



United Nations Population Fund

Population, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Concept note for the development of an evidence-based policy dialogue platform

CONCEPT NOTE

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This concept note was drafted with the intention of providing a document to inspire in-depth and specific discussions about key issues raised in the policy dialogue and advocacy strategy of UNFPA's Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO), and commitments to the Montevideo Consensus on the ICPD Programme of Action.

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Introduction

A sustainable development pathway

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction have placed the United Nations on a new pathway towards the achievement of universal well-being. It is to the benefit of all UN Member States and entities across the UN development system to find a way to achieve the SDGs, bearing in mind the means of implementation set out in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development comes at a time when there is an element of human survival involved, meaning that not taking action might imperil generations to come.

For the United Nations development system, action will include a role in policy advice, as appropriate to its mandate and comparative advantages. Such a role is defined in 'Fit for Purpose? UN Development Reform in the Post-2015 Context':

Instead of focusing on traditional service delivery, especially in middle-income countries... the UN's comparative advantage lies instead in the provision of up-stream policy advice. Countries

struggle to address cross-cutting, cross-government and multidimensional issues. The UN should therefore provide advice, share knowledge and focus its work around building substantive policy agendas.¹

The Financing for Development agreement places policy and strategy at the heart of UN efforts:

Cohesive nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks, will be at the heart of our efforts. We reiterate that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. We will respect each country's policy space and leadership to implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments.²

¹ www.bmz.de/de/zentrales_downloadarchiv/wege_und_akteure/Fit_for_purpose_UN_reform_options.pdf

² www.un.org/esa/ffd/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/AAAA_Outcome.pdf

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is responding to the call to be fit for purpose. UNFPA's Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO) intends to develop a platform for an evidence-based policy dialogue on population, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and sustainable development. The present document is a general concept note designed to establish the foundations for the development of such a platform.

The paper addresses sustainable development from a population and sexual and reproductive health and rights perspective, in reference to the concrete sustainable development challenges that the LAC region faces today. We do so by embracing the idea that sustainable development is still anchored in the Brundtland Commission's 1987 definition³ that summed it all up as *"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*. We look at that effort as one that must integrate economic growth, social inclusion, protection of environment and good governance, all in a mutually reinforcing dynamic, allowing us to continue with our human activity without compromising the planet.

This concept paper provides a general overview of the sustainable development challenges faced by the LAC region, in order to introduce a population perspective, with a particular focus on: a) the importance of the interactions of population dynamics and development; b) the consequences of changing age structures; c) the importance of women's empowerment, their physical and economic autonomy; and d) the key and

strategic significance of investing in young people (adolescents and youth).

Policy environment

Regarding policy development in LAC, our policy dialogue should take into consideration a commitment to work within approaches in the realm of cash-transfer programmes on the one hand (see Annex 1) as well as in the realm of universal social services on the other hand. Making progress on some of the issues related to population and sustainable development requires this vision. This is so largely because cash transfer programmes and non-contributory pension schemes, together with a set of other social policy innovations, have had an important role in reducing poverty and providing disadvantaged groups with opportunities to access basic social services. Several of these programmes address important components of the ICPD Programme of Action, particularly those related to maternal and child health and also schooling of adolescent girls, special attention to older adults, and support to caretakers of the old and disabled. All of these measures are related to populations that are poor and vulnerable.

By 2009, the region's cash transfer programmes had reached 113 million people or 25 million families, and mobilized resources equivalent to 0.4 per cent of regional GNI in 20 countries.⁴ Unfortunately, funding these programmes is not always easy for poorer nations, with tighter fiscal space. They are also vulnerable to economic crisis and recessions, when cuts in expenditures need to take place. Nevertheless, they have become one of the means through which the state provides basic

reproductive health services, nurture and empower adolescent girls, assist older adults and reduce poverty. That is why work should continue around the enhancement of programme efficiency and effectiveness, in particular through monitoring and evaluation.

If policy makers are contemplating a longer-term structural solution to social cohesion, however, they will need to confront the limitations of cash transfer and non-contributory schemes, given the scope of the challenges. One of the most perilous situations is that resources for social policies are available when economic conditions are favourable but they become scarce once the economy slows down, as is the case at present. In the area of social inclusion, there are big stumbling blocks the region has not had the capacity to overcome. One obstacle is the lack of a truly redistributory fiscal pact that could give a firmer base to equal opportunity. Another obstacle is the need for a significant leap forward in making economic activity more 'formal' in general and in employment in particular. Some 80 per cent of household income originates in the labour market but a significant proportion of that income comes from employment in the informal sector (particularly in the case of women). As a consequence, it does not lead to a linkage with some form of social protection system, and evolves in conditions of vulnerability. Only 50 per cent of the labour force is affiliated with some form of social protection system; in rural areas the situation is worse, with only 15 per cent of women and 25 per cent of men participating in any form of social security scheme.

Finally, we must bear in mind that fiscal earnings

do not have a significant effect on income redistribution, with Mexico providing a case in point. Mexico, with its relatively low fiscal pressure and enormous reliance on oil revenue, illustrates a problem that many of other economies in the region also encounter. Despite multiple fiscal and tax administration reform, the actual fiscal pressure has remained relatively stable for 70 years, within a range of 9 to 10 per cent of GNI. Of concern is evidence that fiscal earnings in Latin America and the Caribbean do not have a significant effect on redistribution of income. This is due to the relatively small volume of fiscal revenue that is obtained through taxes, and to the type of programmes those earnings fund. This explains in part the poor quality of social services and the incapacity of the state to provide the necessary coverage and quality of key public health and education services, where population issues could be addressed and solutions found.

A platform for evidence-based policy dialogue should provide a base to discuss fundamental public policy issues that the region confronts. In the framework of the SDGs, this includes the call to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, by aiming at targets such as 1.3 to "implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all". Such protection systems cannot elude reference to population, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights contained in the ICPD Programme of Action, which has been extended beyond 2014 because it articulated a bold vision that recognized the human rights of women and young people, including their reproductive health and rights, as cornerstones of sustainable development.

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brundtland_Commission

⁴ The gross national income (GNI) per capita is the dollar value of a country's final income in a year, divided by its population. It reflects the average income of a country's citizens. See also www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/UN-ECLAC-Sustainable-Development-in-LAC.pdf



ICPD Programme of Action and sustainable development



At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, 179 countries adopted a forward-looking, 20-year Programme of Action that continues to provide important guidance on how we should articulate population and sustainable development and, more importantly, why such links should be at the forefront of the development of population policies. Regarding population, sustained economic growth and poverty, the ICPD Programme of Action provides this objective:

The objective is to raise the quality of life for all people through appropriate population and development policies and programmes aimed at achieving poverty eradication, sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development and sustainable patterns of consumption and production, human resource development and the guarantee of all human rights (para. 3.1).

One of the central aspects of the Programme of Action is its reflection on how human activity has a profound effect on the use of natural resources, the state of the environment and economic and social development. A key component of that reflection is the manner in which human activity can affect sustainability through the patterns of consumption and production.

Population and sustainable development

Population dynamics are to be considered through the prism of human activity and its patterns of consumption and production. For example, fertility trends and the ensuing rate of population growth have the potential to influence the way in which human activity engages in consumption and production, particularly when population growth happens in a context characterized by poverty and inequality. In such a context of poverty, people and households have very few choices and sustainable alternatives for what and how to produce and

consume goods and services. Further, population dynamics such as urbanization, migration and uneven population spatial distribution play an important role in determining the characteristics of human activity. The capacity of the population to engage in sustainable patterns of consumption and production is easily derailed by rapid and unplanned urban growth or sudden human migration. The ICPD Programme of Action calls upon governments to take action:

Seek to bring about population trends consistent with the achievement of sustainable development and the improvement of the quality of life... [and to do so]... Governments should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and promote appropriate demographic policies (para. 3.6).

Part of the challenge is that policies to manage these processes cannot be implemented in a way that overlooks people's rights. This is a central message of the ICPD Programme of Action. Regarding fertility, for example, it states that demographic goals should not be imposed on family planning providers in the form of targets or quotas; rather, it recognizes "the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so" (para. 7.3). That is an established social right.

Another aspect of population dynamics related to sustainable development and emphasized in the ICPD Programme of Action is the spatial distribution of the population and its mobility, which

are closely linked to urbanization. The pace and mode in which urbanization and mobility take place can have a negative impact on the sustainability of development processes, both from a social and an environmental perspective. Sudden, disorderly and unattended population displacements that go from one setting to another should be guarded against. If the new place is unable to absorb and accommodate the sudden surge of people occupying the territory, impact on the environment can be negative.

Of particular concern is the rapid growth of urban areas. Policy should take into consideration the pull factors and push factors that determine the characteristics of these movements. Policies related to territorial planning, peace building and disaster risk reduction can help prevent surges of internally displaced populations or refugees forced to move from one area or country to another. Such movements can place serious pressure on infrastructures and services on the receiving end, and their development. One of the objectives of the ICPD Programme of Action is a more balanced spatial distribution: "To foster a more balanced spatial distribution of the population by promoting in an integrated manner the equitable and ecologically sustainable development of major sending and receiving areas" (para. 9.4).

Some population movement can make a positive impact, including orderly migration. The ICPD states that "orderly international migration can have positive impacts on both the communities of origin and the communities of destination, providing the former with remittances and the later with needed human resources" (para. 10.1).

The ICPD Programme of Action recommends that a country's territorial planning should develop a system of smaller and medium size cities, as such

an approach would be better-suited to deal with rural-to-urban migration and population mobility, avoiding concentrations in mega cities.

Poverty

The ICPD Programme of Action establishes links between population, sustained economic growth and poverty:

Efforts to slow down population growth, to reduce poverty, to achieve economic progress, to improve environmental protection, and to reduce unsustainable consumption and production patterns are mutually reinforcing" (para. 3.14).

It conceives poverty from a multidimensional perspective. It views unemployment, malnutrition, illiteracy, low status of women, exposure to environmental risks, limited access to social and health services (including reproductive health and family planning) as dimensions that reinforce each other's negative impacts in the human condition. The existence of high fertility rates, morbidity and mortality are correlated to poverty, particularly at the household level. The ICPD Programme of Action advocates in favour of considering the benefits of slower population growth in order to reduce poverty, repair the environment and build the base for sustainable development.

Women

The multidimensional approach to poverty, which includes reproductive health and family planning, emphasizes the role and status of women. Women

are central actors and agents of change. Likewise, from the human rights perspective, women are fundamental rights holders in regard to decisions on whether to have children, how many and how births will be spaced. It is only through the exercise of women's reproductive rights that stabilization levels of fertility can be reached. Women are also fundamental rights holders when it comes to maternal health and care when they decide to become mothers. The ICPD Programme of Action emphasizes that empowering women and girls is key to ensuring the well-being of individuals, families, nations and our world:

Advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programmes. The human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in civil, cultural, economic, political and social life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex, are priority objectives of the international community (principle 4).

Children, youth and older adults

Two additional demographic factors can affect sustained economic growth and sustainable development: the youth bulge and ageing. These factors are particularly relevant in Latin America and Caribbean where some countries of the region experience both phenomena. The population has reached, on average, replacement-level fertility rates and population growth is decreasing in proportion. The ICPD Programme of Action notes that sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development will be necessary to accommodate these pressures:

“The unusually high number of young people... requires that productive jobs be created for a continually growing labour force... The number of elderly requiring public support will also increase rapidly in the future” (para. 3.15).

For children and youth, the ICPD Programme of Action calls on countries to make investments in the development of human capital through both creation of opportunities (education and health being fundamental for both boys and girls) and special protection measures, particularly for poor and disadvantaged children and youth. Early childbearing, marriage and motherhood should be prevented because they curtail educational attainment and reinforce the intergenerational transmission of poverty. Protection against the perils of exploitation, abuse, neglect, drug abuse and trafficking are mentioned. It also declares that a fundamental aspect of children’s welfare is to have

been a wanted child in the first place; a condition that is conducive to other positive reinforcements along that person’s lifetime:

“...Promote to the fullest extent the health, well-being and potential of all children, adolescents and youth as representing the World’s future human resources” (para. 6.7).

Education is considered central to sustainable development. The ICPD Programme of Action suggests attainment of the highest level of quality education for women and young people is one of the principal enablers of other positive characteristics: “Education is a key factor in sustainable development: it is at the same time a component of well-being and a factor in the development of well-being through its links with demographic as well as economic and social factors” (para 11.2).

Sexual and reproductive health

All of the above mentioned processes are closely related to the ICPD’s important message on reproductive health:

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health therefore implies

that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so (para 7.2).

Those decisions need to be informed decisions, hence the availability of proper and correct information and advice. Services must be available to enable those decisions to be carried out, so that a woman may use family planning or go safely through pregnancy and childbirth. A constellation of technologies and services are available to ensure such processes. These technologies and services, as well as information and counselling, also need to be accessible to adolescents in order to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible manner with their sexuality. In all cases, services should offer a choice of contraceptive methods in order to meet the specific needs of different age groups and different life situations. Services should also include men and boys, with an active effort to engage with them and foster as role models men who share the burden and responsibility equitably with women and girls. All sexually active individuals should have access to reproductive health information and services, married or not.

Reproductive health includes family planning counselling, information, education, communication and services; education and services for pre-natal care, safe delivery and post-natal care, breast feeding and infant and women’s health care; prevention and appropriate treatment of infertility, abortion (if it is legal), management of the consequences of abortion, treatment of reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections (STI) and other reproductive health conditions; information and counselling on human sexuality,

reproductive health and responsible parenthood. There should be referrals in case of complications, including breast cancer and cancers of reproductive tracts; active discouragement of harmful practices, such as FGM.

Sexual and reproductive health should be considered as a basic health need, and the services to meet such needs should be part and parcel of primary health care systems. This includes the ability to provide referrals to more complex health services. Universal access to health, as one of the axiomatic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), includes sexual and reproductive health. Communities and civil society organizations should be able to participate in overseeing the application of these principles to ensure the sustainability of such services. The promotion and protection of the right to sexual and reproductive health is to be understood as a necessary condition for the attainment of other basic health goals such as infant and child survival and good health, and the elimination of HIV and AIDS.

The ICPD Programme of Action does not limit the scope of women’s rights to those related to sexual and reproductive health, and makes it abundantly clear that the empowerment and autonomy of women and the “improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is a highly important end in itself... [and]...essential for the achievement of sustainable development” (para 4.1). The Programme of Action calls for the full participation of women in that process. Their autonomy and empowerment are related to gender equality and the shared responsibility of women and men in reconciling productive and reproductive life, as well as women’s equal rights to education, decent employment, political participation, health, control over resources, property, inheritance, etc.

These rights can only flourish in an environment free of gender discrimination and violence against women and by respecting the rights and enabling the empowerment and autonomy of the girl child from the earliest stages. This is why some of the actions recommended by the ICPD Programme of Action target the adolescent girl:

Countries should develop an integrated approach to the special nutritional, general and reproductive health, education and social needs of girls and young women, as such additional investments in adolescent girls can often compensate for earlier inadequacies in their nutrition and health care (para 4.20).

The capacity to realize the right to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights means that women are better able to manage productive and reproductive life, allowing them to increase their economic participation. Such participation affects roles and responsibilities in domestic life and has an impact on family composition and structure. Traditional gender-based division of labour is often unsustainable and unfair in these new contexts, as the ICPD Programme of Action notes: “Traditional notions of gender-based division of parental and domestic functions and participation in paid labour force do not reflect current realities and aspirations” (para 5.1). The ICPD Programme of Action mentions the need for day care centres, facilities for breast-feeding mothers within the work premises, availability of kindergartens, part-time jobs, paid parental leave, paid maternity leave, flexible work schedules and larger measures of social security and protection. In addition to women’s economic

participation, family dynamics are also influenced by population dynamics such as migration of individual members of families and the emergence of new transnational or trans-regional situations that require a new look at gender relations in the household.

At the base of gender relations lies human sexuality and the ability of men and women to develop a respectful and balanced relationship, without impositions or sexual violence of any sort, fully respecting the physical integrity of the human body. These are practices and attitudes that need to be nurtured from the onset, particularly among boys and girls that are entering their teenage years. In that regard, integral and comprehensive sexuality education plays a central and major role.

Inclusion

The ICPD Programme of Action is inclusive by nature. It advocates inclusion of women in the social, economic and political life of their community and country, and recognizes that women are subjects of rights. If societies and/or social arrangements are to be sustainable, an element of social cohesion needs to be increasingly present. This necessitates recognizing members of the population that have been neglected, such as women, but also indigenous populations, persons with disabilities or older adults – a group with growing impact on demographics. In each of these cases the measures for inclusion have different characteristics and components, and they consist not only of acknowledgements of needs but also of contributions. From this perspective, each person is considered as an active agent and not simply as beneficiary of a paternalistic protection. However, it is also important to ensure that the idea of contribution is understood not only in

economic terms, and that the notion of inclusion goes beyond insertion into the labour market and the economic system at large. Social inclusion should be understood as the granting by society of fundamental rights and the freedom to choose one’s own lifestyle, without having to necessarily fit into predefined categories of normality or socially constructed stereotypes for specific groups or individuals.

Indigenous populations constitute a case in point. While it is fair to recognize their contributions to sustainable environmental management, thanks to their traditional knowledge, expertise and lifestyle, such recognition should not confine indigenous populations to a role as forest guardians or custodians of ancestral traditions. Too often, they are perceived as entitled to the protection of their traditional lifestyles in remote rural communities, yet discriminated against and excluded when migrating to urban contexts or, more generally, when interacting with the national political, economic, administrative and judicial

system. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the idea of a pluri-ethnic and multicultural state and its operationalization in public policies is a key issue.

Although the ICPD Programme of Action does not mention the issue, during the ICPD review process of 2014 one of the emerging issues was the recognition of another group that has historically suffered stigma and discrimination, which is the LGBTI population. Civil society organizations, academia and governments of the LAC region raised this issue during the 1st Regional Conference on Population and Development. There is an effort to include the sexual diversity perspective in public policies in order to remove barriers and improve access to health, education, employment, justice and welfare while also reducing harassment, morbidity and mortality. The region’s Montevideo Consensus includes a commitment to overcoming these obstacles and ending violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity, including hate crime.



Population dynamics and sustainable development in LAC

2

Fertility

The total fertility rate in Latin America has declined from 3.95 children per woman for the period 1980 to 1985 to 2.15 children per woman for the period 2010 to 2015. The region as a whole has reached replacement-level fertility rates. Unmet need for family planning has declined from 17.1 per cent in 1990 to 10.1 per cent in 2012, meaning that more women who want to avoid or space pregnancy are able to do so by using safe and effective modern methods of contraception. More women are thus able to regulate their fertility by choice, rather than by chance. With rare exceptions,⁵ since the International Conference on Population and Development of 1994, family planning policies and programmes in the region have respected the right of women to decide freely whether they want to use family planning methods or not. With Cairo, family planning programmes rejected past targets related to contraceptive prevalence rates and past notions that method choice was a matter for the medical profession; instead, family planning programmes embraced a human rights-based approach that emphasized the woman's choice (see Annex 2).

Age structure

Age structure has been affected by the region's demographic transition, notably the fall in fertility. The age group 0 to 14 years has been declining in proportion since the 1960s. The working age group 15 to 59 years will peak in 2035 at 437 million, to later decline, while persons older than 60 will increase in proportion, according to population projections. Older persons represented 5.6 per cent of the regional population in 1950 and 10 per cent in 2010 and are projected to represent 21 per cent in 2040 and 36 per cent in 2100. It is estimated that the age group of older than 60 will peak in 2080, with 241 million. This is why, from a long-term perspective, demographers in the region are interested in the analysis of low fertility and ageing societies.

Ageing is only part of the story, however. In some countries, large numbers of young working-age people have become part of the reason why the region was able to take advantage of the opportunities for economic growth at the turn of the millennium.

⁵ Perhaps the most blatant case of violation of reproductive rights has been that of the surgical contraception during the Fujimori Government in Peru during the late nineties and early 2000.

Demographic dividend

The region faces a double challenge: a) guaranteeing the rights of youth with regards to social services, socio-political participation and decent work; and b) planning for an ageing population based on research and data collection to inform policies, and reducing vulnerability through health services and social protection schemes. The challenges differ in different countries. Countries in the initial stages of the youth bulge could take advantage of the demographic window of opportunity. Countries that are already past that window of opportunity must turn to harnessing the benefits of ageing and addressing its challenges.

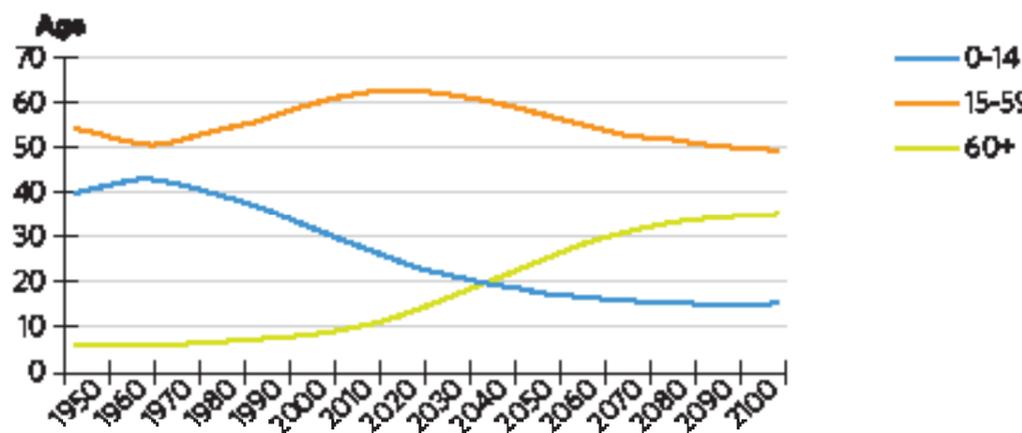
The dependency ratio in LAC started falling in the 1970s and will reach its lowest point around 2025. From a dependency ratio of 78.75 in 1980, the region has seen a smooth descent to 50.78 in 2015. The dependency ratios for children decreased from 70.77 to 39.34 in that same period. It is projected that total dependency ratio will reach its lowest point in 2025, reaching 49.1, and then

it will begin to increase as a result of the increase in the proportion of dependent older adults. The dependency ratio for older adults is projected to reach 15.21 in 2025 and go up to 23.4 in 2040.

One of the most problematic issues facing the region is that only an estimated 40 per cent of older persons have any form of social protection. Four out of 10 persons older than 65 received a pension or retirement benefit in 2009, on average. This is symptomatic of how ill-prepared the region is to grapple with an ageing population. The issue of the changing age structure and the rise in life expectancy at birth, which has gone from 56 years in 1960 to 74 years in 2012, has alerted analysts about the impact of ageing. This process is taking place at an accelerated pace. It is estimated that by the year 2040, the proportion of persons older than 60 will surpass that of persons under the age of 15.

The traditional recourse to women's domestic labour for providing care is not sustainable at this point in time. Families are increasingly unable to take full responsibility of caring for older adults, and thus it is important that public policies define

FIGURE 1: POPULATION BY AGE GROUPS IN LAC, 1950 TO 2100

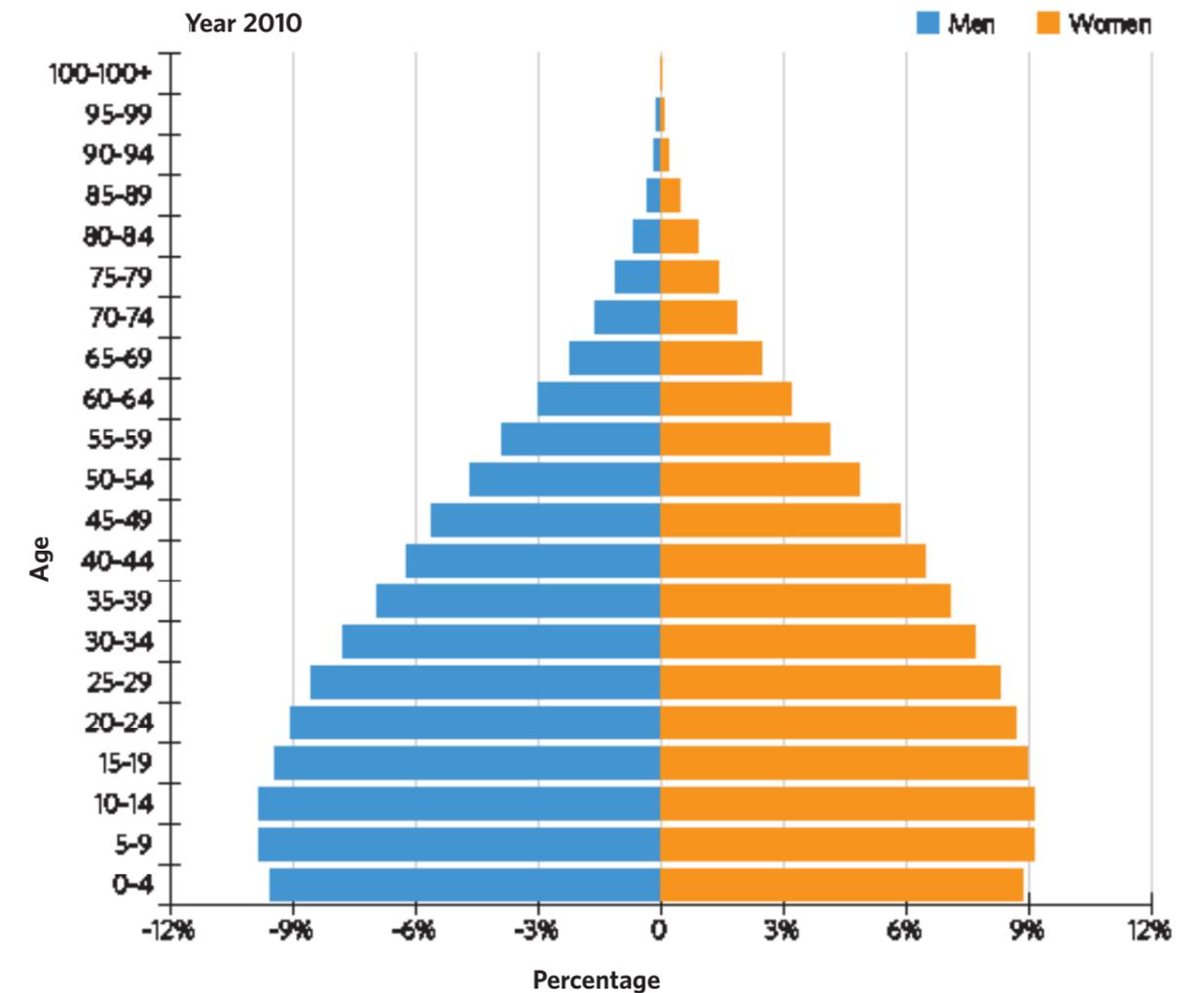


Source: http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/WEB_CEPALSTAT/Portada.asp

the roles of State, private sector, communities and families in this endeavour. Due to the increase in the dependency ratio of the elderly, there is a possibility that the burden of care will increase and fall on women, who will again have difficulty managing their integration into public life and the labour

market. Creating care systems that articulate the family, community, market and state will become an urgent priority and necessary in order to maintain the levels and contributions of women to their countries' economies.

FIGURE 2: AGE STRUCTURE IN LAC, 2010



Source: http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/WEB_CEPALSTAT/Portada.asp

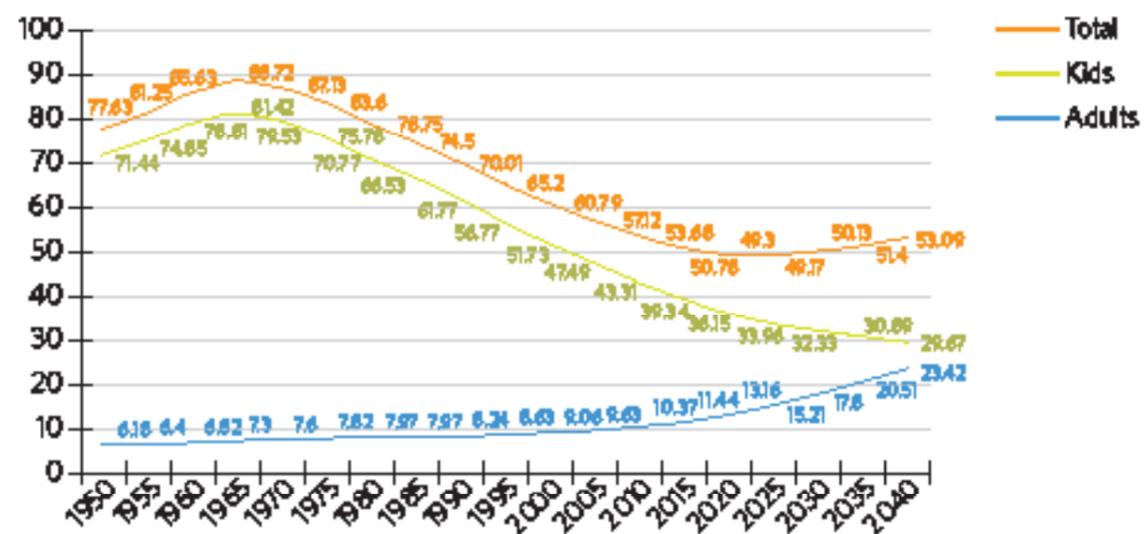
TABLE 1: PAID AND UNPAID HOURS OF WORK PER WEEK, WOMEN AND MEN

COUNTRY	TOTAL WORKING HOURS		PAID WORKING HOURS		UNPAID WORKING HOURS	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Brazil (2012)	43.51	42.94	19.91	36.87	23.60	6.07
Colombia (2012)	53.12	53.57	20.89	43.70	32.23	9.87
Ecuador (2012)	57.62	49.41	19.09	39.96	38.54	9.45
Guatemala (2011)	9.16	8.55	2.20	7.18	6.96	1.37
hours per day						
Honduras (2009)	9.52	7.23	2.41	5.85	4.11	1.39
hours per day						
Mexico (2009)	67.22	60.02	19.89	45.61	47.33	14.40
Panama (2011)	56.79	55.46	23.17	41.52	33.62	13.95
Peru (2010)	60.91	57.82	21.55	42.92	39.36	14.90
Uruguay (2007)	62.73	53.72	18.91	36.39	43.82	17.33

Source: http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/WEB_CEPALSTAT/Portada.asp

FIGURE 3: DEPENDENCY RATES IN LAC

Years and Percentage of Dependency Rate



Source: http://estadisticas.cepal.org/cepalstat/WEB_CEPALSTAT/Portada.asp

The continuous decrease of the demographic dependency ratio has allowed those that are economically active (productive) to increase their capacity to consume, save and invest. At a certain point and within certain socio-economic strata, this has helped move households out of poverty to become part of an emerging middle class. It is for this reason that demographers in the region are also interested in how to harness this demographic dividend, particularly in countries where the window of opportunity to reap the benefits will be open beyond the regional average. These countries include Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay, among others. In 2010, the regional population pyramid clearly indicated the increasing weight the young cohorts have in the age structure, which signals the urgency of looking at this age group.

In most of the other countries of the region, the demographic dividend is an argument that is losing relevance, and what exists in the region is largely a youth bulge that is already present and knocking at the door seeking opportunities for increased

employment, higher education and political and civic participation. Consequently, youth policies are generally driven by the need to respond to these demands in the short- and medium- term, rather than preparing for their emergence.

There are 35.4 million international migrants from Latin America and the Caribbean, most of them in the United States and in Spain. International migration has multiple determinants, but inequality and poverty have definitely been push factors behind the decision taken by many young people to look for better opportunities elsewhere. That outlet has had a mitigating effect on the lack of social inclusion and it has also created an income that today is of paramount importance for economic and social sustainability.

Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean increased steadily from \$21.9 billion in 2001 to \$64.9 billion in 2008. Remittances then slumped down to \$56.5 billion in 2009, as a result of the financial crisis, but they increased again to \$61.3 billion as of 2012. The countries where the remittances have the most weight (in order of

TABLE 2: MEAN YEARS OF SCHOOLING FOR FEMALES AND MALES

REGION	FEMALES 2002-2012	MALES 2000-2012
Arab States	4.9	6.7
East Asia and the Pacific	6.8	7.9
Europe and Central Asia	8.8	9.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.7	8.0
South Asia	3.5	5.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	3.7	5.4

Source: UNDP Human Development Index Data Base

higher to lower percentage of GNP) are Haiti, Guyana, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Guatemala, Belize, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Paraguay. Countries less dependent on remittances include Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Trinidad and Tobago. It would be in the region's best interest to properly manage both migration and remittances because they are key pillars of its sustainable development.

Despite the daunting challenges presented by these changing age structures, two very positive developments have taken place: a) the working age population is now more educated than before, and b) the economic participation of women has brought skills and knowledge into the system that had been subsumed in non-remunerated domestic labour.

The mean years of schooling for LAC in 2012 was 7.9 years, second to Europe and Central Asia and above that of East Asia. Economic opportunities that arose could be seized, in part because there were human resources adequate for meeting the required roles. The labour market has benefited from a population entering its economically active years with more skills and capacities than in the past. Also, gender parity in schooling has been a given for some time, so these mean years of education have impacted women and men, girls and boys. Estimates indicate that the net enrollment rate in secondary education has been steadily increasing. Among school-aged children, it has gone from 57 per cent males and 60 per cent females in 1999 to 71 per cent males and 75 per cent females in 2012. The gender parity rate in secondary enrolment has favoured girls for quite some time at 1.054 in 1999 and 1.066 in 2012. Increased coverage of secondary education has not been gender biased, to the detriment of girls. Nevertheless, in the

regional averages of mean years of schooling, a slight difference between men and women is still recorded. The mean of schooling years in LAC is 7.7 for females compared to 8.0 for males.

Important differences are found between countries. The 10 countries with the lowest mean years of schooling for females are Haiti (4.9), Honduras (5.5), Guatemala (5.6), Nicaragua (5.8), El Salvador (6.5), Colombia (7.1), Brazil (7.2), Dominican Republic (7.5), Ecuador (7.6) and Surinam (7.7). The countries with highest degree of gender inequality in mean years of schooling, in detriment of females, are Peru (1.1 more for males), Honduras (0.9), Guatemala (0.8), Surinam (0.7) and Mexico (0.7). There are 11 countries where females have higher mean years of schooling than males, from least to greatest difference: Argentina, Uruguay, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Brazil, Jamaica, Paraguay and Guyana. In Guyana, females have 1.8 more mean years of schooling than males.

Women and the gender bonus

Though gender parity exists in schooling, this has not necessarily translated into equal economic participation. The proportion of women in the economically active population is lower than men, and women still have not gained equality in salary levels or in access to decent employment. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of women have become part of the economically active population. Women's contribution to the economy both at macro level and at the household level has been described in studies as the 'gender bonus'.⁶ One study estimated through a simulation exercise

that the incorporation of women into the labour market has as a consequence a significant increase in household income. Women's income was calculated to represent between 60 to 90 per cent of the mean income of men, and the study showed that loss of such income in two-parent households would increase poverty levels between 6 to 22 per cent in 14 countries that were subjects of the study.⁷

The number of women estimated to be part of the economically active population (EAP) in 2015 is 127 million, compared to 34.5 million in 1980. This significant increase in economically active women has had a major impact on economics, society, politics and culture. Economic participation of women has gone from 46.8 per cent in 1997 to 52.3 per cent in 2010. This increase in the proportion of women that become part of the economically active population is greater among women from the higher quintiles.

Increased economic participation by women is part of the demographic transition, and is closely correlated to falling fertility, as well documented. However, inequality persists. Access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights has been limited by important disparities. Not all women have the choice to take advantage of modern methods of contraception in order to regulate when and if to become pregnant. There are pending issues related to equity and diversity. Also, the type of contraceptive mix is often inadequate to respond to the diversity of demands and requirements young people and women in reproductive age have at present. The need is increasing for adequate supply of relevant contraceptive options.⁸ Women are seeking a wider range of choices. Some developments include the grading of hormone doses for hormonal methods, and use of the female condom. It is also necessary

to incorporate voluntary male surgical contraception.

A pressing issue is adolescent sexual and reproductive health. The average age of first intercourse has been dropping and changes have been occurring in cultural patterns of relationships, e.g. less stable couples and increased number of sexual partners. Meeting the needs of adolescents is part of the new complexity of citizen care. Another issue to be addressed is access to sexual and reproductive health information and services at the local level; an equity issue that also includes improving commodity distribution systems to local distributors in poor areas. LAC countries have made significant progress in the purchase and storage of commodities yet often fail to reach the territories where women with unmet need for family planning live.

If we consider reproductive life to include sexuality, pregnancy, delivery and infant and child care and education and reflect on how these activities or events affect our capacity to engage in productive and income generating activities, then investing in sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights gains another dimension. Such an investment allows women and men in the workforce to obtain a more optimum balance between their reproductive and productive roles, including how they organize their households and use their time. This view has been accounted for in social security and labour legislation, policies and programmes, through conciliatory policies. Family planning as well as arrangements such as maternal and paternal leave and the incorporation of day care centres and lactation rooms in the workplace are evidence of such an approach. Such arrangements are optimized, of course, when complemented with a more gender equal culture with co-responsibility of men and women in the whole process of reproductive life,

⁶ Martínez, Ciro. Bono De Género De América Latina Y El Caribe: Conceptos, Metodología Y Aplicaciones. Report. December 2012.

⁷ Ibid., citing Ros (2009).

⁸ Position Paper: UNFPA LACRO ICPD Beyond 2014, Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office. UNFPA, 2013.

particularly in infant and child care.

The challenge is, however, that a large portion of the workforce, particularly women, remains in the informal sector where there is little or no regard for conciliatory legal and policy frameworks. Further, the gender culture places a disproportionate burden of domestic labour in the hands of girls and women.

Rather than workplace solutions, there is a much greater reliance on family and community networks and support systems. This sometimes works well but on other occasions the consequences are questionable. For example, a significant percentage of young people are qualified as those who 'do not study or work', the so-called NINIs. The percentage of young people who did not study or work in 18 countries ranged from 12.7 in Bolivia to 27.5 per cent in Honduras, according to an ILO study in 2009. Among girls and young women included in this category, however, 71.4 per cent are in fact working: they are engaged in non-remunerated domestic labour. These adolescents and young women are often taking care of young siblings and/or their own child (as teenage mothers) and performing other household chores, so as to support their mother's or even grandmother's income-generating activities. Such support has the beneficial short-term effect of allowing the breadwinners to go about their business; in the medium and longer term, however, this situation diminishes the probability that teenage girls will develop the skills and knowledge necessary to increase their human capital. The issue of reproductive and productive life includes the development of the necessary skills and knowledge for productive work, i.e. development of human capital. In this regard, adolescent pregnancy can be seen to have an adverse effect on the probability that adolescent mothers will develop their full

potential for a productive life. For adolescent girls and women, their reproductive lives may hinder the capacity to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for more productive lives. Policies must take into consideration not only women who are already participating in the economy but also adolescent girls and young people 'who do not work', if the objective is to prepare the workforce of the future. The targets of SDG 4 on quality education address these concerns:

- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;
- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university;
- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.⁹

Adolescents and youth

The youth bulge calls for efforts to utilize the capacities of governments, civil society and the private sector to harness the benefits of the demographic dividend. Analysts and decision makers are keenly interested in relevant interventions that will benefit adolescents and youth. Yet major challenges face these age groups. Societies must provide adolescents and youth equal opportunities to develop their capacities to the fullest extent, and do so recognizing adolescents and youth are subjects of rights. From a population perspective, this section considers the challenges

faced in setting a policy agenda that will contribute to the well-being of adolescents and youth.

Countries throughout the region have taken important strides towards building a pluralistic notion of citizenry and, during the recent decades of imperfect yet improved democratic institutions, new subjects have emerged and demanded recognition. Indigenous peoples, workers, women, youth, afrodescendants, LGBTI persons and other specific population groups have influenced national policies and legislation in important ways. In doing so, social policies in particular have evolved by

incorporating new approaches to social inclusion efforts. For example, the intercultural approach to maternal health is very important in territories with large indigenous populations. Health service providers have been trained to connect with communities and offer services in the indigenous language, with facilities and practices that are more amicable to indigenous women. However, creating policies for adolescents is more difficult, because that age group has less autonomy, fewer skills and less knowledge to act and be agent of some form of societal change.

⁹ <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>



Adolescent sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights



Adolescent-serving organizations tend to take the role of 'protectors' of adolescents rather than as 'enablers' of their active participation in decisions affecting their lives. Also, youth platforms are usually focused on the issues of older youth, such as employment, participation and tertiary education and, as a general rule, they leave adolescent issues behind.

It is important that policies directed at adolescent girls and young people are based on an integrated view, including education, health, work, violence and conflict with the law. Additionally, they must underline the importance of the rights to reproductive health, sexual health and gender equality and of girl's empowerment.

Adolescents in LAC are engaging in sexual activity with little comprehensive sexuality education and lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services (which should include information, counselling and contraceptives). At the same time, gender relations are often marked by sexism and violence in the face of which girls feel powerless and unprotected. Policies for adolescents are often marred by a moralistic rather than an evidence-based approach. Often, public opinion is in a state of

denial when it comes to adolescent sexual relations.

Of the menaces that young people face, two are particularly disconcerting and have the potential to seriously disrupt the building blocks of a young person's life trajectory: violence and conflict with the law. These elements are closely linked to the absence, weakness and corruptibility of public institutions, in combination with the existence of criminal organizations and poverty and the absence of opportunities for young people. Together, these factors represent one of the principal knots that needs to be untied in order to take the path of sustainable development. They are addressed in the targets of SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions:

- Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates;
- End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children;
- Promote the rule of law... and ensure equal access to justice for all;
- By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and

arms flows... and combat all forms of organized crime;

- Reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.¹⁰

Population mobility and disadvantaged adolescents

As mentioned in the analysis, population mobility that involves the most disadvantaged groups of society often has similar characteristics to the phenomena of violence and the lack of the rule of law and may be closely related to it. People that take the option of migrating without complying with legal requirements, some claiming the status of refugees, are often pushed out of their countries of origin because of the insecurity and the violence. These migrants, particularly young women and children, are exposed to situations of extreme vulnerability.

Migrant women and girls face multiple forms of violence, including murder, in countries of transit and destination exerted by various perpetrators (e.g. traffickers, police, immigration authorities, military, gangs, common criminals, drug dealers and even other migrants). They are especially vulnerable to sexual violence. A study by Amnesty International shows that sexual violence against migrant women passing through Mexico to the United States is a common practice of traffickers and police, affecting 6 out of 10 women traveling clandestinely.

Violence against women is a continuum that occurs in the countries of origin, transit and destination for the migration process. It is critical to address this phenomenon in all countries involved with strategies

to strengthen the protection of women and girls through a comprehensive approach integrating prevention, care, punishment of perpetrators and reparation.

In this regard, countries of the region have made significant progress in legislation, regulations, national plans and protocols to address the problem of gender-based violence (GBV), including domestic violence, sexual violence, trafficking and femicide. Recent years have seen the generation of comprehensive care models and protection networks and the launch of information campaigns in several countries. Efforts also have been made to train service providers and decision makers in the health and justice sectors and increase the availability of information on GBV and related themes. Despite these advances and because of the magnitude and complexity of the problem, major challenges to implementation of these frameworks still exist. Critical barriers to implementation include lack of funding, difficulties in multi-sector coordination to implement interventions, and lack of standardized information to compare data and avoid underreporting and duplication in the region.

The right to sexual and reproductive health for teens between the age of 14 and 19 is a particularly controversial issue in the region that is reflected in the legal barriers that adolescents face in terms of accessing reproductive health commodities. In the Caribbean, for example, the age of consent for sexual activity is 16 yet the legal age for access to reproductive health services without a parent's written permission is 18. When there is no recognition of the existence of consensual sexual relations between teens at the age of 14 or 15, the institutional framework leaves an important group of teenagers out of the nation's sexual and reproductive health services.

¹⁰ Ibid.

The best approach to recognizing the rights of adolescents and youth is a life-cycle approach. The stages of early and late adolescence should be well-structured in terms of a typology of situations that affect these age groups, and then should look at youth beyond the teenage years, also with their specificities. Types of interventions developed will most probably depend on a combination of actions in at least two areas: a) universal services such as education and health and b) special protection measures that intervene mainly when situations of risk and vulnerability occur and it is in the public interest to avoid further deterioration. In the area of health, preventive measures have a critical role to play.

Issues of reproductive rights are necessary complements and enablers of other equally important rights, such as education and work, as well as a life of dignity in which every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Life cycle and life trajectories

Taking the life-cycle approach into consideration, what measures can be implemented to allow adolescents and youth to follow their life trajectories, and find a position and role in society that will embrace their diversity, activate their potential contribution and allow them to realize their dreams? A pressing issue in the region is the notorious difficulty of strengthening the 'package' of interventions needed to guarantee an enabling environment for adolescents and youth. This is a complex endeavor but a package of interventions must address a number of concerns.

The Latin America and the Caribbean region is

home to 111,047,000 adolescents aged 10 to 19 in (Table 3). Most live in Mexico (23.5 million) and Brazil (34.2 million). According to an analysis of the results of selected recent Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) and other surveys, the proportion of women who had their first sexual relation by 15 years of age shows a range from 5.3% to 16.8%. According to Mexico's National Health and Nutrition Survey, 20.5 per cent of women aged 12 to 19 have had sexual relations. In this same set of surveys, the percentage of women who have had sexual relations before or by the age of 18 ranges from 39.8 per cent in Honduras to 53.8 per cent in Paraguay. For 50 to 60 per cent of adolescents in LAC, sexual relations are a concrete reality and thus their right to sexual health is of high importance.

As an indication of the safety of sexual relations, condom use in the last high-risk sexual relation among youth between 15 and 24 years of age shows significant gender differences. Three countries, where men and women could be compared, show a significant gap that is always to the detriment of women's safety. The capacity of women to negotiate condom use and their knowledge of the risks are probably lower than men, and this adds to their vulnerability. Men and boys in the Caribbean seem to be more prepared and conscious of the need to use condoms, most probably as a result of the higher HIV prevalence rates and the condom programming that has taken place in order to control the epidemic. Over 75 per cent of HIV infections are transmitted through unprotected sexual intercourse and from mother to child during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

The percentage of teenage mothers (per cent of women aged 15 to 19 who have had children or are currently pregnant) in the region is an important aspect of the status of reproductive health and rights. Only a fifth of adolescent pregnancies in

TABLE 3: DEMOGRAPHICS OF ADOLESCENT POPULATION AGED 10 TO 19 IN LAC (2012)

COUNTRY	ADOLESCENTS AS % TOTAL POPULATION	ADOLESCENT POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	ADOLESCENT FERTILITY RATE (15 TO 19)
Guatemala	23.5	3,537	97.2
Honduras	22.6	1,793	83.9
El Salvador	22.6	1,425	75.9
Bolivia	22.0	2,308	71.8
Nicaragua	22.0	1,319	100.7
Haiti	22.0	2,243	41.9
Guyana	21.7	173	88.4
Belize	21.6	70	71.3
Paraguay	20.9	1,395	66.9
Jamaica	20.2	560	70.0
Mexico	19.5	23,259	63.3
Dominican Republic	19.4	1,997	99.5
Peru	19.4	5,804	50.7
Ecuador	19.1	2,966	77.0
Grenada	18.8	20	35.3
Venezuela	18.5	5,537	83.2
Colombia	18.4	8,797	68.5
St. Vincent Grenadines	18.3	20	54.5
Panama	18.2	690	78.5
Suriname	18.2	97	35.1
St. Lucia	17.8	32	56.3
Antigua Barbuda	17.7	16	49.2
Costa Rica	17.3	830	60.7
Brazil	17.2	34,205	70.7
Argentina	16.4	6,733	54.3
Bahamas	16.2	60	28.4
Chile	15.6	2,724	55.2
Uruguay	15.3	521	58.3

Source: UN Population Division: <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>

COUNTRY	ADOLESCENTS AS % TOTAL POPULATION	ADOLESCENT POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	ADOLESCENT FERTILITY RATE (15 TO 19)
Barbados	13.4	38	48.3
Trinidad Tobago	13.3	177	34.8
Cuba	12.7	1,430	43.0
LAC	18.0	111,047	68.6

Sources: UN Population Division: <https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/>

TABLE 4: AGE OF SEXUAL INITIATION

COUNTRY	% BEFORE 15	% BEFORE 18
Dominican Republic	16.8	47.7
Cuba	12.9	--
Costa Rica	12.3	--
Paraguay	11.9	53.1
Colombia	10.9	48.7
Suriname	9.6	--
Barbados	9.4	--
Honduras	9.3	39.8
Bolivia	8.4	42.0
Peru	8.0	42.0
Guyana	8.0	43.1
St. Lucia	5.8	--
Belize	5.3	--

Sources: Encuesta Nacional de Salud y Nutrición, México 2012. Encuesta Nacional de Demografía y Salud Sexual Reproductiva, Paraguay 2008. Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar, Perú, 2013. Encuesta Nacional de Demografía y Salud, Honduras 2012. Demographic and Health Survey, Guyana, 2009. Encuesta de Demografía y Salud, República Dominicana, 2013. Encuesta Nacional de Demografía y Salud, Colombia, 2010. MICS Belize 2011, MICS Barbados 2012, MICS Costa Rica 2011, MICS Cuba 2011, St. Lucia MICS 2012, MICS Suriname 2010.

TABLE 5: USE OF CONDOM IN THE LAST RISKY SEXUAL RELATIONS AMONG POPULATION AGED 15 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE (%)

COUNTRY	MEN	WOMEN
Bolivia	48.5 (2008)	--
Guyana	78.2 (2009)	55.8 (2009)
Haiti	66.4 (2012)	55.1 (2012)
Honduras	67.1 (2012)	36.4 (2012)
Jamaica	79.2 (2012)	57.1 (2012)
Belize	--	64.6 (2011)
Colombia	--	45.4 (2010)
Peru	--	31.6 (2012)
Surinam	--	55.5 (2010)

Source: CEPALSTAT

Latin America are intentional, compared with 67 per cent of those in Africa and 54 per cent in Asia. Among adolescents younger than 15, data on pregnancies is less solid, but from the analysis of consecutive surveys in all regions, LAC is the only region where births to mothers under 15 year old shows an increase of around 10 per cent between the two surveys. Adolescent pregnancy in girls under 14 years old should be prevented regardless of whether the adolescents consent to sexual intercourse themselves. The sexual relationship that leads to the pregnancy of a girl under 14 is in most cases classifiable as sexual violence and is therefore punishable. Evidence shows that pregnancy in girls less than 15 years old quadruples the risk of dying from causes related to pregnancy, delivery and postpartum complications, when compared with women aged 15 to 19.

In certain contexts and countries, it should also be noted that there is a correlation between early marriage and teenage motherhood. Though data is

not available for all countries, available information shows that the percentage of women married before the age of 18 in the following countries is quite significant: Dominican Republic (41 per cent), Nicaragua (41 per cent) and Cuba (40 per cent). Both the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua are above the average of sub-Saharan Africa (40 per cent). In the Dominican Republic, 12 per cent of women are married or in union before the age of 15. Table 6 shows data concerning teenage mothers compared with the data on early marriage. Early marriage is slightly above the world average of 27 per cent (excluding China), with 29 per cent in LAC. In the case of those first married or in union before 15, it is slightly below the world average of 8 per cent, with 7 per cent in LAC. Cases of child marriage are less common in the region and the practice of betrothal of girls to older men is not accounted for and probably very rare. Indigenous populations have or have had as practice early marriage, and adolescents are customarily married after the onset of puberty, following traditional practice, as

anthropologists have observed on several occasions. In the Caribbean, particularly in countries with a relatively large West Indian population, early marriage and betrothal continue and should be considered in an in-depth analysis.

Incidence of early marriage and teenage motherhood is closely related to two of the key goals of the ICPD Programme of Action, to reduce maternal and infant death. Maternal mortality in Latin America and the Caribbean is the leading cause of death among women aged 15 to 19, and the risk of infant mortality is also higher when the mother is an adolescent (WHO, 2010).

The issue here is to guarantee the rights of women to choose if, when and how many children to have and to promote wanted pregnancies among young women, at an appropriate age. In the trajectories of life young people desire and plan, guarantees for safe motherhood should have an important place. The average maternal mortality rate in LAC is 80 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, according to 2011 estimates by WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank.¹¹ Gaps between countries are significant. The estimated maternal mortality rate was 29 deaths per 100,000 live births in Uruguay compared with 120 in Guatemala in 2010. In the English-speaking Caribbean, Guyana has a maternal

TABLE 6: TEENAGE MOTHERS AND EARLY MARRIAGE, PERCENTAGE

COUNTRY	TEENAGE MOTHERS %	EARLY MARRIAGE (BEFORE 18) %
Nicaragua	25.2 (2007)	41 (2006)
Honduras	24.0 (2012)	34 (2011-12)
El Salvador	22.8 (2008)	25 (2008)
Guatemala	21.8 (2009)	30 (2008-9)
Dominican Republic	20.6 (2008)	41 (2009-10)
Colombia	19.5 (2010)	23 (2010)
Guyana	18.0 (2009)	23 (2009)
Bolivia	17.9 (2008)	22 (2008)
Belize*	16.9 (2011)	29 (2011) MICS
Jamaica***	14.9 (2011)	8 (2011)
Haiti	14.2 (2012)	18 (2012)
Peru	13.2 (2012)	19 (2012)
Paraguay	11.6 (2008)	18 (2004)
Argentina**	11.6 (2014) MICS	--
Suriname	--	23 (2010) MICS
Trinidad and Tobago	--	10.7 (2006) MICS

Source: World Bank Data Bank unless MICS, where noted.

¹¹ Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013. Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/112682/2/9789241507226_eng.pdf?ua=1

mortality rate of 280 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Finally, Haiti exhibits the highest ratio in the region, with 350 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Approximately 95 per cent of maternal mortality in LAC can be prevented by using effective interventions currently available in the countries. Some 93.7 per cent (PAHO / WHO, 2012) of births are attended institutionally, and it is estimated that 95 per cent of pregnant women received prenatal care. A significant proportion of maternal deaths are caused by unsafe abortions, which represents a serious public health concern in the region, especially among young women. In Brazil, Colombia and Peru, one of every 10 women who are hospitalized due to complications of abortion is less than 20 years old. Similarly, in four selected countries in the region, cumulative maternal mortality (2000-2008) due to pregnancies ending in abortion was 9.91 per cent in women under 19 years of age. In 2008, the annual rate of unsafe abortion estimated for the region was 31 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15 to 44, similar to that of sub-Saharan Africa.

Trends in teenage pregnancy emphasize the importance of the universalization of comprehensive sexuality education in the region. Some countries exhibit significant progress such as Argentina,

Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador and Uruguay. Other countries ignore the issue, do not address it or show very little progress, as is the case of most countries in Central America. Most LAC countries have signed a variety of international declarations and agreements in which comprehensive sexuality education is considered a human right, in particular for girls, boys, adolescents and youth – notably the ICPD Programme of Action and the Montevideo Consensus. It is also considered a strategy that contributes to human and social development through overcoming inequalities. Nevertheless, there remain many challenges to overcome in order to achieve consensus and include comprehensive sexuality education as an integral part of quality education.

Violence

The life and condition of adolescents and youth, particularly those from the lowest socio-economic strata, is associated with the troubling and prevailing violence in the region, which, as mentioned earlier, is one of the cross-cutting elements that threaten the general sustainability of societies. Violence is having a devastating impact on young people, among young men in particular, as shown by the data.

TABLE 7: INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE RATE

REGION	HOMICIDE RATE	COUNT
Americas	16.3	157,000
Africa	12.5	135,000
World	6.2	437,000
Europe	3.0	22,000
Oceania	3.0	1,100
Asia	2.9	122,000

Source: UNODC Report. See <https://www.unodc.org/gsh/>

In the Americas, the 10 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with the highest homicide rates in 2015 included: El Salvador (103), Venezuela (90), Honduras (57), Jamaica (45), Guatemala (30), Brazil (26), Colombia (25), Dominican Republic (17), Mexico (13), and Costa Rica (11) and Panama (11). By comparison, homicide rates in Europe range from 0.5 in Austria at the low end to 7.5 in Lithuania at the high end.

The homicide rate is highest among young men. According to the UNDP Human Development Report for Latin America 2013–2014, lethal violence affects young men in a disproportionate way. “The homicide rate among young men is more than double that of the total population – approximately 70 per 100,000 young men,” the report states. This is a phenomenon with multiple determinants, where poverty and inequality play important roles. In addition, such violence is related to society’s hegemonic constructs of masculinities. In other words, domination, power and masculinity are crucial elements of the explanation and must

inform the fight against violence and crime. This cultural construction needs to be addressed and understood in order to develop policies, strategies, methodologies and programmes for social and cultural transformation towards equality and non-violence.

Conflict with the law is an issue that affects young men more than young women. Most of those incarcerated are men. The percentage of women in the incarcerated population ranged from 3 per cent in the Dominican Republic to 10 per cent in El Salvador, among the Latin American countries in 2011. In the Caribbean, percentages of women were lower, ranging from 1 per cent in St. Lucia and St. Kitts to 6 per cent in Trinidad and Tobago. There is not an abundance of data on how the incarcerated population is distributed among age groups, but the data available indicates that the proportion of young men between the ages of 18 to 30 is significant. Peru is a case in point.

The situation of the incarcerated population should

TABLE 8: INCARCERATED POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX IN PERU, PERCENTAGE

AGE GROUP	MEN %	WOMEN %
18 - 24	17.2	12.1
25 - 29	19.1	15.8
30 - 34	17.7	17.2
35 - 39	14.4	15.7
40 - 44	11.0	13.8
45 - 49	8.4	11.6
50 - 54	5.6	7.2
55 - 59	3.3	3.8
60 +	3.3	2.8

Source: Informe Estadístico Penitenciario, Noviembre 2013, Perú

become an issue for special protection measures. For example, correctional facilities are often badly managed, fraught with corrupt practices, overpopulated and operate with little oversight; these facilities are becoming a breeding ground for a new generation of violent victimizers. Also, there are an estimated 500,000 youth gangs members in the region, with almost 50 per cent of them in Central America. Most gang members are male, which in part explains why most victimizers and victims are male.

Violence against women is on the rise. While most homicides affect young men, femicide is growing at a faster rate than homicide: in Guatemala, murders of women increased by 141 per cent compared with 68 per cent for men (2004); in El Salvador, murders of women increased by 111 per cent compared with 40 per cent for men (2006); in Honduras, murders of women increased by 166 per cent compared with 40 per cent for men (2007). Gender inequities and discrimination, which cause and perpetuate gender violence in normal times, persist and even increase in times of crisis. The 2011 Global Burden of Armed Violence study, conducted in 111 countries and territories, concluded that most femicides occur in the domestic sphere and the perpetrator is the current or former partner in just under half of the cases – both globally and in the Latin American sub-region. However, women are also victims of femicide outside of their relationships. In countries with high femicide rates, women also run a higher risk of becoming targets of violence outside the private sphere. In Guatemala, 90 per cent of femicides are committed with small arms, creating a point of intersection between the proliferation of small arms and femicide.

Special protection measures for preventing gender-based violence and protecting girls and women

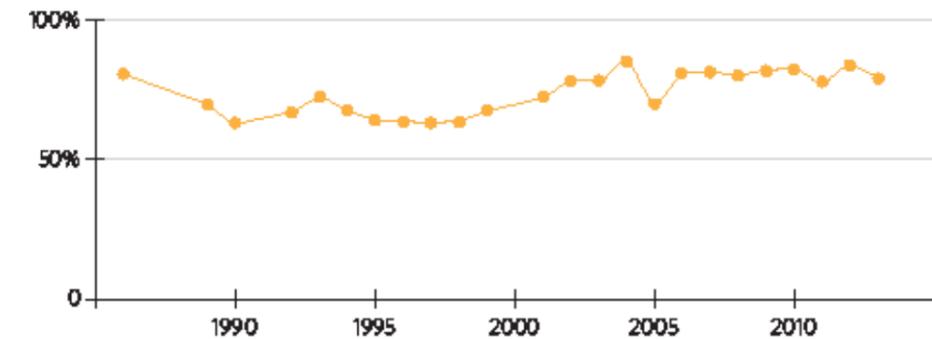
who are victims of violence should be part of the package of interventions for young people. Protection policies should take into account that gender equality grows in areas with greater security and where there is a presence of social protection systems. In contrast, there is often discrimination and subordination of women and girls in areas without government presence, in networks of organized crime and in family groups that segregate women and impose barriers to their empowerment. In such circumstances, women are relegated to spaces of subordination associated with domestic spaces of reproduction, child-raising and care, as well as a type of contribution to the economy that does not include decision-making power. Sexual violence is the major symptomatic expression of the subordination.

The empowerment and development of girls is particularly important in the effort to prevent discrimination and violence. Girls will become young women with better chances of breaking the patterns of inter-generationally transmitted gender inequality if they have access to education and sexual and reproductive health services, protection against abuse and sexual violence, and opportunities for participation.

Education

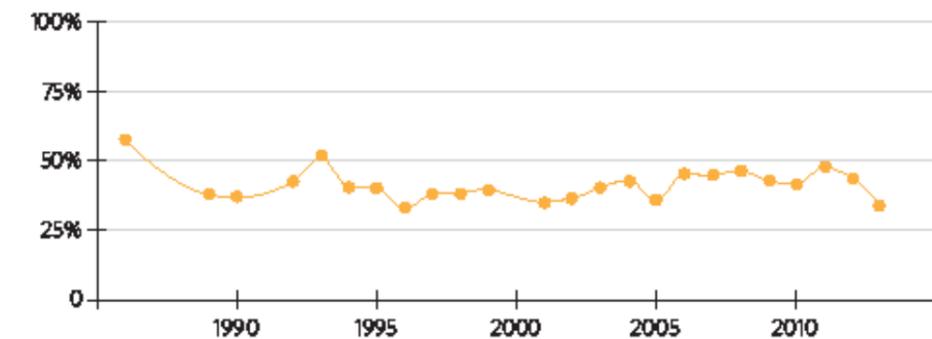
Secondary education has an important role in the life of adolescents and is a key intervention to safeguard the human rights of adolescents and their trajectory to a life of dignity. Figure 4 looks at inequality among adolescents attending school in Honduras, comparing the upper quintile and the lower quintile of household income. Honduras has the lowest percentage of adolescents aged 13 to 17 attending school in the region.

FIGURE 4: UPPER QUINTILE ATTENDING SCHOOL IN HONDURAS (13-17 YEARS OLD)



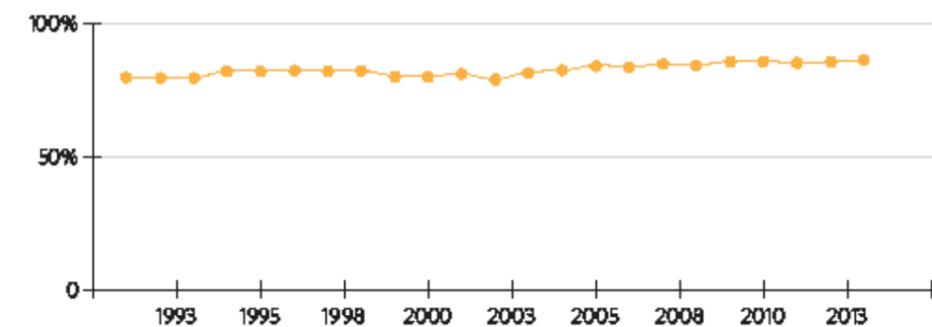
Percentage of people reported to have attended school in the reference week.
 Note: Excludes individuals not attending during vacation.
 Source: Sociometro-BID.

FIGURE 5: LOWER QUINTILE ATTENDING SCHOOL IN HONDURAS (13-17 YEARS OLD)



Percentage of people reported to have attended school in the reference week.
 Note: Excludes individuals not attending during vacation.
 Source: Sociometro-BID.

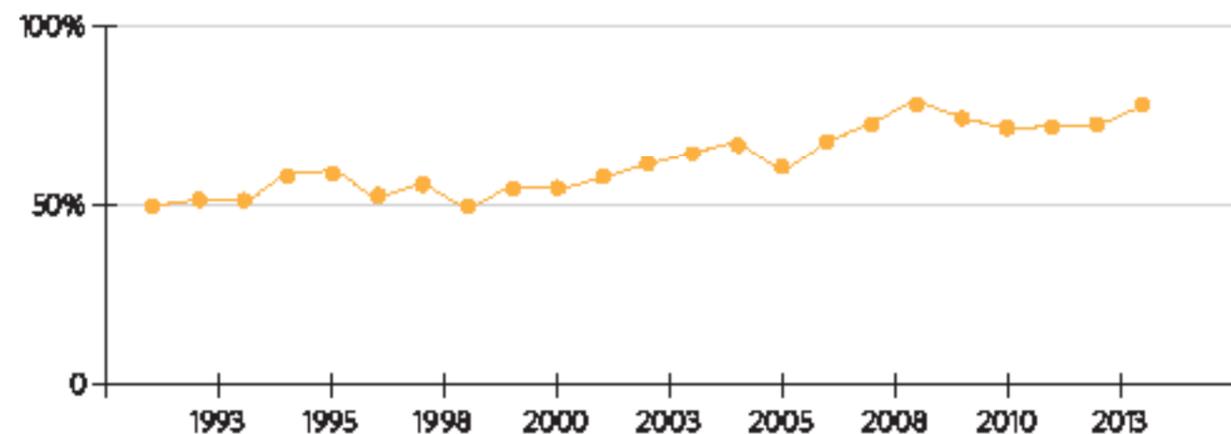
FIGURE 6: PERCENTAGE OF URBAN 13 TO 17 YEARS OLDS ATTENDING SCHOOL IN COLOMBIA



Percentage of people reported to have attended school in the reference week.
 Note: Excludes individuals not attending during vacation.
 Source: Sociometro-BID.

Figures 4 and 5 display the disparities that exist between wealthier and lower-income adolescents. This is a serious challenge to sustainable development given the abundant research demonstrating that education is the most important enabler and fulcrum of social mobility. It is an

axiological human right, from which a number of other human rights derive. Disparities observed in terms of poverty quintiles are also present when urban and rural data are compared, as in the case of Colombia.



Percentage of people reported to have attended school in the reference week. Note: Excludes individuals not attending during vacation. Source: Sociometro-BID.

Child labour

Population dynamics related to poverty and child labour are linked to lack of attendance and also to lack of enrolment. As well known, child labour can be a factor that hinders the capacity of children and adolescents to complete their basic education or to fully take advantage of their learning opportunities. It is most pervasive among the poorest households; in all cases in the region, the percentage of child labour is higher in the poorest quintile than the richest. As Table 9 shows, in Latin America and the Caribbean countries, child labour is more common

among boys than it is among girls. The most noticeable exception is Peru, which has the highest percentage of total child labour (34 per cent) with 31 per cent males and 36 per cent females. The five countries with the highest percentage of child labour, include: Peru (34 per cent), Paraguay (28 per cent), Bolivia and Guatemala (26 per cent each) and Haiti (24 per cent). In rural areas of Bolivia, child labour reaches 65 per cent and in Peru 61 per cent. This phenomenon is linked to the communitarian traditions of Andean peasant or indigenous communities. The Arab States and LAC are the regions where the gender gap in detriment of boys is the widest. The regional average of child

labour¹² is low in LAC compared with the situation in other regions. Table 9 shows the figures at regional level.

In rural areas, the availability of secondary education services is also wanting because the population is often dispersed in small villages and in geographic

TABLE 9: PERCENTAGE OF CHILD LABOUR (MALE AND FEMALE) BY REGION

COUNTRY	COUNTRY	FEMALE %	MALE %
Sub-Saharan Africa	25	25	25
Eastern and Southern Africa	25	24	27
West and Central Africa	25	25	25
Middle East and North Africa	9	7	11
South Asia	12	12	13
East Asia and Pacific	8	7	10
Latin America and Caribbean	11	9	13
CEE/CIS	5	4	7

Source: UNICEF Global Data Base. Child Labor. Updated 2014.

areas where access is difficult. Rural education and bilingual education for indigenous populations are difficult challenges to address. In the case of the adolescent girls, the added factor of safety and protection becomes an issue.

Improvements in accessibility and equity, as well as the quality of secondary education, could go a long way in facilitating a number of other protection and promotions services destined for adolescents, such as preventive health care, vocational orientation, safety and comprehensive sexuality education.

We would be making an extremely important contribution to sustainable development in the region affecting a string of SDG targets, ICPD objectives and the Montevideo Consensus resolutions if we were able to integrate a package of interventions for adolescents and youth. This articulated and cohesive package would include a combination of universal services and special protection services, whereby we could reduce and prevent violence, adolescent pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, unsafe abortions, maternal mortality and morbidity among young people, conflict with the law, school dropout, child labour and other cross-cutting vulnerabilities.

¹² Percentage of children 5–14 years old involved in child labour at the moment of the survey. A child is considered to be involved in child labour under the following conditions: (a) children 5–11 years old who, during the reference week, did at least one hour of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household chores, or (b) children 12–14 years old who, during the reference week, did at least 14 hours of economic activity or at least 28 hours of household chores.



Cross-cutting vulnerabilities



The issues, trends and information presented above must be viewed in reference to the more general threats to sustainability that cut across countries and sub-regions. These include issues related to social inequality and cohesiveness, economic vulnerability and exposure to natural hazards, patterns of production and consumption, citizen security and corruption.

Inequality, discrimination and racism

Latin American and the Caribbean is widely known as the most unequal region in the world. There are stark disparities and a worrisome concentration of income, despite progress. Between 2000 and 2009, the region's Gini coefficient decreased from 0.54 to 0.50, indicating a reduction in inequality, but it remained at 0.50 as of 2013. This is far behind benchmarks such as the Scandinavian countries, where the Gini coefficient is 0.25. Inequalities of income in Latin America and the Caribbean are correlated to ethnicity, gender, age and area of residence.

Groups such as indigenous people, afrodescendants, rural populations, children, adolescents, youth and women are disproportionately affected by poverty compared with other social groups. The understanding of inequality in the region would be incomplete if racism and discrimination are not factored into the equation. Racism and discrimination have affected the lives of an estimated 45 million indigenous people in the region, belonging to 826 groups, of which 200 are in danger of extinction. In addition, racism and discrimination has affected the lives 120 million of afro-descendants. National census are imperfect in making visible these populations and there are significant numbers of marginalized populations that remain unaccounted for.

Important advances in social inclusion and non-discrimination have come about partly as a result of the emergence of political democracy and social investments. Nevertheless, concerns emerge regarding their sustainability. At present, hard won gains risk being reversed and conflicts along class, ethnic and territorial lines could have a serious impact on political polarization and governance. There are two important factors to be taken into

account: a) the large numbers of people vulnerable to poverty and b) natural hazards. Historically, exclusion in the region has been closely correlated with racial, ethnic and socio-cultural discrimination.

Progress has been made in reducing poverty in the region yet large numbers of people are living in a situation of vulnerability, despite discussion of an emerging middle class. ECLAC¹³ explains that if one were to include within the poverty range income that is only 0.5 to 1.25 times higher than the values of national poverty lines of some countries, one would easily double the number of people living in extreme poverty. In Brazil, this recalculation would include 19 per cent of the total population. In Chile, 39 per cent of households have incomes that are less than twice the established poverty line. According to a recent World Bank report, 40 per cent of the population in the region is in a situation of vulnerability and risks falling back into poverty.¹⁴

Natural hazards

Natural hazards can become major disasters in a region with vulnerability. Of the 35 countries with the highest exposure to natural hazards in the world, 11 are from Africa and 10 are from Latin America and the Caribbean: El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Chile, Jamaica, Haiti, Guyana, Dominican Republic and Honduras.¹⁵ Many risks are traceable to climatological phenomena that are determined by

global warming. Hurricanes, flooding, drought and storms are recurrent and taking on dimensions that are uncommon. Seventeen percent of the population of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean lives on land less than 5 metres above sea level; 82 per cent do so in Bermuda. Seismic activity is also a considerable risk, particularly as it affects several of the major cities in the region; an important fact not only because of the risk of human loss and suffering, but also the drastic damage it can inflict on the economy. The metropolitan area of Lima-Callao, Peru, for example, is vulnerable to quakes and tsunamis, with approximately 8 million inhabitants and around 50 per cent of its GNI produced in that area. Several capitals and ports along the Pacific coast are at serious risk and have a comparable importance in terms of economic outputs and concentration of population (see Annex 3).

The vulnerability to natural hazards is closely interrelated to the issue of urbanization and sustainable cities. As of 2013, an estimated 78 per cent of the region's population, some 491 million people, lived in urban areas.¹⁶ It is also estimated that 14 per cent of that urban population lack access to sanitation - some 69 million people. Sanitation access is a fair proxy indicator for other characteristics, such as vulnerability to natural hazards, be it by location or by the type of dwellings and urban infrastructure to which they have access. As an analysis of the Nepal earthquake of 2015

¹³ Desarrollo Sostenible en América Latina y el Caribe. Seguimiento de la agenda de las Naciones Unidas para el desarrollo post 2015 y Rio + 20. CEPAL et. al. Agosto 2013.

¹⁴ Cord, Louise, Marai Eugenia Genoni and Carlos Rodriguez Castelan. 2015. Shared Prosperity and Poverty Eradication in Latin America and the Caribbean. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/21751> License: CC By 3.0 IGO.

¹⁵ 2013 World Risk Report (WRR 2013) published by the Alliance Development Works/Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft (BEH).

¹⁶ The percentage of urban population varies greatly by country or groups of countries. Those with low level of urbanization are in the Caribbean (Haiti 53.4 per cent, Jamaica 52 per cent, Barbados 44 per cent, Guyana 28.7 per cent, T&T 13.7 per cent) and in Central America (Belize 44.7%, Guatemala 49.8 per cent, Honduras 52.2 per cent and Nicaragua 57.5 per cent). Ecuador, Paraguay and Surinam are intermediate with between 60 and 70 per cent. The most urbanized countries include Venezuela (93.5 per cent), Uruguay (92.5 per cent) and Chile (89.2 per cent).

stated, "Earthquakes don't kill people, buildings do."¹⁷ Risk management in cities is essential yet does not seem to be in place as a general rule. Urban planning and regulation for risk reduction can make a dramatic difference, as illustrated by the enormous disparities between the effects of the earthquake that devastated Port au Prince, Haiti, compared with the effects of an 8.1 earthquake that caused relatively minor disruptions in Santiago, Chile.

Economic base

The economic base is another important factor to include in the list of challenges the region faces with regards to its social, economic and environmental sustainability. Three issues need to be mentioned: a) lack of diversification of exports, b) low value added and c) an increasing reliance on unprocessed natural resources and commodities in general. ECLAC describes this phenomenon as the 're-primarization' of the economic base, relying mainly on providing the global economy with minerals, metals and agriculture without additional processing - with some countries overly dependent on one or two commodities. Another issue is the lackluster performance in terms of increasing the levels of productivity. The region has a dual economy that includes a very modern sector with high productivity as well as a large informal economy with low productivity. Combined, these factors have a negative impact on the sustainability of economic growth. At present, for example, demand for commodities has fallen and there is a general slowdown of the economies of the region, particularly in South America; this is affecting employment and household income, social programmes and public expenditures. Further, the

informal economy and the less productive sectors of the economy do not constitute a firm base for increasing household income beyond minimum standards, nor do they guarantee access of the population to social security and protection.

Violence, crime and corruption

Sustainable development in LAC is hindered by violence and drug trafficking. The region has high levels of criminal violence. The organized crime that manages this multibillionaire business have permeated the social fabric of Colombia, Mexico and Peru and the countries of Central America and the Caribbean. They have developed all sorts of networks, often based on the recruitment of young men who find in this violent world a means of subsistence and social mobility. Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region in the world where lethal violence increased between 2000 and 2010. While homicide rates decreased in other regions, the LAC region experienced a 12 per cent increase; it is estimated that more than 1 million people have died in the first decade of the 21st century as a consequence of criminal violence in the region.

Crime and violence weaken key institutions, and the incapacity of the State to safeguard citizen's security explains public opinion regarding vigilante tactics: a survey in 22 countries, 42.8 per cent of respondents agree that 'taking justice in one's own hands' is justifiable, according to recent USAID report on the political culture of democracy in the Americas. The report explains the importance of security to democracy:

¹⁷ "Trying to stay ahead of earthquake disasters", Kenneth Chang, New York Times, 4 May 2015.

¹⁸ "Zechmeister, Elizabeth J., ed., and Vanderbilt University. 2014. The Political Culture of Democracy in the Americas, 2014: Report. Washington, D.C.: USAID.

*Bailey (2009) warns against a vicious cycle in which countries find themselves in a "security trap," where inefficient state bureaucracies and rampant corruption weaken the ability of states to provide public security and maintain the rule of law, invoking distrust in the legitimacy of democracy that in turn weakens the state. Having a strong state that can effectively respond to and deter crime and violence is critical to the flourishing of democracy in any context. As Karstedt and LaFree (2006) eloquently state, "The connection between democracy and criminal justice is so fundamental as to be self-evident: the rule of law guarantees due process, and the observation of human rights is an integral part of the emergence and institutionalization of democracy"*¹⁹

Corruption is another factor that weakens the presence and legitimacy of the state. According to Transparency International and the index for perception of corruption, a number of countries in Latin America belong to the list of 100 countries that have a classification of 3.5 and less, on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is most corrupt and 10 less corrupt. These countries are from bad to worse: Colombia, Peru, Jamaica, Guatemala, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Bolivia, Guyana, Ecuador, Paraguay, Haiti, Venezuela, Belize and Granada. Corruption scandals are a constant in public life in the region, and significant amounts of

resources are lost in fraudulent acts that undermine the credibility and legitimacy of governments. The reports of the scandal surrounding Petrobras, Brazil's state-controlled oil company, featured arrests for money-laundering, collusion among politicians and construction companies, and slush funds for political parties; it was a corruption crisis affecting the President's popularity and legitimacy. In Panama, corruption was at the root of the case of the National Assistance Program, which diverted funds destined for the neediest. Taking bribes and custom fraud featured in the crisis in Guatemala that led to the prosecution of the President on charges of criminal association.

Patterns of production, consumption and environmental impact

On top of the region's problems is an overarching challenge to achieve sustainable patterns of production and consumption. No matter how difficult the circumstances, the region is compelled to find ways of reducing poverty and developing inclusive economic models, taking into account the need to put a cap on global warming and avoid damaging environmental impacts.

Exploitation of the region's very rich natural resource base is an area of concern. Several of the countries in LAC are among the world's largest producers of gold, copper, iron, silver, molybdenum, lead and tin. The region holds 52 per cent of the world production of soya, 16 per cent of meat and corn, and 11 per cent of milk production. The region also holds one third of global reserves of fresh water and 15 per

cent of the world's agricultural land. Bolivia has the largest reserves of lithium in the world, which is increasing in importance because of its use in batteries in cell phones and electric cars. LAC holds 20 per cent of the world's total oil reserves.

The challenge entails rational exploitation and the capacity to add value within a modern and highly productive economy, with the added challenge of mitigating impact on the environment. Immediate gains often outweigh long-term expected gains.

Latin America and the Caribbean accounts for an estimated 11 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, revealing a comparatively low contribution to global trends. Though from a global perspective the region does not – comparatively speaking – make a significant contribution to CO₂ emissions, within the region there is the world's fourth-largest emitter (Brazil) and the world's tenth-largest emitter (Mexico). Moreover, the annual per capita contribution to CO₂ emissions was on the rise from 1990 to 2010, with few exceptions. Four countries (Belize, Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Jamaica) were able to reverse that trend for the period 2000 to 2010. At the same time, deforestation has increased, with notable exceptions in the cases of Cuba, Chile, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia and Uruguay. If the region is to reach environmental sustainability, modes of production and consumption require a change in order to reduce the emissions.

A special mention should be made of the extractive industries, particularly mining. The reliance on exports of metals and minerals is an important characteristic of the region's economy. At the same time, the environmental impact of this industry, particularly on water resources, is worrisome and the number of socio-environmental conflicts around

the issue of water has increased significantly. Informal exploitation of metals has had very serious environmental and human impacts. In the state of Bolivar, Venezuela, there are hundreds of illegal mining settings, many ruled by independent prospectors, the 'Garimpeiros' of Brazil. They use mercury to amalgamate gold, caustic soda to clean the gold and abrasive water jets to search for gold. The impact on the Caroni and Orinoco rivers is serious and the deforestation is estimated at 1,100 square kilometers a year. In Ecuador, in the provinces of Esmeraldas, Loja and Zamora, the human impact of informal miner's settlements, with an absence of state institutions, has led to a culture of violence, sexual exploitation of girls and young women, child labour and substance abuse.

The toll on the environment of pursuing economic growth at all costs is already evident. Mexico estimates that 45 per cent of its territory is degraded. The Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources divides the degradation into categories of hydric erosion, wind erosion, chemical degradation and physical degradation.

In Peru, environmental impact is analyzed by sectors, and in the case of agriculture is quite serious, particularly when it relates to water management and the impact of certain practices on ecosystems, such as deforestation. It is estimated that the burning of forests accounts for two thirds of the country's carbon emissions. In Panama, confrontations between the indigenous groups (Ngabe Bugle) against mining and hydroelectric dams have generated social unrest and protests that have partially paralyzed the country. Water resources are among the most affected; prolonged dry seasons are placing a strain on populations that in the past never suffered water shortages.

¹⁹ Ibid.



Conclusion

5

In the Montevideo Consensus there is an important call to strengthen the institutional framework for population policies in the region. We should heed such a call, because population issues are an important point of entry to implement the sustainable development goals and targets. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes a pledge to leave no one behind, and analysis of the demographic transition and the demographic dividend shed light on the people we should be making an effort not to leave behind in the LAC region. At the same time, population dynamics such as fertility, urbanization, spatial distribution and migration determine how and whether people can engage in sustainable patterns of consumption and production, promote social inclusion and ensure economic growth. Population analysis allows us to place people at the centre of the 2030 Agenda.

In this discussion paper, we have mentioned population groups that we believe require particular attention in the region, notably adolescents and youth and women, particularly income generators and heads of households. We have identified the vulnerability of women who earn income in the informal sector and do not have opportunities to benefit from social protection schemes. We have

also identified the growing population of older adults who have no social security to rely on and are at risk of becoming dependent. Finally, we have mentioned the poorest and the structurally poor populations that are undernourished, lack access to basic social services and rely on very basic skills to find livelihoods that most probably will not take them out of poverty.

The Montevideo Consensus has a specific chapter for indigenous people and for afro-descendants, in order to clearly distinguish between two populations that share the pains of exclusion but have very different socio-cultural characteristics. Social inclusion measures directed to one and the other must be different in nature. An inter-cultural approach has been promoted as a way to facilitate the utilization of sexual and reproductive health services by these populations. Such an approach can reduce maternal mortality among these groups. An intercultural approach is also important when looking at fertility rates, which are normally higher among indigenous populations. Access to contraceptives is much more difficult for indigenous women than non-indigenous, but to talk about family planning or prevention of adolescent pregnancy among these populations, service providers need an understanding

of the cultural values that are present in the group in order to approach them correctly; this is even more so in the case of populations that feel menaced by extinction, where communities have a strong pro-natalist sentiment.

The ICPD Programme of Action Beyond 2014 reasserted the multidimensionality of poverty and consequently the need to include the sexual and reproductive health status of women as a constitutive dimension of poverty analysis. That message needs to be carried on to the sustainable development goals, particularly when, under the goal of poverty reduction, there is a target on reducing by half all the dimensions of poverty.

On the issue of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, we should also bear in mind that the interrelation that exists between productive and reproductive lives makes it a dimension of poverty. One of the most evident links has to do with the size of families, considering families with a large number of children find that the productivity of the income earners does not suffice to raise the household out of poverty.

Another factor to consider in economic growth in the region is how women's access to family planning and women's empowerment when it comes to reproductive choices determines their increased economic participation and hence their increased economic autonomy. Economic autonomy allows women to generate income and raise themselves and their families out of poverty. The links between the physical and economic autonomy of women are an important component of gender equality yet are often overlooked by decision makers who are concerned about economic productivity and growth. The links between reproductive and productive work should not be understated, especially in light of the immense contribution of women to the pool of

human resources.

Finally, let us focus on the informal migrant, trapped in vulnerable situations unable to claim the status of rights holder. Though some extremely courageous and resilient individuals will manage to navigate through the perfect storm and eventually recover their rights, many others will not. Loss of citizenry is the opposite of the SDG pledge of not leaving anyone behind. The inclusion of all in their diversity of age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. is not only an act of compassion or a recognition of these populations as rights holders but also a way to find potential solutions to the many challenges that lie ahead. Each of the excluded could be a lost opportunity for the rest of society. The platform for an evidence-based dialogue should have the issue of citizenry at heart.

Next steps

This concept paper represents the basis for a sustained process of contributing to guidance approved in September 2015 known as 'Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support' or MAPS.²⁰ MAPS provides thought leadership for governments, partners and the UN at all levels on the new 2030 Agenda, affording special attention to the cross-cutting priorities of partnerships, data and accountability to countries at the national and sub-national level to implement the SDGs. The population perspective is particularly well suited for what MAPS calls 'horizontal policy coherence' because we can identify populations in need, analyse the socio-demographic characteristics, bring forward the relevant disaggregated data and have a multi-stakeholder and inter-sectorial approach to including that population in the process of sustainable development.

The foundation for an evidence-based policy dialogue will include the following elements:

- a) Analytical briefs and concept notes that drill down on more specific situations and realities that affect issues such as changing age structures, the status of women's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, key aspects of adolescent sexual and reproductive health, and access to family planning services, among others;
- b) Compendiums of good practices that adequately illustrate the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing interventions for change and improvement;
- c) Proposals for projects, regional programmes and thematic trust funds that aim to mobilize resources for the implementation of UNFPA's role in policy development, as well as the implementation of particular pilot projects and/or scaling up proposals;
- d) Articulation of a thematic base to convened decision and policy makers, academics, civil society and private sectors leaders, so as to build alliance and partnerships among multiple stakeholders;
- e) A set of key messages that can orient a communication strategy, with traditional and social media outreach capacity.

Most importantly, this discussion paper is intended to provide UNFPA and its partners with an evidence-based approach for use in influencing policy development, utilizing the data and factual information that is increasingly available through open data sources.

What determines the capacities of nations to develop in a sustainable manner? We have

mentioned conditions such as being a Small Island Developing State or a landlocked country. We also have mentioned the cross-cutting developmental challenges the region faces: a) inequality; b) the over-dependence on the export of commodities; c) the size of the informal sector in the economy; c) the percentage of the population that has risen from under the poverty line, but is still largely vulnerable and can easily slip back down; d) corruption and violence; e) increasing emissions of CO2 per capita; and f) the threat of natural hazards. We have also mentioned the fact that a majority of the population faces these challenges in urban settings, and thus see their future tied to the prospects of developing or working towards sustainable cities.

In such a policy dialogue, the framework we have chosen to use the Montevideo Consensus, which provides an important population perspective on a very wide array of issues and complements the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As a next step, the regional conference on population and development should become a forum in which UNFPA supports the efforts of UN Member States to incorporate these issues in their national plans. UNFPA can also feed into the 'Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development', an entity established in May 2016 that will constitute the regional mechanism for follow-up and review of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.²¹

²⁰ <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/MAPS-brief-10JUNE2015.pdf>

²¹ www.cepal.org/en/news/forum-countries-latin-america-and-caribbean-sustainable-development-will-follow-2030-agenda

ANNEX 1: CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMES

The most emblematic of cash transfer programmes is perhaps Brazil's Bolsa Familia, a conditional cash transfer programme targeting poor and extremely poor families. The goal is to reduce poverty and inequality and promote human capital development by improving schooling and the health status of children and reducing incidence of malnutrition among the poor population. The Benefício de Prestação Continuada (BPC) is unconditional cash transfer targeted to individuals of any age with severe disabilities and to the elderly over 65, with family per capita income below one fourth of the minimum wage. The objective is to meet the basic needs of disabled and elderly people, to provide access to social policies, to overcome the disadvantages and to achieve autonomy.

ECUADOR

In Ecuador, the Human Development Bond has a budget of \$625 million and pays a \$35 monthly benefit to approximately 1.8 million people, 67 per cent of which are mothers representing their families. These families commit to registering their children in school and have to ensure that the children attend at least 75 per cent of class time. The so-called Joaquín Gallegos Lara (BJGL) Bond is an economic aid programme consisting of a \$240 monthly payment for a family member that is in charge of providing care to other members of the family that suffer from severe physical or mental disability. It also includes medicine, health training, hygiene, rehabilitation and programmes on nutrition, rights and self-esteem.

GUATEMALA

Four monetary and in-kind schemes can be highlighted in Guatemala:

- *Bono Seguro*: programme to support those families who, together with the government, fulfil the responsibility of providing health care to their members and ensuring the permanence of children at school;
- *Mi Bolsa Segura*: temporary programme that periodically provides a bag of food to families in a situation of poverty and/or crisis who live in urban risk areas in the Guatemala Department;
- *Mi Beca Segura*: temporary conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme available to families who do not have the financial resources required for their adolescent and/or young children to have access to basic and diversified secondary education in the country's schools system; and
- *Mi Comedor Seguro*: support to individuals and families in a situation of poverty, crisis, emergencies, calamities or other situations that affect their access to food. It provides nutritious, balanced and hygienic low-cost food rations.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

In the Dominican Republic, Progresando con Solidaridad aims to break with poverty avoiding the vicious cycle of it being replicated from generation to generation. It includes seven main components: nutrition, environmental sustainability, citizenship, health, education, access to technology and income generation.

MEXICO

The objective of Mexico's PROSPERA is to coordinate the institutional offer of social policy programmes and actions, including those related to productive development, income generation, economic welfare, work and financial inclusion, education, food and health. Support is targeted at the population in a situation of extreme poverty, through the use of joint responsibility schemes that allow families to improve their living conditions and guarantee the enjoyment of their social rights, as well as access to social development with equal opportunities.

CHILE

Chile's Chile Solidario is a model that organizes and coordinates the different social services and programmes available through the public network, guaranteeing preferential access to its users because they are the most vulnerable population in the country. Its programmes are designed to work directly with the populations it supports. Chile Solidario also mobilizes other resources available from the institutional network in order to effectively assist individuals in the process of dealing with critical situations that affect them, such as unemployment, disease, disability, old age and poverty. Its strategy consists of strengthening individuals so they can fulfil the functions inherent in the current stage of their life cycle and develop better strategies to face their current or emergent critical contexts.

PANAMA

Panama offers a number of programmes:

- *Red de Oportunidades*: cash transfer for women heads of family usually single with children, with conditions to participate in health care programmes, microenterprise initiatives and educational programmes;
- *Angel Guardian*: cash subsidy to help families with handicapped members to alleviate additional economical demands;
- *Beca Escolar Universal*: bi-monthly cash transfer to help cover scholastic expenses of children and young students until high school;
- *Fondo Solidario de Vivienda*: cash subsidy for first time home owners in the form of an initial down payment of \$5,000; and
- *Intereses Preferenciales*: preferential interest rates for housing loans that are under \$80,000 for lower income groups.

PERU

Peru's programme 'Juntos' programme integrates two broad objectives: a) in the short run, to reduce poverty by providing households with cash transfers; and b) in the long run, to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty through promotion of human capital via improved access to education (aimed at increasing primary school attendance, decrease in dropout rate and decreases in child labour) and health services (aimed at decreasing in infant and child malnutrition; decreases in infant and mother mortality; decreases in child, infant, prenatal

and postnatal morbidity; and increases in the percentage of births with medical assistance).

The programme achieves these objectives through the provision of a monthly cash transfer of approximately \$30 to eligible households. Unlike other cash transfer programmes, this is a lump-sum payment and does not differ across households (e.g. with a different number of children). To receive this payment, households need to comply with a number of requirements. These 'conditionalities' vary depending on the age and gender of the beneficiaries: children under 5 years old must attend regular health and nutrition controls (for periodic monitoring of height and weight, complete series of vaccinations, iron and Vitamin A supplements and anti-parasite checks); children 6 to 14 years old with primary school incomplete must attend school at least 85 per cent of the school year; pregnant and breastfeeding mothers must attend prenatal and postnatal checks (tetanus vaccination, folic acid and iron supplements and anti-parasite checks).

BOLIVIA

In Bolivia, three cash transfer programmes can be highlighted:

Bono "Juancito Pinto": established October 2006 to promote school enrolment, school retention and the completion of the school year among children from 1st to 6th grade in public elementary schools, including special education and alternative youth education students. This programme provides an annual cash grant of 200 Bolivian pesos in a single payment;

Renta Universal de Vejez - 'Renta dignidad': non-contributory programme established November 2007 as a lifetime benefit provided by the Bolivian State to all residents in the country age 60 or older who do not receive a long-term social security pension or a retirement pension from the State's General Budget. It is worth noting that those individuals who already receive a social security pension are also entitled to this other pension, but only in a proportion of 75 per cent (250 and 200 Bolivian pesos, respectively); and

Bono Madre Niño - Niña "Juana Azurduy": programme established April 2009 to promote the use of health care services by women during the periods of pregnancy and childbirth, as well as compliance with protocols to monitor the growth and development of children, from their birth to the age of two. The total amount of this grant is 1,820 Bolivian pesos per person, paid in different moments over a total period of 33 months.

VENEZUELA

In Venezuela, one of the distinctive characteristics of the vast majority of cash transfer programmes is that they are actual indirect subsidies to the population, which are distributed through so-called 'missions'. With the exception of the social security transfer system, which operates through cash transfers paid to the elderly population and/or individuals in a condition of inactivity, all the programmes targeted at the population operate through non-monetary transfers.

EXPANSION OF FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMMES

1960S: Since the 1960s, when technological advances led to new interventions to regulate fertility, the word about contraceptive methods has spread all over Latin America. The process, however, was slow especially in the early stages, when only women from higher social classes had access to modern contraceptive methods through private healthcare services.

1970S: It was only thanks to the adoption of public policies that the use of family planning spread at a rapid pace, gradually increasing access to virtually all social sectors. Fertility regulation was not only possible, but also desirable for women and their partners in light of changes in the Latin America and the Caribbean region as it became urbanized, levels of schooling among women increased, and women increasingly joined the labour market.

New pregnancy prevention technologies, and the State's family planning programmes in particular, were not free from ideological debates and controversies that questioned people's right to decide on the number and spacing of their children. The recognition of the fact that human reproduction could be part of the decision-making sphere of individuals involved a real transformation of socio-cultural environments and ways of thinking, in a world marked by ideological polarization, without excluding the diverse political choices and religious diversity.

The establishment of family planning programmes in public health services also led to ideological debates among service providers themselves, particularly among physicians. The value of family planning to the health of individuals, particularly women

and their children, was still largely ignored, in part because all the family planning advocates had focused their arguments on economic and social development and the concept of family planning as a response to accelerated population growth.

1980s: The 1980s were characterized by a boom of family planning programmes, which saw an expansion in almost all of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a vision characterized by a predominant interest in reducing demographic growth. Most family planning programmes established rigorous systems to measure results and set quantitative goals that generally focused on contraceptive prevalence. The quality of these programmes was even evaluated based on the mix of contraceptive methods used, with a higher value assigned to those mixes with the presence of the most effective methods.

1990s: This is part of the background that existed in Latin America and the Caribbean by the time the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development was held. The ICPD was a conference where the global consensus established the rights-based approach to guide population policies and programmes, as well as the right to make free and informed reproductive choices for women and their families. No more demographic goals. Today, the consensus is that population programmes must aim at expanding people's capacities and opportunities so they can exercise their right to make free, responsible and informed decisions about their reproductive behaviour, without any coercion or interference and based on their own beliefs and preferences.

ANNEX 3: NATURAL HAZARDS AND DISASTERS

Disasters increase social vulnerabilities and exacerbate pre-existing inequalities. After the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, mortality rates increased for all ages, primarily affecting the 15 to 24 age group, which accounted for 25 per cent of all deaths; the pregnancy rate tripled in the area impacted by the earthquake, increasing from 4 per cent in 2005-2006 to 12 per cent in 2010; the fertility rate of adolescents in camps doubled the number found in rural areas and tripled that from urban areas outside of the camps. While no reliable data is available, testimony and evidence revealed a sharp increase in gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence.

Overall, economic losses due to disasters are increasing in the region, rising from \$20 billion in the 1970s to more than \$60 billion in the current decade, according to EM-DAT, national Bureau of Labor Statistics and IDB calculations. While the number of casualties due to disasters has decreased, the number of people affected and the level of economic losses are on the rise. For

example, Central America's Hurricane Mitch (1998) and Venezuela's landslides (1985) caused a \$5 billion loss with 10,000 deaths and a \$3.5 billion loss with 30,000 deaths, respectively. In contrast, the more recent Colombia floods (November-December 2010) and Buenos Aires floods (April 2013) caused a \$5 billion loss with 389 deaths and \$100 million loss with 100 deaths, respectively.

About 80 per cent of the population in the region lives in urban or peri-urban areas, and about 75 per cent lives in high-risk areas. Given urbanization trends and exposure to natural hazards, there are growing concerns about the higher incidences and impacts of disasters on the population and economy in urban areas of the region. In recent years, governments in Latin America and the international community have increased efforts to create forward-looking, corrective and prospective risk management strategies for urban residents and those moving into cities as a result of displacement.

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