

Population in Focus:

Guide for the Implementation of the Population Situation Analysis in Latin America and the Caribbean

Executive Summary

The Population Situation Analysis (PSA) is a joint process between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and national counterparts, conceived as a tool to achieve a better identification and understanding of population dynamics, providing intelligent data and evidence to guide the formulation, implementation and monitoring of public policies for the country's development, based on the relationships with social, economic and environmental dynamics from a human rights-based, cultural, territorial, generational and gender perspective.

Since the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have made progress in their PSAs (Venezuela in 2006 and Argentina in 2009), and a Regional PSA was even developed in 2007.

In 2011 the [Conceptual and Methodological Guide](#) was published (UNFPA, 2011) and in 2019 the update of this global Guide was launched with the aim of addressing the content and priorities of the 2030 Agenda, with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Based on the above background and working documents from six countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Peru and Venezuela), this document has been prepared with the aim of guiding the implementation of the population situation analysis in Latin America and the Caribbean, reflecting on the opportunities and challenges that countries face during the process of developing them, analysing, among other factors, the involvement of national actors, the possibilities for national ownership of the instrument and its contribution to evidence-based planning, the available sources of information and its possibilities for disaggregation by economic, territorial, ethnic, age and gender groups.

To this end, first, the conceptual and reference framework of the PSA as an instrument for evidence-based policy evaluation and advocacy is presented. It then goes on to detail, structured in the form of a roadmap, the reference framework for the design and development of the PSA, which includes a series of tips for its approach, as well as the minimum contents it should have. This framework is presented in dialogue with the

experiences in these countries, analysing the main challenges and opportunities they faced in developing the PSA, as well as the lessons learned and the central role of information sources in this process.

Key Messages

- The PSA should be based on a broad **participatory process (government, civil society, United Nations system) and political dialogue** between the main national actors, which facilitates the achievement of the essential objective of the PSA, which is to advocate for the analysis of demographic dynamics to be present in public policy decision-making. The absence of government bodies in the construction of the PSA does not invalidate it, but it is necessary to promote, based on the objectives and scope of this instrument, the **national appropriation of its conclusions and recommendations**, which will enable their scaling up and linkage in public policies.
- Fulfilling one of the defining characteristics of the 2030 Agenda - the promise to **"leave no one behind" (LNOB)** - cannot be achieved on the basis of national averages and requires not only the recognition of inequalities at all levels, but also the analysis of their possible determinants and causes, as well as their intersectionalities.
- At the heart of the PSA process is the **availability and use of quality data**, with special emphasis on data produced by the National Statistical System. However, the absence of up-to-date information does not preclude progress with the structuring of the process, and the PSA can even be an important tool for raising awareness of the importance of statistical operations and influencing their regular implementation. The PSA is also a tool to make information gaps visible and to promote advocacy actions for the mobilisation and management of statistical operations based on the timely collection of relevant information.
- The PSA represents a **timely tool in the face of emerging and contextual changes** arising from specific political situations and the pandemic, to incorporate population, sexual and reproductive health and gender issues in the definition of priorities for the promotion and development of public policies. For example, the current context of the electoral process in Guatemala, the renewal of the UN Country Programme in several of the countries analysed, the planning of the next Population Census, the accountability for results on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Montevideo Consensus, are unique and important moments for the political dialogue for which the PSA can and should serve as a basis.
- The process of building the PSA may face **challenges that limit participation and subsequent national ownership of the conclusions and recommendations** as an instrument of assessment and public advocacy. For example, the influence of pressure groups that may hinder the effective and full exercise of rights or socio-political conflicts that affect governance and political stability. In this sense, the analysis of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats (SWOT) that the particular context imposes, demographic dynamics, sexual and reproductive health and gender issues in the definition of public policy priorities, constitutes a first key step in the construction of the PSA.

- The PSA is a **living process that is updated over time according to** changing population, socio-economic, environmental and institutional dynamics, as well as by the availability of information sources and their updating, derived from new censuses, surveys and new trends obtained from administrative records.
- A main message of the PSA should focus on the proven fact that **population factors *are not neutral*** and have a significant interaction with socio-economic inequalities. That is, population factors matter in analysing present and future social realities and in making decisions to formulate public policies.

1. Conceptual Framework

This guidance document for the development of the Population Situation Analysis (PSA) constitutes a conceptual and methodological guide for the integrated diagnosis of population and reproductive health dynamics and their impact on the implementation of public policies for the reduction of poverty and inequality and the promotion of sustainable development. The PSAs have as their antecedents the International Conferences on Population and Development (ICPD), particularly the historic one held in Cairo in 1994, which in 2019 celebrated its 25th anniversary at the Nairobi Summit and 2024 commemorating the 30th anniversary of its promulgation. Specifically, the PSA embodies the commitments made by countries to effectively integrate population issues into socio-economic development proposals and to achieve a better quality of life for all people, including those of future generations.

The PPS seeks to contribute to more efficient data- and evidence-based public policy programming, based on the consolidation and systematisation of already available population data, and the increase in data generation capacity (UNFPA, 2011). Among the antecedents of this document are the PSAs developed by some countries, such as Venezuela in 2006 and Argentina in 2009, and even the Regional PSA carried out in 2007.

Since the first publication of the PSA Guidance in 2011, new issues and challenges have emerged (mentioned in the 2021 Draft Guidance), in particular those arising from the multiple impacts of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, many of which have not yet been estimated or sufficiently correlated with the focus of UNFPA's work. Progress has also been made in new international agreements that establish new public policy priorities based on the analysis of population dynamics, such as the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (MCPD) in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2013).

The Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development sets out an agreement on priority public policy measures arranged in 9 chapters:

- A. Full integration of the population and its dynamics into sustainable development with equality and respect for human rights.
- B. Rights, needs, responsibilities and demands of children, adolescents and young people.
- C. Ageing, social protection and socio-economic challenges.
- D. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health services.
- E. Gender equality.
- F. International migration and the protection of the human rights of all migrants.
- G. Territorial inequality, spatial mobility and vulnerability.
- H. Indigenous peoples: interculturality and rights.
- I. Afro-descendants: rights and combating racism and racial discrimination.

At the second meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development held in Mexico City in 2015, the countries of the region adopted the "Operational guide for the implementation and follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and

Development" (ECLAC, 2015). This Guide is an excellent tool as a basis for analysing and operationalising possible public policies linked to demographic changes in the countries of the region.

The third meeting of the Regional Population Conference was held in Lima in 2018, coinciding with the five-year anniversary of the Montevideo Consensus. There, the countries of the region presented their progress reports on the implementation of the priority measures of the WCDP. The [country reports](#) provide valuable background information on the implementation of public policies in the countries to be taken into account in the elaboration of the PSAs. Likewise, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) presented the Draft of the first regional report on the implementation of the CMPD, which was revised, updated and published in 2019 (ECLAC, 2018). This document also constitutes a relevant background for the construction of the PSAs.

The fourth meeting, which took place in Santiago (Chile) in 2022, reaffirmed the MCDC as the basis for a comprehensive roadmap for regional and national action on population and development. It also recognised its strategic role as a framework for the implementation of actions that contribute to responding to the repercussions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the living conditions and the exercise of rights of the population. At this meeting, the document "The socio-demographic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean" (ECLAC, 2022a) was presented, whose preliminary results on the effects of the pandemic on demographic dynamics and on different population groups identified as targets for priority measures constitute relevant inputs for the analysis of demographic and population dynamics within the framework of the PSAs.

Several countries in the region have developed their PSAs based on the 2011 Guide. It is important to mention the case of Colombia, which presented a version of its PSA in 2018 (UNFPA, 2018), which has served as a guide for the application of the methodology for several countries in the region. In the development of Colombia's PSA, the joint work of academia, government, civil society and UNFPA stands out. This joint and inter-institutional work facilitates the achievement of the aforementioned essential objective of the PSA.

Changes in population dynamics, structure and spatial distribution provide important opportunities and challenges for sustainable development. The PSA, in this sense, is a relevant assessment and advocacy tool as it represents a commitment to incorporate analyses of the relationships between population dynamics and social, economic and environmental dynamics into national development strategies from a human rights, cultural and gender-based perspective. However, it is important to stress that this cannot be accomplished on the basis of national averages and requires the recognition of inequalities at all levels, starting with the adoption of one of the defining characteristics of the 2030 Agenda: the promise to "leave no one behind" (LNOB). This requires the adoption of a hierarchical analytical model, i.e. moving from a descriptive to a causal analysis, incorporating not only the breakdown of information by economic, territorial, ethnic, age and gender groups, but also an analysis of the possible determinants and causes of the inequalities that place specific groups in situations of vulnerability and risk, according to their socio-demographic characteristics.

2. Roadmap

This section is structured in the form of a roadmap, i.e. it provides a framework for the design and development of the PSA, and contains recommendations according to each country's capacities, constraints and contexts. This advice is not intended to be prescriptive, nor is it an exhaustive list of options. Each country will have to find its own way, prioritizing the areas it considers appropriate, taking into account the achievements made, the challenges ahead in the framework of its agenda and development plans.

Step 1. Institutional Readiness

Key to the construction of the PSA is the first step of a technical, operational and advocacy planning process, which requires establishing costs and funding according to the structure and scope set out, as well as assessing the willingness of stakeholders to participate and determining what obstacles may exist or arise along the way. This, together with the consequent identification of key government bodies, institutions/organisations and stakeholders to be involved in the formulation and review of the PSA, is referred to as "institutional readiness".

The PSA requires national ownership of the analysis, which implies, on the one hand, country ownership and, on the other hand, the adoption of a participatory and inclusive approach, which values the capacities, commitments, resources and authority of the different national actors responsible for addressing key problems and priority needs.

In special circumstances (institutional weakness, political upheaval, change of government), the construction of the PSA in the absence of government support does not mean that it is not valid, but it is necessary to encourage the objectives, scope and utility value of the PSA to be appropriated so that it can be used, both by the government and by other actors in society, and so that it can be scaled up and linked to the definition of public policies, and can be used as a tool for political dialogue. Here it is relevant to mention that, although government leadership is ideal in the construction of the PSA, other options -such as a PSA driven by UNFPA Country Offices (COs) and led by them in support of other relevant actors or even a PSA led by academia- can lead countries to achieve the same objective.

All this requires an analysis of the possibilities and constraints imposed by the particular political context, identifying those groups and individuals who can influence the success of national development strategies or who are important for them to take place. One strategy for safeguarding processes from political instabilities is to identify, as far as possible, key technical persons in the institutions who are independent of circumstantial political conjunctures, and to rely on them to accompany the processes, to achieve strategic alliances with institutions recognised for their prestige at the national level that support the formulation process, whether in the formulation itself or through its revision, and to negotiate the relevance of issues and the "noblest" treatment of these, without this implying limitations in terms of the rigour of the analyses or ethically questionable omissions.

Box 1. Lessons learned Guatemala

The general election period, June 2023, represented an important possibility for political dialogue between different relevant actors.

The prevailing conservative environment at the national level in 2022 and 2023 has prompted a comprehensive internal PSA. This environment facilitated the use of data, collected in censuses and registers, both to understand the present reality and to project future scenarios. Moreover, this context favours the availability of crucial information that can be used for policy dialogue, especially in view of the new government that will take office in 2024.

The conservative orientation that defines the national landscape has prompted a comprehensive assessment of the demographic and social situation within the country. This analysis, carried out internally, stands as a fundamental tool for understanding the dynamics and challenges facing the country. Furthermore, the availability of various information resources, such as census and registry data, has enriched the perspective on the current state of society and the projection of possible future scenarios.

The use of diversified information is an essential component of this process of population analysis. Data obtained from reliable and varied sources have allowed for a comprehensive approach ranging from demographic aspects to socio-economic indicators. This enrichment of the information base not only contributes to a deeper understanding of the current reality, but also lays the foundation for informed strategic planning.

In this context, the importance of accurate and up-to-date information stands out as a key element for informed decision-making. The ability to anticipate demographic and social trends becomes a valuable asset for the design of effective public policies and the implementation of measures to address the changing needs of the population.

This forward-looking approach aligns with the vision of preparing for policy dialogue with the next government that will take office in 2024. The availability of detailed and contextualised information is presented as a valuable resource to nurture this dialogue, allowing for an informed discussion oriented towards the construction of policies that respond to the emerging demands and challenges of society.

In this sense, the PSA, as an instrument of evaluation and public advocacy, constitutes a timely tool for incorporating demographic dynamics, sexual and reproductive health and gender issues in the definition of public policy priorities.

The PSA aims at a dynamic political dialogue with different national actors and this dialogue should be made explicit in the content of the PSA. In this regard, it is important that the PSA takes into account the positions of different political actors or pressure

groups that hinder the exercise of rights in accordance with the principles agreed upon in the ICPD and the WCIP. These challenges include, for example, the influence of pressure groups that hinder the exercise of rights in accordance with the principles agreed upon in the ICPD and the ICPD, or socio-political conflicts that affect governance and political stability.

It is suggested that the UNFPA Country Office facilitate the process in coordination with government counterpart institutions and integrate UN System agencies in a timely manner. This process will allow for an important positioning of the UNFPA Country Office in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), allowing it to lead working groups. It is important to analyse the support of experts (consultants, academia) to the extent that the issues to be worked on require a depth of work that is not possible to develop by staff members due to time and/or *expertise* issues.

Considering that the PSA is a living process that requires updating over time, according to changing socio-economic, environmental and institutional population dynamics, a 4-year programme is suggested with periodic updates of key components as demographic and health changes evolve. A relevant experience is the Colombian case, with its two PSAs in 2018 and 2022.

Box 2. Lessons learned Colombia

One of the main lessons learned most relevant for this stage is the importance of collaborative work with strategic direction, i.e. working together with governments, and the relevance of policy dialogue with different relevant public and private actors in a participatory approach as a necessary condition for national ownership of the PSA. The institutional involvement of government within the PSA may slow down processes, but provides a relevant strength for policy dialogue. Wherever possible, institutional involvement of government in the process is strongly recommended.

In Colombia, for example, the process of institutional preparation and management of the PSA with the government was carried out through the Inter-Institutional Population Roundtable composed of nine national entities linked by their mission to the population and development agenda. Through this coordinating body, the presentation of the voluntary report of the Montevideo Consensus + 10 has been prepared using the Colombia 2023 PSA as a basis of evidence and is a reference for other global and regional reports and for the implementation of public policies.

Entity testimony: At the launch of the 2023 PSA, the Colombian Foreign Ministry said "The PSA is a fundamental tool that allows us to understand the dynamics of the population, as well as the inequalities we face, with a view to effectively guide the development and design of public policies that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda" (Deputy Minister (E) Multilateral Affairs)" (Vice-Minister (E) Multilateral Affairs)".

Box 3. Lessons learned Cuba

The 2021 PSA, which was concluded in 2022, was carried out within the framework of a political process that not only yielded significant results, but also validated them and gave them legitimacy. This procedure was previously planned in the Country Programme Document (CPD) for the period 2020-2024, being an integral part of the mid-term reviews/mid-term reviews (MTR).

The urgency to conduct such an analysis stemmed largely from the impact of COVID-19 on society, highlighting the imperative need to understand demographic and social dynamics in the post-pandemic context. This approach aligns with the search for effective and adaptive solutions to address emerging challenges in the post-COVID-19 scenario.

A team of consultants wrote the document. Sessions/workshops were prepared for the presentation of findings, challenges and recommendations for adjustments to the programme.

A distinctive element of this process was the active involvement of the government at all stages, which ensured a holistic perspective and direct engagement with the results. Close collaboration between a team of specialised consultants and various working groups was also instrumental in enriching the analysis with multiple perspectives and experiences.

The analysis was not only limited to a technical assessment; it also facilitated a space for participatory discussion between (government counterparts, civil society, donors and other UN agencies) and the government. This participatory dimension ensured that the voices and needs of the community were taken into account, contributing to a more complete and contextualised understanding of the population's reality.

It is crucial to highlight that the outcome of this analysis is not considered static, but a dynamic document that will evolve over time. It is planned to be updated in 2023, with the aim of providing fundamental inputs for the definition of the Common Country Assessment (CCA). This "living document" approach underlines the importance of maintaining an updated and adaptable vision as the population situation evolves and transforms. Given that the CPD 2020-2024 will be extended to 2025, the document will be updated between 2023 and 2024 in order to have relevant inputs for positioning in the CCA. The proposal has been that the UNFPA consultant can interact with the CCA team.

Step 2. Determination of the Scope of the PSA

After the institutional readiness phase in which the relevant people and organisations are identified and convened, defining the scope of the PSA is key, which requires an analysis of the timing of its construction and the objectives guiding its development, as well as the underlying conceptual framework. Here it is important to establish the purpose of the national PSA, identifying what the instrument is being developed for, i.e. is it being developed for the Common Country Assessment (CCA)¹ as the basis for the UNSDCF? is it being developed for the renewal of the UN Country Programme CPD²? For the national reports that countries have to produce in the framework of the PCD or the CMPD, in the framework of a new National Development Plan, as a diagnostic tool for outlining the policies and programmes of a new government, for the planning of a new census round? These questions allude to different milestones that represent important moments to develop a timely PSA to define priorities to be addressed by public policies, making it possible to generate evidence beyond UNFPA's mandate and to assume a leadership position with respect to the UNCT.

Box 4: Lessons Learned PSA Colombia

"In the case of Colombia, the PSA was considered in the construction of the CCA for the new cooperation framework 2023-2026, being used in the chapter on demographic context and as a reference for the structuring of the LNOB chapter, which was the basis for the transformational axes defined in the UNSDCF and on which the UNS agencies are linked through their country programmes.

For example, the evaluation of the sixth Programme (2018-2022) in Bolivia represents a great opportunity for the design of new national development strategies by identifying and analysing lessons learned, good practices and innovations, to assess their value and potential for replication and scaling up for evidence-based decision-making. Guatemala and Peru, for their part, have recently launched the eighth (2022-2025) and tenth programmes (2022-2026), respectively, which, on the basis of cooperation agreements with public and private institutions, set out work priorities. Colombia and Cuba, on the other hand, are in the midst of developing the seventh (2021-2024) and ninth (2020-2024) Country Programmes, respectively. Considering the progress achieved in the development of their CSAs, these programmes have facilitated political dialogue between the different relevant actors for the determination of national priorities.

¹ The CCA is a quantitative and qualitative analysis document on the country's development situation, pointing out the main opportunities and challenges that the country faces in order to advance on the path of human development and from a human rights and inequality reduction perspective.

² The Country Programme Document (CPD) is an instrument of accountability of specialised UN agencies to the government, the Executive Board and the target population. It is also a key tool for resource mobilisation, advocacy, policy dialogue and strategic partnerships needed to accelerate the achievement of national development strategies.

Box 5: Lessons Learned PSA Bolivia

The preparation of the new Bolivia PSA is unique in that, on the one hand, it is thematic, i.e. it analyses the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the population in Bolivia (COVID 2022-2023 PSA) and, on the other hand, it has an immediate predecessor, a PSA prepared in 2019. The Country Office decided to move forward with the preparation of this complementary report in order to have a dynamic, concise and updated document on the demographic and population dynamics of Bolivia. Although the country's PSA has not changed substantially in recent years, in certain thematic and geographic areas important changes were evident as a result of the COVID crisis. Therefore, the COVID PSA includes new evidence and analysis on the possible effects of the pandemic on three main areas: demographic variables, economic variables and access to services. Finally, given the relevance of the information provided in the study, mostly coming from the exploitation of national surveys and specialised studies on the impacts of COVID, and also thanks to the openness of the Bolivian government, the PSA served as input for the elaboration of the Country Report on the Implementation of the Montevideo Consensus.

Another important opportunity is the planning and implementation of the Population Census for the 2020 round (2015-2024) and the 2030 round (2025-2034). Countries such as Bolivia, Chile or El Salvador that are at this stage may benefit from the PSA development process, as it makes it possible to identify national priorities, possibilities and limitations in the disaggregation of data and data gaps associated with the international commitments assumed by the countries and necessary for evidence-based planning.

The scope of each of the SDGs is linked to the slogan "leave no one behind", which requires that the tools - such as population censuses - for measuring progress must be able to operate at very specific levels of disaggregation and account for the specific situation of different populations, as well as different territories. In this sense, the development of PSAs can be facilitated by the process of preparing censuses, which constitute the backbone of the country's social statistics system and, therefore, the conceptual definitions used in the census act as the framework for the country's social statistics for at least the next 10 years (ECLAC, 2017; 2021).

This is important not only for the potential of this data source to measure the indicator at a general level, but also for the comparable thresholds of disaggregation required, such as age, gender, ethnic-racial affiliation, migratory status or territorial location. Population and housing censuses are the ideal source of information for the construction of many of the indicators and their disaggregations, as well as providing the denominator for many of them.

A central aspect linked to the PSA process that can be facilitated by the planning of the next census rounds is the possibility of disaggregation to lower geographic levels offered by censuses as a universal source, since when census data are combined with geographic location they acquire greater added value for decision-making based on empirical data in specific territories (ECLAC, 2021).

The new focus on human security issues also appears as an entry point for the PSA to define a positioning for assisting countries to strengthen their capacity to understand

and anticipate the demographic dynamics they are experiencing, and to ensure that they have the competencies, tools, political will and public support to manage them.

Countries' regular performance reporting to different UN bodies can also be facilitated by the PSA. For example, countries will soon be required to submit national reports on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the CMPD to report on progress on commitments to ICPD+30 and, complementarily, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, which in 2023 undergoes its global mid-term review.

The tenth anniversary of the ICPD, together with the preparation of the second regional report on the implementation of the ICPD and the conclusion of the current global review and appraisal cycle of the ICPD Programme of Action (ICPD+30), is a unique opportunity to begin, advance or conclude the PSA process. The preparation of the national reports that countries are required to submit in connection with these commitments can be an opportunity to take stock of the country's situation on population and development issues. In this regard, because they involve a significant investment of time and resources by the national government, they can be facilitated by the process of building the PSA, adopting a synergistic approach that draws on and strengthens the technical, programmatic and operational capacities of the different national actors interested in participating in the PSA process.

Step 3. Identification of Data Sources to be Used

The sources of information are a determining element in establishing the scope, objectives and approach of the PSA.

It is suggested to give priority to national data over internationally compiled data, i.e. data produced by: 1) National Statistical Institutes or Offices and National Geographical Institutes or Offices: focus on periodic and large-scale surveys, such as censuses, household and employment surveys, demographic and health surveys, multi-purpose surveys, living conditions surveys, immigration surveys, among others. 2) Management information systems: population registers (vital statistics, income and outflows to the country), health registers (access to health services, hospital statistics, nutritional status), school registers (school enrolment, repetition, drop-outs, school results, etc.), social security registers, among others. 3) National programme documents, policies, laws and regulations, and all legal materials that have an impact in one way or another on the socio-economic life of the country.

However, some issues need to be considered during the development of a PSA:

- Only three of the six countries analysed have updated census data (Colombia and Guatemala, both from 2018, and Peru from 2017). The rest have census information that is approximately 10 years old. National censuses are the most valuable and reliable source of data for studying changes in the dynamics and structure of a population at the macro level. Likewise, as they are universally surveyed, they are the only ones that allow optimum flexibility for analysis at micro-social and micro-spatial levels with statistical representativeness, and are a fundamental tool for the analysis of the LNOB.

- An assessment of the quality, consistency and completeness of administrative records on vital events - especially births and deaths - is required. These statistics are central to monitoring annual changes in population dynamics.
- In the absence of reliable and up-to-date vital statistics or to complement information on these components of population dynamics, national surveys on specific topics, especially those on demography and health, should be explored, considering not only the results at the national level, but also the estimation domains and the possibilities of obtaining representative disaggregations.
- Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) are a major source of data on sexual and reproductive health, and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) also provide valuable data for SDG monitoring, especially for children and women.
- Population estimates and projections. Not optimal, but this could be the case for Venezuela with outdated vital statistics, the most recent census of 2011 and the latest demographic survey of 2010. In case of lack of information, United Nations [World Population Prospects 2022](#) (2022) projections can be used. This new version of the UN Population estimates and projections is an excellent tool for estimating the impact of Pandemic COVID-19 on demographic indicators.
- The results presented in the document "[The socio-demographic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)" published by ECLAC (2022a) can be used as a reference for preliminary analyses of the impacts of the pandemic on regional demographic dynamics. The 2022 edition of the Demographic Observatory, which compiles selected indicators of population estimates and projections for 38 countries and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean, is also an important source of reference (ECLAC, 2022b).
- The Virtual Platform for the follow-up of the ECLAC Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, presented at the Fourth Meeting of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in June 2022 in Santiago, Chile, constitutes a relevant instrument to obtain baselines of public policies implemented by the countries on the priority measures recommended by the CMPD.
- [UNFPA's data platform](#) is another platform that provides information for tracking priority indicators. This platform marks a step forward in UNFPA's commitment to provide evidence for informed decision-making and to promote our evidence-based global development initiatives that reflect regional priorities and realities. Key features include: enhanced geospatial capabilities, data integration and user-friendly interface. The regional platform integrates with UNFPA's global data website, streamlining navigation and simplifying access to the information needed for its day-to-day work.

The processing of the information requires a careful analysis of comparability. National data may suffer to a greater or lesser extent from incompatibilities due to different methodologies and definitions. Where international estimation models are used, it is important that deviations from national values, due to different definitions or adjustments, are appropriately footnoted.

Data gaps should also be recorded in the PSA and concrete recommendations on how to address and fill these gaps in statistical information should be made in the relevant section. In this way, we will not only be managing missions effectively, but also actively contributing to statistical visibility by recognising and proposing solutions to data gaps that may exist.

A lesson learned from the experiences analysed refers to the potential for the use and exploitation of different data sources, especially national ones. In this sense, the importance of having periodic and large-scale surveys, as well as administrative registers, such as population registers, is highlighted. This point is discussed in the next section of this paper. It may be the case that the country does not have a recent census, and one is due to be conducted in the next few years. The recommendation is to carry out the PSA process with the statistical tools available, and to carry out an update when census information becomes available. Census processes are often lengthy and sometimes with uncertain timetables. Undoubtedly, censuses are the foundation of national statistical systems, and allow for a disaggregation of information that no other source has. As an example, Colombia carried out its PSA in 2018 without having the data from that year's census available, and in 2022 it is updating the PSA process, with the data from the 2018 census already incorporated.

Step 4. Establishing the Structure of the PSA

The 2011 Guide suggests structuring the PSA into more or less independent modules (or chapters), with mandatory modules, referring to the minimum content that any PSA should have (see proposed minimum content index below), and optional ones, which will vary according to national interests and priorities. However, the analyses recommended in the PSA, the incorporation of other priorities for the country or differences in the emphasis of each of the modules will depend, on the one hand, on the criteria of feasibility, availability of information and capacities, and, on the other hand, on their adaptation to national priorities and the policy dialogue process.

Throughout the structure of the PSA, it is recommended to work on **key messages** that highlight and synthesise in a clear, simple and creative way the main conclusions and recommendations of each chapter of the PSA. These messages are intended to make the PSA a reference document for evidence-based decision-making. It is important that these messages summarise the main operational conclusions of each chapter, from which policy implications are drawn that can be used during the policy advocacy process. A recent experience to highlight in this regard is the use of key messages by Colombia during the process of drafting its latest PSA.

3. Minimum Table of Contents.

The following is an indicative outline of the minimum content that the PSA document should contain:

- 1. Introduction and Scope**
- 2. Country Context**
- 3. Population Dynamics**
- 4. Population Dynamics and Inequality Gaps - [Leaving No One Behind \(LNOB\) and Reaching Furthest Behind \(RFB\)](#)**
 - 4.1 Health including Sexual and Reproductive Health.**
 - 4.2 Gender Equality**
 - 4.3 Risks, Resilience and Vulnerability of the Population to Natural Disasters and Climate Change**
- 5. Challenges and opportunities - Policy recommendations**

1. Introduction and Scope

This module includes the background to the PSA, the overview covering the objectives and guiding principles of the document and the conceptual framework behind it. It should also provide a brief description of the process that was followed and an outline of the rationale and structure of the document. This module should cover the scope of the document, discussed in Step 2 of the proposed roadmap, i.e. answering what the PSA is being developed for and narrowing it down conceptually and methodologically.

The PSA, by materializing the commitments adopted at the international and regional levels in the area of population, should be developed in accordance with the principles agreed upon in the ICPD, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, at the regional level, in the Regional Conferences on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The design and development of the PSA should be in line with the contents and priorities agreed in each of these instruments.

2. Country Context

This module should be brief and should include a comprehensive analysis of the country's situation with respect to the country's economic, social, cultural, political, environmental and institutional context, highlighting the possibilities or constraints imposed by this national context. Analyses made in the CCAs and CPDs can be used as background.

An important aspect - included in the new version of the Guide and emphasised in the SDGs - is physical infrastructure. In this regard, it is recommended, for example, to consider information on health facilities, schools, transport, road infrastructure, energy,

water and sanitation (coverage data and access to services) as essential elements for development and well-being, as well as on the availability of statistical data and the challenges for climate change policies.

Another innovative aspect of the new draft version of the Guidance is the consideration of [climate change](#) as one of the major challenges facing humanity today, especially vulnerable populations, including women, children and older people, as well as people of African descent and indigenous peoples who disproportionately bear the burden and environmental racism. Without expanded action to address gender and health inequalities in the area of climate change, policies and interventions, certain populations will continue to be left behind. These populations also lack the resources needed to adapt to climate change and ensure the protection of their livelihoods and well-being. These groups tend to be most at risk living in neighbourhoods where housing stock and infrastructure are often poor or non-existent, and many are in flood zones or low-lying coastal areas, where threats from climate change impacts are often greatest.

The links between population, poverty and environment tend to form vicious circles. We need to analyse, on the one hand, population dynamics can clarify who is most vulnerable, why and how interventions could be most effective for those who really need it; and, on the other hand, national land-use strategies, particularly with regard to sustainable use of space, and existing settlement patterns in the country, identifying high-risk human settlements that contribute to environmental vulnerability. In order to ensure effective programmatic programming and responses to climate change emergencies, we need to strengthen individuals and community resilience by: investing in a healthy, educated, empowered population whose sexual and reproductive health and rights are addressed and fulfilled.

Issues related to climate change that the PSA should explore to ensure resilience building and protection within the Decade of Action include: the frequency and intensity of water-related disasters (droughts, storms, floods and natural phenomena in general), and the impact on agriculture (reduction of desired yields) and the costs of adaptation. Other topics are climate change and cities, demography and climate change, populations at risk of flooding, and the consequences/impact of climate change and environmental degradation on poverty, etc.

Moving towards evidence-based programming requires using the best available data to provide demographic intelligence; in this framework, the assessment of the quality of the national statistical system provides an opportunity to systematise statistical information in the country, which will facilitate the work to be done in subsequent modules of the PSA. In the absence of recent assessments, the PSA could include its own assessment of information availability, based on the experience gained in trying to access the necessary data. This should take into account variations in data quality depending on the source and the passage of time.

This module also shows the country's situation in terms of compliance with international commitments, with an emphasis on the SDGs and the WCDC agreements. It is important to highlight here not only the laws and strategic interventions carried out in the area of population, but also their degree of implementation and the main obstacles that could limit the progress achieved. Here it is necessary to highlight governance issues as a

determining factor, and to analyse the possibilities for national ownership of the PPS and its use in planning.

3. Population Dynamics

This is a core module of the PSA and provides an overview of the demographic situation, identifying the main challenges and consequences of demographic changes in the country and their linkage with economic and social structural changes. A decisive first step in understanding population dynamics and its relationship with the territory is the characterization of population dynamics, which includes all demographic components, including demographic trends and population projections. In this sense, demographic dynamics makes it possible to recognize the basic characteristics of the population for which it is planned, how many people compose it, where they are and who they are in terms of their age, sex, ethnic condition and how they move in time and space (UNFPA, 2009). The emphasis of each component will be determined by: the contextualised SDGs, the importance of each of them for the country, depending on the status of the demographic and urban transition, availability of information, etc.

The following are the basic components that this module should cover³ :

1) *Population trajectory and growth in the context of demographic transition.* Size describes the number of inhabitants usually residing in a specific place at a specific point in time. Populations are constantly changing as they experience increases (by birth or immigration) or decreases (by death or emigration), and based on this it is possible to establish the rate of growth and to pose some scenarios about population changes over time and anticipate the demands for basic needs. Considering that census information does not provide year-by-year information, population projections and estimates are one of the main sources of complementary information for understanding population dynamics.

2) *Natural or vegetative growth dynamics.* This refers to the levels, rates and trends in birth and death rates, which are associated with the processes and patterns of both biological reproduction and morbidity and mortality, and which together impact on the growth of a population over a given time.

2a) Birth rate. This refers to the number of births occurring in a population at a given time and depends both on the number of women of childbearing age in the population and their ages as well as their sexual reproductive behaviour. While the birth rate is affected by the age and sex structure of the population, changes in this component do not always reflect changes in the level of fertility. Instead, fertility refers to the average number of children women have during their reproductive life.

2b) Mortality. This refers to the number of deaths that occur in a population in a given period. The behaviour of mortality is conditioned both by the age and sex composition of the population (its structure) and by the environmental, social, economic, cultural, etc., conditions of the population, which largely define the risk factors for disease and death as well as the protective factors, such as the

³ For further references see: UNFPA (2009).

availability and access to health services, the quality of health services, health infrastructures and the culturally established risk/protective practices of individuals and their communities.

3) *Dynamics of migratory growth*. This refers to the change of residence from a place of origin to a place of destination, involving the crossing of a defined geopolitical boundary or border. For the analysis of migration, it is not only necessary to know the number of people who enter (immigrate) and leave (emigrate) a territory, so that the gains and losses resulting from these movements can be established, but it is also necessary to know the periodicity with which these movements occur; the flows of origin and destination, the motivations that preceded the decision to migrate; as well as the environmental, social, economic, family, etc., implications that the process generates for both the places of departure and arrival (and "transit") of migrants. It is important to work not only on the dynamics of international migration, but also on the evolution of internal migration within the country in order to work on territorial differences. It is important to consider mobility from the perspective of continuous change, realised mixed migration, and to explore issues such as the vulnerability of migrants, their migration experience among some of the most used irregular routes, and the gaps in providing adequate protection for migrants along these routes.

4) *Population structure*. Now more than ever, countries are incredibly diverse demographically. We cannot expect a one-size-fits-all solution to apply to countries with ageing populations or low fertility rates. UNFPA works with individual countries to create country-specific programmes that aim to help their societies thrive in the midst of demographic change.

It refers to the composition of a population according to elements, characteristics or attributes that allow it to be qualified. The most basic elements usually considered are age and sex, and it provides a fundamental overview of the vital needs of the population in the territory. The inclusion or not of other attributes in the analysis of the composition will depend on the needs and characteristics of the country and the effective possibilities of access to the required information. This analysis, linked to the following module, aims to identify specific population groups whose particular conditions require specific treatment in planning processes.

There is a complex interrelationship between the dynamics of population growth and its effects on population structure. For example, a decompensation in the demographic structure, manifested in the decrease of the population in economically active ages, can be caused by strong emigration processes associated with environmental, social and/or economic dynamics. In countries that clearly expel populations, where migratory selectivity can modify the population pyramid, presenting a lower relative percentage of people of working age -particularly men- than expected.

Population pyramids can be complemented by other indicators of structure - such as Masculinity Index, Mean/Middle Age of the population, Dependency Ratio, Ageing Ratio - that shed light on how the interplay between mortality, migration and fertility may be affecting the demographic structure.

Another element linked to the structure of the population is the identification of the so-called "demographic bonus", which refers to the increase in the number of people of working age (15 to 64 years) with respect to the total number of people of inactive age

(and, in particular, the 0-14 group). The main indicators for the analysis of the demographic bonus are the demographic dependency ratio and the economic dependency ratio. The application of the methodology of National Transfer Accounts systems is recommended to study the economic impact of the demographic bonus, as Colombia has used in its recent PSA, and Guatemala proposes to use in its roadmap. UNFPA offers a growing package of tools to help countries rapidly characterize their populations based on population censuses and surveys, including patterns and projections of age structure, current rates of child marriage, unmet need for family planning, coverage and access to sexual and reproductive health services and entitlements, and gender differences in schooling, among other factors.

5) *Spatial distribution of the population and mobility over the territory.* Depending on the behaviour of the previous components of demographic dynamics, the population will tend to be distributed differently over the territory. Among the most basic aspects are the size of the population in the different national sub-units into which the country can be divided and in its urban and rural areas, as well as the population density in each of these areas. While there is no single most appropriate or desirable measure of density for a territory, densities that exceed the territory's capacity, for example, to recycle waste from human populations end up generating imbalances that can deplete ecosystems and thus the very sustainability of the population. Sub-national analyses are of great relevance in the analysis of regional inequalities within countries. The use of geo-referenced data is an excellent tool to describe these inequalities.

Population mobility is part of all migratory processes, but it has a special place in the analysis of demographic dynamics, because many movements do not constitute a permanent change of residence but do represent important changes in the distribution of the population in the territory and above all in the demand for environmental goods and services, infrastructure and public services, means of transport, etc., both in the region that receives important population flows from time to time and in the region from which they originate. There are many forms of daily or temporary mobility of the population, depending on the frequency of movement and its characteristics.

Climate change is one of the global megatrends with important implications for each of the demographic components. Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions most exposed, vulnerable and impacted by climate change. Internal and international migration is one of the ways people adapt to these changes in climate and seek security or greater economic opportunity. Migration may reduce population pressure on places affected by climate stress and may benefit labour-scarce destinations. However, the location of migrants in destination locations may in turn exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities because migrant populations are often located in areas of high social and environmental risk (Rigaud et al., 2018).

Exposure to climate change also has effects on the health of exposed populations. For example, extreme temperatures particularly affect at-risk groups such as children under 5 years of age, the elderly and people with chronic diseases, increasing mortality in these groups. It also increases the number of people exposed to dengue fever and other infectious and communicable diseases (WHO, 2022). Climate change may also affect fertility patterns and increase gaps between countries (Casey et al., 2019). Climate change may drive fertility increases in response to rising infant mortality, or due to limited access to sexual and reproductive health services (UNFPA, 2022b).

Climate change has differentiated effects on certain groups, due to their age, mobility, dependency, as well as physical, emotional or mental condition. This is exacerbated by poverty and location, such as remote or coastal areas. In a context of an ageing population, in which 4 out of 5 people over the age of 60 are expected to live in developing countries, the effects of climate change will affect the chances of achieving healthy ageing and longevity (WHO, 2022).

Clarification: It is important to show the progress of the national demographic and urban transition and compare it with other countries in the region, exhibiting its specific characteristics and disparities between territorial units, depending on the availability of information. In an effort to leave no one behind, the analysis should be conducted at the national and sub-national levels, aggregating data from the lower levels of geographical disaggregation to the national level. Starting the analysis at the lower level can guide the interpretation of the national level data by taking into account the inequalities observed at the lower levels.

4. Population Dynamics and Inequality Gaps - Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and Reaching Furthest Behind (RFB)

The demographic and epidemiological transition, detailed in the previous chapter, has progressed in different ways not only among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, but also in certain territories or social sectors within the same country. This **demographic diversity**, which reflects and is the result of socio-economic inequality in the region and within each country, imposes specific challenges for public policies, both economic and social. Hence the importance of considering the implications of this demographic diversity in the PSA process based on an analysis of inequality gaps.

In this direction, once the demographic dynamics have been characterised, it is possible to understand the population dynamics and its interactions with other factors of social, economic and environmental dynamics; as well as to show the relevance of the socio-demographic manifestations of inequalities and poverty, and their persistence despite the progress of the demographic transition. As a priority, it involves identifying those people or groups that are being left behind, disaggregating the information by age, gender, ethnicity, race, economic status, migration status, disability, geographical location, etc. (SDG 17.18). Disaggregating the indicators will show how inequalities are related to population dynamics, which are an important component of social inequalities in general.

We will increasingly move from thinking in terms of LNOB or RFB groups to thinking in terms of RFB factors. A factor is a characteristic that drives discrimination and inequality and may intersect with several other exclusionary factors in the same person or group. This shift of factors helps to avoid seeing discrete groups of RFB populations in narrow and limited compartments, and reflects the reality of intersectional disadvantage for those furthest behind. Importantly, it also supports consideration of why (or almost inevitably, the many whys) a group does not access services, experience discrimination or make progress towards achieving development goals.

Disaggregation of information

The disaggregation of information at very specific levels will make it possible to account for the particular situation of the different populations, as well as the different territories, i.e., the regional and territorial diversity within the same country. It will also make it possible to establish gaps according to social and economic conditions and to measure progress in population and development.

Multiple stratification based on these disaggregations should account for the demographic diversity that characterises the country, representing a fundamental tool of analysis to comply with the principle of LNOB's Agenda 2030. Decision-making based on disaggregated information will make it possible to generate specific and well-defined public policies, and thus improve their effectiveness in terms of inclusion.

A cross-cutting aspect of the entire PSA process is the **territorial disaggregation** of the information, seeking to achieve the highest possible quality geographical disaggregation. The preparation of the next census rounds is an opportunity to update the census cartography, especially in remote and/or smaller areas, with the objective of ensuring consistency between the statistical base and the geography. The integration of geographic statistical information offers a great opportunity to add value to the information by allowing both a territorial view of the information and the linkage between various disaggregated topics for smaller areas (ECLAC, 2021).

Relational analysis of determinants and causes

This chapter should also include an analysis of the possible determinants and causes of inequality gaps, which requires presenting data on explanatory factors. To understand the causes, evidence and disaggregated data should be generated, but also analysis of the grounds of discrimination prohibited by international law and examination of social, cultural, economic, political, legislative and other mechanisms of exclusion. **Intersectional** analysis should be promoted to understand how different social inequalities relate and articulate with each other, producing specific conditions of systematic exclusion.

Intersectionality is presented as a category of analysis that goes beyond single-category approaches to inequality and, in this sense, is a key tool for operationalising the principle of "leaving no one behind" by helping to identify the interconnected nature of different social categories and how they can create multiple systems of disadvantage and exclusion.

This type of analysis makes it possible to unravel the power matrix that produces specific inequalities by highlighting how the different categories relevant to a specific geographical and historical context intersect. It also facilitates the development of public policies with a rights-based approach, as a good diagnosis will enable the establishment of priority axes, recognising the diversity within groups and avoiding a monofocal logic.

In this sense, "leaving no one behind" means going beyond the assessment of average and aggregate progress to ensure progress for all population groups at a disaggregated level. This will require disaggregating data to identify who is being excluded or discriminated against, how and why, as well as who is experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality. At the same time it will involve

identifying unfair, avoidable or extreme inequalities in outcomes and opportunities, as well as patterns of discrimination in law, policy and practice. It will also involve addressing patterns of exclusion, structural constraints and unequal power relations that produce and reproduce inequalities over generations, and moving towards equality for all groups in society. This will require supporting legal, policy, institutional and other measures that promote equality and reverse the trend of increasing inequalities. This will also require the free, active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, especially the most marginalised, in review and monitoring processes to ensure accountability, recourse and solutions for all.

In addition, it is necessary to include the extent to which the country's policies or measures promote and protect human rights and achieve their full realisation. It is also necessary to analyse the extent to which existing conceptual frameworks have limitations, for example, by describing through single categories that do not reflect the reality that we all have multiple identities and therefore may face intersecting forms of discrimination (AWID, 2004).

The themes on which the relational gap analyses are conducted will depend on the contextualised SDGs, the importance of each of the different disaggregations for the country, the status of the demographic and urban transition, the availability of information, etc. UNFPA's global, regional and national emphases and priorities should also be taken into account.

Box 6. Lessons learned in structuring the PSA

For the preparation of the 2018 PSA, Colombia took the categories proposed by the 2011 Conceptual and Methodological Guide as the organising axes of the PSA: inequalities between territories, generational, by sex, in sexual and reproductive health, population with disabilities and due to ethnic characteristics. In contrast, for the new version of the 2022 PSA, the analysis of inequality gaps was structured on the basis of the substantive chapters of the CMPD mentioned in the conceptual framework of this document, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the country's inequalities.

The PSA is a technical and political process that requires a solid institutional set-up (objectives according to country priorities, alliances, resources), solid technical content (sources and analysis of population dynamics) and strategic content to influence public policies, cooperation frameworks and voluntary reports to follow up on population and sustainable development agendas.

Three issues deserve special attention because of the relevance they have acquired in recent times and because of their implications for national development strategies. On the one hand, the recognition of good health for the enjoyment of dignity and human rights, including the fundamental right to sexual and reproductive health (SRH). On the other hand, the commitment to reduce gender gaps and promote the empowerment of women and girls. Finally, risks, resilience and vulnerabilities in countries facing humanitarian emergencies.

4.1 Sexual and reproductive health and health of the population

This theme involves changes in health/disease patterns in the country, focusing on the outcomes included in SDG 3, with analysis of access to and quality of health services, and with an additional detailed assessment of sexual and reproductive health. It should cover: 1) Changes in morbidity and mortality patterns in the general population, with emphasis on intersectional analysis by age, gender and territory; 2) Child health and survival: a) Infant mortality, and b) Under-five mortality; and 3) Adolescent health; 4) Health in the older adult population; 5) Sexual and reproductive health: (a) Maternal morbidity and mortality, (b) Contraception, (c) Unwanted pregnancies, (d) Abortion, (e) HIV and AIDS, among others; and 6) Universal health coverage: a) service coverage, (b) availability and access to services, (c) immunisation coverage, (d) nutritional status.

4.2 Gender equality

Given the relevance of this issue for the UNFPA agenda, due to its close link to international agreements on population and development and to a certain setback that is occurring as a result of the emergence and strengthening of fundamentalist or conservative groups and tendencies, it could be placed as a separate section. Although it could be addressed as part of the intersectional analysis pursued throughout the PSA, having it separate would ensure greater visibility within the PSA and would allow for a more in-depth treatment of aspects that directly affect the attainment of inalienable human rights and SRHR in particular, such as early unions and harmful practices, adolescent pregnancy and fertility, and gender-based violence.

Each country will have to evaluate its contextual conditions and the cultural relevance of the way in which these issues should be addressed in order to avoid unnecessary conflicts, while observing the need to face up to problems that could be subsumed, made invisible or omitted, and which nevertheless have a high ethical and moral profile, while affecting, perhaps like no other, the full development of women, adolescents and children in particular.

For this type of analysis, it is not enough to disaggregate the information according to sex, but it is also necessary to provide sufficient gender sensitivity in the analysis itself, based on the meanings that certain socio-demographic data could be providing but which are commonly naturalised as part of the patriarchal, androcentric and heteronormative interpretation that they have historically had. To this end, national surveys on gender equality, fertility, time use and the MICS themselves could be very useful, as well as those carried out among key populations for the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Other registers such as police records, gender and health observatories could also be very useful for gathering relevant data on gender-based violence. The case of the PSA carried out by Cuba could serve as an example.

4.3 Risks, resilience and vulnerability of the population to natural disasters and Climate Change

Climate change poses a threat to everyone on the planet, but as a "threat multiplier" it tends to exacerbate pre-existing inequalities. Women and girls suffer disproportionately from the impacts of climate change. For example, women are more likely to die from injuries due to social constraints that limit access to information, mobility and decision-

making. However, these effects are not uniform, primarily affecting indigenous and Afro-descendant women, older women, LGBT+ populations, women and girls with disabilities, and those living in remote areas.

In this regard, it is suggested to move towards the identification of vulnerable populations - with reference to the data disaggregations suggested in SDG 17.18 - and the dangers they face, in line with the "leave no one behind" principle of the 2030 Agenda. This commitment implies reaching those furthest behind first and addressing inequality and discrimination. To this end, it is suggested to use the evidence gathered to identify those groups most at risk of being 'left behind' and the priority actions in the short, medium and long term to eliminate humanitarian needs, reduce future vulnerabilities and increase resilience to change.

It is also recommended to analyse the adequacy of existing emergency response plans to save the lives and dignity of affected people from a human rights, gender, age, diversity and territorial differential approach. This analysis includes identifying strategic response priorities and the coordination structure between the different national actors and the link with UNFPA and other organisations of the United Nations System.

The analysis should focus on (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2020):

- Who are those left behind (gender, age, disability, social status, nationality, ethnicity, other contextually relevant characteristics)? Who are those who can contribute most to improving the situation affecting populations in protracted crises?
- Where are those who are left behind?
- When are they likely to be left behind?
- What is causing these people to be left behind (risks, vulnerabilities and insufficient capacities)? Are the causes and consequences of being left behind different depending on gender, age, capacity, etc.?
- How can those at risk be prevented from being left behind?

This theme is optional and includes: 1) Assessing vulnerability and risk factors, 2) Highlighting the types of interventions that are carried out during humanitarian and emergency crisis situations during conflicts, natural disasters and public health emergencies (e.g. COVID).

5. Challenges and opportunities - Policy Recommendations

The final chapter of the PHC report should serve three functions: a) to serve as a summary and conclusions, with emphasis on the relevance of the findings (conceptual and empirical evidence) and the identification of the main challenges and priorities facing the country, as well as the contribution that can be made from the population analysis. This means putting in place the main messages of the analysis and relating them creatively to the existing political and institutional context and the way the UN works in the country; b) highlighting opportunities and the need to invest in rights-based public policies to reduce inequalities, especially in light of "leaving no one behind" as a central theme of the SDG agenda; and c) defining strategic interventions that

development partners, in particular UNFPA, can undertake as part of a joint effort to support the country's development.

This section requires articulating the main lessons, findings and recommendations with what governments have set out in their national and sub-national policy agendas and programmes, as well as with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) structures, with the aim of translating the collective promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind into tangible action for people on the ground, especially the most vulnerable. In this sense, the PSA is a very important evidence base for the Common Country Analysis (CCA) and in the national voluntary reports of the 2030 Agenda, the ICPD and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development - CMPD, based on the identification of the main problems and development gaps, and the subsequent definition of the areas in which the articulated work between UNFPA and the national government will be prioritised.

Without this "demographic intelligence" - developed in each of the chapters of the PSA - it is not possible to understand the changing needs of a country's population and thus design evidence-based policies aimed at influencing future demographic trends. The PSA - as an assessment and advocacy tool - will contribute to the creation of demographically resilient societies, that is, societies that are able to thrive regardless of the demographic changes they experience because they have the capacity to predict those changes, understand their implications and develop evidence-based policy responses with human rights at the centre of any intervention (UNFPA, 2023a; 2023b).

While the concept of **demographic resilience**⁴ was originally developed initially to be applied to those countries in Europe and Central Asia with low fertility, population ageing and, in some cases, population decline, countries around the world share a desire to build societies that can thrive in the midst of demographic change, regardless of the exact nature of demographic change and the country's economic, social and environmental conditions (UNFPA, 2023b).

A key condition is the capacity of national and local governments to address, analyse and anticipate demographic changes. Experience shows that even the best efforts to change demographic futures are often very costly, ineffective and may even infringe on the rights of populations, and therefore greater emphasis needs to be placed on evidence-based planning that builds societies that are prosperous, inclusive and resilient to these changes (UNFPA, 2023b).

⁴ Demographic resilience is defined as the ability to adapt or state of adaptability in a context of demographic change, and the ability to thrive in spite of demographic change (UNFPA, 2023a).

Box 7. Lessons learned PSA Venezuela

The 2006 Venezuela PSA (UNFPA, 2006) included a chapter entitled "Challenges and Opportunities: Implications for Public Policies". It presented the main challenges facing the country and the opportunities identified by the population analysis. This section included a synthesis of the main findings found in the chapters that made up the PSA, building some scenarios with recommendations for public policies in the areas of population, sexual and reproductive health and gender, showing the benefits of timely action and the risks of inaction or delayed responses. This chapter highlighted policies aimed at expanding capacities, reducing inequality gaps and protecting the rights of the most vulnerable and left-behind groups.

Finally, some guiding elements on UNFPA's dialogue with national institutions were included, based on the Political-Strategic Dialogue with key national actors, a central strategy of this PSA.

4. Specific Recommendations for the Application of this guide in Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were recognised as a distinct group of developing countries facing specific social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Earth Summit or Rio+20, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. This group of countries, while experiencing economic difficulties and facing development needs similar to those of developing countries in general, also have vulnerabilities and characteristics of their own: their small size, remoteness, limited resource and export base, and susceptibility to global environmental problems and external economic shocks, including a wide range of climate change impacts and potentially more frequent and intense natural disasters (Chapter 17 of Section II of [Agenda 21](#)).

These structural and external difficulties, which SIDS face in achieving sustainable development, pose many public health challenges, including increased illness and death from hurricanes, floods, heat waves and droughts; food and water insecurity; increased transmission and spread of infectious diseases; declining air quality; and adverse impacts on the physical and mental health of populations displaced by climate change disruptions.

The number of people internally displaced by storms and floods has increased dramatically. Between 2009 and 2013, more than 600,000 people were displaced and in the following five-year period (2014-2018) that number increased six-fold, affecting 3.4 million people. Forced displacement especially affects women and children and adolescents, who are at greater risk of violence, trafficking and exploitation, as well as of contracting diseases such as measles and respiratory illnesses. It also differentially affects migrant families, especially those with irregular migration status, who may not seek support for fear of deportation (UNICEF, 2019).

Of the total number of SIDS, 22 countries and territories are in the Caribbean and are home to approximately 7.6 million inhabitants. Despite the classification of most countries as high-income economies and most of the rest as middle-income, countries in the Caribbean sub-region are highly vulnerable, due to large external debts, high exposure to natural disasters, limited natural resources and limited economic diversity. These factors place the Caribbean in a position of vulnerability to poverty unless "demographic intelligence" is applied through the development of tools such as the PSA for achieving demographically resilient societies.

This region is characterised by one of the largest population movements in the world. The cultural and national history of Caribbean peoples makes migration a way of life, which could be described as a migratory tradition-identity. However, the variety of socio-economic indicators at the regional level are the basis of migratory pressure and mobility within the area. In most of these countries, emigration rates are high, mainly due to lack of economic and livelihood development opportunities among the youngest who suffer from high unemployment rates - reaching 25% in some cases. But it also affects the highly skilled population, such as nurses and other health workers, for better job opportunities and professional development in destination countries. This type of migration threatens and negatively affects health systems, especially in small-population countries such as the Caribbean LMICs, due to the impossibility of filling available health posts (PAHO, 2020).

An important consequence of emigration is remittances, which are an important source of foreign exchange, representing - on average between 2018 and 2022 - 6.7% of the Gross Domestic Product of Caribbean SIDS compared to 4.5% among the least developed countries (World Bank, 2023). The outcome document of the Third International Conference on SIDS, known as the "Samoa Pathway" (United Nations, 2014), recognises the positive role of migrant and diaspora populations in development and the achievement of the SDGs, which through remittances contribute to alleviating poverty and strengthening the resilience of recipient households (e.g. enabling them to cope with post-disaster losses).

Most countries have an advanced median age, with total fertility below replacement levels. However, the demographic and epidemiological transition has progressed in different ways in certain territories or social groups within these countries and territories, reflecting disparities between socio-economic and ethnic groups. This demographic diversity imposes specific challenges for public policies, a key element being the availability of timely and high-quality data to address structural inequalities and ensure that no one is left behind. Different UN documents report that, although efforts are being made to increase the capacity to collect and analyse high quality data, particularly population and household data, the lack of timely high quality data is a major challenge in the sub-region, especially due to weak national statistical systems that operate with insufficient human and physical resources (ECLAC 2009; UNFPA, 2022a).

Therefore, the PSA process is an opportunity to advocate for the need to invest in the collection and analysis of high quality data to identify the main challenges and priorities facing the country based on an analysis of the relationships and impact between demographic dynamics and social, economic and environmental phenomena. Without this "demographic intelligence" it is not possible to advance towards the design of

evidence-based public policies that will enable the countries and territories of the Caribbean sub-region to be demographically resilient and face the challenges that extreme economic and environmental shocks present them with.

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