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**Study Status**

Results

**Study Type**

Descriptive / Surveillance

**Sample Size**

3,185 local government officials

**Research Implemented by IPA**

No

# Assessing the Impact of Data Reporting by Local Governments on National-level Administrative Data Quality in Colombia



In This Image  
People completing surveys in Colombia

**A researcher assessed in Colombia the mechanisms of local governments reporting data to the central government and the impact on administrative data quality. IPA provided research support in contacting local officials and designing survey questions.**

Central governments often rely on data and reports from local governments to make decisions on public goods and service provision, finances, and public administration. Yet research suggests that local officials can misreport or manipulate the information reported to the national government — particularly as it relates to performance metrics, qualification for intergovernmental transfers, or oversight — if they have an incentive. [1] Colombia's central government relies heavily on municipal governments to self-report administrative data that can then be used to inform policymaking. However, assessment of data quality of the resultant administrative data in Colombia suggests substantial variation in the reporting and accuracy. [2]

The researcher assessed the mechanisms of local governments reporting data to the national government and the impact on administrative data quality. First, they assessed what data is solicited and how it is used by national government agencies. To do this, they reviewed archival records and data from three sources: the National Planning Department (DNP), which distributes royalties for local departments and municipalities; SISBÉN, a national database

that determines household eligibility for social programs for low- and lower-middle-income families; and SECOP, a national database for government contracts that monitors spending, efficiency, and transparency.

Following the review of national archival records, the researcher conducted surveys with 3,185 local government officials who compile and report the data to DNP, SISBÉN, and SECOP. IPA provided research support by contacting local government officials, piloting and revising survey questions, and cleaning the data. Finally, the researcher mapped interactions between local and central government officials to identify ways to assess administrative data quality and its implications for use in research.

Results will be available later in 2023.

## Sources

1. Wallace (2014), Martinez (2021), Haseeb & Viborny (2020)
2. Garbiras-Díaz, Natalia, and Tara Slough. "The Limits of Decentralized Administrative Data Collection: Experimental Evidence from Colombia." (2022).