

Distr.
LIMITED
LC/CEA.13/5
24 November 2025
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH
2500499[E]

Thirteenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas
of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Santiago, 25–27 November 2025

**PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PRODUCTION OF HARMONIZED STATISTICS
ON FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

SUMMARY



INTRODUCTION

In Latin America and the Caribbean, migration, forced displacement and refuge are on the rise, driven by violence, armed conflict, rights violations, socioenvironmental crises and structural exclusion. The statistical measurement of these trends poses challenges, in particular for data comparability and disaggregation. There are persistent gaps in data on internal and cross-border displacement, especially in cases where displacement is not formally recognized, which reduces its visibility and limits evidence-based policy design. A regional tool is needed to standardize concepts and methodologies on the basis of frameworks including the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics and the international recommendations on statelessness statistics, as well as on technical cooperation exercises led by the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service. The aim of this guide is to strengthen national capacities to produce useful, high-quality, comparable and rights-based statistics on forced displacement. It proposes flexible guidelines, adaptable to different contexts, that integrate information from multiples sources and incorporate gender and intersectional perspectives. The guide has four chapters: the first, representing its central focus, addresses population and housing censuses and administrative records (section A of this summary), and complementary chapters focus on the use of data from non-State entities and other sources (section B), inter-agency coordination (section C) and communication and dissemination strategies (section D).

A. TYPOLOGIES OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION

A typological approach recognizes that forcibly displaced persons have specific protection needs that are not adequately reflected in general migration statistics. In accordance with the revised recommendations on statistics of international migration and temporary mobility of the Statistics Division of the United Nations (2025),¹ this chapter is aligned with the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics and the international recommendations on statelessness statistics, prioritizing comparability and disaggregation by citizenship and birthplace. Migrants are the central unit of the analysis, which examines their characteristics, trajectories, legal status and differentiated needs.

The broadest term used in the typological approach to international protection is “refugee and refugee-related populations”, which, in the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, encompasses refugees, asylum-seekers, returned refugees, stateless persons, internally displaced persons and other groups in refugee-like situations. Some of these populations may be classified as international migrants for statistical purposes, but this fact has no bearing on their legal status. The scope of the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics includes persons crossing borders owing to persecution, violence or war, but not persons whose reasons are solely economic or environmental (except those who require international protection).

The revised recommendations of the Statistics Division introduce the concept of temporary mobility, which includes asylum-seekers, persons in transit and those who move for climate-related reasons

¹ United Nations. (2025). *Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration and Temporary Mobility (Unedited version)*. <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/sconcerns/migration/>.

and do not meet the minimum stay requirement for habitual residence. Most refugees in asylum countries meet the criteria to be counted as international migrants and should be classified as foreign citizens. The International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics additionally include returned refugees, who should be counted in both inflows and outflows, even if their need for protection has not been formally recognized.

The second term used in the typological approach is “internally displaced persons”. Originally, in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, the term referred to persons who have been forcibly displaced and have not crossed an internationally recognized State border. In the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics, this classification includes internally displaced persons and related populations, including family members who have not been displaced and persons whose displacement-related vulnerabilities have been overcome. Internally displaced persons who temporarily go abroad retain their status as long as they do not establish a new habitual residence while there.

The statistical framework disaggregates the stock of internally displaced persons into three sub-stocks: those who remain in locations of displacement, those in locations of return and those who have settled elsewhere in the country. Children born after displacement are not counted in the total stock of internally displaced persons but should be counted as members of displaced households given the differentiated vulnerability that they face; specific effects on children and adolescents relate to access to care, education, health and protection, and they can be further intensified as a function of gender, age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Internally displaced persons exit the total stock when they overcome displacement-related vulnerabilities or establish a new country of residence or upon death.

The third term used under this approach is “stateless persons”, defined in the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons as a person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law. UNHCR includes in this definition persons of undetermined nationality. The international recommendations on statelessness statistics propose three categories: (i) persons without a recognized nationality status, whose stateless status is legally recognized; (ii) persons with recognized stateless status, who are formally identified as such by a relevant authority; and (iii) persons without a recognized stateless status, whose lack of nationality has not been officially recognized. Although these can be further disaggregated by birthplace, using the aggregate is recommended for statistical purposes.

Within this population, persons formally recognized as stateless are differentiated from those whose nationality status is unclear or in dispute. When a case of statelessness is combined with either internal displacement or refuge, this duality should be explicitly recorded as such in order to avoid double counting.

The prevalence of statelessness is not significant in the region, and what cases of statelessness there are correspond more to the status “undocumented” than “without nationality”. Consequently, this document does not define specific guidelines on statelessness, deferring instead to specialized UNHCR frameworks and the international recommendations on statelessness statistics. Analysis should differentiate by gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability status.

The presentation of the typologies in diagram 1 is designed to illustrate the different types of migration and the criteria used for their measurement, along with specific groups requiring special attention in statistical registers and protection policies:

- (i) **Type of displacement.** Includes forced displacement (refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons), international migration (requiring a change in residence for a period of at least 12 months) and temporary mobility (persons in transit, seasonal workers, circular migrants and nomadic populations);
- (ii) **Statistical criteria.** Distinguishes stocks (measuring the population in one place and moment in time) and flows (measuring movements over a period of time);
- (iii) **Special cases.** Includes asylum-seekers in transit, seasonal and itinerant workers, and nomadic populations which, despite their relevance for designing protection policies and service provision, tend not to be reflected in traditional sources.

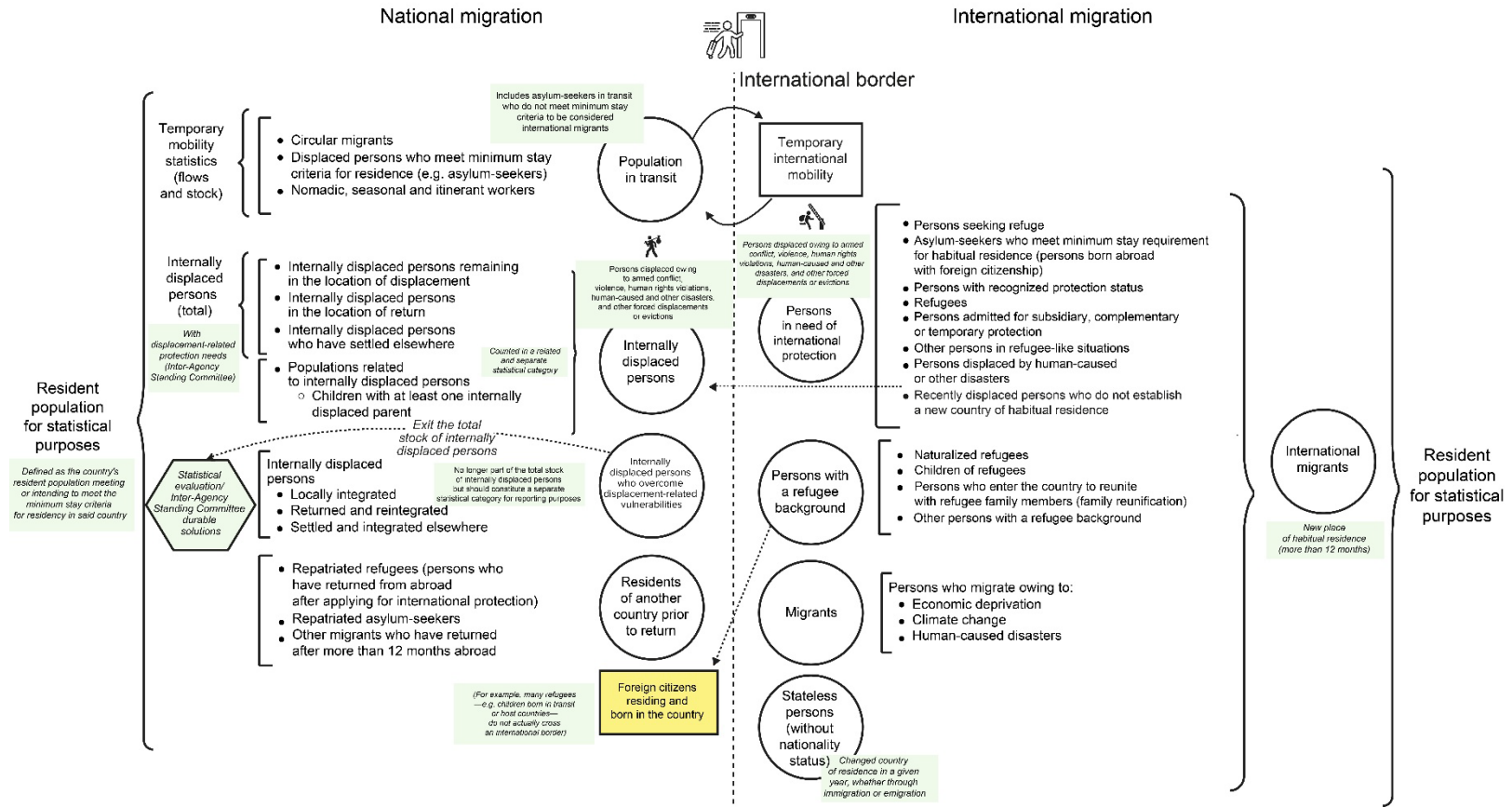
Methodological and statistical challenges in identifying migrant populations include conceptual ambiguity, category overlap and problems of international comparability. Moreover, the causes of migration tend to be mixed, further complicating classification.

Added to this are the limitations of traditional sources of data: censuses and surveys need to include specific questions on residence, reason for migration and migration status, and administrative records are fragmented and susceptible to undercounting, especially cases of irregular status. There are also problems identifying habitual residence and determining minimum stay requirements for persons in transit or who have been displaced on multiple occasions.

From an ethical standpoint, data collection comes with risks related to insecurity and distrust; the process must therefore ensure confidentiality, informed consent and the use of data exclusively for statistical purposes.

Recommendations in this regard include adopting clear operating definitions, strengthening inter-agency coordination, including specific modules on statistical operations, encouraging the use of innovative methodologies and ensuring compliance with the ethical principles of data protection in all processes.

Diagram 1 Migration and forced displacement typologies Measurement of the migrant population for statistical purposes



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, on the basis of information from the Joint Internal Displacement Profiling Service.

1. Guidelines for population censuses

Censuses, with their exhaustive nature, national scope of coverage and established periodicity, are a strategic tool for ensuring the visibility of displaced persons and refugees. They make it possible to obtain territorially disaggregated information and establish baselines for comparison, but there are methodological challenges which must be overcome to conduct censuses adequately, relating to question design, coverage of vulnerable settlements, updating of maps, operational capacity-building for those involved in census operations, and ethical data protection.

For censuses to identify forced displacement, they must include questions about previous residence, reason for migration and date of migration. They must be designed with technical clarity and cultural sensitivity in mind and with the understanding that people facing violence or stigmatization might be reluctant to respond. It is critical to adapt questions to the language, education level and migration experience of the respondent, avoiding potentially alarming terms. In addition, intersectionalities between a person's migration experience and inequalities relating to their gender, age, ethnicity or disability status must be represented statistically to reflect the diversity of trajectories.

Many displaced persons live in camps, informal settlements or alternative housing that may fall outside the census framework. The definition of housing needs to be expanded to include formal and improvised structures. To ensure effective coverage, map systems should be updated through field surveys, participatory mapping and satellite imagery, census units should be adjusted, personnel should receive training on cultural diversity and protection protocols, and work should be coordinated with local stakeholders or humanitarian workers throughout all phases of the census operation. These measures will ensure the inclusion of highly vulnerable segments of the population and improve statistical quality.

Given that displacement affects family structures and living arrangements, censuses should collect data on households composed partially or entirely of displaced persons and mixed nuclear families. Identification of displacement should not be limited to the individual, recognizing the household as a unit of analysis. One strategy in this regard is to classify as internally displaced any household that includes at least one displaced person. In addition, households shared with host families should be taken into account by using relationship categories that reflect co-habitation and family trajectories. This approach will provide a clearer picture of support networks and resettlement patterns.

Children born in transit or host countries are not counted as displaced persons, but their situation is tied to the protection status of their families. While they should not be counted as displaced persons, they should be identified as members of affected households, as their inclusion in the analysis is necessary to understand their barriers to access to education, health and protection due to family insecurity. In accordance with the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, these children should be included in the category of persons with a refugee background, an approach that maintains methodological rigour while ensuring social sensitivity.

Questions on displacement should be evaluated through cognitive tests, pilot tests and consistency analysis. The process should take into account differential bias based on gender, age, education level and ethnicity, and questionnaires should be adapted linguistically or completed with the support of community interpreters. The National Quality Assurance Framework of the United Nations offers a comprehensive approach to ensuring the quality of new data sources and strengthening inter-agency collaboration. The social validity of the questionnaire—in other words, whether people understand and accept the questions—should also be evaluated, and perceptions in that regard should be documented during pilot tests.

The processing of census data on displacement must be guided by confidentiality, informed consent and the “do no harm” principle. Displaced persons who may be distrustful of official registers need assurances that their data will be used exclusively for statistical purposes and that their identities will be protected. It is crucial to raise community awareness and train personnel on human rights and cultural diversity. Census operations must have protocols in place to recognize at-risk cases and refer them to the appropriate authorities, ensuring ethical and technical integration throughout the process.

According to the framework on durable solutions for internally displaced persons of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, a durable solution is achieved when internally displaced persons no longer have any specific needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy equal rights. Achieving a durable solution through one of three possible means —return, local integration or relocation— requires sustainable conditions, which should be evaluated on the basis of eight criteria: safety and security, standard of living, livelihood, restoration of housing and land, documentation, family reunification, participation in public affairs and access to justice. Although censuses do not capture all these dimensions, they contribute key structural inputs for monitoring progress.

On a related front, questions about the past, for example on previous residence or reason for migration, make it possible to reconstruct the circumstances of displacements due to violence, disasters or persecution, estimate how long the person has been displaced and differentiate recent displacement status from integration processes in more advanced stages.

In addition, censuses facilitate comparison of characteristics between displaced persons and the general population, such as education, employment, housing and access to basic services, making it possible to measure inequalities and identify differential patterns according to age, sex or ethnicity.

However, it should also be noted that questions about whether people wish to stay or return are rarely included in censuses despite offering valuable information for forecasting integration or future migration, which is particularly useful in designing support and reintegration policies.

Raising the visibility of the specific inequalities affecting women, girls, LGBTIQ+ persons, Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendants and persons with disabilities is of vital importance. This document offers guidelines aimed at ensuring disaggregation by sex and other dimensions of analysis, identifying vulnerable households, localizing displaced persons from a territorial perspective, training personnel on gender perspectives and using the feedback provided by census results to design inclusive public policies.

Censuses can contribute relevant variables for criteria related to the achievement of durable solutions and the exercise of rights, such as victimhood of violence status, freedom of movement, protection mechanisms, disaster risk reduction, food security, housing, medical services, education, employment, economic security, restitution of property, personal documentation, family reunification, public participation and access to justice. Although their scope is indirect, these variables help to produce structural indicators that, when linked to surveys and registers, strengthen displacement monitoring.

2. Guidelines for national surveys

Household surveys’ ability to capture detailed variables and maintain a measure of methodological flexibility makes them an essential means of generating information on forcibly displaced persons and refugees. They make it possible to analyse areas including access to rights, integration trajectories, housing and working conditions, reasons for displacement and progress towards durable solutions. In contexts where

censuses and administrative records are insufficient, surveys become the primary source of information for ensuring that these populations are seen and analysed. Conducting these surveys requires careful design of concepts, samples and operations, in addition to mainstreaming gender and intersectional perspectives to reflect differentiated inequalities.

All surveys should begin by clearly defining the subject and objectives of the analysis. Their focus can be currently displaced persons, persons who were displaced in the past, or persons who returned or integrated. Defining the survey universe is a decisive step: a broad focus will facilitate detection of a range of different trajectories and vulnerabilities, while a narrower focus, for example on currently displaced persons or people with formal refugee status, will limit the diversity of experiences included in the analysis.

The survey design should incorporate typologies and reason for displacement, avoiding the use of generic categories that mask relevant differences. It should also align with the typologies of forced displacement and migration presented in this document with a view to ensuring the comparability of data generated by other instruments. An identification module comprising questions aligned with standard criteria is fundamental for ensuring methodological consistency and avoiding disparities between surveys.

With regard to design strategies, there are two main approaches. The first is to include identification modules in general surveys, such as household, quality of life or employment surveys, which make it possible to leverage established statistical operations frameworks, procedures and tools, ensure comparability with the general population and produce historical series. However, the sample size for displaced persons tends to be small, which hinders detailed analysis, and these instruments offer limited space for the inclusion of more specific questions.

The second approach is to conduct specialized surveys focused on displacement or refuge. Specialized surveys make it possible to understand trajectories, discrimination, integration and institutional ties in greater depth. The downside, however, is that they require more resources, in addition to detection strategies adapted to respondents' potential distrust or insecurity.

The two approaches are complementary: a country might use general surveys to gain a broad understanding and more targeted surveys for detailed insights. In all cases, the variables collected should enable cross-tabulation by sex, age, ethnicity, disability status and family status in order to reflect the differentiated effects of displacement.

Regarding sample design and detection strategies, displaced populations tend to be underrepresented in traditional sampling frameworks. To remedy this, overrepresentation can be applied in areas of high concentration, or the number of observations can be increased through the periodic inclusion of modules. Specialized surveys can use conventional frameworks (censuses and registers) or targeted methods, such as location sampling, service centre sampling or chain sampling, which are useful for difficult-to-access populations, although representative inferences are not always attainable through these methods.

Migration and recent settlement are more complicated matters, with data collection requiring a more flexible approach and coordination with territorial stakeholders. Non-response bias is also a concern, as some people might decline to respond out of fear or because of their irregular status. Ensuring anonymity, training interviewers and building trust in interviews are essential mitigation measures. In addition, sample design must enable the identification of key subgroups and territorial and thematic disaggregation for utility in public policy design.

Ethical and protection considerations constitute another central element. In conducting surveys, the “do no harm” principle must be prioritized, recognizing that displaced persons have often experienced violence or persecution. Informed consent is vital: participants should understand the objectives and nature of the questions and the guarantee of confidentiality. The information gathered must be protected from inappropriate use, with a guarantee that it will not be used for migration control or punitive ends.

There should be referral protocols for when a threat is detected, such as violence or trafficking in persons. In addition, interviewers should have an awareness of human rights, migration and displacement, as well as gender and intersectional perspectives. Trust can be built by including displaced persons in survey teams and ensuring that questionnaires are respectful and free of stigmatizing categories, integrating explicit ethical frameworks in line with international standards and national regulations on data protection.

Likewise, statistical production should follow the guidelines of the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, the Statistics Division of the United Nations and other global frameworks aimed at facilitating comparability and monitoring of global commitments. The International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics, the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics and the international recommendations on statelessness statistics provide standard definitions and methodologies, and the Statistical Division’s revised recommendations on statistics of international migration and temporary mobility provide relevant technical criteria for household surveys. In addition, the compatibility offered by specialized agencies’ tools makes it possible to integrate information with data generated by other regional and global mechanisms, maintaining consistent language and a shared methodological foundation.

Surveys facilitate more in-depth measurement of durable solutions, beyond geographical localization, considering current status and exercise of rights. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee framework, as previously discussed, identifies three means to achieving durable solutions —return, local integration and relocation— and proposes eight criteria for evaluating progress, which translate into statistical objectives that can be operationalized in surveys through indicators and question banks.

Surveys also make it possible to measure perceptions of safety and security, access to services, living conditions, labour market access, availability of documentation, family reunification, social participation and access to justice. The Inter-Agency Durable Solutions Indicator Library offers tools for operationalizing and aligning these criteria with the SDGs.

Gender and intersectional perspectives should be mainstreamed, as experiences and barriers vary according to age, gender, ethnicity and disability status; for example, women may be at greater risk of violence or labour exclusion, while young people and adolescents may be more exposed to education-related, social or economic vulnerability. Survey design and analysis must recognize and account for these differences by reflecting the diverse range of trajectories and generating data to inform inclusive public policy responses.

3. Identification of displacement and migration

Official statistical production on displacement and migration requires disaggregating census and survey data by migration and displacement status, through questions aligned with international standards. In administrative records, identification tends to be based on legal status, but in censuses and surveys, this matter is a work in progress. This section presents a summary of international recommendations, their limitations and proposed improvements.

The Statistics Division of the United Nations proposes basic variables for censuses and surveys: country of birth, citizenship, country of parents' birth, previous residence abroad and ex-members of the household living abroad. It also proposes the following for classification of migrants: year of arrival, acquisition of citizenship and reason for migration. The Division's revised recommendations include cross-tabulating country of birth and citizenship and classifying as migrants anyone whose country of national citizenship differs from their country of birth. Emphasis is placed on the need to include a "stateless" category and to distinguish dual citizenship. Variables like year of arrival and modality of citizenship acquisition are key for analysing integration.

The limitations of the "reason for migration" question for capturing displacement led the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics to draft specific guidelines. The Expert Group recommends using four variables to identify displaced persons and refugees: citizenship, legal status, whether the person was forcibly displaced or obliged to flee, and migration history (which is linked to previous residence abroad). Capturing legal status involves documentation, while the question on forcible displacement or flight is a more effective and direct approach than the "reason for migration" variable.

The question on reason for migration also presents limitations in that it focuses on a specific move, requires a single "primary reason", involves the reason for arrival and excludes displacements within the same administrative division. Asking "Were you forced to flee?" sidesteps those problems but raises others: for example, it excludes people who, having had some measure of discretion in their decision to leave, fail to meet the threshold, and it has the potential to generate social desirability bias. Still, it captures more cases than the question on reason for migration: in Guatemala, according to the National Survey of Living Conditions, 2023, the estimated number of forcibly displaced persons based on "reason" was 49,000 people, compared to 572,000 based on the "forced to flee" option.²

In Canada, cognitive testing revealed difficulties relating to the citizenship question, in view of which it is recommended that national citizenship and foreign citizenship be separated so that a person can be classified as having dual or foreign citizenship or being stateless. In terms of legal status, rather than asking about the "primary document", it is advisable to list various options and classify as "in analysis" any person who has no document.

When classifying international migration and refuge, it is recommended to link common variables, such as country of birth, previous residence, reason for migration and legal status. In Peru, the inclusion of questions on intention to remain and fear of returning to country of origin in the National Household Survey, 2024, made it possible to identify people in need of protection regardless of formal status. A question sequence about remaining, perceptions of safety and change in residence that was tested in Honduras tripled the identification of internally displaced persons compared to standard questions.

² The difference stems from the module on forced displacement included in the National Survey of Living Conditions, 2023, which tested two different formulations: a closed-ended question on the "main reason" for migration, and a direct question (Were you forced to flee?). Both come from the same census operation, but their comparison illustrates how a question's formulation affects the number of cases captured and the estimated magnitude of displacement.

4. Guidelines for administrative records

Administrative records are a fundamental source for statistical production on international migration and forced displacement, in particular where censuses and surveys fall short. They enable continuous and detailed monitoring of migration trends, legal status, migration and integration trajectories and access to services, and facilitate timely updating of population data. Their utility depends on the standardization of concepts, institutional interoperability and respect for data protection principles.

A basic set of variables that ensure identification and reliable characterization of internally displaced persons is needed. A distinction can be made between key variables and complementary variables:

- **Key variables.** These include unique identifiers, age and sex, previous and current place of residence, date and reason for migration, which are essential for counting, longitudinal monitoring and territorial analysis;
- **Complementary variables.** These include name and identification document (not essential if a unique identifier is provided), citizenship and country of birth, household composition and vulnerabilities. Though not obligatory, these variables enrich the analysis, and their incorporation makes it possible to bring registers in line with international standards and enhances their statistical potential.

Registers should be structured in accordance with the frameworks of the Statistics Division of the United Nations and the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics, among others, which promote interoperability and compatibility:

- **Interoperability.** Involves the use of consistent indicators, standardized structures and technical protocols to link data from censuses, surveys and administrative records, ensuring quality and confidentiality;
- **Compatibility.** Requires aligning definitions and classifications with the International Recommendations on Refugee Statistics and the International Recommendations on Internally Displaced Persons Statistics, facilitating international comparability and monitoring of commitments, including those reflected in the SDGs.

Steps should be taken to build a basic statistical register on the migrant population, forming an integrated and harmonious infrastructure that consolidates records on migration, refuge and internal displacement. This register should be interoperable and anonymized and, while not a substitute for sectoral registers, should include consolidated information for statistical analysis.

The quality of information from administrative records should be evaluated for completeness, consistency, timeliness and comparability, among other dimensions. Resources like the administrative records quality assessment tool (created by Mexico and also adopted by Paraguay) and the matrix developed by the National Statistical Office of the Dominican Republic as part of its methodological guide on determining the statistical utility of administrative records³ can be used to diagnose strengths and weaknesses, rate their utility and steer improvements.

³ National Statistical Office. (2022). *Guía metodológica para determinar el aprovechamiento estadístico de los registros administrativos*. <https://www.one.gob.do/publicaciones/2022/guia-metodologica-para-determinar-el-aprovechamiento-estadistico-de-registros-administrativos/>.

5. Integration of statistics on forced displacement and refuge with statistics on migration and the Sustainable Development Goals

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires statistics that adequately represent displaced persons and refugees. Integration is needed on two tracks: statistics on migration, recognizing forced displacement as a part of human mobility, and statistics on the SDGs, ensuring that their indicators reflect this inclusion.

Linking statistics on forced displacement and refuge with statistics on migration calls for consistent definitions and classifications that distinguish displacement without isolating it from the migration system. In the case of international migration and refuge, linkage is a more direct process, thanks to the availability of information on country of birth, previous residence, reason for migration, legal status, year of arrival and sociodemographic data; in the case of internal displacement, linkage depends on the existence of national registers or specialized surveys. Monitoring trajectories is critical, as internally displaced persons may later become international migrants. Interoperable and standardized variables enable tracking and regional comparison of these trends.

The SDGs do not include specific indicators on forced displacement or refuge, but several indicators can be adapted through disaggregation, in particular those referring to poverty, health, education, gender equality, employment, reduction of inequality, housing, peace and justice. Systematic inclusion requires identifying displacement in surveys and administrative records, developing disaggregation methodologies and performing intersectional analyses. This calls for incorporating identification variables in statistical operations, developing adequate estimation techniques, strengthening institutional capacities, cultivating sustained partnerships, deepening territorial analysis and maintaining the methodological leadership of national statistical offices. Integration increases the equity and efficiency of policies and the accuracy with which statistical narratives reflect social reality.

B. USE OF DATA FROM NON-STATE ACTORS AND OTHER SOURCES

The data generated by non-governmental entities —such as civil society organizations, the academic sector, the private sector, the media and humanitarian agencies— are a valuable complementary source of data for expanding the coverage, timeliness and disaggregation of information. They include administrative records, surveys, academic studies, investigative journalism and non-traditional sources, such as satellite images, mobile applications, call logs and social media. In addition to their technical value, the use of these data sources amounts to a form of social participation in data production, which strengthens accountability and influence on public policies. Their qualitative contribution, through interviews or participatory exercises, is fundamental for raising the visibility of experiences and barriers not always caught by traditional surveys. International recommendations recognize the utility of these data sources in situations of displacement, although they underscore the need for mechanisms to validate data and ensure their consistency and compatibility with official statistical principles.

Big data technology offers innovative tools for analysing migration and displacement patterns in real time. Passive records, such as those culled from mobile phones, social media, digital platforms and satellite observation, improve the granularity, frequency and timeliness of data, which are critical during emergencies and in situations of irregular migration. However, their use comes with challenges, such as representativeness, data governance, adaptation of conceptual frameworks and privacy protections.

Initiatives like the Migration Data Portal encourage responsible use of such data sources, based on trustworthy sources and with assurances of ethical treatment.

To ensure that national statistical systems have solid technical foundations, quality, traceability and pertinence criteria should be established for non-State data which, when collected employing clear methodologies and upholding ethical principles, can fill significant gaps in data on populations with low visibility, such as irregular migrants. Establishing agreements between statistical offices and non-State stakeholders, creating interoperability protocols and offering technical skills-building for producers of data are all recommended pursuits. Forums for dialogue and inter-agency committees are also important for harmonizing methodologies and promoting interoperability with international standards, such as the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange set of technical standards. Protection of sensitive data is a fundamental principle and should be supported by anonymization techniques and informed consent.

National statistical offices have a central role in institutionalizing the responsible use of non-State data. In that regard, collaborative platforms should be created to document and disseminate good practices, methodologies and validated sources, which should be continuously updated and accessible to a range of stakeholders, strengthening public trust and fostering a national culture of statistics. Adapting communication to different audiences, certifying quality and recognizing successful initiatives can reinforce links between the State and society. Lastly, gender and intersectional perspectives must be integrated to ensure the visibility of historically excluded groups and advance equity in data production and analysis.

C. INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION

Inter-agency coordination is a central pillar of national statistical systems, led by national statistical offices, that aims to ensure methodological consistency, avoid duplication, optimize resources and produce useful statistics for policymaking. This coordination is even more important in the context of human mobility, owing to its complexity and the diverse range of sources of related information.

A new human mobility committee should be created as a permanent body for technical coordination among public institutions, international organizations, civil society and the academic sector. Its objective would be to standardize definitions, classifications and basic variables relating to migration, refuge and internal displacement, and to strengthen administrative records for statistical use and pursue complementary statistical operations.

The committee would facilitate the integration of information on migration status and displacement in administrative records from the education, health and housing sectors, as well as from civil registers, applications for refuge and migration control records, ensuring that said integration is based on anonymized data and complies with the principles of confidentiality and protection of personal information. It would also draft guidelines for interoperability, capacity-building, evaluating information sources and developing a shared road map for statistical production. Its institutionalization within the national statistical system would ensure technical and political sustainability, contributing to robust rights-based governance.

The human mobility committee should coordinate with regional platforms, such as the Regional Platform for Migration Information, the Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela, the Migration Data Portal of IOM and the Information Platform on Health and Migration in the Americas of the Pan American Health Organization, with a view to supporting international comparability, common standards and stronger capacities through the sharing of experiences and technical assistance.

Internal coordination of the national statistical system requires having clear legal frameworks, reinforcing the technical authority of national statistical offices and creating multisectoral inter-agency committees. Technological interoperability, supported by SDMX standards, will facilitate the efficient exchange of information and the integration of administrative records. Transparency and public access to data, meanwhile, will build trust with the public.

To institutionalize the proposed human mobility committee, an administrative act formalizing its establishment is recommended, together with sustained resource allocation and the drafting of a workplan with specific targets regarding methodological standardization, collection protocols and interoperability mechanisms. The committee should ensure multisectoral representation, transparent reporting and mechanisms for the continuous evaluation of data performance and quality. It should also mainstream gender and intersectional perspectives to ensure the participation and visibility of vulnerable populations.

D. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION STRATEGIES

The communication and dissemination of statistics on forced displacement and refuge is not just about publishing figures; the aim is to facilitate comprehension and use of the statistics by policymakers, civil society, international organizations, the media and affected communities. It should be an inclusive process that takes ethical concerns into consideration and seeks to maximize the information's public value and strengthen its contribution to public action.

Statistical offices should adapt their messaging to different audiences and engage in dialogue early on with potential users of the information that they produce to guide the design of capture strategies. Data should be presented in a clear, easy-to-understand format, with multilingual and inclusive materials, in order to avoid creating new forms of exclusion. In addition to figures, materials could include narratives and anonymous real-life stories to humanize the information and put it in context, ensuring alignment with ethical principles. Training the communicators of this information in approaches that are sensitive to human rights is crucial, as is the creation of participatory spaces to receive community feedback.

Adequate dissemination requires dialogue among institutional producers of data and their users, through forums, technical committees or sectoral gatherings. This will ensure that statistics line up with national priorities, support the sustainability of processes and strengthen institutions' commitment to international frameworks like the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Global Compact on Refugees and the 2030 Agenda.

Traditional and social media and parliamentary and academic forums should be leveraged to make statistics part of the national discourse. Statistics should be presented clearly, accurately and in context, with messaging that highlights displaced persons' contribution to their host communities. This ethical, evidence-based approach helps to counteract stigma and disinformation, strengthening inclusive policies.

Communication should also seek to increase participation in censuses, surveys and registers, especially among populations that, owing to fear or distrust, are underregistered. Intercultural and territorial campaigns should be designed to convey the objectives and confidential nature of these processes, work with community leaders and train displaced persons in field operations with a view to building trust and improving data quality. Raising awareness among journalists about the ethical use of statistics is also extremely important in order to avoid sensationalism and encourage inclusive, non-sexist reporting.