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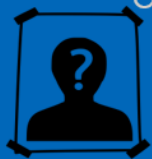
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# Mexico

## HUMAN RIGHTS

### CONTEXT

**13** Journalists and **21** human rights defenders were **killed** in **2019** in Mexico.



Officially, the GOM acknowledges the disappearances of **60,000+** people and **3,631+** clandestine graves.

**983** femicides were reported in **2019**.



In **2019**, the National Human Rights Commission received **199** complaints for **cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment** and **84** for **torture**.



### OVERVIEW

Significant human rights violations including unlawful killings, torture, unresolved disappearances, and femicides unfortunately persist with impunity in Mexico. High levels of violence by organized criminal groups and the Government of Mexico’s (GOM) response has led to widespread abuses. Evidence suggests that security forces have been involved in many cases. Journalists and human rights defenders continue to be targeted, threatened, and killed. While the GOM has taken positive steps, prominent civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the United Nations, the Inter-American Human Rights System, and the country’s National Human Rights Commission continue to document and warn of human rights challenges in Mexico. With 93 percent of crimes going unreported and uninvestigated, a justice system more capable of sanctioning human rights offenders is a necessary condition in addition to strengthened protection measures.

### OBJECTIVE: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND PREVENT ABUSES IMPROVED

USAID continues to improve the ability of the GOM to prevent, investigate, and prosecute human rights abuses, while strengthening civil society to engage on human rights issues. Assistance additionally supports CSOs to collaborate with the GOM and the public on issues related to freedom of the press, addressing femicides, support to victims of torture, and resolution of forced disappearances. Technical expertise provided to federal and state institutions and civil society improves accountability, effectiveness, and quality of preventative and protective measures for victims of human rights violations.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AS A RESULT OF USAID SUPPORT

The **Specialized Attorney General's Office for Crimes against Journalists (FEADLE)** successfully prosecuted **three high-profile cases** in 2020, two for murders of journalists and one for torturing a journalist.



With USAID assistance, authorities in **Chihuahua** obtained **117 DNA profiles**, positively identifying **24 deceased**.



In **Nuevo León**, USAID-trained police officers responded to **44%** of gender-based violence cases with **new protocols** designed to **protect citizens**.



USAID supports **Mexico's National Protection Program** which in 2020 offered protection plans with security measures for **78 journalists** and **140 Human Rights Defenders**.

## USAID HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES

**Human Rights Accountability Activity (Chemonics)** \$24m, 2020-2025. This activity supports the GOM's efforts to effectively and accountably respond to and prevent human rights violations. It implements new national and state laws on disappearances and torture, provides targeted forensic technical assistance to address the backlog of unidentified remains, and builds the GOM's institutional capacity and inter-agency coordination.

**PROVOCES (Tetra Tech/DPK)** \$7.1m, 2017-2021. This activity strengthens the institutional capacity and commitment of the GOM and civil society to improve the security and protection conditions of journalists and human rights defenders. The activity also supports organizational and operational improvements to the National Mechanism to Protect Journalists and Human Rights Defenders and builds linkages and coordination among the special prosecutor for crimes against freedom of expression, civil society, and the private sector.

**Dialogue on Journalists' Protection (Article 19/Mexico)** \$1.5m, 2018-2021. This activity improves respect for freedom of expression in Mexico by documenting and analyzing aggression against journalists, increasing the national and international visibility of offenses and developing capacity of government institutions. In addition, the activity seeks to address constraints on freedom of expression that facilitate or exacerbate censorship or self-censorship.

**Justice for the Disappeared in Nuevo León (CADHAC/ICMP)** \$2.2m, 2018-2022. This activity improves state response and victim advocacy in cases of forced disappearances in Nuevo León. This includes aiding neighboring states and facilitates cooperation between states, the GOM, the National Search Commission (CNB), the Nuevo León Attorney General's Office and Search Commission, and civil society organizations. In partnership with the International Commission for Missing Persons, the activity helps identify human remains.

**Justice for the Disappeared in Chihuahua (CEDEHM/EAAF)** \$2m, 2018-2022. This activity supports local governments and civil society to strengthen victim assistance. Training covers the prosecution of disappearances and the identification of unidentified remains, towards a more effective system for victims' access to truth and justice.

**No More Femicides (Fundación IDEA)** \$2.2m, 2018-2022. This activity supports GOM state-level institutions to address specific challenges in the prevention, classification, investigation, and prosecution of cases of femicide. The activity promotes an integrated approach from state institutions to prevent femicides and implement tailored activities that classify, prosecute, and sanction these cases with a gender perspective.

**Documenta Tortura (Documenta A.C.)** \$803,000, 2019-2022. In Baja California and Coahuila, this activity aims to reduce torture through the gathering, recording, and publishing of information. The activity also improves the capacity of local actors to prevent and/or punish torture and mistreatment while working to change public attitudes.

**Femicides (Data Cívica)** \$1.3m, 2019-2023. This activity improves state prevention and response to femicides through greater empowerment of female victims of gender-based violence and increases the monitoring of state institutions charged with the active participation of civil society organizations to advocate for and litigate femicide cases.