

ANTI-RIGHTS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Profiles, practices, and cases
in Bolivia
(2020-2022)



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Rebeldía



OXFAM

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This document is an executive summary of an investigation that has been drawn up within the framework of the Global Digital Justice project. Its content is the sole responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily reflect the position of Oxfam.

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PRESENTATION

Digitization is a global process that entails the emergence of new centers and new peripheries within social structures; it also generates changes in relationships, poles of power, and, consequently, renewed perceptions, identities, and values that must be understood in this new context. The process also entails the existence of greater monopolies at a global level, which generates new types of inequalities and the need to understand and analyze them under the criteria of global justice and the protection of rights.

On the other hand, today's debate on the health of democracy is strongly linked to the analysis of digitization and the effects that certain technologies can have on the understanding of the social contract. For some, technology is a source of progress and a useful tool to promote 'increased citizenship'; for others, it is a source of control and restriction of freedoms.

This context, embodied in the document of the "Global Digital Justice" program carried out by Barcelona City Council together with Oxfam Intermon, is the framework of the "Digital Justice for Equality in Democracy" project in our country. In the Bolivian case, the process of digitalizing daily life has been going on for a couple of decades and has developed, unlike what has been experienced in European societies, at a later pace due to the slow growth in levels of connectivity, a variable that has accelerated exponentially during the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020.

Bolivian society is currently going through a scenario where existing inequalities have deepened and new ones have emerged. Added to this is a context of profound deterioration in democratic coexistence, the product of multiple events that have occurred in recent years. In it, it has been identified that some of these new inequalities are associated with the forms of relationship and democratic coexistence in digital environments, in which a part of citizenship is currently exercised.

As social networks become spaces where meanings are disputed and, at the same time, perceptions are shaped, the generation of evidence around the dynamics and exchanges that take place there becomes a central issue. Much more under the understanding that digital violence against certain groups has become an increasingly widespread practice.

Oxfam's office in Bolivia has found within the Global Digital Justice Program the possibility of working on the aforementioned issues. It also constitutes

an opportunity to continue generating inputs that contribute to building a model of equal, intercultural, and inclusive democracy while encouraging the construction of a new progressive agenda in Bolivia. Currently, both fields are also litigated in digital spaces.

This study is the product of the work carried out during the first year of execution of the aforementioned project. The initiative was implemented within the framework of activism and advocacy processes developed by the *Articulación Feminista Campaña 28 de septiembre Bolivia* and *Colectivo Rebeldía*, also well as training actions and capacity building in the management of social networks and digital security.

On this occasion, emphasis has been placed on the effort to try to understand the functioning of the digital activity of anti-rights groups in Bolivia, especially in the discursive litigation that they develop against feminist activism and their struggles for sexual rights and reproductive rights. Thus, the document is aimed at generating and updating knowledge and evidence regarding the ways in which anti-rights groups and sectors express themselves and interact on social networks in the face of feminist activism.

The Oxfam office in Bolivia hopes that this document will become another input to better understand the presence and practices of anti-rights sectors in Bolivia. Likewise, it seeks to contribute to a reflection on actions and strategic uses to safeguard the care and safety of activists who display their struggles on social networks and, in this way, bet on strengthening feminist activism for sexual rights and reproductive rights in digital times.

Lourdes Montero
Oxfam office in Bolivia



PART 1: **GENERAL** **OVERVIEW**

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, we have witnessed relevant global sociopolitical events. On the one hand, the use of social media has increased in importance in the public sphere, given the power and scope they have in the installation of senses and meanings, deliberation, and definition of the public agenda.

On the other hand, the emergence and strengthening of conservative and fundamentalist groups and sections, which, because of their differences and particularities, are actively collaborating to stop and limit the sexual and reproductive rights of women and people with different sexual orientations or gender identities and LGBTQI groups.

Although there are several different denominations, this document will use the term “anti-rights”, which seeks to involve groups, sectors, and actors who actively and sustainably seek to legitimize their views and narratives regarding women’s right to decide on their sexuality and reproduction. They are particularly opposed to the decriminalization and legalization of abortion, comprehensive sexual education, marriage equality, contraception, and sexual diversity and expression, among others. The term “anti-rights” describes both their position and the effects they seek to produce¹.

“...are actively collaborating to stop and limit the sexual and reproductive rights of women and people with different sexual orientations or gender identities and LGBTQI groups.”

.....

¹ Rights at Risk. Observatory on the Universality of Rights AWID, 2017.

“Digital environments have gained high relevance as spaces for the construction and dispute of interpretation.”

According to studies carried out in some countries of the region² (Chaher, 2021), digital environments have gained high relevance as spaces for the construction and dispute of interpretation. In this regard, a central issue to consider is the high levels of aggressiveness and violence that exist on social networks and in the debates and exchanges that arise in them.

This research aims to generate and update knowledge on the expression and interaction of anti-rights groups and sectors on social networks in Bolivia. Particularly in the face of feminist activism for women’s sexual and reproductive rights, as well as activism of LGBTQI communities.

The initiative addresses concerns that are widely shared in different spaces and seeks to contribute to the strengthening of feminist activism for sexual and reproductive rights, the fight for the decriminalization of abortion, and the LGBTQI community’s demands for sexual rights and freedoms. Correspondingly, it aims to promote reflection and formulate strategies for interactions on social media, as well as to generate tools for safety, care, and self-care to face harassment and attacks that seek to limit and impede progress. All this is under the understanding that the interactions that occur in the digital sphere are related to democracy itself and the practice of citizenship.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The design and execution of the study aimed to focus on the main resources and strategies with which anti-rights groups and actors express themselves on social networks, especially against feminist activism for sexual and reproductive rights and LGBTQI rights.

The general objective that guided the process was to identify and analyze actions and strategies of anti-rights sectors and groups on social media against feminist activism for sexual and reproductive rights, and LGBTQI people, with emphasis on the right to choose and the decriminalization of abortion.

At the level of specific objectives, our aim was to:

.....

2 ¿Es posible debatir en medio de discursos de odio?: activismo feminista y grupos antiderechos en el Cono Sur de América Latina. Sandra Chaher, Comunicación para la Igualdad Ediciones, 2021.

Available in <https://cl.boell.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Es%20posible%20debatir%20-%20Completo-%202021.pdf>

1. Identify and characterize the profile of feminist activism on social media regarding the agenda of sexual and reproductive rights.
2. Identify and characterize the profile of anti-rights groups and sectors regarding the speeches and actions of feminist movements on social networks and the rights advocacy agenda.
3. Collect and analyze evidence of attacks, aggressions, and derogatory remarks made on social media by anti-rights groups, organizations, and actors against feminist and LGBTQI activism.

The timeline of this study covers the period between 2020 and 2022. During this period, some political conflicts and tensions in Bolivia coincide, which somehow complicates the events studied.

Regarding anti-rights sectors, we defined them as organizations, institutions, and groups, as well as individual referents. These had to meet the following criteria: active participation in activism, public accounts and profiles on social media as well as a visible presence. In this framework, 38 accounts and profiles were identified.

Regarding feminist activism, we identified and established a list of organizations, collectives, and other groups that work together in support of feminist causes, as well as individually considered people, members or not of any collective or group, and their full affinity with the agenda of sexual and reproductive rights, with an emphasis on the decriminalization of abortion. The criteria were similar, that is, to have a public presence and develop activities on social media. This group includes activists advocating for sexual and gender diversities, as well as LGBTQI individuals. For feminist activism, a broader territorial scope was sought to cover the entire country, that is, the nine departments of the country.

The study methodology is qualitative and exploratory and is framed in the perspectives of feminist social, cultural, political, and cyber feminist analysis from a human rights perspective. The designed instruments mainly aim to have qualitative information collected through two central tools, consisting of a checklist of social media accounts and a semi-directed interview.

The checklist was mainly applied to anti-rights accounts. The tool was set to review these accounts and collect information according to the defined variables, which were translated into a list of topics. Its application allowed us to establish the profile of anti-rights on social media, and identify common practices, forms of interaction, and other points that were standardized. The tool was applied based on the complexity of the object of study and the lack of access to anti-rights groups and referents, and in the understanding that social media accounts are public and can be analyzed by anyone.

In the case of activists and defenders, in addition to the checklist, we conducted an individual interview aimed at establishing the digital profile,

identifying and deepening situations and experiences of harassment and digital attacks, and collecting proposals.

The checklist was applied to 44 accounts, according to the following breakdown:

- 15 accounts of anti-rights groups/institutions
- 15 accounts of anti-rights individual persons/representatives
- 14 accounts of feminist activists

There were 26 interviews conducted with feminist activists, defenders, and people from the LGBTQI movement, corresponding to various collectives, networks, organizations, and institutions, as well as independent activists.

The previous procedures were complemented by a documentary review regarding the regional bibliography and studies produced in recent years, also developing a wide review of websites and social networks.

During the process, ethical principles were considered regarding informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for the people who participated in the study, which is why we omitted any reference to their names in the document.



PART 2:

A DIGITAL PROFILE OF FEMINIST AND ANTI-RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

This section gathers and systematizes data collected from checklists, interviews, and social media account reviews. It is structured to characterize the digital profile of feminist and anti-rights activism and analyze some aspects of the attacks they carry out in the digital space.

2.1 PROFILE OF DIGITAL FEMINIST ACTIVISM

The development of the digital profile of activists allows us to have an analytical model to identify the main characteristics and forms of activism in the digital space. It also provides elements to identify and understand how activists behave on the internet.

To develop the profile, the following variables were considered:

- Type of activity carried out on social networks
- Format for content creation
- Time dedicated to activism
- Topics addressed
- Social media, messaging services, and digital tools used for activism
- Characteristics

“The development of the digital profile of activists allows us to have an analytical model to identify the main characteristics and forms of activism in the digital space.”

Type of activity carried out on social media

It has been identified that activists concentrate their digital actions in two areas:

- **Cyber activism:** dissemination of rights, development of support systems (support lines, dissemination of help locations), public denunciations, creation of meeting spaces (virtual workshops, informative meetings, discussions, etc.), call to action in cases of rights violations, monitoring and accompaniment of judicial processes, and others
- **Cyber feminism:** although most of them carry out cyber activism, some complement digital activism with cyber feminism, which consists of questioning the inequalities in digital spaces. They dedicate their activism to the generation of feminist digital content, addressing gender digital gaps and intersections of ethnicity, generation, economic status, and others; feminist shaming; and other related actions.

Both types of activism are complementary, and the way of expressing or manifesting them is constantly changing and adapting due to trends and the emergence of new technological resources that, in many cases, serve to create digital content. It should be noted that these are also used to generate attacks on activists, for example, by opening accounts on anti-feminist and homophobic social media platforms, editing photos to generate posts, etc.



Logo: **COPIE WARM'S**

PUBLICAR FOTOS DE MUJERES GOLPEADAS NO PREVIENE LA VIOLENCIA

INFORMAR SÍ

Más empatía y menos morbo

#25N

Icon: A red circle with a diagonal slash over a stack of photos, indicating that posting photos of women is discouraged.



¿El papá de tus hij@s no cumple con la ASISTENCIA FAMILIAR?

¿Tiene un mandamiento de apremio corporal por el impago de la asistencia familiar?

Comunicate con nosotras y que la vergüenza pase de bando.

ESCRÍBENOS A MESSENGER Y CUÉNTANOS TU CASO

Porque la asistencia familiar no es una limosna.

RUMBO AL 25N

Format for content creation

Different formats are used for the creation of digital content, and as new digital forms or recourses appear, activists adapt their use. According to the currently collected information, the following formats are used:

- **Images:** memes, infographics, art, photos, collages, etc. Most of these images are memes or digital art with information on rights and complaints (pronouncements).
- **Text:** Generally, pronouncements and posts with comments and opinions on a specific topic are posted on social media profiles. Some activists write articles or opinion columns that are posted to those same profiles and other digital spaces. They're used to interacting with the community by responding to comments and others. In contrast, text messages are used through messaging service applications and are generally short texts to provide assistance or support in some cases. It was identified that some activists also engaged in artistic expression (poems) with one another.
- **Videos:** Videos are not commonly used on traditional social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram, but they are on TikTok due to the dynamics of the platform. Generally, short videos with information or context analysis are made, and live broadcasts of events are generated.
- **Audio:** Audios are used to answer questions, inform, and expedite communication between activists. No podcast producer was identified.

Time dedicated to activism

This refers to the time dedicated to digital content creation related to rights, specifically on topics related to the object of study. The time activists spend consuming content in digital spaces is not considered activism, as content consumption does not imply activism as such, and the time they spend researching or studying is also not considered.

Digital activism is carried out on a daily basis; some activists do it daily and others sporadically. Based on an average, the following estimates can be mentioned:

- Activists log in four days a week.
- On average, they dedicate one hour to digital content creation.
- Total: four hours per week and sixteen hours a month minimum.

Digital activism goes hand in hand with in-person activism, which involves a greater number of hours invested. On certain dates, digital presence increases, which is related to commemorating emblematic dates for human rights, women's rights, and the rights of sexual diversities. Another factor that increases social media presence is high-profile cases of human rights violations and political and social events.

Topics covered

Digital activism, just like in-person activism, is varied and addresses different issues related to human rights. Some activists specialize in digital content and focus on specific topics on their social media accounts, such as:

- Feminisms
- Women's rights
- Violence against women
- right to choose
- Sexual diversity and gender non-conforming identities

Social media, messaging services, and digital tools used for activism

Although there are a variety of social media platforms, not all of them are used for activism. The most commonly used platforms are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. In terms of messaging services, Messenger and WhatsApp were more commonly used.

Facebook is the primary means to carry out activism; most interviewed activists have created a fan page to develop their actions. There are activists' personal accounts (profiles) where they carry out their activism, as a large part prefers to use collective spaces or carry out their activism on both.

Twitter is a platform mainly used to share opinions, protest, and generate information towards authorities and decision-makers through collective actions such as tweets and digital campaigns that use hashtags and tag authorities and some journalist accounts.

Instagram is mostly used to share graphic information and short videos in stories. Because of the platform's format, images with information on activism are given priority; reels with information on said topics are posted; and mentions and tagging are often used.

TikTok is a social media where short videos with specific information are made, is used by activists to inform, share their opinion on a certain topic, engage with their audience, speak on the rights of marginalized groups (trans women, non-binary people, women with diverse body types), perform situational analysis, and organize protests. These accounts are both collective and personal, and in most of them, activists show their faces and use their voices.

WhatsApp is the main means of communication and coordination among activists. Some of its uses are:

- Support lines, consultation, and information to aid women who seek to voluntarily terminate a pregnancy and in cases of violence, etc.
- Creation of coordination groups, activists, and supporters' groups. Each collective or group of activists has more than one, and in some cases, many WhatsApp groups.

It has been revealed that the creation of collective WhatsApp groups has generated dangerous situations for several activists, as invite links to access these groups were created and then shared with anti-rights groups. As a result, infiltrators have managed to obtain information on the activists (names and phone numbers) and screenshots of comments, leading to the identification of activists and attacks on their personal WhatsApp and social media accounts.

General characteristics

Based on the information provided, the following characteristics can be identified:

- Most activism accounts are public, meaning activists show their faces on the posts.
- An activist uses at least three social media platforms and messaging services for their digital interventions.
- The accounts related to information on pregnancy interruption are anonymous for safety reasons, generally relying on images and art to provide information.
- The body and language used are diverse: formal, sarcastic, friendly, and alternative.
- No confrontational accounts or accounts that directly attack a person or group, generally referred to as "troll accounts," were identified.
- There are feminist accounts specifically created for public shaming (scratches).

“The profiles of anti-rights groups, actors, and figures allow us to have an analytical model that identifies the characteristics and forms of digital content and attacks directed at activists and rights advocates.”

2.2 THE DIGITAL PROFILE OF THE ANTI-RIGHTS

The profiles of anti-rights groups, actors, and figures allow us to have an analytical model that identifies the characteristics and forms of digital content and attacks directed at activists and rights advocates. It also allows us to better identify and understand how people behave on the internet.

To develop the profile, the following variables were considered:

- Type of social media activity
- Content creation format
- Time spent in digital space
- Topics boarded
- Social media platforms, messaging services, and digital tools used for the attacks
- Characteristics

Based on the information gathered, the following profile was developed:

Type of social media activity

Anti-rights accounts engage in various activities with their content and do not specialize in a particular topic. Among the main actions, there are:

- Social networking through personal and institutional accounts. These accounts are not generally used to launch attacks on activists.
- Creation of troll accounts: these are social media accounts that are characterized by a lack of content and information and are made to generate attacks on activists' accounts. They rely on anonymity to ridicule, threaten, or make other comments.
- Creation of anti-feminist accounts, made with the sole purpose of attacking and publishing information against feminists and sexual diversities.



> Anti-feminist page



- > Creation of fake accounts; these accounts have a generic name and attract followers based on a type of activity, profession, or membership. Such as *Junta de Vecinos*, *Tarija Actual*, *Fotografas La Paz*, *Mi Barrio*, and others, which are usually made to post general information and share hateful content, harassment, and attacks on activists.

Content creation format

There are two ways to use these formats. On the one hand, there are public accounts where you can identify the person and institutions, and on the other hand, there are troll accounts or pages dedicated to harassment that use other types of information:

FORMAT	IDENTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNT	ANTI-FEMINIST AND FAKE ACCOUNTS
Images	They post official statements, calls to action, opinions, religious images, and activities.	La mayor parte publica memes, fotos editadas o artes digitales con desinformación.
Videos	They make videos of their life streams (events and press conferences).	They post faceless videos attacking activists, post fake information, and perform direct attacks on activists.

“Troll accounts do not post anything. As previously mentioned, they are mostly accounts used to attack activists.”

Time spent in digital space

Based on the information collected in this study, it is evident that the attacks are usually daily and constant. In this context, the attacks go together with posts and information shared by feminist and sexually diverse activists, as well as with daily misinformation.

Most of the accounts that were identified produce daily content. Regarding attacks and harassment, there's an increase in emblematic dates related to feminist activism and gender and sexual diversities; they also tend to take advantage of the situation to generate misinformation (media cases, political contexts, etc.).

Troll accounts do not post anything. As previously mentioned, they are mostly accounts used to attack activists.

Topics addressed

The topics addressed by anti-rights groups are varied and generally act as a hook to attract followers and sympathizers. Most posts have fake or doctored information to reinforce their speeches.

Anti-feminist accounts only post memes mocking the figures of activists. It's worth mentioning that they take advantage of current events to develop messages, often resorting to general knowledge topics like movies, TV shows, trending songs, etc.

Among the messages used to attack activists and digital content creation, inclusive language, abortion, and sexual diversity stand out.

The following topics were identified among issues addressed in anti-rights accounts: politics, religion, family, the right to life, gender ideology, and leadership.

Social media, messaging services, and digital tools were used for the attacks.

Five social media platforms were identified as the ones most frequently used by anti-rights groups:

- **Facebook** is the main platform used to spread actions and carry out attacks on activists.
- **WhatsApp**: There are groups made for the creation and dissemination of activities; generally, they are private and difficult to access.

- **TikTok:** There are accounts to spread information and attack feminists. These accounts are usually banned, but they continue making new ones.
- **Twitter** is a platform to share opinions and generate actions towards authorities. The strategy is usually to flood the comment section on authorities' posts and tag them in posts.
- **Instagram** is used to share visual information, usually from a misinformation standpoint or to establish value judgments.

Characteristics

Based on the gathered information, the following characteristics were identified:

- Anti-rights groups use both public and identified accounts, as well as fake accounts, to carry out the attacks.
- They rely on different means to communicate and spread misinformation.
- There are two tones used at the time of communication: a friendly tone in identified accounts and one of superiority and aggressiveness in fake accounts.
- They have a permanent presence on social media and produce plenty of digital content. The attacks are frequent and usually carried out by trolls or fake accounts.
- Misinformation related to emotions about family and religious values is frequently used in attacks and messages with disinformation.

PART 3:
FORMS OF
ANTI-RIGHTS ATTACKS
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



3.1 FORMS OF ATTACK

In the study conducted for this research, we have identified seven forms or types of attacks carried out by anti-rights groups in digital spaces, which are:

- Misinformation
- Doxing (online identity exposure)
- Ridicule
- Bullying and harassment
- Threats
- Discriminatory actions
- Account reporting (censorship)

Based on these attacks, some are directly targeted by activists, mainly feminists and the LGBTQI community, while others are directed at feminist struggles and slogans, such as “gender ideology.”

There are triggers for the increasing frequency of attacks on activists. Among the main ones are topics like abortion, sexual rights, gender and sexual diversities, and the use of inclusive language. When topics related to violence prevention or femicide are addressed, there are not the same number of attacks, or they are less violent.

Misinformation

The discourse used by anti-rights groups is based on religious fundamentalism and generally does not rely on information or research. They often appeal to emotions and beliefs, and, in most cases, the information provided for the attacks is fake and/or altered depending on the topic they address.

The main actions of misinformation deployed include the following arguments:

- They want to get rid of the natural family. Take care of your family.
- They seek to “homosexualize” children.
- They want women to become lesbians.
- They promote pedophilia.
- They hate men.
- They are anti-Christ groups.
- They profit from it; they are a business.

Online identity exposure or Doxing

Sharing personal information on social media to promote massive attacks is a recurring strategy. In general, they implement it through the infiltration of anti-rights activists into feminist WhatsApp groups.

Among the published information used to generate those attacks are:

- full first name and surname
- National identity card number
- Cellphone number
- Social media account
- Home, study, and work addresses
- Activists’ family information
- Personal pictures of activists (family members, festivals, celebrations, trips, etc.)
- Sexual and gender identity

They use various methods to spread this information, such as fake accounts, mass groups such as «Chinatown» (barrio chino), rentals, and real estate. They also post activists’ personal information on pages offering sexual content and pornography, which leads to people contacting them and demanding sexual services.

“They would send me messages and call me asking for free sex.” They told me that my photo and phone number were on a webpage, so I chose to change my phone number. (Feminist activist)

Ridicule

Attacks against activists focus heavily on physical appearance and the use of inclusive language, creating memes. In some cases, pictures of the activists were edited to generate mockery.

Harassment and Intimidation

In cases where activists were identified, systemic attacks were carried out on their social media accounts, as well as their organization, collectives, and institution accounts. Harassment consists of making offensive comments on all posts and sending consecutive messages with information or intimidation.

Threats

In several cases, threats to activists were identified, consisting of vandalizing their homes and warnings of “collective rapes” because they “don’t know real men”. Other tactics seek to stop activists from accessing an area or stopping them from carrying out certain activities because harm may come to them.

Discriminatory expressions

Ethnic and cultural identity, or certain physical characteristics of the activists have been repeatedly targeted during attacks. Explicit references focus on certain features and appearances, calling them derogatory terms for indigenous peoples like indias, imillas, cholas, etc.

Other attacks focus on sexual identity and relationship status. Like using the terms lesbian or spinster become an object of stigma as they are considered negative in anti-rights groups.

QUINTANA ROO

Feministas no quieren realizar servicio militar

Feministas en Quintana Roo rechazan iniciativa de obligar a las mujeres al servicio militar.

Queremos igualdad pero no de esa manera: dicen feministas tras iniciativa presentada en la Cámara de Diputados, en la que obliga a las mujeres a realizar servicio militar, dejando de ser voluntario.



Unión Juvenil Cruceñista - SCZ

26 de noviembre a las 14:04

Seguir

Aquí la prueba de el Delito de Odio y de Amenazas contra bienes del Episcopado, también con este video asumen que son parte del atentado que se llevo a cabo hace unos días en la Conferencia Episcopal que como saben igual lo realizaron mujeres de estas olas subnormales Fcministas, Pedimos a la Justicia que tome cartas en el asunto sobre este grupo (Pesada Subversiva) y los demás colectivos de esta gente sin Oficio y que son afines al Mas como pueden ver en sus paginas y capturas que tenemos guardadas para pruebas, Feministas estan advertidas, regresan a hacer vandalismo o a amenazar, van a llevar tunda y luego no esten llorando y no se hagan las víctimas, ya que si ustedes se creen "Brujas", nosotros seremos los Guerreros Templarios o Inquisidores que las pondremos en su lugar para que aprendan a ser Educadas y a Comportarse.
Ver menos

Facebook page with the name and logo of the UJC (Santa Cruz Youth Union – Unión Juvenil Cruceñista)

ustedes no saben absolutamente nada para juzgar a la gente detrás de su supuesta vulnerabilidad ustedes pueden ser putas pueden ser lesbianas pueden ser todo detrás de soy mujer pueden hacer daño detrás de su fenismo cuando no saben nada gente hipócrita eso son que sin saber nada publican sin saber nada hablan y defiende a la peor basura en está vida pero todo lo que se hace se paga y el daño que están haciendo a mis hijos lo van a pagar



Account reporting (censorship)

Some anti rights groups have organized digital campaigns to try to take down feminist activists and collectives, resulting in account blocking and temporary suspensions.

Words frequently used in attacks

As previously mentioned, according to the reviewed accounts it is obvious that the words used recurrently refer to the physical appearance of activists, sexual orientation, age, cultural and ethnic identity, and political and ideological affiliation.

It's worth mentioning that the posts and attacks of anti-rights groups use the term "lesbian" is used as an insult, like anti-Christian. Based on the use of both terms, fundamental individual rights are violated.

The list of more frequent "insults" is:

Feminazi	Pedophiles
Ugly, feminism makes you ugly	Abortionist
Fats	Female supremacist
Lesbians	Anti-Christian
Fatherless	Up with the patriarchy
Resentful and jealous	Femiorca
Hurt or bitter	Femimasistas (related to MAS political party)
Indias or Imillas (a derogatory term for Indigenous people)	Femi-idiots
Criminals and vandals	Femi-Indigenous
Crystal generation	Femi-crazies
Degenerates	

3.2 EFFECTS OF THE ATTACKS

Based on the analysis of detailed cases in the following section, the following effects were identified in the activists.

- **Violation of fundamental human rights:** the attacks and posts violate the right to free speech, privacy, safety, violence-free life, and internet access.
- **Fear and insecurity:** most activists admit to being afraid of suffering aggression and feel unsafe when they post something related to activism.

- **Physical and mental health damage:** after the attacks, several activists experienced anxiety and physical damage due to fear (headache, nausea, vomiting, etc.,)
- **Censorship and abandonment:** many paused their digital activism and some of them decided to completely close their accounts.
- **Loss of supporters:** collectives that suffered attacks reported that some members decided to abandon activism for fear of suffering attacks.
- **Family conflicts:** due to the attacks, the families of activists reacted differently. In some cases, they were supportive and strengthened by the idea of insecurity, leading them to demand that they stop their work.

3.3 ACTIVISTS' RESPONSE

The cases analyzed in the study showed that activists' answers were similar, such as:

- **Support:** request for support from other activists and collectives on a national level, which was manifested through statements, digital moves, etc.
- **Application of digital security measures:** in most cases, attacks took the activists by surprise, and they asked for technical support to apply digital safety measures.
- **Personal security measures:** due to fear, collectives, and activists who suffered attacks applied personal security measures. Like not walking alone on the street they suffered the attacks and change their routines.
- **Digital movement:** because of the distance and time, priority was given to certain digital actions by organizing and creating uniform content with messages and hashtags, such as "Women Not Welcomed to Machismo", "I graffitied Tarija" and others.

3.4 VULNERABILITY FACTORS

Six vulnerability factors were identified that puts activists, organizations, and institutions at risk of attack, which were used to promote attacks:

- **Lack of implementation of personal and collective digital security protocols,** security measures were applied only after attacks occurred.

- ***Sharing personal information without digital security measures***, with photos, videos, and personal data obtained mainly from activists' personal social media accounts.
- ***Creation of support spaces without cybersecurity protocols***, particularly WhatsApp groups linked to abortion and feminist groups where anti-rights groups infiltrated to obtain activists' information.
- ***Lack of internal communication between activists that created ruptures and abandonment of supporters***, as there was no protocol or intervention route in case of a crisis or attack, resulting in some activists posting information that was later used against them or was distorted.
- ***Support on cases without verification***, it was evidenced that anti-rights groups would contact activists with supposed abortion cases to identify them and subsequently report them. Some collectives and activists have protocols to verify the cases' authenticity, but many do not and expose themselves to high risk due to the type of support they provide. There are cases of activists being criminalized using this method of deception.
- ***Public statements without prior legal analysis***, specifically in cases of support and accompaniment for voluntary pregnancy interruption, openly admitting this type of activism cannot be accepted due to the criminal responsibility it implies. Therefore, activists need to be aware of the legal framework and avoid admitting any information that publicly compromises them. It is identified that anti-rights groups use chat groups and public statements to criminalize activists.



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PART 4: CASES OF HARASSMENT, ATTACKS, AND DIGITAL VIOLENCE

According to the objectives set for this study, in this section, we seek to characterize and analyze some situations and incidents of attacks, harassment, and aggressions carried out by anti-rights sectors against feminist activism.

While the different events and actions have their dynamics and particularities, they have in common the expression of manifestations of hostility, harassment, and obstruction to the struggles and actions of rights and freedoms. In this sense, they seem to fulfill a deterrent function that seeks to demonstrate and strengthen an established order of classist, patriarchal, colonial domination, and preservation of a network of oppressions and discrimination.

The cases are organized into six categories, but this does not imply a fixed grouping. The attacks and aggressions registered have occurred in the context of the following feminist and LGBTQI activism events:

“they seem to fulfill a deterrent function that seeks to demonstrate and strengthen an established order of classist, patriarchal, colonial domination, and preservation of a network of oppressions and discrimination.”

4.1 CASES OF ACTIVISM IN THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE AND ENFORCEABILITY OF ILE (LEGAL PREGNANCY INTERRUPTION)

Over four years (2019-2022), the situation of more than 15 cases of girls and teenagers who became pregnant as a result of rape and sexual abuse, mostly by perpetrators who were members of their immediate family and social environment (uncles, grandfathers, stepfathers, half-brothers), became a matter of public knowledge.

These events happened in both provinces and rural areas as well as cities in different departments of the country. These cases received public exposure,

some more than others, due in large part to sensationalist and unethical media coverage by major national media outlets (television channels and print media).

In most of these cases, feminist networks, platforms, and collectives, as well as defenders of rights and activists, participated by promoting actions and accompanying processes of enforcement of rights to achieve access to Legal Interruption of Pregnancy (ILE). The protests of activists and defenders included press conferences, demonstrations, and the formulation of public complaints about obstruction, violence perpetrated by state institutions, and the submission of girls and teenagers and their families to processes of re-victimization. The digital sphere was a very important scenario for rights enforcement.

On social media, both from individual referral accounts, and from institutions and anti-right groups (“Save the Two Lives Bolivia”, “Free Speech Bolivia” and “For the Cross and Life Bolivia”, among others), attacks and harassment were launched against feminist activists, defenders of rights, and, with great virulence, against the then Ombudswoman, Nadia Cruz.

Likewise, when these cases occur, accounts and pages that publish and share news, such as Radio Global Sucre (radio TV and streaming), and Agustín Zambrana in El Bunker, generate a large number of interactions. A piece from the former made in 2021 has 420 comments, while the latter, in 2020, has 480. With exceptions, the vast majority of content is offensive, insulting, and derogatory.

Many digital attacks on activists and defenders resort to insults such as “murderers and child killers”, adopting a derogatory tone and, in some cases, ridicule towards feminisms. According to the interviewees, in response to such attacks, they have only answered in some situations to establish points of argumentation and debate and not to engage in controversies or respond to offenses, insults, and provocations. As they pointed out, the strategy is not to lend themselves to their logic or give way to controversy, understanding that many times they also operate by acknowledging their voice and legitimacy.

...at the beginning, I used to respond to them, but it was terrible, they always want to have the last word. In general, I read what they write and delete their comments, I don't want them to appear because what they say is rude and strong. They don't seek exchange but controversy, their levels of aggressiveness are very high, and it's a waste of time (feminist activist).

A relevant fact is that especially from institutional accounts, organizations, and groups, insults, and threats seem to become more intense, which is explained by the cloak of impunity facilitated by anonymity.



Frank Gutierrez

3 de noviembre de 2021 · 🌐

¡EL ESTADO QUIERE ABORTO OBLIGATORIO!

La Defensoría del Pueblo Bolivia no se rinde y quiere aborto obligatorio. ¿De que manera? Arrebatando a la indefensa niña de las manos de su madre exigiendo la TUTORÍA de la niña para obligarla a realizarse el aborto, opción que la niña y la familia ya habian descartado.

#DefensoríaAsesina



4

1 comentario



Por la Cruz y por la Vida Bolivia

21 de agosto de 2022 · 🌐



La defensora del pueblo se empecina constantemente en presionar a las adolescentes para que maten a sus propios hijos..... en lugar de darles ayuda con la maternidadEl Ab*rt0 solo eleva los traumas de aquellas que sufrieron de violación, pues se genera el síndrome post aborto

La defensora debe cuidar a los bolivianos desde la concepcion....

#DefensoríaAsesina



Carlo Cortez BOL

9 de abril de 2021 · 🌐



¿Saben que es lo más contradictorio, la Defensoría de la Niñez mandando a matar a un niño.



11



DebbyAramayo está en Ciudad Potosi, Potosi, Bolivia.

31 de julio de 2022 · 🌐

Los #abortos forzados en #bolivia se están volviendo el pan de cada día y la @dpboliviaof Defensoría del pueblo de Bolivia está obligando a menores a realizarse un aborto, aún sabiendo que la #ILE dice que no se puede obligar a ninguna mujer a realizarse un aborto, según #onumujeres este es un tipo de violencia contra ellas.

Between September and December 2020, digital communication and information campaigns and the presentation of posts and videos on the decriminalization of abortion and women's right to choose were subject to insults, disparaging remarks, and various attacks. In summary, the following events can be highlighted:

- Billboards hired through an advertising company, placed in strategic locations in the city of Santa Cruz, were subject to pressure from conservative political groups and Catholic and evangelical churches. As result of

“Two activists were criminally charged by municipal authorities. Councilors from the extreme right-wing group, *Republica 2025*, the Catholic Church, and other conservative sectors for painting graffiti on the Sucre Metropolitan Cathedral.”

pressure exerted on local authorities, they obtained municipal permission to force their removal (September 2020).

The campaign carried out on Facebook with videos, infographics, and various materials on the causes of the Legal Interruption of Pregnancy (LIP) provoked insults, disparagements, and harassment from people who seemed to be acting in a concerted manner, practically taking over the AF-C28S pages (October and December). As an example, in one of the publications, more than 800 comments and reactions were recorded.

In December, the campaign on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, “Digital Revolt I Support”, through which activists and feminist organizations speak out for the decriminalization of abortion and respectful accompaniment to women’s decision-making, was attacked. Heated debates and exchanges took place, with many insults and threats.

4.2 CASES OF THREATS AND AGGRESSIONS ON EMBLEMATIC FEMINIST DATES

The incidents included here are related to attacks and harassment that occur during mobilizations on emblematic dates of the feminist and rights agenda.

The first occurred in the city of Sucre, in the context of the self-organized demonstrations for September 28, 2022, a regional protest for the decriminalization of abortion under the slogan “Legal, free, safe and accessible abortion”.

Two activists were criminally charged by municipal authorities. Councilors from the extreme right-wing group, *Republica 2025*, the Catholic Church, and other conservative sectors for painting graffiti on the Sucre Metropolitan Cathedral.

The legal complaint came along with a wide-ranging campaign of harassment on social media, led by a digital news page from the city of Sucre - *Correo del Sur*, clearly identified by its anti-rights views - with the aim of criminalizing demonstrations and protests carried out by feminist activists and rights defenders.

The two activists appeared to provide their informational statement, denouncing the harassment and threats received, especially through social media. Meanwhile, at a local and national level, different feminist collectives, organiza-

tions, and movements, rights defenders, and sexual diversities, supported and actively accompanied the process through statements with validation, social media campaigns, monitoring, etc.

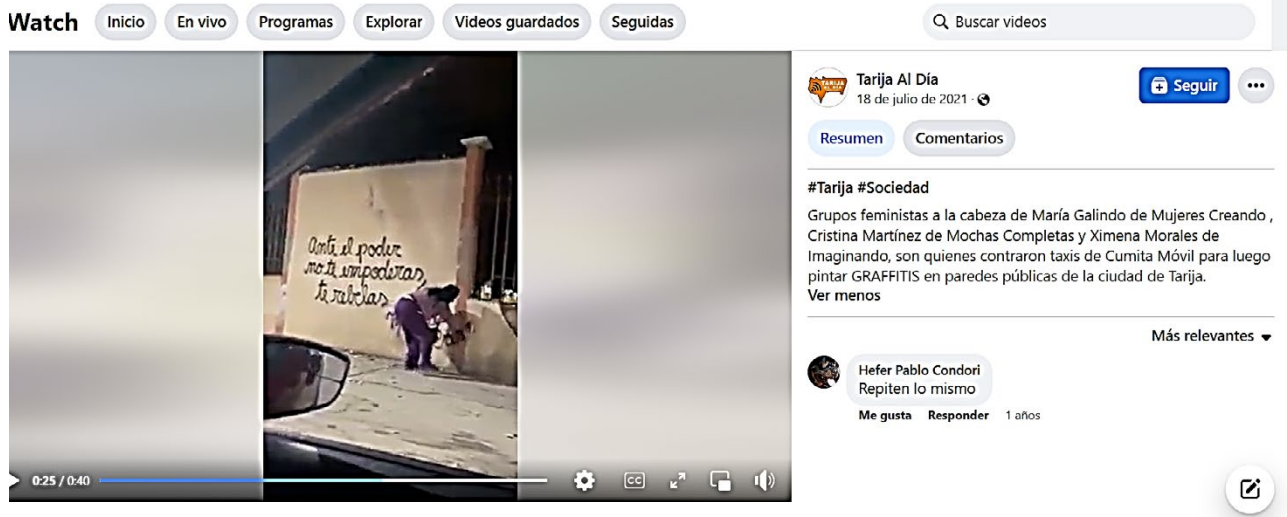
In the reflections and analysis of this case, both by those directly involved and by other feminist activists and rights defense collectives and organizations, there is clarity regarding the intent of the legal complaint.

It is revealed as an attempt at discipline and a threat for all, based on “exemplary sanctions,” which have a clear meaning in terms of prosecuting two feminist women and sending a dissuasive and intimidating message to the rest. It aims to “alert” about the risk of getting involved, raising their voices, and claiming and defending a feminist agenda for free abortion, women’s autonomy, and freedom.

The strategy of criminalizing and judicializing activists and rights defenders, a relatively new component in anti-rights strategies, was accompanied by intense use of digital resources that ended in multiple attacks, harassment, and intimidation. As an illustration, we can point out the following aspects:

- Use of mostly fake profiles, exposing the identity of the two activists, which were taken to specify the complaint. That is, social media posts constitute evidence to support a legal complaint as if it were a legally significant instance.
- Incitement to sexual violence and attacks in comments shared on local news pages and threats to show up at their home.
- Discursive resources accusing the hostility and aggressiveness of the activists and an attitude of victimization against “feminist violence.” during the 25N of 2021 in the city of La Paz, the RedLBBi was accused of trying to place a bomb in the *Maria Auxiliadora* church.
- Use of aggressive language to refer to the demonstrations, mentioning “disturbances, terrorists, and vandalism rings.”

“It is revealed as an attempt at discipline and a threat for all, based on “exemplary sanctions,” which have a clear meaning in terms of prosecuting two feminist women and sending a dissuasive and intimidating message to the rest.”



4.3 FEMINIST GRAFFITI IN TARIJA AND POTOSI

After the presentation of a book in July 2021, a couple of feminist collectives went out to graffiti the city of Tarija. The next day, the graffiti was shared by several media outlets, and supposed neighborhood groups denounced “feminist vandalism acts.”

Once the collective to which the authors of the graffiti belong was identified, they began to search for the representatives, managing to identify two of their members to proceed with the attacks.

From *Tarija Actual* Fanpage, managed by anti rights groups, they searched for the activists’ personal information and posted the identity of members of the collective: full name, address, and personal photos, inciting violence against them, which is known in the digital world as Doxing.

Another common harassment tactic was the call to attack the activists’ homes and the expression of racist remarks that made reference to their physical appearance.

One of the identified activists was not in the city when the events took place. However, she was attacked regardless. Municipal authorities announced legal proceedings against the collective, although in practice the threat did not materialize.

The collective requested support from other feminist organizations and groups. In response, national declarations were generated, digital movements such as the creation of live programs, and the publication of support samples (art) with the use of the hashtag #YoGraffitiTarija (I tagged Tarija).

The attacks were instantaneous, based on the supposed protection of the municipal historical heritage, accusing the activists of damaging walls that were already painted with at least 400 graffiti with political propaganda



themes, love declarations, and the names of gangs. It is evident that, unlike these last graffiti, the feminists created messages denouncing institutional machismo in Potosi, which annoyed and produced the attacks.

The day after the incident, the photograph of the graffiti was posted on several Facebook pages, generating a series of attacks on the *Mujer de Plata* Fanpage and on identified activists' accounts.

The attacks on social media called for aggression against the activists, painting their homes; many messages had racist, misogynistic, and homophobic content because they threatened to commit "corrective" sexual assaults considering them lesbians. They tied their physical appearance and published personal information: name, address, workplace, and school.

The attacks and intimidations generated various effects on the activists, of which we highlight the following:

- Decrease face-to-face activities for fear of possible attacks and harassment.

“The first incident occurred in the city of Santa Cruz, during LGBTQI Pride Month in June 2022, on the occasion of the Revolution Pride art exhibition at the Altillo Beni municipal museum.”

- Activists stopped posting information on their accounts.
- Came up with personal security protocols, for example, not walking alone, creating chat groups to ask for help, and applying digital security measures.
- Development and reasoning for an anti-feminist wave, unleashed by authorities and conservative groups belonging to media and Facebook pages.

4.4 CASES OF ACTIVISM IN DEFENSE OF SEXUAL LIBERTIES AND DIVERSITIES

In this section, we seek to account for situations and acts of aggression and attacks by anti-rights groups aimed at the LGBTQI community and sexual and gender diversity activists, also involved with feminist and anti-patriarchy agendas.

The first incident occurred in the city of Santa Cruz, during LGBTQI Pride Month in June 2022, on the occasion of the Revolution Pride art exhibition at the Altillo Beni municipal museum. The exhibition was subjected to permanent attacks, harassment, and threats by groups of people who, from hate and homophobic speeches, demanded its closure. On one occasion, they destroyed some of the artwork and attacked museum staff.

On an online level, the accounts of those in charge of the exhibition were subjected to attacks, disparaging remarks, insults, and threats, although they also became a space for expressions and shows of support. In fact, beyond the generated aggressions, the intense exchange of ideas and points of view that arose can be highlighted, contributing to the construction of a plural and respectful society of diversity and free of discrimination.

In the exhibition, I used my social media profiles to defend the exhibit. I mostly use social media when something happens to me or my friends. That's when my accounts become a battlefield. (activist)

Regarding other facts, between Santa Cruz and La Paz, feminist and LGBTQI and sexual diversities activism refer to experiences of harassment and direct digital attacks from anti-rights groups and representatives.

A cyber activist by self-definition, she has been the object of aggression and violence in both spaces, highlighting the double risk faced by those who face these struggles:

...behind the computer or on the Street, we receive cyber violence, through social media or other platforms. You don't know who they are... When you do activism on social media, you live it every day, not just during protests. (activist)

The attacks carried out from the account of a person from Santa Cruz - who introduces himself as a “lawyer, defender of democracy, entrepreneur, believer of God” - have taken place through Twitter, with content that strongly conveys transphobia. In these incidents, a non-conforming body becomes a place of rejection and denigration, hence insults and the use of offensive terms such as “man in a dress” are frequent. Likewise, they resort to “diagnosing” trans people as “sick.”



4.5 FAKE PAGE AND FRAUDULENT INFORMATION

This case, shared by two interviewees for this study, has distinctive characteristics from the rest, as it is a fraudulent strategy developed by anti-rights organizations. It consists on the existence of a Facebook page or profile that supposedly aims to help women who want to have an abortion, but seeks to dissuade them and prevent them from doing so. That is, it is a strategy for promoting misinformation on basic rights issues.

The investigation carried out by the activists who reported this situation exposed the mechanism of deception and recruitment, showing that the phone number

“It consists on the existence of a Facebook page or profile that supposedly aims to help women who want to have an abortion, but seeks to dissuade them and prevent them from doing so. That is, it is a strategy for promoting misinformation on basic rights issues.”

registered on the page refers to a Market Place post, also on Facebook, where the selling of misoprostol was announced. In such a way that it even takes on a similar identity to a feminist collective that accompanies women who decide to terminate an unwanted pregnancy.

They found that the methodology involves offering help with healthcare, with free ultrasound and medical care services, as well as “advice against the psychological effects of an abortion” and the promise of accompaniment during the pregnancy process.

...they take you to a room and ask why you want to have an abortion. They show you videos of abortions made with the aspiration method, stigmatizing you, and ask if you have the pills. A man that knows nothing says you have to be a mother and, as a woman, take responsibility for your mistakes. He mentioned how bad it would be psychologically. He said, “You’re young. You need to have your kid. It comes with a roll (bread) in its arms” (feminist activist and companion).

The complaints and efforts made by feminist collectives to dismantle this fraud, under the argument of a fake page, for offering deceptive public information and manipulating women who seek help in a vulnerable situation have not been successful.

That page should be taken down because it’s false information. They say there is freedom of choice, but it’s deceitful because they should come forward and show who they are, saying things upfront and not tricking women. (Feminist activist)



We are facing a strategy that resorts to the digital posting of deliberately fake content that is presented as formal and authentic, to deceive users.

According to investigations carried out by Open Democracy, the existence of these centers has been verified in cities in Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Ecuador, which operate with resources from conservative organizations and Christian right-wing groups in the United States³.

³ See: <https://lamalafe.lat/grupos-conectados-a-estados-unidos-desinforman-sobre-salud-y-aborto-a-mujeres-de-america-latina/>

4.6 HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION AGAINST LGBTQI ACTIVISTS AND DEFENDERS IN CONTEXTS OF POLITICAL CONFLICTS

In this last section, it is important to highlight situations of aggression, harassment, and attacks on feminist and LGBTQI rights activists that have taken place in the context of recent political conflicts in the country, especially in the Santa Cruz region.

A brief analysis allows us to establish that these scenarios foster and increase harassment and aggression, both in-person and in digital spaces. This highlights the close articulation between anti-rights sectors and groups with expressions of political conservatism and the far-right.

In Santa Cruz, feminist activists made public complaints and statements addressing the scenario of violence, authoritarianism, and intolerance that prevailed during the strike and blockade in October and November 2022. The reactions on social media were insults and hostilities, resorting both to political aspects and to insult feminisms, and racist prejudices. Frequent insults such as *whore*, *'feminazi'*, *socialist*, *communist*, *ugly*, *fat*, *traitor*, *Masillama* (referring to MAS political party).

The Women's House (*Casa de la Mujer*) even suffered an attack by mobilized groups in the streets. "We recorded it and posted it on Facebook, it went viral." The circulation of this information was the trigger for an international public complaint.

The digital attacks on activists who explicitly position themselves politically and ideologically as popular, anti-capitalist, anti-colonial, and anti-patriarchal feminisms were very strong, ranging from insults, threats, and discrediting to attempts to hack and maneuvering to have their social media accounts closed. *Las Niñas Malcriadas*, who reside outside the country and engage in digital feminist activism, recounted their experience during the October and November conflict last year.

During the civic strike, when the *Federacion de Campesinos* headquarters were burned down, we received a video from Casa de la Juventud leader justifying it. We uploaded a video contrasting what he showed, but he had already taken it down. We talked about the media blackout, the burning of the headquarters, and the UJC (Santa Cruz Youth Union), showing the guy and his video. Our video when viral on Facebook and from there, they started watching us more closely. They said we had no idea what we were talking about, mixing political and personal attacks, "you're privileged, you're from that school". They sent 130,000 bots to follow us. Suddenly our 3,000-follower Instagram account had 16,000 followers, all with completely fake profiles that had no posts. They told us these groups have people running them that have bot

“In several of the events referred to by interviewees, it is evident that the insults and aggressions have sought to threaten and discredit the activism of those who link their feminist and LGBTQI struggles with criticisms and questioning of the discourses of ultraconservative and far-right groups with xenophobic remarks.”

farms and send them to penalize you for buying followers. (Feminist activists)

To face the situation, they had technical support from the organization Internet Bolivia, which guided them to deactivate the attack suffered and not lose their account.

In several of the events referred to by interviewees, it is evident that the insults and aggressions have sought to threaten and discredit the activism of those who link their feminist and LGBTQI struggles with criticisms and questioning of the discourses of ultraconservative and far-right groups with xenophobic remarks.

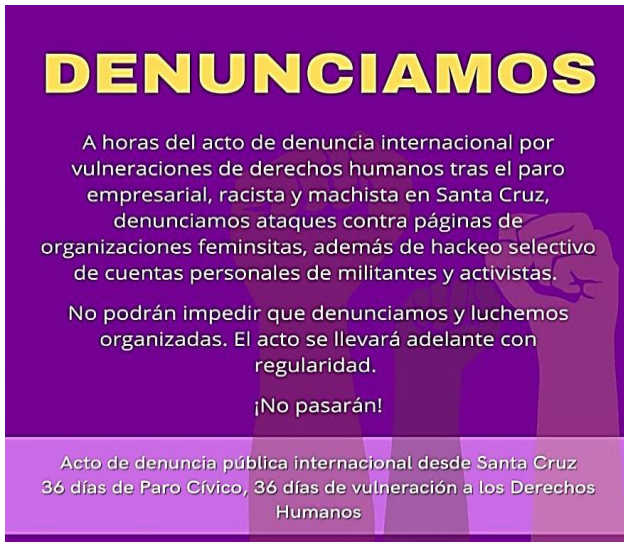
The growth of fascism in Santa Cruz scares me, you can't have a different opinion about the civic movement. They insult you "You're a traitor, go back to the jungle". With that discourse, "You're a traitor, go back to the jungle. Santa Cruz doesn't want you" they try to chase you out from Santa Cruz as if they owned it. (Feminist and sexual diversity activist)

When there was a blockade in Santa Cruz, I tweeted that I had suspended my trip because they told me that to get to the city I would have to pay money on every corner. I also posted a complaint about a girl who was being robbed there. I received a lot of

hate, people went to my profile and, seeing I was a feminist, they launched criticism, hatred, death threats... They told me they "did not want people like me in Santa Cruz, we already have enough of you". Someone took old photos from the abortion march and said "You are the crazy one who always promotes death" (feminist and sexual diversity activist).

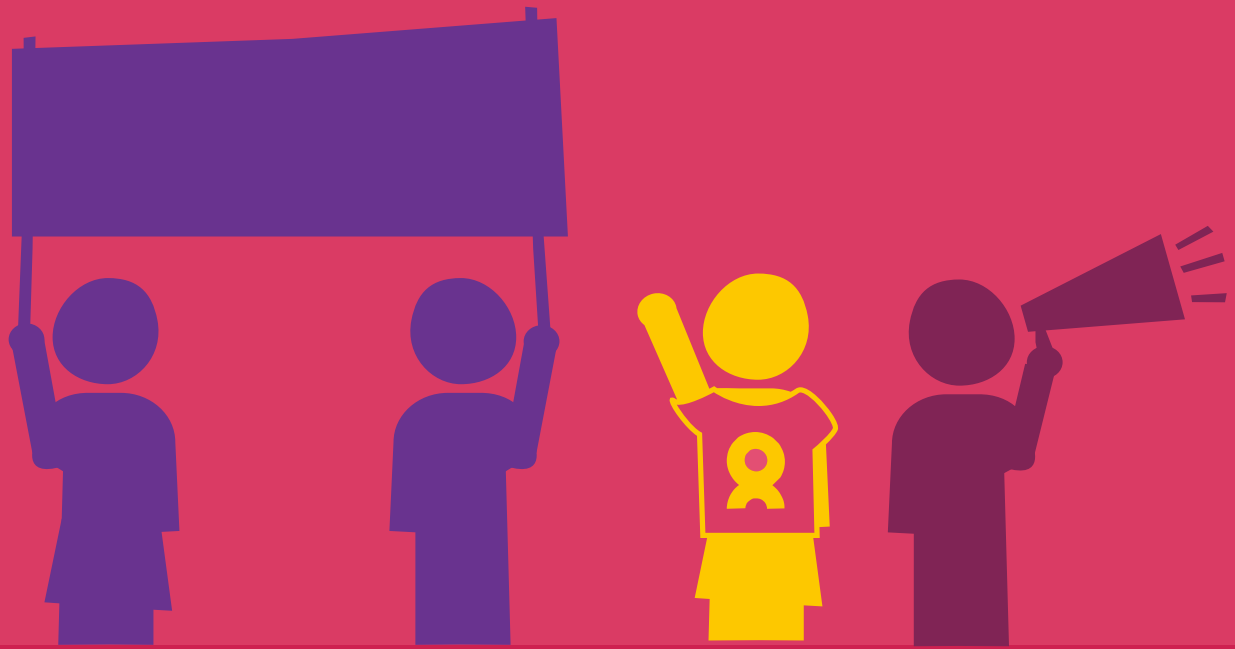
Regarding the collected testimonies, it is important to note that the tensions and conflicts have, as a backdrop, the strengthening of an extreme right-wing, regionalist, xenophobic, religious, and patriarchal movement. This struggle for political power promotes scenarios of growing polarization, authoritarianism, conflict, and political tension, and in turn exacerbates attacks and barriers to feminist agendas, LGBTQI rights, and sexual and gender diversities.

The narratives are fueled by various ideological, political, religious, cultural, and historical sources, etc. As we have seen, they are manifested in aggressions, insults, and disqualifications towards feminisms, gender, diversity and sexual dissidence, abortion, cultural and ethnic identities, and non-hegemonic aesthetics and bodies, among others. In the virtual realm, as several interviewees have referred to, these manifest as "digital persecution and lynching".



“The tensions and conflicts have, as a backdrop, the strengthening of an extreme right-wing, regionalist, xenophobic, religious, and patriarchal movement.”

In these scenarios, the regional protests in Santa Cruz, especially those that have taken place between 2021 and 2022, have been spaces for aggressive rhetoric and harassment towards feminist and LGBTQI activism, both in person and online.



PART 5:
CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS



5.1 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, in the following pages, we highlight and share central issues in terms of findings and critical issues addressed throughout the study. They are organized around relevant topics for analysis and discussion, in this sense we propose some reflections and challenges to think about feminist activism and the actions of anti-rights groups on social media.

Meanings and Scope of feminist activism on social media

Social media is a valuable tool for feminist activism. However, they are not spaces for public debate and deliberation. Tension arises when it is noted that it is not possible to be outside the digital sphere and social media, understanding their importance in the dispute of meanings and the installation of discourses.

In feminist activism, there are shared views on the possibility of developing debates and interactions with anti-rights groups and sectors, given the level of violence and aggression in their interactions.

A coinciding strategy is to ignore/block and not debate or discuss the messages since doing so would mean giving legitimacy and validity as interlocutors, especially since they are often deliberate strategies to induce controversy, especially if they are shielded by anonymity. In this framework, it seems necessary to consider that replication and counter-argumentation should be examined in each case, being clear that messages of hate and aggression should not be answered or generate interactions.

“In feminist activism, there are shared views on the possibility of developing debates and interactions with anti-rights groups and sectors, given the level of violence and aggression in their interactions.”

“Although it involves risks for activism, they generally manage to have broad repercussions and generate “alerts” about certain aggressors and their behaviors.”

Use of social media: public shaming of violence and support for IVE (Voluntary Pregnancy Termination)

Among the uses of social media in feminist activism, there are two lines of action worth highlighting. On the one hand, the content for public shaming, where the aim is to expose and socially visualize cases of violence against women, and denounce aggressors, especially when they are incidents with impunity and are not usually addressed by the judicial system.

Although it involves risks for activism, they generally manage to have broad repercussions and generate “alerts” about certain aggressors and their behaviors.

In the case of accompanying women to provide support in requests for voluntary termination of pregnancy (IVE), specific messaging services are generally used with extreme caution given the possible legal implications of these actions. Here too, there is a risk of deception by anti-rights groups, who try to infiltrate activist WhatsApp groups and simulate an unwanted pregnancy.

Attacks and Aggressions

Regarding the results and impacts of attacks and threats towards feminist activists and defenders, in addition to personal damages and harm to physical and emotional integrity and health, it becomes evident that in many cases they incite violence against women. In a context like Bolivia, with high rates of femicides and sexual violence, and impunity, this is critical because it speaks of the low valuation of women, resulting in “lesson-giving messages” that are part of the pedagogy of violence, as Rita Segato has said. That is acts and practices that teach, habituate, and program to produce a normalization effect and promote desensitization to the suffering of victims.

Therefore, we can speak of the continuum of violence against women, which operates both in the physical world and in digital environments. The various experiences and situations reported by activists and defenders allow us to verify that attacks, aggressions, and threats can go beyond virtual spaces, manifest in daily life, and even take the form of legal complaints and persecutions with high levels of vindictiveness. Therefore, it becomes necessary to recognize that these are real risks that should not be minimized within feminist spaces.

Relevant Strategies and Actions:

In summary, we can indicate the following as relevant aspects of feminist activism:

- Digital activism actions generally break with societal beauty standards and stereotypes. In many cases, digital appearances are diverse and express different bodies and identities. Additionally, they disrupt the digital space with a diversity of topics.
- There is an over-demand for the quality of the information they share, and often receive criticism regarding the sources backing their argumentation, which does not happen with anti-rights groups who generally do not support with data or evidence.
- Various expressions of digital resilience, which show adaptation to technology and overcoming technological limitations related to issues of access and opportunities.
- It is evident that in feminist activism there are digital gaps, generally of generational and intercultural nature. These articulate problems of access, lack of knowledge, disconnection, and distrust of technology.
- The most visible activism actions are marches, graffiti, and iconoclastic actions. Ironically, in some cases, these actions are used to threaten, intimidate, and generate fear among activists.
- There is a widespread perception of the digital space as threatening, which causes many to engage in activism with discomfort, fear, or anxiety. There are cases where some activists temporarily or definitively abandon the digital space and feminist activism.
- Digital support is considered a strategy to confront situations of harassment and aggression from activism.
- We can observe significant levels of misinformation about what feminism and cyberfeminism imply.

Regarding anti-rights activists, the following aspects should be noted:

- Regarding feminist activism, there are no attacks or aggressions against anti-rights accounts, although there are some cases of public shaming.
- They use different strategies to attract followers, like, creating social interest groups such as neighborhood associations, tourism groups, photography, etc. where information is then shared against feminist and LGBTQI agendas.

“Misinformation and information distortion practices are excessive, and there is no regulation or data verification. Particularly, they distort issues related to the decriminalization of abortion.”

- A recurring strategy is to post photos of feminist activists and LGBTQI people to intimidate them. Most attacks come from unidentified accounts or trolls.
- Several of their posts could be considered criminal behavior, such as threats, racism, apology for a crime, incitement to violence, and others. However, anonymity protects the identity of these aggressors.
- Misinformation and information distortion practices are excessive, and there is no regulation or data verification. Particularly, they distort issues related to the decriminalization of abortion.
- Attacks, speeches, and actions replicate strategies used in other countries by fundamentalist groups, such as in Peru with “Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas” (Don’t Mess with My Children).

- Frequently, most insults, disparaging remarks, and offenses are focused on the physical appearance of activists, gender identity, and inclusive language, using the decriminalization and legalization of abortion as a reference point.
- They use images of children, women, and sexual and gender diversities without respecting their rights to privacy.

Political Context

Statements and reports provided by activists and defenders demonstrate an increase in harassment and intimidation, particularly in political conflicts. This reveals coordination between anti-rights groups and conservative and far-right movements. Especially in Santa Cruz, this has become evident during the conflicts that have occurred in 2020 and 2021.

In these politically polarized scenarios, harassment, intimidation, and threats against feminist agendas are compounded by bigoted remarks and hate speech with racist, xenophobic, and homophobic connotations.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

By the objectives of the study, and the need to strengthen feminist activism and confront anti-rights groups and individual attacks and violence, we share some proposals and guidelines formulated in the process. They are largely practical issues that are drawn from both personal and external experiences and can be enriched and expanded upon.

Strengthening skills and security

In this area, it becomes necessary to strengthen the development of online skills, including issues of security and digital content creation. Regarding this, it is advisable to strengthen feminist and LGBTQI activism through the use of tools that allow for adequate levels of security and privacy. For example, determining what information will be shared, type of password, linking of social media accounts, names, and application (apps) control that have access to photos or location.

Although this perspective is not unanimous, the interviewees and different regional studies suggest carefully distinguishing the use of social networks between what corresponds to activism and personal, social, and family life. It is evident that a high level of public exposure to information and content on social media, especially photos, can generate greater vulnerability.

In cases of attacks, harassment, or threats, especially when they escalate or reach high levels, it is recommended to take screenshots of the posts to have evidence of them. It is about recording and having elements for a possible counterclaim or some form of defense.

An additional warning is to take specific measures to safeguard feminist accounts, as threats and attacks can also be aimed at taking them down.

In the case of feminist activism that carries out actions of “scratches” (public shaming) in cases of violence and accompanying women seeking support for IVE, it is recommended that they have internal protocols to manage security issues with greater care.

The measures and mechanisms require the promotion of the generation of alliances with specialized institutions and groups that work on training and digital security issues to ensure that these skills are not only available to small circles.

Results and impacts

To strengthen the impact, it is suggested to have a more strategic presence on social media. Some proposals in this regard include:

- Generating mechanisms for digital inclusion and mitigation to prevent activists from abandoning the digital space.
- Developing a collective reaction when requesting action to report and demand the blocking of anti-rights accounts.

“An additional warning is to take specific measures to safeguard feminist accounts, as threats and attacks can also be aimed at taking them down.”

“To strengthen the impact, it is suggested to have a more strategic presence on social media.”

- Generating opportunities to build strategic discourses and actions that are not solely reactive, which implies reflecting and betting on creativity and the construction of interesting content.
- Planning shared strategies regarding the management and adequate responses to hate speech and harassment.
- Analyzing the possibilities offered using mockery and ridicule. When faced with attacks, bigoted remarks, and insults from anti-rights groups, it may be effective to respond with humor and mockery rather than reason and logic.

Internal reports

Regarding internal reports on social media, it is suggested to reflect on their scope. In many cases of attacks and threats suffered, the actions that can be taken within the same medium do not seem to have fully favorable results. Unless they are part of a very massive initiative, they generally remain unpunished due in large part to the lax internal regulations and rules.

Digital support

Promote mechanisms and measures so that feminist and LGBTQI defenders who suffer attacks and threats do not feel alone. That is, facilitate the construction of collective support networks that provide solidarity and accompaniment. This, which is challenging to the patriarchal order in political and ethical terms, also implies sharing the best feminist practices validated in experiences to face such attacks.

Activism Strategies

It is necessary to generate processes of reflection on feminist activism and advocacy strategies, both digital and in-person. Some experiences and situations of harassment, threats, and persecution faced by various activists in the context of public interventions show a critical scenario. In many cases, these are disruptive and challenging proposals that require further reflection on risks, scope, and impact.

Among other things, this means reflecting and coordinating strategies in perspective so that feminists project activism, both in-person and digital, that is not based on individual action nor relies on the traditional influencer model but should be contextual, strategic, and less reactive.

Generation of knowledge and evidence

It is necessary to continue updating information that allows us to qualify activism.

Among the most important are the following:

- Carry out a study to systematize and extract lessons learned about resilience and digital support practices in Bolivia.
- Carry out an in-depth study on human rights violations and the anti-rights accounts' misinformation processes.
- Generate a fact-checker for information spread by anti-rights accounts to expose misinformation.

“... this means reflecting and coordinating strategies in perspective so that feminists project activism, both in-person and digital, that is not based on individual action nor relies on the traditional influencer model but should be contextual, strategic, and less reactive.”

