

# Gender and waste – how to mainstream gender into national waste management policy

Our experience in the Waste Management National Plan in Uruguay

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**Ministerio  
de Ambiente**

# Agenda

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1. Uruguay : context information
2. National Waste Management Plan (2021)
3. Incorporating gender dimensions into the NWMP :  
experiences and lessons learnt

# Overview of Uruguay



- **3.4** million inhabitants
- Montevideo is the capital city
- **87%** agricultural land (over total land)

- GDP: **71.18** billion current US dollars in 2022
- GDP growth: **4.9%** in 2022
- Life expectancy at birth: **77** years



Source: International Development Bank, World Bank, Uruguay XXI

# Unveiling Gender Inequalities

**50%** of the Uruguayan women participate in the labor market and

They earn **31%** less than men for doing the same work or holding the same position.

Women own less than of **12%** companies

Management positions (*Minister, sub secretary and General Director*) in the **Executive Office:**

**85%** are men

**15%** are women (2019 data).

Women spend **20%** of their day doing domestic work - while it's only 9% in the case of men.

Unpaid domestic work represents **16%** of GDP



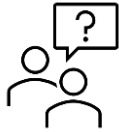
# Introduction to the National Waste Management Plan (2021)



- A strategic planning instrument, aimed at improving waste management and fostering the transition towards a **circular economy**. It sets strategic objectives and lines of action for the next ten years (2022 – 2032).
- First waste management plan at a national level
- The process of developing the plan involved a wide range of stakeholders (nearly 30 organizations)
- Of the **209** people that somehow participated in the making of the plan (Ministry of Environment, social organizations, private sector, public sector, etc.), **73%** were women.

# Integrating Gender Dimensions

## *The role of our ministry*



Consultation and exchange meetings with gender specialists

- Ministry of Environment
- Women OF Waste (WOW) a working group of ISWA



Integration of "INMUJERES" - the institute of the Ministry of Social Development that is responsible for gender policies in Uruguay - in the National Waste Management working group



First survey of the local government workforce dedicated to waste management, disaggregated by occupation and gender.



*Integration of gender dimension in environmental policies*



# Integrating Gender Dimensions

## *Results*

- ✓ we integrated the **National Strategy for Gender Equality** as part of the regulatory and institutional framework
- ✓ we **explicitly incorporated the gender perspective**
- ✓ we defined "Gender and Generations" as one the strategic axes, which implies

*"incorporating the **gender perspective in a transversal manner, considering the persistent inequalities between men and women and promoting the full exercise of their rights under equal conditions**"*

- ✓ we integrated **language considerations** to avoid generating a gender bias.
- ✓ we designed **follow-up indicators** that consider disaggregation criteria by gender, age and ethnicity towards an alignment of the Plan with **intersectionality** concerns.



# Mainstreaming gender in the NWMP

## *Key successful factors*

- Reviewing national and international precedents
- Articulate and make alliances with key agencies with competencies in gender equality issues and promote their participation in the process of developing the Plan.
- Generate information on the current gender situation in the waste management system to put the issue on the table.

Process

Key interventions

- Improve the working and living conditions of women working in the informal sector.
- Avoid further inequalities in the distribution of domestic work (women as users of waste management services at the household level).
- Collection of gender-segregated data for monitoring processes.



# Ongoing challenges

- Lack of capacity to drive strategic actions oriented to gender equality permanently in the national waste management, and to monitor the **real gender impact** of the National Waste Management Plan's actions.
- We are working on incorporating gender **equality criteria** in the conformation of **roundtables and panels** on waste management organized by our ministry.

*In the transition to a more sustainable and circular waste management, we need to ensure that the actions we design to improve waste management not only **do not increase existing gender inequalities, but also contribute to reversing them.***



Thank you!  
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