



**Fifth session of the
Regional Conference on
Population and Development in
Latin America and the Caribbean**

Cartagena de Indias, 3 and 4 July 2024

Fifth session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 3 and 4 July 2024

Concept note

Panel 2

“Persons with disabilities and the population and development agenda”

The fifth session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean will be held on 3 and 4 July 2024 in Cartagena de Indias.

By virtue of resolution 4(IV), adopted at the fourth session of the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in June 2022, and the agreements adopted at the fifth meeting of the Presiding Officers, held in November 2023, it was resolved that the thirtieth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development would be commemorated in the framework of the fifth session of the Regional Conference.

The Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development underscored the pressing need for continued action to promote effective measures for the prevention of disability, for rehabilitation and for the realization of the goals of full participation and equality for persons with disabilities (paragraph 6.28). The objectives are: (a) to ensure the realization of the rights of all persons with disabilities, and their participation in all aspects of social, economic and cultural life; (b) to create, improve and develop necessary conditions that will ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and the valuing of their capabilities in the process of economic and social development; and (c) to ensure the dignity and promote the self-reliance of persons with disabilities.

The recommended actions explicitly state that: “Governments at all levels should consider the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of ethical and human rights dimensions. Governments should recognize needs concerning, inter alia, reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, HIV/AIDS, information, education and communication. Governments should eliminate specific forms of discrimination that persons with disabilities may face with regard to reproductive rights, household and family formation, and international migration, while taking into account health and other considerations relevant under national immigration regulations.” (paragraph 6.30) The Programme of Action also states that governments at all levels “should develop the infrastructure to address the needs of persons with disabilities, in particular with regard to their education, training and rehabilitation” (paragraph 6.31),

“should promote mechanisms ensuring the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and reinforce their capabilities of integration” (paragraph 6.32), and “should implement and promote a system of follow-up of social and economic integration of persons with disabilities” (paragraph 6.33).

On 30 March 2007, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was opened for signature. This marked a real paradigm shift in the treatment of persons with disabilities, from a medical or charitable perspective to a human rights approach that ensures that persons with disabilities have access to and can participate in decisions that affect their lives and seek remedy for violations of their rights.

Adopted in 2013, the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, which addresses disability in a cross-cutting manner in all its chapters, explicitly refers to the important contribution of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in incorporating disability-related issues as an integral part of national sustainable development strategies, from a human rights perspective, with equality and without discrimination. Under priority measure 50, the countries also agreed to fulfil the commitment to promote and ensure gender mainstreaming and its intersection with perspectives on race, ethnicity, age, social class and disability status in all public policies, especially in economic and cultural policies, and coordination between branches of government and social stakeholders, including organizations of young, Afro-descendent or indigenous women, to ensure gender equality. Likewise, the issue of persons with disabilities has gained increasing visibility in the context of the sessions of the Regional Conference, where it has become more visible, owing to increased demand and a more prominent place on the regional population and development agenda, as well as to the active participation of civil society organizations of persons with disabilities in the Conference. In that regard, at the third session of the Regional Conference, held in Lima in 2018, countries were requested to include in their national reports more in-depth information on persons with disabilities in relation to each chapter of the Montevideo Consensus, in line with the *Operational Guide for the Implementation and Follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development* and in accordance with national priorities and needs. Reference was also made to the need to establish thematic subgroups on specific indicators for follow-up of the Montevideo Consensus, such as those relating to persons with disabilities, and to the need for data disaggregated by disability in systems of sociodemographic, economic and vital statistics (resolution 3(III), paragraphs 14, 19 and 24).

Similarly, at the fourth session of the Regional Conference, held in Santiago in 2022, countries were encouraged to “develop and strengthen the capacities of national statistical systems and national statistical offices to generate population data, disaggregated by [...] disability and other relevant characteristics of diverse populations that are required for an accurate assessment of the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development”; and were requested to “include in their national reports more in-depth information on persons with disabilities in relation to each chapter of the Montevideo Consensus” (resolution 4(IV), paragraphs 22 and 23).

Thus, a proposed approach and strategy for addressing issues related to persons with disabilities has been emerging in the framework of the Regional Conference on Population and Development.

To analyse the achievements and challenges related to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities since the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and taking into account the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (2013), a panel will be held to provide a framework for discussions and reflection on this issue of vital importance for the population and development agenda.

The panel will take the form of a round table discussion in which representatives of governments, civil society, academia, international cooperation agencies and other relevant stakeholders involved in the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities will participate.

The moderator will present a series of guiding questions and allow each panellist to express their views and perspectives on the various thematic issues, following which there will be a brief opportunity for dialogue and exchanges between panellists. Panellists are requested to limit their answers to no more than three minutes in order to facilitate interactive dialogue. The guiding questions are:

- (i) ***Shift in approach and policy actions since the adoption of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development:*** How has the shift from a biomedical paradigm to a social and rights-based approach impacted policy actions over the past 30 years? What have been the key policies or programmes to promote the exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities in an intersectional approach?
- (ii) ***Strategies:*** What strategies are required to ensure that issues related to persons with disabilities are mainstreamed in the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus? What can be done to better promote and give greater visibility to the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of the population and development agenda, and to raise awareness on ensuring the autonomy, independent living and participation in community life of persons with disabilities? What actions are needed to promote, from a gender perspective, the statistical visibility of persons with disabilities and to boost the production of indicators disaggregated by disability status?
- (iii) ***Role of civil society organizations of person with disabilities:*** What role should civil society organizations of persons with disabilities play in holding governments accountable for policy actions for persons with disabilities?

Panel 2

“Persons with disabilities and the population and development agenda”

Thursday, 4 July

2.30 –3.30 p.m.

Moderator: María Soledad Cisternas (Chile), Professor of Law and Researcher. Former Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2013 – 2016), and Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility (2017 – 2023)

- Anderson Henao, Director for Ensuring the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Equality and Equity of Colombia
- Olga Montúfar, President of the Network of Indigenous and Afro-descendant Women with Disabilities of Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico)
- Mr. Kenrick Theus, President of Belize Assembly for People with Diverse Abilities (BAPDA) (Belize)
- Marcela Ramírez, Deputy Director, Continuing Education Program Coordinator, School of Social Work, University of Costa Rica
- Jorge Luis Díaz, Specialist in the Social Cohesion Area, Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)