Towards a regional agenda for **inclusive social development**

Bases and initial proposal

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Second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

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Contents

Table

Figures

Box

Diagrams

Map

Presentation

At the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in October 2017 in Montevideo, member States agreed to work on defining a regional agenda for inclusive social development, in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and asked the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to provide technical assistance for its construction. Accordingly, the Chair of the Conference, together with ECLAC in its capacity as technical secretariat, began the process of developing the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

This is a participatory process which is expected to actively engage all the member countries of the Conference. It consists fundamentally of forging agreements on the nature, goals and principles of inclusive social development, and establishing commitments as to how these goals are to be met in the region, in order to tackle structural inequalities, eradicate poverty and contribute to sustainable development. As argued in this document, inclusive social development may be understood as the capacity of States to ensure the full exercise of their citizens' social, economic and cultural rights, providing forums for participation and recognition, targeting gaps in access to key areas of well-being and addressing social inequalities and the axes around which they are structured from the perspective of a universalism sensitive to differences.

The development and implementation of the regional agenda for inclusive social development has gained importance in the regional context, marked today by the urgency of making progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and by the numerous political, economic and social challenges emerging in the region. The regional agenda draws attention to the key role of inclusive social development with equality at the centre, as a pillar of sustainable development and a condition for economic development and environmental sustainability, and to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the region. At this time of multiple changes and uncertainties, and in view of the global community's commitment to sustainable development, it is all the more important to forge compacts and commitments around a vision on inclusive social development that has been agreed upon by consensus, with multilateralism as the mechanism for bringing it to fruition.

This document is intended to guide the construction of the regional agenda for inclusive social development in particular, the discussions of the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place in Panama City in September 2018. Its content was presented and considered at a working meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference held in Santiago in April 2018, in the framework of the second meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. The comments made on that occasion were taken into account in the preparation of the present document.

A number of elements and milestones are proposed here for discussion by the countries, for consideration in developing the regional agenda for inclusive social development, its goals and its principles. The first chapter addresses the conceptual bases and proposes a definition of inclusive social development in the broader sustainable development framework. The second chapter outlines the critical obstacles to the region's inclusive social development that the agenda would need to address. The third chapter examines the indications and guidance provided by international standards on social development that are to be taken into account in developing guidelines for preparing the agenda, and offers a preliminary systemization of the commitments adopted at regional and subregional intergovernmental forums on cross-cutting themes and core dimensions of inclusive social development, as well as their means of implementation. This exercise serves to identify areas of agreement and others that will require further work during the discussion of the agenda. Lastly, the fourth chapter sets forth a first proposal on the vision and goals of the agenda and its guiding principles, and identifies key milestones in its formulation.

It is hoped that these inputs will provide a basis for discussions at the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and serve to make progress on defining the components of the regional agenda for inclusive social development and the next stages in its construction.

CHAPTER

I

Inclusive social development in the framework of sustainable development and equality

Introduction

Latin America and the Caribbean is in a period marked by challenges both old and new. Emerging dynamics confronting the region include technological change and the transformations that are occurring in the world of work; rapid population ageing due to the demographic transition and to shifting migration dynamics; climate change, pollution, environmental degradation and more frequent disasters; and the necessary transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy. These phenomena generate structural and persistent blockages and gaps, which aggravate discouraging trends in economic growth, social investment, poverty and inequality. Following substantial reductions in poverty and extreme poverty between 2002 and 2014, the corresponding rates have risen again since 2015. Moreover, the process of declining income inequality observed in that period has also slowed in recent years, and the levels of all these indicators remain very high (ECLAC, 2018a). This context is closely related to social development and its policies, which are becoming priorities for sustaining the progress made in the last few decades, forestalling setbacks and moving towards the great civilizing imperative of the 2030 Agenda: to achieve sustainable development with no one being left behind.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a transformative programme that puts equality, dignity and individual rights at the centre and calls for a new style of development (ECLAC, 2016c). Its global adoption poses a huge challenge, namely "... between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources", as well as "... create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities" United Nations, 2015a). Inclusive social development occupies a central place in these aspirations, by assigning a leading role to individuals as subjects of rights.

The concept of sustainable development places the social dimension on the same hierarchical level as the environmental and economic ones, since its objectives and targets are naturally integrated and indivisible. The interactions that exist between the three dimensions are recognized as crucial (ECLAC, 2017b). This comprehensive vision reaffirms, firstly, that social issues do not play out in the social sphere alone (ECLAC, 2016b), since macroeconomic and environmental policies are a crucial part of the solution to social problems —besides being responsible for many of them. Secondly, it emphasizes that productivity, economic growth and environmental sustainability also unfold largely in the social sphere. In addition to guaranteeing citizenship rights, resources well invested in social issues help to strengthen human capacities throughout the life cycle, resulting in more informed citizens and better working conditions in productive and quality jobs, with heightened awareness of responsible consumption and the need for environmental stewardship. This interlinked conception of the dimensions of the 2030 Agenda will make it possible to move forward together in reducing the social footprint of the current development model, which is manifested in the persistence of poverty, high levels of inequality and the concentration of income and wealth, major deficits in terms of decent work and other shortcomings, structural gaps and rights violations that characterize societies and stem from the current development model and contradict the very notion of sustainable development, including its economic and environmental dimensions (ECLAC, 2017b).

The mandates arising from resolution 2 (II) of the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean respond to the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda. These state that "[...] reducing the social footprint of the current development model and achieving inclusive social development are essential for sustainable development and for the fulfilment of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and that "[…] sustainable development cannot be achieved without equality of rights, capacities, opportunities, means, outcomes and the commitment of governments and civil society to consolidate social development and close access gaps within and between countries [...] " For this reason, it reiterates the regional commitment "[...] to eradicating poverty and inequality in all their forms and dimensions through social policies that are inclusive and difference-aware, and have a gender, ethnicity, race, intersectoral, intercultural and human-rights perspective". The Conference also recognizes that, despite

progress made in reducing poverty and inequality and in improving citizens' living conditions, the tendency to reduce social development budgets, and the potential impact thereof, remain a cause for concern. In view of this, it emphasizes the need to safeguard, promote and ensure the efficiency of social investment and continue working to make the tax burden more progressive, in order to consolidate the progress achieved and avoid setbacks that would carry high costs for individuals and national economies" (ECLAC, 2018e).

To safeguard and promote social development, the mandates defined during the second session of the Conference include "the building of a regional agenda for inclusive social development based on public policies that address the region's structural inequalities and the new challenges arising from technological change and the necessary transition to an environmentally sustainable economy, with a focus based on rights, gender equality and the life cycle and an approach of universalism that is sensitive to differences, within the general framework of the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (ECLAC, 2018e).

The commitment expressed in the construction of this regional agenda for inclusive social development refers to three interlinked domains: (i) the importance of inclusive social development as part of the countries' development process, which calls for an effective prioritization of actions, together with an adequate institutional framework and budget, among other means of implementation; (ii) awareness of the region's debt in terms of overcoming structural inequalities in order to guarantee citizens the full exercise of their social, economic and cultural rights and overcome the adverse social and environmental impact of the current development model; and (iii) the urgent need to move in that direction and generate the conditions to achieve sustainable development, which represents a new development paradigm oriented towards progressive structural change, with an environmental big push and equality at the centre (ECLAC, 2016c).

As indicated by ECLAC (2016b), this mandate demands "a new generation of policies" that can help sustain and generate the conditions for overcoming poverty and inequality and for the shift towards that new development paradigm. This orientation should be mainstreamed in the regional agenda for inclusive social development in two ways: firstly, in thematic terms, covering the region's emerging and structural challenges; and secondly, in terms of its guiding approach, combining the objective of acting on the axes of the social inequality matrix in the region, a universalism that is sensitive to differences, the proactive role of citizens as subjects of rights and the challenge of not duplicating pre-existing agendas and commitments on social development, but harmonizing them.

Designing an agenda of this type requires a number of conceptual clarifications regarding inclusive social development. The following paragraphs briefly consider this notion and what it implies when creating a new policy agenda in the region, as previously outlined in working papers of the Regional Conference on Social Development (ECLAC, 2016a, 2016b, 2017b).

A. Social development: conceptual bases

Social development has been an issue of key concern since the creation of the United Nations, and, as such, permeates the latter's founding instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations, 1966a). Its conceptual discussion has been linked constantly to the notions of well-being and improvement of people's quality of life. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that the satisfaction of economic, social and cultural rights is essential for human dignity and free development of personality; and it establishes the rights to social security, to work and to an adequate standard of living as part of the pillars of development thus understood. The Declaration also affirms the shared desire among countries to promote social progress and raise the standard of living of the citizenry in freedom. Likewise, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights defines a group of rights that are fundamental for the notion of social development: the right to work;[1] to social security including social insurance; to protection and assistance for the family,

[1] The Covenant explicitly recognizes "[…] the right to work, which includes the right of everyone to the opportunity to gain his living by work which he freely chooses or accepts […]", seeking to ensure "[…] full and productive employment under conditions safeguarding fundamental political and economic freedoms to the individual" (United Nations, 1966a).

including the protection of mothers, and protection of children and young people from economic and social exploitation and child labour; to an adequate standard of living, including access to adequate food, housing and clothing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions; to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; and to education and culture. The Covenant states that such rights must be respected, protected and promoted by the States and implemented progressively and without discrimination.

In a later formulation, the Declaration on Social Progress and Development adopted by the General Assembly in its twenty-fourth session in 1969, explicitly addresses these notions and states that social progress and development "… should aim at the continuous raising of the material and spiritual standards of living of all members of society, with respect for and in compliance with human rights and fundamental freedoms […]" (United Nations, 1969). In addition, this Declaration states that the elimination of all forms of inequality and the exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, without any discrimination, are part and parcel of achieving progress and social development.

Areas linked in this Declaration to the achievement of progress and social development include the right to work; the right to proper nutrition, including the eradication of hunger and malnutrition; the achievement of the highest standards of health, including access to health protection; the right to education; the elimination of poverty and all forms of discrimination and exploitation, considering "continuously rising living standards and the fair and equitable distribution of income;" universal access to culture, housing and social services; the provision of extensive social security systems and social assistance services; protection of the rights of mothers, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, including granting women pregnancy and maternity leave and allowances without the loss of employment or wages, and, more broadly, the protection of individual rights. This Declaration thus makes the role of social development highly visible in the broader development processes, describes the very close link that exists between the rights approach and development, emphasizes the reduction of inequality as an objective linked to social development and highlights the deep and necessary interaction between it and economic development.[2] Thus far it has been an integral expression of the role of social development in achieving broader objectives.

A second milestone in the evolution of the concept of social development was the discussion that took place during the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, in March 1995. This was the first time that governments had held a meeting at such a high political level to discuss social development issues. As indicated in the Summit's Programme of Action, "the ultimate goal of social development is to improve and enhance the quality of life of all people […]" (United Nations, 1995). The Copenhagen Declaration includes a definition of the principles of social development and its horizon. In paragraph 25, it states: "We Heads of State and Government are committed to a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility and cooperation, and full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people. Accordingly, we will give the highest priority in national, regional and international policies and actions to the promotion of social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition, based on full participation by all" United Nations, 1995).

[2] This idea was already present long ago in United Nations norms, particularly those of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which was founded in 1919 and, following the creation of the United Nations in 1945, became one of the latter's specialized agencies. According to Ramos (2009), the creation of the ILO, as part of the Treaty of Versailles which put an end to the First World War, expressed the notion that economic development should be accompanied by social development. The Organization's fundamental conviction is that universal and permanent peace can only be based on social justice, which presupposes the existence of employment opportunities and respect for rights at work. The creation of ILO was the outcome of diverse currents and actions of humanitarian, reformist and socialist thought in the nineteenth and early the twentieth centuries in Europe, where the trade competition between nations increased dramatically as a result of the advance of industrialization. Nonetheless, this process was not accompanied by an improvement in working conditions. On the contrary, by deconstructing previous modes of production, it also caused the disintegration of lifestyles for large swathes of the population, aggravating their poverty and creating severe social insecurity (Ramos, 2009). The Declaration of Philadelphia, approved by ILO in 1944, reiterates that permanent peace can only be based on social justice; and it establishes other fundamental ideas, including: that work should be a source of dignity; that labour is not a commodity; and that poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere. Its provisions go beyond the world of work, and state that "[...] all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex [...]" (ILO, 1944), have the right to "[...] pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, of economic security and equal opportunity [...]" (ILO, 1944). It also reiterates the need to reconcile economic and social objectives in the countries' development process, stating that "[...] all national and international policies and measures, in particular those of an economic and financial character, should be judged in this light and accepted only in so far as they may be held to promote and not to hinder [...]" (ILO, 1944) the fundamental objective of guaranteeing all human beings that right (Abramo, 2015).

As this article makes clear and is reinforced in the Programme of Action, achieving social development requires the materialization of a set of fundamental assumptions and principles, including the existence of democratic institutions, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and cultural diversity, as well as the full involvement of civil society.[3] This conception of social development implies the perspective of social inclusion, expressed in terms of the recognition of differences and social participation as preconditions for its achievement.

The Declaration particularly stresses the need to address social problems such as poverty, unemployment and social breakdown, addressing evils that are a source of social instability, including "… chronic hunger; malnutrition; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; foreign occupation; armed conflicts; illicit arms trafficking, terrorism, intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases" (United Nations, 1995).

The Copenhagen Declaration also lists ten commitments that serve as a guide for social development policies. These recognize that achieving social development requires an enabling environment at the economic, legal and political levels, both nationally and internationally. The key objectives on which these commitments are centred are the eradication of poverty and the promotion of full employment and social integration. The latter is understood in a broad sense, framed by fundamental principles for social development, and is reflected in the Declaration's fourth commitment: "We commit ourselves to promoting social integration by fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons." Other issues addressed in this list of commitments are gender equality and equity, universal and equitable access to quality education and primary health care in the face of structural inequalities, and the promotion of and respect for cultures. Also included are commitments related to the means of implementation in terms of increased and effective use of the resources allocated to social development and the strengthening of international cooperation (United Nations, 1995).

The Declaration considers the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) in an interconnected way.[4] Moreover, both the Declaration and the Programme of Action resulting from the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1995), view social development as being affected by the development of other complementary factors in its environment, such as the global terms of trade, market forces and growth patterns; democracy and its institutions, or problems linked to violence, crime and illegal drug trafficking. Social development is thus at the centre of a global agenda that transforms social, political and economic relations, a feature that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will emphasize later.

Another milestone in the debate on the domains of social development was the adoption and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), proclaimed by the Millennium Declaration in 2000. The eight MDGs and their corresponding targets constituted a roadmap for global development during the first 15 years of the millennium: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), achieve universal primary education (MDG 2), promote gender equality and empower women (MDG 3), reduce under-fives child mortality (MDG 4), improve maternal health (MDG 5), combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (MDG 6), ensure environmental sustainability MDG 7) and develop a global partnership for development (MDG 8). The social dimension was mainstreamed throughout these goals —particularly in the first six— through the sectoral and intersectoral actions to be undertaken by the States to achieve them.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development now offers a renewed framework for debate on social development, albeit building on the progress made with previous instruments. The social dimension of

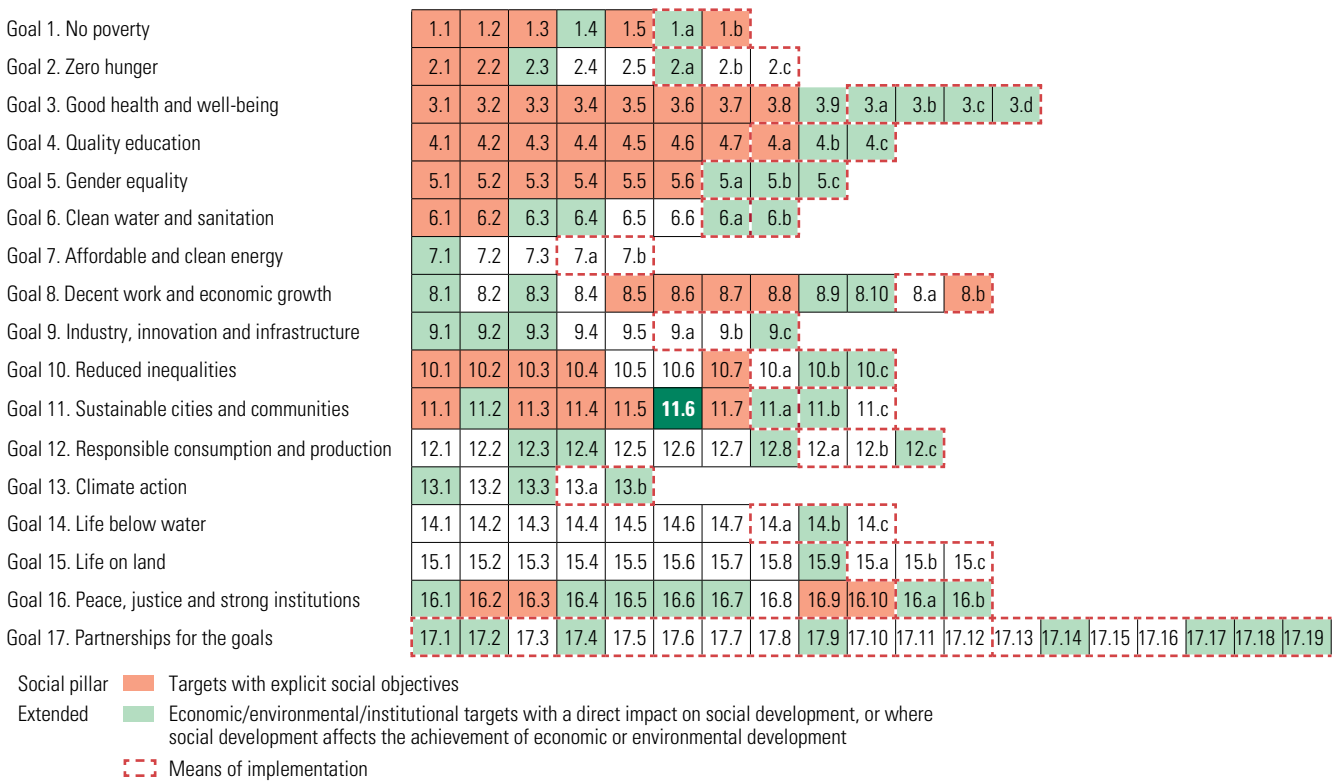
[3] As stated in paragraph 7 of the Programme of Action: "[…] access to resources and participation are essential for democracy, peaceful coexistence and social development. All members of a society should have the opportunity to exercise their right and responsibility to participate actively in the affairs of the community in which they live […]." (United Nations, 1995).

[4] The Declaration states: "We are deeply convinced that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development, which is the framework for our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people […]" (United Nations, 1995).

development is central to this Agenda, interacting with the economic and environmental dimensions. Its importance is reflected by the fact that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions —including extreme poverty— is recognized as the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement of sustainable development (United Nations, 2015a). At the same time, by including the explicit objective of reducing inequality within and between countries and proclaiming that no one should be left behind along the way, the Agenda recognizes the role of social inclusion and equality as fundamental pillars, which can only be achieved through a careful recognition of existing social development disparities. Although the elimination all forms of inequality had been included as an objective in previous instruments, such as the Declaration on Social Progress and Development and the Copenhagen Declaration, it is a central focus in the 2030 Agenda, which even specifies targets for reducing it.

The social pillar of the 2030 Agenda comprises a set of targets with explicit social aims. These are encompassed by Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 16[5] covering the areas of poverty and inequality, nutrition and food security, health, education, gender equality, access to water and sanitation, full and productive employment and decent work, the construction of sustainable and inclusive cities, and peace, justice and solid institutions for development. Nonetheless, as proposed by ECLAC (2017b), the "extended" social pillar is present throughout the 2030 Agenda, in its various thematic areas, and not just in the explicitly social goals and targets; emphasis is placed on its role as a precondition for sustainable development (see diagram I.1).

Diagram I.1
The extended social pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Sustainable Development Goals[a]



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Linkages between the social and production spheres: gaps, pillars and challenges* (LC/CDS.2/3), Santiago, 2017.
[a] Updated revision.

[5] The Sustainable Development Goals are listed in full in annex I.A1.

In short, successive international human rights instruments have always contained elements of social development, which have been expanded and deepened through time around the goal of achieving the highest possible level of personal well-being in a framework of freedom and dignity (ECLAC, 2016b). How social development is conceptualized is closely linked to the existence of key structural conditions for achieving it, including democratic social institutions and respect for the international human rights framework. The values of equality, solidarity and non-discrimination are imposed as guiding principles, from the standpoint of the indivisibility and interdependence of economic, social and cultural rights and between these and civil and political rights (ECLAC, 2000, 2016b). The notion of social citizenship, which assumes that people exercise these rights and actively share in the benefits of societal life and in the decisions affecting them, provides a framework from which to move towards the conception of inclusive social development.

B. Inclusive social development on the road to sustainable development

The concept of inclusion has been a permanent feature of debates on social development and it also appears in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is in essence a multidimensional concept (Szoke, 2009; Kantor, 2009), in that it refers to multiple manifestations and domains (inclusion can be social, economic, labour-market or educational, among others). Its contribution to public policy design stems from its potential to directly address the effects of social exclusion as an interlinked phenomenon, highlight the role of institutions in achieving this, and enhance the design and implementation of actions aimed at improving the population's quality of life, in other words social development. The concept of inclusion is frequently invoked but seldom defined. Hence the importance of reflecting conceptually on its scope and its potential to nurture inclusive social development.

ECLAC (2017b) has defined inclusion as the "realization of rights, social engagement, access to education, health and care, access to basic infrastructure services, and the availability of material resources such as income and housing. It requires a process of improving economic, social, cultural and political conditions for people's full participation in society, with both objective and subjective dimensions."[6] Moreover, a recent report issued by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) defines social inclusion "as the process of improving the terms of participation in society for people who are disadvantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status, through enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights" (United Nations, 2016b).

From this standpoint, inclusion seeks to promote full participation by all people and eliminate the multiple barriers that affect certain populations, groups or individuals in the exercise of their rights and access to well-being, decent work, economic progress, productive assets, political deliberation and decision making. It thus contributes to eradicating poverty, reducing inequalities and overcoming the region's longstanding culture of privilege, which entrenches social hierarchies and permeates social structures and institutions (ECLAC, 2016a, 2018b).

Social exclusion, meanwhile, refers to a systematic deprivation of resources and recognition that affects certain groups and makes it impossible for them to fully participate in economic, social, political and cultural life (United Nations, 2016b). It is thus associated with poverty,[7] lack of educational and employment opportunities and discrimination, among other social problems (Cheung, 2013; Kantor, 2009); and it has been defined as the breaking of social ties (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 1996). In short, it is expressed in access barriers to material resources, institutions, participation spaces, goods, rights or services that are fundamental for social life, as well as in the lack of agency or control over one's decisions (Levitas and others, 2007; United Nations, 2016b). It also implies the existence of mechanisms and institutions that contribute to exclusion from groups (De Haan, 1998); and it can be conceived as the non-realization of the social, civil and political rights of citizenship. It is a dynamic state and process with multiple causes and expressions (De Haan, 1998); it can be identified at the individual level, or it may affect entire communities (Szoke, 2009; Kantor, 2009).

6 On the basis of ECLAC (2008, 2009); United Nations (2016b); Levitas and others (2007).

7 The lack of one's own income is one of the circumstances that explain social exclusion. Nonetheless, various other obstacles and problems, which do not necessarily have an economic origin and cannot be addressed adequately through income transfers alone, also need to be considered (Whelan and Whelan, 1995).

Inclusion is considered a policy objective that seeks to respond to the challenges of exclusion, a deliberate process of embracing and accepting all people under equal conditions (United Nations, 2016b). At least five elements underlie this conception. First, social inclusion can display various gradations or intensities on a continuum spanning full inclusion to total exclusion. It is also a non-linear process in which setbacks may occur —for example, populations that were included at one point in time may suffer exclusion at times of crises or other events (Castel, 2014). Secondly, inclusion focuses on inequalities and their structuring axes, which in the region are expressed mainly in socioeconomic, gender, racial and ethnic inequalities and those linked to the life cycle and territory (ECLAC, 2016b), with a view to identifying and tackling the disparities of access, rights and participation that it is desired to resolve. In other words, the goal is to be included, under equal conditions and without anyone being left behind. Third, inclusion requires that specific features and differences be actively considered as a precondition for guaranteeing rights, citizen participation and recognition among equals in this participation. It is in this sense that the Regional Conference on Social Development has embraced the mandate to develop policies under the rationale of "universalism sensitive to differences",[8] which at the same time address the structuring axes of the region's social inequality matrix. Fourth, in view of the multidimensional nature of inclusion, policies need to act simultaneously and synergistically in different areas (De Haan, 1998). Social inclusion is conceived as a process that provides opportunities and resources for full participation in economic, social, political and cultural life (Commission of the European Communities, 2003, United Nations, 2016). Therefore, to achieve it, policies and mechanisms should be considered that guarantee inclusion and rights in each of these areas, encompassing economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. Mechanisms that can play an important role in the achievement of social inclusion include, as a priority, social policies and their institutions, for their ability to address and remedy the dynamics of welfare exclusion, quality employment and decent work —a field that is also closely linked to productive development policies, labour market regulation and active labour market policies— and policies on intercultural recognition and anti-discrimination, together with specific mechanisms that guarantee the rights of all citizens and their participation in their areas of interest.

Although the right to work is considered a key element of the concept of social inclusion in the international instruments reviewed in this chapter, social inclusion and labour market inclusion refer to different dimensions of the exercise of individual rights. Social inclusion means universal access to quality social services, while labour market inclusion involves access to decent work opportunities offering social security coverage (ECLAC, 2017b). Social inclusion and labour market inclusion are also strongly interlinked and exhibit a high degree of interdependence and mutual reinforcement: adequate nutrition, good health and quality education are fundamental for the optimal labour market inclusion of working-age individuals; and access to decent work facilitates and reinforces, and may even condition, the exercise of other rights related to social inclusion, such as guaranteeing proper nutrition and good school performance.

It is also important to identify the links between the concepts of inclusion and social cohesion, which, while not synonymous, are closely related. Social cohesion is a collective process that indicates the quality of coexistence (Forrest and Kearns, 2001) and refers to the disposition of people in a society to face different aspects of life collectively. It can be understood as the cross-cutting recognition of all actors and their role in society, rather than the generation of dense networks within subgroups or communities. Thus, social cohesion reflects the interaction between social development mechanisms (employment, educational systems, health and social protection systems; rights entitlement; and pro-equity, welfare and social protection policies), to which other mechanisms linked to the dimensions of social inclusion can be added, such as recognition, advocacy and participation spaces and the behaviours and value judgements of the members of society (ECLAC, 2007). As noted by Sojo (2017), the distinction between social cohesion and social inclusion is that the former incorporates the disposition and behaviour of the actors in question, including dimensions such as trust in institutions and a sense of belonging and solidarity, among others. Inclusion can thus boost social cohesion and help strengthen democracy and deepen citizenship.

8 See Habermas (1998) cited in ECLAC (2016b), and Hopenhayn (2001).

Linking the concepts of social development and social inclusion makes it possible to propose certain dimensions and characteristics of inclusive social development, which, if achieved in the region, should make it possible to close gaps and reduce structural inequalities to move towards sustainable development with equality as the horizon.

Firstly, inclusive social development refers to access for all citizens to levels of well-being that enable them to exercise their economic, social and cultural rights, continuously improve their quality of life and develop their individual and collective capacities and interests. As can be seen from the definitions of social development discussed above, well-being requires positive actions to guarantee health, education, decent housing and basic services (access to water and sanitation, energy and information and communication technologies), with due attention to quality; decent work; the social protection necessary for an adequate standard of living, including sufficient income; food and nutrition security, and other dimensions, such as transport, clothing and citizen security. The State has an inescapable and crucial role in this architecture of well-being. As noted above, the region displays gaps in these areas, so social policies have a key part to play in each of them.

These areas, included in a policy agenda that can be taken forward by social cabinets, ministries or secretariats of social development and related entities in the region, are organized around the strategic focus of social protection throughout the life cycle. Comprehensive social protection systems are understood as the set of policies aimed at ensuring sufficient well-being to achieve and sustain an adequate standard of living for personal development; provide mechanisms to protect against situations in which the capacity to generate autonomous income declines; facilitate access to social services, social promotion policies and care policies; and promote decent work. These systems include a contributory and a non-contributory component (security and assistance), labour market regulation and care systems (Cecchini and Martínez, 2011).

Secondly, inclusive social development must specifically address the access gaps in each of these dimensions and, therefore, respond to social inequalities and axes that structure them. A careful analysis of inequalities, aligned with fulfilment of the principle of equality and non-discrimination and a rights-based approach, requires effective identification of the groups that suffer exclusion in each of these areas. This gaps analysis should also be performed from the standpoint of the quality of the services accessed, with a view to reducing inequalities within each of these dimensions. It is a matter of addressing social exclusion and, simultaneously, as indicated by Sen (2001), ensuring the inclusion of people and groups that are in unequal conditions or that have historically experienced these inequalities. This will allow for its adequate resolution through effective policies, including affirmative action where necessary and relevant.

Third, from the perspective of universalism sensitive to differences, inclusive social development should generate mechanisms that tend to transform policies and institutions and their environments, directly or indirectly eradicating discriminatory practices. At the same time, such policies should aim to recognize the identities and specific needs of populations historically affected by social exclusion and structural and institutional inequalities, ensuring full exercise of their rights. This demands social policies formulated with a rights-based approach and oriented towards universal coverage, but which, through targeting or affirmative action, make it possible to eliminate access barriers to social services and well-being (ECLAC, 2016a). For example, the prevailing gender inequalities demand the mainstreaming of gender equality in the different spheres of society, in institutions and, naturally, also in the design of public policies (ECLAC, 2016c), as well as the eradication of patriarchal biases that may persist in the operation of policies and shape social development models that lack the appropriate inclusive approach. As has been discussed in the context of the Regional Conference on Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean and mandated in its resolutions, and in order to guarantee the rights of all citizens, socioeconomic, gender, ethnic and racial, life cycle and territorial approaches that address the structuring axes of the social inequality matrix in the region need to be mainstreamed in social policies, along with their necessary interactions.

Fourth, this view of inclusive social development should consider strengthening citizenship not only in terms of guaranteeing rights, but also in terms of the possibility of exercising their agency and participating actively in the central spheres of society. Social participation is, therefore, one of the fundamental vehicles for implementing an inclusive social development agenda. Other means of implementation can be added to

participation that have already been defined by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and by the set of regional and subregional agreements on social development (see chapter III). These include the framework of social institutions, policy financing and regional and international cooperation, including South-South cooperation, among others.

Lastly, in keeping with the sustainable development perspective, achieving inclusive social development requires, firstly, synergy with the economic and environmental dimensions, which means increasing cross-sectoral interaction within States;[9] and, secondly, the identification of critical blockages and measures that can help achieve inclusive social development in an institutionally viable and efficient and effective manner, as will be seen in the next chapter. These elements will help guide the definition of the objectives and principles of an agenda of the type being proposed, and also make it convergent with the broader objectives of sustainable development.

In short, the current social and economic context features persistent critical blockages and new challenges, along with social policy approaches being promoted at a global and regional level (a rights-based approach founded on a universalism that is sensitive to differences, addressing inequalities and their structuring axes, recognition with participation and sustainable development). Against this backdrop, it is proposed to make social protection systems and their institutional framework a pillar of public policy for achieving the objectives and priorities to be promoted under the regional agenda for inclusive social development, and thus enable the region to progress inclusive social development in its different dimensions.

9 In this connection, for example, ILO (2014a) has indicated that: "Inclusive and sustainable development requires economic growth to be managed in order to generate decent work, in other words productive, quality work that is formalized and socially protected, and which makes it possible to overcome poverty and inequality and open up opportunities for the region to progress."

Annex I.A1
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals defined by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015) are the following:

Goal 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goal 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

CHAPTER

II

Critical obstacles to inclusive social development

A. The persistence of poverty and vulnerability to poverty as inescapable challenges for sustainable development
B. Inequalities: unfair and inefficient
C. Safeguarding rights and boosting human capabilities throughout the life cycle in order to forge sustainable development: a still distant imperative
D. Promoting productive and quality employment and decent work: a key to inclusive social development
E. The broken promise of universal access to social protection
F. The work in progress of social institutional frameworks
G. Social investment in the region: unequal and insufficient
H. Newly emerging critical obstacles
I. Final reflections

Chapter I describes how the concept of social development has evolved and propounds the idea that inclusive social development is geared towards consolidating States that provide full guarantees for the exercise of people's economic, social and cultural rights; foster the active participation and representation of citizens for realizing them; and strive for equality for all, from a perspective of universalism sensitive to difference with a rights-based, gender, territorial, life cycle, ethnic and racial approach. Advancing along that road towards inclusive social development necessarily involves addressing the gaps that impede or hinder access to an adequate standard of living, including housing, food and basic care and services; high-quality education and health; decent work; social security; and opportunities for people to participate and have a real impact in the various spheres of social development. For that, it is vital to tackle each of the many elements that together comprise the matrix of social inequality in the region, that impinge directly on those gaps and are manifested in a whole range of both material and symbolic impediments. Social policies in general, and social protection systems in particular, have a key part to play in closing those gaps and mitigating the social footprint of the current development model by guaranteeing rights for all, leaving no one behind.

This chapter analyses some key aspects of the critical obstacles resulting in the emergence and persistence of the gaps thwarting achievement of inclusive social development. The obstacles examined are: the poverty and vulnerability to poverty still so deeply rooted in the region; social inequality and its manifestation in the culture of privilege; the lack of good-quality and productive jobs and shortage of decent work for much of the population; still partial and unequal access to social protection and to key policies for human capacity-building; a social institutional framework still in the making; limited social investment; and a set of emergent challenges, the starkest of which are violence, increasing exposure to disasters, looming changes in the world of work, migration and demographic, epidemiological and nutritional transitions. This chapter stresses that, while undeniable progress has been made in various spheres of social development, considerable challenges remain. Moreover, these critical obstacles are interrelated so that combined actions focusing on those priority areas are needed. A regional agenda for inclusive social development will need to accord those areas priority as a means to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the region.

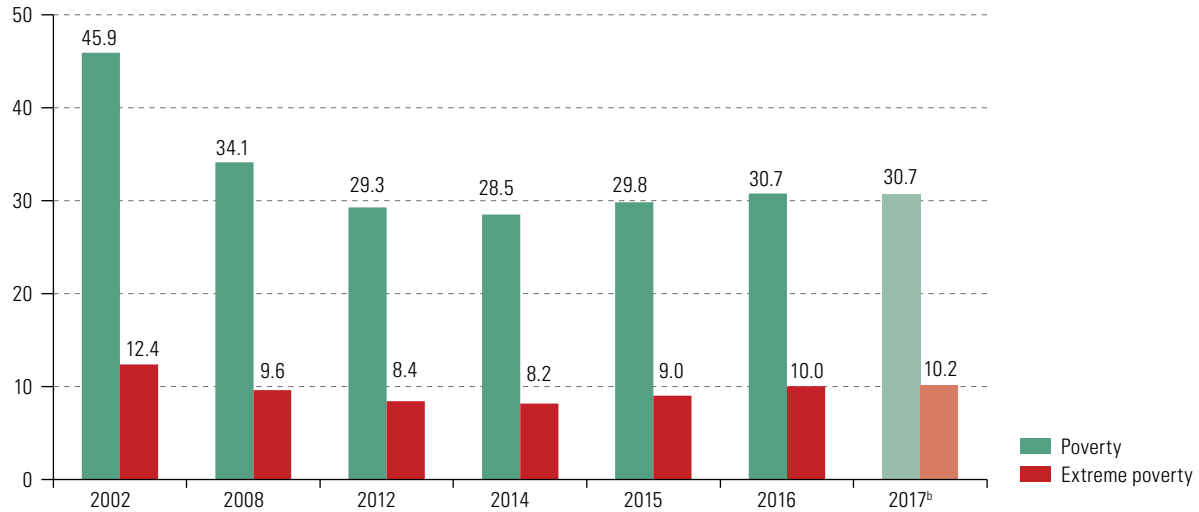
A. The persistence of poverty and vulnerability to poverty as inescapable challenges for sustainable development

As the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and a prerequisite for sustainable development. From a multidimensional perspective, poverty denies people options, opportunities and the very possibility of participating effectively in society and it is one of the clearest manifestations of violation of rights. It restricts the development of people's capacities to reach their full potential and achieve an adequate standard of living. Thus, poverty constitutes an obstacle to sustainable development; eradicating it is consequently a precondition for achieving sustainable development.

In Latin America, as measured by income, both poverty and extreme poverty declined significantly between the early 2000s and 2014 (see figure II.1). The percentage of the population living in poverty fell from 45.9% to 28.5%, a decline of 17.4 percentage points; while extreme poverty fell from 12.4% to 8.2%, a decline of 4.2 percentage points. These positive developments have to do with the economic growth associated with higher prices for raw materials —the commodities boom (despite the 2008-2009 crisis)—, the demographic dividend, stronger participation by women in the workforce, the expansion of fiscal space and the adoption of countercyclical policies in several countries in the region precisely in order to confront the crisis. However, they cannot be explained without other key factors: a political context in which the reduction of poverty and

inequality and the promotion of social inclusion have been afforded unprecedented priority in many countries of the region; in which governments have expanded their commitment to a rights-based agenda; and in which, as a result, active policies are pursued in the social[1] and labour market[2] spheres (ECLAC, 2016b).

Figure II.1
Latin America (18 countries[a]): poverty and extreme poverty rates, 2002-2017
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2017* (LC/PUB.2018/1-P), Santiago, 2018.
[a] Weighted average for the following countries: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
[b] The figure for 2017 is a projection.

In 2015 and 2016, poverty and extreme poverty rates increased again, albeit with significant differences from one country to another. ECLAC estimates that, in 2016, 186 million people were living in poverty and 61 million in extreme poverty (ECLAC, 2018a). This scenario impacts inclusive social development and the policies needed to achieve it in at least two ways: on the one hand, it drives home the need to recognize the heterogeneity of the dynamics of poverty in different countries and the need to pursue strategies tailored to each context; on the other, it points to the compelling need to strengthen institutions and pursue active social and fiscal policies geared towards protection and promotion, distribution and redistribution, in order to keep up —or revive, as the case may be— poverty reduction efforts.

Despite the diversity of circumstances and levels of poverty from one country to another, the countries of the region have traits in common, in which the main structural features of social inequality intertwine and reinforce one another (ECLAC, 2016c). Identifying them is therefore crucial for achieving inclusive social development through relevant and effective policies. Thus, poverty bears the face of a woman or a child; and its incidence is higher among indigenous peoples, the Afrodescendent population and in rural areas. For instance, in 2016, children and adolescents under the age of 15 accounted for 25% of the population of Latin America, 38% of the population living in poverty and 42% of the population living in extreme poverty. This situation is starker still when the ethnic and racial dimension is included. For example, a markedly higher percentage of indigenous children are in the lowest income quintile, compared to non-indigenous children. Roughly 50% of

1 Such as policies for transferring income to households, expanding contributory and non-contributory social protection and access to education, health care, housing and basic services, in addition to affirmative action policies on behalf of sectors excluded or discriminated against, such as women, indigenous peoples and persons of African descent (ECLAC, 2016a).
2 Such as increases in the minimum wage, promotion of formal sector employment, the establishment of job protection mechanisms, efforts to combat unacceptable forms of labour, such as child labour and forced labour, and the strengthening of labour-related institutions, such as workplace inspections, collective bargaining and the boosting of social dialogue processes and bodies (ECLAC, 2016a).

indigenous children aged 0–4 and 5–9 years of age are in the first income quintile, compared with less than one third of non-indigenous children (ECLAC, 2017a). Experiencing poverty in childhood not only violates the rights of children and adolescents; it also curtails their future exercise of rights, with deleterious social and economic consequences for society as a whole.

A key factor to take into account when crafting poverty eradication policies is the importance of a comprehensive perspective, coordinated horizontally and vertically with long-run policies offering permanent guarantees of social protection. This is because poverty has its own dynamics and there is a risk of sinking back into it. The evidence on vulnerability to poverty is conclusive. When the population is divided into four possible strata: actually living in extreme poverty or highly vulnerable to it (income of up to 0.6 poverty lines); poor or highly vulnerable to poverty (income between 0.6 and 1.2 poverty lines); vulnerable to poverty (income between 1.2 and 1.8 poverty lines); and not vulnerable to poverty (income above 1.8 poverty lines), what transpires, on the basis of data for 2013, is that less than half the regional population (49.1%) is free from vulnerability to poverty. Vulnerability to poverty is worse among indigenous peoples and Afrodescendants: only one third of this segment appears not vulnerable to poverty (ECLAC, 2016b).

B. Inequalities: unfair and inefficient

Inequality is a historically and structurally embedded feature of Latin American and Caribbean societies and it constitutes a major obstacle to the full exercise of rights and to inclusive social development. Moreover, as ECLAC points out in *The Inefficiency of Inequality*, the position document presented at the Commission's thirty-seventh session, inequality in all its manifestations not only affects the social component of development; it also hampers its economic and environmental dimensions and thus constitutes an obstacle to sustainable development as a whole (ECLAC, 2018b). Just as social issues are not confined to the social sphere, economic issues are played out in a much wider field than the economy: social development is a necessary condition for economic growth and protection of the environment. Consequently, substantially reducing all forms of inequality is not an effort that only economically developed countries can indulge in once they have achieved high income levels. On the contrary, all countries, and especially those with greater levels of inequality, must take steps to reduce it, not just as a moral imperative, but as an investment strategy for increasing productivity and moving towards integrated and sustainable development (ECLAC, 2018b).

Disparities in income distribution are a core dimension in the analysis of inequality and, in the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, they are closely associated with the structural heterogeneity of the production matrix, as ECLAC has pointed out (ECLAC, 2010a, 2014a, 2014e, 2016c and 2018b). Despite the improvement in the distribution of income since the early 2000s in Latin America,[3] since 2014 the pace of that improvement has declined and both income and wealth are still highly concentrated, conspiring against the expansion of citizenship, the exercise of rights and democratic governance (ECLAC, 2016a).The region is also characterized by its low taxation rates, a regressive tax structure, and high rates of tax evasion and avoidance.[4]

Nevertheless, it is also increasingly acknowledged that inequality is not a matter solely of the economic sphere or production resources (income, property, financial and productive assets), but also includes inequality in the exercise of rights, capacities, autonomy and recognition (ECLAC, 2014a; 2016a).

Based on this broad concept of inequality and on the need to deepen knowledge of the numerous ways in which it is manifested and reproduced, and with a view to improving the design and implementation of

[3] The reduction of inequality in income distribution in that period is associated with greater growth of incomes in the low part of the distribution, i.e. a relative increase in incomes in the first quintile greater than that in the fifth quintile, associated mainly with income from paid work (the principal source of income for households), be it in the form of wages or income from independent work. Between 2008 and 2015, for example, for 14 countries in Latin America, those variations were, respectively, 3% and 2.8% per year for the first quintile and 2.3% and -0.3% per year in the fifth quintile. In the same period, there was also a major (6.4%) increase in income from (contributory and non-contributory) pensions and other cash transfers (such as conditional cash transfers). In 2006–2014, the wage share of GDP grew in most countries, which suggests that the improvements in personal income distribution were partly linked to more equitable distribution of returns between capital and labour (ECLAC, 2017a).

[4] ECLAC estimates that tax evasion in 2015 amounted to approximately US$ 340 billion, equivalent to 6.7% of regional GDP (ECLAC, 2017b).

pro-equality public policies, it is now argued that, in addition to socioeconomic stratum, gender, ethnic, racial and territorial inequalities[5] and those related to the different stages in a person's life cycle form the axes that structure the social inequality matrix in Latin America. That matrix is rooted in a highly segmented and poorly diversified production matrix and in a culture of privilege that has historically been a hallmark of Latin American and Caribbean societies (ECLAC, 2016a; 2017b). As ECLAC points out (2016a, p. 16): "What gives these axes the power to structure social inequalities is their constitutive and determining weight in the process of producing and reproducing social relations and people's experiences; or, in other words, their impact on the depth of inequalities and their reproduction in different areas of development and the exercise of rights." These factors permeate access to the various spheres in which rights are exercised, including the whole set of social policies and services that constitute inclusive social development and well-being (see table II.1). It is precisely the inequality in access to those rights and services and the social exclusion processes associated with it that inclusive social development seeks to combat.

Table II.1
The social inequality matrix in Latin America

Theoretical positions	Social inequality matrix	
	Axes around which inequality is structured	Spheres in which rights are impacted
– Structural heterogeneity (production matrix) – Culture of privilege – The concept of equality: - Equal means (income and production resources) - Equal rights - Equal capacities - Autonomy and reciprocal recognition	– Socioeconomic level – Gender – Race and ethnicity – Age – Territory Other: – Disability – Migratory status – Sexual orientation and gender identity	– Income – Work and employment – Social protection and care – Education – Health and nutrition – Basic services (water, sanitation, electricity, housing, transportation, information and communication technologies) – Public safety and a life free from violence – Participation and decision-making

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of *The Inefficiency of Inequality* (LC/SES.37/3-P), Santiago, 2018; *Inclusive social development: the next generation of policies for overcoming poverty and reducing inequality in Latin America and the Caribbean* (LC.L/4056/Rev.1), Santiago, 2016; *Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future* (LC/G.2639), Santiago, 2014; *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2011* (LC/G.2514-P), Santiago, 2012, and *Time for Equality: Closing Gaps, Opening Trails* (LC/G.2432(SES.33/3)), Santiago, 2010.

The inequalities relating to each of these axes intersect and heighten one another, accumulate and concatenate through the different stages of the life cycle, creating a complex system of social relations in which those multiple inequalities and the related discriminatory processes manifest themselves as disparities in autonomy, well-being and empowerment, in unequal treatment and as pronounced differences in the exercise of rights, capacity and skills-building, and enjoyment of opportunities (ECLAC, 2016a).

The structure of these intersecting axes of inequality is also permeated by deeply ingrained sociocultural patterns. Axes and patterns together serve as a bedrock for the region's social inequality matrix: a culture of privilege, feeding off a violent patriarchal culture and associated with racism and stereotypes based on social class, age and place of residence.

The culture of privilege, inherited from colonial times, is embedded in the region's history. It is a culture that normalizes social hierarchies and highly unequal access to the fruits of progress, political deliberation and production assets: a culture that is tacitly accepted by both the groups that benefit from it and those that are excluded (ECLAC, 2018b). The culture of privilege has three basic features: (i) the normalization of difference as inequality; (ii) the establishment and perpetuation of hierarchies by groups that, far from being impartial, are the very groups appropriating the benefits; and (iii) the propagation of these hierarchies through social structures and institutions (ECLAC, 2018b). A key ingredient for perpetuating the culture of privilege is the concentration of decision-making power,[6] which is closely linked to socioeconomic inequalities among citizens.

[5] Territory as a structural factor in social inequality can be analysed by distinguishing rural from urban areas, but there are also other manifestations of "territorial" inequality: for example, between regions within a country, between different administrative divisions, such as provinces and departments, and inequalities within urban areas generated by clear-cut residential segregation practices. Finally, migrant status, too, especially that of irregular migrants, is shaped by territory in two senses: the implications of coming from a territory with one set of structural axes and another alien territory of destination with different risks and opportunities.

[6] This can take various forms, including concentrated ownership of mass media.

This highlights the link between democratic participation, the elimination of social inequalities, the economic development model and inclusive social development. Political participation is linked to equality in that it impacts the decision-making processes that determine the allocation and distribution of social, economic, political and cultural assets. From that angle, participation is not just a fundamental right and a key dimension for social inclusion, but also a highly important mechanism for dismantling the culture of privilege, strengthening democracy and transitioning to egalitarian societies.

Advancing down the path to inclusive social development will require new coalitions, partnerships and compacts. It will require including traditionally excluded actors to enable them to contribute new and innovative ideas both within each of the countries of the region and in relations between and among them (in the various bilateral, subregional and regional bodies that either already exist or may yet be constituted), if a just and sustainable future is to be feasible, with no one left behind. The participation of citizens and of civil society organizations is necessarily a part of this process: inclusive social development with the aim of equality cannot be achieved without the commitment and participation of all.

C. Safeguarding rights and boosting human capabilities throughout the life cycle in order to forge sustainable development: a still distant imperative

A resolute effort to eradicate poverty under an inclusive social development model also entails confronting its non-monetary facets, especially those that condition people's chances of breaking the vicious circle of poverty and pursuing social mobility. Thus, special heed must be paid to developing human capacity in the broad sense of that whole set of abilities, knowledge and skills that individuals acquire that enable them to pursue goals in life they deem worthwhile, in terms of education, health and nutrition and access to basic services.

ECLAC has always viewed education as a key link in a chain of factors helping to reconcile growth, equality and participation in society. It has become particularly important in recent years, as a key axis in the equality paradigm, both in its own sphere, as a means to narrow educational divides and ensure full exercise of the right to education, and also from a general perspective, given the central role it plays in bringing about structural change. In practice, that role boils down to building cross-cutting capacities while at the same time catering to the new demands that come with today's global and quicker pace of technological change. The close tie between education and present and future opportunities for access and improvement in social, economic, labour and cultural conditions makes education one of the main critical areas for reducing inequalities and progressing towards inclusive social development.

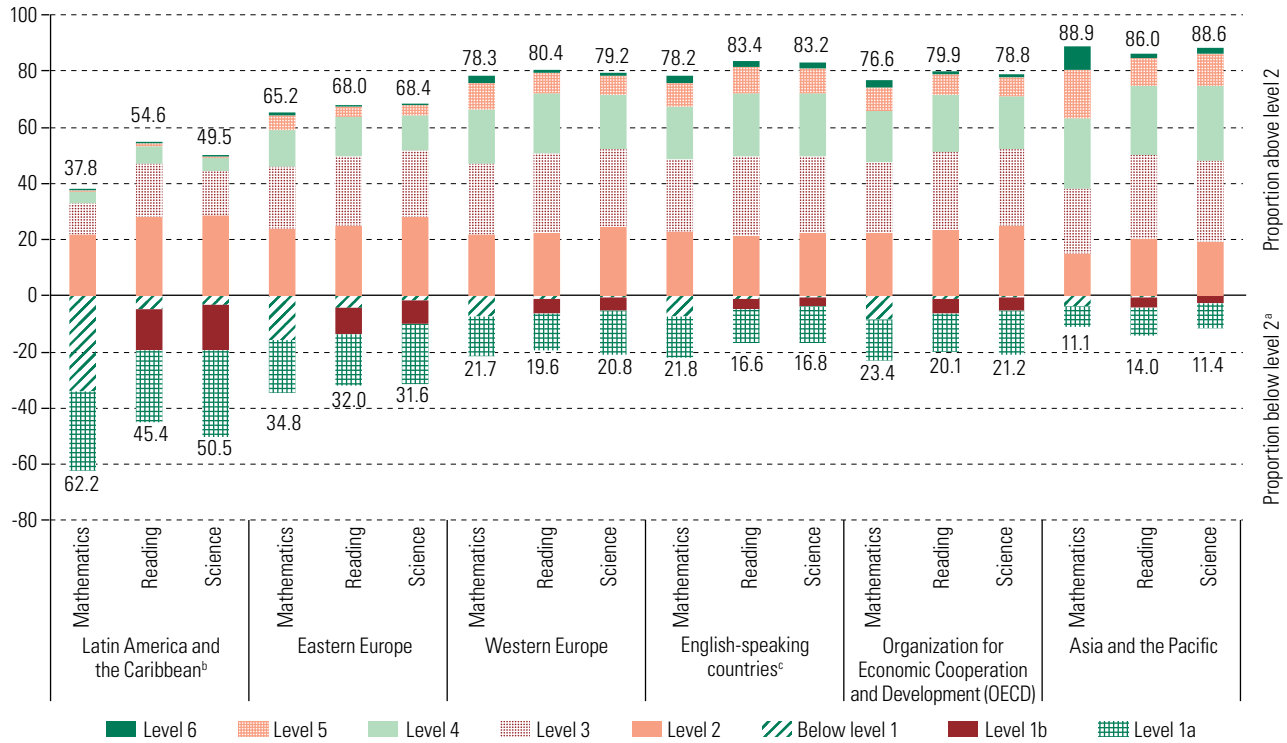
In an increasingly complex and globalized society, greater skills are needed to achieve social, work-place, and productive inclusion. The educational scenario in many respects reflects the way in which inequality tends to reproduce itself. Educational systems have expanded on a massive, but starkly segmented, scale. Despite the progress made, there are still major issues of access: approximately 40% of young people aged 20 to 24 have failed to complete secondary school and further education is still the preserve of an elite (roughly 10% of those aged between 25 and 29 have completed tertiary education) (ECLAC, 2016b; Trucco and Ullmann, 2015). The main problem in many countries is not only exclusion from the educational system. Rather, it stems from social and educational segmentation and inclusion in an unequal educational system, in which the retention rate for vulnerable groups and the likelihood of their receiving an adequate level of education and benefits are lower. This is exacerbated by the homogeneous "supply" of education unable to cater to heterogeneous and specific needs that are not addressed by the educational system.

Overall, the region is heterogeneous in that there are still areas and countries that need to redouble efforts to broaden coverage and access to primary and secondary education. Completion of secondary school is considered a minimum requirement for ensuring a future free from poverty. In countries with more marked urban-rural and ethnic or racial divides, in which the combination of such gaps exacerbates socioeconomic and

gender inequalities,[7] much still needs to be done to narrow the access and completion gap in education. The reasons for dropping out of school differ according to circumstances, and public policy strategies need to take such nuances into account. From an intergenerational perspective, investment in early childhood education is also key to reducing inequality. Preschool education plays a central role in the delivery of basic care for children, especially when they come from families living in vulnerable socioeconomic circumstances (ECLAC, 2017b).

However, it is not just the number of years of schooling that counts. What is learned and how it is learned matter, too. Despite the progress made in international evaluations using standardized tests in recent decades, the results for the region for 2015 show a very high percentage of students with precarious performance levels in all the subjects assessed by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (see figure II.2). For instance, the percentage of 15-year-olds scoring less than 2 (the lowest level deemed adequate) was 62.2% in mathematics, almost three times the average found in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In reading, the percentage was 45.4% and in science it was over 50%. The gaps are even wider when gender and ethnic differences are considered (UNESCO, 2016 and 2017a).

Figure II.2
Student performance in PISA tests by region and competence (mathematics, reading and science), 2015
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015.

[a] Students at levels below 2 (level 1a, level 1b and below level 1) have not attained the basic level of competence expected.

[b] Latin American and the Caribbean includes eight countries: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay.

[c] The "English-speaking countries" category includes Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States

Another key factor in helping people achieve their full potential and thereby contributing to sustainable and equitable development is guaranteeing them access to high-quality health care and sufficient and healthy nutrition, the basic requirements for the development of the human capacities needed to overcome poverty

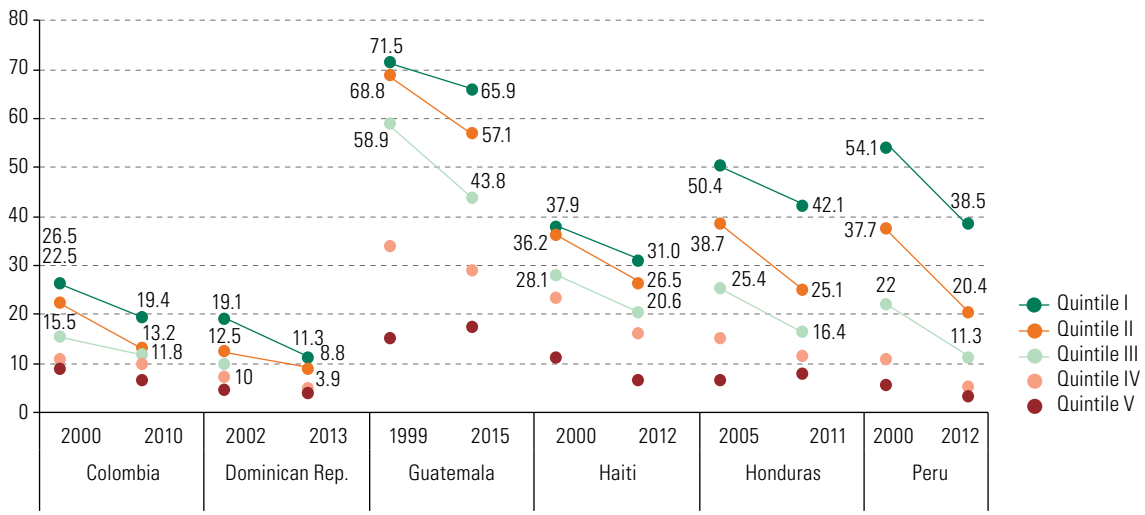
[7] *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2016* (ECLAC, 2017a) showed a positive trend with respect to completion of secondary school in five countries in the region: Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, between 2002 and 2014. Nevertheless, ethnic gaps are still very pronounced. Whereas nearly 70% of non-indigenous youths aged between ages 20 and 24 have completed secondary school only about 50% of indigenous youths have done so.

and reduce inequalities. Attending and doing well at school, performing well at work and looking after and feeding a family all require an appropriate level of health and nutrition. Health likewise has a key part to play in poverty reduction, because good health enhances a worker's productivity, educational achievements and income (ECLAC, 2018b).

In recent decades, Latin America and the Caribbean have significantly improved a number of health indicators, with respect to both access and outcomes, but still face challenges, especially sharp inequality in the health of certain segments of the population. Those inequalities begin at birth and are reinforced by the intersection of the various axes of the social inequality matrix: socioeconomic status, gender, ethnic or racial status, and place of residence.[8]

Health-related inequalities accumulate throughout a person's life and prevent the exercise of rights and full participation in all spheres of society. For that reason, the early stages of the life cycle (childhood, adolescence and youth) are especially critical for shaping future health. Chronic malnutrition (stunting in children under 5 years of age), for example, has lasting effects on those who suffer it. In recent decades, despite improvements in the region, this indicator still varies sharply according to economic stratum and, in some countries, progress was more marked in the medium-income quintiles, not among the poorest (see figure II.3). There are also clear divides, especially in countries with high levels of chronic malnutrition, between children in poor households and those in better-off households.

Figure II.3
Latin America and the Caribbean (6 countries): changes in chronic malnutrition in children under age 5 by wealth quintile, around 2000 and 2010
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) for the countries and years indicated.

Also notable in the region is the fact that, even though eradicating undernutrition is still a challenge, it is accompanied by a marked increase in overweight and obesity rates. This double burden of malnutrition affects not just individuals but society as a whole and takes its toll on the economies of the countries in the region, as shown by studies conducted by ECLAC and the World Food Programme (WFP) (Martínez and Fernández, 2007 and 2009; Fernández and others, 2017).

Health and nutrition interventions in the early stages of the life cycle can boost cognitive and emotional development and foster the adoption of good habits conducive to long-term health. While it is true that a person's health needs and challenges change over the various stages of the life cycle, health is shaped to a

[8] Disability, migration status, sexual orientation and gender identity also have a significant impact on inequality.

large extent by the quality of earlier stages. That being so, health policies need to espouse a life cycle approach with respect to prevention, early detection and timely treatment, so as to trigger virtuous circles fostering sound habits in health and nutrition.

One way to reduce inequalities in this sphere and progress towards full enjoyment of the right to health is to achieve universal access to good-quality health care. Some countries in the region have taken significant strides in that direction. Nevertheless, even in countries in which universal coverage is a legal requirement, there are a number of economic, geographical, cultural, linguistic, attitudinal and other barriers that combine to restrict effective access to health care. Given the multiple inequalities typical of Latin American and Caribbean societies, progress towards universal health-care coverage needs to be accompanied by sensitivity to difference. In other words, rights-based universal policies are needed that can be supplemented by targeted, selective or affirmative action mechanisms to break down the barriers that have traditionally impeded access to health care for certain segments of the population.

D. Promoting productive and quality employment and decent work: a key to inclusive social development

Of all the spheres in society that generate, exacerbate or mitigate inequalities, the most crucial is the world of work. Consequently, it lies at the heart of inclusive social development. As ECLAC has stressed (2010a, 2014a, 2016c and 2017b), work is the master key to equality, personal development and economic growth. It is a key factor for social inclusion and a core mechanism for forging autonomy, personal dignity and a deeper sense of citizenship, provided that it is decent work, as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1999a)[9] and as reasserted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in Sustainable Development Goal 8: to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

Income derived from the labour market is the principal source of household income in the region.[10] Historically, it has been the link between a highly heterogeneous production apparatus with a preponderance of low-productivity sectors and high inequality in household income. However, more recently (especially between 2002 and 2014) it has played a major role in reducing poverty and inequality (ECLAC, 2016b, 2017a and 2017b). Nevertheless, there are still major shortfalls in Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to access to full and productive employment and to decent work that need to be overcome in order to really break the vicious circle of poverty and achieve full inclusion.

As noted earlier, the inequalities encountered in the region in terms of workers' incorporation into the labour market stem from the heterogeneity of the production structure and are associated with different levels of earnings, job quality and access to social protection. Those employed in low-productivity sectors earn less than half the amount earned by those employed in middle- and high-productivity sectors (ECLAC, 2018a) and major differences persist in the quality of employment. Despite an increase in the wage-earner rate in the region between 2002 and 2015 (from 59.7% to 64.5%), it remains highly unequal from one socioeconomic stratum

[9] The notion of decent work refers to promoting opportunities for men and women to have a productive and high-quality job in conditions that ensure freedom, equity, safety and human dignity. It is a multidimensional concept encompassing the quantitative and qualitative aspects of work. It proposes measures geared not only to the generation of jobs and to combating unemployment but also to doing away with jobs that pay so little that workers and their families cannot escape poverty, or that involve unhealthy, dangerous, unsafe or degrading activities and for that reason contribute to the perpetuation of poverty, inequality and social exclusion. It asserts the need for employment to come with social protection and full observance of labour rights, including the rights to representation, association, trade union organization and collective bargaining (ILO, 1999a; Rodgers, 2002; Abramo, 2015; ECLAC, 2016b).

[10] In 2013, earnings from work made up 80% of total household income, 74% of poor households' income and 64% of indigent households' income (ECLAC, 2016b).

to another: in the first income decile, a little over one third (37%) were wage-earners, while more than four fifths (82%) were wage-earners in the tenth decile (ECLAC, 2018a). High levels of informality also persist.[11]

Apart from socioeconomic inequalities, gender, race, ethnic, and life-cycle-related disparities can lead to major differences in terms of formal labour market access and participation (ECLAC, 2016b). The gender gap translates into the profound barriers that women face in the world of labour given the persistently unequal sexual division of labour, in which women perform most of the unpaid work. In addition, more women than men are employed in low-productivity sectors (78.1% as opposed to 55.5%, ECLAC, 2016d) and in several countries in the region women's participation in the workforce is half that of men's; only one in two working-age women in the region are employed or seeking employment (ECLAC, 2017a). It also transpires that adverse labour market conditions affect women worse than men. Thus, between 2015 and 2016 the urban unemployment rate increased on average by 0.5 percentage points, but that increase was 0.7 percentage points among women and 0.3 percentage points among men: a clear indication of the prevailing inequalities (ECLAC, 2017f). Nevertheless, some data are encouraging: women's participation in the workforce increased by 32.9% between 2002 and 2015: a larger increase than for men (22.2%) in the same period. The increase in the number of female wage-earners was also larger than for men (ECLAC, 2018a).

At the same time, several studies have shown that in Latin America unemployment hits the indigenous and Afrodescendent population hardest, especially women: another indication of the abovementioned intersection between the axes structuring the social inequality matrix. Based on population census data, the unemployment rate among the population of African descent is higher than that for other segments of the population in 10 of the 11 countries in which estimates could be made, the exception being the Plurinational State of Bolivia (ECLAC, 2017a). The intersection between racial and gender inequalities is evidenced by the fact that, in the countries in which estimates could be made, the unemployment rates for Afrodescendent women were higher than for Afrodescendent men. The same finding holds even when women's level of education is higher than men's (ECLAC, 2016b, 2017a, 2017g).

Young people's participation in the workforce is another cause for concern: youth unemployment rates exceed those for the population overall in all countries in the region. Once again, young people's difficulties in entering the labour market are exacerbated by the axes structuring social inequality: for instance, the youth unemployment rate in the upper income quintiles is three times lower than the rate for youth in the poorest quintiles (ECLAC, 2016b). The transition from school to labour market poses a major challenge for the youth population and highlights a series of obstacles relating to difficulty in completing the educational process and in acquiring the skills needed by the labour market and those related to care-giving, which falls disproportionately on women and frequently limits their access to the labour market. Thus, the segment of young people who are neither in education nor employment is one that gives special cause for concern. It was estimated that, in 2014, this group accounted for 27.9% of young women in urban areas in the region and 12.1% of the young men, while in rural areas the figures were 41.7% of young women and 9.5% of young men (ECLAC, 2017a).

Another consideration is the limitations of earnings for enabling people to achieve a decent standard of living. In 2016, only 31.4% of the economically active population aged 15 or more earned more than four times the poverty line, a level of income considered sufficient to keep a medium-sized family out of poverty as a basic standard of social inclusion. These averages mask the differences that exist with respect to other structural axes of social inequality. For example, when analysing differences between men and women, 36.1% of men are found to have income of more than four poverty lines, whereas only 25.3% of women reach that level (ECLAC, 2018a). Another measure of income inadequacy is the share of the workforce that earns less than the minimum wage. Once again, the data reflect intersection with the social inequality matrix. In 16 countries in the region, around 2014, a higher percentage of women than men earned less than the minimum wage in both urban and rural areas. The same was true of young people: 44% of the men and 52.4% of the women aged 15 to 24 earned less than the minimum wage (ECLAC, 2017a).

[11] Wage earner-employer relations are in principle regulated by the labour laws in the different countries and therefore tend to exhibit a higher level of formality with respect to contracts and social benefits. Nevertheless, high levels of informality may also be found even among wage-earners. According to *Social Panorama for Latin America, 2015*, an ECLAC publication, in 2013 42.8% of wage-earners had no contract of employment. According to the *2016 Labour Overview of Latin America and the Caribbean* (ILO, 2016), that percentage persisted at least until 2015 (ECLAC, 2018a).

Consequently, the region is a long way from having a labour market capable of generating full inclusion as an integral part of inclusive social development. A study conducted in 2017 (ECLAC, 2017b) also showed that in 2015 only just over half of all Latin American households had a member aged over 18 years who was employed and had access to social security (affiliation to a pension or health-care fund) or a member over 60 receiving a contributory pension. That meant that almost one in two households in Latin America lacks that minimum level of employment-based inclusion (current employment in the case of the active workforce or past employment in the case of retirees). This exclusion rate is higher when compounded with the various social inequality axes, hitting single-parent female-headed households in rural areas hardest, and depending on the ethnic or racial status of the head of household. For instance, only 21.7% of households with an indigenous head of household and 21.3% of households with an Afrodescendent head of household benefit from dual (social and employment-related) inclusion in eight countries for which the relevant data are available (ECLAC, 2017b).[12]

Finally, a warning is merited regarding one of the most blatant antitheses to decent work and one of the worst obstacles to inclusive social development: child labour. According to 2016 data, 10.7 million children and adolescents were performing child labour in Latin America: 5.3% of the regional population between the ages of 5 and 17 (ILO, 2017). Child labour is a serious violation of children's rights. It is both the product and the source of chains of inequality now and throughout the lives of its victims, impairing their educational and employment prospects and passing on those impairments to future generations. Children and adolescents who are victims of child labour see their opportunities for participation and achieving inclusive social development curtailed because child labour obstructs access to the basic services and rights needed for their all-round development and narrows their options for full participation, on an equal footing, in the various spheres of social life.

In short, the structure and dynamics of labour markets in the Latin American countries continue to be characterized by major shortfalls in their ability to generate productive and worthwhile jobs and decent work. Those shortfalls are associated with sharp inequalities based on gender, race, ethnicity, age and geography that prevent labour market participation from serving as a lever for development and a mechanism for inclusion. Overcoming those shortfalls is a priority for achieving inclusive social development.

E. The broken promise of universal access to social protection

Social protection is a right and, as a public policy, should guarantee a level of well-being that is sufficient to maintain a standard of living that enables people to develop their potential, facilitate access to social services and foster decent work (Cecchini and Martínez, 2011; Cecchini and others, 2015). Its components include non-contributory social protection (or social assistance), contributory social protection (or social security), labour market regulation and care policies. The benefits it provides may include cash transfers (conditional and non-conditional); social subsidies, scholarships; unemployment, invalidity and survivors' insurance; various kinds of social security instruments (including pensions); and care policies, including maternity, paternity and parental leave, as well as others. These policies fulfil a key function in the guarantees that States offer citizens to enable them to exercise the whole set of economic, social and cultural rights and achieve well-being, especially at times when the ability to generate income autonomously is limited; they are, therefore, a pivotal mechanism for inclusive social development. For that reason, and especially since the first decade of this century, the region has tended increasingly to formulate comprehensive social protection systems crafted with a rights-based approach, although there are still dual systems with non-integrated contributory and non-contributory components and although the actual ability of those systems to provide universal guarantees of protection remains limited.

[12] In the case of households with an indigenous head of household, a simple average was calculated for the following countries: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. In the case of households with an Afrodescendent head of household, a simple average was calculated for the following countries: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay.

Income transfer programmes and conditional transfer schemes, in particular, have been widely used in the region since the middle of the last decade as a non-contributory tool for reducing poverty (ECLAC, 2016b). A review of those programmes suggests that, despite their broad coverage —in 2016, 29 million households received such transfers in 20 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with an investment equivalent to 0.33% of regional GDP (ECLAC, 2017b)—, experience has been mixed, varying from one country to another and by no means encompassing the whole of the population living in poverty. Around 2015, the total number of people living in households receiving conditional cash transfers exceeded the number living in extreme poverty but accounted for only 73.6% of the total living in poverty (Cechinni and Atuesta, 2017). This does not necessarily mean that all those living in extreme poverty were covered; a more specific study would be needed to determine that. According to the most recent data,[13] moreover, the coverage achieved by these programmes has been tending to shrink, with a fall in the number of people participating since 2013 (Cechinni and Atuesta, 2017). This is worrisome, given the ongoing structural issues of poverty, inequality and exclusion in the region (ECLAC, 2017b).

The impact assessments conducted in the region indicate that, rather than overcoming poverty and inequality, these programmes have provided temporary relief. Therefore, in order to progress towards social and labour inclusion of the population, conditional cash transfer programmes need to be coordinated with universal policies for ensuring full access by citizens to education and health (ECLAC, 2016b), as well as to labour and productive inclusion programmes fostering decent work. While these latter programmes have been found to improve the labour indicators of those at greatest risk of exclusion (youth, women, persons living in poverty or who have low levels of education), they also pose challenges in terms of their design, implementation and planning that need to be overcome if they are to meet their objectives. For example, in some cases the scale or duration of the programme is insufficient to guarantee a significant or longer-term impact. This is compounded by their lack of coordination with other policies such as industrial and territorial development policies. More also needs to be done, in both design and implementation of programmes, to take into account the needs and characteristics of the target population; for example, by offering access to care services for the children of participants and proposing initiatives targeting, in particular, women, young people, indigenous peoples and the population of African descent, all of whom, as mentioned earlier, constitute a disproportionately high share of those living in poverty or vulnerable to poverty, informality and breach of their rights (ECLAC, 2017b; OAS/ECLAC/ILO, 2011). Mainstreaming an effective gender, ethnic and racial and territorial perspective in these policies and programmes is a still pending task.

In contributory social protection, pensions systems are vital for ensuring full exercise of the right to social security. Despite the increase in coverage of those systems between 2002 and 2005, when the share of the active workforce either contributing or affiliated to pension schemes rose from 38.0% to 50.3% and that of wage-earners from 53.9% to 64.7%, almost half the workforce is still not covered. Among non-wage workers, in 2015, fewer than 18% were contributors or affiliated to pension schemes, with differences between groups depending on the axes of the social inequality matrix. Young people show the largest affiliation deficits, to the detriment of their future pensions. Geographical disparities are also evident: whereas 55% of the employed urban workforce is affiliated to pension schemes, barely 22% of the workforce in rural areas is affiliated. In addition, 72% of the active workforce in the highest income decile is affiliated, compared to 9% in the first, or lowest, income decile (ECLAC, 2018a).

The divides and inequalities in affiliation are reflected in the risk of an unprotected old age for a significant portion of the population in the region. Around 2015, although 70.8% of persons over the age of 65 received some kind of (contributory or non-contributory) pension, only 49.5% of that age group in the first income quintile received pensions, whereas the figure for the quintile with the highest income was 76.6%: a gap of 27 percentage points (ECLAC, 2018a).

The expansion of coverage in access to pensions benefited from the growth of non-contributory pensions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of countries with non-contributory pensions increased from 8 in 1990 to 26 in 2016. Estimates for 2015 place the coverage of non-contributory pensions at 33.7% of the

[13] Preliminary data for 2016.

regional population.[14] Nevertheless, a major challenge is the sufficiency of these pensions. Around 2015, average monthly non-contributory pension amounts were invariably less than the minimum wage, while 40% of contributory pensions were also below that threshold. In most countries, the average monthly pension payments received by women were lower than those for men; the average pensions for those living in rural areas were less than half the pensions paid in urban areas; and for persons in the lowest-income quintile pension amounts were barely 10% of the pensions received by persons in the highest-income quintile (ECLAC, 2018a).

Lastly, special mention is merited by the role of care policies in connection with social protection systems. Care is an essential ingredient of the way societies operate, apart from being a fundamental right and a need at various stages in the life cycle. Given the persistent inequality in the sexual division of labour, the way care is organized in society exacerbates inequalities in the region because assigning responsibility for care to women restricts their labour market participation and status. Despite the importance of this social function, the gradual progress being made in the region as a whole is fragmented with respect to the consolidation of integrated care policies and systems guaranteeing the rights of those who require it and provide it and taking into account the time, resources, services and instruments needed to regulate and oversee it. For example, while childcare policies and services and care services for dependent older persons exist in all the region's countries, policies for unpaid caregivers are underdeveloped. The coverage of available services is also limited (Rico and Robles, 2016) and uneven. For instance, a study of the coverage of childcare centres for children up to 3 years of age in six countries in Latin America showed that around 2010 the figure ranged from 35% in Uruguay to 1% in Guatemala (Berlinski and Schady, 2015); similarly, preschool education attendance rates for children aged between 3 and 5 in eight Latin American countries[15] around 2014 ranged from 86% in Uruguay to 37.6% in Honduras, and averaged 64.8% (ECLAC, 2017b). The lack of these services directly impacts women's participation in the workforce and curtails the exercise of children's rights and, thus, their access to key resources for inclusive social development.

In short, regional data indicate that there is still a long way to go to achieve universal social protection, which is an imperative established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goal target 1.3: "Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable".

F. The work in progress of social institutional frameworks

Social institutions are fundamental for implementing the policies needed to progress towards attainment of inclusive social development and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. The discussion surrounding the institutional frameworks of social policy (in the broad sense of policies covering health, housing, education, labour and social protection) is well established and several studies have pointed to the importance of social policies and programmes being subject to explicit and transparent rules and standards recognized by the stakeholders, so as to maximize their contribution to the achievement of goals and the effective fulfilment of rights and, to the extent possible, to minimize private, political, or simply inefficient criteria in their use (Martínez, 2017).

ECLAC has examined the need to forge a solid institutional structure to support the rights-based approach in social policies. It has also stressed the need for high-quality policies, that is to say, policies that are effective, efficient, sustainable and transparent. Sound policies also require an institutional framework that provides continuity for policies and processes, but is also open to innovation to address new challenges and social needs (ECLAC, 2016b; Martínez 2017). Nevertheless, in Latin America and the Caribbean, there are particular challenges in each of the dimensions of social institutionality: the legal, juridical and normative dimension; the organizational dimension; the technical and operational dimension; and financing (ECLAC 2016b, Martínez, 2017).

[14] Based on administrative records and including coverage of participants aged 65 or over by the rural pensions system in Brazil (ECLAC, 2018a).
[15] Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay.

As regards the legal and normative dimension, many countries in the region are signatories to international human rights conventions, which provides a good basis for the formulation of human-rights-oriented social policies. However, accession to those treaties does not in itself guarantee that the necessary policies will in fact be developed. The level of compliance is low in terms of effective implementation and concrete achievements based on international and domestic rules and regulations. Thus, a legal and normative base needs to be consolidated to make social policy sustainable as State policy and to generate the broad consensus required to move towards more structural and longer-term objectives that transcend a particular government's term in office (Martínez, 2017).

With respect to the organizational dimension, the picture in the region is mixed. In recent years, a number of ministries specializing in social development have been created. However, not all of them are set up by law and they work alongside line ministries (such as ministries of health, labour and housing that are generally older and have more developed budgetary and personnel structures) and with a growing number of entities designed to promote the well-being and guarantee the rights of specific segments of the population (some of which, such as mechanisms for the advancement of women, also predate ministries of social development). This variety of organizational models in the region poses and renews an enormous challenge: to strengthen social policy coordination, linkages and integration. Given that poverty, inequality and inclusive social development are multidimensional phenomena, addressing them requires a coordinated, linked-up and integrated approach engaging a large number of government agencies and other actors involved in policy implementation.

As for the technical and operational dimension, heterogeneity at the subnational levels (in terms of material, human and financial resources, as well as technical capacity) is a challenge that has to be tackled, given that such aspects tend to be more precarious in areas further removed from central government. It is essential to enhance the quality of management between central, regional and local governments, focusing on those that are particularly weak and located in the poorest areas, and to develop opportunities for the participation of the populations targeted by policies and their organizations, as well as the participation of relevant private actors. The region falls short in terms of mechanisms for consultation and participation in public administration, to the detriment of relations between policymakers and target populations (ECLAC, 2016b). The challenge still remains of enhancing formal procedures for participation at every step from the establishment of plans through to the evaluation of outcomes. Another is to enhance the availability of reliable and timely information for decision-making (Martínez, 2017).

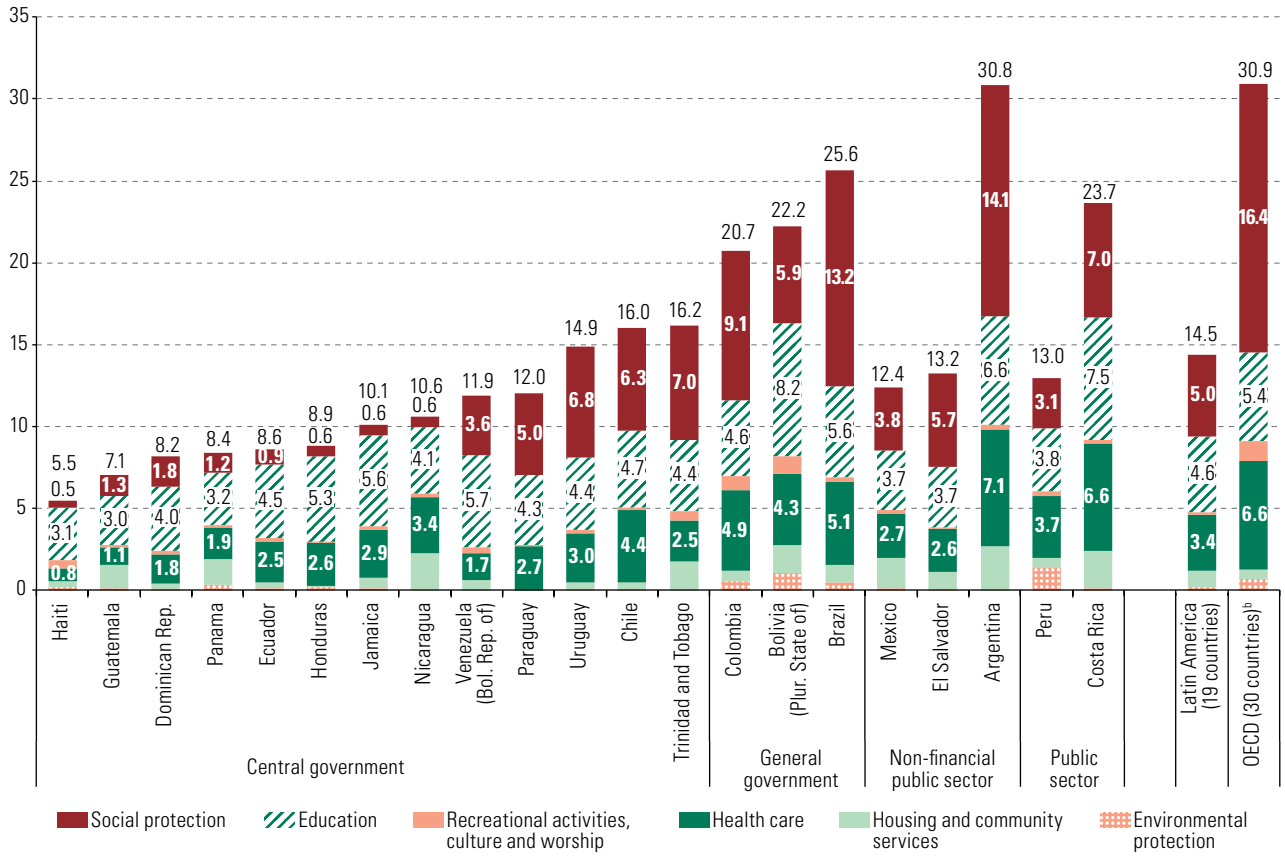
G. Social investment in the region: unequal and insufficient

Given the scarcity of resources, analysis of financing for social policy is fundamental for achieving inclusive social development. As ECLAC has pointed out (2016e and 2017a), social investment may also be regarded as one of the most important means of implementation for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals because it is crucial for achievements in access to basic services, such as sanitation, housing, education, health and social protection systems, areas in which the 2030 Agenda calls for progressing towards universal guaranteed access. The current situation with regard to levels of social investment in Latin America and the Caribbean is mixed: in 2015, social expenditure peaked at 14.5% of GDP as a simple average for the countries of Latin America (see figure II.4), equivalent to half the average for OECD countries, which amounted to 30.9% of GDP the same year. In terms of allocation of social investment by function, social protection, education and health were the top priorities (accounting for 5%, 4.6% and 3.4% of GDP, respectively).

In general, the countries with the greatest needs have the lowest service coverage and fewest resources per capita, and they assign them lower priority in their allocation of tax revenue. For example, Argentina allocates the equivalent of 7.1% of its GDP to health, whereas Haiti's allocation to health is equivalent to barely 0.8% of its GDP.

Finding sufficient resources to attend to the needs of high-quality social policy, by switching the notion of current expenditure for that of social investment and improving the way it is recorded and disclosed, with respect to both financing and execution, poses a fundamental challenge for the region. The sustainability of financing for social policies is another important aspect, a goal that can be achieved only through domestic resource mobilization through tax collection. Finally, and no less importantly, is the dependence of social spending on the economic cycle: full enjoyment of the rights to a quality education and to health care should not depend on ups and downs in the economy (ECLAC, 2016e; Tromben, 2016).

Figure II.4
Latin America and the Caribbean (21 countries) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): social public spending by function and institutional coverage, 2015[a]
(Percentages of GDP)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2016* (LC/PUB.2017/12-P), Santiago, 2017, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) "Government expenditure by function (COFOG)" [online] https://stats.oecd.org.

[a] The data for Panama and the Plurinational State of Bolivia refer to 2014, those for Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to 2009. Three countries have fiscal years that do not match the calendar year: Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica. The data for Ecuador refer to institutional coverage of the general State budget, which includes central government and decentralized and autonomous entities. Does not include information on the Ecuadorian Social Security Institute (IESS). The information for Uruguay comes from the Office of the Accountant-General and includes only institutional coverage of the central government. It does not include parastatal retirement fund data, data from the social protection agency or the State Sanitary Works. This information does not match the historical series compiled in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

[b] Does not include Canada, Chile, Mexico, New Zealand or Turkey.

H. Newly emerging critical obstacles

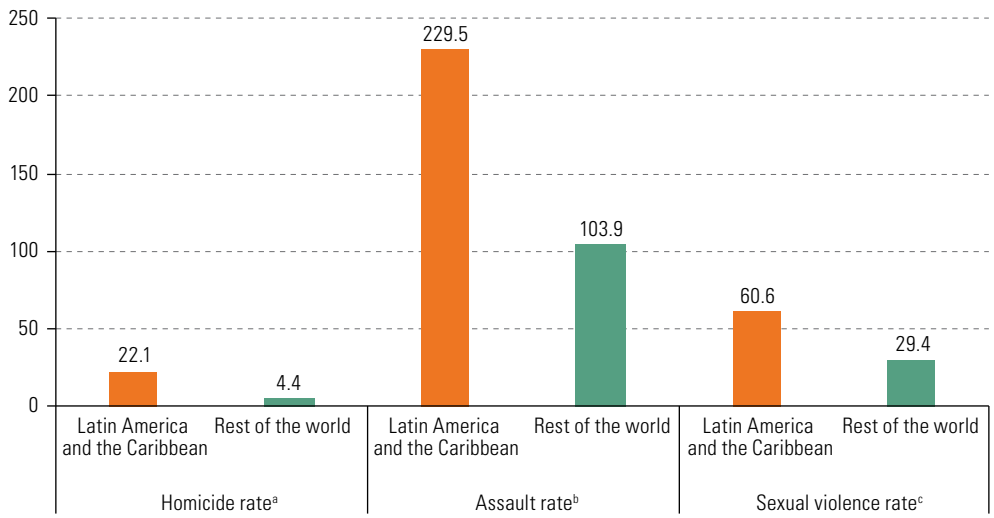
This section underscores some emerging phenomena and some old issues —but with new angles or facets— that also constitute critical obstacles to progress towards inclusive social development. In particular, it addresses the various manifestations of violence, disasters, technological transformations, migration and (demographic,

epidemiological and nutritional) transitions. All these have the potential to be obstacles to development and social inclusion and to further widen existing gaps, unless they are properly taken on board and addressed in a linked-up manner by public policy in order to convert them into opportunities for development and social inclusion instead.

1. The diverse manifestations of violence: eroding the Latin American and Caribbean social fabric

Although the States in Latin America coexist in peace and are not engaged in conflict, there is a high level of violence within countries. The region has the unflattering reputation of being the most violent part of the world, which stands in contrast to its level of economic, political and social development (ECLAC, 2018b). That dubious distinction refers not just to the homicide rate, but also to other manifestations of violence, such as assaults and incidents involving sexual violence (see figure II.5).

Figure II.5
Violence indicators, around 2015
(Incidents per 100,000 inhabitants)



Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

[a] "Homicide" means unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person. International homicide data also include aggravated assaults resulting in death and deaths as a result of a terrorism but exclude attempted homicide, manslaughter, killings due to legal interventions, justifiable homicide in self-defence and death due to armed conflict.

[b] "Assault" means a physical attack against the body of another person resulting in serious bodily injury. Severe physical force includes, at least, use of a firearm, stabbing, cutting, blows using an object and poisoning. The term "assault" does not cover the use of lesser physical force (such as punching, slapping or pushing). It also excludes sexual assault, threats, and assault leading to death.

[c] "Sexual violence" here means any unwanted sexual act. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual assault and other acts of sexual violence, but excludes sexual exploitation, prostitution offences, pornography and trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation.

Factors associated with violence in the regional context include the after-effects of civil conflicts, drug trafficking, deportation processes, domestic violence and the stigmatization of youth. In addition, intolerance to difference and its manifestations in racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia are all factors associated with the high levels of violence in the region. Research has also shown that, while poverty is an aggravating factor in all types of violence, inequality and increasing economic and social polarization are far more systematically related to violence, especially among youths. Studies have found that the communities worst affected by violence are those that the State has in some way "neglected" or from which is absent, leading for example to infrastructure in poor repair or lack of public services (Soto and Trucco, 2015). The axes of the social inequality matrix and the sociocultural patterns underpinning that matrix, such as racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia, lead to their own particular manifestations of violence. For example, violence against women

comes in numerous guises, including physical, psychological, economic or property, obstetric, symbolic, and via the media, which need to be seen in broader contexts relating to the culture of hate and crime at both the regional and global level (ECLAC, 2016d) and which undermine women's autonomy in every sphere: violence in reproductive processes that curtail their physical autonomy; media and symbolic violence propagated through public discourse, restricting women's political autonomy; and violence in the form of harassment in social and educational settings and in the workplace that limit the exercise of women's economic autonomy (Gherardi, 2016). Femicide or feminicide may be regarded as the most extreme manifestation of violence against women (ECLAC, 2016d). At the same time, the high homicide rates among Afrodescendent youth in some countries in the region are clearly linked to racism. Finally, discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity leads to unacceptably high levels of violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI) (OHCHR, 2012).

Violence is not a new phenomenon in Latin America and the Caribbean. It might even be said that the region as it is today was born out of violence, the starkest expressions of which were the forms of slavery involving the transatlantic trafficking of African people by European conquerors (ECLAC, 2017a) and the genocide perpetrated against indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, its recent manifestations stand out for their intensity, explosive growth and territorial expression, as well as their cross-border nature and links to organized crime. Indeed, in the areas most plagued with violence, organized crime competes with, and sometimes supplants, the State. At the same time, the encroachment of organized crime within the State apparatus to expand and consolidate its power poses a grave threat to democracies and erodes the (already low) level of trust in public institutions (Miraglia, Ochoa and Briscoe, 2012).

Violence threatens people's —especially young people's— current and future lives by restricting their options, dismantling the social fabric and weakening democracy. Accordingly, it is vital to recognize a life free from violence of all forms as a fundamental right and to pursue a cultural change rooted in tolerance and in appreciation of the value of human life in all its diversity.

2. Disasters and the impacts of climate change: growing sources of vulnerability

Disasters, such as floods, hurricanes, mudslides and earthquakes, have a direct adverse impact on people's well-being. Their increasing frequency is associated with such phenomena as climate change (see box II.1) and environmental pollution. The frequency of disasters worldwide has been increasing since 1960, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, where they are estimated to have increased by a factor of 3.6 in the past half-century (Vargas, 2015).

While they are often referred to as "natural disasters", it would be more accurate to describe them (from the point of view of their impact on the well-being of the population) as the result of a combination of natural phenomena and pre-existing conditions of physical, social, economic and environmental vulnerability of people and human settlements. Today disasters, regardless of their (natural or human) origin, are regarded as social phenomena, the damage from which can be avoided and mitigated so as to reduce or at least control their effects (Cecchini, Sunkel and Barrantes, 2017).

Such occurrences have a greater impact on the population living in poverty and vulnerability and on specific groups within that population, such as women, older persons, persons with disabilities and children. In the case of children, disasters force families, especially those living in poverty, to take decisions that may have detrimental long-run effects, such as taking them out of school or reducing spending on health care, which then exacerbates the intergenerational reproduction of poverty (Hallegatte and others, 2017). Disasters may also trigger unplanned migration under precarious conditions.

Box II.1
Climate change and inclusive social development

Climate change has obvious implications for inclusive social development. The consequences of gradual global warming include the increase in average temperatures, alterations to rain and snow patterns, rising sea levels, a reduction of the area covered by glaciers and the occurrence of extreme weather events.

Climate is one of the determinants of agricultural productivity, so that, predictably, that sector will be impacted by climate change, making it harder to achieve two core Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: ending poverty all its forms and ending hunger. For instance, disasters have an impact on food prices (see, among others, Bailey, 2011), which puts pressure on poor households or those that are vulnerable to poverty and may restrict their access to healthy food.

The impacts of climate change will be heterogeneous: how intense and temporary those effects are will depend heavily on pre-existing (climatic and other) conditions in the area affected. Developing countries, including those in Latin America, are noticeably more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than developed countries because of their greater dependence on agriculture, their more limited resources for taking measures for adapting to climate change and, in many cases, their greater exposure to extreme climatic events (ECLAC, 2015).

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of R. Bailey, *Growing a better future: food justice in a resource-constrained world*, Cowley, Oxfam International, 2011, and ECLAC, "Cambio climático y actividades agropecuarias en América Latina", *Project Documents* (LC/W.689), Santiago, 2015.

3. Demographic, epidemiological and nutritional transitions: a framework of changes for inclusive social development

It is important to bear in mind demographic and epidemiological —as well as nutritional— factors that pose new challenges for achieving inclusive social development. This is an era of far-reaching demographic changes, characterized by steady ageing of the population as a result of sharp declines in fertility and increases in life expectancy. From a life cycle perspective, this translates into longer and more complex old age: as life expectancy and healthy life expectancy increase, the older population becomes more heterogeneous as it encompasses persons of different ages with differing skills, degrees of functionality and needs. This demographic milestone, which is the result of numerous factors, including improved nutrition, health, sanitation and technological changes, means that the number of people over 60 years of age will steadily increase over the coming decades. Latin America and the Caribbean is in fact the world region where projections show the fastest increases in the population aged 60 or over, with an increase of 71% over the next 15 years (ECLAC, 2017a).

Sociodemographic traits of the older population include: (i) the feminization of old age (due to the higher survival rate among women at advanced ages, which is not to be equated with well-being and in fact disguises significant inequalities and disadvantages); (ii) territorial patterns with a large majority of older persons living in urban areas and premature ageing in rural areas; and (iii) an increase in the educational levels of older persons (ECLAC, 2017d). These new configurations will give rise to new needs and social, economic, political and cultural demands by different age groups that will need to be addressed and resolved through public policies guaranteeing social inclusion and full enjoyment of rights for everyone (ECLAC, 2016).

Population ageing may impact inclusive social development inasmuch as it will entail a decline in the share of people of working age and a potential increase in tax pressure to pay for pension and health systems (Rofman, Amarante and Apella, 2016; Cotlear, 2011), as well as rising demand for care, which, within families, often falls on the shoulders of women. Nevertheless, attention has also been drawn to the need to recognize, appreciate and enhance the positive contribution that older persons can make to our societies.

Along with these demographic changes, the countries in the region are seeing related changes in their epidemiological profile, with significant alterations of morbidity and mortality patterns, including a decline in the share of communicable diseases and an increased proportion of non-communicable chronic diseases.

These changes are not only occurring among the adult population: there are also increases in the prevalence of non-communicable chronic diseases in ever-younger age groups. Health systems urgently need to be rethought and reoriented in order to address the challenges posed by this transition. This includes taking measures to prevent non-communicable diseases at all stages in the life cycle, by altering eating habits, encouraging physical activity and providing long-term treatment. Such an effort is made more complex by the fact that many countries in the region have to cope simultaneously with the health pressures stemming from non-communicable diseases and the challenges still posed by such communicable diseases as cholera and dengue, as well as some emergent threats, such as the Zika and Chikungunya viruses.

Coinciding with the demographic and epidemiological transitions, major changes in dietary patterns in recent decades have led, among other things, to malnutrition from deficiency (undernutrition) coexisting with overweight and obesity associated partly with sedentary urban lifestyles and excessive consumption of processed foods high in calories and low in nutritional value: the "double burden of malnutrition". Particularly worrisome is the fact that high-calorie processed food with low nutritional content tends to be more affordable for low-income households than healthy food, which has triggered a rapid rise in the prevalence of overweight among both children and adults (FAO, 2014) and, concomitantly, in the prevalence of non-communicable diseases in those populations.

Together, the epidemiological and nutritional transitions will adversely impact countries' current and future productivity and will substantially increase health system costs (Fernández and Martínez, 2017).

4. The new dynamics of migration and the challenges they pose

In recent years, migration has established itself as a shared, but very heterogeneous, issue in all countries in the region. Public policies, in general, and social protection in particular, have started to mobilize and adapt, but still have a long way to go, while new global pressures, starting with current United States migration policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean, have lent added urgency to the issue. Lastly, the region also sees migration flows caused by natural and climatic phenomena that are hard to foresee, as well as other caused by economic and public safety crises and instability in countries within the region, all of which require responses that are not easy to muster immediately.

Regional migration trends continue to show a predominance of emigration over immigration (Martínez Pizarro and Orrego Rivera, 2016); that is, in net terms for the region as a whole (not for specific countries), cumulative immigration in the region continues to be less widespread than emigration. Thus, based on data from the 2010 round of censuses, the share of the immigrant population compared to the native-born population averaged 1.3% in the region, a figure that was fairly similar for the various subregions of Latin America and the Caribbean, ranging from 0.9% in South America to 1.1% in Central America and 2.8% in the Caribbean. Emigration accounted on average for 4% of the total regional population, with marked differences from one subregion to another, with the Caribbean and Central America standing out as having the highest share of emigrants compared to the native-born population (11.1% and 10.2% respectively), whereas the figure for South America was 1.6% (Martínez Pizarro, Cano and Soffia, 2014). The same census round also shows a structural change in immigration, from mostly extraregional (especially from Europe) to intraregional. New and more active migration corridors have developed towards Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago (ILO, 2016). Thus, census information from 2010 for 10 countries shows that intraregional immigrants account for 63% of total immigration or nearly 3.7 million people (Maldonado, Martínez and Martínez, 2018). These changes in migration patterns are very important since they pose major challenges for achieving inclusive social development, above all in contexts where there is significant irregular migration as well as frequent cases of trafficking and smuggling of persons and labour exploitation of migrants in both regular and irregular situations. Another challenge has to do with the social inclusion of dependants (and, in general, of family members) of persons who migrate (mostly) for work-related reasons, with a view to guaranteeing rights and making the most of the contributions and dynamism they can generate in host countries.

The panorama of migration in the region has thus become more diverse and complex. Of particular importance from the point of view of policymaking (especially social policies) is the transnationality of the phenomenon and the existence of people at different stages of the migratory cycle: origin, transit, destination

and, possibly, return. Each stage brings specific risks associated with migration (and within each stage, risks associated with the stage of life of migrants themselves). In the country of origin and in the transit process, those risks include some related to the security of migrants and their ability to embark on a safe migration plan. In the transit phase and in the country of destination, there are risks associated with irregular migratory status and being exposed to worse labour conditions and exploitation, as well as the risks of becoming a victim of child labour or human trafficking. In the country of destination, too, there is a risk of exclusion from networks or even from basic health, education and food services. This is in addition to the challenges relating to disconnection from —and the possible loss of— any social protection benefits available in the country of origin. In cases in which migrants return, a new challenge is posed for social inclusion and reconnection with social protection in the country of origin, as well as the risk of losing rights, benefits and entitlements accumulated in the country to which the migrant initially emigrated.

Irrespective of the heterogeneity of migration patterns in the region, all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean face inclusive social development challenges relating to one or more of these stages in the migration cycle, depending on their particular circumstances in relation to migration. That is why it is essential to devise a comprehensive framework taking into consideration the existing gaps and most relevant social protection instruments at each stage in order to begin to cater systematically to this group, which has hitherto been afforded little priority by public administrations (Maldonado, Martínez and Martínez, 2018). At the same time, in this new context, coordination of objectives, equivalence of the standards set and policy agreements among countries all become key factors for progressing towards a regional model of inclusive social development, so as to ensure that no one is left behind and to make the portability and effective enjoyment of human rights in general a reality, especially as regards social security.

5. Technological change and changes in the world of work: their impacts on social and labour inclusion

The fourth industrial revolution is being driven by technological changes that are radically altering the nature of our societies. It is hard to predict all of these changes and the impacts they will have. That uncertainty derives from the speed with which new technologies are developed, their variety and the expansion of their effects on the economy and society. It also has to do with the ability to respond to those rapid changes on the part of governments, other stakeholders in the world of work (firms and trade unions) and civil society.

Technological change, along with the aforementioned demographic trends, the greater complexity of global value chains and the transition to a low-carbon economy are radically altering labour markets (ECLAC, 2017b). Those changes presuppose, on the one hand, the adoption of new technologies (accompanied by an exponential increase in digitization, the use of robots and automation and artificial intelligence) and, on the other, organizational changes within firms or between firms at the regional or international level. Under these circumstances, new forms of production and employment are emerging (such as distance, on-demand and gig work, collaborative platforms and the various different types of outsourcing, or arrangements with no clear employment relations), alongside the "classic" precariousness and informality typical of labour markets in the region (ECLAC, 2017b; Novick, 2018). Some of the major concerns prompted by this scenario have to do with loss or destruction of jobs or increasingly precarious employment (especially as regards the more routine or less skilled jobs), and with the future of labour relations and corollaries, such as access to social protection.

Against this backdrop, the implications of the new economy need to be thought through, as do the challenges it will pose for inclusive social development in societies and labour markets characterized by structural inequalities, high levels of informality and weaknesses in social protection systems. The impact of technological and organizational changes on employment and the labour market are not determined a priori. In terms of employment creation and destruction, most likely the impacts will be mixed, varying from one country, region, sector or type of enterprise to another. The net result will depend on macroeconomic dynamics and a series of political and institutional factors, including actions taken by States and public institutions, labour regulations, trade union organization and the ability to forge opportunities for collective bargaining and political and social dialogue among stakeholders (ECLAC, 2017b). A major issue in this new scenario is how to establish a social protection floor guaranteeing a

minimum of economic security throughout the life cycle and how to finance it sustainably (Bertranou, 2016). At the same time, education and technical and professional training are becoming increasingly important to prepare people for the new kinds of jobs and to equip them with the skill sets associated with technological change.

Technological transformations are also having huge impacts on other dimensions of inclusive social development: on education and training (in terms of both what is taught and how information is transmitted); on health (from the management of health services and communication between health personnel and patients through to the provision of prevention, detection and treatment services); on forms of participation and day-to-day interaction; on access to culture; on relations between the State and citizens; and, equally, on social relations and the codes people use to communicate. These "exponential technologies" not only affect the processes by which goods and services are produced; they also impact society as a whole, so that technological changes are likely to continue to transform all these spheres.

That is why it is vital to have public policies, institutions, dialogue and social compacts capable of turning the new technologies and the other processes under way into opportunities for narrowing, rather than expanding, divides. Otherwise, their impacts —due to limitations in access to and use those technologies— are especially troubling.[16] If access to them and the basic skills needed to use them are not universalized, those technologies will soon turn into an additional dimension of inequality, which in turn will widen other gaps to the detriment of inclusive social inclusion.

From this standpoint, the State needs to play an active part in promoting and channelling changes in at least three ways, in addition to its industrial and technological policy: first, by fostering appropriate labour regulations, creating opportunities for dialogue and for forging compacts regarding the processes of change in the workplace, strengthening such tools as collective bargaining and the minimum wage, and protecting trade union freedoms; second, by promoting more egalitarian distribution of the fruits of technological modernization and of the opportunities afforded by new technologies in spheres such as education and health care; and third, by strengthening universal, high-quality social protection systems to protect workers and their families and the general population during times and processes of transition (ECLAC, 2017b).

I. Final reflections

The critical obstacles addressed in this chapter refer to phenomena that, on the one hand, prevent or hamper access by groups of the population to the minimum levels of well-being associated with inclusive social development. That is the case of the population living in situations of poverty or vulnerability, especially in rural areas, indigenous peoples, persons of African descent and migrants, who face multidimensional barriers to access to social protection, decent work, health care, and high-quality education at all stages of the life cycle, as well as to the other social services associated with guarantees of their rights and with acceptable levels of well-being. These adversities are compounded for those in situations of violence or disasters that increase their vulnerability and for those facing unequal opportunities to participate in social, economic and political spheres. These critical obstacles also reflect persistent institutional and social challenges in dismantling the culture of privilege, which is a major barrier to equality, and in implementing relevant and effective policies based on a universalism sensitive to difference in a context of new challenges and circumstances.

These obstacles therefore need to be addressed by a regional inclusive social development agenda, as part of its priority spheres of action, objectives and policies. As will be discussed in chapter III, these concerns are already reflected in the commitments undertaken in regional and subregional intergovernmental forums on these matters. Given that several of these critical obstacles have to do with phenomena —such as the social impacts of disasters, migration and the changes taking place in the world of work— that simultaneously affect the region as a whole and not just particular countries, it is feasible to tackle them jointly and move forward in line with the mandates of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

[16] For example, a number of studies have documented that segments of the population are being left behind with respect to the digital society, such as older persons (Sunkel and Ullmann, 2018) and persons with disabilities (Ullmann and others, 2018).

CHAPTER

III

Background for constructing the regional agenda for inclusive social development: commitments on social development

As established in resolution 2 (II) of the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and emphasized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2010a, 2014a and 2014e), forming a long-term shared vision with explicit commitments is crucial for building social compacts for equality. This makes it possible to cultivate convergent expectations among political and social actors and a greater sense of ownership of the corresponding proposals. It also fosters the establishment of stronger and more legitimized policies and institutions, linked to long-term intertemporal relationships as part of a wide-ranging participatory process, which is fundamental at times of heightened uncertainty (ECLAC, 2014a). Nurturing such agreements is all the more important in the scenario currently prevailing in Latin America and the Caribbean, in which progress towards inclusive social development is confronted by persistent critical obstacles, compounded by changes and uncertainty and the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Multilateralism is accepted as a principle and as an essential mechanism for achieving sustainable development, but it requires a new global partnership centred on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable (United Nations, 2015a). In the Latin American and Caribbean region, ECLAC has drawn attention to the importance of strengthening governance for cooperation, promoting greater regional integration. Among other things, this assumes that the design of social policies for sustainable development fulfils the commitments previously acquired in integration mechanisms, as a basis for adopting new agreements aimed at achieving inclusive social development.

Mindful of these substantive considerations, this chapter provides an initial systemization and analysis of the social development commitments adopted in various mechanisms on different levels, as a guiding framework for formulating the regional agenda for inclusive social development. A central reference for this analysis is the set of internationally agreed commitments on social development. As described in detail in chapter I, these commitments are embodied in international human rights instruments and in global agendas and also in the resolutions adopted in intergovernmental forums and conferences convened by the United Nations system. There is also a set of regional and subregional commitments that have been signed by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. This chapter makes an initial approach to the commitments adopted in global intergovernmental forums and in regional and subregional integration mechanisms, on issues that are considered crucial for inclusive social development and the "extended social pillar" of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Although most of these mechanisms have generated non-binding documents, which therefore impose no formal obligations on the States that have endorsed them, their consensual nature enables them to encompass areas in which there are shared visions and agreements that need to be considered and could be enhanced in the process of discussing the regional agenda for inclusive social development. This analysis also reveals areas that hitherto have been neglected and are now a priority.

A. A global reference framework for commitments on inclusive social development

1. International law on social development

A first reference for the regional agenda for inclusive social development is the international framework of human rights, especially the instruments most directly linked to social development and to the set of economic, social and cultural rights. By defining mandates to be fulfilled by individual States, these instruments are a key reference for the regional agenda that must incorporate the rights in question, including their dimensions and implementation approaches.

As noted in chapter I, the rights and dimensions linked to social development have been addressed by international law in a variety of instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (United Nations, 1966a); the Declaration on Social Progress and Development (United Nations, 1969); the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (United Nations, 1995); the Millennium Declaration (United Nations, 2000) and the

various conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).[1] All these instruments, along with others that are equally relevant at a global and regional level, stress recognition of the rights to protection and social security,[2] including access to policies on care, decent work, health, food security, education, housing and basic services, and culture. The right of every person to associate freely with others is seen as fundamental for exercising the right to participation (United Nations, 1966b; Organization of American States (OAS), 1948).

The need to protect and promote people's civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights is also mainstreamed in these instruments, alongside the broader objective of eradicating poverty. Various instruments also refer to the elimination of all forms of racism and discrimination (United Nations, 1965, 1993, 2001 and 2007; OAS, 2013; ILO, 1951), including racial discrimination,[3] xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, drawing attention to the linkages that exist between various manifestations of discrimination and associated phenomena, such as poverty, underdevelopment, denial of the right to work, marginalization, social exclusion and economic inequalities (ILO, 1951 and 1958; United Nations, 2001).

These instruments also establish mandates to uphold cultural rights, including the right of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities to have a cultural life and to use their own language (United Nations, 1966b). The need to recognize differences, cultural diversity and the rights of minorities, indigenous peoples and people of African descent is also explicitly emphasized. In this context, the special situation of migrants and, particularly, those suffering from racial discrimination[4] is also highlighted (United Nations, 2001).

In the case of indigenous peoples, governments are urged to implement measures that promote the full effectiveness of their social, economic and cultural rights, "respecting their social and cultural identity, their customs and traditions, and their institutions", as stated in the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). For the first time in international law, this instrument recognizes "the collective and territorial rights of indigenous peoples, as well as the importance of their cultures in the preservation of their collective identity" (ECLAC, 2016a, p.24). Both this Convention and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007) include provisions that aim to improve indigenous peoples' living and working conditions, raise standards of health and education in the regions they inhabit, and ensure they are not discriminated against in access to employment, social security, education and health.[5]

In the case of protection for children and adolescents, the commitments most directly linked to inclusive social development, which are expressed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), concern their care in adequate conditions and the guarantees provided by States parties for them to exercise their rights of survival and development; the right to the highest possible standard of health, including access to health services; to benefit from social security; and to an adequate standard of living for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. This requires States parties to adopt measures to provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing where

1 See annex III.A1 for the list of human rights instruments that guarantee these rights.

2 The ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) specifies the following as benefits to be regulated: medical care, sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, old-age benefit, employment injury benefit (including occupational disease), family benefits for workers with dependent children, maternity benefit, invalidity benefit and survivor's benefit.

3 As stated in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (United Nations, 1965), among other measures, this also implies the review of government policies that have the effect of creating or perpetuating racial discrimination, as well as the adoption of concrete measures to ensure the adequate development and protection of certain racial groups or individuals belonging to them, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Intolerance (OAS, 2013) also expresses the commitment of States parties to adopt special policies and affirmative actions needed to ensure the exercise of rights and fundamental freedoms of persons or groups that are subject to such situations for the purpose of promoting equitable conditions for equal opportunity, inclusion, and progress for such persons.

4 The special situation of vulnerability affecting migrants is addressed in various instruments, such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (United Nations, 1990), the Maintenance of Migrants' Pension Rights Convention, 1935 (No. 48), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143) (ILO, 1935 and 1975) and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (United Nations, 1993), among others. These instruments establish the need to safeguard access to employment, social security, social services and the health of migrant workers, and the right to receive education for their children, among other things.

5 In the case of health care, ILO Convention No. 169 provides that health services shall, to the extent possible, be community-based; and they should be planned and administered in cooperation with the peoples concerned and take into account their economic, geographic, social and cultural conditions. In the case of education, programmes and services must also be developed in cooperation with indigenous peoples and incorporate "their histories, their knowledge and technologies, their value systems and their further social, economic and cultural aspirations"; and children belonging to the peoples concerned shall, wherever practicable, be taught to read and write in their own indigenous language or in the language most commonly used by the group to which they belong (ILO, 1989).

necessary; education; rest and leisure and participation in cultural life and the arts; protection against economic exploitation and any work that may be hazardous or interfere with the child's education or be harmful to the child's health and development. In particular, the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) (ILO, 1973) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) (ILO, 1999b) define the fundamental provisions for the prevention and abolition of child labour and the urgent eradication of its worst forms.

These instruments express a commitment to promote greater harmony and tolerance in societies (United Nations, 2000), together with education for the respect of human rights and to "promote understanding, tolerance, peace and friendly relations between nations and between racial or religious groups" (United Nations, 1993). Likewise, aspirations for equality, including gender equality, and the achievement of full social inclusion across the whole of society, take centre stage in these instruments.

In particular, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, 1979) comprehensively addresses the multiple forms of discrimination against women, as a violation of the principles of equal rights and respect for human dignity and a barrier to their social inclusion. It establishes the mandate to modify the sociocultural patterns of behaviour of men and women to overcome discrimination, guaranteeing a family education that recognizes motherhood as a social function, along with the shared responsibility of men and women in child-rearing. It also encourages access to social support services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities, areas directly linked to care policies. It also notes the need for States parties to adopt all appropriate measures to ensure equal rights for men and women in education and health care, and to eliminate all discrimination that is generated in employment to guarantee women the same rights as men in the labour market, including the right to social security and health and guaranteed maternity leave as a central means to prevent discrimination against women in the workplace. The Convention also recognizes the special situation of rural women. A key precursor is the set of ILO conventions that aim to protect maternity and prevent discrimination against women in the workplace, including the Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), the Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103) and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); along with the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) and the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) recognizes the multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination that affect persons with disabilities, noting that the majority also live in poverty. It also highlights the greater risk of violence to which women and girls with disabilities are exposed, both in the home and elsewhere. The Convention recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to education through an inclusive education system; to the highest possible standard of health without discrimination; to work and employment; to an adequate standard of living; to social protection; and to participation in political, public and cultural life, among other domains.[6]

Lastly, in terms of the means of implementation of all these commitments, public-private partnerships and collaboration with civil society organizations, cooperation and financing, and the compilation of adequate information through statistics, are considered crucial for progress in guaranteeing rights as well as for development and social inclusion. Each of these instruments embodies the cross-cutting principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including recognition of the sovereign equality of all its Members and the peaceful settlement of international disputes (United Nations, 1945).

[6] In the region, the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (OAS, 1988) recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to receive special attention, including access to resources and work programmes; and it expresses the commitment of the States parties to include consideration of solutions to specific requirements arising from needs of this group as a priority component of their urban development plans. Likewise, the Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (OAS, 1999) is aimed at the prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination that may affect persons with disabilities.

2. International agendas and commitments

In addition to the instruments outlined above, there is a set of agendas and commitments that have been adopted at various summits and conferences held under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. These instruments foster the concept of inclusive social development and provide political and normative updating to the process of formulating the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

A key benchmark for this process is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015a) and its Sustainable Development Goals. As described in chapter I, the 2030 Agenda includes an extended social pillar that intersects with many of the Sustainable Development Goals, mainstreaming the social inclusion perspective and addressing issues related to poverty and inequality; nutrition and food security; health; education; gender equality; access to water and sanitation; full and productive employment and decent work; the achievement of sustainable and inclusive cities; and peace, justice and the construction of solid institutions for development.

There are also other global action agendas that should be considered, given their potential links to the issues that could be covered in the regional agenda for inclusive social development and its means of implementation. These include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (United Nations, 2015b) and the New Urban Agenda (United Nations, 2016a), which make it possible to connect issues of financing and territorialization with provisions that could be established in the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda contributes to the discussion on the means of implementation that make it possible to move towards fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. As a starting point, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda highlights the synergies that exist between different policy areas that have strong intersectoral links: social protection and public services, efforts to end hunger and malnutrition, overcoming infrastructure deficiencies, inclusive and sustainable industrialization, the generation of full and productive employment and decent work for all and promotion of micro- and small and medium-sized enterprises, protection of ecosystems and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies. In addition to the above, the Agenda proposes the following areas of action for the financing of sustainable development: promoting and strengthening the mobilization of domestic public resources and their efficient use; measures to promote and strengthen an inclusive domestic and international private business and finance; reinforcing international development cooperation; generating appropriate measures for mobilizing resources and adapting to the new cooperation scenario; promoting international trade, recognizing it as the engine of development, and promoting its liberalization in an open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable context within the World Trade Organization (WTO) framework; collaborating to achieve debt sustainability in the different countries, generating the policies and measures needed for the financing, relief, monitoring and management of liabilities; treatment of systemic issues, such as improving and promoting global economic governance and designing a more robust international architecture; and promoting capacity-building in the field of science, technology and innovation. These spheres of action serve as guiding principles for defining means of implementation, especially for the financing of the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

The New Urban Agenda addresses commitments to achieving sustainable urban development in an environment that is propitious for social inclusion and poverty eradication. In it, the countries commit to promoting urban and rural development, without discrimination of any kind. The notion embodied in the Agenda is the construction of cities and urban settlements which, among other features, achieve gender equality and promote an age- and gender-sensitive planning. The Agenda reinforces the focus on human rights and people's fundamental freedoms, promoting equitable access to the opportunities and benefits of urbanization for the entire population. The principles of the Agenda include: "Ensuring that no one is left behind, which means putting an end to poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including the eradication of extreme poverty, by ensuring equal rights and opportunities, socioeconomic and cultural diversity, integration in the urban space" (United Nations, 2016a). In the Agenda, the countries recognize that it will be necessary to make progress

in constructing an urban governance by improving normative frameworks based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination; capacity-building for integrated planning and management at all levels; participatory approaches that take into account the characteristics of the population throughout the urban planning process; housing policies, infrastructure planning and transport policy; international cooperation to obtain resources and to share good practices; and the adoption of measures to respond to natural disasters and mitigate the effects of climate change.

The resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference also contain mandates in terms of the right to decent work, which is of particular relevance to an agenda centred on inclusive social development and social protection. The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (ILO, 2008) expresses the tripartite consensus (encompassing governments, labour unions and employers) on the centrality of the decent work agenda and its four strategic objectives: promotion of productive and quality employment in a sustainable institutional and economic environment; adoption and expansion of social protection measures for workers; promotion and guarantee of rights at work; and tripartite social dialogue.

In addition, the Global Jobs Pact (ILO, 2009) seeks to consolidate an instrument to promote decent work in response to the repercussions of the global economic and financial crisis, which is an issue of permanent concern for an instrument such as the regional agenda for inclusive social development. The Pact defines a set of decent-work-based responses that include the strengthening of international labour standards and social dialogue and the establishment of sustainable social protection systems, along with measures such as job creation and recovery.

In line with these proposals, the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) (ILO, 2012) offers a fundamental guiding framework for the regional agenda for inclusive social development in the domain of social protection. As a starting point, the Recommendation reaffirms that social security is a human right and that, together with the promotion of employment, it represents an economic and social necessity for development and progress. It is also a relevant tool for the prevention and reduction of poverty, inequality, social exclusion and social insecurity and for the promotion of equality. The Recommendation then provides guidelines for the establishment and maintenance of social protection floors, conceived as "nationally defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion". These floors are a fundamental element of national social security systems and form part of strategies for extending social security in the individual countries, with social inclusion among their principles. At a minimum, social protection floors should ensure access to essential health care and basic income security throughout the life cycle.

Lastly, a set of declarations and resolutions have been adopted in forums and conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, which are also of special interest for the formulation of the regional agenda for inclusive social development. These include the ministerial declarations issued by the high-level political forum on sustainable development, along with the agreements reached at the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994, embodied in the Cairo Programme of Action, and at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, held in Beijing in 1995, as reflected in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[7]

In short, the regional agenda for inclusive social development draws on a pre-existing normative framework, condensed into a series of established rights and approved agreements, together with mechanisms for deliberation and the pursuit of global agreements on social development. The following subsection reviews the status of the agreements adopted at the regional and subregional levels.

[7] At the regional level, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (ECLAC, 2013) is aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Cairo Programme of Action and its follow-up, while the Regional Gender Agenda reaffirms the commitment of the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and it is invoked again by the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda in the Framework of Sustainable Development by 2030 (ECLAC, 2017e).

B. Commitments on inclusive social development adopted at the regional and subregional levels

The Latin American and Caribbean region has made steady progress in building a social development agenda that has been constructed through multiple intergovernmental forums on the subject, and which reflects a strengthening of social policies and their institutional framework at the regional level (ECLAC, 2016e). These forums have different modalities of regional interaction and integration, they express organizationally the international mandates of the social area and facilitate the coordination of efforts, cooperation and the adoption of consensuses. As described in this section, these forums reveal the emergence of social agendas that are mutually convergent and complementary and focused on the objectives of overcoming poverty and social inequalities (ECLAC, 2016e).

The preliminary results of a review of the commitments adopted in regional and subregional intergovernmental forums in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2010 are presented below. They are embodied in a variety of instruments that include treaties, conventions, pacts, declarations, consensuses, resolutions, agendas, strategies and action plans. This endeavour is intended to identify common agendas in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It offers an initial overview of the areas of agreement already reached in these dimensions, which can be elaborated further in the process of formulating and debating the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

The preliminary review includes data compiled from 41 regional and subregional intergovernmental forums, linked to 24 agencies (see map III.1 and annex III.A2):[8] 12 regional forums organized under the aegis of the United Nations system, 14 forums associated with other regional integration mechanisms, and 15 subregional forums. The review has prioritized commitments embodied in strategic agendas emanating from each forum and, in particular, those generated at meetings of ministers and high-level authorities of social development.[9]

A review of the instruments adopted at these meetings identified commitments related to dimensions of inclusive social development, as a unit of reference. The definition of these dimensions took into consideration the conceptual bases of inclusive social development and its areas of law, as specified in chapter I, and the objectives and goals of the extended social pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[10] The goals of this pillar were thus linked to the dimensions of inclusive social development, since the content of the 2030 Agenda should guide formulation of the regional agenda for inclusive social development.

Diagram III.1 shows the links between the dimensions considered for the analysis of inclusive social development and the goals of the extended social pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As noted above, three groupings were defined. First, cross-cutting axes or areas were considered for the analysis of commitments on inclusive social development, which include the main objectives of social policies in this domain: the reduction of poverty and inequality and the achievement of social inclusion. Secondly, the central dimensions of well-being and inclusive social development were addressed, which, as stated in chapter I, are fundamental for the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights, and include access to health, education, housing and basic services, work, food and nutrition security and social protection. Lastly, a third analytical group was formed by other dimensions associated with inclusive social development and the extended social pillar of sustainable development, or which directly affect its achievement, such as disasters and violence, in line with the critical obstacles identified in chapter II.

8 This information has been included in a database of regional and subregional commitments on the dimensions of inclusive social development, which is currently under review and complementation. In this first review, it was not possible to find information from some of the forums shown in map III.1, so their review remains pending for the final version of the database of regional and subregional commitments on social development, to be presented at the third session of the Regional Conference on Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, scheduled for 2019. The forums for which it has not yet been possible to find information online are the Council of Ministers of the Association of Caribbean States, the Meeting of Ministers for the Social Area of Member Countries of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Social Area of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Council of Ministers for Human and Social Development of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). This also applies to the agreements of the Central American Parliament (PARLACEN) and the MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR). The complete list of the forums reviewed, associated with each of the bodies included in map III.1, is presented in annex III.A2.

9 In a few specific cases, in which the topics were closer to a social development agenda, meetings of high-level authorities of foreign relations (migration), education and health were also considered.

10 See diagram I.1 in chapter I.

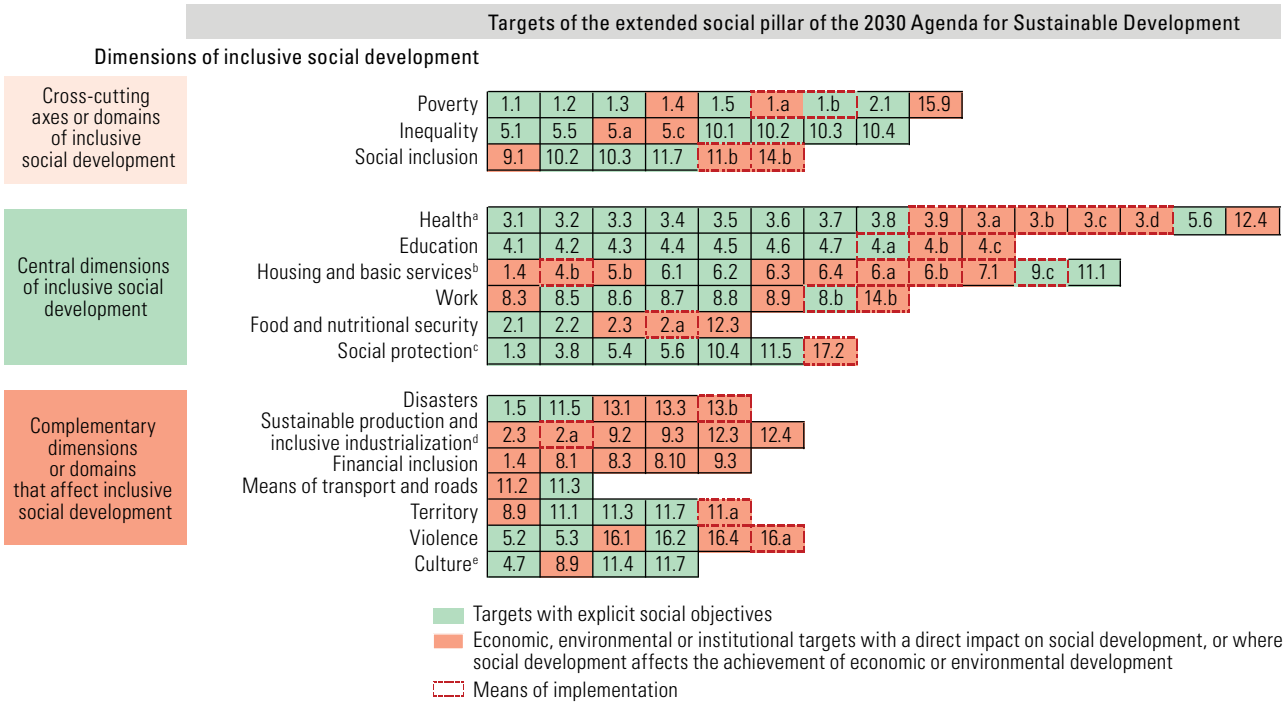
Map III.1
Regional and subregional dimension of the formulation of the regional agenda for inclusive social development

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Note: UNDP: United Nations Development Programme; UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; ILO: International Labour Organization; IOM: International Organization for Migration; PAHO: Pan American Health Organization; ALADI: Latin American Integration Association; CELAC: Community of Latin American and Caribbean States; OAS: Organization of American States; SEGIB: Ibero-American General Secretariat; OIJ: Ibero-American Youth Organization; OEI: Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture; SELA: Latin American and Caribbean Economic System; CARICOM: Caribbean Community; SICA: Central American Integration System; SISCA: Central American Social Integration Secretariat; ALBA: Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America; OECS: Organization of Eastern Caribbean States; ACTO: Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization; CAN: Andean Community; MERCOSUR: Southern Common Market; UNASUR: Union of South American Nations.

[a] The participants include countries from Latin America and the Iberian Peninsula.

Diagram III.1
Connection between the dimensions considered for the analysis of inclusive social development and the targets of the extended social pillar of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



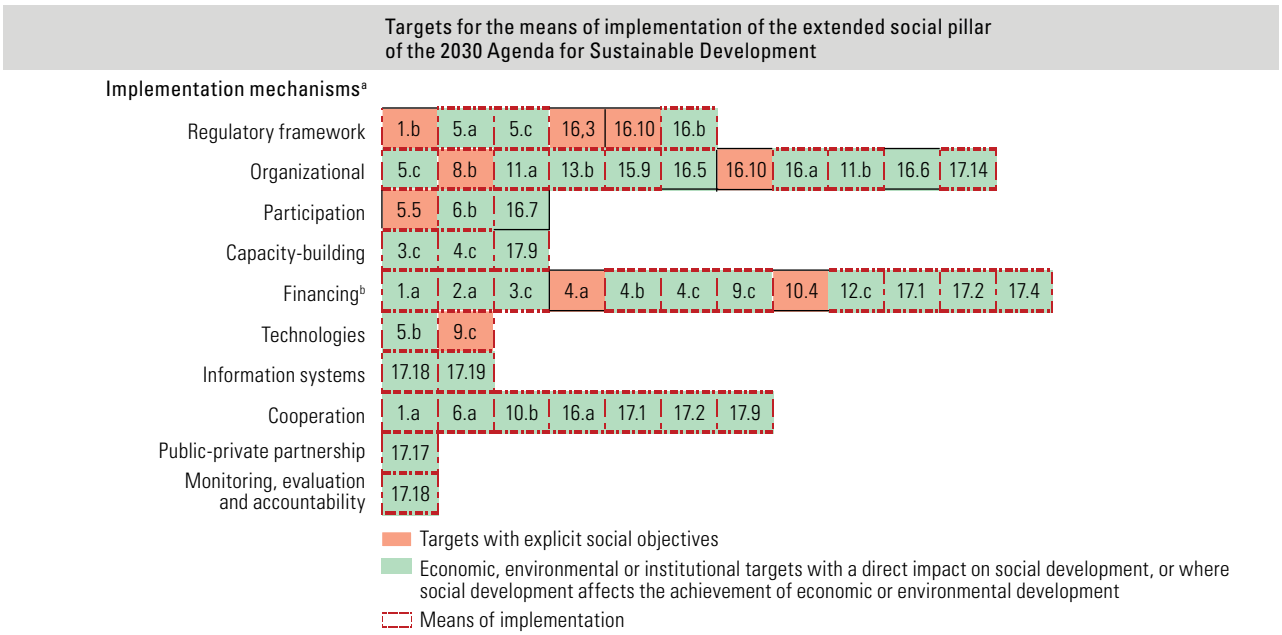
Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of ECLAC, *Linkages between the social and production spheres: Gaps, pillars and challenges* (LC/CDS.2/3), Santiago, 2017.
[a] Includes sexual and reproductive health.
[b] Includes water and sanitation, access to energy and information and communication technologies.
[c] Includes non-contributory and contributory social protection (social security), and care policies.
[d] Includes sustainable agricultural development.
[e] Includes leisure time and recreation.

In each of these groups efforts were made to distinguish regional agreements from those at the subregional level (see map III.1), and to identify their priority applicability in the case of specific population groups, from the life cycle, gender, territorial and ethnic and racial standpoints, as well as agreements relating to persons with disabilities, vulnerable persons or migrants.

The 2030 Agenda also contains a series of targets relating to institutional capacities and standards, governance and cooperation for sustainable development, as well as the means for their implementation. These include statistics that are disaggregated by the different axes of social inequality and other relevant characteristics in the different national contexts. These targets must be included in the regional agenda for inclusive social development to ensure its implementation and its viability within the sustainable development horizon, especially with a view to meeting the challenge of closing implementation gaps between the objectives and the outcomes of the policies and programmes aimed at achieving the various dimensions of social development. Accordingly, the analysis of social development commitments also included a review of agreements in terms of means of implementation for inclusive social development (see diagram III.2).[11]

[11] On 19 April 2018 a working meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Santiago, as part of the second meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. Government officials from the following member countries of the Presiding Officers participated in the meeting: Uruguay, in its capacity as Chair of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean; and Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Panama, in their role as vice chairs, together with representatives from Argentina, Chile and Paraguay and from the United Nations system. One of the main points of consensus in formulating the regional agenda for inclusive social development was that it should be focused on the implementation gaps existing in the region relative to the goals of social development and challenges for policy implementation in this context.

Diagram III.2
Connection between the means of implementation considered for the analysis of inclusive social development and the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of ECLAC, *Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030* (LC/CRM.13/5), Santiago, 2017; and *Linkages between the social and production spheres: Gaps, pillars and challenges* (LC/CDS.2/3), Santiago, 2017.

[a] The means of implementation considered include communication.

[b] Includes commitments related to the countries' fiscal policy.

The following paragraphs present the key findings of the review of regional and subregional commitments on social development adopted in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the axes and dimensions of inclusive social development identified above.

1. Cross-cutting axes of inclusive social development

Poverty eradication and the reduction of inequality, along with the achievement of social inclusion, are themes embedded in the commitments adopted in the region; and they are mentioned in nearly a quarter of all commitments reviewed.

Poverty is addressed in terms of the commitment to eradicate it throughout the region and its linkage with other key areas of inclusive social development. For example, at their first meeting, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, a subsidiary body of ECLAC that convenes ministers and high-level authorities of social development, highlighted the importance of "progressing towards the elimination of poverty in all its forms, as established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, consolidating recent progress in Latin America and the Caribbean and recalling that those advances are fragile and reversible unless accompanied by stable generation of productive employment and decent work, the universalization of access to quality education and health care, and the construction of a rights-based universal system of social protection" (ECLAC, 2017i).

Other commitments stress the links between education, health, the eradication of hunger, reduction of the digital divide and poverty.[12] They also assume the commitment to make progress in participatory and inclusive programmes for poverty reduction. In particular, the connection between poverty commitments and decent work is highlighted as a fundamental objective for eradicating poverty and inequality. For example, at the Ninth Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Labour, Employment and Social Security the member countries of the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) stressed the importance and necessity of fostering decent, dignified employment and social inclusion to eliminate inequalities and end poverty (SEGIB, 2016a).[13]

In several of the agreements, the goal of eradicating poverty is linked to the reduction of vulnerability and social exclusion; and it is understood that policies to reduce poverty should also foster inclusion. The broader connection between poverty and inequality identified in the commitments reviewed can be seen in the following example of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (ECLAC, 2013), adopted at the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which establishes the mandate to "reinforce the public policies and actions needed to eradicate poverty and break the cycles of exclusion and inequality as a condition for achieving development in the region".

In addition, some commitments also propose specific targets for the goal of eradicating poverty. For example, the declaration issued by the seventh meeting of the Andean Council of Ministers of Social Development (CADS) of the Andean Community (CAN, 2011), defined eradicating poverty and reducing economic and social inequalities as a first objective in the Andean Social Development Goals, including targets to be met by 2019, such as reductions of one third in extreme monetary poverty, 40% in monetary poverty, 10% in the Gini coefficient, and a halving of monetary poverty among indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples.

The review identified poverty reduction commitments relating to various specific population groups, including children, adolescents and youth, older adults, indigenous peoples and Afrodescendent populations, people living in rural areas and, to a lesser extent, migrant populations.

The approach to inequality in the commitments reviewed reflects the understanding of its multidimensional nature and its close connection with poverty reduction and social inclusion. In particular, the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean has recognized the region's social inequality matrix as a basic analytical framework for understanding the mechanisms by which social inequality is reproduced and for significantly reducing it. At their first meeting, in 2016, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean highlighted the importance of "continuing to deepen research and knowledge related to the social inequality matrix in the region, which is closely related to the highly heterogeneous and undiversified production structure of its economies and which is conveyed, through the structure of the labour market, to the social sphere, where it produces sharp inequality in household income, to which are added gender inequalities, ethnic and racial inequalities, territorial inequalities and age-based inequalities" (ECLAC, 2017i).

Over a third of the commitments on inequality mainstream a gender perspective, by addressing the necessary reduction of inequalities existing in this area with respect to women's economic autonomy, including their labour market participation and their financial inclusion; the struggle against gender violence as an expression of such inequalities; and measures relating to equality in the domains of fiscal policy, institutional strengthening, care, and access to education and health services. These measures have been promoted,

[12] For example, in the Santo Domingo Consensus, the outcomes of the twelfth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, it was agreed to "seek ways to bring sciences and the new technologies closer to the specific situations of women, appreciating the dimensions of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and age, with a view to helping to eradicate poverty in areas with the worst social exclusion, promote development and democratize education" (ECLAC, 2014d).

[13] A very important precursor of the regional agreements in which decent work is defined as a condition for overcoming poverty, inequality and social exclusion is the Mar del Plata Declaration "Creating jobs to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance" and its Plan of Action. These were adopted at the Fourth Summit of the Americas, held under the auspices of the Organization of American States (OAS) at Mar del Plata (Argentina) in November 2005. In the Declaration, the Heads of State and Government reaffirm their commitment "to fight poverty, inequality, hunger, and social exclusion in order to raise the standard of living of our peoples and strengthen democratic governance in the Americas". They also "assign the right to work, as articulated in human rights instruments, a central place on the hemispheric agenda, recognizing the essential role of the creation of decent work to achieve these objective" (OAS, 2005).

especially in the framework of successive meetings of two other ECLAC subsidiary bodies, the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.[14]

Similarly, the life-cycle and ethnic and racial approaches are present in various commitments on social inequality in the region. In the case of children and adolescents, they address issues related to health, education and the guarantee of rights. For example, the Strategy and Plan of Action for Integrated Child Health of 2012, adopted at the twenty-eighth Pan American Sanitary Conference, a forum that brings together the region's health ministers, organized under the auspices of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) mentions that "persistent social exclusion, inequalities of gender, class, and ethnicity, and pervasive inequities all have detrimental effects on children's development and constitute one of the greatest challenges in the region" (PAHO, 2013). Moreover, the importance of implementing coordinated measures to promote education and child nutrition and for the prevention and eradication of child labour, with a view to reducing social inequalities, is mentioned in several regional and subregional agreements. In particular, the concern regarding access to education, by eradicating all barriers that affect various population groups and promoting social inclusion, is well represented in the commitment made in the Declaration of Mar del Plata at the Twentieth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, convened in 2010 by SEGIB. At this Summit, it was agreed to deepen the development of intersectoral public policies with equity and inclusion in order to reduce educational inequalities in terms of access and quality at all levels —including efforts to promote bilingual intercultural education— and taking into account the right to gender equality, cultural differences, ethnic minorities, first peoples, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, people with special educational needs, persons with disabilities and the situation of social groups that inhabit marginal urban and rural areas (OEI, 2010a).

The inequalities experienced by indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples are highlighted in the commitments adopted in the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development. The priority measures adopted in this instrument address interculturality and the rights of indigenous peoples, including guarantees and protection against all forms of violence and discrimination. In the case of persons of African descent, measures in the framework of their rights and the fight against racism and racial discrimination include addressing "gender, racial, ethnic and intergenerational inequalities, bearing in mind the way these dimensions overlap in situations of discrimination affecting women, especially young Afrodescendent women" (ECLAC, 2013). In addition, the Andean Community's Andean Social Development Goals include a commitment to reduce social inequalities that affect indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples by promoting their participation (CAN, 2011). The Andean Intercultural Health Policy, adopted in 2014 by the Ministers of Health of the member States of the Andean Health Organization, defines its objective as helping to overcome the health inequities experienced by indigenous, Afrodescendent and other peoples, helping to guarantee access to culturally appropriate health services, and strengthening and coordination of medical systems and social consensus mechanisms (ORAS-CONHU, 2014).

Although less frequent, commitments on territorial inequalities express the need to consider this dimension a source of social inequality in the region. For example, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development agrees to "promote the development and well-being of people in all territories without any form of discrimination, and provide full access to basic social services and equal opportunities for populations whether they live in urban or rural areas, in small, intermediate or large cities or in isolated areas or small rural settlements" (ECLAC, 2013).

Lastly, several commitments specifically address the issue of social inclusion as a focus of action. This is considered a prerequisite for sustainable development; and its achievement requires responsible governance and robust institutions (ECLAC, 2014g). Other commitments argue that access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), along with the exercise of the right to health care (OAS, 2015b), education (OEI, 2010a) and decent work (ILO, 2014b), are fundamental for social inclusion; while commitments on inclusive cities

[14] The Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean convenes ministers and high-level authorities of the region's mechanisms for the advancement of women, while the Regional Conference on Population and Development is attended by the countries' ministers and high-level authorities responsible for areas related to the issues addressed by the Conference.

also emphasize the link with social inclusion. In general, the commitments refer most forcefully to achieving greater inclusion for women, indigenous peoples and Afrodescendent populations, as well as young people, migrants, people living in rural areas and persons with disabilities.

2. Key dimensions for the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights and for achieving inclusive social development

(a) Health

An important part of the commitments in this area, particularly those that adopted in the framework of organizations specifically devoted to improving health, focus on urging governments to prevent, reduce the occurrence of, and provide treatment for, certain health issues. The most frequently mentioned are sexual and reproductive health, including maternal mortality, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, unmet need for contraceptives and abortion services; child health, including immunization and treatment for nutrition deficiencies (both chronic malnutrition, overweight and obesity); non-communicable diseases; vector-borne diseases, such as dengue, zika virus, chikungunya, Chagas disease, malaria and yellow fever; violence; mental health; consumption of harmful substances; and the universalization of health coverage under social protection systems.

Both the use of technologies to progress towards full enjoyment of health (OAS, 2012) and social participation in the health domain are issues emphasized in various commitments. In terms of the relationship between health and other areas of well-being, the most frequently mentioned issues are education, decent work and social protection. In the case of education, many of these agreements recognize that school is a key space for promoting good health.

Health issues are most frequently addressed in these agreements through the rights, life cycle and gender perspectives, and the ecological model; a focus on the social determinants of health, interculturality and comprehensive health. The profound inequities that exist in the health domain are described as one of the main challenges in progressing towards sustainable development in the region, especially those that affect people throughout the life cycle, and those affecting women in particular. In addition, several agreements refer to indigenous and Afrodescendent populations, such as the Andean Intercultural Health Policy, whose contents, according to the document itself, help countries in the subregion to ensure the right to health and good living or living well for indigenous, Afrodescendent and other peoples (CAN, 2014). Other agreements, such as those enshrined in the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, also mention health inequalities that occur at the territorial level.

Other commitments emphasize institutional aspects and means of implementation, calling on countries to strengthen health systems; promote national and regional capacity for preparedness, prevention, detection, monitoring and response to outbreaks of diseases and emergencies and disasters that affect the health of the population; ensure adequate financing for health systems and investment in health; strengthen the sources of health information (both in terms of improving information on specific health issues, and in terms of allowing for breakdowns to ascertain and monitor the health status of different population groups); and strengthen partnerships and multi-stakeholder and South-South cooperation. They also mention coordination between the various relevant stakeholders (ministries and other public and academic institutions, and between the public and private sectors and civil society) and intersectoral work, in recognition of the comprehensive nature of health status. Another institutional aspect addressed in these agreements is the development of human resources, in terms of increasing capacity and the provision of quality services, and ensuring that health personnel have the capacities to implement the intercultural approach in health systems and services.

All the agreements adopted since 2015 refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and their links to health. Notably, in line with the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas 2018–2030, adopted at the twenty-ninth Pan American Sanitary Conference, reaffirms the right to health, equity, comprehensive and integrated services, universality, and collaboration

with other actors, all of which are principles of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, the goals of the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas correlate directly with the Sustainable Development Goals and with other agreements. For example, goal 2, target 2.1 "Achieve universal access to health and universal health coverage, according to the national context" (PAHO, 2017a) is an adaptation of Sustainable Development Goal target 3.8 and the PAHO Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage, adopted at the fifty-third meeting of the Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization/sixty-sixth session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for the Americas.[15]

(b) Education

Alongside health, education is the area most frequently mentioned in the commitments, thus testifying to its central role in the regional social agenda. As would be expected, the population groups most frequently referred to in the commitments include children, adolescents and young people. Women are also frequently mentioned, followed by older adults, people living in poverty or situations of vulnerability and indigenous peoples.

Several of the commitments reviewed treat education as a right. For example, the Buenos Aires Declaration, adopted in 2017 at the Regional Meeting of Ministers of Education of Latin America and the Caribbean convened under the auspices of UNESCO, states that "education is a fundamental human right of every person and a basis for realizing other rights," in addition to recognizing the key role that education plays as a catalyst of sustainable development. Mention is also made of the need to ensure that all children complete primary and secondary school education, which should be free, equitable and of high quality; and it emphasizes the need to expand coverage and to overcome quality gaps, recognizing the central role played by teachers in the education process, strengthen their training and develop approaches that reinforce the sociocultural diversity that characterizes the region (UNESCO, 2017b).

The various sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean have recognized the importance of education as a means for women to achieve autonomy, along with the need to adopt measures to eliminate the violence and gender biases present in education systems. The work programme of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean repeatedly mentions the importance of education as the sphere in which change can be brought about in areas such as the promotion of social protection, sexual and reproductive health, combating racism and racial discrimination, as well as fostering compatibility between study and work. Mention is also made of the role of ICTs in education and the potential for their use in this domain.

The 2014 Plan of Action of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and its Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the Eradication of Hunger 2025 (CELAC, 2014a and 2014b) refer to the issues mentioned above, while also stressing the importance of participation by families in the implementation of public policies aimed at improving education, as well as the strengthening of education in terms of values and cultural training. Similarly, the 2021 Educational Goals, adopted in the Mar del Plata Declaration at the Twentieth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2010, highlights the role of education in fostering social inclusion, through educational strategies that include participation by different sectors of society, and the strengthening of bilingual intercultural education. This instrument formulates 11 general educational goals, with specific targets, indicators and achievement levels to be attained by 2021; and it considers the creation of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the corresponding processes (OEI, 2012b). The Plan of Action of the Social Charter of the Americas, which was issued by the forty-fifth regular session of the Organization of American States (OAS) (2015a), includes the promotion of greater coherence between educational, economic and labour market policies among its lines of action. In addition, the Inter-American Education Agenda, adopted at the Eleventh Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education, organized under the auspices of OAS (2018), specifies three priority areas: quality, inclusive and equitable education; strengthening of the teaching profession; and comprehensive early childhood development strategies.

[15] In the framework of the Pan American Sanitary Conference, which convenes the region's health ministers, other relevant strategies have also been approved, such as the Strategy and Plan of Action for Integrated Child Health (PAHO, 2013) and the Policy on Ethnicity and Health (PAHO, 2017b), among others.

The subregional level agreements examined —which number proportionally far fewer than the regional agreements— mainly emphasize the adoption of measures to eradicate illiteracy in the region, along with the need to respect the inherent cultural diversity of the different parts of the continent, by including this topic in the different educational programmes. Reference is also made to the importance of ensuring education services for migrants and the need to develop sources of teacher employment.

(c) Housing and basic services

The regional commitments in this dimension address a variety of issues. For example, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development expresses a commitment to promote the availability, accessibility and quality of basic services through decentralization and participatory planning processes (ECLAC, 2013). It also refers to the importance of guaranteeing women's right and access to the ownership of land and housing, as well as concern for persons of African descent and their disadvantaged status in terms of access to housing and other social services. The Twenty-second Regional Conference on Migration reaffirmed the importance of ensuring migrants have access to basic public services (IOM, 2017a).

Other regional agreements have mentioned issues such as promoting recognition of the right to drinking water and sanitation as a human right; the development of awareness and education programmes on alternatives for disinfecting water for human consumption in the region; and the creation of infrastructure to guarantee safe and sustainable access to drinking water and basic sanitation services for the entire population. For example, at its forty-fifth regular session, the Organization of American States agreed to work to provide more and better housing options, especially for vulnerable and lower-income populations and to ensure fair, equitable and non-discriminatory access to basic public services, as well as to extend the coverage and quality of safe drinking water, sanitation, storm water management, solid waste management and energy services, with an emphasis on rural areas (OAS, 2015a).

Of special importance for the region is the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean 2016–2036, developed jointly by ECLAC, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities of the Housing and Urban Development Sector in Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI) (ECLAC, 2018d). Principle 1 (Inclusive Cities) defines the "Fulfilment of the right to adequate housing and the improvement of informal and precarious settlements and their integration within the city" as a strategic outcome, along with "Universal and equitable access to quality and affordable physical and social infrastructure and urban services". The Plan includes five action areas. For Action Area 3 (Urban and territorial planning and design), the objectives include "equitable access to quality basic services, urban and social infrastructure and urban amenities through coherent and coordinated urban and territorial management" and "Promoting adequate and affordable housing as a fundamental element of urban planning and design" (objectives 3.6 and 3.7).

Other subregional agreements highlight the importance of addressing precarious human settlements; constructing basic energy, water and sanitation infrastructure; providing basic services to people for whom access is more difficult, making the management of drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services sustainable; and improving access to water and sanitation for indigenous peoples, Afrodescendants and border populations.

Lastly, increasing attention is being paid to ICTs as part of the public services that need to be guaranteed in order to reduce social exclusion. Several commitments emphasize the key role of ICTs in generating opportunities, mobility and social inclusion. For example, the Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which convenes the region's ministers and high-level authorities in the areas of social development, notes that ICTs are instruments that generate opportunities and mobility and social inclusion (UNDP, 2016); and the Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM, 2017) states that ICTs stand to play a transformative role in fostering an integrated and inclusive digitally-enabled Caribbean Community. In general, the commitments reflect the need to promote training and thus encourage the development of scientific and technological capabilities, and to ensure equal access to these benefits for the entire population, especially women, as indicated at the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (2017j) and the Santiago Declaration adopted at the first session of the Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communication Technologies of ECLAC (see ECLAC, 2014c).

(d) Food and nutrition security

Commitments in this domain address various related issues, such as food security, agricultural development, food availability, vulnerability and the measures that must be adopted to combat the double burden of malnutrition (undernutrition and obesity). Some instruments, such as the MERCOSUR Strategic Plan for Social Action, assume the commitment to guarantee food and nutrition security (MERCOSUR, 2012). The Intersectoral Regional Agenda on Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity (ARIPSIP) 2018–2030 (SICA, 2018), cites the following agreed-upon measures: access to adequate and sustainable nutrition and food in all stages of life and spaces of coexistence, within a social protection framework. Similarly, the Priority Social Actions Agenda of the South American Union (UNASUR), adopted at the South American Council for Social Development of 2012, agrees to promote initiatives that facilitate sufficient and timely access to healthy and quality food, and access to services that guarantee comprehensive development for the enjoyment of a full life. It also prioritizes government action to combat hunger and malnutrition in early childhood, by promoting school meals programmes and by implementing mechanisms to increase food availability both nationally and regionally. Child undernutrition continues to be an area of fundamental concern; it is included among the Andean Social Development Goals, which set a target to reduce chronic child undernutrition by 50% (CAN, 2011).

Nutritional issues are addressed specifically from the health perspective, and the commitments highlight new and longstanding problems affecting the region, such as non-communicable chronic diseases, the double burden of malnutrition and chronic undernutrition. The declaration of Cartagena de Indias "Youth, Entrepreneurship and Education" issued at the Twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government organized by SEGIB, states that public health policies need strengthening to address the negative impact of the double burden of malnutrition among adolescents and young people, in order to help improve their quality of life, and to strengthen the exchange of successful experiences and lessons learned on these issues in Ibero-American countries (SEGIB, 2016b).

In terms of the right to access quality food, the review found 27 commitments referring to agricultural development in the region, of which 15 were made within CELAC. These agreements address various agricultural development issues, such as working on prevention measures to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, promoting the purchase of products, strengthening food safety and providing training to farmers. They note that agricultural development efforts will also have economic effects at the territorial level, complementing poverty eradication efforts (CELAC, 2014b). Measures that have been promoted in the region include the work being done to revive ancestral food products. Moreover, CELAC has reaffirmed commitments relating to nutrition education as a means to promote good nutrition (CELAC, 2014a and 2014b).

(e) Work

Commitments in the labour dimension stress the importance attached to the stable creation of productive employment and quality and decent work as key factors for poverty eradication, the reduction of inequality, social inclusion and, as from 2015, progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Commitments have also been assumed on workers' rights, working conditions and the institutional framework of the labour market.

Although the aim of this chapter is to analyse the commitments assumed in the region since 2010, some information on earlier developments is useful. The first intergovernmental regional commitment to promote decent work was made in 2003, at the Twelfth Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML) organized under the auspices of OAS. That was followed by the Declaration of Mar del Plata and the Mar del Plata Plan of Action adopted at the Fourth Summit of the Americas in 2005, in which the Heads of State and Government of the American region committed to "implementing active policies to generate decent work and create the conditions for quality employment that imbue economic policies and globalization with a strong ethical and human component, putting the individual at the centre of work, the company, and the economy […] and promote decent work, that is to say: fundamental rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue" (OAS, 2005, paragraph 21). Then, at the Sixteenth American Regional Meeting of ILO, held in Brasilia in 2006, ministers of labour, along with trade union and employers' organizations of the American region discussed the proposal for a Hemispheric Decent Work Agenda and inaugurated a "Decent Work Decade in

the Americas", proposing that the policies contained in that Agenda should guide the development strategies of the countries of the region, with each country deciding on the goals that it is capable of achieving, according to its respective national circumstances and priorities (ILO, 2006, cited in Abramo, 2015).

The Seventeenth American Regional Meeting of ILO (held in Santiago in 2010) took stock of the decade of promotion of decent work and discussed the outlook for the Hemispheric Decent Work Agenda. Its conclusions stress that "severe inequality persists in the region, despite the economic progress made" and that "economic progress alone was not sufficient to reduce inequality and to create quality jobs. There was thus a need for private and public policies that placed employment at the centre of development strategies" (ILO, 2010). It reaffirms the importance of freedom of association and recognition of the effective right to collective bargaining to achieve the goals set out in the Hemispheric Decent Work Agenda; and it highlights the importance of promoting the ratification of the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, No. 102, and the strengthening of labour market institutions (ILO, 2010). Four years later, in 2014, the Lima Declaration, adopted at the Eighteenth American Regional Meeting reaffirms the importance of the relationship between promoting decent work, combating inequality, and the possibilities of building models of development with social inclusion in the region. In that Declaration, governments (represented by ministries of labour) and both employer and union organizations reiterate the importance of developing policies and commitments in various areas, such as respect for rights at work, consistent and integrated strategies to facilitate the transition from the informal to the formal economy, minimum wage policies, immediate and renewed action to address the youth employment crisis, eradication of child labour and forced labour, promotion of non-discrimination in employment and occupation, promotion of green jobs, establishment of social protection floors and social security measures, strengthening of labour inspection services and improvement of occupational safety and health conditions (ILO, 2014b).

All the agreements in the framework of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean have highlighted the importance of decent work as a part of inclusive social development strategies. In resolution 1(I) adopted at the first session of the Conference, held in Lima in 2015, the region's senior authorities on social development requested ECLAC to deepen the integrated analysis of the multiple dimensions of social inequality, poverty and vulnerability, as well as the relationship between economic, productive and social policies and policies for the protection of employment and the promotion of decent work (ECLAC, 2016f). Moreover, the agreements reached at the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santo Domingo in 2016, note that the stable generation of productive employment and decent work, together with the universalization of access to quality education and health care and the construction of a rights-based universal system of social protection are fundamental for "progressing towards the elimination of poverty in all its forms, as established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (ECLAC, 2017i). Lastly, at the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Montevideo, 2017), the member States reaffirmed the "conviction that the sustained creation of productive employment and decent work is a prerequisite for consolidating and deepening the region's progress in reducing poverty and inequality, as is guaranteeing access to quality education and health care and to universal social protection systems founded on a rights-based approach, including care policies to ensure co-responsibility between the State and society and between women and men, with an emphasis on gender, generational and human-rights approaches" (ECLAC, 2018e).

The third meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development, convened under the auspices of OAS, agreed to "strengthen programs on income generation and creation of decent, dignified, and productive employment for the poor and vulnerable, as a way out of poverty and a means to sustainable autonomy" (OAS, 2016).

The issues of women's economic autonomy and the social recognition and value accorded to women's unpaid work have been addressed both by the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (ECLAC, 2013) and by the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. For example, in the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030 (ECLAC, 2017e), the countries called for measures to eliminate gender discrimination and asymmetries in access to employment, but also to facilitate women's full incorporation into the labour market, including measures to improve access to economic assets (land, financing, and so on) to enable them to set up their own enterprises.

Education, particularly technical and vocational education, has been recognized as an essential prerequisite for decent work on several occasions. Countries have also issued calls to promote and invest more in educational programmes generally, but particularly in those targeting specific population groups such as youth, women, persons with disabilities and young people in rural areas. At the various Ibero-American summits (OEI, 2010a and 2012) for example, the countries have affirmed that decent work, education and vocational training throughout life should be considered as primary rights. They also consider it important to invest in the development and renewal of knowledge and skills, which requires coordination between training policies and developments in the world of production, among other actions. Moreover, the action plan of the Ibero-American Youth Pact adopted at the Twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2017, and at the Eighteenth Conference of Ministers of Youth earlier the same year (OIJ, 2018), includes a thematic pillar that seeks to promote employment and entrepreneurship, in a framework of decent work and as a mechanism of autonomy and youth emancipation. Several of the activities within this pillar are related to education.

Lastly, the subregional integration organizations have formulated plans and agendas that include issues relating to decent work. For example, the Intersectoral Regional Agenda on Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity (ARIPSIP) 2018–2030, which was produced under SICA auspices, seeks to increase people's social protection and productive inclusion, in line with the various Sustainable Development Goals (SICA, 2018). The Andean Community (CAN, 2010) and MERCOSUR (2012) have also promoted social development agendas that address issues such as social protection and work. Lastly, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM, 2014) has drawn up a strategic plan that encompasses several work-related issues (training and the development of a regional labour-market information system).

(f) Social protection

Social protection is a current issue in various forums; and it is considered a driver of equity and inclusion in society —viewed from a comprehensive and universal standpoint and applying different instruments for different population groups.

Social protection has been mentioned in the various outcome documents of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. In resolution 1(I), adopted at its first session in 2015, the Conference urges ECLAC to deepen its research and technical assistance in this area (ECLAC, 2016f). The agreements adopted at the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference, held in 2016, indicate that the construction of universal rights-based social protection systems is one of the conditions for progress in eliminating poverty in all its forms and to avoid possible setbacks. Resolution 2(II), adopted at the second session of the Conference in 2017, underlines the importance of universal rights-based social protection systems, considering them a prerequisite for consolidating and deepening the region's progress in reducing poverty and inequality "with an emphasis on gender, generational and human-rights approaches" (ECLAC, 2018e).

Extending the scope of social protection is mentioned as one of the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda in all the resolutions and conclusions of the American Regional Meeting of ILO (ILO, 2010 and 2014b). Similarly, the Plan of Action of the Social Charter of the Americas, adopted at the forty-fifth regular session of the Organization of American States, includes the objective of creating or strengthening "comprehensive social protection systems based on respect for human rights and on the principles of universality, sustainability, equality, inclusion, shared responsibility, solidarity and equity that include the generation of opportunities needed for families and individuals in vulnerable circumstances to enhance their well-being and quality of life" (OAS, 2015a). The strategic lines of action envisaged for achieving this objective include encouraging the implementation of social protection floors, the expansion of coverage[16] and distribution of its benefits, and the promotion of a comprehensive approach "through a wide range of measures and an intergenerational and life-cycle perspective" (OAS, 2015a), a perspective that is also endorsed in the Commitments for Social Development adopted at the third meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development of OAS

[16] The CELAC Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger Eradication 2025 contains an agreement to universalize conditional transfer programmes: "Encourage countries to seek universal coverage of CTPs for the poor as well as the extremely poor, linked to other systems of social protection" (CELAC, 2014b).

(2016). This latter forum, agreed, in general, to interlink the government's efforts with all sectors of society with a view to achieving more inclusive social protection with a comprehensive approach that favours public policies aimed at reducing inequality (OAS, 2016).

Various commitments also refer to the sustainability of social protection systems, with the corresponding need to strengthen their institutions and financing, highlighting their key role in crisis situations. As part of the Commitments for Social Development adopted at the third meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development, it was agreed "to promote the sustainability of social protection programs —especially those geared toward eradicating poverty, particularly extreme poverty— and of non-contributory pension programs; and to establish a mechanism to analyze and monitor the budget appropriations concerned" (OAS, 2016). In the same statement, it was agreed "to advance toward regulatory frameworks for social protection aimed at coordinating the progress made with both contributory and non-contributory social protection systems, and encourage the promotion of social protection in the countries that have made least progress in that regard" (OAS, 2016).

Social security also has a key role in agreements on social protection. The Nineteenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government agreed to move towards a culture of prevention and safety, recognizing the importance of health and social security in sustaining the quality of life of individuals, families and society as a whole (OISS, 2009). The extension of social security coverage is mentioned in various commitments to improve labour policies aimed at decent work, eliminating barriers to accessing formal employment —for example, those related to gender, ethnicity or income (SEGIB, 2016a). Similarly, the Brasilia Consensus, agreed upon at the eleventh session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2010c), stresses "the importance of and need for broad, inclusive, sustainable, redistributive, solidarity-based and strengthened social security systems." Other related areas are also included in the commitments, such as special postnatal maternity or care leave, for example at the Twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government held under the auspices of SEGIB (2016b).

Social protection is also highlighted for the role it plays throughout the life cycle. This has been made explicit in various meetings, including the Eighth Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which stated that social protection systems should become a continuum of protection, with different programmes available at different stages of people's life (UNDP, 2016). A similar opinion was expressed at the third meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development of the Organization of American States, which agreed to "advance toward comprehensive social protection systems in line with national contexts, which may include a rights-based approach, where appropriate, that take into account the different needs of individuals during the course of their lives, in order to enable them to live well in harmony with nature, and generate the conditions for individuals —particularly those in vulnerable circumstances— and societies to develop to their full potential" (OAS, 2016).

The population groups that attract the most attention in the different commitments include women, children, young people and older persons. Thus, at the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the objective was to "guarantee for all boys, girls, adolescents and young people, without any form of discrimination, the chance to live a life free from poverty and violence, and to enjoy protection and exercise of their human rights, a range of opportunities and access to health, education and social protection" (ECLAC, 2013). Social protection, in terms of its constant link with health, education and inclusion, tends to be mentioned in the different commitments.

In the case of older persons, the Protocol of San Salvador (OAS, 1988), establishes the right to special protection in old age, which includes access to food and specialized medical care for the elderly who lack them; and it also considers work programmes for this population group. The Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons seeks to guarantee the exercise of the rights of the elderly, "in order to contribute to their full inclusion, integration, and participation in society" (OAS, 2015c). Among other rights, the Convention recognizes the right to life, to independence and autonomy, to participation and inclusion in the community, and to security, as well as to a comprehensive care system, to social security, to work, to health, education, culture and housing. In the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (ECLAC, 2013), it was agreed to promote the development of benefits and services in social security, health

and education in social protection systems, particularly for older persons, taking account of the demographic changes taking place in the region. It was also agreed to include care in social protection systems, through allowances, social and health-care services and economic benefits that maximize autonomy, in particular for older persons, and guarantee the rights, dignity and well-being of families.

The Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, adopted at the thirteenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2017e), recognizes the persistence of gender gaps in various domains, including access to protection and social security; and it commits countries to putting mechanisms in place to ensure equal inclusion of women. Similarly, at the eleventh session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, a main objective proposed was to "increase public investment in social security, so as to comprehensively address the specific demands for care and social protection required by women in situations related to illness, disability, unemployment and life cycles, especially childhood and old age" (ECLAC, 2010c). A concern to strengthen prevention and social security policies, especially for women and girls, is also expressed at the subregional level in the MERCOSUR Strategic Plan of Social Action (PEAS) (MERCOSUR, 2012).

The strategic lines of action of the Plan of Action of the Social Charter of the Americas include the recognition of "nominal contributions to social security and pension entitlements by migrant workers", in accordance with national legislation (OAS, 2015a). The situation of migrants was also recognized at the Twenty-fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government, which agreed upon the importance of coordinating national legislations on pensions so that, with full legal security, they would guarantee the rights of migrant workers and their families, as protected under the social security schemes of the different Ibero-American States (SEGIB, 2005).

Commitments at the subregional level include those adopted in the Intersectoral Regional Agenda on Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity (ARIPSIP) 2018–2030 (SICA, 2018), which aims to develop intersectoral strategies that strengthen the capacities of SICA countries to increase social protection and productive inclusion for present and future generations. The agreement includes a specific commitment to achieve universal access to social protection schemes and services, which should provide universal, equitable and coordinated coverage (SICA, 2018).

3. Complementary dimensions of inclusive social development

The commitments reviewed also contain other dimensions that may be viewed as complementary to an inclusive social development agenda.

These include commitments on issues related to disasters (both natural and man-made) or the various forms of violence —areas that can directly hinder the achievement of inclusive social development.

In terms of the link between disasters and inclusive social development, at their fifty-fifth meeting, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean drew attention to the need to implement agreements on cooperation for development between countries and subregions in the face of extreme natural events or other critical situations, including the domain of women's social, economic and cultural rights (ECLAC, 2017h). Thematic proposals and agreements have also been established on the importance of guaranteeing access to health care and promoting cooperation in this area in the face of disasters, as well as strengthening international cooperation with a territorial approach, consolidating risk reduction structures and humanitarian assistance, especially for the most vulnerable island nations. The special concern about the vulnerability of Caribbean and Central American States to the effects of climate change is also highlighted in instruments such as the CELAC Ministerial Declaration on Family Farming and Rural Development, especially given its impact on the capacity of family farming and sustainable production (CELAC, 2017). The implementation of climate-change mitigation and adaptation measures in the areas of food security, income generation and risk reduction targeted on poor and vulnerable populations, especially in outlying urban settlements, forms part of the Commitments for Social Development adopted at the third meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development of the Organization of American States (OAS, 2016).

At the subregional level, the strategic lines of action of ARIPSIP 2018–2030 address the improvement of services and critical infrastructure in the face of disaster risk, as part of universal access to social protection schemes and services, as well as the promotion of financial services for appropriate management of disaster risks and climate change for the population living in poverty, among interventions at the territorial level (SICA, 2018). It also highlights the goal defined at the seventh meeting of the Andean Council of Ministers of Social Development of the Andean Community, that at least 70% of populations living in poverty and high vulnerability should be organized and trained in the prevention of social impacts from climate change and natural disasters (CAN, 2011).

With regard to the various forms of violence, the commitments adopted in different forums show that the phenomenon is a persistent one in Latin America and the Caribbean, and has a particular impact on women throughout their life cycle. Intergovernmental agreements reached under ECLAC auspices point to the urgency of promoting gender-equity measures to combat gender violence and enable women to fully exercise their social, economic, political and cultural rights (ECLAC, 2014d, 2015c and 2017h). The situation with regard to violence suffered by young and adolescent girls and migrant women was also considered at the Twenty-second Regional Conference on Migration (Commission of the European Communities, 2017b). Other issues mentioned by the agreements include the need to eradicate violence against children, the elderly, indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples, migrants and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) population. Adolescent and youth violence are addressed in various commitments. Several of them focus on the topics of domestic violence and violence in schools, and also stress the importance of fostering the role of young people as promoters of the culture of peace, leveraging "the education of values for an active, ethical, supportive, creative, humane, tolerant, participatory, law-abiding, environmentally respectful, non-violent and non-discriminatory citizenship" (CELAC, 2014a).

Other commitments focus on dimensions that facilitate inclusive social development. These include commitments on transport and road development, which centre on the need to generate better transport and mobility routes for people; for example, as a prerequisite for the development of territories with more productive, inclusive, resilient and equitable dynamics (SICA, 2018). Sustainable production is also an issue associated with the promotion of sustainable rural development and agriculture, as well as sustainable production in the urban, periurban and rural areas, and the awareness of sustainable production and consumption practices. In particular, CELAC has highlighted the role of family farming to reduce the loss of food in the region (CELAC, 2014b and 2017). Financial inclusion has been considered mainly from the standpoint of equal access to the financial system for men and women, especially in mechanisms associated with the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. A commitment has also been made to expand access to financial services for the entire population, including young people, rural-dwellers and farmers.

Commitments may also be identified in the domains of culture, leisure and recreation, linked to people's cultural rights. The regional agreements on this subject mention issues related, firstly, to health, highlighting the importance of guaranteeing their intercultural approach and inclusion, the linguistic and cultural training of personnel in this area, decision-making on health with a cultural perspective, and sexuality education with a focus on cultural relevance —topics specially promoted in the commitments adopted at the Pan American Sanitary Conference (PAHO, 2017b). Meetings of the subsidiary bodies of ECLAC, such as the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, have drawn attention to the need to design public policies that tackle the structural bases of gender inequality —especially in view of the cultural factors that perpetuate traditional gender roles— human rights construed from an intercultural perspective, the right to health and to medicines and traditional health practices with their socio-territorial and cultural specificities, and education programmes with an intercultural approach that foster knowledge of national and Latin American culture (ECLAC, 2013 and 2017e). Other regional agreements propose strengthening the cultural and sport practices of young people, making progress in promoting a culture of peace, generating conditions of intraregional mobility as the driver of cultural progress in the region while confronting the challenge of social inclusion, and implementing educational strategies that are respectful of the cultural diversity that characterizes the individual countries. It is also proposed to place renewed value on the languages and cultures of the region as assets that sustain intercultural education, to generate a culture of respect through education; consider

multiculturalism in the implementation of development strategies; adopt relevant measures to recognize and protect the collective knowledge, resources and wisdom of traditional or ancestral medicine, respecting the traditional medicine practices of indigenous peoples, and valuing and promoting the policies' cultural focus. Lastly, the importance of promoting the circulation of cultural goods, services and contents between the countries is also emphasized.

In the domain of leisure time and recreation, the priority measures specified in the *Operational guide for the implementation and follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development* included an agreement to design programmes to promote peaceful coexistence, continuing education, creative leisure pursuits, mental health and citizen security for the population in their territories in order to prevent the current social problems associated with issues such as poverty, social exclusion, the abusive use and trafficking of drugs, and gender-based violence (ECLAC, 2015b). The agreements also stress the importance of protecting women's leisure time, associated with the implementation of policies and measures to foster co-responsibility in care provision in the region.

Lastly, it is worth noting the cross-cutting nature of the territorial analysis in the commitments reviewed, which reveal the interrelationship between measures that address gender inequalities, promoting the economic and political participation of women in all territories (ECLAC, 2010b), and agreements to formulate policies that address territorial inequalities, in order to make progress in developing more integrated, interconnected and cohesive territories, and promote decentralization (ECLAC, 2013). Territorial inequalities are one of the structural axes of the social inequality matrix, as recognized in the agreements reached at the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2017i). Moreover, the outcome of the second session of that Conference emphasized the importance of treating territory as a vector for guiding the design and implementation of social policies to promote equality and inclusive social development (ECLAC, 2018e). In particular, the Regional Plan of Action for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean 2016-2036 translates this territorial approach into various lines of action, specifying objectives related to the implementation of national urban policies, urban legal frameworks, urban and territorial planning, urban economics and local implementation (ECLAC, 2018d).

4. Means of closing policy implementation gaps

Lastly, there are a number of regional and subregional commitments relating to means or mechanisms for the implementation of policies and actions, which can help close gaps in access to social policies and services in the region, in areas that are synergistic with the means specified in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see diagram III.2). The following paragraphs offer a brief summary of the issues that emerge from the commitments identified in this area.

Some commitments address the need to strengthen the countries' legal frameworks for the implementation of policies relating to the various dimensions of inclusive social development. These commitments highlight the need to harmonize national frameworks, and also in relation to the international human rights instruments ratified by the countries; the ratification of these instruments; and the strengthening, or even creation, of legal frameworks in specific areas that are not covered (such as migration and violence, recognition in the national accounts of the productive value of unpaid work, or women's access to formal financial services, among other issues).

Another set of commitments focuses on the organizational structures required for the management of public policies in the domains of inclusive social development, with an agreement on the creation, where necessary, and strengthening of social institutions, including the theme of inter-institutional policy oversight. In particular, the commitments reveal the need to promote interagency articulation to respond to issues and areas of multidimensional policies that require comprehensive responses, such as social protection (UNDP, 2016). Along these lines, the generation of multisectoral mechanisms that foster dialogue between representatives of governmental and non-governmental sectors are also highlighted; in particular, the promotion of public-private

partnerships in areas such as health, gender equality policies; and policies for the reduction of poverty and inequality; policies on education and economic growth and the strengthening of tripartite social dialogue (between governments, labour unions and employer organizations) for the promotion of decent work (ILO, 2010 and 2014b). In terms of organizational scope, some commitments involve the implementation of monitoring, evaluation and accountability mechanisms to oversee progress, which could be applied in various dimensions, such as health and gender equality, in line with the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For example, one of the measures established in the Montevideo Strategy for the Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda in the Framework of Sustainable Development by 2030 is "take into consideration the information compiled from monitoring and evaluation to create or strengthen accountability mechanisms relating to advances concerning, and fulfilment of, the Regional Gender Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, particularly, allocated budgets at all levels of public administration" (ECLAC, 2017e).

The commitments consider participation as a right, and also as a mechanism for their implementation, and a fundamental means for attaining inclusive social development. Participation is understood as the right of all individuals, communities and peoples, to be able to intervene and make decisions on issues that could influence their quality of life or rights (ORAS-CONHU, 2014); and it is recognized that people's participation and voice is essential for the advancement of sustainable development, social inclusion, economic inclusion and sustainability (ECLAC, 2014d and 2018c). Thus, the commitments view participation as a measure for involving society at large, including indigenous and Afrodescendent peoples with a gender approach in decision-making on various topics, including education, health and migration. Citizen participation is stressed as crucial owing to its contribution to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, such as those addressing gender equality and women's human rights (ECLAC, 2017e).

Other areas in which commitments have been made include means of implementation such as communication, especially linked to actions aimed at changing cultural practices, for example, for gender equality (ECLAC, 2017e); or the dissemination of practices aimed at reducing natural-disaster and climate-change risks (ECLAC, 2017h); the use of technologies to close gaps in access to policies and services, for example, in the health domain (PAHO, 2013); the information systems promoted for use in health policies and to provide sufficient and quality data on populations that experience inequalities or are left invisible from a statistical standpoint; or for the design of policies with a gender perspective (ECLAC, 2014d); and capacity-building, especially in the area of human resources and for the adoption of various measures, such as gender statistics and indicators, the design of policies with a gender perspective, and for the provision of quality health services (ECLAC, 2017e).

Some of these commitments mention cooperation, including South-South cooperation, as a means of implementation to advance gender equality in the region and for the exercise of women's social, economic and cultural rights; and also in other areas, such as migration, housing and health (ECLAC, 2017e, Regional Conference on Migration, 2017a, PAHO, 2017b). Financing is seen as a cross-cutting mechanism for the implementation and sustainability of policies for inclusive social development, for example, the financing of policies on gender equality (ECLAC, 2017e), health (PAHO, 2013) and quality public education (UNESCO, 2017a). Commitments that address areas related to the countries' fiscal policy reflect this concern and focus on securing (and sometimes increasing) the mobilization of sufficient and sustainable public funds to finance public policies (both sectoral ones such as education, and policies targeted on specific population groups, such as women); the recognition of the negative indirect effect fiscal policy can have when certain approaches are overlooked (gender approach, territorial focus, rights-based approach), and recognition of the potential of progressiveness of tax policy.

5. Regional and subregional commitments on social development: pending issues

This chapter has attempted to provide an initial systemization of the areas and dimensions of rights linked to inclusive social development, in which a level of agreement has been reached at the global, regional and subregional levels. This includes a degree of consensus and commitment reached on the guarantees that States must provide to their populations in terms of human, economic, social and cultural rights. The issues of poverty, inequality and inclusion appear as cross-cutting axes of an inclusive social development agenda, with strong interrelationships between all areas of rights. There is also a broad set of specific commitments in each of the areas of rights that have been defined as core dimensions of inclusive social development: health, education, housing and basic services, food security, decent work and social protection. These commitments reinforce a rights-based approach in addressing these dimensions and mainstream these approaches in axes of the region's social inequality matrix: socioeconomic, gender, life cycle, ethnic and racial and territorial. Cultural rights and participation are also referenced in these commitments, along with other domains, less frequently addressed by the set of documents reviewed, in complementary dimensions of inclusive social development, such as tackling violence or the impacts of disasters, among others.

Two areas stand out in particular as pending issues to be deepened in regional and subregional commitments, which could be addressed in an agenda such as the regional agenda for inclusive social development. First, some of the critical obstacles and challenges emerging from the current situation in the region, as identified in chapter II, are seldom addressed in the commitments. This is the case of the transformations that are occurring in the world of work, the challenges associated with the consolidation of an environmentally sustainable economy and the demographic transition. These challenges will have a particularly strong impact on Latin American and Caribbean societies; and, along with disasters, violence and migration, they need careful monitoring given the persistent and newly emerging gaps they generate in terms of access to the full exercise of citizenship rights. Secondly, most of the commitments remain anchored at a declarative level of objectives and principles, without necessarily being translated into more specific lines of action, except in the case of strategies and action plans that already exist on various issues in the region. Achieving a higher level of specification, focused on closing implementation gaps between the objectives, the policies and their results, could be a promising way forward in the process of formulating a Regional Agenda for Inclusive Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Annex III.A1
International human rights instruments

The following international human rights instruments impose obligations on States in terms of protecting the rights of persons in the following dimensions: social protection and social security; decent work; health; education; food safety; housing and basic services; culture and participation. The list also includes instruments that address other related issues, such as the elimination of all forms of racism and discrimination, or which refer to the protection of the rights of specific population groups, such as children and adolescents, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and migrants.

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- American Declaration of the Duties and Rights of Man (1948)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- Declaration on Social Progress and Development (1969)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights "Protocol of San Salvador" (1988)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)
- Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993)
- Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995)
- Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (1999)
- Millennium Declaration (2000)
- Declaration of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (2001)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Intolerance (2013)
- Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons (2015)

Fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO):

- Forced Labour Convention (No. 29) (1930)
- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention (No. 87) (1948)
- Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98) (1949)
- Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) (1951)
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105) (1957)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) (1958)

- Minimum Age for Admission to Employment Convention (No. 138) (1973)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) (1999)

Other conventions and instruments of the International Labour Organization (ILO):

- Maternity Protection Convention (No. 3) (1919), revised in 1952 (No. 103) and in 2000 (No. 183)
- Maintenance of Migrants' Pension Rights Convention (No. 48) (1935)
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention (1952)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) (1981)
- Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention (No. 118) (1962)
- Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention (No. 143) (1975)
- Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention (No. 157) (1982)
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No. 169) (1989)
- Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189) (2011)
- Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) (2012)

Annex III.A2
Regional and subregional intergovernmental forums

Body	Forum
Intergovernmental forums organized under United Nations auspices	
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)	Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
	Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
	Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean
	Statistical Conference of the Americas
	Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee
	Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies
	Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing and the Rights of Older Persons
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Ministerial Forum for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	Regional Meeting of Education Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean
International Labour Organization (ILO)	American Regional Meeting
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Regional Conference on Migration
Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)	Pan American Sanitary Conference
Other regional forums	
Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)	Meeting of Ministers for the Social Area
Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)	Summit of Heads of State and Government
Organization of American States (OAS)	Summit of the Americas
	Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Social Development
	Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Education
Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)	Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Labour, Employment and Social Security
	Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Public Administration and State Reform
	Ibero-American Conference of Ministers of Health
	Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government
International Youth Organization for Ibero-America (OIJ)/SEGIB	Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth
Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OED/SEGIB)	Ibero-American Culture Conference
	Ibero-American Education Conference
Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA)	Meeting of the Latin American Council
Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO)	Meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO)
Subregional forums	
Association of Caribbean States (ACS)	Council of Ministers
Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)	Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Social Area
Andean Community (CAN)-Andean Integration System	Andean Council of Ministers of Social Development
	Meeting of Ministers of Health of the Andean Area-Andean Health Organization (Hipólito Unanue Agreement)
	Andean Parliament
Caribbean Community (CARICOM)	Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Caribbean Community
Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)	Meeting of Ministers and High-level Authorities of Social Development
	MERCOSUR Parliament (PARLASUR)
Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project (MIDP)	Summit of Heads of State and Government
Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)	Council of Ministers of Social and Human Development
Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)	Meeting of Foreign Ministers
Central American Integration System (SICA)	Council of Ministers responsible for Social Affairs
	Meeting of the Central American Social Integration Council (CIS) (SISCA)
	Central American Parliament
Union of South American Nations (UNASUR)	South American Council on Social Development

CHAPTER

IV

Towards a regional agenda for inclusive social development: an initial proposal

A. The nature and objectives of the regional agenda for inclusive social development: the achievement of inclusive social development in the framework of sustainable development
B. Principles of the regional agenda for inclusive development
C. Operational aspects in the development of the regional agenda for inclusive social development

As noted in chapter I, resolution 2(II) of the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in October 2017, included among its commitments the definition of a regional agenda on inclusive social development, to which end the Conference requested ECLAC to "provide technical assistance for that agenda's construction within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, continuing to analyse in-depth the axes that structure social inequality in the region, promoting the guarantee of the population's social, economic and cultural rights, with particular emphasis on policies for contributory and non-contributory social protection, health and education, food security and nutrition, care, the promotion of productive employment and decent work of high quality, and the social institutional framework and financing of social policies, and fostering South-South cooperation for exchanging experiences and lessons learned among countries" (ECLAC, 2018e).

The construction and implementation of this agenda is all the more important in a regional context marked by the urgent need to expedite progress towards the targets proposed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and by the multiple emerging political, economic and social challenges already described. The regional agenda on inclusive social development thus seeks to position inclusive social development as a central pillar of sustainable development and a condition for economic development and environmental sustainability, and for supporting the regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In this context, the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, jointly with ECLAC as its technical secretariat, have begun work on building a regional agenda for inclusive social development. This is intended to be a participatory process actively involving members of the Conference, to which end a series of milestones and mechanisms are proposed. These are described in this chapter, which also outlines the general approach to the regional agenda for inclusive social development, and its objectives and principles.

A. The nature and objectives of the regional agenda for inclusive social development: the achievement of inclusive social development in the framework of sustainable development

The regional agenda for inclusive social development seeks to coordinate commitments between the countries of the region on the objectives, principles, targets and priority policies of inclusive social development, and on their strategies, means of implementation and mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation, in order to take action on structural inequalities, eradicate poverty and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the region.

It is thus a political and technical instrument intended to contribute to prioritizing actions and defining strategies for their implementation in the countries, while also providing a framework for cooperation and regional integration around a shared vision for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The agenda is thus geared towards attaining inclusive social development in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and producing achievements that will be sustainable over time. This is understood as the capacity of States to ensure the full exercise of people's social, economic and cultural rights, consolidate spaces for participation and recognition, and eradicate gaps in access to spheres that are fundamental for well-being, taking into account social inequalities and the axes that structure them from the perspective of universalism that is sensitive to differences. Bringing such an agenda to fruition will require a set of mechanisms translated into policies and means of implementation. As described in chapter I, the policy agenda should also be closely linked with the implementation and strengthening of social protection systems, a sphere in which social development ministries and secretariats have a key role to play and in which the different agents of social policy in collegiate bodies and specialized agencies must necessarily be well coordinated.

As indicated in resolution 2(II) of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the regional agenda for inclusive social development must address "the situation of particular inequality, discrimination and social and economic exclusion that affects children and adolescents, older persons, young people, women, indigenous peoples, the Afrodescendent population, persons with disabilities, those living in disadvantaged areas and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, together with migrants, populations affected by disasters and climate change and those displaced from their territories by conflicts" (ECLAC, 2018e).

The regional agenda for inclusive social development must also consider the special situations faced by countries with lower levels of economic development, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States (SIDS) and post-conflict countries. In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, special consideration must be afforded to the situation of the Caribbean countries[1], as well as people living in diverse territories in both urban and rural areas.

This will require a social institutional framework capable of addressing these challenges, with effective horizontal and vertical coordination, adequate organization, human and financing capacities, effective public-private partnerships and active participation by civil society. It will also require strengthening of South-South cooperation and a new regional governance for cooperation based on stronger regional integration, which are crucial as means of implementation of the agenda. These are all aspirations on which the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean has expressed consensus in successive resolutions.

Against this backdrop, an initial proposal of objectives for the agenda is described below, and will be submitted for review by the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference at their next meeting.

The overall objective of the agenda is to help Latin America and the Caribbean to progressively achieve inclusive social development, as a central component of sustainable development. This implies eradicating poverty, increasing equality, ensuring that everyone can fully exercise their economic, social and cultural rights, and combating all forms of discrimination and exclusion and the culture of privilege in the region.

The specific objectives are to:

- Identify and develop a set of principles and a map of priority measures expressed in commitments to safeguard and deepen the progress made in social development, and to achieve greater social inclusion and equality in the region, ensuring that the population can fully exercise their economic, social and cultural rights from the perspective of universalism that is sensitive to differences.
- Promote an integration and cooperation framework built on agreed and shared objectives and priorities relating to inclusive social development, duly taking into account the different capacities and situations of the countries and the specificity of the region.
- Contribute to guaranteed access for the population to good-quality health and education, universal social protection, food and nutritional security, housing and basic services, as well as productive employment and decent work, specifically closing the remaining access gaps which forms part of the social inequality matrix, and addressing the needs of specific populations.
- Promote and strengthen inclusive and comprehensive universal protection systems that can ensure access to policies and services for well-being, including amid potentially highly destabilizing phenomena, such as economic crises, disasters, different forms of violence, demographic shifts and changes in the world of work stemming from the fourth industrial and technological revolution and from the transition to a low-carbon economy.

[1] The Caribbean countries are particularly vulnerable to disasters, a situation that has major repercussions for their levels of public debt. This is a situation that "seriously damage[s] the economic infrastructure of small island developing States, diminishing their social achievements and deepening inequalities" and "compels them to apply austerity policies and cut back public investment" (ECLAC, 2018b, pp. 181–182). In response to this, ECLAC has proposed a debt-relief strategy for the subregion, along with the establishment of a Caribbean Resilience Fund (ECLAC, 2018b).

- Contribute to countries' efforts to close gaps in the implementation of priority policies, identifying a set of strategies, actions and means to achieve these objectives, including normative frameworks, institutions, cooperation, participation, financing, capacity-building, communication, technologies, information systems, and monitoring, evaluation and accountability systems.
- Strengthen regional and national instruments to review the progress made towards the achievement of inclusive social development in the framework of the social dimension of sustainable development.
- Contribute to the stability and strengthening of democracy, citizen security and consolidation of a culture of peace, rights, equality and non-discrimination in the countries of the region.

The regional agenda is intended to reinforce the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from a regional perspective, by singling out the priorities and main requirements for implementation and follow-up in Latin America and the Caribbean. At the same time, the regional agenda should complement the 2030 Agenda by sharpening the focus on the fight against the multiple forms of inequality in the region.

Therefore, the regional agenda should provide concrete guidance for following up the countries' progress in these areas, particularly in the framework of mechanisms such as the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development —which is the regional follow-up mechanism of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals— and of related instruments, such as the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development and the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030.

B. Principles of the regional agenda for inclusive development

The principles of the regional agenda for inclusive development are directly inspired by those contained in the set of international instruments governing human, economic, social and cultural rights that are fundamental to inclusive social development,[2] and by international and regional instruments on social development and the regional and subregional commitments they enshrine.

The aim and main inspiration of the 2030 Agenda are peaceful, fair and inclusive societies in larger freedom. It also incorporates essential principles such as the protection of human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as equality within inclusion under the imperative of leaving no one behind and endeavouring to reach those furthest behind first. According to ECLAC (2017b), the 2030 Agenda shows a deep commitment to "human rights, [...], the rule of law, access to justice, non-discrimination, substantive equality between women and men, the fight against all forms of violence and equality of opportunities".

At the same time, the resolutions of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean and the agreements of the first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference highlight the fact that poverty and inequality are multidimensional and interrelated phenomena and addressing them requires the consideration of their various expressions and the needs of the different populations from the perspective of universalism that is sensitive to differences. These instruments also highlight the commitment to equality as a guiding principle of social development policies, considering equal rights, capacities, opportunities, means and outcomes. All these declarations reflect the firm commitment to guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights and mainstreaming approaches based on socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, race, life cycle, territory and human rights.

[2] These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations, 1966a), the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development (United Nations, 1995) and the United Nations Millennium Declaration (United Nations, 2000) which, in turn, inspired the principles contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (United Nations, 2015a), which is an inevitable framework for the principles of the agenda.

These principles are in addition to others set forth in the corpus of regional and subregional instruments and commitments relating to social development which are now under review, especially those stemming from action plans, consensuses and strategies adopted at intergovernmental forums.[3] The regional agenda for inclusive social development must be linked up with commitments made at these forums; hence the importance of ensuring these linkages are in place right from the guiding principles stage.

There follows a preliminary and non-exhaustive list of guiding principles for the regional agenda:

- Recognition of the universality, comprehensiveness, indivisibility and complementarity of human rights and dignity, and the commitment made by States to respect, protect, promote and fulfil social, economic and cultural rights.
- The rights-based approach and its principles of equality and non-discrimination; participation and empowerment, and accountability and transparency, as the bases for policies.
- A perspective of universalism that is sensitive to differences in socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, race, life cycle and territory as a guide for inclusive social development to ensure that no one is left behind.
- The principle of progressivity and non-regression in the measures agreed upon for the agenda, to the maximum of available resources and respecting the sovereign decisions of the States.
- Effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, sufficiency, participation, transparency and access to information in the social policies prioritized in the agenda.
- The systemic vision of development, with social, environmental and economic stability.
- The irreplaceable role and commitment of the State, in collaboration with civil society, to achieve inclusive social development.
- Full equality, including equality between men and women, and the eradication of poverty as goals of inclusive social development policies.
- Solidarity as a pillar in the development of universal policies for equality and eradication of the culture of privilege.
- Respect for diversity, peace and tolerance, and the sustainability of development, ensuring intergenerational equity with responsibility for present and future generations, as universal goals of inclusive social development in the framework of sustainable development.
- Democracy, alliance-building, mutual responsibility, international cooperation and an institutional framework suited to the challenges faced as fundamental means of implementation, with the active participation of all stakeholders.

C. Operational aspects in the development of the regional agenda for inclusive social development

It is proposed to develop the regional agenda for inclusive social development in a progressive and participatory manner, with ongoing dialogue among the member States of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. Part of this is the formulation of ad hoc mechanisms for the continuous

[3] Some examples of these instruments are, at the regional level, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (ECLAC, 2013), adopted at the first session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2018c), the Sustainable Health Agenda for the Americas 2018-2030 (PAHO, 2017a), adopted at the twenty-fourth Pan American Sanitary Conference, the Asunción Declaration, adopted at the twenty-first Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI, 2011) and the Plan of Action of the Social Charter of the Americas (OAS, 2015a); and at the subregional level, the Andean health policy for the prevention of disability and for the comprehensive care and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities of the Andean Health Organization-Hipólito Unanue Agreement (ORAS-CONHU, 2010) and the Intersectoral Regional Agenda on Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity 2018-2030 of the Central American Integration System (SICA, 2018).

review and negotiation of agreements and consensuses on the components of this agenda and its scope in the framework of the 2030 Agenda and other commitments made by the States. Such mechanisms will enable the member countries to define the depth and type of commitments to be set forth in the regional agenda, as well as its expected development phases. These phases could be coordinated on the basis of the incremental components to be included in the agenda, as proposed below:

Phase I:

1. Conceptual frame of reference on inclusive social development.
2. Guiding principles for the formulation of social policies for inclusive social development.
3. Objectives of inclusive social development.

Phase II:

4. Targets of inclusive social development.
5. Policies prioritized in the dimensions of inclusive social development.
6. Lines of action for each policy prioritized, which may include sectoral and intersectoral measures.

Phase III:

7. Strategies and means of implementation that include institutional aspects and political, technical and financial agreements that enable the development of prioritized policies.[4]
8. Mechanisms for the follow-up and evaluation of progress, which could include the development of a system of indicators to follow up the commitments adopted in the agenda. This component could also draw upon the databases maintained and updated by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), as mentioned in the mandate of resolution 2(II) adopted at the second session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the database on social investment in Latin America and the Caribbean, the database of non-contributory social protection programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean, the database on youth and social inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean and the database on social institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the observatory on social development now being built.

Given that the development of the agenda will extend until the third session of the Conference (to be held in the second half of 2019), certain milestones may be identified along the road towards the formulation of a first draft of this agenda for review by member countries of the Conference:

1. The compilation of the existing foundation of regional and subregional commitments on inclusive social development deriving from the intergovernmental forums mentioned in chapter III. The information systematized in this instrument over 2018 will be included in a web platform to be presented at the third session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019, and is expected to serve as the basis for the review of commitments to be adopted in the framework of the regional agenda.
2. Discussion and definition of agreements on the principles, objectives and linking concept of inclusive social development of the agenda at the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference, to be held in September 2018, and following the meeting, on the basis of the proposal made herein.
3. Following the experience of other agendas of intergovernmental work at the regional level,[5] the creation of a working group, at the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference, to advance in the negotiation of agreements on the agenda.

[4] For reference, the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, adopted in 2016, includes 10 implementation pillars: normative framework, institutional architecture, participation, capacity-building and strengthening, financing, communication, technology, cooperation, information systems, and monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

[5] The experience acquired in the formulation of the following instruments was taken into consideration: Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development; Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean; Regional Action Plan for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean 2016–2036.

4. Definition of the depth of commitments to be included in the agenda and their binding or non-binding nature, and of their various components. These decisions may be made within the working group and later submitted for consideration by all member countries.
5. Preparation of a draft version of the agenda by ECLAC, in its capacity as technical secretariat of the Conference, which will be reviewed by the working group.
6. Subregional meetings with member countries of the Conference to share the progress made in the preparation of the agenda and to agree upon its fundamental elements, while strengthening its coordination with subregional agendas for social development that already exist or are being developed.
7. Possible consultations with civil society on the nature, scope and content of the agenda.

There follows a proposed timeline of activities for the development of the agenda.

Diagram IV.1
Stages in the development of the regional agenda for inclusive social development, 2018

April	May-June	July	August	September	October-December
• Systematization of global, regional and subregional agreements on inclusive social development • Preparation of the draft agenda for the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development				**12 September** Second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: • Presentation of the document • Adoption of agreements on the development of the agenda • Creation of a working group to develop the agenda	• Preparation of the draft agenda • Consultations with civil society
19 April Working meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference: • Process of building the regional agenda on inclusive social development • Document of the second meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference			• Communication of the process and delivery to the countries of a concept note on progress in the development of the regional agenda for inclusive social development		

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Diagram IV.2
Stages in the development of the regional agenda for inclusive social development, 2019

January-March	April	May	June	July-August	September-December
• Preparation of the draft agenda • Meeting of the working group: adoption of preliminary agreements on the scope, components and basic text of the agenda	• Third meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Conference in the framework of the third meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development • Subregional meetings to validate the agenda		• Meeting of the working group on a final draft of the agenda • Preparation of the final draft of the agenda	• Editing and translation of the reference document	Third session of the Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: • Discussion and adoption of the agenda • Presentation of the basis of regional and subregional commitments

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The legal instrument that will facilitate the operationalization of the agenda must be defined once the member countries of the Conference, through the working group established to develop this agenda, has decided on the depth of the commitments to be adopted, their binding or non-binding nature, and components.

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