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IN BRIEF:

MAKING EVERY WOMAN AND GIRL COUNT IN COLOMBIA

THE ISSUE

A national assessment on gender statistics conducted in 2019 in Colombia revealed three interrelated challenges:

- The national statistical system (NSS) had multiple entities producing statistical information, which can lead to duplication and inconsistency.
- There was limited information and evidence to inform local policymaking and weak capacity to produce gender data on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the subnational level. There was limited training on gender perspectives or intersectional approaches for staff that produce and disseminate statistics.
- Gender statistics were not concentrated in a single place and there was limited availability of survey and census microdata. There were also few feedback mechanisms to detect unsatisfied needs from users – with half of the country’s institutions lacking such mechanisms.

WOMEN COUNT RESPONSE:

- **Creating an enabling environment:** A coordination mechanism was established and has improved exchanges between key actors in the NSS – such as the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) and the Presidential Council for Women’s Equality (CPEM) – to better mainstream gender in national policies and legal frameworks and prioritize gender data in key national strategies.
- **Increasing data production:** The technical capacities of DANE were strengthened to mainstream gender in key statistical operations, which has resulted in more quality data on time-use, the gendered impacts of COVID-19, political participation, security and disability, and more data are available for improved SDG monitoring.
- **Improving data accessibility and use:** Partnerships were established with national and regional gender observatories to improve data accessibility and use. Key knowledge products, such as Women and Men in Colombia, are being used to track progress towards gender equality and to inform public policies, as a part of broader and substantive support to the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of key public policies.

“Through the Women Count project, UN Women has made it possible for DANE to build a strategic alliance with [the Presidential Council for Women’s Equity] to ensure that the gender statistics produced are used to inform the design of inclusive policies. For example, new data and analysis produced on women’s time spent on unpaid care in Colombia are already being used by [the National Planning Department] and [the Council] to inform the design of the Government’s new care policy.”

Juan Daniel Oviedo, Director General, DANE

KEY RESULTS

Since 2019, Women Count has contributed to significant improvements in how gender data are produced and used in Colombia. Key results include:

1. Creating an enabling environment

- **Greater coordination within the NSS is generating national ownership and fuelling action.** As a result of UN Women’s advocacy, DANE and CPEM have joined forces to strengthen the analysis and use of gender data. Several mechanisms have been established to bring together more data producers and users, which has improved coordination on the production, access and use of gender statistics for policymaking, promoting accountability on gender equality and women’s empowerment. UN Women contributed to the establishment of an expert network on gender data at the Technical Advisory Council of the National Statistical System (CASEN) to guide efforts to systematically mainstream gender in its statistical operations – a clear sign of national ownership. UN Women and DANE also developed the first institutional guidelines to improve coordination and communication between producers and users of gender statistics within the NSS. The guide will be taken forward by CASEN to sustain efforts to engage policymakers, civil society and key actors within the NSS to create more data-driven policies, programmes and strategies to deliver on the 2030 Agenda’s promise to leave no one behind.
- **Intersectional and disaggregated gender statistics are now prioritized in national development plans and regulations.** While Colombia’s Women Count project was in its pilot phase and advocacy had begun, the country’s National Development Plan (PND) 2018–2022 was published with its first-ever

dedicated chapter on gender and an explicit mention of the need for disaggregated gender statistics. The law regulating the PND, adopted once the project was fully underway in 2019, specifically included actions to strengthen intersectional statistical production, dissemination and use to inform public policymaking in a timely way.

- **Advocacy has resulted in the integration of a gender lens in the evaluation of national policies and programmes.** UN Women has provided technical support to the evaluation of the National Public Policy on Gender Equality (CONPES 161) and the National Policy on Risk Prevention, Production and Guarantee of the Rights of Women Victims of Armed Conflict (CONPES 3784). UN Women and the National Planning Department (DNP) teamed up to develop guidance aimed at building capacities within SINERGIA¹ to evaluate public policies from a gender and evidence perspective for the first time. The guidance will also be used to monitor the implementation of the National Care Policy.

2. Increasing data production

- **More gender-related SDG data are now available.** The SDG Subgroup chaired by DANE facilitates the coordination of UN custodian agencies measuring and monitoring SDG indicators. Through its participation in the SDG Subgroup, UN Women led, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the development of methodologies for five SDG indicators² measuring the prevalence of violence against women, women’s political participation and women’s land ownership. UN Women, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the World Bank, supported

¹ SINERGIA is a system responsible for tracking the implementation and performance of key government policies and programmes in Colombia.

² SDG indicators 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.a.1

DANE and CPEM in strengthening the Colombian Women's Observatory to effectively measure the SDGs, by defining and producing the first national set of 99 gender indicators. In addition, the latest DANE barometer – which measures data availability across SDG indicators – will be developed and used to measure progress. Several indicators moved from being unmeasurable to measurable as a result of reprocessing existing data and analysing administrative data, including SDG 5.1.1. on legal frameworks (which went from having 17 to 100% of data available), SDG 5.c.1 on gender-responsive budgeting (which went from having 8 to 85% of data available), and SDG 5.4.1. on women's unpaid domestic and care work (which went from 79 to 100% data available).

- **New surveys are closing data gaps on women's economic empowerment, care work and violence against women.** UN Women has promoted the inclusion of a gender perspective in key statistical projects of the NSS, including the Economic Census and the Multipurpose Cadaster. Together with the DNP and DANE, a methodological guide was produced to guide the collection and production of data on access, tenure and land use, to inform policymakers of the barriers women face to owning land in Colombia. The guide, which has been used to monitor the implementation of the Multipurpose Cadastre and has since been piloted in six municipalities, will provide the baseline data needed to measure women's access to land – one of the key commitments of the Government's Peace Accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). As a result of UN Women's partnership with DANE, the upcoming Economic Census (2022–2023) will include a specialized module on care services for the first time, which will provide the evidence needed to monitor the national care policy and inform the design of territorial care systems.
- **More data users and producers are equipped with the needed skills to better produce and analyse gender statistics.** DANE and CPEM, with support from UN Women and ECLAC, conducted an intensive 60-hour training that has strengthened the ability of more than 100 data users and producers who now know how to produce, analyse and use gender statistics, and have designed individual strategies for how to integrate gender and intersectional approaches in their work. Select participants serve on the gender network that advocates for incorporating gender and intersectional approaches within the CASEN. Women Count was also instrumental in supporting

the production of DANE's methodological guide on how to collect and present data on differences and intersectionality. Training on guidelines for gender equality in cadastral management, carried out by DANE and the Agustin Codazzi Geographical Institute, also benefited more than 65 data producers who have applied their skills in piloting the guide in six municipalities.

3. Improving data accessibility and use

- **Data are fuelling policy action on women's unpaid care work.** Time-use data were used to inform Colombia's first National Care Policy and the first Municipal Care System in Bogotá. UN Women supported DANE to analyse the 2016–2017 Time-Use Survey (TUS) and design and conduct the 2020–2021 TUS to produce timely data on unpaid care, time poverty, caregivers and estimates of care needs. The results revealed that 60% of women contribute to unpaid care and domestic work activities and have higher poverty rates than men due to insufficient income and lack of employment, aggravated by higher time poverty. Such data were used by DANE and CPEM to inform discussions and develop a series of evidence-based recommendations for the first National Care Policy – including recommendations for the better social distribution of care – which have since been adopted by DNP.
- **RGA data were used to justify differentiated measures to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on women.** Data from Colombia's RGA on COVID-19 impacts were used to justify a 50% subsidy for women under the Formal Employment Support Programme (versus a 40% subsidy for men). They also helped justify a national programme that placed at least 300,000 women in formal employment, and helped shape the Fund for Women's Entrepreneurship with priority funding for rural women's projects. A second RGA conducted in partnership with UNICEF and UNFPA on the needs of persons with disabilities, is being used by the Presidential Council for the Participation of Persons with Disabilities, DNP, DANE and Ministries of the Interior and Health to inform its review and updating of the national public policy on disability.
- **Colombia's first gender statistical profile is informing SDG reporting, the Government's review of its National Gender Policy and shaping local, regional and national decision-making.** Launched in 2020, Women and Men: Gender Gaps in Colombia is the country's first gender statistical profile published by DANE, CPEM and UN Women. It also includes

intersectional data on disability and ethnic self-identification. In a clear show of high-level political support, Colombian Vice-President Martha Lucía Ramírez opened the launch event in 2020 and promoted the publication's use to guide local and national policy and decision-making. The profile has since been widely disseminated and used to assess progress and challenges in achieving the SDGs and has contributed to improving reporting on commitments as part of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2021, whose gender data mentions increased from 10 to 68 between 2018 to 2021. Regional gender observatories in the departments of Antioquia, Nariño, Cauca and Meta have since launched their own localized versions of the profile to inform local and regional policymaking, with the cities of Medellín and San Juan de Pasto successfully using their localized data to get selected as pilot cities for the first departmental care systems being developed under the National Care Policy. Profile data were also used in the situational analysis for the country's updated National Public Policy on Gender Equality, which was adopted in 2022. DANE has committed to produce the gender statistical profile regularly every two years, with the next edition in 2022.

- **Gender data are now increasingly accessible as a result of analysis, data visualizations and partnerships.** Under Women Count, UN Women partnered with five gender observatories to facilitate access, analysis and use of gender statistics to monitor national and subnational commitments to achieve gender equality. For example, indicators were revised to include sufficient municipal data disaggregation and access to microdata was facilitated for the preparation of various knowledge products. This has increased the dissemination of gender data across Colombia, with more than a dozen knowledge products developed, including books, newsletters and infographics. Moreover, the subnational observatory in Nariño produced and used infographics and figures amid the COVID-19 pandemic, launched a radio show and a public participation forum to encourage dialogue and evidence-based decision-making on gender equality. UN Women and DANE also developed the first Gender Atlas, which utilizes geospatial technologies to visualize gender data on women's economic empowerment and care work and is improving monitoring of the SDGs.

FIGURE 1
Measuring Progress during Phase I



Progress was the result of continued and improved coordination between key national partners, leading to greater national ownership and prioritization of gender data in development plans and policies. In 2021, 100% of targets were met by the project.

PLANS FOR PHASE II³

Under Phase II, Women Count Colombia will continue to work with key stakeholders such as DANE and CPEM to strengthen coordination on gender data, scale up data-collection efforts on violence against women, the gender-environment nexus and women's economic empowerment, and strengthen efforts around promoting data use for public policies and programmes. Key activities will include:

- Providing technical support to CASEN to update the national strategy for the development of statistics.
- Supporting the first national survey on VAW.
- Leveraging the use of modern technologies to fill knowledge gaps on gender and the environment and women's access to land.
- Together with DANE, introducing new modules in the Gender Atlas to increase access to gender data.
- Conducting training for data producers and users on how to monitor public policies from a gender perspective.

³ Plans for Phase II may be further adjusted.