

Let's end violence  
against women!  
Sincerely: The men

Master's Thesis  
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## ABSTRACT

The present work is led by the desperate need of finding effective ways to abolish violence against women particularly in Cochabamba-Bolivia as leader in Latin America in the rates of femicides; therefore we start with the exploration of the problem and the formulation of the research question, that ends up in the inquiry of strategies to include men in the struggle to end gender-based violence. Indubitable this exploration should begin with the comprehension of the historical events that have shaped the chauvinism in Cochabamba and its evolution with different cultural, political and social connotations; once the roots of patriarchy are understood; the analysis of the information is put under the lenses of the holistic and the transrational approaches, achieving as result a broad and new perspective of the problem, that allows us to formulate new postures to face this problematic including all the stakeholders and promoting a change of paradigm, fostering the ownership of men in the issue of violence against women and its leadership to be as well agents of transformation.

Key words: Gender-based violence, Change of paradigm, Transrational approach, Holistic approach, Patriarchal practices

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction



"A life with violence is not a life"  
A 16 years old student

As a Peaceworker or simply as a student of a peace master's programme, I have as a main concern the issue of violence; although in my country Bolivia there is no current armed conflict, as any other low-income country the rates of violence are alarming, since the UNODC<sup>1</sup> (2013) has launched its annual report where we occupy the twentieth place on the list of the most dangerous countries of the world.

If we look carefully at this data, we realize that the indicators to measure violence within a country are many, and we find among them, numbers of killings, rapes, harassments, and physical mistreatments that qualify as a crime within a legal system (UNODC, 1996); all those kind of abuses in Bolivia are mostly committed against women, and the statistics show that such cases are increasing; therefore, the index of crimes with female victims are in fact raising the rates of general violence in our country; in other words, Bolivia is not a

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

dangerous country in terms of security for anyone, but it is one of the most dangerous for women, since they are prone to become victims of all kind of crimes.

On that context, it is from my deepest interest to develop a thesis on the topic of violence against women in my country, with the aim of providing a suitable material to be applied for any private or public institution that might be interested in taking action to struggle this problematic from a holistic approach.

Therefore, the present work attempts to explain my concern, introduce you to the reality of violence against women in the Bolivian context and offer a thesis proposal to guide my research, mainly in order to achieve my goal of creating a useful and practical instrument that can contribute to promote a transformation in this struggle.

### **1.1. Author's perspective**

First of all, before knowing the way I will develop my research, it is important for me to let you know who I am, and my motivation to investigate on the particular topic of violence against women. My name is Daniela Maudeth Valdivia Gutiérrez, I was born in 1986 in a small city called Oruro in Bolivia the heart of South America, I belong to a middle class family, my father comes from the eastern part of the country, where the people is known by their openness, for the rest of the country it seems that they are happier and more

relaxed, they are surrounded by bunch of trees, plants, woods, birds and the weather is pretty warm. On the other hand my mother was born at the same city as I was, the west, quite cold, mountains, not much vegetation, the people is serious, hardworking and conservative; and all that has influenced deeply in my worldview.

Since we lived in the west of the country, as a child, I felt many times uncomfortable, when the people would say that I do not seem to be from Oruro; then I started to analyze why I was very different from the others. I noticed that my voice was quite loud, I would always say what I think, I would be very relaxed before any stressing situation and I would love to make new friends and tell them about my life. All those features were certainly different to the behavior patterns of my fellows, and although I was not aware of where those characteristics came from, it became clear to me that I never met the prototype of a western girl. Hence I decided to deal with it and use it to my own benefit.

Due to my particular way of being, in my school I would always be helping others to speak out their concerns or feelings, I would intervene to mediate between friends in any conflict, and I would raise discussion in my class when we would consider that one of the teachers was being unfair, in fact I used to be a little chatterer. Therefore everybody used to call me ombudsperson, and I took it as something nice rather than as a joke.

When I turned fourteen, I realized that I was not tolerant to injustice and violence, and I was never afraid to voice it out and do something when such circumstances would show up. I perceived that at school there were several unfair rules, such as, girls were only allowed to make crafts, to knit or to bake; and boys should learn carpentry, forge and deal with machines and heavy tools. Another mean rule was that only basketball was mixt, while football was exclusively for boys and volleyball for girls. Then, that was the very moment when I decided to break the rules and challenge my teachers and even classmates to explain me why all that was normal and fine.

### **1.1.1. My first encounters with misogyny and my motivations**

As you may see, I started to question myself and others about that huge gap between men's and women's duties and rights, and the only answers that I have gotten from people around me, was "it is like it is", "because it is the rule of society" "because god says that through the bible" and more nonsenses to me; with that motivation, I studied Law in Cochabamba, one of the main cities of Bolivia, where I got even more surprised, when I saw closely the discrimination against women due to their condition; they were not welcome to occupy hierarchical positions at any scope, they were frowned upon wearing short skirts or necklines, and even worse, if they would have good grades, everyone would assume that it was due to their beauty and not their



intelligence. Those facts among several other situations that I have experienced made me reflect more deeply on the issue of gender inequality, discovering even more reasons to break the silence and start talking about misogyny as such, that was being ignored and normalized.

In this long path, I have met wonderful people that also shared my concerns and ideals, thus, we gathered in an interesting synergy of university students in different areas, in order to raise discussion upon social issues and build our capacities to contribute with solutions. To be part of that small association of fellows has helped me to develop new skills and become more aware of my reality. Later on, I started to work at the regional court, and again, to my own disappointment, it was the same story, the judges were mostly males and the women were subordinates.

When I left the tribunals, I started to work at a renowned law office where I stayed for five years; I have worked mainly in criminal as well as family cases; that is how I realized that I could not move forward on that career, if I would not do anything to change this misogynistic society, at least to start a path to achieve it. Hence, in 2012 I moved to Basel Switzerland to make a master program in Peace and Conflict Transformation, because I am convinced that education is the only way to struggle and succeed against injustice.

After finishing the courses at the University Basel, I applied for an internship at the international aid organization called Terre des Hommes

Schweiz, I worked for the program coordinator of violence prevention and conflict transformation department; thus I had the great opportunity to analyze real intervention projects in many countries of Latin America as well of Africa. I perceived that in both continents the gender-based violence is a huge problem that needs to be addressed and interrupted as soon as possible, in order to avoid more damages to the current generations.

The more I was in contact with all those projects designed by civil societies and their results, the more convinced I became that local initiatives are an entry point to start real changes. Hence, I wrote my thesis on the "Analysis of the Monitoring and Evaluation System Applied in Terre des Hommes Schweiz, and Recommendations to enhance it" (Valdivia, 2013-2014). This work has helped me very much to understand deeply the workings of an aid intervention project, its design, management, follow-up and evaluation; promoting not only development but also learning process for all actors involved.

After that amazing experience I decided to found an NGO, in order to develop intervention projects in my own country with my people; I did so, and our first work in 2014 was done addressing the issue of domestic violence, which is currently being implemented in my hometown Cochabamba; bringing to me nice experiences and vast learning.

### 1.1.2. My Connection with Violence Against Women

Along my blessed life until my current twenty nine years, I have had several close encounters with misogyny and I have faced gender-based violence within my own context; nevertheless, my real connection with violence against women emerges since my childhood, where I felt discriminated due to my female condition even within my own family. As I had only a brother who was four years older than me, I felt that he had always certain prerogatives, just by the fact of being a boy or the oldest one; he has gotten always what he wanted, he would have the best toys, the best clothes and even more permitted time to play, whereas I was always restricted to play too much or being out till so late; and whenever I have complained my parents would say, "you are you and your brother is your brother".

Later on, I realized that my mom would give me different tasks than my brother, according to my age of course, but also to my 'gender', cleaning up, learning how to iron, learning how to cook and such kind of things; even worse, we had a child-minder who used to do exactly the same, she would do everything for my brother but she would always show me how to do things for myself because I was supposed to do that 'as I was a girl'.

Under those circumstances, I started to feel very affected and hurt, thus I decided to stop being feminine, I change my way of wearing, speaking, and even behaving, I started playing soccer, wearing male trousers, and hanging

around more with boys, because I definitely wanted to have the same privileges that my brother and normal boy used to have. Unfortunately, as I was very young I did not realize that I took the wrong way, I even started to act like my brother, but as you might imagine I did not get any positive result, all the opposite, my parents were very disappointed of me and my behavior, and they did not understand my reaction and punished me often to make me 'reflect'.

That was certainly a sad chapter of my life; I did not want to accept that being a girl could make you less important than a boy even with your loved ones; I could not understand that everyone around me thought that I was a rebellious child only by expressing my unconformity with those terrible differences between boys and girls; I felt it as an attack and I felt alone and weak to defend myself.

### **1.1.3. My perspective as researcher**

As I feel fully connected with the issue of violence against women, I must acknowledge that I am still on my path to learn and understand more about this matter, in fact everyday in my job, there is something new to learn or simply something to be surprised about. Nonetheless, the only thing that I know for sure, is that everyday the rates of violence against women are increasing, and I can see it through my own eyes when I deal everyday with complete families suffering the consequences.

In that context, it is important to mention that Bolivia has occupied the first place in the rates of violence against women in 2014 in Latin America (CEPAL)<sup>2</sup>, and it is the thirtieth most violent country in the world (UNOCD, 2013<sup>3</sup>); only this 2015 until March in Bolivia there has been ten femicides<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, the data given by the police section of violence against women in Bolivia (2015), reveals that approximately only the fifty percent of the victims denounce their cases before the legal instances, and only five percent end with conviction, which generates a visible mistrust towards the public institutions that are supposed to make justice for the victims.

In that sense decided to undertake this adventure of researching about violence against women in my hometown Cochabamba, because I would like find a way to contribute with valid methods and strategies to address this problematic in a more effective manner. Therefore, I consider myself in a privileged situation for the purpose of my research, first of all because I come from a country where violence against woman is a huge problem and it is starting to be a governmental concern; moreover, I am working since January 2014 within a project that deals with domestic violence, so I have close contact with victims of all type of abuses, which gives me a real framework with facts and aspects to take into account for my struggle. Finally I have some

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<sup>2</sup> Comisión Económica para Latinoamérica y el Caribe de las Naciones Unidas

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Office on Crime and Drugs

<sup>4</sup> Homicides to women committed by their husbands, partners, boyfriends or ex-husbands ex-partners or ex-boyfriends

experience in the field of aid interventions and certain knowledge of how to cope with conflict and promote its transformation.

Moreover, I consider that given my geographical, cultural, spiritual and intellectual position on this world, I have certain advantages to research on the topic of violence against women, since I am one of them that had to struggle in all scopes in my life and deal with discrimination, misogyny, prejudgments, and criticism, unfortunately not only from men but also from women; and that scenario gives me the opportunity to a better understanding of the cruel consequences of this problem mainly for women and for the new generations of families.

## **1.2. Description of the research problem**

In the previous chapter I have explained my interest to address the issue of violence against women particularly in my hometown Cochabamba; arguing my deepest connection to the specific topic, my broad knowledge on the problematic and I my advantage of developing my research while I am working physically on the field within a project related to my research's subject. In that order I would like to elaborate on the current context of this matter for the purpose of my investigation.

### 1.2.1. Roots and rates of violence against women in Bolivia

Bolivia is the poorest country from South America<sup>5</sup>, with 10 027 254 inhabitants according the last census 2012, from which fifty-one percent are women and forty-nine are men<sup>6</sup>. We have been colonized by a Spanish monarchy, thus many of our cultural practices come from there; nonetheless the last ten years we have been trying to recover our native identity by promoting the ancestral traditions such us worship of *Pachamama*<sup>7</sup> or the *Aymara* greeting<sup>8</sup>.

On than context, most of the people have a mixture of culture called "mestizos"<sup>9</sup>; personally I consider myself a mestizo, because there many native traditions that I practice currently, but as a child I had never felt identified with them. The unkind fact is that no matter which culture is predominant in our societies, all of them have a patriarchal mindset very rooted in men and also in women, thus the relationship between both is strongly affected. For example, as I have told beforehand, I felt discriminated in my own family due to my female condition, I was forbidden to do many things, such playing outside, going out so often, going to parties over evening, or going to certain places,

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<sup>5</sup> The World Bank, poverty and equality data 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas Bolivia (INE)

<sup>7</sup> Mother earth translated by the author

<sup>8</sup> Aymara is one of the native languages, And the way to greet a person was "do not steal, do not lie, do not be lazy" translated by the author

<sup>9</sup> Mixed

because my mother would always argue that I was a girl<sup>10</sup> and she was taking care of me.

Under that sense, women were not aware of the destructive practices of the chauvinism, they (we) rather consider that our patriarchal culture was protective and respectful of women, and any idea of opposition to those dictates was considered disobedience and insolent to our parents or even to god; hence, the females would never voice out their unconformity. Nevertheless, it is clear that protection will never be synonym of property, and respect will never suppose harming; but still, today in Bolivia, some women would say: *“he beats me up because he loves me”*<sup>11</sup>.

Nowadays since 2007, due to the efforts of international organizations, there has been certain intervention in Bolivia in order to raise awareness on the issue of virility and its damaging consequences for women and children. Thus, there has been a positive change in the mindset of women, because now they know their rights and how to defend them, which has been displayed throughout the rates of complaints made before the police the last seven years.

Furthermore, as I have already mentioned, according the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2014)<sup>12</sup>, Bolivia

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<sup>10</sup> In Spanish it is very familiar to hear “porque eres mujercita” (because you are a little girl. Translated by the author)

<sup>11</sup> Known Spanish expression “me pega por que me quiere” translated by the author

<sup>12</sup> UNECLAC In Spanish Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe CEPAL



has occupied the first place in the rates of violence against women in 2014 in Latin America, and Cochabamba city (my hometown) is in turn the first one in the country. Another alarming data is that, behind Haiti, Bolivia is the second country with the highest index of sexual violence in America (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). Likewise, every three days a woman is murdered by her partner/ex-partner or husband/ex-husband, and 1.3 million girls are victims of domestic labor due to significant risks by working with fire, gas, chemicals and sharps. (Centro de información de desarrollo de la mujer, 2014)<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, in 2013 the Pan-American Health Organization revealed through a survey, that the victims have identified as the worst types of violence against women, the following: eighty-three percent physical aggression, seventy-two percent forced sexual intercourse, and forty-four percent impairment in value at work. Before these records, it results evident that the active protagonist of those violence episodes are men closely linked to the victim, namely the father, grandfather, husband, partner, brother, boss or colleague.

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<sup>13</sup> Center of Information and Development of Women CIDEM

Official complaints of violence against women 2014 in Bolivia divide per cities.

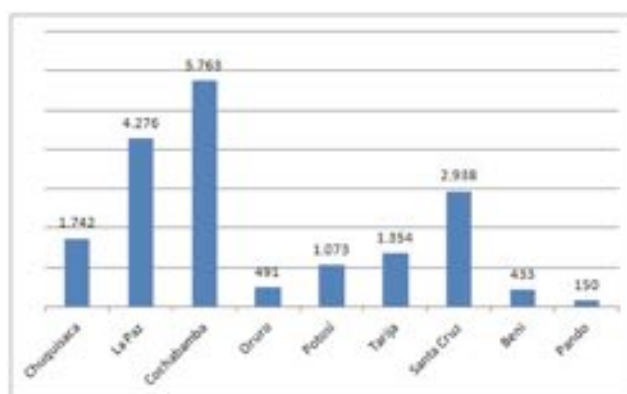


Figure 1. Source: (CIDEM, 2014)

In that order, we might see an awakening in the women's consciousness, because some of them are now breaking the silence, taking their cases before the legal instances, from which unfortunately only five percent end up with conviction, which generates a visible mistrust in the police and tribunals; however these numbers help to the national government and to the civil society to see closer the dimension of the problem; although there is no accurate information due to the lack of proper systematization, at list now we can recognize that violence against women is a huge problem in our country, and see somehow its fatal consequences to call for reflection on that and undertake real actions to stop it.

### 1.2.2. Current context of Violence Against Women in Cochabamba

Once assumed the numbers that the previous paragraphs display, we may understand that despite the endeavors of the aid organizations and now the regional governments, the rates of violence against women seem to increase,

whereas in fact, it is the awareness which has been raised for the victims to speak out their situation and defend themselves; nevertheless there is still a long path to follow, in order to achieve an open set of mind where all women may feel free to denounce acts of violence and succeed.

Under that circumstances, there has been a great progress with women in terms of empowerment, since the last year 2015 the department of domestic violence of the regional police, acknowledges an evident attendance of women who know their rights and the legal mechanisms to exercise them, in conjunction with the promulgation of the recent law No. 348<sup>14</sup> in Bolivia, many women now claim their rights and they even leave their homes with their children or in some cases without them, to avoid more violence.

Nevertheless, I see particularly that there has been much work done with women, but not with men; yes, women are breaking the silence, but that does not mean that men are now reflecting and changing their patriarchal behaviors. Since the problematic of violence against women is not a polarized issue, the presence of men should be vital to address it, the fight to end this evil cannot be an independent task of women, quite the contrary, the endeavors must be starred by both genders in equal proportion.

Hence, I believe that there is lack of participation of men in the problematic of violence against women, due to the stigmatization of males only as aggressors but never as a possible contributor to transform this

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<sup>14</sup> Law to Prevent Any Kind of Violence Against Women No. 348

struggle; whereas, it would be more effective to tackle the problem under a holistic approach including all its actors, in order to promote practical proposals also from the male perspective.

### **1.2.3. Formulating a broad research question**

As I have explained in the previous paragraphs, my main concern is the issue of violence against women in my hometown Cochabamba Bolivia; moreover, I admitted the advancements given between 2013 and today, in the matter of awareness and empowerment of women to act upon the problem and stop remaining in their situation of victims without doing anything; nevertheless I also miss the male participation in this process of overcoming patriarchal patterns still practiced, not only by men but also by women conscious or unconsciously.

On that sense, the problematic of violence against women supposes inevitable the presence of men; therefore, it is precisely men who must unfailingly take part of the promotion of transformation. Hence to create new paradigms free of chauvinism; all initiatives regarding this problem must include the participation of men in the same proportion as women, fostering values such as respect, tolerance and acknowledgment to achieve the integration and complementation of females and males in equality.

On that regard, I formulate my broad guiding research question as following:

*How to develop strategies, to include men in the pursuit of a transformation in the problem of violence against women in Cochabamba, promoting their proactive participation in equal proportion as women?*

#### **1.2.4. 'Including men in the struggle of violence against women in Cochabamba' and the others' ideas**

As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, due to that alarming data of the last three years in Cochabamba, many endeavors have been undertaken by international organizations and regional entities to address the thematic of violence against women, trying to provide support through the empowerment of women, the hardening of the norms, and the creation of shelter for victims; nevertheless I insist that men are missing on this process. Therefore, to complete my survey I have talked about my broad research question with practitioners, stakeholders, and simply people that has not a particular interest on the topic, in order to narrow down my research theme and formulate a concrete research question with some inputs from different perspectives.

#### **1.2.5. The enriching process of listening to the others**

When I mentioned practitioners, I referred to two psychologists<sup>15</sup>, who are experts in cases of domestic violence; regarding the topic of violence against

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<sup>15</sup> Isabel Lafuente (36 years old) and Patricia Gasser (38 years old), psychologists specialized in domestic violence and violence against children, respectively.

women in general they both agree that women are currently more aware of their eventual condition of victims, so they opt for a defensive behavior towards society in general, one said "they are ready to fight" (Lafuente, personal interview, 22 April 2015). Furthermore, they notice that this could be rather a trigger to start violent episodes with people that might feel attacked by an aggressive stimulus.

Regarding my research question, they said that men's participation on the fight of violence against women would be the ideal, but one of them said "the -how- might vary depending on the context, so you should reduce the scope of your question even more to a timeframe and the age of the males you want to include" (Gasser, personal interview, 22 April 2015). This comment made me think really deeply, because it is true that the strategies and actions to involve men in that task, might be different in regard of their age, educational level, and within a certain period of time.

Moreover, I had an interesting conversation with a doctor<sup>16</sup> who married a young woman who was a single mother; he affirms that there cannot be equality within a marriage if you want it to succeed, "there must always be someone who leads the car to the front" he said. (Azeñas, personal interview, 22 April 2015). Nonetheless the professional insists that women can not be anymore the "ladies" of his times, they should study, realize themselves academically and professionally, they should look as pretty as they want, they

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<sup>16</sup> José María Azeñas (35 years old), dermatologist

should go out with friends and have free time for them to enjoy alone. Yet, referring to my research question, he said:

*...It will be a hard work, men are now too far of being included in such initiatives, the organizations and women themselves have managed very well to exclude them and make them -the villain of the movie-, hence we (men) have certain resentment to participate freely. (Azeñas, personal interview, 22 April 2015).*

Such answer, made me simply confirm that, there has been a huge advancement in terms of raising awareness of women on the issue of violence, but we have left aside the men's ideas, proposals and even feelings, which now creates certain barrier to reach them and turn them into active participants to struggle misogyny and violence against women.

To be more objective, I have also interviewed a woman victim of violence<sup>17</sup>, who even cried while telling her story; her husband used to beat her up whenever he was drunk, and every weekend he would organize a party with friends at their place, where she was supposed to cook, attend, and clean while everyone was getting drunk; she said that there have been many times that she had to hide and lock inside the room of her little daughter so he could not hit her.

When I told her about my idea of involving men in looking for a transformation in the problem of violence against women, she said "That

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<sup>17</sup> María Janeth Vidal (26 years old)

sounds crazy, I would like to believe that it is possible, and I would like to help in such project” nevertheless, she added “but knowing my ex-husband, my brothers and even my cousins, I am not sure whether they would like to participate, we come from the countryside and there, we are raised within a chauvinism model, where women must obey to the males, and they have the last word at home” (Vidal, personal interview, 23 April 2015). This opinion made me aware of another aspect that I should take into consideration; men that live in the city but have been raised in small villages normally conserve their ancestral values, thus, it might be another hindrance to join those men in the struggle against misogyny.

On that sense, this interviewee made me reflect again on my broad research question, because designing strategies to involve men in fighting the violence against women, should also be differentiated regarding the background and cultural values that they have received in their childhood, therefore it would be again another reason for me to reformulate my research question.

My survey could not be complete if I would have not interviewed people who do not feel affected with this problematic. Thus, herein I describe my interaction with a fourteen years old youth<sup>18</sup>. After I made sure he did not have a girlfriend, I asked him his opinion about violence in general, and he said that he was aware of the large violence we coexist with, “everyday we hear about

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<sup>18</sup> Juan Bozzo Ramos



violence in the TV, in the radio, in the streets and sometimes also at the school" he even affirmed: "...everyday in the TV I see that someone killed his wife, or his girlfriend normally because of jealousy..." (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015). Moreover I asked whether he had had a close experience with people involved in such cases, he said: "...no, but when you hear it daily everywhere you feel familiarized with that kind of situations"; Afterwards I asked concretely if he would like to participate in initiatives to prevent violence against women, his answer was: "if there would be another men involved, of course, but if it is a women's activity, I do not go along with the girls that well, so, I would prefer to keep aside" (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015).

My final question to that youth was, whether he could suggest an effective activity promoted by men in order to prevent violence against women, and he said, "I would need time to think and give an idea about that, because I have never seen or participated in such actions". (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015) The last statement made me certainly reflect on the importance of the example for the new generations, they would be more creative and proactive if they had had at least an example to mimic and improve.

### 1.2.6. The gratifying results

After interviewing six different persons, females and males, from different background and ages, somehow related to the topic and also not involved, I became more confident on the selection of my research problem, indeed, this exercise provided me a kind of better lenses to see the reality, I have heard different points of view and I have observed the diverse perspectives. Hence I definitely have ripened my ideas, I think that trying to provide strategies to involve men in the struggle of violence against women is a huge task, in terms of scope, subject and even timeframe.

Therefore, taking into account the inputs of my interviewees have made me become more aware of the hindrances of the formulation of my broad research question. Moreover, considering that I want to deal with this particular problem that has its roots in the relational aspect between males and females, I have changed the departure point of my survey; thus, in order to make a specific and appropriate research that fills the gaps of my inquiry, I consider of primary relevance to provide a framework to display the importance and the potential benefit, of gathering men and women consistently in the task of transforming the problem of violence against women from the relational aspect, rather than simply jumping directly into the strategies to achieve it, without knowing the arguments and the very reasons that sustain it. Otherwise,

as Cohen and Rubio affirm (2010) *"the consequences are harmful and costly to society"*.

Consequently, I have improved and narrowed down my previous broad research question of *"How to develop strategies, to include men in the pursuit of a transformation in the problem of violence against women in Cochabamba, promoting their proactive participation in equal proportion as women?"* into the following one:

*- How can we involve men and women equally and proportionally in the task of transforming the problem of violence against women in Cochabamba? -*

### **1.3. Methodology. Man being included in the transformation of the problem of violence against women. How do I undertake a proper research?**

As my research topic is related to violence against women in Cochabamba Bolivia, considering that it is a very broad and current theme, there is a huge literature available in different contexts, languages and formats; the sources of information are infinite, books, articles, thesis, papers, laws, conferences, institutional resolutions, journals, interviews, summaries, e-books, etc. Hence there is an important part of the research that will be definitely theoretical.

Nevertheless, landing on a specific scope, my research question narrows my survey to the analysis of the problematic of violence against women, and the very importance of involving men in the construction of proposals for

transforming this issue; on that matter, there is some limited literature available, nevertheless, taking into account that the investigation will be given within a particular territory and population, it might be likely impossible to find exclusive information on the precise issue, which turns my research into an empirical one.

Furthermore, the aim of my survey is to trigger a positive change within my target population, therefore I attempt to write an 'action research', defined by Carr and kemmis (1986) as:

*... A form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out.*

Hence, as I ponder myself as a social agent certainly affected by the problematic, and I will undertake my research with the participation of a collectivity that is currently addressing the issue of violence against women, as I have mentioned that I am taking part of a civil society project as peaceworker; the action research model will lead my methodology on this work. Moreover all the findings of my investigation could become a guideline for developing strategies to involve men actively in the struggle of violence against women mainly for the context and the community I am working with.

Likewise, I consider myself in this particular work as a post positivist researcher, since I am absolutely sure that my own worldview will certainly

influence the development of my investigation (Popper, 1963), as you have seen in the first chapter my close link to the issue of gender-based violence. Moreover, since I will be studying and analyzing human and social behaviors in order to provide a framework to answer my inquiry, my research will be rather qualitative than quantitative.

### **1.3.1. Likely hindrances in the development of my research**

Being aware of the likely hindrances of my research, is a useful exercise for a proper selection of tools and methods, which best suit to answer my research question; in that order, I listed the difficulties that I might face during my investigation and I discriminated them by determining its real impacts in the construction of my thesis. Hence, I have identified the following:

- There is a lack of proper systematization of the data on violence against women in Bolivia (CIDEM 2013)<sup>19</sup>. Which could make vary some rates and numbers of statistics to provide a real dimension of the problem; nevertheless I will make a comparison with all sources of data available in Cochabamba, in order to take the averages.
- There is no literature available, particularly on the matter of men included in the struggle of violence against women in Bolivia, and even

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<sup>19</sup> Centro de información de desarrollo de la Mujer. In English Center of Information and Development of Women

less in Cochabamba (CEPAL 2013)<sup>20</sup>. Thus I must construct my own narrative on that subject with the support of other research tools and methods.

- The regulations on the issue of violence against women are very recent<sup>21</sup>; therefore there is no appropriate support of the public institutions on that topic. Thus I must pay attention on the testimonies of the authorities and their experience on the current implementation of the law 348; so find the lessons learnt, in order to enrich my knowledge on that particular issue.
- There is no law or any norm that compel men to participate in the fight of violence against women; thus, there is a lack of a legal backing to undertake my research. Therefore, I need to figure out whether the men would or would not take part in that topic, freely without any compulsion, out of a moral motivation.

### 1.3.2. Methods and tools

As I have already identified the strengths and weaknesses of my research question, I must carefully chose the tools and methods that will be beneficial for this kind of mixt (theoretical and empirical) research. Hence after analyzing

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<sup>20</sup> Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. In english: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean UNECLAC

<sup>21</sup> Law to Prevent Any Kind of Violence Against Women No. 348

the feasibility and pertinence of the possible instruments that might be useful for the purpose of my research, I opted for the following:

- Literature review

Thankfully, on the topic of violence against women, there are very much authors and researchers, not only individuals but also at the institutional level; several organizations and UN agencies dedicate their full work to develop helpful and practical material to combat violence against women; nevertheless this available literature tackles normally broad aspects of that theme, there is no specific writing about misogyny for instance in Cochabamba.

Yet, I will be reading several books, articles, data reports that show the rates of cases of violence, international legal instruments and national legislation on the topic of violence against women, I have to look for peacebuilding processes, empowerment processes of women, I will review the several programs of prevention of violence against women implemented currently in Cochabamba, going through a learning process to gain more knowledge.

- Data collection

After analyzing the broad literature at my disposal, As I will have the privilege to work within a project of prevention of violence against women, during the ongoing of my investigation, I will start collecting data from the primary sources, such as assessing interviews to victims, to children as witnesses of

violence against women, and to aggressors, to related authorities, and to project coordinators, that will be already held by practitioners within an implemented project that deals with the involvement of men in the struggle of violence against women.

- Data analysis

After having carefully read the selected literature available, and made the assessments of the respective sources, being part of the community where I will develop my survey, I will be able to make close contact and observe the process, thus, I will be able to develop as well a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973). Moreover, I will discriminate what could be useful and enriching for the purpose of my research after a deep analysis; Likewise I will make a comparative analysis of projects related to prevention of violence against women of other the neighbor country Brazil<sup>22</sup>, in order to see their improvements or struggles in this task.

Additionally, I believe that all tools and methods at my disposal have been considered in this paper, nevertheless there is flexibility to introduce and apply new instruments depending the on the ongoing of the research and the accurate and valuable information that I will be acquiring; thus, if some tools or methods are not producing the expected results, I am ready to make a timely

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<sup>22</sup> I have selected this country because, as I have worked in an International Aid Organization as Terre des Hommes Schweiz, I already know some project currently being implemented on the topic of violence against women and this facilitates my comparative analysis and my research as such.



decision to change it and improve it by using different and suitable instruments.

### **1.3.3. Relevant literature related to violence against women and the men's role on this matter**

As I have mentioned in my previous chapter, there is a number of documentary resources written on the broad issue of violence against women, nevertheless, there must be a clear discrimination of the sort of literature that I will be addressing in order to complete my research. I will show in this part the sources on the particular matter with their concern and form that will contribute to the academic knowledge that supports my thesis. Hence, for that purpose, I must be able to acknowledge my current capital of known literature, to identify the relevance of my literary support and the lacking knowledge, because there is certainly a bunch of material available that I have not yet surveyed; thus I will also point out the literature that I would like to find to close the gaps and fill the loopholes of my investigation.

### **1.3.4. Classification of the available literature**

- Sociologic literature

On this field of science, I have analyzed mainly books and articles that would help me to analyze the collective phenomenon of violence particularly against women upon a broad perspective; furthermore, I will deepen into literature

that will provide me more knowledge about my research topic in a smaller scope, such as Latin America, South America, and if possible concretely in Bolivia.

It is important for me to understand the sociological root causes of misogyny, in order to elaborate my proposal for overcoming that problematic through the involvement of men in the discourse of transformation; therefore I must pay attention also to the sociologic development of men's behaviors towards the struggle of violence against women along this last twenty years.

- Political science literature

This area of knowledge might be one of the most relevant for the sake of my research, since the problems or needs of the states are always governmental concerns that in turn, become measures based partly on the political science (UN, 2006)<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, the problematic of violence against women is necessarily related to distribution of power within a political structure.

On the other hand, political science will provide me a better understanding of the development of the state's policies and structuralism (Blackburn, 1993), preferably in Latin America, showing the evolution and the advancements of the government's behavior to handle the issue of gender equality and violence against women as such.

- Psychological literature

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<sup>23</sup> United Nations publications 2006 poner fin a la violencia contra la mujer Estudios del Secretario General de la Naciones Unidas.

A long this journey, I will also need the support of the psychological science to find answers in terms of men's and women's feelings towards the fight of misogyny, how both of them contribute to the strengthening of the patriarchal practices that delay the establishment of the gender equality (Walker, 1989). In the pursuit of those answers, it will be also fruitful to identify certain patterns that determine the misogynic behaviors of individuals under certain conditions and circumstances.

- Institutional documents

A large part of my literature review for the purpose of my research, will lie on institutional documents, since violence against women is one of the current principal concerns, led and promoted by the United Nations and local civil society; therefore I will analyze this kind of material, namely manifest, reports, databases, resolutions and mandates of international organizations of the global community, which are currently facing this problematic from different perspectives, attempting to provide accurate information as basis and foster a transformation.

Moreover, I will include specific state's documents such as, laws, norms, resolutions, databases, reports, and political determinations at national or regional level, linked to the regulation of gender inequality, misogyny and violence against women.

- Transrational literature

Considering the innovating content of this science, its holistic approach of thinking and elaborating theories, will be definitely necessary to develop the answer to my research question (Arnold, 2003); as a matter of fact, addressing the idea of involving men as co-starts in the task of eliminating violence against women in equality and proportionally with the participation of women, understood as a relational problem, could only be possible as result of transrational analysis.

Landing on a sub-classification, it is important to discriminate the types of sources that will be standing my investigation, because, while there are several books that will provide valuable knowledge; due to the dynamic of my research topic, there will be much more resources such as thesis, articles, and academic papers in general, that might be more assertive within the timeframe of my investigation.

Another primary source of information for my research will be some and project reports of civil the society organization where I will be working at, and certain initiatives that are also addressing the issue of violence against women from a holistic perspective. Hence, I will be reading and analyzing, project designs, annual reports, outcomes chains documentaries, audits, internal reports and portfolios of activities that will enrich the response to my research question.

### 1.3.5. Particular literature that sustains my hypothesis

After an analysis of my literature available, among my sources of institutional documents, I have found several articles and reports that highly recommend the fostering of partnership with as many actors as possible, namely, promoting strategic partnership with regional governments, civil society organizations, public and private institutions and small sector associations (Rioseco, 2005).

On the other hand, several documents that contain accurate information and proposals for transforming the problem of Violence against women, such as UN-Women, CEPAL<sup>24</sup>, WHO<sup>25</sup> and other UN agencies, bestow normally broad insights regarding this particular topic, for instance, how this issue could be overcome, how we could address it from the governmental perspective, how civil society could act upon the problematic to prevent it, and how the international community is contributing on this struggle (Steinberg, 2010). Nevertheless, there is no a particular material that addresses my research question as such, whereas some authors refer as important the fact of including men as actors within the programs of fighting misogyny or gender inequality, but none of those found so far in my research, explain the very reasons of its relevance, even less within the context of my investigation, therefore I did not

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<sup>24</sup> Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe de las Naciones Unidas

<sup>25</sup> World Health Organization

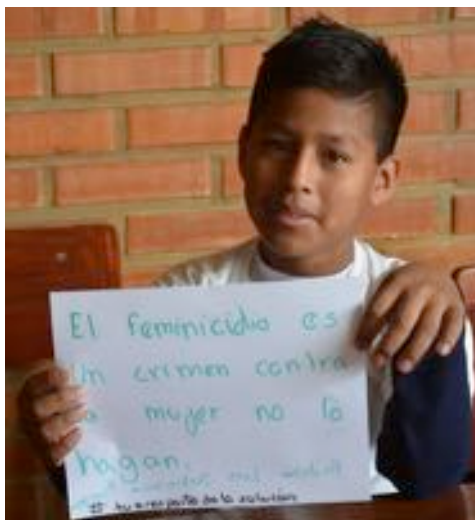
find at this superficial part of the construction of my thesis, an entry point for answering my research.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that in deed there is a school that supports my research question and sustains my idea of taking it to action; it is the transrational perspective, which foster the holistic thinking that in turn, on this particular matter, sustains my attempt of providing an academic framework to promote a transformation in the struggle of violence against women, addressing the relation aspect of females and males in order to succeed.

For this purpose, It is important to make a deep analysis on the historical sequence of the problem of violence against women, indeed, getting in touch with the different 'peaces' of Wolfgang Dietrich will provide a better understanding of the current context of this struggle and it will enable me to find the inner energy of the relational aspect in order to promote entry points for transformation.

## Chapter 2

### Violence against women in Cochabamba



The femicide is a crime against the women, do not do it!  
A message of a 12 years old student

#### 2.1. Historical context

##### 2.1.1 The Aymaras

Cochabamba belongs to what was called “Collasuyo” which was an empire before the invasion of the Incas in 1300, this empire had its own customs, traditions, worship, language and values, regarding the gender matter it is important to highlight that there was always a chief of the family who was supposed to be the wisest and therefore the oldest of the family who would have the enough wisdom and knowledge to guide their clan, those chiefs were men. (De Gamboa, 2012)

The Aymaras<sup>26</sup> had different traditions and rituals that marked the gender hierarchical differences, such as, the time of the man “Cycle of Awti”<sup>27</sup> that urges to celebrate the resting of the earth after the harvest, which

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<sup>26</sup> Inhabitants/demonym of the Collasuyo

<sup>27</sup> Cycle of drought (translated by the author)

supposes a time of reflection and spiritual renovation that again brings the idea of: men being the symbol of good.

This 'Aymara' culture had also a very important place for the woman; with the abstract institution of the "Jallu Pacha" that means time of the woman. Women were very important for the Andean society, since it has been always a symbol of fertility and abundance, but never without the costarring figure of the male element; the woman represented the mother earth 'Pachamama' and the man represented the rain and the mountains 'Orqhos', which would bring the fecundation to the earth, hence, the production of fruits and foods. (De Gamboa, 2012)

Even when we can see that both, woman and man are important for the Aymara society, I can still see certain higher relevance in the male's role, since the author stresses that man are the giver and maker of all products that earth produces. Nevertheless, De Gamboa (2012) also highlights the fact that women were that important, that in battles or conflicts, the worriers would kill mainly to women in order to generate real destruction, since murdering a woman meant diminution of the energy in the community as such.

This fact previously mentioned, murdering first and mainly women in order to cause a proper destruction is a great sign of misogyny, but maybe in a different manner than in current times, since nowadays femicides occur often due to the lack of consideration to the woman, and then in the past, femicides were product of the high price of women as core of the family and consequently of the community.

Another aspect regarding the gender inequality within the Aymara Society, is the fact that during the "Awti Pacha" or time of the men, right after the harvest, in the time when the earth rests, the chief clans would share their



cattle among the sons and godsons as a present and payment for the work in the community (De Gamboa, 2012) Meaning that women did not receive anything directly, because their husbands or fathers did received for the good of the family; nevertheless, this is again a symptom of patriarchy since women were not let tasks of administration of assets.

### 2.1.2. The Incas

The year 1400 the invasion of the Incas hat started, who have conquest the whole region of the Andean Plateau, in that sense the year 1438 the Inca Pachacutec succeeded against the Aymara emperor, incorporating the Bolivian Plateau as a province of the Collasuyo, imposing the Quechua as the official language and the political system of theocratic monarchy; nevertheless each 'suyo' was a sub-region under an Inca similar to a viceroy.

The Inca was a sort of divinity in their culture, called "Sir Inca", "Divine Inca"<sup>28</sup>, "Only Inca" and even though their forefathers were a couple of a woman and a man, the Incas in the government were only men, as it is registered in the "Capac Cuna" which is the official list of the sovereigns that are thirteen in total. Huascar the second last one in 1525-1532 and Atahualpa the last one in 1532-1533. (Cobo, 1892).

Another relevant aspect to be considered in the gender topic of the Inca's culture is the rules to choose the new 'Inca'; the norm established that he had to be the cleverest; he could be the oldest son of the current Inca. The Inca could also name his inheritor, but he had to be accepted by the gods through an oracle; nevertheless the females were not candidates to the crown.

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<sup>28</sup> Quechua word 'Sapa Inca' that means Divine Inca (translated by the author)

Regarding the marriage, the Incas used to practice the exogamy differentiating the relatives through the maternal lineage, thus the last name given by the mother would give to the child of the Inca certain status, those women that had abundant kin had a higher position in the social structure, nevertheless that was the only importance of women's name in the Inca empire. (Cobo, 1892)

Although the Inca's traditions and culture were organized based on the duality of relationships, such as "hanan and urin, alaasa and massaa, uma and urco, allauca and ichoc"<sup>29</sup> in the case of women and men, men were more important for reproduction, since one only man could fecundate many women. (Pease García Yrigoyen, 1991). Unfortunately the Spanish writers did not describe properly the social structure of the duality of the "Curacazgos"<sup>30</sup>, they were mainly led by male 'curacas' namely Acarí, Lima and Lupacas from Collao and Tarata, however in some of them the history brings out some females as 'curacas' such as Colán and Cuzco, meaning this a clear exception and absolutely not the rule. (Guamán Poma, 1908)

In that sense, Pease García Yrigoyen (1991) describes that there were also duality and reciprocity between the 'curacazgos, being opposites and complementary simultaneously, and even though it was difficult to deduce their duties were, but they complemented and integrated each other as 'the hands of a human'<sup>31</sup> having paired tasks.

On the other hand regarding the royal hierarchy of the Inca Empire, the Inca was at the top, the "coya"<sup>32</sup> below as the wife and the "Auqui"<sup>33</sup> right

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<sup>29</sup> Big and small, right and left, feminine and masculine, inside and outside (translated by the author)

<sup>30</sup> Political division of the Inca empire, lead by a "Curaca" which is a sort of Earl assigned to a specific region.

<sup>31</sup> («yanantin» the Quechua expression to describe a perfect duality

<sup>32</sup> Quechua Word to name The royal wife (translated by the author)

under the mother as the son inheritor of the crown, but for non-royal families, women did not have any hierarchy, indeed, the commoners used to receive from the government a piece of land called "Tupu" which was given to the family unit when a son was born and only 0,5 when a daughter was born, meaning that the families get richer when there are more sons rather than girls. (Pease García Yrigoyen, 1991)

Furthermore, considering that the Inca Culture had a strong influence of religion, it is important to mention that the Inca's mythology according María Rostworowski (1999) had three different worlds created by the God Viracocha<sup>34</sup>. "Hanan Pacha" a sort of heaven where only moral and just souls can get in, and then, become also gods such as Inti, Mama Quilla, Pachacamac, Mama Cocha and other ones<sup>35</sup>, all of them represented by the Andean bird Condor. As we can perceive, there were also some goddesses representing the female divinity, nevertheless the most important god was always a male figure adored and venerated by the whole population of the Inca Empire.

The Kay Pacha in turn was the present world the 'here and now' the underworld where the humans live and develop their lives, represented by the cougar, and finally the Uku Pacha world of the dead, of the non born children and all that is under the surface of the earth and the sea represented by the snake.

As María Rostworowski (1999) let us see, the Incas had a polytheist religion with gods and goddesses, all of them created and guided by the supreme god Viracocha, thus it is important to mention that all the goddesses

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<sup>33</sup> Quechua Word to name The royal son inheritor (translated by the author)

<sup>34</sup> One of the names of the Inca God Wiracocha or Huiracocha

<sup>35</sup> Quechua names for naming Inca Gods God Sun, Goddess moon, God Creator of earth, Goddess Mother of the water (translated by the author)

were mostly related to the planet earth, such as Pachamama (Mother earth), Mamasara (Mother of the corn) and Mamacocha (Mother of the water) that certainly were well venerated, nevertheless, all goddesses were a creation of the supreme god, that was more related to the universe, which brings us again to the same hypothesis, that the females could not exist without the males and there was always a hierarchy that places the female figure below the male ones.

### **2.1.3. Colonization**

The year 1542 after the arrival of the Spanish in Latin America, it happened the invasion of what was so called "Collasuyo" part of the Inca Empire, establishing the viceroyalty of "Nueva Castilla" in the region of Ecuador, Peru and what now a days is called the Bolivian Plateau and part of the valleys with its capital in Lima, which after in 1543 turned into the viceroyalty of Peru. In that order the current city of Cochabamba has been part of this political division of the Spanish Colony. (Valcárcel, 1946)

In those circumstances, this political division distributed the population in more or less 12 139 498 inhabitants, between the years 1543-1550, all of them governed under a viceroy within the Spanish monarchy (Carrión, 1885). Moreover it is important to clarify that along this process of colonization, there were several abuses, such us the slavery of the indigenous, the rape of the women, the murder of the elderlies and the submission of the people to the new culture, new religion, new language and new labor system, and it is within this context that the gender issues continued developing in what now we call Cochabamba.

Furthermore, regarding the position of the woman within the indigenous, she was even less than a thing, although the slavery was applied

with males and females, women had less rights, for example if they would not have a family they were asked to work more hours than the average (Medinaceli and Mendieta, 1997); nevertheless the Spanish women had a better consideration, they were the wives of the viceroys or relatives of them, which meant certain hierarchy, however their function beyond the reproduction was to keep the house and raise the children, keep the Spanish traditions, foster the practice of religion and ancestral values, because during childhood, their education was in charge of the nuns in order to keep them isolated of the society and of the male authority. (Salinas, 1994)

As we may understand so far, according Clara López (1998) the tendency of diminish the value and restrict the roles of the woman increased during the colonization, since fertility for the Spanish culture was no longer something sacred, because duality was not relevant for them as it was for the Aymara's and Inca's culture, other roles were assigned to the women such as, being the public companion for the husbands, have an active presence in the church and the administration of the domestic issues.

Another important fact to be considered as influence of the colonization in the gender matter, is the Christianity, the Spanish brought along the Catholicism, which differing to the native religions it was monotheist with a male -supreme God- The Father, and a male -human God- the Son Jesus Christ and a male -divine character- the Holy Ghost the three of them making the "The Holy Trinity" (Haring, 1966) As we can perceive, after the colonization there were no longer goddesses of any nature, in fact the only female figure that occupies a place within the divine structure for the Catholicism, was the mother of Jesus Christ Maria, who was important, again, only because of her role of the gestation under the conception of the Holy Ghost.

In that sense, we have also to consider, that the faith inculcated to the people through education, the establishment of the churches and other practices, had as main personality a male character which consciously or unconsciously forced the new generations to locate the women automatically in a secondary role, excluding the leadership and the decision-making functions from the female tasks.

#### **2.1.4. El Mestizaje**

The Colonization as we have seen has brought several changes in the Bolivian culture, religion and traditions, and in that path many abuses have been committed in order to force the indigenous to obey and to practice customs that were even against their own moral principals; unfortunately one of those abuses among murders and brutality, the rapes to the native women were very common, which beyond the impunity this atrocities have produced a new generation of children without fathers, that due to their condition of Spanish authorities have denied their paternity to those sons and daughters of indigenous women. (Arocena, 2007) This historical event has left a generation of men and women product of a mixture of races called "Mestizaje"<sup>36</sup>

At the very beginning, it was a shame for the Spanish to have brought a child to the world with native blood, therefore the single women with children were doomed to stay single because it was a dishonor to bring a child out of a marriage, normally those woman had to suffer a higher exploitation and their children had to work as soon as possible in order to survive (Arocena, 2007); however, some married women that have been also raped were lucky to remain under the protection of their husbands and raise their mestizo children with their other children with the same father; at the contrary in some other

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<sup>36</sup> Miscegenation (translated by the author)

situations the husbands would abandon their whole family due to the dishonor of keeping a wife that has been raped by another man (Soruco, 2006).

It is also important to mention that after certain period of time, approximately from 1552 on some of the rapist, mostly those that have no children or wives, decided to keep their sons and recognize them as such, and if the women were lucky they could stay with their sons as mothers and bring more children as a family, but some could stay only as slaves to serve to the fathers and their sons. (Soruco, 2006) The marriage between Spanish and indigenous was not allowed, but the mixt families were growing mostly in the region of the current Cochabamba, in the small villages called Punata, Cliza, Tarata, Mizque, Anzaldo, Totorá, Ayquile and Sacaba, because that was a huge region of Spanish landowners and servitude (Monasterios, Estefanoni and Do Alto, 2007).

Consequently, this growing generation of mestizos represented a new social class, that has to be recognized by the authorities, thus many Spanish had given their family names to their children in order to make them legally beings of law with rights and duties, certainly those privileged with Spanish names were mostly men, because at the beginning of the Mestizaje the daughters were rejected by their fathers (Monasterios, Estefanoni and Do Alto, 2007). In that sense the less favored were always the women, the mothers and their daughters that had barely some rights.

In that order, along the years the Mestizos gained some privileges, such as tax exemption, or better payment, nevertheless they were not allowed to occupy public positions, and the situation of the mestizo women were even less advantaged, because although some of them had Spanish names, as women in general had no right to vote, their situation was not truly different from the native women (Tórrez, 2014). Women either half-caste or not, were

supposed to serve the men, meaning first of all, owners, bosses, fathers, husbands, sons and even grandchildren; thus we may see that this was one of the worse historical periods for the woman.

Finally, we can say that, the introduction of the criminal law and civil law has barely improved the legal situation of the women, namely because of the criminalization of some abuses that earlier were acceptable, and the acknowledgement of some rights for the mothers; nevertheless, the best achievement of women after this unfortunate times was the universal vote given in the revolution of 1952 (Tórrez, 2014), that will be elaborated in the following title.

### **2.1.5. The Republic and the Plurinational State of Bolivia**

In 1825 Bolivia has gotten its independence and it was born with only six departments from the current nine that it has now; La Paz, Santa Cruz, Potosí, Chuquisaca, Oruro and Cochabamba (Bolivia, 1826)<sup>37</sup>, and the Republic of Bolivia was geographically much bigger than now after the lost of territory due to wars, battles or negligence of our administrators.

Under the new constitution of the republic of Bolivia, the woman was not considered in different manner as before the independence, the roles given to the women were still the same inherited from the colonization, with the only difference that the Catholicism became the official belief for the people, and therefore the mandates of the Catholic church were practically laws; which in terms of gender it was absolutely unfavorable. (Thorne, 1971)

In that context the churches were a sort of moral schools, mainly for women, for instance, on of the dictates of the Catholicism against the freedom of the woman interpreted from the bible, was that they should bring to the

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<sup>37</sup> First Bolivian Constitution of 1826



world as much kids as God would send them (1 Timothy 2:15, 5:14, Genesis 1:28) meaning that women could not freely decide how many kids they would like to raise. Another example is the mandate that dooms the woman to be under the man, being this last one the chief of the family, who provides goods and food, and the woman should stay home to care about the house and the children. (Ephesian 5:22, Colossians 3:18, Tito 2:5 Peter 3:5)

Under those circumstances we can see a significant submission of the females to the males in this historical part of Bolivia, without considering that cheating and male infidelity was morally accepted, while a woman who cheats a man was excommunicated of the church, bringing up the topic of 'kids out of the marriage' which was also accepted for men and absolutely impossible to happen in a female case, because she would be likely dead before such situation could materialize (Lerner, 1990)

Furthermore, it is important to mention that women were not considered at all in the political decisions, since they were not part of the voter's universe just until the year 1952 after the National Revolution, from then on, the women, indigenous and illiterates were legally able to vote for their governors; but as it was expected, the fact of letting the women vote never meant that they would achieve a political influence as such, at least not very soon. (Dunkerley, 1987)

On that path of pursuing certain equality between women and men, the year 1994 the law of Popular Participation<sup>38</sup> has been launched, with the aim of compelling to the political parties to include in their boards as many women as men, in order to allow more females to become authorities (Bolivia Law 1551 article 1, 3 II and 8 f) 1994); nevertheless, despite the good intention of the law, what happened was that the parties were in fact integrated by men and

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<sup>38</sup> Bolivia *Law 1551 Popular participation* April 20th 1994

women proportionally, but the first places of the boards were occupied by males and the rest and less relevant places were full up with females, meaning anyways that the men would certainly guarantee a high political position and women would be less likely to become politicians due to their unfavorable position in the board.

In that context, the year 2007 during the government of the current president Evo Morales, The Republic of Bolivia has suffered a huge transformation, with the foundation of a new State called "Plurinational State of Bolivia" with a brand new political Constitution promulgated 2009, which as main betterment for the women's situation, has brought along several precepts contained in the second chapter referred to the fundamental rights, where it is emphasized that 'everyone and specially women have the right to live free of any kind of violence'<sup>39</sup>. In the same manner, this new Constitution displays some changes in the writing style mentioning always the substantive –men- and -women-, whereas in the previous one it was written only in the male form.

Under those legal circumstances, the year 2010 the 30<sup>th</sup> of June the Legislative Power has launched the Law 026 of Electoral System, which establishes in its article 11 that the boards of the parties for election, will be formed by men and women equally and alternately (Bolivia, 2010), namely, if the first candidate is a male, the second one should be a female and the next one again the opposite gender, in a way that there is a real proportionality in the distribution of the political positions.

Indubitably, this political and legal evolution during the independent life of Bolivia and the changes that the constitution has suffered have brought positive achievements for the woman, mainly regarding the decision-making processes, nevertheless, although the women are now (more than before)

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<sup>39</sup> Bolivian Constitution 2009 Article 15 II (translated by the author)

occupying important political places, if they do not change their chauvinistic mindset, their influence in the main decision made for the good of society, will still be less favorable for the females, because the source of ideas and proposals is still contaminated by old patriarchal disvalues that place the woman in a lower position a man.

Moreover, although the women in Bolivia have been in a constant fight to become active holders of rights and every year their situation improves, since more rights are being granted to the women, yet, the chauvinistic culture seems to remain intact in our country and even worse in Cochabamba, which is clear as from the rates of violence against women that display an increasing number of victims rather than a reduction of them.

## **2.2. Types of violence against women more frequently practiced in Cochabamba**

### **2.2.1 Types of violence mostly identified in Bolivia**

Since we are tackling the issue of violence against women in Bolivia, we will talk about the types of violence against women within the framework of the recent law No. 348 of Prevention of violence against women launched in March 9th 2013, after a survey made the last 2011 and 2012, the legislative power in this country, has determined the creation of a law that could guarantee the women a life free of violence; in this line there have been identified seventeen types of violence normally practiced against women that are now part of the criminal legal system in order to punish those who inflict such acts of violence.

In that sense, the Law 348 Article 7th establishes as types of violence, the following:

*"1. Physical violence, it is all kinds of actions that causes injuries or bodily damage internally or externally, temporary or permanent that can*

*be manifested immediately or in a long term produced employing the force or any other means.*

*2. Femicide violence, it is the action of extreme violence that violates the fundamental right of life and causes the death of a woman only by the fact of being one.*

*3. Psychological violence, it is many different systematic actions of devaluation or intimidation and control of the women`s behavior and decisions, that consequently diminish the self-esteem, brings along depression, psychological instability, disorientation and even a suicide.*

*4. Media violence, it is produced by the massive medias through publicity, broadcasting messages and stereotyped images, that promote the submission and exploitation of the woman, discriminating, dishonoring, humiliating or violating their dignity, name and image.*

*5. Symbolic or hidden violence, it is practiced by messages, values, symbols, icons, signs, or social, economical, political, and cultural or religious impositions that convey, reproduce and consolidate relationships of domination, exclusion, inequality and discrimination, naturalizing the subordination of the woman.*

*6. Violence against the dignity, honor and name, it is all verbal or written expression of insult, defamation, calumny or threat tendentious or public that discredits, disqualifies, devalues, demeans or affects the name, dignity, honor and reputation of the woman.*

*7. Sexual Violence, it is any behavior that jeopardize the sexual self-determination in the intercourse or any genital or non genital contact, that threatens, violates or restricts the right to a safe, effective and full sexual life with independence and sexual freedom of the woman.*

*8. Violence against the reproductive rights, it is the actions or omission that restricts or violates the right to information, orientation, integral assistance and treatment throughout the pregnancy, loss, postnatal*

*period and lactation, in order to make decisions responsibly and freely the number of children and time of separation to be able to practice a safe motherhood, and choose safe contraceptive methods.*

*9. Violence within the healthcare system, it is all discriminatory, humiliating, and dehumanizing action that restricts or denies the timely and effective access to proper information for women, jeopardizing their health or life.*

*10. Economic violence, it is any action or omission that could affect the private or common assets of the women damaging their heritage, values, or resources, controlling or limiting their income or disposition of their goods, or the indispensable means to live.*

*11. Labor violence, it is any action within the work system produced by any person, pairs, higher or lower hierarchy, that discriminates, humiliates or threatens to the women, or blocks the free access, permanency or promotion to a job, violating their rights.*

*12. Violence within the education system, it is any act of physical, psychological, or sexual aggression committed against women within the regular, alternative, special or high education system.*

*13. Political violence, it is committed by acts that inhibit or disturb the right to a leadership of the women, when they are occupying a political charge for the state or for the opposition, or when they are building their leadership in order to become so.*

*14. Institutional violence, it is any action or omission of the public servants or personnel of private institutions that discriminates, prejudices, humiliates and dehumanizes, delaying, hindering or negating to the women the free access and attendance of the required service.*

*15. Domestic violence, it is any physical, psychological or sexual aggression committed against women by the husband or ex-husband,*

*partner or ex-partner, his family, brothers, sisters, civil relatives or tutors in charge of the custody.*

*16. Violence against the sexual freedom, it is an action or omission that restricts or inhibits the right of the women to a joyful, free, safe, effective and full sexual life violating their sexual choice."*

Within the classification of types of violence against women identified by the Law 348 of prevention of violence against women, there are many types of violence that are more likely to be committed in certain regions depending on factors as culture, demography, values, religion, poverty and other aspects that influence for determining the characteristics of the aggressions against women, because within Bolivia we have more than 36 ethnic groups in the countryside (The CIA World Factbook, 2008) and the urban part has also a huge diversity, dividing the Bolivian society mainly in "Collas" and "Cambas"<sup>40</sup> having among them strong differences and even certain rivalry.

For example, at a macro level, in European countries such as Switzerland, Sweden, The Netherlands, Denmark and Norway, the rates of violence against women are leaning more to the psychological violence (Secorum, 2014), whereas in countries such as Poland, Ukraine, Macedonia, Albania, Croatia and Romania the most common aggressions against women are domestic violence Physical and even sexual (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014); meaning, that in all countries all kinds of violence are committed against women but certain types are more likely to happen due to different factors.

In that sense, the gender based violence in low income countries of Latin America and Africa had different connotations, in some countries for instance as the poverty is a relevant factor there is a tendency of

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<sup>40</sup> "Collas" live in the western part of the country and "Cambas" live in the eastern one.

unemployment for men case in which there are high possibilities of men becoming alcoholic, which is one of the main causes for beating up their wives, falling into the category of domestic violence, while in countries where at the contrary, poverty is being overcome one of the most common acts of violence against women is economic violence, meaning that the males control the finances within the family and the wives depend fully on them, generating certain obedience and submission to their husbands falling also into a sort of psychological aggression (Secorum, 2014).

Under this categorization according the characteristics of the continent, country and region, it is important to stress that Bolivia in general is a low income country with strong features of chauvinism as the other Latin American countries, but there is not a high index of unemployment and it has also a decreasing index of illiteracy (Bolivian National Institute of Statistics, 2013)<sup>41</sup> nevertheless the rates of violence against of women are alarming.

The Gender Observatory <sup>42</sup> has identified through a survey made in 2014, as the most common types of violence practiced in Bolivia, the following: physical violence in the first place, sexual violence in the second place and psychological violence in the third place. Those types of violence have in turn different manifestations in several ways of perpetration such as misogyny, deprivation of freedom, physical abuse, sexual harassment and other patriarchal practices.

On the other hand, due to the lack of systematization of data that this topic faces in low income countries such as Bolivia, we have different results displayed in a survey made by the several specialist practitioners, called

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<sup>41</sup>Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas del Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia INE

<sup>42</sup> Observatorio de Género - Coordinadora de la Mujer

“Denunciando la violencia sexual contra niñas adolescentes en Bolivia”<sup>43</sup> presented and treated in the 144<sup>a</sup> session of hearing of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights in 2014, which shows that the most common violence practiced against women is psychological with 54%, physical violence in second place with 52 % and the last place, with sexual violence from their partners or husbands with 15%. These rates show clearly a contradiction in contrast with the previous survey of the Observatory of Gender in the same year; nevertheless, what is clear is which types of violence are more commonly committed against women in Bolivia.

### **2.2.2. Rates by types of violence in Cochabamba**

Since Cochabamba makes part of the Bolivian rates of violence against women, certainly, physical, psychological and sexual violence are also the most common types of aggression in that city, nevertheless, it is important to narrow down those categories of violence in more specific acts that are more typically committed against women in Cochabamba, thus we can understand much better the relational dynamics around this problem.

In that sense, within the three identified types of violence, physical, psychological and sexual, we can find the economic violence, chauvinism and domestic violence that are not excluded from the previously mentioned; since the Regional Police Against Violence of Cochabamba (FELCV) has informed the last October 2015, that 72% of the cases of violence against women are result of domestic violence since January to October 2015, and from that percentage the cases of psychological violence are normally due to economic manipulation that derives in patriarchal practices, deprivation of freedom, intimidation and harassment to the self-esteem.

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<sup>43</sup> “Denouncing the sexual violence against girls and teenagers in Bolivia” (translated by the author)



Furthermore, as we can now see somehow which are the most frequent acts of violence within the context of Cochabamba, even more with the contextualization of the roots of chauvinism in Cochabamba approximately since the year 1300. In that sense, knowing that the society of Cochabamba has strong features of 'machismo' but it has also a matriarchal mindset, we have the access to a survey done within a project of violence against women<sup>44</sup> in Cochabamba, which displays the most common acts of violence against women the years 2014 and 2015 in the city of Cochabamba, and the results were the following:

Acts of violence	Physical abuses	Deprivation of freedom	Sexual abuses	Economic manipulation	Diminution of the self-esteem	Intimidation and threatening
<b>Cases 2014</b>	1235	467	409	83	53	28
<b>Cases 2015</b>	1354	592	442	79	51	7
<b>Total</b>	2589	1059	851	162	104	35
<b>Average</b>	<b>1295</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>18</b>

Made by the author 2016 (Annex 1. Report of H&F of the project as a source of verification)

With these rates we can observe that there is a high tendency to exercise more physical violence than the other types of aggression, which is not exclusive, at the opposite, the predominance of physical violence supposes the presence of other types of violence practiced before, during and after the violent episodes, since the physical aggression is mostly one of the last links of a chain of violence against women. (World Health Organization 2014) <sup>45</sup>

For instance, the survey practiced by the Organization H&F (2015)<sup>46</sup> in Cochabamba within the project "Tú eres parte de la solución" shows that 82% of the women victims of physical violence have suffered before either

<sup>44</sup> Project "Tú Eres Parte de la Solución" with support of the Swiss Development Cooperation. "You are part of the solution" (translated by the author)

<sup>45</sup> The *Global status report on violence prevention 2014*

<sup>46</sup> Annex 2

psychological or economical violence, and 67% have been still in the chain of violence due to abandonment, sexual violence or also psychological violence.

This data displays perfectly that the rates of certain type of violence do not exclude any other type, at the contrary, normally one kind of aggression comes along with other ones; even more if we consider that those indexes are done based on the number of denounces before the legal instances, through which the victims generally reveal the worst type of violence practically ignoring 'minor' episodes.

This mindset of going before the legal instances in the 'worst case' belongs to two main arguments, first of all, that a –good- woman should be able fix her domestic problems inside the family unit without involving outsiders, and the second argument is, that the woman from Cochabamba is strong and powerful enough to defend herself and not letting the others know that she is suffering (Villena, 2013)<sup>47</sup>. Definitely this theory of the Ombudsman can be understandable as a local, but if we expose these arguments to justify the acceptance of violence to certain extend, and the call for institutional help only in the worst cases, we are admitting that our women are somehow being their own accomplices of the crimes they are victims of; hence there must be a huge shift in the women's mindset too in order to stop effectively gender violence.

### **2.3. Bolivian legislation**

Due to the increase in the rates of denounces of acts of violence against women, before the need of urgent protection for the woman in Bolivia, the legislative power of the country has launched the law No. 348 the 9th of March

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<sup>47</sup> Rolando Villanueva Santa Cruz Ombudsman of Bolivia (presentation of 8th of march 2013)

2013 to guarantee a life free of violence for the women, this law is indeed the only legal norm that attempts to reduce violence against women, nevertheless, considering its recent promulgation, most of the legal precepts related to the prevention appendix are not yet implemented or they have many deficiencies.

Moreover, the Law No. 348 has as main goal, “to establish mechanisms, measures and integral policies in order to prevent, attend, protect and repair, to the women in situation of violence aiming to guarantee a dignified life and welfare”<sup>48</sup> and, within its first title we can identify four areas of regulation: Prevention, attendance, protection and reparation.

The prevention axis, according to this law, aims to prioritize as a national policy the inclusion of institutional strategies and measures in order to prevent the violence against women. On the other hand, the axis of attendance has as main goal the implementation in the public sector, of specialized assistance for women in situation violence, whereas the protection theme has to do with the timely intervention of the state in cases of violence against women in order to avoid the prolongation of the situation of victim. Finally the reparation axis points to articulate the punisher power of the state in order to penalize the aggressors of acts of gender violence.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, it is important to mention that as any other substantive law, as it is stated in the transitional instructions of the law 348 itself, it needs to have an adjectival regulation that consolidates its mandates through a complementary law that establishes the ‘how’, namely, the procedures that will endorse the accomplishment of the main normative, which is, to guarantee to the women a life free of violence.

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<sup>48</sup> Bolivian Law No. 348 Article 2nd (translated by the author)

<sup>49</sup> Bolivian Law No. 348 Article 8th

Nonetheless, as it is written in the Law 348, its precepts and mandates sound really suitable and effective, yet, now in 2016 after more than three years of its promulgation, no further regulation has been launched establishing the procedural norms to make the law 348 feasible and successful, neither at the legislative level nor at the institutional one. Hence the problem of gender violence in Bolivia is still facing a legal loophole that brings as consequence the delay of the transformation.

This previous analysis of course, according to Wolfgang Dietrich, would belong to a moralist thinking of peace, assuming that the lack of a normative would derive in a perpetuation of the problem; indeed it seems to be like this in Cochabamba's society, nevertheless the ideal scenario would be to foster also other instruments apart from the norms to transform this relational problem of gender violence.

## **2.4. Institutional presence**

After the promulgation of the Law 348, there have been no relevant changes at the institutional level, because all of the private, international and public entities that were related to the domestic violence or protection of the family, are still making their roles, nevertheless there has been an important shift in the legal instances, since the Law establishes the need of creating specific police services and judicial jurisdiction in order to attend cases of violence against women.

Therefore, under articles 53, 68 and 80 of the law 348, currently the criminal system of the State, has introduced new tribunals to judge cases of violence against women, a new branch of the criminal police "Fuerza Especial de Lucha contra la Violencia"<sup>50</sup> to investigate such cases, and new procedural

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<sup>50</sup> Special forces to fight against violence (translated by the author)

measures have been implemented to intervene immediately in situations of violence to protect the victims.

Although, these repartitions of the criminal system have been created within the three months of promulgation of the law, by its own mandate, the other institutional modifications in the rest of the public sector, have not become a reality, at the opposite, nearly no one of the state services have implemented a differentiated attendance for women in situation of violence, even worse in the private sector, there is absolutely no special treatment for woman victims of violence that would like to take their cases to the legal instances, since there is no tolerance for absence or delay for such paperwork. (Elizabeth Gutiérrez, 2016)<sup>51</sup>

On the other hand, along this last three years of the implementation of the Law 348, we have seen many cases of violence against women, simply rejected or abandoned, because of the negligence of the justice operators; the year 2014 the 89% of cases of psychological violence have been rejected due to 'lack of proofs' (CIDEM, 2015), which is really insulting and humiliating for a woman who is looking for justice; a twenty two years old woman said "How can I prove my emotional situation and the psychological damage that my brain has? Isn't it enough to say that I cannot communicate with any member of my family? That I cannot have friends and that I cannot work because my partner gets so angry and stops talking to me for weeks? How can I prove the violence I am victim of, if I don't have the means to pay for a psychological assessment? How can I prove my desperation if by not crying here on front of all this cold

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<sup>51</sup> Minister of Justice of Bolivia, Journal interview "La Razón" March 2016

and insensible people that supposedly work to ‘fight against violence’? (Wara Flores 2015)<sup>52</sup>

This testimony shows perfectly the institutional situation of Bolivia regarding the application and implementation of the only norm (Law 348) that attempts to protect and guarantee to the women a life free of violence, in few words, in Bolivia and even more in Cochabamba, due to the deep chauvinistic culture, almost all the public and private services are provided to the people without any rational discrimination in favor of the women, and even less in favor of women in situation of violence.

Moreover, considering that the labor situation is also part of the institutional stage, it is important to mention that there has not been any enhancement in work conditions, although the Law 348 establishes in its second transitional mandate and the article 21<sup>st</sup>, that all public and private institutions should implement policies and effective measures in order to guarantee the respect to the woman and the full practice of their rights with the main aim of avoiding acts of gender violence; which means, definitely, that the Law 348 is being insufficient, hence women are still kept in vulnerability.

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<sup>52</sup> Victim of domestic violence, identified within the target group of the project “tú eres parte de la solución” supported by Huellas & Futuro and SDC

## Chapter 3

### The men`s role in Cochabamba`s society



"The fact that we are men does not mean that we are superior to the women, it means that we must take care and value them"

A message from a 14 years old student

#### 3.1. Polarized campaigning

As the problem of violence against women has become a national concern since 2013 with the promulgation of the Law 348, some international organizations as well as some public institutions related to this topic, have started strong campaigning in order to prevent and mainly to repudiate aggression against women and its promoters; this wave of action has involved mainly women and very lightly it has tackled to the males.

As we can recall the interviews practiced at the beginning of this academic adventure to endorse the selection of the research problem; there were some men that I would like to quote again in order to show the impact of the propaganda against gender violence, undertaken by women and feminist-approach collectivities these last three years.

The first interviewee I would like to stress is a doctor who is married to a young woman who loves to wear nicely and modern; when I asked him his opinion about writing a thesis on the issue of violence against women, he reacted with a discouraging face, and affirmed that there is no 'real equality' within a marriage if you want it to succeed, "there must always be someone who leads the car to the front" he said. (Azeñas, personal interview, 22 April 2015). Still this practitioner says that a woman can not be anymore the "lady" of his times, a woman should study, realize herself academically and professionally, women should look as pretty as they want, they should go out with friends and have free time for them to enjoy alone. Yet, very disappointed he said:

*...It will be a hard work, men are now too far of being included in such initiatives, the organizations and women themselves have managed very well to exclude them and make them -the villain of the movie-, hence we (men) have certain resentment to participate freely. (Azeñas, personal interview, 22 April 2015).*

These words of my interviewee were certainly very discouraging for my expectations as researcher that attempts to involve men in the struggle of violence against women; nevertheless this 36 years old man was telling me the reality of our current context, he was basically saying that 'men are excluded of the process of overcoming gender violence due to the women's manner of confronting this problem'. In fact, even though this statement was unfavorable, it definitely motivated me even more to deepen my efforts on this research.

Furthermore, my other male interviewee was a young fourteen years old youth, who was not dating anyone when we had our interview; we had a long conversation about violence in general, but when we reached the point of violence against women, he affirmed: "...everyday in the TV I see that someone



killed his wife, or his girlfriend normally because of jealousy..." (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015). Although it was his personal impression, I think that there is some of truth in this statement, he also said that he did not have any member of his family involved in cases of violence gender violence "...but when you hear it daily everywhere you feel familiarized with that kind of situations"; I asked concretely if he would like to take part of initiatives to prevent violence against women, and his answer was: "if there would be another men involved, of course, but if it is a women's activity, I do not go along with the girls that well, so, I would prefer to keep aside" (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015). Finally I asked whether he could suggest an effective activity promoted by men in order to prevent violence against women, and he answered, "I would need time to think and give an idea about that, because I have never seen or participated in such actions". (Bozzo, personal interview, 23 April 2015).

This youth has made think in the importance of the example for the new generations, if they do not have any good agent to mimic, it will certainly be difficult to brake paradigms of the past; therefore those words have led me to understand the relevance of including men of all ages in the tasks of ending violence against women, and it has gave me the courage to deepen my interest on this academic challenge of getting involved and committed to the men who are also part of this relational problem of gender violence.

As I have said, since 2013 after the promulgation of the Law 348 to guarantee a life free of violence against women, several public, private and international institutions have started in Bolivia a huge campaigning that has also reached Cochabamba but with a minor impact, because this department, as we have seen, has a special cultural context, where women are strong and dominant but still chauvinistic in their mindset.

In that sense, I would like to quote the Minister of Justice Elizabeth Gutiérrez (2014) who affirmed that -an effective solution for stopping femicides is definitely the death penalty for the murders, and a good way to reduce violence against women would be to harden the penalties for such crimes. If we analyze this political posture of a national authority, we may see that the main public policy in Bolivia to struggle gender violence goes to act upon the problem 'a posteriori' assuming that prevention is not feasible.

In the same line I would like to quote the current Minister of Justice of the country Virginia Velasco (2016), she affirms that -the law 348 is one of the best initiatives of Latin America to strike violence against women, the criminalization of any act of gender violence and the hardening of the penalties is indubitably an important advancement in this struggle<sup>53</sup>. Nevertheless when this authority is asked the reason of impunity after three years of implementation of the Law 348 that guarantees to the women a life free of violence; she blames the judicial operators that are not applying the law as they should, sustaining that judges and public prosecutors delay unnecessarily the resolution of the cases taken before them, due to simple negligence.<sup>54</sup>

Under this declaration of the main authority of justice in the country, the only lecture of the political situation regarding the attempt of transformation of this problem of gender violence, is that the problem as such, namely the actors and the background do not matter, what matters are the actions that the government should take upon the actual 'consequences', such as the aggressors the victims and what we do with them -since they already exist- Hence, the State is not interested in the relational problem that accurately derives in violence against women.

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<sup>53</sup> Virginia Velasco journal interview 08 march 2016 (translated by the author)

<sup>54</sup> Virginia Velasco journal interview 08 march 2016 (translated by the author)

In that sense, if the main public policy of the State provides such framework for the public and private institutions to act, it is obvious that all the principals, policies, measures and handbooks designed and applied on the issue of violence against women will have this influence, in consequence, this problem is understood only as aggressors (men) against victims (women), taking for granted that the actual problem will not change, therefore we need to do something with both parties, 'save to the victims and condemn to the criminals'; that is where we can see clearly the polarized campaigning.

Hence, as we can observe in this legal and institutional context, as well for the State of Bolivia as for the private institutions and local initiatives, the problem of violence against women has two parties clearly identified as aggressor (men and victims (women)), and those roles are not interchangeable, thus this understanding does not respond to nature, since as we know "Nobody can be only good, only strong, and only intelligent. Everything also contains its opposite" (Dietrich, 2012), nevertheless, for them; in their mindset it will remain like that, therefore all efforts to enhance this situation will attempt to try out solutions for both sides, without considering the problem as a whole and including all actors of society without assigning them prejudging roles and analyzing the relational issue behind them.

### **3.2. Men's position regarding the issue of violence against women**

In this point it is important to tackle two topics, first of all the reaction of the males to all the campaigning and warning given after the publication of the Law 348 to guarantee to the women a life free of violence; and the second one, is the indifference of the men to all this huge movement of 'breaking the silence' in situation of violence against women. The reason of selecting these

two aspects of the men's posture, is that, as (for me) they are seen as the aggressors and the women are seen as their victims, I would like to know the male's reaction to all this movement and the way they could assume certain responsibility in the issue.

Before getting deeper into the posture of the males regarding the issue of violence against women in the current context of Bolivia and Cochabamba, I would like to stress that the year 2014, 1362 cases of gender violence with male victims and female aggressors have been registered in the country, and 220 only in Cochabamba.<sup>55</sup> In that sense it is evident that men can also become victims of domestic violence, yet, the law 348 is designed and written in a manner that victim is taken as a synonym of woman, thus aggressor is granted as man, which generates a clear exclusion and polarization in disfavor of the males.

In consequence, I would like to question: How should the men feel after a promulgation of a law, which points at them as the 'only' generators of violence with no chances of being eventually the victims? Thereby I am not saying that the law should not exist or it is not accomplishing its purpose; but inferring just by empathy, I can guess that the men are not quite content with such norm, which means that the Law 348 is not fully legitimized by the Bolivian population. Thus, its mandates will be likely less effective than a norm that has an absolute legitimacy (Dogan, 2003)

Moreover, this biased sense of the Law 348 to guarantee to the women a life free of violence, definitely stigmatize even more to the men of the current and future generations, assigning them categorically the role of aggressor in a society where the women will always have the role of a victims, under this worldview created by the recent norm supposed to combat gender violence,

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<sup>55</sup> INE 2014 Report on domestic violence in health system.

results quite hard to move toward a transformation of the problem, indeed it seems to worsen the issue dividing men and women as antagonists rather than seeking the root causes and unite both genders in order to change the relational dynamics.

Furthermore, beyond this analysis of the impact of the Law 348 to fight violence against women, in the men's mindset; we should also consider the background of our male society of Cochabamba, from which the chauvinistic features derive. Since in fact, the law has been generated due to the massive cases of violence and femicides committed up to 2012 that obviously comes from the patriarchal worldview of the collectivity and the naturalization of the violence against women as part of the normal development of our civilization.

Certainly, we can also see the chauvinistic essence of the Law 348, when the woman is displayed as a victim of a man with no possibilities of changing the relational dynamic between males -the strong ones- and females -the weak ones-, taking for granted that 'violence against women' as such will remain like that, therefore the norm emphasizes in punishing rather than preventing, and it establishes implicitly roles for the males and for the females deepening the gap between them and excluding both of them from a possible common strategy to overcome the real problem.

Finally, taking into consideration all those facts given after the promulgation of the Law 348 with a strong influence of chauvinism in its own content; under my own worldview, as a person who has experienced episodes of rejection and lack of credibility due to my gender, I would like to identify two salient aspects that are to me, the tangible causes of this relational problem called "violence against women"

### 3.2.1. Lack of values

Unfortunately, the 'disvalues' ingrained during the Inca conquest and the colonization of the Spanish, are strongly rooted in the culture of Cochabamba, to the extent of thinking that if a woman is beaten up, is certainly because she has looked for it or she deserves it (Goldsmán, 2014). This mindset (of males and females) response to a distorted appreciation of respect confused with the misconceived authority of men over women brought up even before the independence of Bolivia and practiced despite the evolution of our societies.

In that context, the misconception of a hierarchy or superiority of men over women, sadly leads not only behaviors of males but also of women, that in turn sooner or later become parents and convey those 'moral principals' to their children, perpetuating misogyny girls and boys promoting the cycle of violence against woman. Thus, as main 'disvalues' that foster chauvinism in Cochabamba, we can identify:

- Ignorance or lack of proper education. Unfortunately, just the year 2006 Bolivia has set as goal to overcome illiteracy, which means that just the last 10 years <sup>56</sup>, it has become a priority for the State that all its members are able to read and write; this is of course a clear hindrance for women and men to receive further education, for obtaining accurate information and hence to elaborate on their own thoughts regarding any topic of their interest. In that line, the UNwomen <sup>57</sup> recommends as a State policy to educate mainly girls, since as long as the girls of today are educated there are more chances of overcoming youths at risk or vulnerability such as violence, early pregnancy, abandonment, gangs, drugs and human trafficking.

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<sup>56</sup> Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas Illiteracy index 2016

<sup>57</sup> UNwoman Colombia Estrategias educativas para combatir las violencias de género

This lack of proper education of our current generation of parents increases the possibilities of perpetuation of the chauvinistic mindset in Cochabamba, since they can only convey to their children what they have received from their parents because there is no chance for them to acquire new knowledge or change their worldview. For instance they (males and females) have learned that women are born to be housewives, therefore to do domestic tasks, take care of the children and the husband; and anything that goes against this patterns of family, is repudiated or frowned, always against the women. Another sad but real example is: the man is cheating on her, but still she should keep calm and think about the unity of the family and the future of the children, because this is morally demanded, situating the woman in high moral standards painfully reached or if not, diminishing the value of the failures.

- Stagnation in the old times. This aspect goes closely linked to the previous one, since the fact of not evolving or not opening the minds is part of a dormant society due to the lack of proper education and information. Although the society of Cochabamba has evolved in many phases and it has adapted to the demands of globalization with technology and communication, the patriarchal mindset has remained almost intact; of course the improvement of the women's situation is evident in aspects such as labor rights, political rights, independence, family planning and trend, but yet, misogyny is still present everywhere being practiced by men and women deliberately (Ferreira, 2008).

The supposed moral values constructed hundreds of years ago, are still important for men and women in Cochabamba, for instance, it is still frowned when a divorced woman starts a new relationship right after

the separation, but the situation is naturally accepted when a man does it. Since Cochabamba has also certain patriarchy within the family structure, her advices are applied almost as mandates, and they have certainly a chauvinistic content, such as *-you need to understand your husband, men are always like that- -men always like to have affairs, it is normal- -all the men are the same, you need to accept it- and -you need to please him in order to keep your marriage-*<sup>58</sup>; and even after saying those affirmations, the mothers would tell their daughters *-I am talking from my experience I have seen that my whole life, I know what I am saying-*. Could you imagine the impact of those statements said by your mother? 'The person who loves you more than nobody else', obviously men and mostly women, take the message as a life's law and act upon that; conveying as well these messages to their fellows and eventually to their own children, falling into the stagnation of ancient chauvinistic codes.

- Lack of awareness. This issue is obviously a consequence of the lack of information and the stagnation in ancient 'moral' codes; nevertheless this aspect is the most problematic considering that raising the awareness is the most important step to be given in order to start a path towards a life free of sexism. The lack of awareness is a general problem for all generations and both genders, because they accept certain patriarchal practices against women as natural and normal, internalizing them unconsciously in their daily behavior as part of an ordinary conduct.

Nevertheless, the lack of awareness regarding the issue of violence against women, turns even more problematic, when it is related

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<sup>58</sup> I must say in that point, that I have heard such comments also from my own mother regarding my relationships.



to the parents within a family, because unconsciously they are repeating sexist patterns that are being received by their children, assuming those behaviors as regular and right, considering the parents as the main example to mimic. It is the same case with school teachers, sport stars, celebrities and other public figures, they also become role models for their fans and anything they do will generate a huge and unimaginable impact in the worldview of thousands of youths, for instance, what is the message that a soccer player conveys in an advertisement where he wears certain brand underwear, and many girls flirt with him and dance around him? The obvious answer is that men should always wear in such way that they can get as many girls as possible, displaying and spreading this sexist stereotype to all their fans (García and Lema, 2009).

As we can see those small examples raised in order to show the chauvinistic disvalues inculcated in the current society of Cochabamba, it is also evident that they are minor relational aspects of daily life between women and men regardless the kind of relationship they hold, the fact is that those beliefs can be easily transformed into positive values in favor of gender equity and mutual respect just by everyday practices with our partners in the immediate surrounding that we develop our lives irrespective of whether we are females or males.

### **3.2.2. Patriarchal practices against the women's welfare**

As we have been talking about patriarchal practices, it seems to be only a trigger for an act of violence as such; nevertheless as the problem of gender based violence is a relational issue, it is important to distinguish what could be a chauvinistic behavior that does not affect the integrity or dignity of a woman. In this topic we find different postures, those women that would never accept a patriarchal practice as non-harming, and those females that would accept

certain chauvinism as natural part of couple relationships as long as they do not harm in any aspect to a woman (Carlson, 1988).

The first group of women, who would not accept any chauvinism at all, are focused in the idea that men and women are absolutely equal, meaning that none of them are stronger than one another, therefore, there is no need, for instance, for the men to carry heavier stuff, or give to the ladies their coat because they do not feel cold, or come along with them during night in order to protect them; for this kind of feminists, the females can perfectly do whatever a male can do, and pretending to practice such "gentleman" manners towards a woman could be offensive and attempt to reduce their capacities, which is introduced as 'benevolent sexism' (Philips, 2016)

On the other hand the second group of feminists, are those that look for equity between men and women, but yet, they do not force the concept of accurate equality between a male and a female; for instance, under this currency, a man is obviously different to a woman in many ways, considering the biologic compositions of their chromosomes, hence, men and women might feel different emotions in different situations, women can get pregnant, man could be stronger, and so on; which makes them similar in capabilities and feelings but different in more objective aspects; thus, if a man would like to be protective and chivalrous with a woman, it cannot be considered as insulting, but rather as a natural act of kindness. In that regard Robin Philips (2016) brings up this statement *"women who were exposed to benevolent sexism were more likely to think that there are many advantages to being a woman."*

Under those currencies of feminism, we could say that, given the strong influence of the 'energetic peace' of the Aymaras and Incas and the patriarchal values inherited from the Spanish, Cochabamba has more features of the second group of feminism, those that are against violence and its chauvinistic

source, but they are also in favor of all the kind customs that differentiate a well raised man from a bad one, so *“Even being the wife a doctor or an astronaut, pampering or pleasing mutually is a human need”* (Rubin, 2004)<sup>59</sup>. Hence we will highlight only the patriarchal practices more frequently practiced in Cochabamba, that are against the integrity of the women:

- a) The typical statement of a husband that produces the money for the sake of the whole family “my wife does not work, she stays at home with the children”. The domestic tasks done by the women that stay at home, are seen in Cochabamba as non-work, actually, the males and females would say “you lucky that stay at home with your kids”

In this point I have practiced an interesting experiment, I have asked to some men of Cochabamba –that I assumed they are not chauvinist- what was their opinion about the statement “my wife does not work, she stays at home with the children” and even though I repeated the question several times in order to make it clear and fully understandable, and the answers were always affirmative, such as *“yes it is a reality” “it happens with some mothers that would like to dedicate more to their kids” “sometime not working, is an own decision of the woman”*.

After those answers, I have realized that the statement as such, sounds absolutely familiar to them, whereas to some women that statement sound more like: -men work and women that stay at home with the children do not work- This is the message but the males hear it

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<sup>59</sup> There are women, fighters claiming their rights in favor of gender equality; however, they do not want to lose the privileges of their female condition. They want the man to open the door of the car, to move the chair for sitting, to carry heavy things. Is not that a contradiction? Is not the feminism in fight against chivalrous? And so that we want them to light us a cigarette, they want us to sew their shirts' buttons, or iron their clothes. Even being the wife a doctor or astronaut, pampering or pleasing mutually is a human need. (Translated by the author)

and they do not notice anything wrong, they argue and give their opinion about the situation, but not really about the formulated statement.

After this disappointing experiment and having heard the point of view of seven men, I asked, -do you think that staying at home with the children is not working? – Then, it is in that very moment that they feel urged and somehow attacked; and then they started arguing on their answer.

Some of my interviewees would say, that *“being at home obviously requires certain effort but it cannot be consider a job because it is not paid”* they would also say, *“of course it is a work but it is not seen as such because women do not make money out of that”*. As we can realize with those asseverations this is a current patriarchal practice exercised by men and even women, which not only offend the dignity of a woman but also reduces the value of the female domestic performances, considering such endeavors as nothing or as a natural duty that do not deserve any acknowledgement.

- b) The economic domination of the husbands or partners within the family putting the wives as a non-sovereign member, unable to make her own financial decisions. Due to different reasons that are not relevant to this point, in some cases in a family only the men provides the money, or in other cases both work, but the men ear more money that the women; in such situations, because of the slight matriarchy of Cochabamba’s society, the women would be in charge of shopping the stuff for home, such as groceries y basic things for the children, l which they have plenty of autonomy for choosing quality and price, nevertheless the most important financial decisions are normally made or conducted by the

men, even more when it comes to acquire assets or credits, because - they are the men of the family- (Sara Diez, 2012)

This patriarchal practice in the understanding of many women that has been raised within a chauvinist family, it is somehow a protective and natural feature of men, but for most of the women it is a way to cut off their self-determination, because, even if they do not earn a salary they also contribute with the development of the family and therefore they should have the right to make their own decisions regarding money, they might not produce money, but what they do is also an active for the wealth of the family (Fontenla, 2008). On the other hand, the same right should be preserved for women that do earn money and contribute with it to the family patrimony. Where lies the rational argument for not trusting the women in financial decisions? Why they are not proportionally and equally involved in large financial decisions for the family?

In this regard, we had access to more than thirty files of families of women that have been victims of economic violence<sup>60</sup>, which incredibly show some women that are absolutely comfortable with the male domination in the financial decisions because they consider themselves unable to make right investments, thus, they do not try to get involved with the topic of money until they pay the consequences of giving up their power, when they want something for themselves or their own children, such as clothes, extracurricular lessons, trips, or simply shallow whims. Then the women feel the unfairness of this situation and when they start claiming for their rights the contention arises immediately.

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<sup>60</sup> Annex 2 H&F report 2015

- c) The non-approval for women to work when they become mothers, in order to be fully available for their kids. This chauvinist practice is closely linked to the previously exposed; but in this case it has to do more with husbands or partners that are more fortunate and could easily support their families with their salary; it could also be the case of a father that has a single mom daughter, situation in which the males nearly impose or compel the females under their 'protection' to stay at home at least for the first years taking care of their kids.

Apparently, there is no problem with it, at the contrary, it is a way to help the women when they become mothers, but what happens when children become more independent and they do not need a hundred percent the nearness of the moms? What happens when the mothers would like to continue their careers after some years? What happens when the father is no longer able to support financially the mother and the kids and mother is compelled to work again after being off for a while? What happens when the children do not require that much time of their mothers because they go to school and have their own friends and activities, but the moms are no longer able to get back their individual or professional lives? (Cobo, 1995).

The answers to those formulated questions are absolutely not encouraging for a women, even less if the woman has done or wants to do a professional career, yes, because postponing their lives for some months in low income countries such as Bolivia, means losing their jobs, losing opportunities, stagnation, obsolescence and other negative consequences, considering that Cochabamba is the third biggest city, where many people move looking for job chances.

Therefore, this apparent inoffensive 'act' of urging or manipulating emotionally to the mothers to stay at home with their kids, instead of working -for the sake of the family- is considered a patriarchal custom that easily hinders the success of women, of course when they are forced somehow to do that.

- d) The stereotypes of roles within the family unit, assigned to the females for domestic tasks and to the males for tasks that produce some money to provide goods for the family. This common practice within the society of Cochabamba is one of the main hindrances for women to develop new skills or work on their expertise without leaving aside their very well learnt role of 'housewives'; for instance, when the women work and develop their careers as well as the men, within a family, it is still the woman who keeps the house, making laundry, cleaning toilets, shopping, thinking about the common spaces and things that do not belong to anybody but they are used by all members. And the man at the contrary is busy with his work, his own stuff and he does not need to think about the rest because his wife or partner has always all under control. (Facio, 1999)

In the same line, this chauvinist mindset for which the women are anyways the housekeepers, regardless their educational level or labor situation, brings along serious consequences when it is passed on to the sons or daughters, since boy will acquire the idea of men being unable to occupy themselves in domestic tasks properly, and girls are raised acquiring the responsibility of becoming good at keeping a perfect home, where everything is clean, nice and well organized without taking into account the career or life they will choose or develop.

e) The underestimation of women's capabilities to perform tasks stereotyped as male ones. This chauvinistic practice is closely linked to the previously mentioned, because it also creates certain mental boundary for the women's perspectives. Hence, in Cochabamba there is a preconceived idea of the tasks sports or jobs that could be performed by women and those that could not, because they are only appropriate for men. The typical examples are cabdrivers, bus-drivers, soccer player, assignments that require certain physical strength, construction worker, gardener, electricity technician, plumber and so on.

Nevertheless, we might also see in Cochabamba certain awaken in this issue of stereotyping jobs and tasks, since the last year 2015 in Cochabamba there has been a incursion of some women into the public transport, meaning that the 1 % of the taxi and bus drivers, which is a huge achievement in comparison with 2012 and 2013<sup>61</sup>. On the other hand in Cochabamba there is also an internal female league of soccer integrated by ten teams from the whole department, which in comparison with the male league is obviously very small, but it is a huge advancement against the patriarchal worldview of the society of Cochabamba regarding this discipline<sup>62</sup>.

Moreover, concerning the things that require certain physical strength such as being a construction worker or cleaning heavy debris; it is important to mention that due to economic constraints women have to look for such jobs regardless their physical conditions, nevertheless because construction business are managed by men, they do not get those positions just because the chauvinist prejudices, which also then

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<sup>61</sup> La Razón Periódico Virtual "Mujeres al Volante en la Llajta" Women are driving in Cochabamba (translated by the author. Mach 2016

<sup>62</sup> Female League of Soccer Cochabamba.



becomes violence in workplace against women.<sup>63</sup> However, we can also say that since the implementation of the Law 348 to guarantee the women a life free of violence, the regional government of Cochabamba hires some women for the construction of ornamental civil structures within the city, allowing them to make some experience and then get other jobs in that area.

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<sup>63</sup> Bolivia Law 348 2013 Art. 21.

## Chapter 4

### How to involve men and women equally and proportionally to promote the transformation of the struggle of violence against women?



When a man cries, it not weakness it is sensitivity  
Workers of the municipal government Quillacollo-Cochabamba

#### 4.1. Holistic approach

It is very important to approach the problem of gender violence thinking about all the branches of the problem and all actors involve. Therefore a holistic view of the situation will help us to cover each edge of the panorama, not only considering the existence of the stakeholders but also their roles and the effects of their participation in the development of the relational confrontation between chauvinism and women's empowerment.

The holistic approach for conflict transformation stresses the necessity for complementarity between security, political, socio-economical and cultural factors, and it helps us to engage with issues and people from different backgrounds on various levels within a society (Körppen, Schmelzle and Wils, 2008) which in the particular case of violence against women means to

deconstruct all circumstances and actors around the problem and its interconnections and effects.

In Cochabamba for instance the gender-based violence is not precisely related to the social, economical or cultural factors, although it has certain impact in the type of violence practiced against the women, chauvinism in general is present everywhere, at the school, work, public attention places, health-related places, familial relationships and so on, in that sense the females and the males are always involved in the problem proportionally, no matter who has which intervention on it.

For the problem of gender-based violence to persist, it is undeniably that men and women are equally implicated; nevertheless when we mention the issue of 'violence against women' it is automatically bringing up men as aggressors, whereas women can also be perpetrators of violence against their congeners, which anyways does not suppose that misogyny is an isolated problem of the women; at the contrary, this is going to affect in the very present and the short and long term to both gender generations, fostering the cycle of gender violence and all its consequences for the whole society.

In that sense, the first thing that needs to be understood behind the lenses of the holistic approach and also according to the Energetic Peace, is that all members of society are interconnected, thus, the individual actions and behavior will certainly affect the other's behaviors and actions (Dietrich, 2012, regardless the age, the gender or the role of the individual as such). A good example is the grandmother that raises her daughter and son with very chauvinist standards, then, the daughter with high probabilities will convey those canons to their children and the son will likely look for a wife that can also match his sexist morals, meaning, another family nourishing the big culture

of patriarchy; hence the man and the women can potentially contribute to the increase or abolish the problem of violence against women.

Once understood the real dimension of the problem of violence against women, and its fatal consequences for males and females within a society, it is important so raise the awareness of both genders to make them conscious of their responsibility in the problem as stakeholders and not as simple outsiders, indeed it can be likely more challenging to convince to the men that they are equally responsible in the perpetuation of this problem (Waller and Ortner, 2010), therefore if they want to overcome misogyny and free their sisters or future daughters from a chauvinistic mindset that could even kill them, they need definitely to take and do their part.

As the holistic approach is comprehensive, just the fact of men assuming responsibility in the problem of gender-based violence, supposes a meaningful change in attitude (Montaño, 2013), since responsibility derives etymologically from two words 'Response – Ability' which means the capability to respond before someone or something; hence, raising the awareness of men regarding their proportional accountability in the problem, may generate some consciousness, consequently, it is essential to do so in order to raise their responsibility, in other words, to get the men 'capable to act' upon the issue of violence against women as what they really are, the costars.

In this line, some men might argue that they are not chauvinist, they do not practice any violence against women and they repudiate any type of harming the females, and thus as they do not take part of the problem, they are not compelled to take any action upon it; nevertheless, for the holistic approach even those that are not causing the problem as such, are also contributing to its escalation if they do not participate in its eradication (Waller and Ortner, 2010). Therefore, the men in favor of equity of gender and that

have already a different mindset free of sexism, are of course also urged to take part in this systemic issue of violence against women, taking into account their advantage as potential agents of change.

Moreover, understanding the great impact that the men could achieve with their participation in the struggle against gender violence conjointly with women, is as important as acknowledging not only their likelihood of becoming aggressors, but rather their potentiality of being promoters of change and transformation as any other woman. Hence, giving to the men some recognition as possible good leaders of substantial changes in matters of gender-based violence, might be a great start for involving and motivating men in order to achieve more effective and sustainable outcomes.

#### **4.2. Transrational approach**

I should start by defining what transrational is, but I must say that it is difficult for me to convey what it means in the way that I perceive it, and how I understand it from my own perspective and for the sake of the present research; however, I would like to begin by saying that transrational means for me that one can not always understand everything rationally or logically, we do not have only five senses to see the world, there are much more ways to perceive the outer and even the inner dimensions, and although those paths to apprehend the reality are maybe not tangible, it does not necessarily mean that they are not enough or accurate to convey real facts.

In that sense, it is important for me as the author of the present work, to clarify that the transrational approach to the problem of violence against women and its transformation, has helped me to understand the problematic as such in a different way, for instance, recognizing that certain patriarchy in our society is somehow functional, as long as it does not affect women's rights

or restrict the self-determination of women. For example, as I could perceive during my field research, a woman in Cochabamba likes to feel protected by a male figure not meaning that this protection would ever turn into an oppression, or a woman will still feel that the man should help with the hard domestic tasks not because she can not do them, just because the woman can do other domestic tasks, not signifying that those are exclusive gendered duties. What I mean by these examples is that certain patriarchal practices are still for our mindset, somehow gentle and functional.

Moreover, in the scientific and academic sense, it is relevant to conceptualize the transrational approach for conflict transformation, as it is 'the state of art' for the development of strategies and instruments that help the stakeholders of a problem to achieve certain harmony, meaning peace. Thus, the transrational approach implies the understanding of the peace not a defined goal or as a concept, but rather as a variety of manifestations within a particular context, that at the end of the day are perceived as harmony, therefore the founder of this approach Wolfgang Dietrich (2012), develops this science departing from the historical meaning of peace, discovering different delineations called by himself as the 'Peace Families' namely Energetic, Moral, Modern, Postmodern and Transrational (Dietrich, 2012).

Furthermore, it is important to clarify that those peace families are chronologically studied, but that does not precisely mean that it supposes a sequential evolution of the understanding of peace, nor that one family of peace is better or more evolved than the other ones (Taylor, 2013). At the contrary the transrational approach develops new ways of thinking opening the possibilities to those different perspectives going beyond rationality -twisting it- (Dietrich, 2012). Additionally, the transrational approach brings along the practice of the Elicitive Conflict Transformation, which stresses the participation

of the peacemaker, who brings its own background into the conflict taking part of it, with the only purpose of helping the parties to achieve the transformation from themselves, what could signify to them certain kind of peace.

As the key of the Elicitive approach to conflict transformation is to facilitate the exploration of new possibilities around the problem and stimulate creativity in order to allow the transformation, it is extremely important to highlight the cultural sensitivity (Dietrich, 2012), which, in this particular case of gender-based violence in Cochabamba takes us to the historical background of the mixture of cultures, religions, morals, manners and customs adopted and also dropped during the dynamic development of the current society under the footprints of Aymaras, Quechuas, Spanish colonizers and even an indigenous claim.

In that sense, following the dictates of the transrational approach, being particularly involved in the this problem, I would say that we, the conflicting parties, women and men, should find the way to 'coexist' with the patriarchy transforming the negative aspects of it, that are clearly threatening for the life and freedom of the women, but preserving the positive aspects that are in favor of the obvious differences between females and males, for the common sake of both genders.

Under the previous affirmation of mine, I need to clarify that hereby I am not contradicting the arguments of my own struggle, at the contrary, after undertaking such research for more than a year, I am glad to say today thanks to the previous instrumental approaches employed in this chapter, that, there is no need to fight against the men or against the patriarchy as such, but rather to fight along the men towards the transformation of the problem of violence against women, perhaps by abolishing certain patriarchal practices that are

truly harming the women either psychologically, physically, economically, sexually or in any kind of way, y maintaining those that are protective and mainly accepted by the women themselves.

In that line, if we get to understand first of all, we as women that our task to overcome violence is not against the men, but rather holding hands aside them, the men will be likely more open to participate and acknowledge that this problem affects both genders and brings fatal consequences for the whole society, assuming their part in this struggle, but not supporting the extreme position of abolishing patriarchy at all, rather looking for the establishment of new masculinities that can visibly encourage the equity of genders respecting the obvious and graceful differences between them.

#### **4.3. Switch of paradigm towards better relationships between woman and man**

After analyzing the previous two approaches and their instrumental application for the purpose of this thesis, we may clearly see the imperative need of change of paradigm, in which men and women are not confronted but rather united towards the transformation of the problem of violence against women. We need to foster a new paradigm that proves to man and women that the society of Cochabamba can live with patriarchy but not with misogyny, that the new generations can develop new masculinities in favor and protection of the women's rights, and because of that, men will not become less male or less valuable, at the opposite, this new model of thinking needs to underline the marvelous of being a man or a women, respecting and complementing each other in their differences.

Hence, in order to achieve these longed switch of paradigm; it is necessary to overcome -fear-, fearing to the opposite gender and its potential as human beings, fearing to the power imbalance, fearing to the change,



fearing to the new, but mainly fearing to acknowledge and love each other regardless the gender. In this point, I would like to quote once again Wolfgang Dietrich (2008) who affirms *"fear as a characteristic of relations blockages the free flow of life energy, restricting the concretization of peace ethics"*. Yet, unfortunately governmental policies in Bolivia tend to use -fear- as a weapon to combat violence in general, hardening the punishments, typifying more crimes, enlarging the scope of the criminal system and promulgating more laws; nevertheless, the results so far have been not only discouraging, but even worse, counterproductive, displaying high rates of violence against women within this three years of implementation of the Law 348 to guarantee to the women a life 'free of violence'<sup>64</sup> proving obviously that violence cannot be contended with more violence, but rather with peace itself.

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<sup>64</sup> CIDEM March 2016

## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Recommendations



"When you raise a man, teach him to value women"  
A message of students of high school

#### 5.1. Conclusions

Throughout the previous chapters of the present work, that have shown us the development of the research on the controversial issue of violence against women in Cochabamba as the one of the cities with the highest rates of femicides in Latin America<sup>65</sup>, and the vital importance of involving men in this struggle, we have identified two suitable approaches, the holistic and transrational, that have helped us to appreciate new perspectives of the problem as such, promoting new ideas for getting the men equally committed as the women, in the abolition of the patriarchal practices that breach women's fundamental rights.

In that context, having accomplished the goal of this investigation and providing answers to the research question, I would like to formulate the following conclusions on this particular matter:

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<sup>65</sup> CIDEM March 2016

A) Current situation of violence against women in Cochabamba. We can affirm that the issue of violence against women in Cochabamba is indeed a large problem that has been mirrored in the alarming amount of femicides given the last five years, which situate us in the top of cities with highest rates of gender violence; nevertheless, given that shocking numbers, the State has lounged in 2013 the Law 348 to guarantee a life free of violence for the women, with very disappointing results, because so far during the implementation of this law, the index of femicides have barely decreased and the number of denounces of cases of violence against women has noticeable increased<sup>66</sup>.

These facts, cases of femicides in status quo and accused cases of violence in increase; have an explanation; one is positive and as in any other situation there is also a negative side. The disappointing non-decrease of femicides despite the Law 348, is due to the superficial answer that this norm offers to the actual problem: criminalizing and punishing violence against women without acting upon the root-causes of the issue, fostering the development of the problem by identifying separately an aggressor and a victim, namely men as the evil and women as the sufferer.

And the increasing cases of violence against women denounced before the legal instances, is not precisely because of the intensification of violent episodes as such, but rather due the awareness of current generations that are now empowered to break the silence and speak out the abuses they or their relatives are victims of. Therefore, this is indeed a large achievement, because it does not mean that violence is growing, at the contrary, it is the people's consciousness what is playing

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<sup>66</sup> CIDEM 2014

now a relevant role in the process of 'dis-normalization'<sup>67</sup> the gender violence.

B) Historical and cultural connotations. The issue of violence against women in Cochabamba has been evidently fed by several cultural and traditional aspects inherited from the Aymaras, Incas, and Colonization; having as result a strong patriarchy with certain nuances of matriarchy, from which derive certain patriarchal practices partly accepted and partly repudiated. Thus, the truth is that nowadays men and women are still very chauvinistic in several daily situations that are silently perpetuating misogyny from generation to generation through the familial, educational and societal connections.

Moreover, it is important to acknowledge that there is certain hypocrisy within this 'struggle' against gender violence in Cochabamba because for instance, the women are claiming their rights to be equally treated as the men, but they do not want to pay the bill when they go out for a date, or they do not want to carry heavy stuff (Goldsman, 2014). This paradox is given due to the lack of understanding of what the women really want and what they are willing to show they want under the social pressure; because the women cannot demand for equality if they are not willing to do everything that they expect from a man, that does not make sense; but going back to the historical context of chauvinism, we can understand much better why Cochabamba has definitely a patriarchy particularly accepted by the whole society but rejecting only certain practices.

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<sup>67</sup> I have chosen this term meaning the process of denaturalization of violence as something normal.

Under this framework, once we have understood the special situation of Cochabamba regarding the misogyny practiced by men and women, and the certain functionality of this issue for the sake of the society's development (Ferreira, 2008); we can unlock the real components of the violence against women and the structural stimulation that the state policies and social morals foster to escalate the problem. Hence, first of all, it is vital to recognize how this problem has been developed and how it has wrongly been fed by a secessionist mindset that wants to condemn chauvinism without accepting its partial role in the harmony of the society.

- C) The men's position related to the problem. After the acknowledgment of a patriarchal culture of the society of Cochabamba with its particularities and historical influences, we can also understand that the violence against women arisen from those customs is definitely a relational problem, that occurs due to the participation of women and men proportionally, and it does not evolve or change as well due to the continuous and static patterns of behavior practiced by those actors; therefore the problem of gender violence in Cochabamba has remained the same along the last years despite the promulgation of a Law that criminalizes it more than three years ago.<sup>68</sup>

In that sense, we can affirm that the violence against women in Cochabamba has been perpetuated with the unconscious or even conscious contribution of men and women, mainly by their inactiveness before the escalation of the problem, and the wrong intervention upon the issue as an exclusive concern of the females, condemning the males as direct enemies to fight against. This very polarization of the problem

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<sup>68</sup> Law 348 9th March of 2013

situating the women as victims and the men as aggressors has generated the erroneous approach to the issue, prosecuting offenders and looking for penalization, deepening in that way, the estrangement of men in the possible transformation of the problem.

Furthermore, as the gender-based violence in Bolivia has turned into a constant combat of women against man, even though that women are normally the visible victims of this issue, currently, due to the polarized campaigning undertaken at the institutional level, the men feel also attacked and threatened, thus, they assume a negative posture in the problem setting themselves as victims of a 'radical feminism' that enlarges even more the gap between males and females, isolating the masculine gender from the problem of violence against women as outsiders rather than involving them as stakeholders.

In this factual context, unfortunately, the men have taken a parallel path related to the issue of gender violence, in which they excluded themselves as generators of the problem and even more as potential promoters of change, sustaining an oblivious position in the issue closing to any possibility of a common force against this problem. Hence the task of abolishing misogyny has become an isolated and exclusive assignment of the women that will certainly never succeed as so far, because the violence against women is a relational problem that can be properly approach insofar as both genders become costars of any strategy or action.

D) The violence against women affects everyone. In the previous conclusion, we have seen the real components of the issue of gender-based violence, men and women contributing proportionally to feed this problem, nevertheless it is also evident that due to the state and

institutional policies of approaching this matter, a palpable separation has been produced between both genders, situating the men as outsiders of the issue and taking off their accountability and capability to become likely promoters of transformation.

Nevertheless, although the men feel oblivious to this matter, it is undeniable that the problem of violence against women affects absolutely all members of the society regardless the gender or age, the fact that women are being victims of cruel episodes of all kind of violence certainly touches complete families; to hear in the news that a femicide has been committed surely generates a strong impact in the whole community, and it deepens the insecurity, the fear and the mistrust in the people, producing hatred among genders, disrespect toward the legal system and disappointment towards the inefficient government. (Montaño, 2013).

In that sense, it is imperative to stress the collective damage that the issue of misogyny brings along, not only for women but rather for men, and definitely not only affecting the current generations but also the futures ones, meaning a systemic impact, tackling social, cultural, political and even economical aspects of a community; therefore the intervention in this problem, should be also systemically involving all stakeholders, crating strategies that can effectively abolish violence against women, seen as a general concern that harms each member of the society, urging everyone to take part of its transformation for the evident sake of everybody.

## 5.2. Recommendations

Given the situation of patriarchy in Cochabamba and its partial acceptance within the society, after understanding the functionality of certain masculine practices that provide a sort of harmony to the people, taking extreme care of not confusing chivalrous with harming machismo, I would like to formulate the following recommendations to combat the problem of violence against women in the particular context of Cochabamba:

### 5.2.1. Changing some patriarchal practices

First of all we need to understand, indeed, understand what is exactly what we want as society, to recognize that we agree with male protection, with chivalrous, with becoming a mother and staying at home to raise the children, with going out as a couple and letting the men pay, with accepting that preferably the males should help carrying heavy stuff, with the fact that men can and must do domestic tasks; we should accept that women can be successful as politicians, CEOs, principals, and any other top position within private or public institutions; we need to acknowledge that men and women are not equal but both should have equal opportunities to do what they want to do and to be what they want to be.

Understanding, accepting and acknowledging are clearly acts of sincerity, honesty and love; therefore it is important to promote a change of attitude for men and women in order to open our minds and hearts to express what really makes us happy, being feminist or misogynist can be a result of social pressure, but being honest and voicing out our real concerns and desires will make us free and it will help us to abolish practices that we as women and men do not accept and foster those that we agree with.



It seems to be that some patriarchal practices were accepted in the past by women and men, nevertheless we live in constant change that makes us -as humans- to develop new ways of thinking, new manners, new means of communication and new ways of relating to each other; therefore the acceptance of certain traditions or behaviors also change with the time, some things turn unacceptable, such as women with no write to vote, no write to access university, no write to occupy political positions and any other fact that is now considered harming for the fundamental rights of women; nevertheless, there are some other male-controlled practices that are certainly missed and expected as part of a adequate parenting.

In that line, firstly, it is important to identify which are the very patriarchal practices that women and men consider morally accepted, and which are definitely against of the women's integrity or welfare; for instance asking to any persona whether they think beating up is correct, nowadays males and females would absolutely disapprove it as incorrect, even more if we ask about femicides, regardless the gender man and women are against such crime; whereas, we would certainly raise some controversy if we ask whether women staying at home to exclusively raise the children and perform domestic duties is right or wrong, because those are the aspects of chauvinism that need to evolve and reach consensus of both genders.

In this particular case, in order to define whether condemning women to the domestic scope is right or wrong, the parameters should be based in legitimate arguments such as the Law as long as this aspect is normed, the current situation when the collectivity or even a minority does not agree with it, the universal dictates namely Human Rights to review if this act could violates any fundamental right; or in sum any other instrument that makes reasonable

to stop the patriarchal practice and switch it for a different one. The only premise should be to reestablish harmony and love between men and women.

Furthermore, changing or abolishing the harming patriarchal practices that are currently increasing the rates of violence against women in Cochabamba, means opening the mind to accept and adopt new masculinities and new femininities, changing some ancestral morals that are no longer admitted; it means overcoming fear in order to embrace our own culture where we agree with chivalry but not with misogyny, where we acknowledge that men and women are definitely not equal and therefore in many senses they are complementary, but with these differences both genders are wonderful to be in the way they chose to develop, not necessarily following standards or preconceived roles but rather with the only goal of reaching the full realization individually and collectively.

### **5.2.2. Adopting new values**

It is undeniable that any change supposes an ongoing process, in the case of abolishing patriarchal practices that go against the dignity or integrity of the woman is not any different, thus, the first step to start these changes is raising the awareness of the people regardless their gender, making them know and understand by themselves under the Elicitive approach, what could need a shift and what can be improved for the common good; involving all the stakeholders avoiding separatism pointing out victims and aggressors, taking everybody's concerns and wishes into account in order to achieve a legitimate consensus.

Once the people are aware of the consequences of misogyny and their own will to change the harming practices derived from that, we need to promote the adoption new values that will automatically arise from the

collective willingness of men and women; for instance, we can see the necessity of promoting the value of respect if we want to achieve a significant shift towards the transformation of violence against women. Respect for the human beings and its fundamental rights, such as right to life, right to health, right to a shelter, right to education, right to a free choice, right to a decent job, right to have properties, right to vote, write to become a political authority and so on. Respect for other's opinion, choice, capacities, culture, beliefs, decisions and success; and respect in all sense of the word for the realization of others.

We may as well see the vital importance of promoting the value of tolerance that goes closely linked with respect, but tolerance goes further, it is acceptance of something that we disagree with, thus, tolerance is an act of respect but from the position of disapproval (Scourum, 2014), hence, in this process of change this value will be claimed to all people that ignorantly approve misogyny but should accept and respect those that are willing to adopt new attitudes that are according to the common good. Perhaps current generations of parents of grandparents will be urged to tolerate new masculinities and femininities that are oblivious to them due to the way they have been educated some decades ago.

Another value imperatively necessary to initiate and achieve the transformation of the problem of violence against women is the magic - acknowledgment-, we need to promote the acknowledgement of both genders, recognizing their strengths and foster the positive aspects, for instance it would not be wrong to acknowledge a woman that performs outstanding in the kitchen, or a man that drives heavy machinery, or in the other way around, acknowledging a man that cooks and clean extraordinarily and a women that works excellently with dump trucks, it is the simple

recognition of the person developing a particular task regardless the gender, and not assigning labeling certain roles for women or for man.

Additionally, the acknowledgement that we need to promote, is also towards the small or big achievements in this ongoing process of transformation in order to embrace every little step towards a life free of gender violence, appreciating the slight shifts in the patriarchal mindset of the society of Cochabamba in order to continue in this path reaching the overarching goal: abolishing violence against women, not through a polarized struggle but rather through a common understanding of the situation and the inclusion of everyone's voices. Moreover we must affirm that the rehearsal of those mentioned values require a great feeling that moves everything: love, the love for oneself and the love for others, in the first case the self-compassion and in the second case the empathy (Facio, 1999).

If we can promote and foster respect, tolerance and acknowledgment as new values adopted and applied to achieve the transformation of the issue of violence against women, we will automatically see significant changes, even more effective would be to do so as state policy in order to constrain public and private institutions to the implementation of those values to spread them systemically in the whole country. Hence, the premise of the state would no longer be the promulgation of penal laws to punish aggressors.

### **5.2.3. Fostering a new vision**

Somehow the fight of feminism looking for equality has become the motor that opens more and more the gap between men and women, turning them into enemies that need to combat against each other. In Cochabamba it is not very different, women stigmatize men as the causers of the problem without involving them in the construction of new gender roles or in the deconstruction

of current gender roles (which is clearly not the same); and men remain as outsiders of the problem of misogyny, upset because of the 'unfair' stigmatization. Hence it is important to sit together and build new masculinities and new femininities that allow both genders to achieve their realization, mainly as human beings and of course as women and men.

The new vision that I mean, has to do with becoming aware that the problem of violence against women is not an isolated issue that affects only women, at the contrary it has a large impact in every single member of society; we can compare it to the case of breast cancer, the target of this terrible sickness are only women, but this does not mean that only women suffer the consequences, we can see all members of the family, institutions and countries concerned and committed with this situation and we see a whole force of medical doctors, scientists and pharmacist, males and females struggling against this illness looking for the cure and developing possible ways to prevent it.

Indeed that is the point that we need to reach in this matter, that men and women get committed with the abolition of gender-based violence because it affects direct and indirectly equally to both genders, the vision that needs to be promoted is the one that takes this issue to the general concern, fostering the participation of males and females to look for the cure and develop strategies to prevent it.

All this can only be achieved, working from the small scopes enlarging and intensifying the work to the bigger spheres, raising the awareness of everyone regarding the fatal consequences of violence against women, involving both genders equally as victims of this evil, changing the narrative to a common struggle rather than a polarized combat, promoting new values such as respect, tolerance and acknowledgement to each other regardless the

gender, developing openly new masculinities and new femininities that allow women and men to coexist under equal conditions and to practice the love for each other without any constraints.

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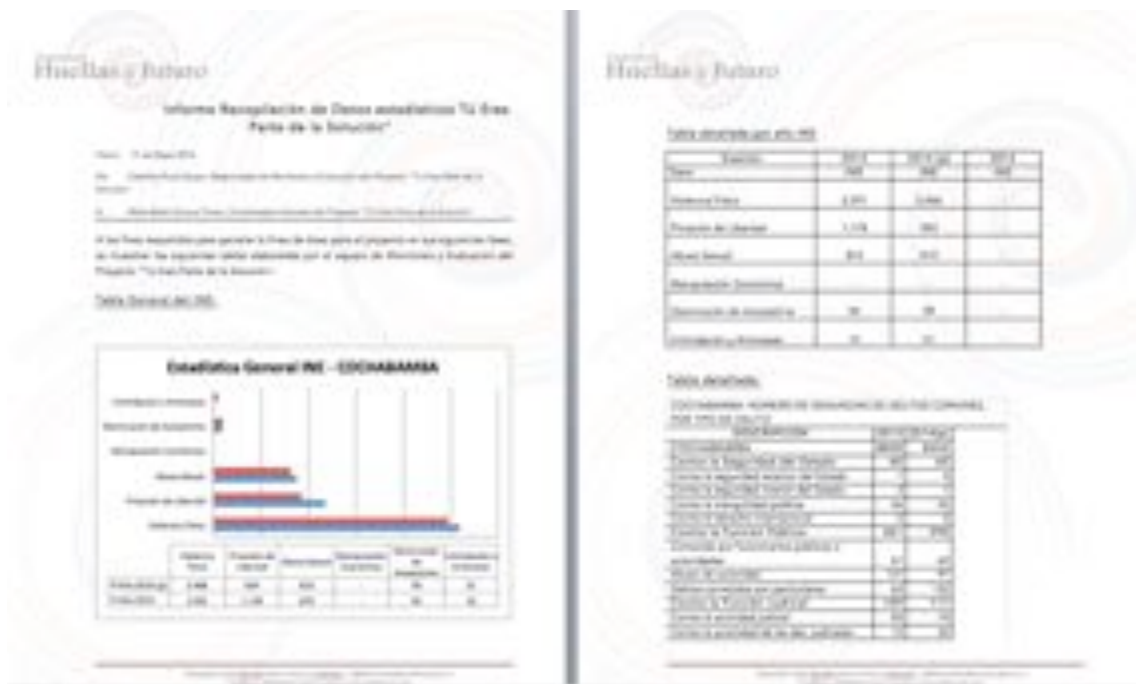
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# Annexes

## Annex 1

Report of 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2016, On Data Recompilation made by the Monitoring & Evaluation Team of the Organization Huellas & Futuro about the project on the issue of Violence Against Women "Tú Eres Parte de la Solución" Cochabamba-Bolivia





## Annex 2

Report of 21<sup>st</sup> of November 2015, made by the Psychological Team of the Organization Huellas & Futuro, about the project on the issue of Violence Against Women "Tú Eres Parte de la Solución" Cochabamba-Bolivia

