

Where are they?

Girls, adolescents and women reported missing during the COVID-19 lockdown could be found alive if they were searched for timely.

The Team:

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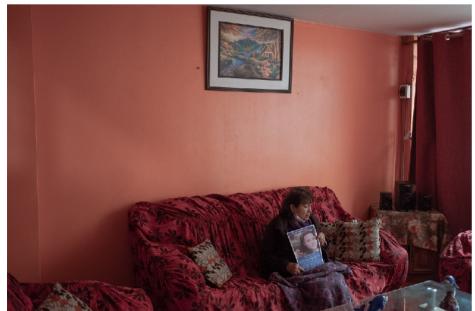


September 3rd, Villa Maria del Triunfo neighborhood, Lima.

Teresa Salas Carrasco (67) carries a photo of her daughter Alison Fernandez (30), who on the morning of August 13th went out to the local market and did not return home. Alison is disabled and has the mentality of a 12-year-old girl.

During the first 7 months of 2020, according to the national police of Peru, there have been 3569 cases of disappearances in the country. The majority - 2257 - are minors. 1011 adult women. "Minors fleeing their homes is a sign that we have failed as a society," says Eliana Revollar Añaños, deputy for women's rights at the Peruvian Ombudsman's Office.

Our report focuses a lot on the personal stories of 2 cases of disappearances in the capital Lima - in two different marginalized neighborhoods, San Juan de Lurigancho and Villa Maria del Triunfo.



A woman, Alison Paola Fernández Salas, 30, who disappeared in August - for the second time - and that the family is still looking for. And another, Marleny Estrada Bolívar, 29, who after almost 2 months disappeared, ended up as a case of femicide - as well as another 77 women so far this year.

At the same time, the cases of violence against women speak for themselves - from March to July during lock down - there were, according to the women's ministry, 11,000 cases. In almost 30% of the cases, the victims are minors.

The Ombudsman's Office and organizations have pressed for the authorities - after 17 years with a disappearance law - to create a registry of the cases - to be able to follow up - to know who and how many have already returned, what happened to the cases and which ones are still missing. The Peruvian government has promised that from October there will be such a record of disappearances.

There is no clarity on the causes. Multiple causes such as domestic violence, rapes, lack of economic resources are pointed out as well as it suspected to be related to human trafficking and slave labor. But without this clarity, it is very difficult to combat the tough situation for girls and women in Peru.

Meanwhile thousands of families throughout Peru are still looking for their missing family members.



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September 3rd, Villa Maria del Triunfo neighborhood, Lima.

A "Wanted" poster to find Alison Fernandez (30), who on the morning of August 13th went to the local market and did not return home. The authorities did not help the family to find her, so they undertook a search with the help of posters.



September 5th, San Juan de Lurigancho Neighborhood, Lima

Cinthia Estrada Bolivar (31) and her 3 year old daughter, standing in front of their house accompanied by their relatives. During the previous night, her sister Marleny Estrada Bolivar (28) was found buried one and a half meters deep in the room of her house.



September 3rd, Villa Maria del Triunfo neighborhood, Lima.

Jessica Quesada (30) carries a photo of her sister-in-law Alison Fernandez (30), who went out to the local market on the morning of August 13 and did not return home. The authorities are not helping the family to find her, so Jessica has undertaken a search with the help of posters.



September 5th, San Juan de Lurigancho Neighborhood, Lima

The neighborhood of San Juan de Lurigancho, considered one of the most dangerous places in the periphery of the city of Lima. Many children grow up without opportunities and find it difficult to get an education, health and a decent future because of the hostile environment and the few resources.



September 3rd, Villa Maria del Triunfo neighborhood, Lima.

Stop "Nueva Esperanza" (marked on the bus) in Villa Maria del Triunfo, a neighborhood that suffered one of the highest rates of extreme poverty and family violence during the three-month quarantine imposed in Peru to stop the COVID-19 virus.



September 5th, San Juan de Lurigancho Neighborhood, Lima

Overview of the settlement of the San Juan de Lurigancho neighborhood, considered one of the most dangerous places in the outskirts of the city of Lima. The families, mostly migrants from the Andes, live in extreme poverty.



September 3rd, Villa Maria del Triunfo neighborhood, Lima.

Teresa Salas Carrasco (67) sitting in her couch breaks down in tears as she tells me about the disappearance of her daughter Alison Fernandez (30), who on the morning of August 13 went out to the local market and did not return home.