CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Agenda is universal and comprehensive, focused on people, planet, and prosperity. It is an agenda that promises not to leave no one behind, and that, because of its very complexity, is only possible to achieve in partnership with multiple actors.

The agencies, funds, and programs of the United Nations Development Group in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDG LAC) have the responsibility to work in partnership with and prioritize those who are marginalized, laggards and excluded. Therefore, we must ask ourselves: What are the characteristics of the population that does not access economic opportunities, that is excluded from social policies, or that suffers as a result of harmful environmental impacts? These are the fundamental questions that we must ask because the approach of sustainable development to consider the intersections and links of economic, social and environmental issues does not allow us to "sectorize" its approach. People and nations live their vulnerability from multiple facets, often simultaneously and where one can be, at the same time, cause and consequence of the other.

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have been protagonists in the elaboration and adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which presents an opportunity for all the countries of the region to include the reduction of inequalities as a fundamental aspect for development. The regional commitment continues in force in the implementation of this agenda. In highlighting actions such as the inclusion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in national planning, the summoning of the countries themselves to a regional discussion about the progress and challenges in the implementation of the agenda and the creation or adaptation of existing institutions.

All these actions are geared toward promoting inter-institutional and inter-agency coordination necessary for the implementation and achievement of the objectives and goals in which governments have committed themselves.

The UNDG of Latin America and the Caribbean, made up of 20 entities of the United Nations (UN), has the mission of strengthening practices and processes to achieve greater synergy and coherence of all the agencies and practices that make up the organization. Likewise, the group helps UN Country Teams to provide practical support to the nations by providing strategic guidance, analysis, and technical assistance and providing a voice to universal values and norms.

More specifically, one of the working groups of the UNDG in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Interagency Working Group on the SDGs (IAWG-SDG), has among its objectives to serve as a space for technical coordination among all UN agencies and as a platform that facilitates providing the United Nations Country Teams, as well as national counterparts, with an integrated technical assistance and a scenario of informed dialogue that points to the articulation of policies conducive to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

This document was drafted taking into account the inputs provided by the different agencies, funds and programs that make up this inter-agency group. It intends to identify the main challenges for the achievement of sustainable development, showing concrete proposals of the UN that are aimed at accelerating the achievement of the SDGs, as well as highlighting exemplary interventions undertaken in the region.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE MAIN CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1   LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

When we talk about sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, we talk about the future of the 652 million people that currently make up its population (330 million women and 322 million men)[1]. To these human groups, we must add the estimated 86 million that will be added by 2030 and, also, consider the new generations that will inherit the consequences of the human activity deployed until then. Compliance with the 2030 Agenda, whether or not the goals of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are achieved, will unavoidably affect this entire population.

However, before going into the socioeconomic context, we do not want to fail to recognize that in the region there is significant progress. Poverty has been reduced from 43% in 2002 to 30.7% in 2016[2]; a significant number of people have been able to access a standard of living that places them above the poverty line; the purchasing level has varied, and the market has begun to respond with credits, and goods and services to this new quota and the new demands.

In 2013, the World Bank revealed that the middle-class population in Latin America and the Caribbean had increased by 50%, from 103 million people in 2003 to 152 million in 2009[3]. It must be acknowledged that inequality has been reduced. According to ECLAC, the Gini coefficient showed decreases between 2008 and 2015. The facts also reveal how these decreases are associated with a relative increase in personal income of the poorest quintile[4]; despite this reduction, the region continues to be the area of the planet with greater inequality. FAO has also highlighted

progress in reducing hunger, "Latin America and the Caribbean met the two international goals of hunger. By lowering its percentage and the total number of undernourished people to less than half, it achieved both the Millennium Goal 1C and the World Food Summit.[5]" The region also met the millennium goal of achieving a two-thirds reduction in child mortality, thanks to which, since 1990, more than 1.6 million child deaths have been prevented in the region as a result of greater access to adequate nutrition, vaccination, medical treatment, improved water, and sanitation.

The difficult task of leaving no one behind should be tackled by building on the successes that have already been achieved. Therefore, efforts must be directed to those people who still live in poverty. For the year 2016, the number of people living in poverty was 186 million[6]. Among them are the 72 million children under 15 years of age. Among them are also 42.5 million people who suffer from hunger[7]; this human contingent is probably the most excluded both economically and socially and lacking a real recognition of their dignity.

The facts mentioned above are those that best approximate a specific description of what the task is, how many people are being left behind. It is also important not to forget that poverty also has a human face that can be correctly outlined, analyzing the socio-demographic and cultural characteristics of that population. When we talk about people in situation of poverty, we refer to indigenous peoples, Afrodescendent people, small farmers, children, adolescents, older adults, people forcibly displaced by persecution, violence or natural disasters, all of them living their backwardness in a specific and concrete

way. Each one of these populations suffers from the particular economic, social and environmental challenges that the 2030 Agenda seeks to overcome.

Regional poverty and correlating factors find their determinants rooted in the depths of history, as well as in socio-economic and cultural structures. Accordingly, it is not possible to have a correct concept of the phenomenon without mentioning realities such as the dual economic structure, with modern sectors and high productivity, alongside precarious, low productivity sectors that do not generate sufficient income, in which women are over-represented. Nor can we forget the re-primarization of the economy, dependent on the economic cycles of *commodities*, with an inability to insert itself, more effectively, in the value chains.

Additionally, within these socioeconomic structures, it is essential to recognize the way in which social relations have been shaped. On the one hand, discrimination has divided people between citizens who enjoy rights and citizens who see the limited enjoyment of those same rights, in key sectors and subordinate sectors; and where, on the other hand, patriarchal values have limited the autonomy and equality of rights for women. In a region that registers high figures of inequality, the interrelation of this inequality, discrimination and the lag of large sectors of the population cannot be overemphasized.

On the other hand, although in principle, the so-called new "middle classes" have overcome poverty, it is also important to bear in mind that they could return to it. According to the World Bank, practically 39% of the Latin American population remains vulnerable to relapse into poverty[8]. The great challenge for this group is to see how they can maintain their income, despite the economic recession. There is some optimism from the World Bank about how resilient they are and how they manage to progressively move away from the border that divides poverty from the category of "middle class". Precisely, the countries must be attentive to this segment of the population, although they have, with it, different attention to the one that must be kept with the people who suffer hunger and indigence. It would be more appropriate to continue maintaining a focus on prevention and protection of the vulnerable population, preventing that a catastrophic illness or

a critical juncture, such as a natural disaster, pushing them down and being affected again by unsustainable situations.

Finally, if we want to have a complete picture of whom we cannot leave behind, we have to examine other categories that are not defined by their references to income or socioeconomic status. This type of examination should be applied to all those categories mentioned above and that are associated with poverty, particularly noteworthy is age, gender, ethnic or racial characteristics.

We also want to emphasize conditions that are overlooked such as disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, people living with HIV, to name a few. These groups often live their exclusion due to barriers to access to essential social services, lack of infrastructure and appropriate approaches to address or include them, and discrimination. The fields of education, health and work are usually the areas in which their exclusion manifests itself. Some examples would be the difficulties that homosexual young people face in the school environment, or those that transsexual people experience in the workplace, to mention these cases. Disability is also a vital exclusion factor for all age groups, from children to older adults. People who are forcibly displaced due to internal displacement or who come from other countries also suffer from these exclusions and barriers to access essential social services.

MEASUREMENT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

Monetary poverty indicators, whether measured from household income or consumption spending, have shown a significant reduction for the region, an advance mainly driven by economic growth. However, these data hide substantial persistent deficiencies, as well as disparities between social groups and between countries.

That is why the region is moving towards more inclusive indicators that show the multiple faces of poverty beyond income and that reflect the advances and lags in the dimensions, indexes, and thresholds that are relevant in different national contexts.

In this sense, several countries in the region have adopted national multidimensional poverty measures, following the methodology of the global MPI, published by the UNDP and estimated for more than 100 nations allowing international comparability.

In the case of Colombia, the application has been linked to its national strategy for overcoming poverty, which, together with the income poverty indicator, constitute the official poverty measures in the country. The new measurement was designed to be a useful tool in the design of social programs. Primarily as an instrument for geographic targeting of beneficiaries -as in the case of the conditional transfer program More families in action-, and as an instrument aimed at identifying the graduation criteria of the Unite Net strategy, action to fight extreme poverty. The choice of dimensions and variables were linked to the Quality of Life Survey.

Colombia has also turned the development of the index into a tool that contributes to the inter-sectoral coordination and articulation within the government. The creation of instances such as the inter-sectoral committees of the country, in which the different institutions and organizations involved in overcoming poverty meet, can generate a coordinated state strategy, and address poverty not only from the income dimension but also from the multiple aspects contained in its definition.

This brief analysis of the categories that we can use to unravel the reality of all those who are lagging behind compels us to highlight the importance of measuring the three dimensions of sustainable development for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through the access to environmental, social and economic data that is disaggregated, timely and available to the public. The importance of the information about who they are, where they are, why they are lagging behind and what is the context of their situation of exclusion, cannot be underestimated.

Notwithstanding this vital need for data, the regional assessments carried out by ECLAC to analyze the production capacity of the indicators show that few countries currently have the ability to monitor more than 50% of the 231 indicators proposed as part of the monitoring of the SDGs[9].

Multiple disaggregation strategies are required to visualize how inequality and exclusion are defined by gender, age, ethnic-cultural and racial factors, disability, social norms, migratory status and geographical location, among others; always bearing in mind the horizon of improving the effectiveness of public policies.

2.1. APPROACHES AND PERSPECTIVES:

In the search for a more comprehensive look and response to the region's challenges, the approaches for action play an important role. In this respect, the gender approach is essential because it facilitates the identification of cultural and social constructions that in some way predispose society to naturalize situations of discrimination and exclusion. Even today, how the feminine and the masculine is built contribute to exclusion, devaluing women versus men[10]. These same dynamics have been extended to new debates on gender identity, sexual orientation, and gender expressions. What matters is to assess the impact of such cultural and social constructions on the opportunities presented to people and if their social roles and the interactions they carry out with others find some restriction that limits opportunities and options for individual fulfillment. It is important, likewise, to take into account the relationship between public policies and what has been built in such a way that their impact on men and women can be better understood.

The intercultural approach represents another vital perspective that favors integration and inclusion. Above all, because it establishes a platform for dialogue with communities that identify values and traditions of the vast and varied range of indigenous peoples that inhabit the region[11]. It is estimated that indigenous peoples currently represent around 14% of the total of people living in poverty and 17% of people living in conditions of extreme poverty in Latin America, despite constituting less than 8% of the population[12]. In general, in all analyses of poverty and exclusion, regardless of the development indicator used, the indigenous peoples that were contacted appear to be behind. Although it cannot be said that the approach is applicable only to these peoples, we must, nevertheless, emphasize its importance, especially in those countries where they have a significant demographic weight, as in the cases of Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and Peru, for example[13].

In the same line of reasoning, the approach of the Afro-descendant population is also closely related to an intercultural approach that promotes coexistence among people of different cultures and religions through a focus on the person as protagonist and rights holder. In the areas of health and education, this approach is inescapable. According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), "indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, among others, face more difficulties in accessing health services in different countries of the Americas, which affects their overall health, according to the national data. According to the latest census data from 19 countries in the Americas, the indigenous population is between 40 and 50 million people, and it is estimated that the Afro-descendant population is 150 million. Infant mortality and maternal mortality tend to be higher among indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, according to available data from those countries. For example, in Panama, infant mortality rate among indigenous peoples was three times higher than that of the rest of the population. In Brazil, the main cause of death in indigenous children under one year were infectious diseases, while in Afro-descendant it was extreme prematurity[14]".

The life course approach is equally important to reach the laggards. This approach "addresses the moments

of the continuum of life and recognizes that human development (....) depends on the interaction of different factors throughout the course of life, cumulative experiences and present situations of each influenced by the family, social, economic, environmental and cultural context. It should be understood that investing in timely care in each generation will affect the next and that the most significant benefit of a vital moment can be derived from interventions made in a previous period[15]".

It is essential to understand that individual life trajectories are also expressions of the interactions that specific population age groups live with their relational and moral environment, and that in this process different levels of influence are interwoven from individual cognitive and genetic factors to socio-cultural factors that may or may not favor their well-being and, more broadly, sustainable development[16]. This alludes, on the one hand, to the set of opportunities offered to specific cohorts and to the individuals who belong to it. Consider the case of early childhood interventions that include care in health, nutrition, and early stimulation; or aspects related to education for sexuality and sexual and reproductive health during adolescence; or the continuing education offered to adults. On the other hand, it also refers to the promotion of freedoms that allow individuals belonging to these cohorts to strengthen their goals (agency capacity), adopt healthy behaviors, or participate in the protection of the environment or the adoption of sustainable patterns of consumption, these as some examples[17].

We must apply this approach in a very diverse demographic context. The age structure has been affected by the demographic transition of the region and, in particular, by the decrease in fertility. The scenarios are different in different countries or groups of nations. As a general trend, we see that the age group from 0 to 14 years has been decreasing proportionally since the 1960s. According to various projections, the group of working age from 15 to 59 years will reach its highest level in 2035, with 437 million, to subsequently decrease, while people over 60 years will increase in proportion. Older adults, who represented 5.6% of the regional population in 1950, 10% in 2010, are projected to represent 21% in 2040 and 36% in the year 2100. It is also estimated that the age group of more than

60 years will reach its highest level in 2080, with 241 million[18]. In this complex background of population aging with very varied dynamics, *a society for all ages* must ensure the opportunities and promote the agency of the different cohorts and their individuals, to implement the 2030 Agenda more effectively and efficiently.

In this line of argument, it is essential to take into account also the regional approach. The population lives in a specific territory with which it maintains particular links, and its strengths, opportunities, risks, and threats are, in some way, determined by the particular space in which it is located. In this regard, an essential factor that should be considered when talking about the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is the fact that, although 54% of the world population currently lives in cities, in Latin America and the Caribbean this percentage rises to 80%. This is equivalent to approximately 500 million people in this vast territory of the American continent living mostly in urban areas[19], a figure that, in turn, makes the region the most urbanized on the planet[20].

The objectives related to sustainable cities are fundamental because the structure or urban life is interwoven with rural or non-urban territories. The connections of the cities with the food producing areas, or with those that provide the water that the cities consume, call us to have a more holistic conception of the interactions between the urban sprawl and the rural environment. At the same time, the conditions that make cities more inclusive and safe, the infrastructures placed within reach of their citizens, the access to services, the means of transportation, all these aspects will give a guideline on how they can make the societies of the region more resilient. Mitigation of disaster risks becomes a pivotal chapter in this same approach, as does the fact that poverty is mainly concentrated in rural areas and the fact that vital ecosystems are being degraded in these areas. In the case of indigenous and rural peoples, for example, poverty has a higher incidence, and the regional approach is of fundamental importance. For indigenous peoples, the territory is not only the geographical scope, but also the space in which their identity and rights are exercised, including the links related to their spirituality. When taking into consideration the above, it is not only the population but also the interaction of

the community and the territory that will allow us to unravel the critical aspects in which we must invest to ensure a better future.

After walking through several of the categories with which we approach the populations that are lagging behind or that may be behind and, at the same time, having raised specific statistical challenges in the identification of these groups through reliable data and, having also listed the approaches that enable an unprejudiced and open look, typical of the United Nations System, it is pertinent to ask next, what are the most critical challenges facing the region with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

2 AXES OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

The degree of social cohesion is closely related to the ability of people to access specific essential social services because in doing so their adherence and interest in the functioning of the social system is reinforced, thus affecting the future sustainability of the same.

Access to social services is one of the elements that most contributes to the reduction of poverty, inequality, discrimination, and vulnerability, closing the distances between individuals, groups, and territories, and strengthening the economic and social sustainability of the region[21]. The achievement of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda constitutes a collective project; however, the lack of equality of opportunities and solidarity undermines the bases that can lead to the construction of said project.

In line with the above, a brief recount will be made of the critical issues that should be addressed so that people can be included socially, understanding that this inclusion will allow them to have higher capacities, exercise their rights and develop the human capital necessary to be more productive and live with dignity.

Several axes of inclusion go through ensuring physical and economic access to a healthy diet, medical care and care for all people throughout the stages of life, an education that contributes to social advancement and commensurate with the challenges of the 21st century, a life free of violence, including gender-based violence, and the creation of new jobs in line with the formalization of the different forms of paid or unpaid work currently performed.

A. HUNGER REDUCTION:

Thanks to innovative public policies and political commitment, Latin America and the Caribbean was the only region in development to meet the hunger reduction goals of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Food Summit. It reduced it to less than half its total number and the prevalence of undernourishment from the 1990 levels[22].

Beyond previous achievement, Sustainable Development Goals establish even more ambitious goals and aim at eradicating hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture[23]. In this regard, the challenge of the region, not to leave anyone behind, calls for improving the living conditions of those people who are in extreme poverty and who still go hungry or suffer from hidden hunger. It is important to point out that despite the long-term progress achieved by the region, for the first time in two decades, hunger has again grown by 2.4 million people between 2015 and 2016, which has increased the regional total to 42.5 million people affected by hunger[24].

Paradoxically, while having to fight hunger, one cannot ignore the increase in the rates of obesity and overweight in all the countries of the region, as well as the deficiency of nutrients. Malnutrition is often considered a problem of the poor, and overweight and obesity as a problem of the rich, but in reality, both are rooted in poverty and increasingly affect the same vulnerable communities in the countries of low and medium income[25]. In the case of children, for example, an estimated 3.9 million children under 5 are overweight[26].

These are symptoms that are related to the unsustainability of current food system characterized by the concentration of capital, infrastructure, and technology; concentration of marketing channels; precariousness of rural work; high vulnerability to disasters; inequitable and high prices that are generating the exclusion of family farming, small producers, indigenous peoples and consumers to

2 ZERO HUNGER

access healthy food, whose expression is the food deserts in several populated areas of the region.

In this last regard, sustainable production and consumption have an essential link with the reduction of hunger and the promotion of food and nutritional security, since to promote the adoption of healthy eating patterns it is necessary to create systems and programs sensitive to nutrition that can ensure an adequate supply of healthy foods for all over time[27].

In overcoming this challenge, it is essential to start from a process of analysis and reflection of the objectives, goals and limits of current food systems, in such a way that we can move towards those that have a comprehensive and multidimensional approach, whose approach goes from sustainable management of natural resources to the loss and waste of food, taking into consideration the socioeconomic aspects and addressing all the levels involved. The issues and standards must also respond to the challenges associated with the degradation of ecosystems and climate change.

90% of agricultural production - planting, work in forests, livestock, fish production and fishing - is carried out by family farmers, on whom 80% of the world's food depends. Family farming is a practice that has helped to have balanced diets and to conserve agro-biodiversity. Family farmers face challenges associated with access to and governance of natural resources, access to markets, productive resources and rural services, vulnerability to climate change, and high migration to cities due to lack of employment opportunities in their territories.

It is important to make family farming visible and, the linking of social protection systems with productive inclusion strategies in such a way as to guarantee more lasting and sustainable results. The insertion of poor and impoverished rural households into a stable, predictable social protection system with adequate amounts would encourage these groups to integrate and identify more promising alternatives regarding employment and investment in productive activities -agriculture, livestock, fishing and fish production, forestry practices.

In this context, the obstacles faced by rural women must be recognized in turn so that their productive role in family farming, mostly unpaid and informal, is recognized and formalized by the State. These conditions, added to the lack of social recognition of women as producers - especially at the local level - as owners and decision-makers are limitations and stigmas that persist to the detriment of their socio-economic and legal empowerment.

By assuming that markets and agri-food systems are the results of a process of social construction, permeable, therefore, to the influence of social forces, it is possible to mold them from public policies and collective action. The inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems work for the benefit of the most backward people, with better nutrition and with better use of natural resources. To this end, as part of the solutions, the UN encourages public purchases from family farming, access of rural women to productive resources, formalization of agricultural work by rural women, short circuits of production and consumption, seals and denominations of origin, local fairs, to name a few.

UNITED FOR A HEALTHY DIET IN THE REGION

Health and development policies on nutrition have traditionally focused on malnutrition, achieving significant results. These policies, along with increased spending on social protection and health, have eradicated acute malnutrition in most countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and have managed to reduce chronic malnutrition by 62% since 2000.

However, in a regional context where several countries have become that of middle income, where geographical mobility, urbanization, and nutritional transition have increased, micronutrient deficiency combined with the rapid increase of overweight, obesity and, chronic diseases are becoming a pressing problem with very high costs for the people, the economy and society.

"The most notable costs of malnutrition are due to the loss of productivity due to premature death and to the reduction of years of schooling, while the costs of overweight and obesity are mainly related to health expenses that include diseases such as diabetes type 2 and hypertension", according to the study *The cost of the double burden of malnutrition. Social and economic impact*, published by the WFP and ECLAC.

Faced with this situation, WFP and ECLAC have joined forces to identify the social and economic impact of child malnutrition in the region. As part of this joint work, a study was carried out in 2005 in Central America and the Dominican Republic, which is called *The cost of hunger*. The study allowed to conclude that undernutrition, measured as low weight for age (global malnutrition), generated costs in health, education and, especially, productivity as a result of lower educational attainment and premature mortality. One of its effects revealed that Costa Rica and Guatemala, for example, experienced losses due to the scourge of hunger (malnutrition) of around 1.7% and 11.4% GDP, respectively. A similar study carried out in Ecuador concluded that the cost of malnutrition in 2005 was 3.4% of GDP, almost ten times the social expenditure of the country.

In a second stage of the *Cost of hunger*, the two agencies carried out, in 2014, a study called *Closing the gap: a model to estimate the cost of eradicating chronic malnutrition and micronutrient*

deficiencies. This study was aimed to evaluate the cost related to the most appropriate actions to combat chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in vulnerable populations in the countries of the region. Continuing with this joint effort, in 2016 work was carried out on the cost of the double burden of malnutrition, which assessed the human and economic impact of undernutrition and overweight.

The results showed that the economic impact of malnutrition reached 4.3% of GDP in Ecuador and 2.3% in Mexico, which represents the staggering US $28.8 billion per year. In these two countries, undernutrition represents a financial burden 1.5 to 3 times higher than overweight/obesity, mainly due to the loss of productivity. Meanwhile, the financial burden of overweight/obesity is already significant and growing. In Chile, it generates a cost equivalent to 0.2% of GDP per year.

B. EDUCATION:

When talking about education, an essential premise to consider is that achievements in this sector are linked to investment during pregnancy, childbirth, and childhood. This investment builds vital capacities and the exercise of rights. Bases for full development of the people can be assured only from an inter-sectoral and multidisciplinary starting point, in which the topics of maternal and child health, nutrition, essential care, early stimulation in stage 0 to 6[28], are addressed. Early childhood, which covers up to eight years of age, is fundamental for children's cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. Quality education in this stage of life and family care is crucial for them to start grade school education at the appropriate age. However, in the region, only six out of ten children aged 3 to 4 years attend early childhood education programs. Understandably, this interest in development at this time in life, in the context of the education system, must also be accompanied by the expansion of quality education. These are aspects that entail the strengthening of early childhood care systems, which now falls mostly on unpaid work for women. The region currently has large gaps to be filled in relation to the primary education.

For UNSDG in Latin America and the Caribbean, this first stage of training must then be fully exploited by a quality primary education system that meets high standards, reaches the most remote corners of the territories and adapts to the diversity of cultural and linguistic aspects of the peoples. Thus, it would achieve the most laggard, incorporating the 3.8 million children who are not attending grade school[29].

It should be emphasized that it is not only a question of enrollment but also of the appropriateness and relevance of the contents, the quality of the teaching methods and of closing the gaps that exist in the acquisition of essential competencies. The average performance in the OECD countries, according to the PISA mechanism, was 493 in 2015, and the countries of the region that participated in that process were below that average[30]. Countries with illiteracy rates below 10% show a high percentage of people with no basic skills[31]. The information provided by the UNESCO Quality Education Laboratory has demonstrated that this unequal distribution of learning is linked to factors such as poverty, gender, place of residence, language, ethnicity, and disability. The evidence indicates that the problem is complex, given that sustainability of education systems requires both to meet the debt that is held with young people regarding access, permanence, and conclusion and to accept the disaffection that may exist in them in relation to the school system.

On the other hand, there are cases such as Haiti, where only 42% of the children of the poorest households who complete grade school education master basic skills, compared to 92% of the wealthiest families; and one must be concerned to know that among the poor, girls master 12% less basic skills than boys[32]. In other countries, there is more than a 15% difference between urban and rural areas in the use of arithmetic and reading or cases where less than 10% of indigenous groups reach a satisfactory level of performance[33]. Concerning indigenous groups, for example, in 2013 women had the highest illiteracy rates in relation to the rest of the population. The percentage of rural indigenous women aged 15 to 19 who had completed grade school education was 5 to 20 percentage points lower than that of their non-indigenous counterpart[34].

Despite the aspects that still have to be covered in education, the current generation of young people between 15 and 24 years, is the most educated that has existed in Latin America and the Caribbean. They have a more considerable amount of years of education than adults, and it is estimated that this trend will continue towards the year 2030. This corroboration is an excellent opportunity for the achievement of the SDGs that involve the participation of young people.

Progress in enrollment and gender parity has been remarkable, especially in primary education. 87% of girls and 81% of boys complete grade school education; and 61% of girls and 53% of boys finish pre-university high school; although the pre-university completion rate shows a significant drop between the conclusion of one and another educational form of 28 percentage points less for boys and 26 for girls[35]. This is an educational gap that must be closed.

Access to high school education, likewise, remains a challenge, especially in rural areas and in the pre-university high school stage. The completion of high

school in rural areas is only 34%, compared to 62% in urban areas[36]. Institutional and social efforts must be concentrated in increasing the number of young people who have finished high school. While within the youth of the most deprived quintile, aged 20 to 29, only 29% finished high school; within their peers from the wealthiest quintile, 83% completed pre-university high school[37]. On the other hand, the countries of the region did not manage to reduce the rate of repetition in lower high school education, which was 5.8% in 2000 and 5.9% in 2012. Likewise, they did not manage to reduce significantly the rate of dropouts at this level, which was 16.9% in 2000 and 15.5% in 2012[38].

At present, another of the critical issues of falling behind in the region is related to the fact that one fifth of young people do not work or study (29.7 million), of which 15% do not have an apparent reason to being out of school and work (4.8 million), an aspect that is part of the hardcore of social exclusion. This group is comprised mainly of young men from urban areas who are between 15 and 19 years old, and who are part of the lowest income quintiles[39]. Adolescents who leave school without finishing high school are more likely to be limited to dangerous jobs in conditions of high insecurity and poverty[40].

Despite the successive reforms of the school system carried out in recent decades, its organizational structure is designed for the nineteenth century, and

the use of technological resources of the fifteenth century has remained virtually intact[41]. Meanwhile, metamorphosis of the youth of the 21st century has been radical[42]. The education system today welcomes adolescents who were born and raised in a different world than their parents, even more so in the world in which those schools were conceived and for which their teachers were trained[43]. There is a tension between the expectations and valuation that the youths have of education and the usefulness and real sense of the school system to prepare their future both materially and symbolically[44]. In increasingly larger sectors of youth, there is a disappointment and frustration with the traditional school model. Hence, disinterest is another reason why certain adolescents may interrupt their studies[45].

While being an adolescent and a young person there are relevant links between education and health and the sexual and reproductive rights of young people. One of the expected outcomes of education is the strengthening of the autonomy and empowerment of girls, adolescents, and young people so that they grow and develop with the capacity to decide freely and responsibly about their sexuality and reproductive life, as well as how to assume leadership roles in all areas. In general, this analytical aspect reinforces the very close relationship between the level of education attained by a woman and her ability to exercise her reproductive rights.

In fact, in the adolescent stage, the lack of a comprehensive sexual education can generate unexpected situations for young people, such as early pregnancy, an event that makes it difficult for them to continue with their studies. This is a phenomenon that has a major impact on the poorest groups in society. Pregnancies are 3 to 5 times higher in low-income adolescents, in those with fewer years of schooling, in rural areas and within indigenous populations. This fact shows a vicious circle in the reduction of inequality since the poorest and most excluded adolescents are the ones who become mothers before the age of 19, a condition that makes it difficult for them to get out of poverty[46].

It is necessary to make a crucial qualitative leap in education, in terms of equity and quality of the different levels and instances of the system; it is essential to bear

in mind that this implies addressing the governance dimension of the same system and its articulation with the other sectors, using multi-sectoral approaches for these cases. Something similar must be done in the field of health. In fact, social cohesion can only occur to the extent that stable conditions are generated in these two essential components of essential social services: health and education. These services should function as enabling platforms to achieve national objectives related to the 2030 Agenda.

C. HEALTH:

Alongside the two previous axes, there is the access to health of the inhabitants of the region. In the same way that there have been significant advances regarding reducing hunger, poverty, and educational coverage, among other areas, the region has also achieved notable achievements concerning health. Life expectancy of Latin Americans and the Caribbean increased to 75 years in the five-year period from 2010 to 2015, an increase that means having earned an average of 16 years of life in the last four decades, more precisely having gained 2 years of life for each five years that have elapsed[47].

Regarding maternal mortality, in the period 2002-2005 a reduction of 68.4 deaths per 100,000 live births was achieved at a rate of 58.2 between 2010 and 2013. In the same periods, significant progress was also made in reducing mortality in boys and girls. From a 1990 infant mortality rate of 44 children per 1,000 live births, changed to 15. This means, in percentage terms, a reduction of 66.0%, and the mortality rate in children under five years was reduced from 55 cases that were registered in 1990 to 18 in the year 2016[48]. The increase in prenatal care and the increase in institutional coverage of births must be added to these achievements[49].

Communicable diseases have also seen a decline in recent years. Cases of malaria decreased from 1,181,095 in the year 2000 to 451,242 registered in 2015, showing a reduction of 62%. The elimination programs achieved the reduction of onchocerciasis, going from 12 outbreaks in the region to only one located in the Amazon, between Brazil and Venezuela. The same can be said of the cases of leprosy, which went from 37,571 to 33,789 between 2010 and 2014.

To these advances are added the declaration of the region in 2015 as free from the endemic transmission of rubella; and in 2016, of measles. Also, special mention should be made to the fact that it has been possible to eliminate the mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and congenital syphilis in the states of Cuba, Anguilla, Montserrat, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands. In this respect, the decrease in AIDS-related deaths is also added, going from 73,579 records in 2005 to 49,564 deaths in 2015, that is, a reduction of 33%[50].

All the previous signs of progress constitute a motivation to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda. Regarding the challenges to be undertaken by health systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, there should be an identification of the situation and mortality trends. The general rate of the latter, adjusted according to age, has shown a slight decrease from 5.6 deaths per 1,000 inhabitants in 2005 to a record of 5.3 in 2013. Non-communicable diseases constitute the bulk of the causes of mortality in the region, and chronic non-communicable diseases dominate the mortality profile in both sexes. In the case of women, 8 of the 10 leading causes of death; and in the case of men, 7 of the top 10 causes. In males, the origin of deaths unrelated to non-communicable diseases originated in external causes such as assaults, homicides, and land transportation accidents.

More specifically, the first causes of death in the region according to the age groups were due, in the population group of 10 to 24 years, to homicides, land transportation accidents and suicides; registering a rate for every 100,000 inhabitants of 20.4 deaths the first, 13.4 the second and 5.3 the third. Ischemic heart disease, diabetes mellitus and, again, homicides were the leading causes in the group of people aged 25 to 64 years, accounting for a rate of 35.9 for the case of heart disease; of 19.1 for the second; and 18.3 for the last one. In older adults, over 65 years old, ischemic cardiopathies top the list with a rate per 100,000 inhabitants of 620.6; followed by cerebrovascular diseases with 327.5; dementia and Alzheimer's disease with 292.8[51].

With regards to maternal and infant mortality, although as illustrated at the beginning of the section there have been significant advances there is still a long gap to settle. Among the total of maternal deaths, 66% of them were linked to direct obstetric causes, that is; generally, puerperal hemorrhages, infections, gestational hypertensive disorders such as eclampsia, obstructed labor and complications due to abortion. Regarding mortality in children under one year, more than 70% of the total deaths occurred during the neonatal period, and the leading specific cause was respiratory distress of the newborn[52].

Continuing with the current health situation in the region, the case of murders as an external cause is alarming not only because of what they represent regarding the loss of life but also because of all the social and economic ramifications that lead to the origin, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, the negative impacts it has on the bonds that make social cohesion and good governance possible in the countries. Also, the level of violence in specific communities is affecting access to essential health services for many of its inhabitants.

Along with violence, another of the first reasons for death originating from external causes is traffic accidents that, according to data from 2013, caused more than 154 thousand deaths. This amount represents 12% of the deaths occurred on the planet due to the same reasons, and an increase of 3% concerning the deaths that occurred in the year 2010[53].

On the status of acquired immunodeficiency virus (HIV) disease status, in 2013 it was estimated that there were 2 million people in the region who had contracted it. Within this number, 58% were 15 years of age or older. In the continental part of the region, the disease had affected primarily men, who accounted for 68% of people with this infection; while in the Caribbean area around 52% were women. The mortality rate as a consequence of tuberculosis had decreased from 4.3 per 100,000 inhabitants to 2.5 deaths in the period 2000-2015; whereas co-infection linked to HIV continued to be one of the main risk factors in the prolongation of the disease and the mortality caused by this cause. According to figures from 2015, that year 218,700 cases of tuberculosis were diagnosed and notified, that is, a rate of 22.1 per 100,000 inhabitants[54].

Another factor to take into account when analyzing the panorama of health at the regional level is drug use. Mortality rate related to drug use in Latin America and the Caribbean reached 14.9 per million inhabitants in 2015[55]. In this sense, trends in abuse remain relatively stable, with cannabis and cocaine as substances of higher consumption and for which more is used to treatment programs.

UNAIDS AND WHO HAVE LAUNCHED THE *AGENDA FOR ZERO DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH CENTERS*

The initiative aims to achieve a shared vision that all people, anywhere, enjoy health services without being discriminated against.

It seeks a social change in the care of people with HIV, increasing commitment, collaboration and accountability among countries, the UN and organizations linked to development.

ITS ACTION PLAN HAS SEVEN PRIORITIES:

1. To eliminate legal and political barriers that promote discrimination in health care.

2. To establish norms for health care without discrimination.

3. To create and exchange an empirical basis and best practices to eliminate discrimination in health facilities.

4. To empower clients and civil society to demand health care without discrimination.

5. To increase financial support to eliminate discrimination among health workers.

6. To ensure the leadership of professional healthcare associations in measures to forge a health workforce without discrimination.

7. To strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms and frameworks to achieve health care without discrimination.

Similarly, it is essential to consider the situation of HIV infection related to the use of injectable drugs, particularly in prisons in Latin America and the Caribbean, where between 2005 and 2015, the prevalence of this virus was almost twice the prevalence reported among the general population.

Within the framework of critical health problems, vector-borne diseases, such as dengue fever and malaria, continue to present cases in the region. This situation has worsened with the appearance in the American continent of the chikungunya and Zika virus. In the 2011-2015 period, some 8,207,797 cases of dengue fever were totaled. Regarding malaria, from 2000 to 2015, the registers went from 1,181,095 to 451,242, showing a reduction in more than a decade of 62%. However, the previous decrease, in 2015 there was an increase in cases in Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, a significant increase in the latter country, going from 90,708 cases to 136,402, that is, an increase of 50%. On the local transmission of chikungunya, in December 2013 the first infections were diagnosed in the French territory of the Colectividad de San Martín. Three years later, in 2016, 361,312 suspected cases were recorded in the Americas; of them, less than half, 157,288 were confirmed. With the transmission of Zika, in February 2014, the health authorities documented its transfer in the continent for the first time. Between April 2015 and January 2017, 714,636 suspected cases were reported, of which 178,297 were confirmed, equivalent to 29%. Between the same years, 2,530 cases of a congenital syndrome associated with the virus were confirmed[56].

Special mention should be made to the increase in obesity as one of the risk factors for health in Latin America and the Caribbean. Women have a higher prevalence of obesity than men in all countries of the region. In 2014, obesity in Latin America reached an average of 27% among women and 17% among men. In the Caribbean, prevalence among women reached 32%, and among men, 18%. The extremes were registered in the Bahamas, where 37% of women and 25% of men are obese, and in Belize, where the index was 28% and 15% respectively[57].

Obesity increases the chances of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, stroke, certain types of cancer, among other conditions. The obesity rate (BMI greater than 30 kg/m2) in the subcontinent was 26.8% compared to a world rate of 12.9%; meaning more than double and having a higher prevalence in women computing 9.6%, than in men adding 24%. In adults over 20 years, it reached the figure of 62.3%[58]. In the case of children under five years of age, data for 2017 indicate a prevalence of 7% (equivalent to a population of 3.2 million people)[59]. This is worrisome data for health in terms of well-being throughout the whole course of life. For the countries is not only about the elimination of hunger and the fight against malnutrition in all its forms, but also to continue with policies that promote a healthy diet, controls on marketing, the frontal labeling of food products, the consumption of sugary drinks and processed products that contain high content of calories, sugars and fats. A healthy diet depends on the availability and access to safe, varied and nutritious foods, highlighting the importance of agrobiodiversity.

Overcoming the health challenges in the region is a fundamental step for the welfare of its inhabitants and, therefore, for social integration. It can also be affirmed that the material reduction of inequalities will also mark the progress in this sector. "Guaranteeing the universal right to health will continue to be only an aspiration if the deep social inequalities that exist behind the health gaps in the region are not addressed. Empirical studies provide clear evidence that the population groups that present the worst health outcomes in the countries of the region are also the groups that show the material evidence of socioeconomic inequality, including low levels of income and consumption, poor housing quality, precarious jobs, poor access to quality health services, fewer opportunities for access to education, deficiencies in access to water and sanitation services, marginalization, social exclusion and discrimination, among other socially and healthily adverse circumstances[60]."

However, the general advances have not been accompanied by a structural reduction of inequalities. The absence of a systematic reduction is what makes it one of the regions with the most significant social and health inequity on the planet[61]. Relative inequality has particular importance, that is to say, the one that exists between social groups; a measure that serves to learn more about the impact of public policies on the poorest

and most vulnerable segments of the population. One of the typical examples of these inequalities between social groups is maternal mortality. Indeed, more than 50% of maternal deaths that have occurred in this part of the American continent in recent years were concentrated in the countries with the lowest rates of human development. These mothers are the faces of those who should not have been left behind. This type of inequality has also been identified in other health indicators, within the social groups of the countries and has also been found in the different stages of the life of the inhabitants of the region.

D. WORK AND EMPLOYMENT:

Education and health are vital social services, and an inclusive organization of them generates greater social cohesion. As we mentioned at the beginning of this section, citizens develop a higher adherence to systems in which they feel included, especially if they receive quality care. This adhesion is transformed not only into an assessment of the social service but also into an evaluation of the political system that promotes and protects it, thus helping the sustainability of the democratic-representative system.

Education and health continue to be great equalizers, giving the population more significant opportunities to aspiring to certain prosperity. Regarding its relation to this section on work and employment, it is necessary to mention some underlying assumptions. First, verify that the realization of the rights to education and health strengthen the human capital and this, in turn, generates greater productivity at work. Second, that human capital qualifies people and enables them to find jobs that create income for households and their dependents[62]. Income that allows them access to education and health, as well as to the satisfaction of their basic needs in general. More importantly, to the extent that employment is linked to the financing of social security and protection systems, a significant portion of it contributes to the sustainability of access to essential social services.

These assumptions are only partially fulfilled in the region. In fact, one of the significant challenges is that this virtuous cycle of the exercise of rights, the formation of capital, entry into the labor market and construction of a social security system is breaking down in different points, affecting young people, women, and older adults in a particular way.

In effect, labor market generates more than 80% of the income of families, for which reason policies aimed at improving working conditions will, at the same time, overcome poverty and inequality. The growth of income from work during the decade of economic boom, 2003-2013, contributed positively to the reduction of poverty and inequality, both by the increase in employment and by the wage increase, especially for the most vulnerable workers through minimum wage policies[63]. However, at present, the situation of the regional labor market is worrying due to the current slowdown or economic contraction experienced by the countries[64].

Similarly, a significant problem remains the informality. This is a predominant phenomenon in the labor markets of Latin America. After moderate reductions, this rose in 2013, reaching 46.8% of the labor force. 79% of women in the region work in low productivity sectors, despite having better levels of training than men[65]. Informal employment, although heterogeneous, is characterized by low payment and productivity, not being covered by social security and not offering guarantees to exercise labor rights[66]. In 2015, there was also a reduction in quality indicators in this area, urban salaried employment fell to 64.1%, and there was a growth in non-salaried jobs that reached 22.8%.
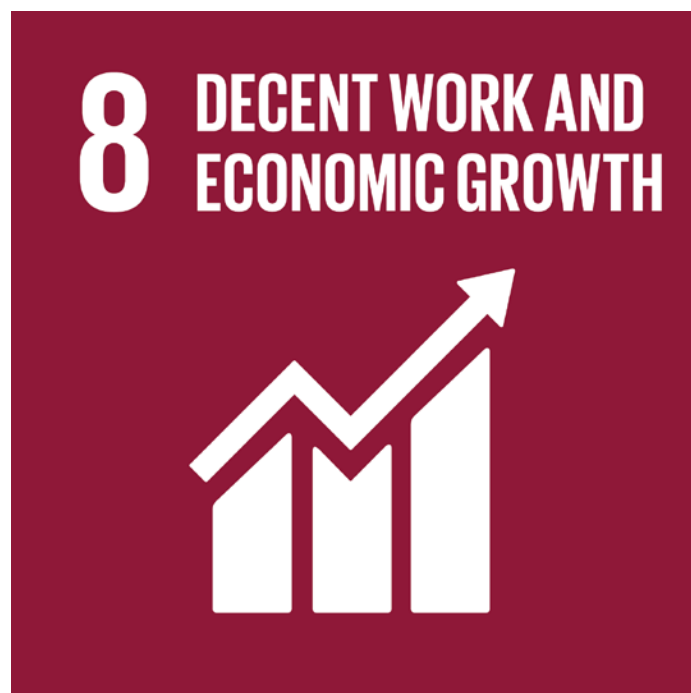
There were also reductions in real wages[67]. In this respect, women receive an average salary, per hour, of 16.4% less than that of men[68].

Both the growth of unemployment and informality affected women more than men and young people in relation to adults. Unemployment rate for women was 10.4%, and that of youth unemployment was 19.5%, the highest in the last decade[69]. This is mainly because the crisis has pushed more women to seek work without success and young people are often the first to be dismissed during periods of deceleration and the last to be hired in the recovery phases. It is also because the primary role of care assigned to women remains unchanged, which constitutes both a barrier to entering the labor market and an element that generates stereotypes, horizontal and vertical segregation.

Likewise, there are still gaps between urban and rural areas in the region. In 2014, urban salaried employment was 68.3% while at the rural level this rate reached 40.6%. In this way, it is evident that there is a more significant presence of non-salaried workers in rural areas with lower quality jobs[70].

Structural problems of productivity and heterogeneity, which affect in a central way the growth rates and the quality of employment, are added to this negative relative situation. In recent years there has been a continued growth in average labor productivity, a mirror of a productive structure dominated by micro and small enterprises and self-employment that, together with domestic work, generated 80% of regional employment. In short, high productivity jobs are scarce because most are created in low productivity sectors. This last sector, regularly, has low salaries, deficient working conditions and few guarantees of access to social protection[71].

If we intend to achieve the goals set for 2030, we must consider multiple variables related to the economic performance of the region, the effects of the policies of diversification, and productive development, the evolution of demography and technology. The future of work as a source of growth for the region, without ignoring the possible threats of destruction of jobs, will depend on the policies adopted today to address issues such as the aging of the population, a matter that

entails a change in demand for educational services, health, care of people, among others; changes in the forms of production and productivity problems; the skill requirements and the "new jobs" generated by the new technologies; as well as the new types of employment relationship such as temporary jobs, part-time jobs, by product, among other issues[72].

The issue of young people and the first job is also a significant challenge that must be addressed more comprehensively. After a decade of economic growth, 2003-2013, young people continue to face considerable challenges when they begin to participate in the labor market in search of their first job. The regional unemployment rate of young people tripled that of adults; in 2016 unemployment affected one in five young people in the labor market, i.e., 19.5%[73]. The participation rates of this group in the labor market are lower than those of adults, 47.8%, and 67%, respectively. Among those young people who get the first job, it is more likely that this is as a salaried worker or as an auxiliary family worker without remuneration. These jobs tend to be precarious, with insufficient coverage of labor rights and short duration[74], a condition that causes a higher rate of informal employment among young people than among adults, 56% for the former and 45% for the latter[75].

An analysis of four countries in the region suggests that the quality of the first job determines the condition of subsequent employment, so that the first insertion in the labor market could have lasting consequences on the work trajectory of young people[76]. On the other hand, another outstanding issue is set by the shortage of young people with independent, self-employed jobs, and to a greater extent as employers of private companies. It is possible that during the younger years, most of the youth projects are carried out of necessity rather than opportunity[77].

Governments must design, in challenging this problem, comprehensive education policies that consider redistribution, recognition, and democratization, reviewing curricular frameworks and their relevance youth in the region in the 21st century, including regarding skills development for the world of work. Among the policies to support young people at the beginning of their work experience, vocational guidance services and job search assistance are

particularly useful and can allow young people to overcome the multiple obstacles that job search presents. It would reduce the time in which they find vacancies and allowing, at the same time, insertions more in line with their qualifications in the labor market. Generating conditions for a real employment link should be an essential objective to be taken into account as part of economic policies.

In the case of women, it is also essential to account for pending matters. While achievements concerning economic empowerment have been significant, with one of them participating in the labor market, progress has been uneven. There are still substantial differences between women and men regarding salaries, own income, and economic participation, as well as among women themselves, depending on their socioeconomic status, their place of residence, their race, and ethnicity. Although between 1997 and 2013, women's labor income increased and the gender gap was reduced from 28 to 22 percentage points, there are still wage distances even when women have attained higher educational attainments than men. The analyses indicate that, if this trend continues, it will take 75 years to achieve equal pay[78]. In the case of rural women, there is a slight increase in their participation in the economic activity that went from 41.7% of women of working age in 2012 to 45.1% in 2014[79].

Also, between 2004 and 2014, women increased their participation in the regional labor market -although to a lesser extent than in the previous decade- and improved their access to income. In both indicators, the gap concerning men was reduced. At present, 50.2% of women participate in the labor market, compared to 74.4% of men, while the unemployment rate among women was 27% higher than that registered among men. On the other hand, of those women who joined the labor market during the last decades, many do not yet have a minimum level of labor rights. In most countries with available data, women in the region remain overrepresented in low-productivity informal jobs[80].

The percentage of indigenous people in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Mexico who have a qualified and stable employment is between two and three times lower than the percentage of non-indigenous people.

In Ecuador and Guatemala, the probability of working in the informal sector increases by 12% and 8%, respectively, if the person belongs to an indigenous group, regardless of their level of education, their gender, the number of dependents or the place of residence[81].

Economic uncertainty, low level of economic growth expected for the region and the detriment that labor markets have experienced recently will have consequences on the achievement of sustainable development objective number eight. Labor markets of Latin America and the Caribbean require comprehensive policies that promote the creation of full and productive employment, becoming an engine of social inclusion, poverty reduction and social protection. Both for what represent work remuneration for households - guaranteeing equal remuneration for work of equal value - as for what would be equivalent in the increase of savings capacity, domestic consumption and tax implications positive to the tax systems of the countries. The opposite, unemployment, informality, employment discrimination and precarious forms of work perpetuate the cycle of poverty and accentuate inequality and exclusion.

3 SOCIAL PROTECTION

A. CARE AND GENDER:

Although the women of the region improved their access to employment, their own income and social protection, thus expanding their role as providers, as mentioned before, they still continue to be the ones who continue to carry most of the domestic work and unpaid care. Men continue to participate very little in these tasks. The markedly unequal responsibility of women in household chores limits their opportunities - be it for education, training and access to employment - and stands as a fundamental obstacle to economic empowerment, optimal performance of women at work and the assumption of their rights, to mention some aspects.

In a world in which women have expanded their role as generators of income and many of them have become the main providers of their homes, the gender division of labor based on the male provider model and the

housewife, no longer is functional, and equality and shared responsibility between men and women are required, both in paid and unpaid work, and within the latter, the work of care becomes very important. In 2014, the main income of a third of the households came from a woman. In two-parent households with daughters and sons, this proportion grew from 14% to 18% between 2002 and 2014[82]. However, despite the greater contribution of women to family income, there are still dynamics in the domestic sphere that limit women's empowerment and the full use of their skills, abilities and knowledge in the labor market.

The fall in fertility rates, the increase in the educational level of women and the constant growth of their participation in the labor market have altered gender roles within families. These changes demand a change in the organization of care and domestic work, two tasks that should be considered as important factors of social integration and, consequently, compatible institutionally and socially with the new era. Above all, when highlighting the empowerment and economic participation of women, as well as the social co-responsibility for care, all of this contributes in an important way to ensure prosperity for the entire population.

An organization of care and domestic work unequal hinders upward labor mobility (women in the glass ceiling scenario), inhibits stable access to formal and well-paid jobs (women on broken staircases) and hinders access to all types of labor income (women on sticky floors)[83]. Recognizing, reducing and redistributing domestic work and unpaid care between family, state, and market, and between women and men, is an imperative task to complete and equalize the achievements made in terms of economic empowerment. Although the countries of the region have made progress in making visible the contribution of the care economy through, for example, national surveys on the use of time and satellite accounts, it is essential to consolidate this progress by incorporating the data into the design or redesign of economic, labor, and social protection policies.

In rural areas, care policies are virtually non-existent, and limited, in certain cases, to school attendance at some level for childhood. This situation affects rural women in different ways. In particular, the lack

5 GENDER EQUALITY

of children's schools or conditions to access them, prevents them from carrying out effective work activities, having to dedicate themselves to the care of their young children, which reduces their income at the moment when they most need it[84].

An important point to keep in mind is to prevent the burden of care from falling on teenagers and young women, preventing them from taking advantage of education, counseling and employment opportunities. Such impediment shatters the possibilities of the young women in a crucial stage of formation of competences and abilities. There is a major challenge in the region in preventing this truncated opportunity. It has been corroborated, for example, that among that population of young people who do not study or have a job, adolescents and young people are in the vast majority dedicated to domestic work, caring for children, elderly or sick people. Frequently, this is combined with the care of their own children, as a result of an early pregnancy in a common law marriage at an early age[85].

B. CARE AND AGING:

The profile of care is also changing due to the aging of the population. As clarified at the beginning of this document, possible future scenarios indicate a rapid and forceful change in the age structures that will affect the burden and organization of care. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the group of women and men aged 60 and over increased from 5.7% in the 1950s to 11.2% in 2015 and is expected to represent 21% of the population in 2040. On the other hand, those under 15 went from representing 40% of the population in 1950, to 26% in 2015, and are expected to represent 18% in 2040. That is, in the same period of time, while the population of 60 years and more will quadruple, those less than 15, will be reduced by half, and the population of older adults will be greater than that of 15 years and less (21% and 18%, respectively). It is also expected that the number of people aged 60 and over will exceed those under 15 years of age by the year 2050 worldwide, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, this phenomenon would occur before, between 2035 and 2040[86].

This aging process goes hand in hand with an increase in life expectancy and longevity. Older people should not be considered a burden; and in this sense it is necessary to differentiate between the different stages of life of the elderly population. Moreover, there is a need to broaden the vision of older adults and strengthen their recognition as subjects of rights and subjects that can be protagonists of sustainable development. At the end of the day, this changing demographic composition of the countries is the result of development and a triumph of public policies in the areas of health, social protection, science and technology, a development that has also generated new opportunities for economic and social contribution. Longevity is an achievement and must be accompanied by the eradication of the current poverty or vulnerability that may arise in old age, and it must be accompanied, within the framework of a more extensive institutional and social focus on the life course, of tools and social learning on how to prepare for the stage of life of the elderly.

The probabilities of greater dependence increase significantly in the course of this aging process, after 70 years of age. In a context of weak social protection systems, smaller families and economic vulnerability of households, the burden of care, will be a factor that, as a consequence, will have implications for the domestic, local and national economy. The increase in this burden of care, now mostly sustained by women, will be unsustainable if national care systems are not foreseen.

On the other hand, aging entails a possible absolute reduction in the number of people of working age, with the consequent implications on the challenge of maintaining income per capita and the guarantee of income security for the elderly, particularly of those that do not have coverage of contributory systems of social security in pensions and health. It should be noted that this uncertainty also has important links with gender inequality. Precisely, the biggest challenge is for women, who have a longer life expectancy than men, but having had a lower labor participation, have lower social security coverage, circumstance that increases their vulnerability to poverty in old age[87].

Therefore, the policies, plans and programs aimed at the population as a whole should include the aspects and challenges of aging and of the elderly population of the countries, identifying the economic, social and human resources that guarantee the best management and monitoring. In this sense, the policy and actions leading to achieving greater equity in access to social and economic services, including an adequate perspective of a differential approach, are important, where actions that promote social inclusion guarantee access to services of health, education, security and social assistance, make sustainable the development, the quality of life and the guarantee of the human rights of the elderly, without leaving behind this age group.

DISAGGREGATION BY AGE: THE SITUATION OF CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

Despite the fact that the 2030 Agenda does not have a specific SDG on children, UNICEF has identified 12 goals and 48 of its targets as very relevant to measure the progress of childhood on the road to sustainable development.

Most of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have high statistical capacity; despite this strength, there is still a need for further disaggregation of information on the situation of children and adolescents, mainly in the data related to indigenous groups, children with disabilities, or information on migrant children. The same goes for cross-cutting areas such as child violence, early childhood development or sexual violence against adolescents.

These new information needs have generated an intense methodological work aimed at the design and refinement of classical methodologies in order to adapt them to the new emerging indicators in the matter based on the improvement in quality and comparability.

UNICEF is supporting governments in the collection of data through the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey by MICS (*Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey*) program. As of 2011, 18 countries in the region have implemented these surveys and six countries have used specific modules of the methodology in their household surveys. This progress makes the MICS the main source of disaggregated data on children and adolescents in the subcontinent, in addition to the fact that it constitutes a fundamental source that provides baselines for multiple indicators of the new global development agenda.

Within this momentum, the sixth round of MICS surveys, 2017-2020, was launched in 2016 for the entire region. In this new round, the questionnaires have been aligned to the new demands of the 2030 Agenda, improving the timeliness of information and incorporating innovative measurement tools such as the water quality test or a module for the measurement of disability in the childhood. The survey tools allow the collection of up to 33 indicators of the SDGs.

4 VIOLENCE AND CITIZEN SECURITY

The previous sections describe the socio-demographic categories that identify those that have been left behind - and run the risk of being left behind. Likewise, those challenges related to social cohesion that have been identified affect the ability of the State and society to ensure sustainable development. Inequality has been considered as a factor that threatens that sustainability. In this section we will discuss a phenomenon whose communicating vessels with inequality and poverty are evident. This is one of the most disturbing expressions of the kind of social and political disintegration that affects the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and that, if it continues, can become one of the most pressing threats to sustainable development[88]. In fact, violence has reached such magnitude in recent years that the description of the region as the most "unequal and violent on the planet" has become more frequent. This is a phenomenon that has become part of the daily life of citizens and a real obstacle to the full exercise of human rights.

From 1995 to date, the regional murder rate per 100,000 inhabitants has been above 20, reaching almost 30 by the year 2002. These numbers represent worrisome amounts when compared to the world rates in the same period, which is below 7.0 murders[89]. Among the latest data reported for the year 2017, several countries alarmingly exceed these averages: Venezuela, 89; El Salvador, 60; Jamaica, 55.7; and Honduras, 42.8. Few states recorded digits below 7.0; highlighting Chile with 3.3; Ecuador, 5.8; Argentina, 6.0; and Nicaragua, which presented a rate of 7.0[90].

The levels of violence and insecurity that are currently registered in Latin America and the Caribbean are questioning the very essence of the concept of State. Several countries in the region have seen the monopoly of coercive power be lost, while there is a proliferation of actors with private, atomized interests that exercise de facto control over various areas of the territory and their populations. Although the severity of the phenomenon differs enormously within the region, this loss of control and legitimacy is eroding the social pact, undermining the autonomy of institutions, thus, affecting a reduction in government effectiveness[91], and slowing sustainable development.

These situations are exacerbated when income is reduced due to an unfavorable economic situation that facilitates an expansion of criminal activities and corruption.

Citizen security has become one of the main concerns of the citizens of Latin America[92]. In 1995, crime and citizen security were 5% among the list of the main problems considered by Latin Americans, while in 2017 they were among the first with 20%, ranking second after economic concerns, which persist as the main concern of the respondents, with 23%[93].

The cost of the impact of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean is considerable in terms of human lives that are lost, of people who, in order to protect themselves, need to move to other parts of the country, or to other countries; additional expenses for the health system, desertion, absenteeism and poor school performance, loss of economic productivity, pregnancies resulting from violence, and forced maternity, among others. Taking an emblematic case, only in El Salvador the cost of violence during 2014 was estimated at around 4,000 million dollars, which would be equivalent to 16% of its annual GDP[94].

Young men are the group most affected by crime and physical violence as they are the main victims and perpetrators, often in the context of collective dynamics such as criminal gangs[95]. This makes them at least ten times more likely than women of their age to be killed[96]. In turn, feminicides have reached high levels in the region. Beside this, it should be added that certain groups of adolescents, particularly from poor or marginalized areas, suffer from stigmatization and are victims of police abuse.

Among the causes of violence in the region are, among others, inequality and social exclusion; cultural patterns that naturalize violence, including gender violence; the lack of essential services for certain populations and territories; the different manifestations of organized crime, including trafficking of arms, drugs, people, wildlife, and cultural heritage, among others; the violence generated by the war against narcotics; the unresolved effects of armed conflicts of the past; conflicts over control and access to natural and productive resources; patriarchal social or cultural norms that normalize inequality between

men and women; accelerated urbanization, including the precariousness and vulnerability of human settlements; the high degree of impunity due to the weaknesses of the criminal justice system (an aspect that also includes the incapacity for re-socialization of the population deprived of liberty)[97]. Additionally, it is important to mention the manifestations of violence that occur due to discrimination based on sex, gender, age, identity, or due to the sexual orientation of people. We present below an overview of the different facets of violence, each with its specificities.

A. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

According to data from ECLAC, Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the regions in the world where the most progress has been made in the legal field to eradicate the various types of violence against women. Despite these legal developments, the phenomenon persists. The available figures indicate that 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of murder of women in the world were in this region[98]. Despite the challenges that exist in the countries with regard to monitoring and data collection, in 2016 a total of 1,831 women from 16 countries in the region -13 from Latin America and 3 from the Caribbean- were murdered for being women. Central America continued to be the territory with the highest rates. In Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, the feminicide rate per 100,000 women reached 10.2 in the first country, 11.2 in the second and 10 in the third[99], with a total of 466 feminicides in Honduras and 371 feminicides in El Salvador[100]. In Mexico, more than 7 women are killed every day. It is important to highlight that there are limitations in the available facts due to the weakness of the national data collection systems and the lack of classification of feminicide or its restricted legal definition that does not allow capturing the extent of the problem. Beside these rates, different manifestations of violence against women are found throughout the different moments of life, in childhood, youth, adulthood; ways of violence that are present both in the domestic sphere and at school, the workplace, public spaces.

In 12 countries in the region, the percentage of married women or who have a domestic partnership that have reported having suffered physical or sexual violence by their partner varied between 17%, registered in the Dominican Republic, and 53% in Bolivia[101]. It is

estimated that 4 out of 10 adolescents, between 15 and 19 who are in some type of conjugal union, have experienced violence from their partners. Additionally, it is estimated that 1.1 million adolescents, between 15 and 19 years old, have experienced sexual violence or any other forced sexual act, with 80% of the aggressors being part of the family group or acquaintances of the victims[102]. This situation worsens for those girls and adolescents who marry or join in common law marriage at an early age and are the cause of a large number of unwanted pregnancies in the region[103].

It should be said that in the region, one out of every four women and girls is afraid of being subjected to different forms of sexual violence in public spaces, from sexual comments, this means unwanted and touching acts, to violations and feminicides. In spite that violence has varied in the private or domestic sphere, it is widely recognized as a public health problem and a violation of human rights. Violence against women and girls, especially sexual harassment in public spaces, is still a problem to a large extent, invisible and unattended, with few laws or policies to address and prevent it. In Quito, a scoping study conducted in 2011 revealed that 68 percent of women suffered some form of sexual harassment and sexual violence, at least once during the previous year. In Guatemala, the first pioneering study of this type, carried out in 2017, showed that 100% of women have suffered some form of sexual harassment in public spaces sometime during their lifetime (UN Women, Safe Cities Program)[104].

There has also been a systematic increase in violence against activists and human rights defenders, often related to political violence that, in general, aims to attack the legitimacy of women's participation in the democratic debate and weaken the political rights of those groups that challenge the status quo. Among the many emblematic cases to be highlighted in the region, mention should be made of the assassination of councilwoman Marielle Franco in Rio de Janeiro in March 2018.

Other manifestations of violence against women, such as cyberbullying, have been identified more recently. "The idea that the virtual environment is not a "real world" means that the violence suffered daily on the internet by girls and women is considered less serious. In contrast, this violence reflects what women

experience offline. It is precisely that false sense of impunity and anonymity that makes girls and women more and more exposed to violence of the most diverse types on the web, and, often, with even more devastating consequences. [105]"

As an example of the various intersecting manifestations of violence experienced by women, the geographical remoteness of indigenous territories and the lack of state services forces indigenous women, in some cases, to walk, sometimes for several days, to be able to arrive to the nearest city in order to make a complaint, making it also difficult to present evidence to support their claims [...]. When women arrive to where they are going, they [...] also face economic problems; they feel uncomfortable in the urban environment and do not dominate the language used in the courts. In many cases they are not assigned interpreters [...] and also encounter the ethnic and cultural insensitivity of justice operators. In addition, judicial officials are often unaware of international human rights instruments of collective and individual scope that apply to indigenous peoples and rarely apply the ethical framework of women's human rights[106].

Women represent 53% of the total of people that are moving within the region. In the case of migration from Central America to the United States, women, including girls and adolescents, are exposed to various expressions of gender violence such as physical violence, sexual abuse, rape, kidnapping, extortion, trafficking in persons, exploitation, subjection and illicit activities linked to drug trafficking, which force them to flee. As an example, 6 out of 10 displaced women are victims of rape on their way to the United States. In addition, the number of unaccompanied girls trapped on the US-Mexico border increased by 77% in 2014. These figures show that this is a crisis situation in which special attention must be paid to the international protection needs of this population that, along with childhood, is in a greater situation of vulnerability.

In addition to the aforementioned forms of violence against women, there are other more contemporary forms such as patrimonial violence linked to the economic survival of women[107].

B. VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN:

Living in a violent environment from an early age leads children and young people to naturalize violence, thus generating a vicious circle of intergenerational transmission of violence. Violence against children and adolescents is serious, not only because they are people with the right to special protection, but also because of the consequences that such violence could have on future generations. 25% of homicides of children and adolescents committed on the planet occur in Latin America and the Caribbean, which represents some 24,500 cases per year, a phenomenon that affects 7 times more male adolescents[108].

Children are exposed to violence within homes, in the community or in institutions. Statistics reveal that 2 out of 3 girls and boys between 2 and 14 years old are victims of some form of violent discipline in their homes[109]; 30% of girls and 28% of boys in 11 countries stated that girls "never" or "rarely" feel safe on the way to school compared to boys[110]. Violence can affect performance or school attendance, truncating, from an early age, the acquisition of the necessary skills to insert themselves into social and productive life.

Likewise, exposure of girls and boys to intimate partner violence can lead to consequences similar to those caused by child abuse and abandonment and increases the risk of transmission of intergenerational violence: the exposure of violence in childhood, as a victim or witness, increases the risk of suffering or perpetrating violence in adolescence or adulthood[111].

Girls, boys, adolescents and young people who are forced to flee their community or country because of violence deserve special attention. In 2015, it was estimated that the Americas had 6.3 million displaced children and adolescents, which represented 21% of the world total. One of the sub-regions most affected by this phenomenon, closely linked to violence, includes the states of Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico, as part of the migration route to the United States. To illustrate this situation, only in 2016 about 59,692 unaccompanied children and adolescents from these four countries were captured in the southern border of the United States. Similarly, between January and October 2016, 31,000 children and adolescents from Honduras, El Salvador and

Guatemala were captured in Mexico and mostly deported.

In this panorama, it is fundamental to safeguard the rights of children and adolescents along migratory routes and also when they are returned or deported to their countries of origin; ensure their protection against abuse and exploitation along the way - both through effective consular protection and through the responsibility of protection that states have with all children in their territories, whether or not they are nationals-; ensure access to health, education and protection services wherever they are located; ensure that they are not separated from their families due to immigration policy issues; implement alternatives to their detention; combat xenophobia and discrimination against migrants and refugees. In spite of the foregoing, it is essential to address the structural causes that push people and, especially, children to migrate; where violence, in its different forms, is one of the main reasons, in addition to the lack of opportunities, the need for family reunification, abuse, discrimination, among other reasons.

C. VIOLENCE BY GENDER IDENTITY OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

Cases of discrimination, aggression and other forms of violation of the human rights of homosexual and transgender people continue to occur in a generalized manner in the subcontinent. The situations of extortion, harassment, humiliation and physical, sexual and psychological violence occur daily. The majority of violent deaths in these cases are not recorded in police statistics, which leads to impunity.

These people are also often rejected by families and communities, discriminated against in schools, health centers and workplaces, mistreated by the security forces and legally unprotected[112]. This social rejection, added to the lack of institutional protection, becomes a factor that increases not only the vulnerability of these people to contract HIV or other sexually transmitted infections[113], but also, of being pushed into poverty and social exclusion.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, 11 OAS member states still have laws that criminalize consensual sexual acts and other consensual sexual acts carried out in private among adults, and one country criminalizes the use of garments traditionally worn by another gender[114]. According to the available data, between 2008 and 2016, the number of transgender people killed in the region totaled 1,834, a number that accounted for 78% of the deaths recorded during that period worldwide[115].

D. VIOLENCE RELATED TO ORGANIZED CRIME

During the last three decades, the role of organized crime as a catalyst for violence in the region has been accentuated. In this context, drug trafficking stands as the main exponent of an illegal business that has diversified and uses increasingly complex and changing structures that, leveraged by corruption, exploit resources and infrastructure (through money laundering and cybercrime, among other forms) of the states for their own benefit and to the detriment of the communities and their sustainable socioeconomic development. The main activities of organized crime in the region are drug trafficking, human trafficking, the smuggling of migrants and arms trafficking[116].

The violence derived from organized crime is mainly caused by the constant competition between criminal organizations that fight for territories and by greater participation in illicit markets. In turn, in order to carry out their large-scale criminal activities, these organizations rely on another series of criminal activities such as extortion, armed robbery, kidnapping and contract killings, among others, all of which fuels even more the different forms of violence present in the region.

E. VIOLENCE AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT:

As per the latest available data, in 2016 there were around 65.6 million people on the planet who are of interest to UNHCR, that is, people forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflicts, generalized violence or human rights violations. Within this total, some 8.2 million were in Latin America and the Caribbean. Intimately linked to the above, it is estimated that there are some 8.3 million internally displaced persons in the region due to armed conflicts. Most of these displaced persons are in Colombia, with about 6.3 million; followed by El Salvador, with 289,000; Guatemala, 251,000; Mexico, 287,000 and Honduras, 174,000[117].

In addition to the previous data on forced displacement, the links between the violence and displacement segment in the subcontinent are present in all facets of the phenomenon, i) in the origin - displacement forced by violence and persecution-; ii) transit - extortion, kidnapping, murders by criminal groups, mistreatment, sexual abuse, rape, trafficking in persons with diverse purposes, whose perpetrators may be criminals or the migrants themselves; iii) in countries of destination, where there are problems in accessing asylum systems and having a durable solution; and iv) in deportation and return, where new threats, assaults, and mistreatment by the authorities can be seen.

F. VIOLENCE TOWARDS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES WHO DEFEND THE ENVIRONMENT

In addition, there has been an increase in incidents of violence committed against indigenous peoples defending their rights through advocacy and social protest efforts. Contamination of soil and water, the effects on health and other affectations have generated this type of individual and collective reaction that has been arbitrarily restricted and/or repressed with violence and criminalized. In 2017 the trend worsened: according to Global Witness (2018), four environmental defenders were murdered every week and between 40% and 50% of the 197 defenders murdered in 2017 came from indigenous and local communities. In addition, many more people were harassed, intimidated and forced to leave their lands. At least 60% of the crimes occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, which for years has occupied the first place among the most dangerous areas in the world for defenders of the environment. The UN Environmental Rights Initiative launched by UNEP in March 2018 will assist states in strengthening their capacities to develop and implement laws that protect environmental rights.

Before ending this section, it is necessary to draw attention towards the links that can occur between food insecurity, violence and migration, especially in the case of Central America. Indeed, an exploratory study developed jointly by WFP, IOM and London School of Economics in 2015 pointed in this direction, highlighting in particular the existence of a positive

correlation between food insecurity and migration from the northern triangle of Central America[118].

The different sides that show violence and insecurity in this part of the American continent hamper the achievement of the sustainable development of the countries. However, its effects do not hit all people equally or in the same way and this must be taken into account when aiming not leaving no one behind in this path towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

5 ENVIRONMENT

The term "sustainable development" was coined in the eighties of the twentieth century, emphasizing that the social, economic, and environmental spheres could not be separated. The 2030 Agenda takes up this original notion of the concept by combining the challenges contained in the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals, which had a strong social focus, and the multilateral agreements derived from the agenda of the Earth-Rio Summit, which had an environmental approach. Decision-makers, experts, governments, the private sector, civil society, and the general public cannot lose sight of the fact that there is a close imbrication between the socio-economic and the environmental dimension. Inequality, poverty, the

precariousness of the economic base are intimately related to environmental degradation caused by unsustainable development models.

When further progress can be achieved in accessing healthy food, education, health, social protection and decent work, the better the people will be to take care of the planet. Labor markets that incorporate sustainable production patterns can offer decent employment that is more sustainable over time. The burden of disease on people can be alleviated if we become aware of the impact that environmental deterioration has on people's health.

Caring for the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean is one of the most strategic aspects of the 2030 Agenda. Even more so if we consider that it is an environmentally rich region with a great diversity of ecosystems. It is imperative that the region can direct its development plans with this comprehensive approach. An exhortation that gains force, considering that it is an area of the planet with a high dependence on primary products and natural resources, products that represent around 50% of regional exports -soybean, coffee, sugar and meat; oil, coal, copper and other minerals, to mention just a few[119].

Due to the above, it is convenient to review certain essential characteristics in terms of their environmental context. The region hosts a little more than 40% of the planet's biodiversity. The total area of natural forest is more than 869.5 million hectares[120], distributed among tropical, temperate and boreal forests that offer very diverse habitats for plants, animals and microorganisms. It also provides water and climate regulation services at a local and global level and is an important base for the economy and the livelihoods of its inhabitants. That said, it is necessary to observe that ecosystem services, biodiversity and productive lands continue to degrade due, among other reasons, to the predominance of an extractive model with insufficient socio-environmental considerations, together with unplanned urban growth and the expansion of the agricultural frontier; phenomena that put the sustainability of development at risk.

In this vast territory of the American continent, countries have different systems of protected areas that play a very important role in the preservation of natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity, as well as the cultures, often indigenous, that live in and around of a number of these natural areas. The United Nations supports the countries in this regard through the recognition of natural heritage sites, biosphere reserves and geoparks, programs to support their creation and management from a landscape approach, with the purpose that these places be a reference of protection while they can comply with their management to the promotion of sustainable development.

The contamination of water, air and soil has critical implications for public health and is a consequence of development patterns. According to the *GEO-6*[121] report, one out of every four river stretches in the region is classified as severely polluted, mainly by domestic waters, by agricultural and industrial production directed to exports.

It is key to decouple economic growth from an irrational use of natural resources, as well as to ensure that goals for the conservation of neuralgic ecosystems are met. This also implies "decarbonizing" the economy, in other words, applying measures in the areas of energy, transportation, and land use and industry that reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to zero[122]. Although the concern has been focused on carbon emissions, as a consequence of climate change for our region and considering what is evident in some countries, it is similarly important to improve water management in production systems. In a context of climate change, "decarbonizing" the economy and reducing the "water footprint" are equally priority.

In the region, around 80% of the inhabitants live in urban areas[123], which entails an interdependence between the welfare of the ecosystems and that of the population, directly or indirectly in the supply of water, energy, protection against the risk of disasters and provision of food, among other aspects. The main challenges in this field are the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage to ensure the provision of environmental goods and services; as well as to strengthen social, economic and environmental resilience in the face of disaster risks and climate change.

In response to this panorama, the integrated approach of the concept of sustainable development promoted by the 2030 Agenda ensures that environmental sustainability is a cross-cutting issue linked to all the SDGs. The environment has a preponderant role in this global agenda. Indeed, 86 of the 169 SDG targets include specific references to environmental issues in articulation with other development priorities such as poverty and hunger reduction, health, education, gender equality, cities, development industrial, among others[124].

Environmental sustainability in the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

(X) = related SDGs

15 LIFE ON LAND — 1 3 6 8 9 11 12

2 ZERO HUNGER — 1 5 10 11 12 14

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION — 1 12 15

13 CLIMATE ACTION — 1 7 8 11 12

14 LIFE BELOW WATER — 1 2 8 15

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH — 1 10 12

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES — 1 12 14 15

1 NO POVERTY — 5 10 12 16

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS — 1 10 12

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES — 1 2 3 8 9 12 13

4 QUALITY EDUCATION — 1 8 12

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION — 1 2 8 11 14 15

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE — 1 2 4 8 10 12 13

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY — 1 2 3 4 6 10 12 14 15

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING — 1 8 10 11 14 15

5 GENDER EQUALITY — 1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Central wheel

Outer ring segments:
- Ecosystem health
- Improve soil and water
- Safeguard the oceans
- Environmental governance
- Reduce pollution and waste
- Promote renewable energy
- Efficiency in the use of resources
- Live and progress sustainably
- Combat climate change

Inner ring segments:
- Alliance
- Capacity building
- National planning
- Follow-up
- Systemic issues
- Commerce
- Technology
- Policy coherence
- Financing

Center: **Environmental dimension of sustainable development**

Source: UN Environment: The environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama, 2016.

A. TRANSITING TO SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS:

The transition to sustainable consumption and production patterns is one of the general development objectives for the year 2030. In its achievement, it is necessary to radically improve efficiency in the use of natural resources and productivity, reduce the environmental impact of productive activities and, incrementally, move to a circular economy in which all waste is an input to another part of the production chain[125]. This is why not only a specific SDG has been agreed, the number twelve, but it has also been linked in a transversal way to the achievement of other SDGs.

This equation has two parts. On the one hand, the market and the creation of incentives and facilitating conditions in the production of goods and services in a more efficient, profitable manner and with fewer risks to health and the environment, in parallel with the creation of green jobs, the promotion of innovation and technology transfer. On the other hand, the awareness and training of consumers by expanding the information they have at the time of making responsible consumer decisions, through, for example, eco-labels and voluntary standards, among others.

In key sectors, such as tourism, construction, and agri-food, it is essential to incorporate sustainable consumption and production patterns due to their environmental and social impacts, and also because of the potential of these sectors of the economy in generating employment and wealth.

On the other hand, the availability of energy is crucial in any development process and therefore production and consumption, this being a sector with ample potential for the incorporation of renewable alternatives. Even though in just over four decades, electricity coverage in the region went from around 50% to over 90%, the lack of electrical services is still substantial, with about 22 million people who do not enjoy these benefits. Also, the region still has a high dependence on biomass fuels, with more than 80 million people depending on firewood and charcoal for cooking. Indoor cooking smoke has been associated with respiratory diseases, which mostly affect women

and girls due to the higher time that they spend in the kitchens.

Achieving universal access to energy for the population that does not yet have access to it requires bringing on board the multiple stakeholders, with the public and private sectors involved to accelerate the implementation of energy projects. The exchange of knowledge about successful experiences in business models, regulatory and institutional arrangements and innovation and renewable energies is undoubtedly equally important. There is an excellent opportunity for innovation and energy efficiency in a region where creative business models for sustainable energy have been designed and implemented[126]. Using energy alternatives can be a significant contribution to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions in the region, that is, to the decarburization of economies.

B. SUSTAINABLE CITIES:

Currently, 54% of the world population lives in urban areas. In Latin America and the Caribbean, this percentage rises to 80% of the people, which is equivalent to approximately 521 million people. An idea of the specific demands that this amount can represent means that three out of four girls, boys, and adolescents live in these areas, that is, about 115 million[127].

The urban areas of the region reflect the environmental problems and socioeconomic disparities described above. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 100 million people in Latin America are exposed to high levels of air pollution that exceed the recommended guidelines and that, among other effects on public health, especially in young children, causes minus 35,000 premature deaths per year[128]. In 2012 alone, a total of 80,000 deaths were attributed to air pollution in homes[129].

Among the primary sources of air pollution are vehicles; the chemical industry; the chemicals that are used and are released intensively by a variety of sectors such as agriculture or mining; and the inadequate management of solid waste, such as outdoors burning[130]. The management of such waste is one of the main challenges of urbanization and has been exacerbated by the culture of "throw-away" which implies that a large part of the products is discarded after a single use.

More than 50% of the waste collected in low-income countries is disposed of in hazardous and uncontrolled landfills. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the generation of municipal waste is estimated at 160 million tons per year, equivalent to 12% of the world total, and this figure is expected to double by 2025. Solid waste also affects the rivers and seas of the region at an unprecedented rate. After the Mediterranean, the Caribbean is considered the most polluted sea in the world due to plastics[131].

Another face of the environmental and health challenges of cities is the issue of mobility. With the constant growth of cities, the poor population is forced to travel ever more considerable distances to work, study and live. This, added to the dependence on private transportation, calculated at 250 vehicles per 1,000 people, contributes to traffic congestion, reduced physical activity, air pollution, and the occurrence of accidents. The latter has become the most crucial problem of mobility in the region because traffic accidents have become the leading cause of death in children aged 5 to 14 years of age, and the second in young people aged 15 to 29 years[132].

Mobility and transportation in cities have gender implications, for example, in the safe use of public

transportation and the care economy. Working mothers and fathers with long travel times imply a greater need for access to quality child care according to their income. It is necessary to have transportation and safe and adequate spaces for the working men and women, free of violence and according to their occupational health and safety needs.

6 REDUCTION OF DISASTER RISK

The achievements made in the region during the last decades are at risk due to the impact, frequency, and intensity of disasters. These disasters are exacerbated by climate change and significantly impede progress towards sustainable development.

In the Americas, the economic losses resulting from disasters, whether they are hydro meteorological, geological or human-caused, affect the sources of income, especially of people who are in a situation of poverty and vulnerability and appear as the second cause of the relapse into poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean, after the lack of employment[133].

In 2015, the representatives of 187 member states of the United Nations, gathered at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, adopted the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, reiterating their commitment to disaster risk reduction and building resilience[134]. It was noted that it is necessary "to address disaster risk reduction and increase resilience to disasters with a renewed sense of urgency in the context of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty, and to integrate as appropriate, both disaster risk reduction and increased resilience in policies, plans, programs and budgets at all levels".

This sense of urgency is also reflected in the decision by the countries participating in the Summit on Sustainable Development, to include in Goal 1 of the SDGs "End poverty in all its forms throughout the world" the need to "promote the resilience of the poor and people in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to extreme phenomena related to climate and other economic, social and environmental crises and disasters".

According to the latest statistical report on disaster loss and damage in 24 countries in the Americas[135], it is shown that in the last 30 years there have been almost 100,000 disaster events in the region. Nearly 50% of these events have been small-scale (extensive) disasters, which often were not reflected in the economic estimates, and which mainly affect communities and small cities.

Of these registered disasters, close to 90% have been hydro-meteorological and therefore preventable, pointing out the importance of adaptation actions to climate change in our region. Among the most vulnerable and prioritized sectors and resources for action on nationally determined contributions, is the water resource. This is a priority marked primarily by the Caribbean countries where this natural resource is, in effect, limited and sensitive. Additionally, the impacts on important economic sectors such as agriculture, industry, and energy were highlighted.

According to FAO, Latin America and the Caribbean concentrates 23% of the potentially arable land and 12% of the land currently cultivated on the planet. It is estimated that, if adaptation actions to climate change do not occur in the Andes, the Caribbean and Central America, productivity could decrease by 23.3% towards the end of the 21st century, thus compromising the means of subsistence and food security of the region[136].

In this context, countries show concern for the conservation of plant and animal species; for the expansion of vectors of infectious diseases, or the decrease in the quality of sanitation infrastructures, among other factors that could affect human health as a consequence of climate change. Especially noteworthy is the assurance of minimum nutritional standards in a changing climate context, where the risks could be more significant for children, due, among other reasons, to the fact that they are more vulnerable to vector-borne diseases, respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, among others.

Also, considering other critical sectors for development, the estimate of economic losses that may occur in a year due to disaster risks, in some cases, double the budgetary allocations for social spending in many

countries of the region. For example, the expected annual average losses (AAL) estimated by the global multi-threat models in 10 Caribbean countries exceeded more than 100% of the total social spending of these countries, that is, expenditures aimed at critical areas in the strategies of national poverty reduction programs such as education, infrastructure, agriculture, and health. That is why disaster risk management can be considered as a policy for poverty reduction. Only a strong political commitment at the highest level can pave the way for the achievement of a more secure and sustainable future through the integration of resilience in development plans and taking into consideration factors such as seismic threats, floods, soil erosion, and environmental degradation[137].

Risk management, therefore, becomes very important given that the impact of disasters has direct consequences on efforts to reduce poverty. For the most vulnerable people, the occurrence of a disaster can mean the loss of their means of subsistence, being compelled to migrate, and it can become an obstacle that truncates the educational career, to mention a few consequences. Disasters do not affect men, women, boys, and girls in the same way. Figures available at the global level indicate that women and children face a much higher risk of dying during a disaster than men.

Likewise, the role of women in the sustainable management of natural resources and the construction of community resilience capacities and mechanisms has been well documented, mainly by rural and indigenous women's organizations. However, rural women continue to live in a situation of social and political inequality, which manifests itself, for example, in their limited rights in terms of tenure, access, use and transfer of land, a situation that limits the promotion of equality and their empowerment as a favorable condition in the eradication of poverty and hunger[138].

PROTECTION OF FORESTS

The mechanism to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) is an initiative that seeks to motivate developing countries with forests to protect forest resources, improve their management and use them in a sustained manner, contributing in this way, to the global fight against climate change. The program is based on the creation of a financial value based on the carbon stored in standing forests.

In addition to deforestation, REDD+ covers the importance of conservation, the sustainable management of forests and the increase of forest carbon stocks. In the long term, payments for the confirmed reduction and elimination of emissions, either through a marketing or financing system, will help participating countries to invest more in low-carbon development and a better and greener future.

The UN-REDD Program was launched in 2008 building on the technical expertise and convening power of FAO, UNDP and UN Environment. In 2009 it had coverage in 9 states; currently, it is present in 64 partner countries.

REDD+ promotes informed and meaningful participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of mitigation mechanisms. For this, it provides assistance adapted to the national context and the specific support requirements of each country through the following support mechanisms:

■ National programs: They have been implemented in Ecuador, Paraguay, and Panama, and they are ongoing in Argentina, Colombia, Honduras, Peru, and Chile.

■ Country or regional needs assessments: which seek to assess participatory preparedness, covering the main areas defined in the Warsaw Framework.

■ Community-based REDD+ (CBR+): provides small donations to indigenous peoples and communities to carry out REDD+ preparation activities.

■ Knowledge management and communications. The next stage of this mechanism, which will go until 2020, is currently being negotiated, concentrating on technical assistance to achieve payment for avoided deforestation results, taking a step forward with those countries that have advanced in their preparation processes.

In response to the previous scenario, the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals incorporate a focus on both climate action and resilience in a transversal manner, motivating countries to be better prepared to manage risks and, thus, to be able to make sustainable advances in social welfare, through the promotion of policies and actions that link preparedness, prevention, and mitigation, response and recovery activities in cases of disasters.

There is an accumulation of outstanding experiences in the prevention and mitigation of disasters that highlight the importance of including risk considerations in social and economic policies, and where knowledge about risks is integrated into development plans and practices. There is also a remarkable experience in the use of nature as a source of resilience and protection against threats, for example, with Adaptation Based on Ecosystems. In this regard, the two issues become relevant: i) the integration of risk considerations in critical public infrastructure and the housing and production sectors, and ii) the linking of social protection systems with the efforts of disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change[139]. Efforts on these two fronts must continue to protect the benefits of development.

The countries of the region have strengthened their capacities for disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change, with technical assistance from the United Nations, through the development of climate information systems and early warnings, the expansion of national institutional capacity to promote resilience, the narrowing of the gap between academics and public and private decision-makers, and concomitant processes of recovery and sustainable management of natural resources.

Finally, it should be noted that actions to promote disaster risk reduction have already permeated the policies, strategies, and plans of the key sectors of development; especially in planning, infrastructure, economy and finance, health and education. In the region, around 1,400 local governments have committed to building resilience[140]. Aligned with the Sendai Framework, countries prepared and approved the Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agricultural Sector and Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean, in December 2017[141]. This local commitment makes the region a global reference and constitutes an essential basis for South-South cooperation towards the generation of resilience as a central element in the reduction of multi-dimensional poverty. Efforts need to continue to expand as a critical step in protecting the development achieved and as a basis for reducing local poverty.

STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE AND FOOD SECURITY

The Central American Dry Corridor covers a large area of tropical forest on the Pacific slope that runs from southern Chiapas in Mexico, through western Costa Rica to the western provinces of Panama. Within this corridor, the most vulnerable countries exposed to extreme droughts or precipitations are Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

The susceptibility to change and climate variability in this territory is responsible for situations of crisis and disasters in socioeconomic, environmental and productive terms. The sensitive decline in agricultural production creates a risk of depletion of food reserves, decreases the diversity of the diet and reduces the energy intake of the affected population, which leads to an increase in malnutrition in children under five years of age. Food insecurity in this corridor has generated abandonment of the countryside and has been a trigger factor for international migration.

The UN, headed by FAO, IFAD and WFP, has joined efforts to coordinate responses to crises caused by climate events and has embarked on a strategic alliance to promote long-term development initiatives in support of food security and the means of subsistence in said territories. Among the actions that are being implemented and that, in turn, are being systematized for the design of risk management policies and capacity development, the following stand out:

■ Technical support in food and nutrition security, rural territorial development and the promotion of efficient, sustainable and resilient agricultural production, provided by FAO.

■ The application of measures aimed at improving absorption, adaptation and processing capacities in agricultural production activities, and the strengthening of dialogue and decision-making platforms at the local level, promoted by IFAD.

■ The promotion of the *Building Resilient Communities and Municipalities* program that provides assistance to the most vulnerable communities in the form of food, cash and vouchers for asset creation and training, led by WFP.

PUBLIC POLICIES SPHERES AND STRATEGIC AXES

1 SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC POLICIES AND INDICATORS

A. MAINSTREAMING, ACCELERATION AND SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC POLICIES (MAPS)

This section of the document seeks to summarize the strategic direction of the UNSDG response to the challenges and proposals identified in the first section. We do this taking into account one of the expected roles of the UNSDG at the regional level, the one that refers to supporting the articulation of public policies that best lead to an efficient and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and that has been reiterated in the proposal of reform of the UN presented by the Secretary General. This is an articulation that should be made concrete throughout the cycle of public policies, from the inclusion of the SDGs in a vision of the desired future, through the design of institutional arrangements and the incorporation of these in the planning instruments, up to the realization of public and private financing, as well as the definition of a monitoring and evaluation plan.

In carrying out this role, the regional level of the United Nations Development System (UNSDG) seeks to make a contribution to the process through which states set their own national goals, taking into account the different realities, capacities and levels of development. Aware that while goals express global aspirations, each government will set its own national goals, taking into account the circumstances of each country.

For the accompaniment that should be given to these national processes, the UNSDG has adopted a common approach since 2015 to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that is effective and coherent, known by the acronym MAPS - it refers to mainstreaming, acceleration and support for public policies, in its acronym in English. The analytical framework of MAPS reflects the cycle of planning and implementation of policies that, although different in each country, usually consists of: i) establishing the public agenda; ii) policy planning; c) implementation of the policies; and iii) its monitoring and evaluation. It is expected that MAPS not only relates to governments, but can also support a revitalized development partnership in which the private sector, academy and civil society are actively called to participate.

This process is already underway in the region and at least fifteen inter-institutional mechanisms for the implementation of the SDGs have been identified, following two approaches. One that uses the existing institutionalism assigning new responsibilities reflecting these new challenges; and another that creates a new specific institutionalism to coordinate the implementation of the SDGs. In both cases, one of the most important obstacles is to show progress in the allocation of resources for sustainable development. So far, much progress has been made in mapping the available information that seeks to monitor the SDGs in the perspective of identifying gaps and advancing in defining national frameworks for monitoring policies. However, the budgeting experiences for the 2030 Agenda results are in its early stage.

It is hoped that due to the very fact that Latin America and the Caribbean were important protagonists of the paradigm shift on global development, the commitment to use the 2030 Agenda as a guiding reference for national and subnational policies is seen as the consequence logic of said process.

The UNSDG conceives the work of implementing the global agenda as an effort to conjugate inter-sectoral policies and actions, with an integrated vision. The ideal is that such integration allows countries to create efficiencies in investment as long as catalytic or acceleration actions are identified and implemented. These actions can, in turn, generate positive results in several SDGs and related goals simultaneously. However, the difficulty can arise in public management, given that it means that the inter-sectoral negotiation and the multiple public and private actors must have the capacity to handle the so-called "trade -offs" or "counterweights". That is why the governance aspects of this agenda will become increasingly crucial.

The role of articulation of public policies to which is alluded is understood as an informed and sustained political dialogue. To reach higher levels of efficiency and effectiveness, the UNSDG considers indispensable to implement evidence-based policies. Thus, countries and regional policy monitoring bodies must develop better information and data management systems.

B. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW INDICATORS:

SDGs indicators require the construction of new statistical capabilities in accordance with the need for information production, which is disaggregated taking into account i) income; ii) gender; iii) age; iv) race; v) ethnicity; vi) migratory condition; vii) disability; and viii) geographical location, among other aspects. The multiple stratification of these disaggregation is not only fundamental to comply with the principle of the global agenda that no one is left behind, and that the first effort is to reach the most laggard, as well as being a vital instrument to improve the effectiveness of public policies.

On the other hand, it is important to strengthen the capacities and contents for which the data and indicators will be developed; disaggregation is insufficient if it lacks an analytical approach that, in the

case of the SDGs, should be oriented towards analysis based on the gender, human rights and sustainability approaches, considering that these are crosscutting axes for all the objectives and goals.

Therefore, the progressive redesign of national statistical systems should be sustained, in accordance with what was expressed by the countries in the framework of the reflections of the CEA-CEPAL, on systematic and efficient processes of information production based on access to information totally disaggregated, pointing to censuses and administrative quality records. These two pillars, on the other hand, will be completed through specialized surveys that allow their data to be combined with estimation models for small areas. In these processes, it will undoubtedly be very useful, for example, the new Global Center of Excellence in Gender Statistics that is being created in Mexico with the support of UN Women.

It is important to take into account the necessary "data revolution" and information systems. For example, when it comes to observing environmental and social processes, there are large gaps in frequency, accuracy and coverage. The data is collected and managed without due systematicity, using different methodologies and tools, making it very difficult to compare and analyze trends at regional level. This type of issues prevents effective monitoring and is detrimental to early action that can improve the performance of interventions. In this context, it is important to support the establishment of large-scale statistical infrastructures, which facilitate inter-sectoral views and, through the use of computer technologies, allow the development of new data in real time, and take advantage of techniques that allow the voices and participation of the populations, men and women, not only for the collection of information but for the rendering of accounts and social monitoring of the progress of the objectives and goals.

Finally, we must remember that the work of articulation of policies, based on an informed dialogue, with a solid and accessible empirical base, must not lose sight of the fact that, although the SDGs are not explicitly formulated in the language of human rights, the majority of its goals find a direct correlation with the internationally recognized standards in this regard. There is an ethical and rights base that supports the

reason why you want to reach the results. The OHCHR plays an important role in UN efforts to ensure that the agenda is implemented in accordance with international human rights law. Country work seeks to integrate a rights-based approach, in accordance with the implementation of the specific SDGs. A particularly important task is required in the areas where the SDGs are limited by national law and where there are gaps, as in the case of the rights of indigenous peoples or sexual and reproductive rights, or discrimination against the LGBTI population. It is undoubtedly important to see the links between the SDGs and the recommendations emanating from the Universal Periodic Review, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the treaty bodies.

SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICIES: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE OBJECTIVES OF THE 2030 AGENDA

Those responsible for the implementation of public policies are in the midst of the challenge of simultaneously accomplishing the SDGs showing joint progress in the economic, social and environmental aspects. In achieving this, the offer of analyzes based on scientific evidence on how the objectives of the 2030 Agenda interact or reinforce in practice can be of great help in the decision-making process, in the need to articulate the work between the governmental organizations and in broadening the spectrum of what is monitored and evaluated. This understanding can be crucial in achieving lasting results.

In this contribution, the International Council of Science (ICS) has prepared a first report, *A guide to SDG interactions: from science to implementation*, which delves into the interdependent and indivisible nature of the objectives and goals of the 2030 Agenda. For example, regarding objective two, aimed at eradicating hunger and its links with environmental goals, it is found that sustainable agricultural systems and practices contribute to having healthy ecosystems; but, if it is sought to increase agricultural production and productivity by incurring unsustainable practices, this can result in greater deforestation and soil degradation, which would compromise food security over time. Here is an interrelation that invites us to seek the best balance between the purpose of procuring food for all and the protection and restoration of ecosystems.

Next to the links it is also important to observe the dependencies or compensations between interests that could enter into competition. Food production, for example, could compete in the use of land and water with the production of biofuels. In this same sense, the set of goals that involves the eradication of hunger is interrelated with the goals of other objectives, such as its relationship with the prevention of maternal death, which belongs to goal three aimed at ensuring a healthy life and promoting the welfare of everyone at all ages. There is also the case of the reduction of food waste and the promotion of sustainable production in companies, which are part of goal twelve, or goal number fourteen, with regards to the conservation of coastlines and marine areas, or its relation to the achievement of equal rights between men and women over the ownership and use of land and other natural resources, which belongs to objective one.

Other links and dependencies deserve to be mentioned: sustainable urban planning, for example, next to access to decent and accessible housing contributes to mental health and access to health services, all of which can reduce non-communicable diseases and limit the negative impacts on the environment. In this same line of examples, a healthy population is essential for development, which represents a synergistic relationship because economic development, when it is sustainable and equitable, contributes to health and well-being through access to paid work, food, housing, education, and medical care, conditions that can be reintegrated into society in greater productivity and income generation. That said, we must also take into account negative dependencies, the assurance to the poor of an energy that is economically accessible, safe and modern contributes to the eradication of poverty. However, energy "decarbonization" through the promotion of renewable energy and the efficiency of energy systems, could cause a rise in prices and, consequently, limit the access of the poor to modern forms of energy.

In short, the invitation made by the ICS report to the understanding of the many practical links of the objectives of the 2030 Agenda is a contribution to the fact that the latter is assumed as an indivisible whole, which in practice also means that the public policies that seek to materialize it, should seek positive reinforcement and reduce the negative ones.

By reviewing the history and contributions of the UNSDG to the 2030 Agenda, a series of public policy axes of great importance can be appreciated. One of them is clear from what we have mentioned above, that is, the need for an integral vision of development, encompassing the environmental, social and economic pillars, and safeguarding the commitment to the rights and wellbeing of the people by recognizing the dignity and rights of all and without leaving anyone behind.

The most important qualitative step that must be taken in the current process of sustainable development is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequalities within the framework of sustainable consumption and production patterns. This means that national and regional institutions, actors and leaders, must simultaneously aim for the elimination of poverty, but without pledging the future, that is, without negatively affecting the environment or squandering the natural resources that are still available.

This qualitative leap in the way to face the challenges to development and solutions can be translated into a set of public policies with an integrating vision.

UNSDG support for the policy articulation process can be structured around five thematic areas that synthesize the major purposes on which governments and societies should focus: i) people, ii) planet. iii) prosperity, iv) peace, and v) alliances.

A. PEOPLE

We emphasize the need to prioritize when working on this strategic axis on people: a) end extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition in all its forms; b) guarantee a healthy life throughout its stages: childhood, youth, adult life and old age; c) an education that contributes to a dignified social leap conceived for all ages in a society in which new skills and abilities are increasingly required; d) the creation of decent jobs, without discrimination and, e) the recognition of social protection and rights of all those informal expressions of work, including the forms of unpaid work. Closely linked to this, is the goal of equality in the participation of women in the labor market, educational access, recognition of domestic work and care, the eradication of violence against women, as well as the expansion of their participation in economic and political leadership.

The eradication of hunger goes through the protection of natural resources

To achieve an end to hunger and food insecurity, the region must continue with policies focused on those sectors and territories where it is most likely to be in a situation of insecurity in obtaining food. The monitoring and strengthening of early warnings to anticipate climatic contingencies and natural disasters deserve special attention.

It is estimated that agricultural production will have to increase between 60 and 100% in developing countries by 2050 to provide food for the entire population. Although it is true that in the past the agricultural sector increased its productivity levels thanks to technological improvements that allowed great advances, the current trajectory of agricultural growth is unsustainable and has serious consequences for ecosystems and people themselves. If we add to this the serious effects that climate change can have on food production, and the risks associated with natural phenomena such as droughts or floods for food availability, a scenario is presented in which the sustainability of the food supply and their future diversity are under threat.

The adoption of healthy eating patterns does not only mean promoting changes in consumption. It also requires reorienting public policies to create food systems that guarantee a sustainable and varied source of supply that can provide an adequate supply of healthy foods, as well as taking into account the reduction of losses and waste of food.

If the goal is leaving no one behind, family farming is the key to guaranteeing food security and the eradication of poverty in our region. However, it faces important limitations that affect its strengthening: access and good governance of the tenure of natural resources-land, water, forests, among others - and lack of specific public policies -financing, insurance, rural extension, and access to markets, among other. Family farming has great productive potential, energizes rural territories and economies, and contributes to a wide variety of foods, even creating food systems that

can promote rural development. The United Nations organizations play an important role in ensuring that policies and programs supporting family farming have a gender approach and that women can have access to land and resources on equal terms with men. They do this, taking into consideration the obstacles faced by rural women for the recognition of their rights and their productive contribution to family farming. This productive sector must be linked to rural development programs, agri-food markets in which the public and private sectors participate and, very importantly, in terms of equality, be included in social protection systems so as not to leave the protagonists who are dedicated to the field outside the instances that represent prosperity and basic welfare. As women are the ones in charge of the majority of the family food and food production in rural areas, some of the consequences of poverty and concentration and precariousness, impact them with greater force. On the other hand, a greater participation of women in the command of resources for food, the decision of food production and consumption and the resources for resilience to climate change will have a better impact on the food security of families and cities.

It will be very useful for the nations to link food security policies with those responsible for the protection of biodiversity. The plans and networks for disaster prevention and adaptation to climate change should also be communicated to them. Technical assistance will continue to be essential to avoid the degradation of natural resources that are needed in food production.

Access to universal health next to the promotion of healthy lifestyles

Policies aimed at achieving access to health for all inhabitants of the region run along with the policies aimed at the elimination of hunger and reduction of poverty. In order to achieve this universal coverage, health policies should continue to redouble efforts to eliminate the set of social barriers that limit access to services. Although health is a human right, the realization of universal coverage within countries goes through the disappearance of economic, sociocultural, geographical and gender determinants, migratory status, to mention the most visible, which makes it hard for certain groups or populations. To overcome these determinants, new agreements and actions in the political field are required to reduce inequities by increasing the presence and real attention of health systems.

This task goes through several aspects of great relevance. First, to achieve access to comprehensive health services whose management is designed to reach individuals and communities. The care model that prevails in the region is generally based on responding to episodic demands that reach hospital centers due to acute conditions; many times with waste of technology and specialized attention. Access to comprehensive health services implies policies that allow an efficient use of the available resources abandoning the traditional modalities of management and provision of services.

Secondly, inter-sectoral coordination focused on finding solutions that overcome the determinants of health should be re-launched. A healthy life is conditioned by the social and physical context. However, if it is conceived taking into account the trajectory of the life course, it should be encouraged in all possible areas, in homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. Although health is affected by economic conditions and social inequities, it is also important to take into account the numerous factors that influence individual health that are related to lifestyles and habits, food and nutrition, prevention tasks such as periodic tests, and access to immunizations. Health in all policies (HiPFA) tools additionally indicate a viable path to a cross-cutting and more inclusive conception of health[142].

A third block of action should focus on the oversight and governance of health systems. In Latin America and the Caribbean, reforms have been carried out on both the supply and demand sides of this sector, in terms of regulatory bodies and the labor structure. Although these reforms, in terms of medical care and social security, have effectively extended financial coverage to a greater number of people, the challenge is to ensure the proper functioning of the regulatory bodies and to transform positive actions that have resulted from the expansion in coverage in an improvement in individual access, as well as in the collective health of the people. Inequity in locating medical personnel must be resolved in such a way that it is consistent with the epidemiological panorama and the geo-demographic distribution of morbidity.

Another aspect to be addressed, as a fourth area of action, is the need to increase funding in the search for equity and efficiency of health systems. The region has increased public spending in this sector, but at a slow pace, thus failing to reach 6% of GDP. The level of economic development of a country has not been a guarantee of increased public spending on health or the achievement of universal health. Together with the need to increase spending, there is the task of making more rational the investment of the available resources and of preventing the existing ones from being squandered due to inefficiency.

Health policies, as well as other essential services in general, require certain stability and permanence in order for them to take effect. That is why, in this area as well as in education, the region should be able to avoid its vulnerability to economic cycles as much as possible. This external vulnerability is a structural failure that affects essential social services in a significant way. Therefore, the institutionalization and counter-cyclical shielding of these services become key pieces of sustainable development.

Quality, equity and inclusion are premises for 21st century education

Education is one of the main platforms for social mobility when completing the people sphere configured by the 2030 Agenda. The policies that facilitate access for all, especially for the poorest and excluded should also be continued to be enforced. The region has

a great challenge in terms of quality, equality and inclusion in facing the demands of the productive and technological sectors of the 21st century. Quality in education must be managed through pedagogical training, with content and learning outcomes, and training for citizenship, to participate in a leading role in the development, monitoring and evaluation of policies that will support progress towards sustainable development. They should also cover the performance of teachers and preparatory training for the labor market.

In the last regional evaluation called the *Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study*, supported by UNESCO, the results of 15 participating countries showed that literacy and mathematical levels of the third and sixth grade students were only at the basic level. A crucial aspect in achieving the quality of education falls to faculty. Current data show that there is little more than a fifth of teachers in primary and secondary education without certification, an amount that can vary depending on the country. The pedagogy and the curricular mesh should incorporate contents and methods in accordance with the competences of the current world, assuming a flexible, holistic approach and promoting active learning. Human rights and gender equality approaches, centered on the human being should also be added to this. The life course approach calls for the creation of lifelong learning opportunities, not only up to professional training, but also including the stages of adulthood and old age.

Parallel to the improvement of quality, the countries of the region must incorporate into their policies, plans and bodies responsible for the educational offer, the acquisition of skills beyond those that have traditionally been used. This incorporation includes the acquisition of diverse knowledge, critical and analytical thinking, conflict resolution and peaceful coexistence, creativity, entrepreneurship, solidarity, respect, recognition and tolerance, and the fight against discrimination in all its forms, the prevention of gender violence, the valuation of the other, the acquisition of digital skills, and problem solving skills -that is, the values, attitudes and knowledge that can enable Latin Americans and the Caribbean to have the tools of knowledge and essential training for the 21st century world.

A critical issue is the qualification aimed at young people that will prepare them for jobs. In the region, the offer of teaching and technical-professional training degrees must improve in terms of access, flexibility, quality and recognition in order to achieve the benefits in terms of promotion and social status as expected. It is necessary to professionalize them while offering alternative financing to students so that curricular programs can be completed. These reinforcements must be a priority for governments in order not to leave the poorest behind in their educational training.

If technical education needs reinforcement in terms of quality, professionalization and financing, higher education should grow much more. Access to it expanded rapidly during the decade of 2000, accumulating an average growth of approximately 40%, which allowed the region to be placed as a whole within the international average. However, this expansion, as in other social indicators, there is still a huge heterogeneity in this educational level in these countries. Growth was marked by inequality, favoring mainly the higher income sectors and urban areas.

The achievement of gender equality entails a change and strengthening of the world of care

The sphere of people, finally, cannot be accomplished without policies designed to achieve greater gender equality parallel to the recognition and incorporation of care within social security. The gender approach, such as life-course and multiculturalism, as mentioned at the beginning of the first part of this document, are essential in addressing all areas and fields of socioeconomic inclusion. Focusing on a greater equality and the strengthening of care -especially for children and older people- is necessary to promote various public policies.

In this way, public policies aimed at the recognition, reduction and redistribution of domestic work and unpaid care work acquire great importance. A distribution that involves achieving new equilibria between family, state and market, and between women and men in order to increase the availability of time and be able to add new achievements in terms of economic empowerment for women.

The above requires to broaden or improve the care services in which early childhood receives attention. The increase in the availability of these services, according to the criteria of equity, access, quality and, taking into account the needs of working parents, can lead to new incomes for women and families, as well as benefits for all the society. Investment in the infrastructure of essential services is of particular importance for women in rural areas, such as: potable water, sanitation, electricity, health. This could help extend time by reducing the burden of domestic work and of care. It should be emphasized that care systems must be linked to labor policies of reconciliation between family and work for men and women, and the economic recognition and assessment of the contribution of care in the economy.

It is urgent to expand and adapt maternity, paternity and family leave to the new needs and the new balance that must be found between the upbringing of children and work. Current licenses, in addition to being marked by socio-economic gaps, offer insufficient coverage for both women and men. The extensions or reforms carried out must be based on the achievement of a greater availability of time and a fairer distribution of tasks between men and women.

The progress in the improvement of universal social protection systems with a gender focus should contemplate the expansion of the coverage of monetary transfers aimed at families with children. The increase of a significant number of women with access to their own income has been achieved through transfer policies, a winning ground that must be maintained.

The increase in life expectancy in the region has been a very important achievement. This achievement also involves adaptations to the changes that this increase has implied in the different age groups. This increase has not necessarily meant having a healthier life for older adults. With the increase in life expectancy, the number of people in the older age groups increases, meaning that multi-morbidity increases, and fragility is accentuated with chronic diseases, deteriorated cognitive and sensory functions.

This situation brings the need to examine the conditions of women in old age, taking into account the specific consequences of the inequalities that have accumulated throughout life. One of the compensation or adjustment policies that should be considered in this regard is the expansion of cash transfer coverage, especially for these women. The design of policies that guarantee economic protection is pivotal in the search for material protection and equity within this stage of life. Several countries in the region are moving towards this goal, seeking to correct the socioeconomic disadvantages of a life dedicated to care work that has not been remunerated or given a discontinuous work trajectory.

Health services, social protection, education and employment organizations will have to adapt to this change. It is essential to build national systems of care with a focus on social co-responsibility, which does not leave women and the private sphere with the greater burden that this change implies. Medical attention should evolve in order to provide the best care to patients who will have a high life expectancy and multiple chronic conditions. A change in which care and self-care will be vital, and in which the competition of several sectors will be required, including the committed participation of young people and adults as subjects of health, as well as the participation of the community as the environment in which women and men work daily.

B. PLANET

The successful implementation of the SDGs will require a balance between socio-economic progress and the conservation and sustainable management of the planet's resources and ecosystems. In order to ensure an inclusive and resilient development that takes into account current generations without compromising the future of the next generations, it is necessary to also apply measures to adapt to climate change and work in mitigating their effects on life on the planet.

Do more and better with less; protecting natural resources

Sustainable consumption and production entails the promotion of greater efficiency in the use of natural and mineral resources in production processes and adoption of new consumption patterns at the private level. This includes, for example, the rational use of energy, water, and raw materials so that non-renewable resources are not depleted and ensure the replacement of those that are renewable. In the same way, a transition to more sustainable patterns of development will reduce future economic, social and environmental costs, strengthen competitiveness and reduce poverty.

One of the main objectives is to reduce the ecological footprint, that is to say that the actual use of resources (forestry, agricultural, soils for infrastructure, pastures, water, energy, fishing resources, emission of greenhouse gases) does not exceed the natural capacity of regeneration of said resources or absorption of carbon in such a way that the future availability is not hindered.

One option for this is to generate circular economies, where residues of certain value chains are inputs for others. This will allow decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, reducing the intensity of energy and material consumption, as well as pollution levels associated with all production and consumption functions within the regeneration capacity of natural ecosystems[143].

At the same time, this alternative ensures that the reasonable use of environmental assets contributes to prosperity, such as through the creation of dignified and green jobs in new sectors.

Sustainable consumption and production requires the adoption of a life cycle approach of products to increase the sustainable management of resources and achieve efficiency in their use, which is "doing more and better with less", increasing the net welfare gains derived from economic activities, environmental degradation, and pollution.

It is important to consider that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have approved a regional strategy of sustainable consumption and production, establishing work priorities and a direct relationship with the Ten-Year Framework of Programs of Consumption and Sustainable Production[144].

These priorities include the development of national policies, programs and strategies in this area; the establishment of sustainable public procurement schemes; the promotion of sustainable lifestyles starting from the educational content; the generation of information for consumers; the promotion of sustainable tourism; the assurance of buildings and constructions in accordance with the protection of the environment; the strengthening of food systems in accordance with the capabilities of the natural environment; support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that incorporate these issues; and the improvement of integral waste management.

Applied research for the development of green and innovative economies

In addition to this regional prioritization, it is recommended to increase and strengthen scientific production through the promotion of applied research that is closely linked to the responsible use of natural resources and the generation of new green products. We must not forget that Latin America and the Caribbean are one of the richest regions of the world in terms of natural resources and biodiversity. The region totals 8% of the global population, it owns 23% of the potentially arable land, receives 29% of the planet's rainfall, and has seven of the twenty-five places in the world with the highest concentrations of endemic species.

Moving forward in this way requires a holistic approach and a profound systemic change that demands the action of several actors, among which are companies, consumers, policymakers, researchers, scientists, retailers, media, and cooperation agencies for development. Therefore, it is necessary to change the vision and strengthen the bonds of cooperation between all the actors involved in the supply chain, from the producers to the final consumers. In this context, it is interesting to note that the Business and Sustainable Development Commission identifies as business opportunities four areas where sustainable practices and circular economies are of particular interest: cities, food and agriculture (including forest ecosystems), energy and material efficiency, health and, well-being [145].

Urban planning contributes to democratizing well-being and assessing the impact that cities have on their input in ecosystems

Unplanned urban growth has generated social exclusion factors in the region -in terms of housing, segregation, mobility, and access to employment, for example-, while at the same time it has had a high environmental impact, translated into an increase in disaster risk, the concentration of air pollution, poor management of wastewater that are linked to various sources of pollution, and a high impact on underground water resources in terms of demand and quality, among others. All of the above with its consequent implications for health and quality of life of the population, with a particular impact on the most vulnerable groups. In this context, addressing environmental challenges is a central issue for the welfare of the population and to ensure that urban areas have sufficient resources to ensure their viability. This will not be possible without appropriate, inclusive, and safe urban planning systems for women and girls and for all people, and with a long-term vision that integrates respect for the natural environment with the improvement of the human environment.

Adequate environmental management in cities is important to ensure public health and well-being standards, increase resilience and promote sustained and inclusive economic growth. It is also important to reduce the environmental impact of the urban centers in their surroundings, ensuring the viability of the ecosystems and the source of natural resources used by the urban population. It is crucial to foster healthy societies by promoting access to adequate, inclusive, and quality public services, a clean environment, taking into account guidelines on air quality, safe public spaces for women and girls, and social facilities and infrastructure[146].

On the other hand, the search for carbon-neutral cities, through mitigation strategies of greenhouse gases in the transportation, energy, and industry sector, the increase of carbon sinks with more green areas and the use of ecological services for the wastewater treatment, proper waste management and efforts to close the energy and materials circuits of cities, for example, have recently emerged as a way to increase synergies between built spaces and the natural environment, another fundamental aspect linked to sustainable consumption and production [147].

Urban management and the growth patterns of cities can be influenced to reduce their environmental impact and reduce their vulnerability to different risk factors to which the population may be exposed. For example, promoting more compact, more accessible cities and guaranteeing better access to non-motorized public transportation. Resilience to disasters can be increased through proper planning of land uses. Local ecosystems and their services - carbon basins, clean air, water, etc. - can be incorporated into urban management. It is also important to innovate in the production and use of energy for housing, transportation and other activities. All of them are alternatives for urban planning to become the main tool in the promotion of robust and integrated responses to the environmental health challenges of cities.

UNITED BY THE CITY

In Arequipa, one of the cities that reports the highest rates of gender violence in Peru, many of the people who work in the collection of solid waste are women. The project *Comprehensive solid waste management project for sustainable and inclusive development* has allowed many women in Arequipa to leave garbage dumps where they were previously exposed to health and violence risks, and become recycling experts and, thereby, improve their means of lifestyle.

The project is supported by UNDP and UNEP, under the Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI), and has the support of the national and local government in the creation, training and formation of female and male recyclers associations. Their work is integrated into a municipal model of selective collection. Through this scheme, where public-private effort converges, the volume of recyclable material collected and the efficiency and impact of the selective collection system are increased, while environmental benefits are generated by reducing both the volume of final disposal of waste and greenhouse gas emissions. The project, added to garbage collection programs at the source that are underway in the country, incorporates around 18,000 tons of waste per month into the recycling chain.

In the same way, through this increase in the volume of collected waste, scale economies that allow the associations a greater economic benefit are generated. During 2016, the National Solid Waste Management Plan was approved, integrating this dimension and summoning the municipalities to replicate this scheme along with the formation of the people that carry out this type of work. In this way, a public policy is institutionalized and allows generating social inclusion for a traditionally marginalized group, while promoting local examples on the path towards a circular economy.

Adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and promotion of resilience

Although Latin America and the Caribbean contribute with only 5% of global emissions of greenhouse gases, the region is already being impacted by the effects of global warming and the scenarios indicate a critical situation in terms of losses in agricultural productivity and in the availability of water. Climate change in the Caribbean basin contributes to significantly increase annual losses due to disasters. According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2017, three of the five countries most affected by extreme climatic events at the global level in the period 1996-2015 belong to the region: Honduras, Haiti and Nicaragua. These cases demonstrate how climate change exacerbates and amplifies economic, social and environmental impacts and costs, with serious consequences, especially for the most vulnerable population.

The challenge is not only to reduce losses and damages in the most vulnerable populations, which are generally those who live in poverty and extreme poverty. The challenge lies in how to make efforts to ensure that the mitigation of climate change, the invested resources and the proposed economic solutions reach the poor and that they benefit from this effort, in order to improve their socio-economic condition. In the end, to improve resilience, it is important to reduce poverty.

Against this background, what was agreed at the global level under the Paris Agreement becomes even more relevant in the context of the region. It is essential to increase the ability to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change and promote resilience to climate change and development with low greenhouse gas emissions and this cannot be postponed.

The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement present an innovative approach in a complementary framework to accelerate action and achieve ambitious sustainable development goals. The United Nations System promotes a transversal view of the response to climate change and risk management in all of these international commitments signed by the countries.

In this context, the UN provides support to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the strengthening of institutional frameworks and in the implementation of Determined Contributions at the national level and the development and implementation of national adaptation plans -NDC and NAP respectively. Additionally, within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the system provides support in the mobilization of international resources that directly contribute to the fulfillment of the adaptation and mitigation commitments of the countries.

All of these actions seek to maintain the increase of the global average temperature below 2°C with respect to pre-industrial levels, in order to considerably reduce the risks and effects of climate change that, which are felt strongly in the region and disproportionately affect the poorest.

Reduction of vulnerability to disasters so as not to retreat in the development already achieved

It is not possible to talk about sustainable development without mentioning the importance of risk management and building resilience in Latin America and the Caribbean. Any gain or improvement, in the areas of the 2030 Agenda, can be erased by a natural disaster if the vulnerability and risks in which the population can be found are not reduced, in particular women and children. In fact, vulnerability to disasters is linked to poverty. It is estimated that there are 8.4 million people in the region living in the path of hurricanes and 29 million in areas of very low elevation[148], being very vulnerable to flooding.

Poor communities and their constructions, located in high-risk areas, suffer most of the impacts. These communities largely lack disaster prevention and response networks. Plans to reduce the risks of natural disasters and the local networks linked to them must adapt to the variety of events - earthquakes, floods, landslides, coastal erosion, storms, and hurricanes. The implementation of these plans must be unavoidable in order to avoid losses with serious consequences at local level. Women in the communities suffer stronger impacts in the face of risks since they are usually less likely to move, less able to access supports and participate in the affected communities and in the places of accommodation. They also face risks of violence that are exacerbated in emergency situations and lack of protection. In addition, women have fewer

opportunities to rebuild their economic activities, either because they were linked to housing in which they no longer live, or because their previous work relationship is usually more flexible and unstable than that of men.

The consistent application of global frameworks on disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change are part of efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty by improving food security.

To mainstream risk management in development processes, the UN agencies work by applying a set of complementary practices and approaches:

■ Reform of governance to manage disaster risk, based on strengthened agreements between sectors and territories to prevent and manage risks and avoid underestimating future risk, as well as ensuring transparency and accountability.

■ Change of vision in the supply and use of information on risk, in the search to be inclusive and participatory, and thus, ensure a social process of knowledge production and inclusion in development strategies from the local level.

■ Assessment of costs and benefits of disaster risk management, especially in calculating generated benefits and avoided expenses in terms of reducing poverty and inequality, environmental sustainability, economic development, and social progress.

■ Integration of the gender perspective in the reduction of risks: i) supporting the generation of evidence and statistics disaggregated by sex; ii) generating instruments and interventions that include the prevention and response to gender-based violence; iii) promoting women and girls as agents for strengthening resilience in the face of disaster risks and climate change; and iii) facilitating the participation of women and girls in the formulation and monitoring of public policies and regulatory frameworks related to risk management[149], as well as in contingency, response, early recovery, and sustainability plans.

■ Strengthening and evolution of social protection systems, and above all, of the systems of conditional transfers, so that in addition to promoting such protection, they can incorporate elements of environmental conservation, adaptation and mitigation of climate change, and disaster risk management.

C. PROSPERITY

The new global commitment is that everyone can have a productive and satisfactory life, to the compass of an economic, social, and technological progress in harmony with the nature. Prosperity assumes the achievement of a planet where not only poverty is eradicated, but also where no one is left behind. While issues related to prosperity are cross-cutting throughout the 2030 Agenda, it stands out in Objective 8 on decent work and economic growth, as well as in Objective 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure.

Labor market must go from informality to the formalization of its structures

UNSDG values, in a special way, the promotion of social justice through decent work, placing job creation at the heart of economic, productive and social policies with a view to resuming a path of inclusive, sustainable growth that will reduce poverty and consolidate more prosperous societies.

The countries of the region must create some 70 million new jobs until 2030 only to absorb the population that joins the labor market, that is, close to six million per year. At the same time, it is necessary to improve the working conditions of the 134 million workers who today belong to the informal sector, many of them forming the new "vulnerable middle class" that demands more and better services from the states. More than 80% of the 134 million workers with informal employment are still in the categories of self-employed, domestic work - household workers - workers of micro and small enterprises - from one to ten workers - and auxiliary family workers without remuneration. At the same time, these groups, in a situation of great vulnerability to economic crises, are mostly not in social protection systems.

The structural transformation of the region has not been able to transfer a sufficient number of workers from the sectors of low productivity to those of high

productivity and some indications suggest that there has been a shift in the opposite direction. Average productivity in Latin America and the Caribbean is half of that of the USA, and most countries could be widening this gap. The low growth of productivity is undoubtedly the Achilles heel of the growth process in the subcontinent and one of the main indicators that Latin America could be trapped in the "middle income trap". In many cases, exports are still concentrated in a few commodities. The region shows great gaps to settle in terms of innovation, education and skills of the workforce.

Given that women constitute more than half of the working-age population in the region and given that most of them are not in the labor market due to inequalities in the organization of care and gender roles, and in a paid job they do not generate the same income as men, despite being equally qualified to be equally productive, it is clear that there cannot be inclusive growth and decent work without gender equality. According to estimates, the per capita GDP of the region could increase by 14% if the gender gaps are closed[150]. Therefore, the economic agenda must include equal access of women and men to productive resources, labor rights and co-responsibility for care.

Efforts must be redoubled in the implementation of productive, innovative and effective development policies

The countries of the region must redouble their efforts to implement more innovative and effective productive development policies that, jointly and in conjunction with labor market policies, contribute to creating good formal jobs and promoting the transition of sectors and activities from low productivity and low wages to those with high productivity and better wages. In other words, social inclusion and productive and labor inclusion are two complementary sides of the same coin.

For example, macroeconomic policies that promote the creation of decent employment and support demand and investments in urban and rural areas will be essential, along with fiscal, sectoral and infrastructure policies that increase productivity and encourage entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. In particular, productive development policies have the greatest influence on the structural transformation, productivity and the quality of sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth that Latin America and the Caribbean needs to create quality jobs. Strategies for the promotion of business initiatives should focus, above all, on supporting smaller companies by stimulating the creation of appropriate conditions for them to prosper -facilitating access to financing, simplifying administrative procedures, among other stimulus measures- which in turn will also promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy of the same and their workers.

Social protection systems are essential to reduce the risk of falling back into poverty

In order to leave no one behind, it will be necessary to address the critical situation of the 24 million people who, despite having income from their work, do not earn enough for their families to overcome the poverty line of $3.1 per day, and of the 25 million unemployed people looking for a paid job. It is not reassuring to know that unemployment, informality and poverty affect women and young people in the region to a greater extent.

Social protection systems are essential to reduce the risk of families of falling into poverty. The regional coverage of protection has improved in the last decade, but it remains low. In 2014, more than 40% of workers

did not have health insurance coverage and almost 50% lacked pensions. The situation was much worse in rural areas, where these percentages rose to more than 60% and almost 75%, respectively. Today almost half of the total labor force works under conditions characterized by this complex, heterogeneous and persistent phenomenon of low quality jobs, of very low productivity, and not covered by social security or labor rights.

It will be necessary to implement policies aimed at reducing inequalities in the labor market. These include measures aimed at promoting youth employment - particularly first-job policies - innovative forms of social protection and wage policies that protect the incomes of the most vulnerable workers, the strengthening of labor inspection, increased participation by women in the labor market allowing them to benefit from fair maternity protection and policies to reconcile work and family life, the protection of collective bargaining, the pension system, and the promotion of social dialogue.

With regard to social protection, as already mentioned, it will be important to promote care policies that have traditionally fallen on women and that create a barrier to their participation in the labor market. This probably implies legal reforms and the creation of social protection mechanisms that socialize more equitably the cost of care for minors, the sick and the elderly. On the other hand, it will be important to promote the creation of jobs for social groups for which the unemployment rate is relatively higher, among which are young people and people with disabilities. In the case of people who do not study or work, it will be important to understand the different factors that affect this situation. For example, it is important for men to belong to a social class and this can be a determining factor. For women, marriage represents a factor important enough to not participate in the labor market and the educational system.

The re-launching of vocational and technical training in line with the demands of the 21st century will be of great importance in the youth labor market.

One of the most relevant proposals is in the preparation for the world of jobs. As it has already been stated, in addition to reinforcing secondary and tertiary education, it is important to strengthen vocational and technical training, in order to provide viable alternatives for those young people who have seen their educational trajectory truncated. In the current demographic context, with cohorts of adolescents and young people at peak height, these interventions can be considered of particular importance.

This education and vocational training is very well combined with the commitment to provide quality learning opportunities during the different stages of life of the people, both at the level of formal and non-formal education. In fact, for UNESCO the development of learning trajectories at all levels, properly recognized, validated and accredited, allows us to make the change in our capacities so as to adapt to the demands of that qualitative leap that we mentioned earlier. What is important, in the context of the 2030 Agenda, are the curricular meshes, which are enriched with contents and methods relevant to 21st century skills, looking at sustainable development and creating a global awareness on the subject. Undoubtedly, both teachers and educational institutions themselves are an essential part of this effort. Schools and institutions require adaptations in spaces and schedules to accommodate the required pedagogical changes and strengthen the public offer of care for children and adolescents. Equally, the investment in teachers in order to reach a 100% certification is an important step so that they can really accompany the development of the students, from childhood to adolescence and adult life.

To ensure the safety and health at work of all workers, including migrant workers, urgent action is required to foster a culture of prevention that respects the right to a safe and healthy work environment, as well as to apply the fundamental rights and standards of the ILO at the national level. Vulnerable groups, including migrants, require special attention in order to ensure that their rights are protected and their working conditions are improved.

Finally, the eradication of forced labor, the end of modern forms of slavery and trafficking in human beings, and the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor will be possible through the implementation of international labour standards at the national level that contain provisions relating to the fight against modern forms of slavery. In the same way,

the problem of child labor must be approached from a multidimensional vision that includes legislation, access of all children to education, social protection for families and labor market policies.

Sustainable industrial development increases productivity, generates jobs and contributes to technological innovation

UNSDG recognizes that an important part of the economic dynamics of the region depends on its industrial processes, trade and tourism. That is why it will be relevant to promote sustainable and inclusive schemes in these sectors, so that while generating jobs and promoting economic growth, inequalities will also be reduced and the environment protected.

Regarding the sustainable and inclusive industrial development, part of Objective 9 of the SDGs, the Lima Declaration recognize its potential as a driver of development, as it increases productivity, creates jobs and generates new income, which also contributes to the eradication of poverty and the creation of opportunities for social inclusion, for example, for women and young people. Similarly, industrial development generates added value, encourages scientific, technological and innovation development, which in turn promotes investment in skills and education, which is linked to other objectives and goals of sustainable development.

Concerning trade, given that liberalization and globalization may be beneficial or counterproductive to sustainable development, depending on how they are received, it is important to advocate that trade does not compete with the environment. Multilateral trading system should be promoted to encourage sustainable production and consumption practices.

In order to leave no one behind, it will also be important to look for mechanisms so that banking, financial and insurance services are accessible to all people, with affirmative actions for women. Access to this type of service allows individuals and companies to face unexpected shocks of various kinds, thereby increasing the resilience of economic and social systems. At the same time, this type of service expands the options of individuals and companies to acquire assets or make productive investments. Access to

banking, financial and insurance services is also an important piece in the promotion of micro, small and medium enterprises, as well as in the promotion of entrepreneurship.

Finally, one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the region is tourism. Therefore, it will be important that this activity is increasingly sustainable and inclusive. This implies not only the promotion of the ecotourism segment, but also making the tourism industry, in general, a sustainable activity in terms of its energy sources, the materials it uses, the waste it generates and that its activities are not predators of nature. The tourism activity is directly linked to the economic, social and environmental aspects, which makes it an activity of great potential as a creator of new opportunities.

Privilege infrastructure plans that promote sustainable development, environmental protection and social inclusion

Infrastructure is a key element to be able to have robust and dynamic economies, improve the quality of life of the population and contribute to the development of resilient and sustainable cities. Transportation, mobility and logistics infrastructure, for example, will help the region to be better integrated, be more competitive, for supply chains to be more efficient, for trade to be increased and diversified, for territorial development to be promoted, and for mobility and quality of life of its population to be improved. The investment that is made in infrastructure, on human settlements and environment impacts the economic development for a long time. Hence, it is fundamental to privilege the infrastructure that promotes sustainable development, that contributes to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and that also promotes social inclusion and cohesion.

One of the factors for the eradication of poverty is structural economic transformation. This transformation implies a series of measures, among which is the adoption of affordable and appropriate technological solutions for the region that must be developed. In some cases, this structural transformation will involve the modernization of certain processes, scientific development and technological innovation. In others, it will focus more on economic diversification,

improvements in management capacity, as well as cooperation and exchange among countries.

One of the aspects in which states must innovate is in the financing mechanisms of their development agendas. While in the region some of the mechanisms are very consolidated, such as the use of international development banking, public-private partnerships or the collection capacity from a set of direct or indirect taxes, there are other mechanisms that still do not enter into force. Some of these mechanisms are impact investment, green financing, crowdfunding and remittances, among others.

SAFE CITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

This program emerged from UN Women in 2010 through a pilot program and has become one of the most important of those carried out by the organization, currently implemented in some thirty cities around the world. The initiative addresses a gender issue that is often made invisible: violence and sexual harassment in the public sphere, which are present in the daily life of many women and girls, causing strong alterations and limitations. The need to prioritize the problem in the region can be seen by observing some data:

■ 9 out of 10 women in Mexico City have suffered sexual violence at least once throughout their lives.

■ 7 out of 10 women in Mexico City said that people do nothing when they witness an act of violence committed against women in public areas or transportation.

■ Almost 8 out of 10 women in Quito and Cuenca avoid corners and streets where groups of men gather.

This transversal program is of special relevance from the framework of the SDGs, reaching its effect beyond SDG five (gender equality). The 2030 Agenda has a firm intention to eradicate the different forms of violence that affect the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. The elimination of violence against women in the public sphere would ensure, directly, the provision of safe public transportation spaces and means (Goals 11.2 and 11.7), being fundamental in the promotion of healthy lives and sexual and reproductive health (Objective 3), helping to achieve women's employment rights and income security (Objectives 1 and 8)

and, similarly, promoting that girls can complete basic studies that would allow a better level of learning (Goal 4).

The program seeks to strengthen the capacities of public actors, collect and process information, improve the quality of urban planning, citizen participation, the transformation of cultural norms that do not accept violence and that promote gender equality, and determine the budget that should be dedicated to this area.

The positive effects of this program can now be observed in some cities where it has already been implemented, such as the case of Quito, where actions have been taken by creating safe stations and bus stops. There have been structural changes in the bus stops, such as the use of transparent materials in the cabins, an improvement in lighting or the implementation of warning bells. Another example in the same line is that of Torreón, in Mexico, where local regulations have been reformed to improve response to violence, including a reform of public transportation regulations, where buses and taxis are required to have signs rejecting violence against women, including telephone numbers to contact in case of an emergency. It also includes the need for bus and taxi drivers to have training in the prevention of violence against women and on the municipal response protocol.

The effect of this program is not only located so directly at a civil level. A study was carried out in Quito which objective was to identify factors that cause sexual violence against women in public transportation, in order to create policies that allow to control this phenomenon. Through the survey "Perception of Sexual Violence against Women in the Trolleybus System", it was determined how most of the users had suffered sexual harassment in one way or another. In addition, protocols for action against violence have been created in different cities, so that both, civil society and the civil service, know how to act in such situations.

The program is currently being implemented in different cities in seven countries of the region with notable results. Colombia, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and as of 2018, Uruguay, are managing to alleviate the existing defenselessness for women and girls through this initiative, creating safer and more egalitarian cities where they can live without fear in the public sphere and develop their full potential.

D. PEACE

The sphere of peace aspires to build a world that is free of violence, far from fear and impunity, a goal that means the commitment to build inclusive, just, and governable societies. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and the latter cannot exist without sustainable development; no level of development will be sustainable if nations do not live in harmony among themselves and if coexistence and governance are not guaranteed within their territories. The promotion of peace and justice is an unfailing requirement for the recognition of human dignity and a public good on which people can develop their potential.

The physiognomy of violence acquires all forms and is found in all areas. In Latin America and the Caribbean, as noted in the first part of this document, its manifestation is an expression of inequities, social and political instabilities, the emergence of groups dedicated to crime, the cultural patterns that naturalize it, violence against women, among others. At the same time, that it constitutes an expression, it also constitutes a stop to development and social cohesion of the countries.

Policies to prevent violence must protect the population, respect human rights and strengthen the rule of law

To confront its many faces, the United Nations System supports the implementation of responses that go beyond police approach. This implies policies that correspond to the protection and respect of the rights of the people and the promotion of the rule of law. According to this vision, public policies conducive to achieving societies with less violence and greater citizen security must start, among other aspects, from the learnings in matters that have been achieved inside and outside the subcontinent.

Roughly, there is a set of actions that must be deployed: i) the need to align national efforts aimed at reducing crime and violence by incorporating the lessons learned on what really works, an alignment that must have national consensus and the participation of civil society; ii) the importance of countries expanding or reinforcing actions aimed at protecting the areas most affected by violence and protecting populations that are in a situation of greater vulnerability, preventing the recurrence of violent acts; iii) the development of measures that reduce social gaps, especially in the territories or areas that concentrate the greatest vulnerability factors, this includes promoting situational crime prevention by concentrating on deterrence and reducing the feeling of insecurity within the population, iv) the urgency to eradicate violence against women and girls and feminicides in the region, not only through prevention but also by ending impunity and guaranteeing access to justice; v) support and expand educational, formal and informal actions to contrast gender stereotypes as fundamental elements for the prevention of all types of violence, gender and non-gender; vi) strengthen the asylum systems since applicants and refugees are fleeing violence, and vii) the strengthening of public institutions and the private sector to shield them from corruption.

Along with the reduction of social gaps, there is the urgent need to (viii) increase real development opportunities for young people, conceiving them as central subjects of progress and not only as the main risk group. In the course of violence, young people are the main victims and victimizers, which should lead to comprehensive policies that include, among others, the permanence within the education system, the offer of diverse and rewarding occupations including decent jobs, recognition of unpaid work, the link with volunteers and, in general, the promotion of their participation; ix) closely related to the foregoing are public health measures focused on the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, the reduction of alcohol and narcotics consumption, together with the control of the possession of weapons; x) given that violence is a risk factor for outcomes such as HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases, mental health disorders and psychoactive substance use disorders, the countries of the region should strengthen the links of prevention with health platforms that already exist; xi) the reduction of impunity through the strengthening of the bodies in charge of security and those responsible for imparting justice, including through the promotion of alternative measures to prison and having as a framework respect for human rights; xii) the strengthening of prison systems so that they implement effective rehabilitation and reintegration measures; and finally, xiii) all these actions achieve a greater impact when the participation

of local communities in the design of citizen security is enhanced; xiv). Besides all this, it is also essential to work with a long-term vision to eradicate those social norms and customs that promote violence and, as an alternative, foster positive parenting models that teach new generations to resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner and not violent.

Programs for the prevention of violence against women must be linked to the prevention of violence against children

This last recommendation has also shown to have a positive effect on policies and measures to reduce violence against women. Interventions that combine multiple strategies and several areas - individuals, close relationships, community organization, civil service, and society- are more likely to succeed. Within these are included those strategies that seek to transform gender relations, orienting them not only to change attitudes, but also to change behaviors - men dedicating more time to care within the family together with women increasing their economic participation in the home, for example.

Violence against women within families does not occur in isolation, but generally coexists with violence towards children; hence the recommendation to link the programs aimed at the prevention of this type of violence with those aimed at the prevention of violence against children. For example, violence against women within families does not occur in isolation, but generally coexists with violence towards children; hence the recommendation to link the programs aimed at the prevention of this type of violence with those aimed at the prevention of violence against children. An example would be investment and promotion of sports practice in girls during adolescence. Sport is a tool for self-care, self-esteem, body awareness and the prevention of gender violence. In this group of policies or initiatives, it is important to actively link men and boys as a key action in the education of respect, equality and the transformation of inequitable gender norms that underlie society. Within this body of actions, the awareness of the civil service continues to be fundamental, especially those responsible for health, security and the delivery of justice, because they constitute the gateway to detect and deal with cases. More than the quality of individual services, it is also very important to maintain the network of attention to women in situations of violence in an articulated

and coordinated manner, and to guarantee sufficient budgets so that services are adequate, in large urban centers and in rural zones.

Long-term prevention policies must influence the different areas where people develop

The implementation of comprehensive responses to violence by countries requires a good level of coordination and interdependence between different ministries, a requirement that can be compensated by reducing crime. Likewise, the redesign of security policies emphasizing crime prevention has proven to be successful. A comprehensive plan of prevention must have measures of short and long duration pointing, on the one hand, to the different stages of the life course; and, on the other, to influence the different areas in which people develop - family, school, the neighborhood, and the streets. The task is demanding and requires political will and coordination.

In this sense, it is encouraging to know that certain public policies designed for matters other than the reduction of criminality and crime help to avoid the occurrence of violations of the law. These include early childhood development, compulsory education for children and young people, and policies to reduce poverty. "In other words, current social and educational programs may already include preventative crime characteristics; that is why significant achievements could be achieved by identifying, redesigning when necessary and appropriately, taking advantage of existing policies, with a more deliberate approach to the prevention of crime and violence.[151]"

E. ALLIANCES

A global commitment has been established to mobilize resources from all available sources beyond public finances to materialize the 2030 Agenda through a global partnership for sustainable development. International cooperation mechanisms and alliances with private sector will be promoted, taking into account that efforts and resources are used in the most efficient manner. This partnership should reinforce solidarity and collaboration among all countries, all stakeholders and all people with the horizon set especially in overcoming the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda is to revitalize the global partnership for development. These alliances call on governments, the private sector and civil society to work in a coordinated manner on common goals and objectives, on a variety of topics that include financing for development, international cooperation, especially South-South cooperation, inter-sectoral coordination, territorial articulation and the participation of civil society, among others.

On the other hand, international cooperation is in a process of redefinition. While a significant part of international cooperation is still governed by Official Development Assistance aimed at low-income countries, that is, North-South cooperation, other forms of international cooperation, mainly South-South and triangular cooperation, have become relevant. According to the SEGIB report on the subject, 1,475 cooperation initiatives of this type were carried out in Ibero-America in 2015, taking into account programs, projects and actions. More than 80% of these initiatives were bilateral forms of cooperation[152].

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean, where most of the countries are of medium income, has the capacity to contribute to the redefinition of the agenda, methodologies and actors of international cooperation. After 40 years of the first formal south-south cooperation mechanism, the Buenos Aires Action Plan for the Promotion and Implementation of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, in 2019 the Conference of High Level of the United Nations on South-South Cooperation will be held in Buenos Aires. UNSDG agrees with the SEGIB that this conference will be an opportunity to identify the challenges and opportunities of this stage of redefinition, to achieve the SDGs and build a new architecture of international cooperation in which all countries participate according to their potential and competitive potential and benefit according to their needs under the 2030 Agenda principle of not leaving anyone behind[153].

However, to achieve the goals of this agenda, alliances become important not only among nations, but also within countries as a support for public programs and policies. One of the premises of this new policy architecture is to break with the sectoral silos that generate disjointed and uncoordinated responses

between ministries and government agencies. It will be necessary to look for the mechanisms of inter-sectoral cooperation and surely new institutional arrangements where it is necessary for the implementation of the SDGs to be carried out successfully. Some countries already have national commissions for the implementation of the SDGs, thus allowing for an inter-sectoral approach to the goals of the 2030 Agenda with a gender perspective and a multidimensional vision of the problems that must be resolved.

By the same token, as inter-sectoral coordination is essential, so is the articulation of policies between the national government and local authorities. This type of effort, in addition to generating dialogue and consensus, allows avoiding duplication of actions, identifying policy gaps, using resources more efficiently and taking advantage of the synergies of coordinated and complementary action between different levels of government.

Another type of key alliance to achieve the SDGs will be public-private partnerships. This type of alliances has been consolidated in important areas such as the construction of road infrastructure or the provision of public transportation and has shown good results as a mechanism to add public and private resources based on common objectives, as well as to transfer the risk of certain interventions to private actors. On the other hand, although these types of alliances have grown in popularity in other development sectors, such as the provision of public services, i.e. water or garbage collection, they are not free of debate. UNSDG recommends adopting a case-by-case approach to assess the appropriateness of this type of alliance and always put the welfare of the population at the center and guarantee accountability mechanisms.

The academic sector is another important area. The academy is where scientific thinking develops, the frontier of knowledge expands and professionals are trained. In the necessary interface between science and politics, the academic sectors are called to analyze the coherence of public policies. It is a favorable forum for the external evaluation of government interventions. In the construction of an institutional framework for the evaluation of social programs, for example, universities can offer knowledge, experience and impartiality.

Finally, civil society organizations, as well as other initiatives of society, are strategic allies for the implementation of the SDGs. The new architecture of the interventions should incorporate more and more citizen consultation and social audit mechanisms. In some countries, civil society organizations operate even government programs. But all people belonging or not to an organization must have the right to demand greater transparency and better mechanisms of accountability. Simply by being users of transparency mechanisms, it fulfills a civic duty that is vital for the construction of more effective and efficient institutions.

The role of the UN is of singular importance in promoting ties between nations and as a platform to facilitate international cooperation. Being aware of this, 32 agencies work in a coordinated manner within a high-level forum conceived for the design of joint policies and decision making. Within the framework of this shared vision, UNSDG launched in 2014 the Standardized Operational Procedures –SOP- adopting the slogan *Delivering as one*.

The main objective of the SOPs is to provide the national teams of the United Nations, governments and other actors in the countries that require it, clear, direct and internally consistent guidelines in terms of programming, leadership, operation, financing and communication. Likewise, identify and recommend policy changes and procedures that should be made at the central office level to reduce the transaction costs of governments, partners and national UN offices, thus allowing a common approach to the results to be achieved at national scale. The five pillars of the SOP are: A leader, A program, A fund, Communicating as One and Operating as One.

The United Nations System provides its support through the use of tools, mechanisms and approaches in policies focused on the transition to sustainable development with a rights-based approach. These include education and communication; the consolidation of strategic alliances, especially within the region, but also externally; innovation; monitoring; effective application of policies and laws; and financing. Jointly, it makes a normative and technical body available to the governments and societies of the region in order to promote regional success in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

THE INTEGRATED APPROACH IN PRACTICE

It is difficult to produce results for a truly sustainable development if the actions remain isolated within the traditional "silos" that separate the social, economic and environmental sectors. In contrast, a more holistic or integrated approach is needed that takes into account the connections between social progress, economic growth and environmental sustainability.

The SDGs are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. As a result, it is not possible to selectively advance in some of the goals; the multidimensional nature of development challenges must be recognized. The role that environmental sustainability plays in creating a prosperous future for all people is an example of this multidimensionality. Its inclusion in all the SDGs challenges humanity to find new ways of guaranteeing well-being without being translated into the depletion of natural resources, the degradation of the environment and the destruction of livelihoods.

Several experiences in the region that have been born in a specific sector -health, forestry, water management, agriculture, social protection or energy- have sought to attract or link others in order to solve concrete problems in a more comprehensive manner. UN Environment seeks to make visible these multidimensional initiatives.

The Special Program for Food Security of Mexico is an example of this strategy, which, in the last 15 years, has been oriented to communities in conditions of marginalization; promoting efforts to improve food security and agricultural productivity while combining this purpose with the sustainable use of natural resources.

In the Dominican Republic, the Safe Hospital program, an example in the health sector, ensures the provision of essential social services in case of disasters. In addition to helping to ensure public investment in health infrastructure, it complements it with environmentally sound management of chemicals, waste and water.

The communities of the region, through their active participation in initiatives such as the social enterprise of the Green Market of Santa Cruz in Trinidad and Tobago, or the ecological village Akapacha in Argentina, are finding ways to contribute to sustainable development by transforming their patterns of production and consumption and the adoption of principles of economic solidarity and collaborative learning.

Local initiatives reveal that integrated solutions, when applied on a larger scale, can lead to tangible changes towards sustainability at the national and regional levels. However, to achieve the viability of these efforts on a larger scale, it requires leadership and political commitment, along with a long-term vision.

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