Sexual Assault Initiative in Colombia

US Department of Justice – International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program – ICITAP
Gary T. Sheridan, Program Manager for Colombia
Five Pillar Integrated Strategy

• Protocol and Legislative Change
• Training and Technical Assistance
• DNA and Forensic Science
• Investigative Equipment Donation
• Public Awareness
Protocol and Legislative Change

- Development of inter-institutional Standard Operating Procedures
- Standardization of Evidence Collection Protocols
- Introduction of new Colombian Legislation calling for enhanced penalties and mandatory DNA testing for convicted sex offenders
- Statistics collection and research
Training and Technical Assistance

• Specialized training for investigators, prosecutors and judges
  – Human Sexuality, Anatomy, Evidence, Clinical Examination, Interviewing Minor Age Victims, Psychology and Sexual Predators

• Symposium on “The Investigation of Sexual Assault Cases.”

• Development of an Elite Group of Sexual Assault Investigators - GEDES
DNA and Forensic Science

- Increase the use of DNA and the CODIS database
- Broker an inter-agency agreement to examine crime scene DNA evidence
- Purchase of DNA reagent chemicals
Investigative Equipment Donation

- Office Automation
- Intelligence / Statistics Database Development
- Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits
- Radio Communications Equipment
- Vehicles
Public Awareness

• Partner with supportive Colombian Senators and Congressional Representatives
• Cultivate News Media Sources
• With Embassy Press Office produce public awareness video
Case Statistics


- Cases: 13,831
- Convictions: 715
- Not Guilty: 112
- Unresolved: 13,004
Sexual Assault Exams - Bogota

- 2005: 3,841
- 2006: 3,935
- 2007: 4,324
GEDES Fact Sheet

• In effect since June 2008
• Composed of 28 investigators and two prosecutors
• Only accept the most difficult cases:
  – Suspect is unknown to the victim
  – Violence employed against the victim
  – Sexual assault occurred within 72 hours
• In 3 months - accepted 100 cases
Statistics Collection

• Incident data
  – City location, time of day, day of week?

• Victim data
  – Sex, age, place of reporting?

• Investigative response
  – Interview conducted/written statement/recorded, artist sketch, crime scene/photos/evidence, neighborhood canvas, clinical exam/evidence, CODIS?

• Response time line