which they are subjected, they look for alternatives to coexist with the dreams and expectations described below.

Support relationships

They look for support in family relationships in the country of origin and arrival that are inspiring and support and collaborate with their projects. They generate and sustain solid bonds of friendship in which they develop a sense of company and complicity necessary for mutual support. Emotional-collaborative intelligence.

Obstacle = opportunity

Despite the aggressions along the way, they observe that the obstacles are a way to learn, a way to acquire more skills to face life. Learning from the mistake, they teach others to process their experiences. They amplify their skills, transform obstacles into positive creations around themselves. They learn to take care of themselves autonomously.

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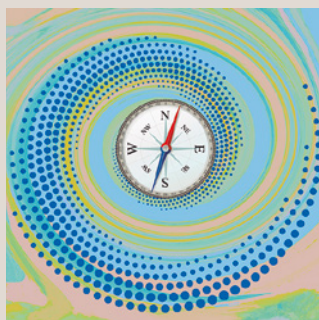
Openness to change

Recognize that life involves change. They develop flexible thoughts, they do not cling to a single idea or position. They learn from the new, they enjoy it. They embrace the context with its precariousness, giving a sense of optimism and faith in them and their environment.

"Visionary Fiction": dreams

They create many visions of the future that allow them to face difficulties assuming that everything will be much better. They create scenarios of imagination where they happily have and carry all their dreams of a better life, based on treating themselves and their environment well.

Source: Developed by the author.

"I want my own coffee shop, I want to meet a Korean group that I really like. I want to travel there and get to know that culture, I want to taste their food."

"My dream, like every other girl, is to go to France, to visit Paris, to go to Italy, to get to know Europe. I would like many things. I want to go to Miami and get to know all that. I want to see the snow. See my family, my mom,

and my dad. There are so many things one wants to do! I want to do a lot of things."

"I want COVID to go away, graduate from medicine, and help support all the girls who need support."

"I want to have support to become a famous businesswoman, an influencer who guides all the girls in the world, and has many friends all over the world, with a beautiful house where my whole family can get together."

"I see myself as a very famous singer, I like to sing. I see myself going to the Oscars."

"I want to do many things. Model, dance, and be a doctor. I want to change the world, so that there is no violence."

"I see myself changing the world so that there is a lot of love and affection for everyone."

"I want to be a very organized president so that when a virus comes, I will not prevent people from going out. I would let people go out for a while and play. I hope the current president lets us go out and play."

"I see myself as a dancer, dancing a lot, traveling, and making friends everywhere. I see myself getting the whole family together in one place."

"I want to have a law firm to defend rights. I want to live with my best friend."

"I see myself fighting homophobia so that everyone can be happy."

"I see myself in the U.S. buying my mother a house with a swimming pool. I want to study and work for her to make that dream come true for her."

"I want to be a lawyer to defend people. More than anything I want to defend women and fight for their rights. I want to know about laws to defend myself and other people so that we can live free of abuse."

"I want to be my own boss."

"I want to be a writer, I want to express what I feel, and transform my thoughts into letters."

"I want to have a music label, record songs, and make my friends famous."

"I want to be a psychologist to help all abused women. I want to help them lose their fear. I would also like to be a pastry chef to make life sweeter. I don't know. I'm undecided."

Conclusions and recommendations

7. Conclusions

The main needs experienced by migrant, displaced, and refugee girls and adolescent girls are related to four correlational spheres, namely the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and cross-border spheres. In accordance with these, substantive deficiencies were detected regarding the guarantees for individual and collective protection.

7.1 Individual sphere

▶ Girls and adolescents coexist with multiple psychosocial affectations related to structural violence and migratory grief, which determines the development of a self-image or self-concept underscored by exile, fear, loneliness, and helplessness.

Many of their psychophysiological ailments are suffered in silence without structures of trust that allow them to feel heard or recognized with credibility to report or activate responses when they face situations of abuse or harassment, both at home and outside of their home.

▶ Adolescent girls are unaware of their body and sexuality. A profound disconnection with communicational guidelines that encourage the development of healthy practices in this area was evident.

Girls between the ages of 7 and 9 consider that these are "adult" topics and prefer not to comment on them, because they are ashamed or afraid to ask or comment. Adolescent girl state that only on social networks and with their best friends do they find answers to their doubts or concerns regarding sexuality and reproduction. They are aware of being treated as sexual objects, through harassment at home and outside of their home.

▶ Adolescent girls expressed insecurities regarding body image in relation to beauty stereotypes. They live in environments of emotional aggression that are constantly harmful for their
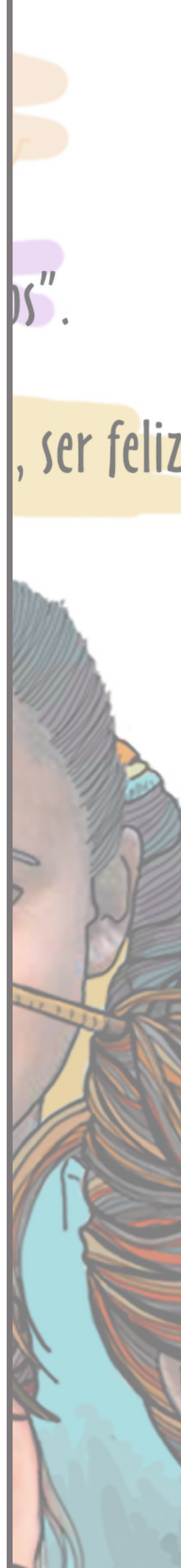
relationship with and appreciation of their own bodies. The indigenous and Afro-descendant girls consulted are the ones who mostly coexist with a feeling of rejection for aspects related to aesthetics or the ideals of white-mestizo beauty that prevail in their context.

▶ The identities and achievements of girls and adolescent girls are configured during the multiple entries and exits of the cross-border spaces in which cruel acts of violence take place, as a consequence of the overexposure to words, unwelcomed touching, and constant restrictions that increase the emotional and economic precariousness they live in. In addition to this, they live in a context where they go hungry and thirsty. The pendular migration experience becomes a constant risk of sexual, emotional, and economic abuse.

▶ The routes that girls and adolescent girls undertake are varied. Thus, their experiences during the journey are also varied and depend on the means of transport—by air, land, or water.

In each case, situations occur that sow mistrust, doubt, and fear. The migratory project is in itself an experience of grief due to the exile, for which they do not receive any type of psychosocial support.

▶ Unaccompanied girls and adolescent girls are the ones who suffer the most from the cruelty or violence of the journey. Pregnant adolescent girls or single adolescent mothers require a lot of courage and resilience to keep "going" for weeks, months, or even years, as they are the most exposed to these dehumanizing situations. During the journey, they sometimes prefer to cling to known or unknown male figures, in search of support and security.

▶ In the girls' and adolescent girls' testimonies analyzed—with the exception of unaccompanied girls and adolescent girls—migration and/or forced displacement is an event that takes them by surprise and over which they have little decision-making power regarding the journey undertaken by the adults in charge.
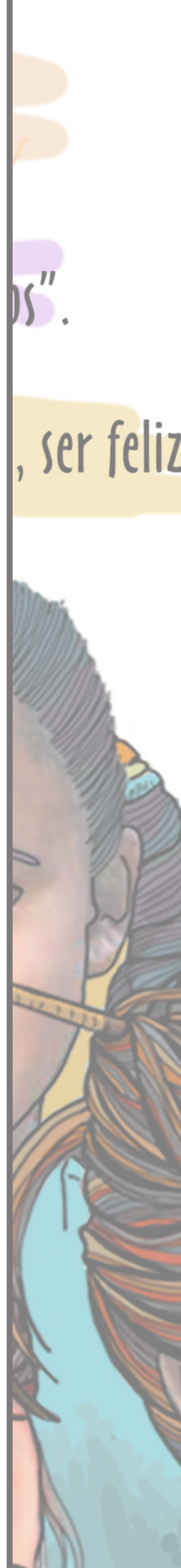
7.2 Interrelational sphere

▶ The girls and adolescent girls report that they live with family, friends, partners, and neighbors who constantly pressure them to maintain strict adherence to traditional gender values. In this

sense, they are marked by experiences of systematic violent communication in their countries of origin, during their transit, at their destination, and upon returning to their countries of origin.

Many of the interviewees stated that their daily settings (home, school, neighborhood, street, social networks, etc.), are determined by practical discourses of adultcentrism, sexism, nationalism, racism, and xenophobia that materialize in expressions or acts of contempt toward their origins and identities.

These experiences or evaluations of the immediate environment generate a constant perception of foreigners that frames their options for active collaboration and inclusion in actions in favor of their rights, since there are no measures in their immediate context that encourage active listening and connection with their needs, knowledge, and feelings passing from individual to collective agency.

▶ Adolescent girls develop relationships of love or friendship along their migratory trajectories in search of sustenance and daily support. Best friends play an important role of attachment, given the multiple losses they face in the country of origin, especially the separation from their grandmothers. For many, these new substitute ties become the only spaces in which they meet their needs of affection, communication, and fun. In these experiences, the mutual care work carried out among peers is notorious; tensions are also revealed among indigenous and migrant girls and adolescent girls, regarding the compliance with gender patterns linked to beauty, sexuality, and care policies.

▶ In the cases explored, multiple romantic love practices were observed, based on emotional and economic codependency on their partners. The systematic control prevails at different levels such as the geographical, physical, relational, economic, sexual, and social network spheres. They are relationships that begin without minimum conditions of information and negotiation, in which the couple's expectations are tied to the traditional pattern of men as providers and women as nurturers.

▶ For unaccompanied adolescent girls, early relationships or unions with young people or adults older than them (between 5–10 years older) are related to the need for emotional and economic containment, as figures with greater power of representation and support to meet the basic needs for security which are not supplied by state agencies.

7.3 Institutional sphere

▶ Before, during, and after their migratory trajectory, the relationship of adolescent girls with the mechanisms that guarantee their rights is non-existent. Most of the participants in the investigation maintain a sense of institutional helplessness, guided by misinformation and the distance generated by the multiple practices of institutional violence to which they are exposed. Adolescent girls do not know what state resources they can access to safeguard their rights.

▶ Beyond the police and school, the interviewees do not perceive state authorities as public agents that can support them in their processes of defense of their rights. The common support denominators for adolescent girls are their mothers, fathers, or people from the neighborhood with whom they establish bonds of trust. The lack of information regarding laws, policies, or services contemplated in their migratory route is evident.

▶ The main evident barrier for the fulfillment of their rights has to do with being in an irregular migratory situation. Therefore, their main demand is to get their "papers" or the refugee status. Those who are living in shelters consider that these spaces are not suitable for them, because they imply confinement or feel like "a prison".

Adolescent girls do not mention institutions for the protection of children, such as the courts for children and adolescents, as instances to which they can appeal or where they can sue in case their rights are violated. Interviewees also expressed total mistrust of the entities of the judicial branch because they "never believe us" when reporting acts of violence experienced at school, at home, and on the street. Adolescent girls perceive that these entities are not going to do anything, because there is no empathy when listening to their stories.

▶ Adolescent girls lack access to comprehensive policies for nutrition, housing, education, health and justice, leisure, and recreation, in accordance with international commitments on protection. Their recurring position is that they have not heard or do not know where to go in case of experiencing violence in any of the areas explored in the diagnosis.

▶ Some girls and adolescent girls live in serious situations of sexual abuse that occur and go completely unpunished in their country of origin. For them, it is visibly painful to remember those experiences

of trauma that are revisited during their journey. The lack of family and institutional protection is obvious along the routes they undertake. They have only themselves to defend their integrity, which is why many resort to self-defense practices to face the adverse context of migration.

▶ The main violated rights, as documented during the diagnosis, refer to the limited access to resources in terms of legal, economic, programs, and planning policies, as well as continuous services that facilitate socioeconomic, legal, and cultural inclusion in the country of arrival.

The inquiry indicates that girls and adolescent girls live in contexts marked by hunger, malnutrition, and health-related issues that affect psychophysiological development. The housing situation is characterized by overcrowding with serious consequences on their mental, physical, and sexual health.

▶ For adolescent girls, health is invariably related to the absence of diseases, therefore, issues related to primary care or to information mechanisms for prevention are scarcely considered as determining elements in their lives.

Adolescent girls indicated that going to the health center means exposing themselves to situations of stigma and discrimination, especially if they are in an irregular migratory situation. The requirement of these documents is the main barrier that hinders access to health for adolescent girls, especially in crucial areas of SRH (family planning, prevention of pregnancies, STIs, etc.). They also highlighted pregnant adolescents who are afraid that health personnel will report their immigration status and therefore the state may take away their custody over their sons and daughters.

▶ Adolescent girls do not know what to do in order to demand or obtain health services. The diagnosis identified that the different points of entry to the health system are regularly closed for adolescent girls, and on top of the required documentation, there are language barriers, in particular for those living in the Caribbean. Indigenous and Afro-descendant adolescent girls also face considerable difficulties since the system does not provide services with an intercultural approach that considers their diverse realities and health perspectives.

▶ As is the case with the health system, the main difficulty to access the educational system lies in the requirement of documents that
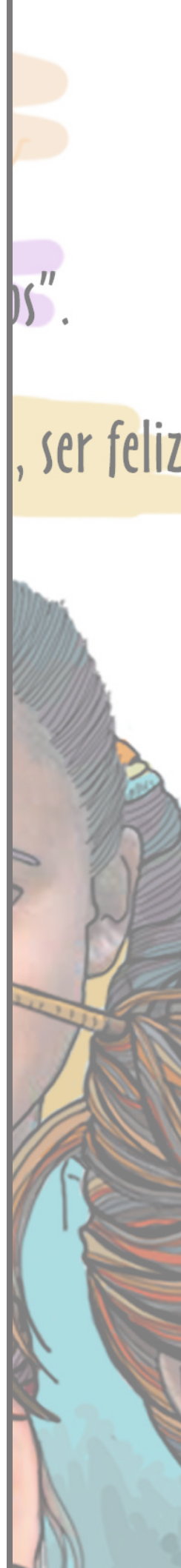
certify the adolescent girl's migratory status in the country of arrival. Additionally, adolescent girls must go through processes of validation of their prior studies, which in some cases are very bureaucratic and hinder their continuation. This can be even worse for those who do not speak the language of the destination country.

Generally, adolescent girls expressed uncertainty about what will happen once they turn 18, because from then on the requirement for documentation is even greater within the system. This aspect underscores the need to connect the policies that frame the rights of youth in the countries of origin and destination.

▶ School is the stage where constant bullying from fellow students and teachers occurs. The diagnosis describes several forms of bullying—from physical to verbal, and in some cases sexual—to which they are exposed. These acts of school violence are not legally prosecuted, which generates serious consequences of helplessness and fear. These events are usually resolved merely by means of temporary expulsion or punishment without any efficient measures in terms of prevention and mitigation of the impacts on the adolescent girl. Reparation after the events is non-existent.

▶ School is one of the few spaces where adolescent girls can develop bonds of friendship or love between peers and strengthen their feeling of belonging and coexistence in the country of destination. This process is constantly being interrupted by acts of blatant nationalism, sexism, xenophobia, and racism. These acts go unpunished and the school, according to the testimonies analyzed, does not contribute to the transformation of the viewpoints that sustain these violent dynamics. Immigration law issues are not part of the educational curriculum despite the existence of migrant girls and adolescent girls in schools.

▶ Another area of rights violations relates to leisure and recreation. Girls and adolescent girls do not have suitable spaces to amplify their skills in art, sports, and culture, because the few public spaces they can access (sport courts, parks) are not safe for them. Adolescent girls identify these places as spaces where hegemonic masculinity engages in constant harassment. Moreover, they tend to be underused spaces, predominantly occupied for unlawful activities.

▶ Social networks and television are the main instruments for recreation, while reading, painting, dancing, acting, and

collaborative or outdoor games were not listed as activities that can be incorporated into their daily lives. Notably, adolescent girls who enjoy "typically male" sports are constantly being reprimanded and receive disparaging comments based on the heterosexist model.

▶ Adolescent girls are constantly exposed to street harassment in the form of verbal harassment and unwanted touching that result in a state of isolation from public spaces. For many adolescent girls, leaving the house is not a viable option, unless they do it in the company of a boy or of adults, which is why sometimes they prefer to interact with men instead of women due to the demonstrations of security and courage that this represents in social perceptions. It is a constant dynamic of coercion and pressure that forces adolescent girls to be constantly under external scrutiny regarding their aesthetics or clothing, preventing them from developing values such as autonomy and independence.

▶ Harassment in social networks is a determining source of violence to which they adolescent girls expose their digital identity. Apart from the blocking or the individual actions that they can take against these forms of aggression, they do not receive information on this topic, and they do not know how to operate devices while protecting their personal data.

▶ Social networks are a decisive resource to access information that families and states do not provide, and they constitute the only means that allow adolescent girls to keep ties with their country of origin, and with friends and relatives. These connections make it possible to appease the impact of migratory grief without counting on any sort of socio-community support. Harassment in networks, and the control that family, love, and friendship bonds exercise through these networks, is a constant source of stress and exhaustion.

▶ Apart from social networks, another preferred means of communication is television. Adolescent girls are usually exposed exclusively to reality show programming, soap operas, and sensationalist programs that reinforce clearly classist, racial, and gender values. The hypersexualization and idealization of white beauty are also a frame of reference that affects their worldviews and self-image, due to the overexposure to long hours of non-educational television content which actually perpetuates the stereotypes of migration as something "disposable" or of no value for the development of the country.

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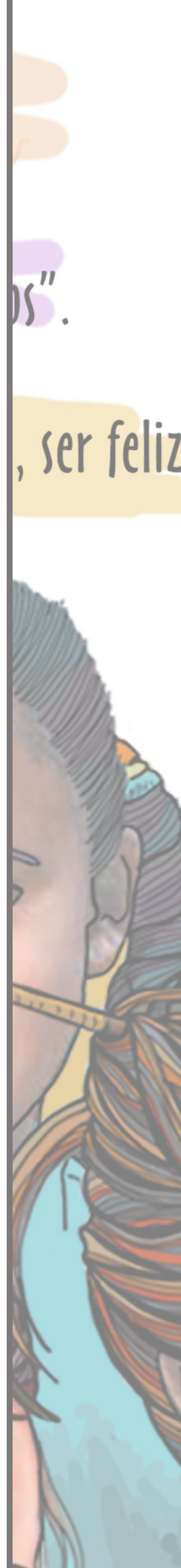
- ▶ While adolescent girls know their rights intuitively and vividly, they do not have access to legal literacy resources to guide them in their migratory processes. None of the participants identified children's courts as a space for the protection of their rights, they only pointed to the police as the only recognizable entity to go to in cases of violation of their rights. Many adolescent girls dream of becoming police officers, or of studying forensics or law as ways to compensate for the institutional abandonment they experience.

- ▶ Adolescent girls perform multiple tasks inside and outside the home without recognition and protection. In the family, there is inequality in the distribution of care tasks based on gender, which implies a significant overload and desperation, preventing the development of other fundamental activities in the field of education, leisure, recreation, and the development of the sense of community.

- ▶ None of the adolescent girls consulted participate in community or extracurricular networks or groups that promote their inclusion in the destination country. Leadership, empowerment, and participation in local decisions regarding their rights are non-existent. They do not have safe spaces to discuss their daily experiences or raise their concerns. In this sense, the study detected local governments are wasting the talent, creativity, and leadership that adolescent girls show in their desire to contribute to inclusion, freedom, and coexistence in their destination country.

7.4 Cross-border and gender-violence sphere

- ▶ During the process of telling their stories, it became evident that girls and adolescent girls are continuously exposed to various forms of gender violence. The most common types are verbal aggressions associated with their bodies, sexuality and the ethics of duty that imposes multiple prohibitions as well as a surveillance system that censor any desire for autonomy. They live in family and community environments framed by violent styles of communication characterized by an unwillingness to listen to them, the imposition of the adult viewpoint, surveillance and control over their decisions, and little empathy toward their perspectives and needs.

- ▶ Most of the girls interviewed experience or have experienced physical aggression. They receive constant blows that affect their

perceptions of themselves and their environment with serious health consequences. These troubles are experienced from a perspective of normalization and an absolute lack of protection because these abuses go undetected in the health and education systems, as well as through the reception protocols established in terms of political asylum.

Several adolescent girls also come from experiences of sexual abuse or assault that occurred in their country of origin. They have no one with whom to share these experiences, in terms of institutional resources, and they report having no confidence that their stories will be believed. In these cases, the family is not a safe space, and neither is the street. Adolescent girls do not know what public resources they can activate for violent events that occur within the family (from stepparents, uncles, or neighbors, among other acquaintances), or in dating relationships, with couples or ex-partners. The main feeling in this context is of helplessness and disaffection with respect to their individual and collective future.

▶ Another form of violence crossed by gender and age is adultcentrism. Girls and adolescent girls are regularly treated as inferior, and as having no decision power, even when their actions or care responsibilities speak of an adult reality, they are bound by an adult world that only orders them what to do and how to do it.

This discontinuity or paradox in the discourse—meaning that on the one hand adolescent girls are treated as minors without skill or experience, while on the other hand, they are required to perform adult tasks—generates discomfort and confusion in them. This is also the cause of breaking with the oppressive family/community context in which they live, which is why they seek to emancipate themselves through early unions with men or young adults in search of emotional and economic protection against the context of vulnerability and fragmentation they experience.

As evident in the conversations, they engage in dependent relationships where they are constantly controlled. In these cases, pregnancy usually occurs without planning. It happens fortuitously and involves major breaks with their personal projects, especially in terms of education and work. For many of the migrant adolescent mothers interviewed, motherhood is something that they have been doing from a very early age and all too soon, through the care of their younger siblings.
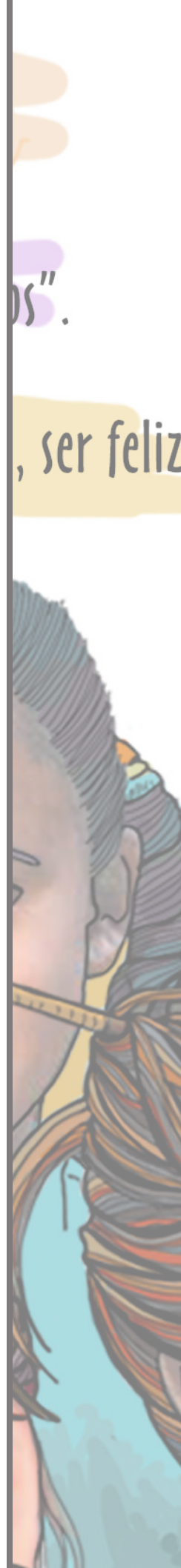
- ▶ The most dramatic impacts of structural violence for adolescent girls are in the psychosocial field, highlighting the effects of migrant grief that is not addressed by reception systems. The most direct consequences are self-denial or low self-esteem, a diminished self-concept and identity, feelings of anguish, anger, fear, loneliness, and constant sadness. It also denotes, in some cases, the learning of violence as the only defense resource.

- ▶ The resilient imagination of adolescent girls is what holds them along their path. The diagnosis shows that adolescent girls develop multiple strategies on a daily basis to remain hopeful in the face of the multiple types of violence to which they are exposed. In this sense, dreams, imagination, and the fantasy of the transformation of living conditions must be highlighted, and these are the reasons why the act of migrating is in and of itself an act of re-existence.

7.5 Recommendations from girls and adolescent girls

Strategic actions proposed by girls and adolescent girls are related to political and social advocacy: co-creation and social participation; media and social networks; and organizational strengthening and psycho-legal assistance with critical perspectives that counteract the welfare and charitable currents of intervention in international protection of children and adolescents.

"I need to learn more about how to prevent pregnancy, I don't know much about birth control […] I also want to learn about it so I don't have to get married early, because if you get pregnant then you have to stay together, sometimes with people who are older."

"Less violence at home, so we don't have to leave home with older people."

"I want to play more [...] I want them to let us play."

"I want to defend the rights of people. I want them to teach me more about the law.

It would be good if the police were more integrated into the community."

"I would like to learn another language."

"I want to have dance schools in my community."

"I want to be an actress. I would like them to teach us more about theater."

"We need more courts to practice sports and do exercises that are good for our health."
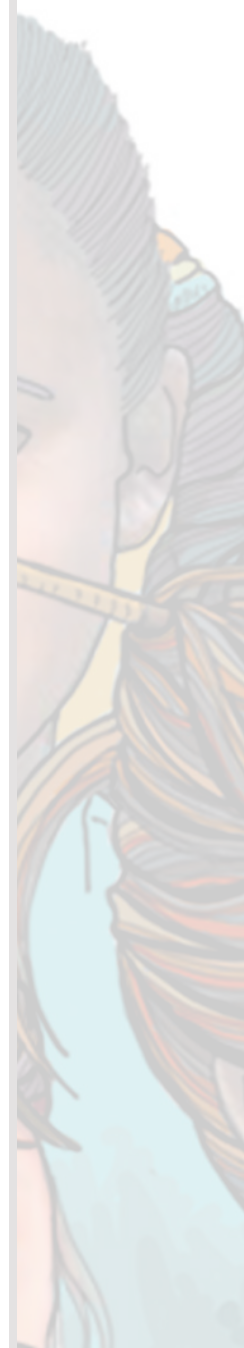
"I don't know how to answer about what governments can do, because I'm not informed about that, but I would like them to be less corrupt and let us live where we want to live."

"I would like them to protect animals more. They suffer a lot of abuse."

"I need them to let me fulfill my dreams of having a house of my own, of having a swimming pool for my mom."

"I wish we weren't bullied in school bathrooms."

"I want the word veneca or veneco to be eliminated."

"That everyone can have the body that they have."

"I don't want people to call me her, I want people to call me him."

"I want to be able to love whoever I want, be it a woman, or a man, it doesn't matter."

"I want them to give me permission to go to Korea."

"We need to have the same scholarships that they give to nationals."

"That they provide extra courses to learn more about the country where we arrived."

Share the different foods from the different places.."

"That they don't require documents to get into school."

"That they don't bother me on the street."

"I need a quiet place, a place for myself, to write."

"I want to be a jewelry designer; I would like them to provide courses on that and on how to start my business."

"I want a group to get together and talk about what happens to us."

"I want them to distribute more food to us."

"I want to be rich, have money, a mansion."

"That they let me cross into the U.S. They should not force us to be away from our families, waiting for the papers here or send us back to the country. We don't know anything about what they will do with us."

"I need to go for a walk or a stroll and not be called a fat cow."

"Parents should be educated more. Give them talks so they don't hit or fight so much."

"That the police do not beat the migrant boys."

"I would like my country to change so that I can go back. That there is more food, and jobs, and that we can return."

"Free WIFI."

"I want the police to focus on the thugs, so we can be at ease on the street."

"There shouldn't be any electricity blackouts so we can study and watch TV, and listen to music. And people shouldn't litter so much because it looks ugly."

"That the road not to be made of sand. And that they fix the streets.

I need to work to get what I want."

"I don't know what I need."

"I need to go back to Venezuela. To have my own things. I want a room for myself."

"I need to feel like my stuff matters."

"I want to be able to go out on my own, without fear."

"That my son is not taken away from me. That they let him stay with me".

"I need help with money because my mother has no money and she has to work for very little. Sometimes she doesn't even have enough to pay for electricity, gas, water, and sometimes we don't have any food."

"Promote the normalization of the topic of menstruation for women, because it is seen as a taboo and while it is something normal, if they see her instead of helping her, they criticize her."

"Support centers like the ones for women."

"We need help with mental health, a few years ago my mental health was affected and everyone would say 'Don't be ridiculous' and I would say 'Do you think I'm making this up?' I don't think anyone understands me."

"We need mobile phones."

"We need our mom and dad to be together and have jobs.

I want classes to learn how to manage money.

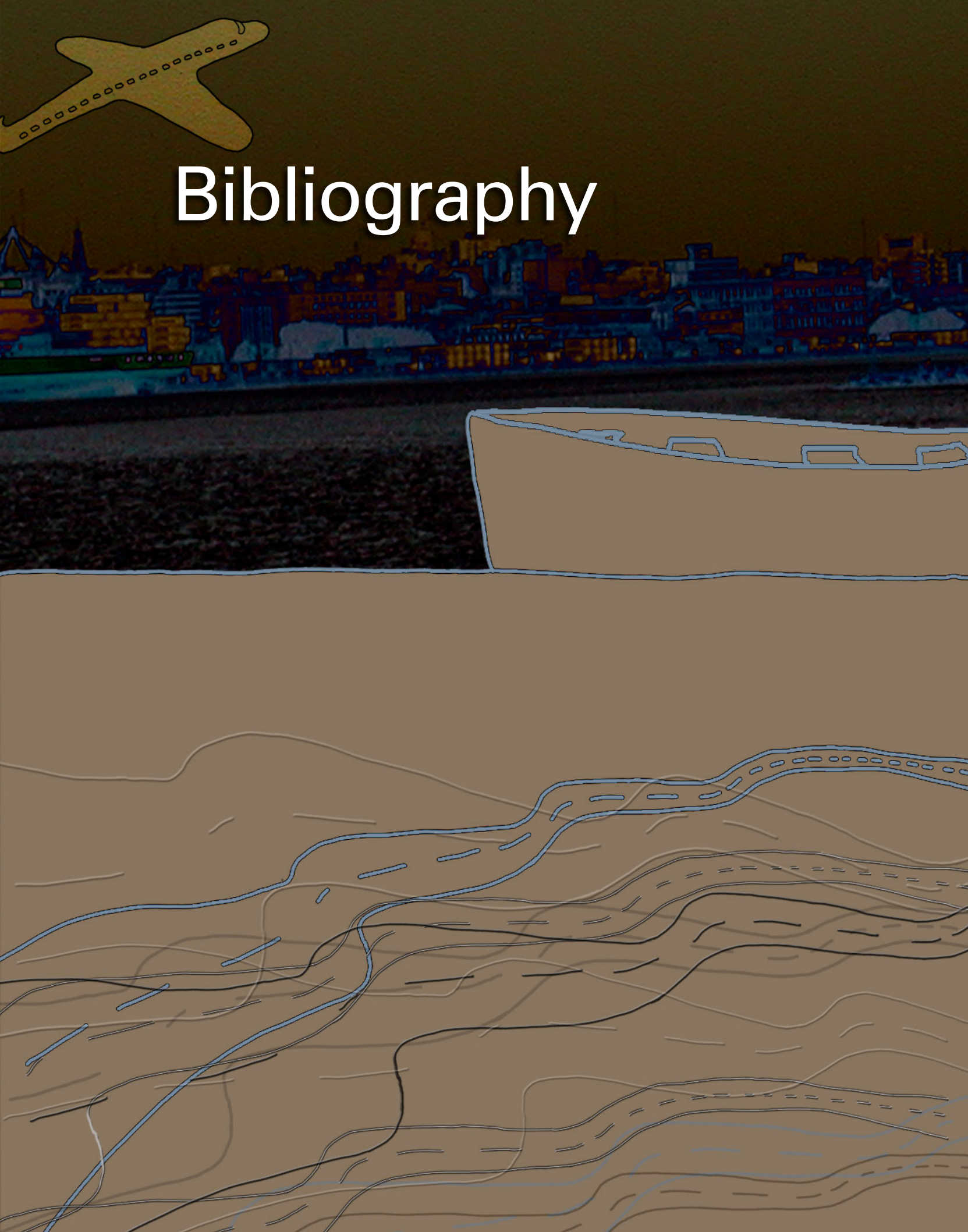*I need to be allowed to go to Canada."*

"We need accommodation but not like a lockdown or jail."

"We need to avoid getting sick with COVID and cross the border."

"I want to travel around the world."

"I want to go back home, and be happy."

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