



AMERICA/GUATEMALA - Alarm concerning the vulnerability of girls, adolescents and young women

Guatemala City (Agenzia Fides) - The most vulnerable part of the population in Guatemala is made up of young women who are victims of different kinds of violence. This is what the director of the Office for the Protection of Human Rights of the Archdiocese of Guatemala City (ODHAG) said in a note sent to Fides Agency. Girls are the victims more subject to child abuse, adolescents are sexually abused and often go unreported, and young women are object of discrimination and in some cases are forced to marry and are deprived of their intellectual future. A girl who gets pregnant sees all her dreams of further education in order to build a better future vanish. This results in favoring the poverty level. According to the chief for the protection of human rights, Guatemala is a chauvinist country and this causes a lot of abuse against minors. The phenomenon is evident with pregnant girls, who often become pregnant at the age of 10. In many cases, the "tormentors" are members of their families who are not reported. In Guatemala there is a law that protects children, but institutions still have to arrange it so that the legal guidelines can be fully implemented in order for it to have a real impact. The lack is due to the fact that the State does not employ sufficient resources for this purpose, privileging other issues. (AP) (Agenzia Fides 19/10/2012)