



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Information received from Colombia on follow-up to the
concluding observations on its ninth periodic report*****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Recommendation contained in paragraph 16 (a)

1. The Government of Colombia is implementing the gender perspective provided for in the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace concluded with the demobilized Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) through the materialization of the 51 gender indicators of the framework plan for the implementation of the Final Agreement¹ as defined in the "Peace with legality" policy at the beginning of the mandate of the President of the Republic, Iván Duque Márquez. This means that, in addition to the Government's parity cabinet, the 2018–2022 National Development Plan "Pact for Colombia, pact for equity" included, for the first time, a gender chapter called "Pact for equity for women".

2. Under the leadership of the high-level forum on gender established by the Government,² the implementation of the gender chapter and its indicators is being promoted by the relevant bodies. The forum met in plenary session four times during 2019, and in 2020 it held two meetings, in March and September. Also in 2020, three technical assistance days were held on gender mainstreaming in the plans and programmes associated with the implementation of the 51 gender indicators of the framework plan. The Presidential Advisory Office for Women's Equity, in coordination with other institutions, held more than 70 technical assistance sessions with 14 of the bodies that comprise the high-level forum.

3. In the field of security, the comprehensive programme of guarantees for women leaders and human rights defenders was adopted, with the goal of ensuring a safe environment for such women within the country and abroad. On 12 February 2020, the Ministry of the Interior issued the action plan for the comprehensive programme, which guarantees its continuation until 2022 and involves 28 Colombian agencies. Between 2016 and 2018, the Ombudsman's Office supported the technical working groups by guaranteeing the participation of women's organizations, especially in the Putumayo Department and the Montes de María region. In these areas, as part of the 32 departmental development plans, the Presidential Advisory Office for Women's Equity promoted a technical guide on gender mainstreaming that contains advice for the women's promotion committees on gender matters.

4. In 2019, support was provided for the formulation and implementation of the action plan, and agreements were made related to the activities proposed by women's organizations and government agencies. Thus, between 2019 and 2020, 24 consultations were held between government agencies and national platforms of women leaders and human rights defenders, as part of the process of building the comprehensive programme of guarantees for such women.

5. The gender approach has been bolstered within the reintegration policy through the promotion of activities that benefit the 2,964 female former FARC-EP combatants who are being reintegrated (24.7 per cent of the total number of people undergoing reintegration). To date, 1,633 women with children and women heads of household who are former members of FARC-EP have joined academic and employment training plans, and 1,259 such women are benefiting from 1,638 productive projects. In addition, 504 former combatants have participated in remote training in the care

¹ The framework plan for implementation of the Final Agreement, adopted through National Council on Economic and Social Policy document No. 3932 of June 2018, establishes specific and measurable pledges to comply with the Agreement in line with point 6.1 of the Agreement. (Presidential Advisory Office for Stabilization and Coordination), 2021.

² The Intersectoral Commission for Including a Gender Perspective in the Implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, known as the Government high-level forum on gender, was established through Decree No. 1418 of 2018.

economy, early childhood care and self-care, and 15 friendly spaces for early childhood care have been improved.

6. The State security strategy has been implemented for 13,978 accredited people, of whom 3,254 are women, in the former territorial areas for training and reincorporation³ and in more than 579 municipalities (more than 50 per cent of the country). The Office of the President of the Republic is coordinating actions with 15 State agencies and bodies to defend and protect this population group, by consolidating more than 50 specific activities to ensure greater security for former combatants. This strategy implements gender action 4.26 on reincorporation, set out in document No. 3931 of the National Council on Economic and Social Policy of 22 June 2018, which establishes the national policy on social and economic reincorporation, formulated through a process agreed upon by the FARC component of the National Reintegration Council, the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization and the Presidential Advisory Office for Stabilization and Coordination.

7. The Technical Committee on Security and Protection was established through Decree No. 299 of 23 February 2017, as a standing body, pursuant to point 3.4.7.4.2 of the Final Agreement, to guide the implementation of the special security and protection programme for women members of the new FARC party, as well as for former women members of FARC-EP who are undergoing reintegration, and their families. The Committee is responsible for assessing at-risk cases referred to the National Protection Unit and for ruling on the security measures requested by persons being reintegrated and members of the FARC political party and the families of both groups.

Recommendation contained in paragraph 16 (c)

8. Colombian institutions have promoted important policies and activities to strengthen the presence of the State in areas affected by the conflict, in line with the Final Agreement.

9. The sectoral public policy on gender mainstreaming for uniformed law enforcement personnel, adopted in 2018 by the Ministry of Defence, includes the prevention of rights violations and forms of gender-based violence, as well as the participation of women in law enforcement.

10. In addition, the defence and security policy for legality, entrepreneurship and equity has been implemented since February 2019, and the National Police has mainstreamed the prevention and the protection of people and communities at risk, based on its 2018–2022 Institutional Strategic Plan, titled “Bicentennial Colombia, security with legality”. In this way, the strategy for the protection of vulnerable populations is being implemented, with a focus on comprehensive activities to defend and protect social leaders and human rights defenders. The Criminal Investigations Directorate of the National Police, through its Elite Corps, in coordination with the Office of the Attorney General, conducts important legal support work for the investigation and dismantling of entities that threaten the security of this group. Thus, the Ministry of Defence has given priority to 23 population groups with the most acute need for institutional action, including the “Woman leader” programme (see annexes, table 1).

³ The territorial areas for training and reincorporation, administered by the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, replaced the transitional local zones for normalization on 15 August 2017.

11. The Police Unit for Peacebuilding, through the basic units of the rural mounted police of the Ministry of Defence, provides police services in the 24 territorial areas for training and reincorporation (see annexes, table 2). The basic units are made up of 827 police officers, who help to ensure peaceful coexistence and security for the citizens within those areas and in the 112 villages surrounding the jurisdiction. From 1 January 2018 to 14 December 2020, 10,725 interventions were conducted as part of their mission, benefiting 32,793 people. The security of 790 women remaining in the former territorial areas has been protected through security arrangements, a standing presence and the deployment of troops and police officers.

12. Through community participation, the Government has applied development plans with a territorial focus and has identified the development needs of the population and defined comprehensive actions for the transformation of the territories. The participatory planning phase of these programmes ended with 16 regional transformation action plans, 14 of which were signed during the current Administration, containing 32,808 initiatives (see annexes, graph 1).

13. The formulation of the development plans with a territorial focus saw more than 65,000 women contribute to the establishment of 16 plans. To that end, the territorial renovation agency implemented gender tools, developed subregional focus groups and municipal preparatory dialogues, and promoted women's visibility within the steering groups to learn about their specific needs (see annexes, table 3). By 30 November 2020, the implementation route had been activated for 508 gender and rural women's initiatives, which account for 11 per cent of the total included in the regional transformation action plans. Of this type, 1,481 initiatives (32 per cent of the total under this heading) have been included in the work plans of the promotion committees, and 1,458 have been included in the territorial development plans (see annexes, table 4).

14. In the area of comprehensive rural development, more than 870,000 women have benefited, 42.9 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries, and 342,632.2 hectares of land have been registered and awarded to 20,798 women, accounting for 42 per cent of the total number of beneficiaries. Also, through the land bank, 1,322.5 hectares have been transferred to 775 women, accounting for 53 per cent of the beneficiaries; and 3,234 new dwellings have been transferred to the same number of women (45 per cent of the total).

15. In the case of the black, Afro-Colombian, Raizal and Palenquero communities, in order to empower the women of the community councils through participatory and planning models within their communities, technical assistance days were held during the second half of 2020 in Nariño, Cesar, Valle del Cauca and Chocó. In November 2020, about 250 women had been reached, and one-day support events have been held on the differential gender approach for women in La Guajira Department. With regard to characterization work in collective territories affected by violence, as of November 2020, progress had been made in four community council characterization processes in the Chocó Department.

16. In the case of indigenous communities, Decree No. 1158 of 21 August 2020⁴ established the functions of the National Commission of Indigenous Women. This led to Agreement No. 1212 of 2020, to strengthen the body technically and to provide holistic advice and support for the establishment of activities related to women's and gender issues.

17. The Victim Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation Unit helps to transform discriminatory social attitudes and remedy violent behaviour; its differentiated gender

⁴ Amending Decree No. 1097 of 9 August 2020, establishing the National Commission of Indigenous Women, pursuant to article 13 of Decree No. 1397 of 1996.

approach strategy provides for day-long differentiated reparation-related events for minors and young people reintegrated after belonging to illegal armed groups, women victims of sexual violence, persons with disabilities, older persons and persons with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The following programmes implemented from 2016 to 2020 are of note: (a) the strategy to provide comprehensive reparations to women victims of sexual violence (since 2019 it has been called Vivificarte (Live your life)); (b) the comprehensive reparation strategy, titled “Repairing the right to be”; and (c) the group-level emotional recovery strategy.

18. With regard to recruitment, according to information provided by the Ministry of Defence, in its capacity as a member of the intersectoral commission for the prevention of recruitment, sexual abuse and violence against children and adolescents by illegal armed groups and criminal organizations,⁵ from 2018 to 2020, 31,503 recruitment prevention activities were conducted, benefiting a total of 672,244 people (see annexes, table 9).

19. Similarly, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights and International Affairs, in its capacity as the technical secretariat of the commission, coordinates, promotes and monitors work undertaken with the competent bodies at both the national and regional levels. The following are among the most important activities carried out by the Office in November 2019: (a) updating the public policy line for the prevention of recruitment, sexual abuse and violence against children and adolescents by organized armed groups and organized criminal groups; (b) municipal prioritization, in which 206 municipalities and 3 departmental districts in 29 departments were classified as high-risk municipalities in March 2020; (c) the action plan of the policy line for assistance to the 209 municipalities with the greatest risk of involvement of children and adolescents in order to take action measurable in the medium and long term; and (d) launch of the strategy titled “Join for me” on 29 July 2020, with the goal of preventing child recruitment by focusing national policies through, inter alia, family and individual psychosocial care and socioeconomic projects.

Recommendation contained in paragraph 26 (c)

20. In line with Judgment No. T-735 of 2017 of the Constitutional Court, in which the Ministry of Justice and Law was urged to implement the redesign of family police services, a standing inter-institutional committee was formed at the highest level, chaired by the Ministry and comprising the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Women’s Equity, the Ombudsman’s Office, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute, the Office of the Attorney General, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, and the Administrative Department of the Civil Service. Bill No. 133/2020, sent to the Congress of the Republic on 20 July 2020, was adopted on first reading. It is currently going through the prescribed legislative process.

21. The articles submitted by the Government for consideration by the Congress of the Republic consist of seven chapters which, inter alia, are intended to ensure that family police services are used exclusively to protect, promote and restore the rights of victims of family and intimate partner violence, and redress violations of those rights; that they may be established as municipal or district agencies or bodies; that each municipality should have at least one family police station with a commissioner and his or her interdisciplinary team; and that the functions of the family

⁵ The commission was created by Decree No. 4690 of 2007 (Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights and International Affairs, 2021).

commissioners should be limited in order to focus their area of responsibility on dealing with family and intimate partner violence.

22. As a contributor to this bill, in its strategic plan for the period from 2018 to 2019, the Office of the Attorney General prioritized the second family police station oversight exercise.⁶ Its work included the first national hearing on family police services, held on 28 February 2019, which succeeded in establishing an inter-institutional forum for reflection on the situation of these bodies at the national level.

Recommendation contained in paragraph 26 (d)

23. The Public Policy Subdirectorate of the Office of the Attorney General led the initial dissemination of the sexual violence investigation protocol from its issuance in 2016 until 2019. Subsequently, women delegates, sectional directorates, prosecutors and investigators have been implementing it in their work. The following are the main products:

(a) Checklist for the investigation of sexual violence, to specify and standardize the guidelines included in the protocol, including recommendations from sectional and special prosecutors and officials working on the investigation and prosecution of these cases;⁷

(b) Internal communication campaign titled “It can be different: the way you look changes lives” and publication of the “10 must-haves for urgent investigations in cases of sexual violence”. The aim was to convey that beyond the challenges of investigating sexual violence, a different attitude is required when attending to victims;

(c) Public policy forum titled “Are our public policies on sexual violence effective?”, held on 9 July 2019, to compile effective strategies implemented in legal systems similar to that of Colombia, and to improve the investigation or prosecution of crimes of sexual violence;

(d) Launch of the microsite titled “Tool for the investigation of gender-based violence” on the office’s intranet in February 2020, to facilitate consultation for public servants and improve their knowledge of various tools useful for research into gender issues.

24. The initial dissemination of the sexual violence protocol included:

(a) Expansion and strengthening of a number of ways of ensuring access to justice, with the aim of providing options to victims and facilitating the filing of complaints, through dissemination of basic facts on reporting sexual violence, at workshops held for more than 200 agency staff, in April, May and June 2019, on the “Practical guide for the reception of complaints – Basic facts phase II”, sponsored by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women);

(b) Online course on “Addressing complaints of sexual violence”, given to 609 civil servants, on guidelines for receiving complaints of sexual offences, including those involving child and adolescent victims and those committed through the use of information technology (see annexes, tables 5 and 6);

⁶ The first family police station oversight exercise was carried out by the Office of the Attorney General in 2011.

⁷ The documents can be downloaded at the following link:
<https://www.fiscalia.gov.co/colombia/protocolo-violencia-sexual/>.

(c) Training sessions on gender-based violence issues, which were included in the 2018 and 2019 institutional training and capacity-building plans titled “Violence as a prioritized phenomenon” (see annexes, table 7). In response to the public health emergency, remote classes were scheduled for recipients of complaints, investigators, prosecutors’ assistants and prosecutors (see annexes, table 8);

(d) More than 500 working committee meetings, held with the country’s 36 sectional offices, to highlight and follow up on cases classified as involving serious or extreme risk, as reported by the centre for liaison and forensic medicine;

(e) Guidelines on issues of sexual violence promoted during 2021 at the national level to provide immediate attention to victims of gender-based violence. Written reporting, which is essential in those cases that require special attention, was introduced, and a button was included on the National Police “Report it!” platform, to file complaints of gender-based violence.

25. The Ministry of Justice and Law carried out the following activities and produced the following outputs:

(a) Guide to serving women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons when accessing legal services, published on 25 November 2019, to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women;

(b) Technical support in 2020 for 50 legal clinics in 18 cities, related to the implementation of the guide to serving women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people when accessing legal services. The Ministry provided an expert gender team to advise and provide guidance to participating university legal clinics in compliance with the improvement plan. Those who applied the guide received a diploma of recognition from the Ministry for the provision of inclusive services to women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. As a result, 44 legal clinics received this award;

(c) Remote training programme for legal practitioners on care for women and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex population, with 602 participants, and the implementation of the remote “Justice connection” tool, which gives family police stations access to the technical guidelines and protocols for providing services to women in domestic violence cases.