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*Current and future scenarios of the sources of socio-demographic data for monitoring the rights of populations in situations of social vulnerability. Argentina, 1994-2015**

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1. Topic to be studied

Human rights constitute attributes inherent to human dignity, which have universal legal protection. All human beings have the same rights, *without distinction of nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language or other individual or collective status*. Human rights are often covered by laws, and guaranteed by them through treaties, the customary international law, and general principles, among other sources. These sources set the *obligations* that governments have in order to take action in certain situations, and to refrain from acting in others, in order to achieve their promotion and protection through public policies and specific actions (OHCHR, 2015).

In Argentina, many of the international treaties that guarantee human rights have constitutional status since 1994. Additionally, the country undertakes supplementary commitments, such as achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030*

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Agenda, and strengthening the implementation of population and development issues through the *Montevideo Consensus*.

The enjoyment and exercise of fundamental rights, and the possibility of access to justice, may be limited by the individuals' belonging to a *population in situations of social vulnerability*. In a traditional sense, this concept indicates the state of exposure of individuals, households and communities to suffering from the deterioration of their living conditions in the face of adverse social events; to “risks” that can be related to the individuals' own profiles, and/or to characteristics of the environment in which they live (ECLAC, 2001; Kaztman, 1999; Busso, 1999). In order to reinforce the dynamic nature of the concept, the term individuals/groups/populations in situations of vulnerability has been proposed: “...individuals who, due to their age, gender, physical or mental state, or due to social, economic, ethnic and/or cultural circumstances, face particular difficulties in exercising fully before the justice system the rights recognized by the legal system are considered to be in situations of vulnerability (...). Age, disability, belonging to indigenous or minority communities, victimization, migration and internal displacement, poverty, gender and deprivation of liberty, among others, may constitute grounds for vulnerability” (XIV Ibero-American Judicial Summit, 2008).

Social vulnerability fragments and therefore revokes the set of guarantees and fundamental freedoms, so that individuals and groups in this situation have rights only at a formal level, since, in fact, they do not meet the conditions required for their exercise. For this reason, it is essential to establish *human rights monitoring systems*, the specificity of which being “to bring the human rights perspective through the recognition of the interested parties (the holders of rights and the guarantors of those rights), and the type of information relevant to them for the realization and enjoyment of human rights. This requires certain institutional arrangements for the collection and analysis of information and special attention to concrete data that capture and reflect the realization of human rights”. (OHCHR, 2012).

In this context, the United Nations agencies responsible for monitoring compliance with the various human rights treaties, and in particular the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), have joined forces with States to assess the

international obligations undertaken. For that purpose, a tool has been deemed indispensable: *reliable and systematic statistical information; and conceptual and methodological frameworks have been developed to establish relevant indicators* (OHCHR, 2008).

Collaboratively, the following criteria have been formulated *for the selection of quantitative indicators* that allow for the measurement of compliance with human rights: “a) to be relevant, valid and reliable; b) to be simple, timely and reduced in number; (c) to be based on objective information and data-generating mechanisms (produced independently, impartially and transparently, and based on solid methodology, procedures and knowledge); (d) to allow for temporal and spatial comparison, and to comply with relevant international statistical standards; and (e) to allow for disaggregation by sex, age and vulnerable or marginalized sectors of the population”. (United Nations, 2006, quoted by Ferrer, 2007).

The conceptual and methodological frameworks mentioned have been the basis for the development of a proposal of indicators for monitoring 14 rights, including aspects of direct socio-demographic reference, such as the highest possible level of physical and mental health, education, adequate housing, social security and work. However, it has also been evident the *difficulty of the countries to obtain the necessary information for calculating the indicators, both in terms of its thematic availability and its quality.*

In this context, we ask ourselves about the situation in Argentina since 1994, when most of the international human rights treaties acquired constitutional status. *What socio-demographic data sources does the country have in order to monitor human rights compliance? Do the data sources allow for the monitoring over time of human rights, and especially of populations in situations of social vulnerability?*

2. Theoretical focus

In the area of demography in Latin America and the Caribbean, the main contributions to the issue of social vulnerability have been done by CELADE, Population

Division of ECLAC, United Nations. This institution has formulated the most important guidelines of the concept in the discipline, focusing on the measurement and analysis of risk in population variables (mortality, fecundity and migration). Contributions made by Kaztman (1999, 2000) stand out in social sciences field, although emphasizing the same variables. Members of this research team have made contributions to the systematization and application of the concept in national and local demography (González, 2007; 2009).

The expansion of this concept in terms of populations and groups in situations of social vulnerability comes mainly from the field of legal-social studies. Special mention must be given to the theoretical and methodological frameworks for monitoring human rights, developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2008, 2012).

There are few contributions related to the analysis of socio-demographic data sources and their applicability in terms of the monitoring of human rights. In this regard, the members of said research team have made approximations to the situation of these surveys for the analysis of a vulnerable population, particularly the elderly (Ribotta, B. Santillán Pizarro, MM., et al; Santillán Pizarro, Ribotta and Acosta, 2015). The results indicate that although different indicators can be developed for monitoring this group, much remains to be done in terms of the assessment of the following Human Rights principles: equality and non-retrocession (belonging to sub-groups such as the rural population or being a resident of collective institutions), and the principle of progressivity and non-retrocession (due to the fact that the data sources either do not capture repeatedly the same variable, or they survey it in different ways).

3. Data and research methods

The main goal of the study is the diagnosis of the situation in Argentina in relation to the availability of socio-demographic information sources, officially produced from 1994 to 2015, for the monitoring of Populations in Social Vulnerability Situations. To do this, the following methods and data sources shall be used:

- *Materials:*

The sources of socio-demographic information produced officially in the last two decades in Argentina shall be surveyed, excluded the sectorial data sources (for example, vital records made by Ministry of Health). These are *population and housing censuses and surveys* (household and specific topics):

- Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas de 2001 (C2001), private households and collective institutions questionnaires.
- Encuesta Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad (ENDI), 2002-2003. Encuestas Complementarias del Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas de 2001.
- Encuesta Complementaria de Pueblos Indígenas (ECPI), 2004–2005. Encuestas Complementarias del Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Vivienda de 2001.
- Encuesta Complementaria de Migraciones Internacionales (ECMI), 2002-2003. Encuestas Complementarias del Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas de 2001.
- Censo Nacional de Población, Hogares y Viviendas 2010 (C2010), basic, expanded and collective housing questionnaires.
- Encuesta de Desarrollo Social (EDS), 1997.
- Encuesta Condiciones de Vida (ECV), 2001.
- Encuesta Nacional de Factores de Riesgo (ENFR), 2005, 2009 and 2013.
- Encuesta Nacional sobre Calidad de Vida de los Adultos Mayores (ENCaViAM), 2012.
- Encuesta Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad (ENDI), 2002-2003.
- Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (EPH, puntual), until 2002/2003.
- Módulo para el Monitoreo de Metas Sociales, EPH module (puntual), 1994.
- Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (EPH, continua), since 2002/2003.
- Encuesta Anual de Hogares Urbanos (EAHU), since 2010.

- Módulo de Actividades de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (MANNyA), 2004, 2006 (EPH module) and 2012 (AEHU module).
- Encuesta Nacional sobre Acceso y Uso de Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación (ENTIC), 2011 and 2015.
- Encuesta sobre Trabajo No Remunerado y Uso del Tiempo (EAHU module), 2013.
- Encuesta Nacional sobre Salud Sexual y Reproductiva (ENSSyR), 2013.
- Encuesta Nacional de Protección y Seguridad Social (ENAPROSS), 2011 y 2014-2015.
- Encuesta Mundial de Tabaquismo en Adultos (EMTA/GATS), 2012.

- *Methods and techniques:*

- Bibliographic review on the main dimensions, variables and indicators that define the populations in social vulnerability situations (in our first selection: children, women, disabled, migrants, indigenous people, afro descendant and refugees).
- Search for socio-demographic data sources produced in the last two decades, their metadata and technical notes, and documentary search on results of those sources (official publications or publications by public entities, such as statistical yearbooks, compilations, etc.).
- Systematization and analysis of the questionnaires for the identification of the variables that allow for the disaggregation of populations in social vulnerability situations.
- Systematization and analysis of the metadata from the sources of information, to determine the following characteristics: type of source of data, periodicity, representativeness, coverage and geographical disaggregation.

4. Findings

a) Availability of variables in data sources:

Table 1 shows the results obtained identifying the variables that allow the operationalization of the populations of interest, in each selected data sources (green: available disaggregation variable, yellow: only one approximation to the disaggregation variable, red: not available disaggregation variable). As can we see, the possibilities of the analysed data sources for identifying populations in a social vulnerability situation vary greatly from one group to another. Women constitute the only group that can be disaggregated from the variable “sex”, in all data sources, regardless of the type of survey and their moment of production.

Table 1. Availability of variables for the disaggregation of groups in situations of social vulnerability, in selected data sources (1994-2015).

Data source	Children	Women	People with disabilities	Indigenous People	Afro descendant	Migrant	Refugee
C2001	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Red
C2001, colec. hous.	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
ENDI, 2002-2003	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red
ECPI, 2004-2005	Green	Green	Red	Green	-	Green	Red
ECMI, 2002-3	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
C2010, basic	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
C2010, extended	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
C2010, colect. hous.	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
EPH puntual, 2002	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red
EPH, m. 1994	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
EPH, s. 2002	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
EAHU, s. 2010	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
EDS 1997	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
ECV 2001	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
ENSSyR, 2013	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red
ENaProSS, 2011	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
ENaProSS, 2014-5	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
ENFR 2005,	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
ENFR, 2009	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
ENFR, 2014	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
MANNyA, 2004	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
MANNyA, 2006	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
MANNyA, 2012	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Red
ENTIC, 2011	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
ENTIC, 2015	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
ENCaVIAM, 2012	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red
EMTA, 2012	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
TNR y UT, 2013	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Green	Red

Source: Prepared based on questionnaires data sources, glossaries and metadata.

Based on the above, it would be assumed that children (0 to 17 years old according to different sub-groups) could be identified in all sources, since age is as basic a variable as sex. However, this circumstance is accessible only in the considered population censuses and in surveys that specifically involve all life cycle stages or a large part of them (for example, EDS and ECV). The remainder surveys include the same variable, but different situations are seen that restrict disaggregation: a) surveys (or modules within a survey) that inquire only some ages of children (for example, Monitoring of Social Goals module included in HPE punctual 1994-5, which has questionnaires for children under 6 and 6-14, but not for 15-17 years old); b) which have other target populations that seldom contain all age segments included in "childhood" definition (e. g., the continuous EPH limits the individual questionnaire to population aged 10 years and over), or c) which directly exclude children (such as the ENFR, applied to population aged 18 years and over).

Regarding disability, once again, censuses and their complementary surveys are the best data sources that make a better identification. In particular, the ENDI 2002-2003 and the 2010 census (extended form) deserve special mention. In other data sources, the incorporation of this disaggregation variable changes according to time (low conceptual and operational development, as shown by ESD), to incomplete and highly changing forms of identification in the most current surveys (direct and partial questions - such as inquiries for the existence of a disability certificate, which could provide an approximation), until its non-existence. It is noteworthy that the survey dedicated to determining the living conditions of older adults (ENCaVIAM, 2012) only examines certain specific cases of deficiency.

Only very few data sources allow the identification of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. 2001 household census identifies indigenous people, its supplementary survey ECPI 2004-2005, and the 2010 census (extended questionnaire). This last census is the only one that also includes Afro-descendants nowadays.

Finally, many data sources can identify international migrants and their families in a basic way at least. On the contrary, no source allow to do the same with refugees.

b) Data sources characteristics

When selected data sources are analysed to see their possibility of having representative estimates in their geographic coverage, which allow accurate estimates, and their comparative appreciation over time, we observe:

- On the one hand, population censuses have wide estimation domains with very representative geographical coverage, and however are not very frequent. Regarding the exercise of rights of populations in social vulnerability situation, the first advantages are partly offset by the second circumstance, since changes can only be appreciated over too large a period of time.

- On the other hand, household surveys that allow monitoring of a high periodicity in time, although with loss of geographical coverage (all are sources of urban population, although in the best case including up to 5000-2000 inhabitants localities), and in estimation domains. In this group, the best positioned are the household surveys (EPH, EAUH), although as it is well known, they have the greatest content limitations. A striking circumstance is the interruption of periodicity in some of these surveys (such as ESD and ECV, which were related), or the existence of other specific surveys -or modules within other surveys- that have not been replicated over time (such it is the case of ENSSyR, ENCaViAM, etc.).

5. Conclusions

This work provide with a detailed diagnosis on the availability of the selected information sources, for the identification of the populations in situations of vulnerability, and, therefore, of the most basic possibilities to carry out the monitoring of their exercise of human rights. To the same extent, the proposed approach allow for making recommendations for improving existing sources of information and the development of new official data collection instruments.

It is noted that while the main sources of socio-demographic data in Argentina (i.e., population and housing censuses), have a generally acceptable level of geographic coverage

and by the considered variables. Likewise, the situation of other sources of socio-demographic data (such as household surveys or specific topics), shows a lack of human rights content, or even when these variables are present, they are not always captured in the same way (or in an integrated way), which restricts their temporal monitoring⁴. These first findings highlight the need to deepen the diagnosis of the current situation and, based on it, propose strategies to supplement the existing data sources, and/or determine those situations in which it is indispensable to design new ways of collecting information.

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⁴ The table with the systematized data (type of source of data, periodicity, representativeness, coverage and geographical disaggregation), can be requested from the authors of the research.

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