



Contributions to the of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) **Country Advances**

Costa Rica 2008-2012



United Nations Population Fund

Country Context

Costa Rica is a country that acknowledges and has proven that sustainable human development must be supported through democratic governance, the rule of law, transparency, respect for human rights, peace, and security. It also acknowledges the relationship between these achievements and growth, education, health, innovation, environmental respect, and poverty reduction, among other issues.

Official cooperation funding to the country's development has decreased during the last few years, due mainly to the fact that Costa Rica is considered a high - middle income country, leading to a gradual withdrawal of a significant number of donors.

1 The Gini coefficient is a measure of inequality in income distribution. Its value ranges between 0 and 1. As the index approaches 1, the income inequality becomes greater.



In spite of receiving relatively low amounts of development cooperation, the country has proven a high capacity for efficient and effective usage, as demonstrated in this document.

Costa Rica also registers high development indicators, which has contributed to a decrease in development cooperation funding as well. However, during the same period as decreased cooperation funding, the GINI¹ coefficient has increased, as well as other disparities in indicators related to geographic location, age, gender, and among other vulnerable groups, issues that require urgent attention.



As a result of the aforementioned situation, the country is exploring innovative possibilities, such as South-South Cooperation, *Triangular Cooperation* and strategic alliances, among others. The objective of these innovative modalities is to share knowledge, best practices and maximize cooperation resources. The United Nations System has been called upon to be one of the country's principal partners in this

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J. Enrique Castillo Barrantes
Minister of Foreign Affairs

process. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been a strategic actor in collaboration with the country since 1984 in topics related to Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender and Population and Development, using a perspective of the advancement of human rights, especially reproductive rights, which are recognized and appreciated by the country.

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Roberto J. Gallardo Núñez
Minister of National Planning and Economic Policies

About

"Delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted... every childbirth is safe... and every young person's potential is fulfilled"

UNFPA

The United Nations Population Fund is the lead agency of the United Nations in supporting countries in expanding possibilities and opportunities for women and young people to lead healthy sexual and reproductive lives. UNFPA promotes progress towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health, including voluntary family planning and safe motherhood. It also supports progress in the rights and opportunities of young people.

Through alliances and partnerships with governments, other UN agencies, civil society and the private sector, **UNFPA has made a positive change in the lives of billions of people in 140 countries**, including Costa Rica.

Fewer women are dying during childbirth, more unwanted pregnancies are prevented, and young people have more opportunities. Yet, **much more must be done** in order to achieve a healthy and just world. UNFPA helps countries use population data to anticipate tomorrow's challenges. It provides empowering technical guidance, policy advice, training and support to ensure that reproductive health and the rights of women and young people remain at the very heart of development.

Achievements

A summary of the achievements obtained by Costa Rica as a result of UNFPA's support for 2008-2012 is as follows



Laws, Policies, And Strategic Plans

A policy is a pledge of a public nature that allows for agreement upon intentions and commitments of different actors, as well as a strong testament for social change. In this period, UNFPA supported the creation of policies, and their corresponding strategic plans, regarding sexuality, gender equality and equity, young people and the senior population. All policies and strategic plans were developed through a participatory approach.

1. 2010-2017 National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity and corresponding Action Plans

The National Policy for Gender Equality and Equity summarizes the main commitments of the Costa Rican government in the field of gender equality and equity for a 10-year period. It is supported in three large strategic action groups: economic independence, political participation, and cultural change, all of which are core foundations in surpassing the inequality barriers that affect women in Costa Rica.

Two action plans were created for Policy implementation (2008-2012 and 2012-2014). Both were developed through consultation processes with institutional representatives, civil society and women's organizations.

This Policy served as the catalyst in the creation of equality policies in different institutions, such as the Costa Rican Social

Security Institution, the Ministry of Labor and the Supreme Court of Elections.

2. 2010-2021 National Policy on Sexuality and 2012-2015 Strategic Plan on Sexuality

The 2010-2021 National Policy on Sexuality and the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan on Sexuality gather the main commitments made by the Costa Rican government in guaranteeing and respecting access to, and exercising the right to a safe, informed and coresponsible sexuality as an integral part of the human right to health for all persons living in the country.

The challenge of this policy is to guarantee the right of every person—without discrimination—to an integral sexuality using an approach based on human rights, gender equality and diversity that promotes relationships that are more just, affective, equitable and respectful, and that provide opportunities for mutual growth.

Laws, Policies, And Strategic Plans



The policy created a strategy for the universal and effective access to condoms, which promotes access to and use of male and female condoms as a means of protection for sexual and reproductive health.

3. 2010-2013 Public Policy on Young People and corresponding Action Plan

The creation of this policy began in 2009, using information from the National Youth Survey, the Public Policy on Young

People 2003-2007 and 2007-2010, and the Ibero-American Convention on Young People's Rights, which implies a central human rights based approach.

The 2010-2013 Action Plan was built upon the strategies of the Public Policy on Young People, with the participation of responsible institutions and the incorporation of existing related institutional plans and public policy. The Plan also incorporated a gender approach during the drafting process and for measuring impact during the evaluation.

4. 2011-2021 Public Policy on Older Persons

The creation of this policy began in 2009, based on a consultation process with the participation of more than 3,000 senior citizens in all 81 counties in Costa Rica. This process also led to the formation of the National Consultation Forum of Older Persons. The Policy promotes the principles of universality, equity, dignity, inter-generational solidarity, social participation and social co-responsibility.

5. National Plan for the Attention and Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The Plan for the Attention and Prevention of Violence against Women was updated, limiting the action plan to women of at least 15 years of age in situations of violence in couple and family relationships, rape and sexual harassment. The Plan allows the Costa Rican National Women's Institute to supervise and coordinate other involved actors in the field of violence against women, as well as facilitate follow up to institutional obligations in this area.

Production and Analysis of Information for Decision Making

The formulation of successful development policies and programmes for poverty reduction and follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) requires relevant, reliable, timely, comparable and disaggregated socio-demographic population data. The population and housing census, as well as national surveys, are ideal instruments to obtain the necessary data.



1. Support in the 2011 Census

UNFPA was present from the preparatory work stage for the 2011 Census, supporting strategies for the production of census cartography, for data capturing, and processing, as well as some aspects of the field operations (staff training on census processing, definition of census topics, among others), and the dissemination of results.

2. Production and Analysis of Information on the Reality of Young People

In 2007 the National Survey of Young People was carried out. From 2008-2012 the results were analyzed, revealing topics of interest such as sexuality, migration, drug consumption, education, among others. In 2011, the design of the II National Survey of Young People began, applying the lessons learned from the previous survey and analysis.

In 2010, county surveys were carried out on the reality of young people from Upala and Desamparados, within the framework of the Youth, Employment, and Migration Programme, financed by the Spanish Fund for the MDG. The results have guided the

actions of the ***One-Stop for Employment of Young People in Desamparados and Upala***, and have had an effect in local institutions, guiding programmes and projects to respond to the realities of young people.

3. National Sexual and Reproductive Health Survey

The National Sexual and Reproductive Health Survey took place in 2010, with a sample of national representation that included 1,601 men and 1,596 women between the ages of 15 and 80 years.

The survey considered the following variables: access to information on sexuality and planning, pregnancy history, family planning, fertility preferences, opinion on reproductive rights, sexual practices, sexually-transmitted infections, knowledge, attitudes and practices associated with HIV and AIDS, sexual dysfunction, attitudes towards sexual diversity, sexual violence, and sexual roles. This survey was a very innovative experience, both for the scope of the information collected, as well as the scope of age groups included and for having included men as well.

Strengthening Citizen and Institutional Capacities



Instruments and work models oriented to the strengthening of institutional capacities have been developed through participatory processes and methodologies, involving beneficiary populations and civil society organizations. These populations and organizations in turn have experienced a strengthening of capacity to impact and follow up on political and institutional commitments.

1. Work models that contribute to the implementation of Public Policy for Young People

Between 2008 and 2012, UNFPA assisted the Youth Council in developing models based on the execution of two interagency joint programmes:

Youth Employment and Migration:

The integrated approach model for Youth Employability, Employment and Entrepreneurship aims at exploring young people's needs and identifying solutions through existing or the creation of new local services. The model was implemented in the counties of Upala and Desamparados funded by the MDG Achievement Fund.

Giro 180°: The goal of this programme is to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent HIV among adolescents through strengthening healthcare and educational institutions and the active participation of young people using the development of

youth-friendly services and peer educators as the principal strategies. This programme was a joint effort with UNDP and UNICEF, and was implemented in the provinces of Limón and Puntarenas.

2. Community model for the prevention of domestic and gender-based violence with the participation of adolescent and adult men

As part of the process in finding solutions to the problem of violence against women, the need to work on men's masculinity was acknowledged. The model developed was validated in Moravia, in the community of Los Sitios, with teenagers from high schools and professionals from the Ministry of Public Education. The manual *Hombres que impulsan el cambio* ("Men promoting change") was developed to prevent violence and promote personal growth from a masculinity perspective.

Strengthening Citizen and Institutional Capacities

3. Human mobility management model in border areas

Within the framework of the Migration and Sexual and Reproductive Health Project (supported by the UNFPA/Spanish Agency of International Cooperation and Development Fund for Latin America and the Caribbean), assistance was provided in developing a model to comprehensively address human mobility and security in border areas based on the experiences carried out in the border town of Upala.

This model, approved by the National Immigration Council, seeks inter-sectorial and inter-institutional coordination in order to guarantee the human rights of mobile populations inhabiting border areas.

4. Education methodologies with Police officers

Beginning with the police officer training programme in the Ministry of the Interior, Public Security and Police, training modules were developed to be used by institutional

facilitators in developing new training processes addressing the prevention of HIV, intra-familial violence and commercial sexual exploitation. The modules take into account institutional policies and practices, as well as daily experiences of the police officers.

5. Strengthening the coordination role of the Costa Rican National Women's Institute, Youth Council, and Ministry of Health

UNFPA's support to develop public or national policies (such as the policies on gender equality and equity, young people, and sexuality) has enabled the responsible institutions to strengthen their coordination through the development of participatory and inter-sectorial processes. The Costa Rican National Women's Institute, the Youth Council, and the Ministry of Health have been able to position and strengthen themselves both as articulators and coordinators of state actions directed to specific issues and populations.



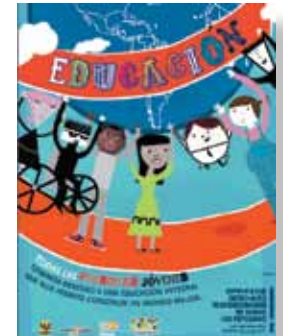
Dissemination and Advocacy Strategies

Advocacy is the capacity to influence decision making in different spheres. Campaigns, audiovisual presentations, and documents have been prepared to disseminate processes and results in order to influence in decision making.

Campaigns and communication materials

1. Campaign on Youth Rights

Costa Rica ratified the Ibero-American Convention on Young People's Rights in 2007. For the dissemination and promotion of the Convention's principles, the Campaign on Youth Rights was launched prioritizing the dissemination of four rights: education, information on sexuality, employment and participation, as well as the principle of non discrimination.



2. Adolescent pregnancy prevention campaign in partnership with University Veritas

In 2011, an alliance was established with University Veritas so that students in Advertising would develop campaigns on adolescent pregnancy under the technical guidance of UNFPA. The campaign was launched within the framework of the celebration of reaching a world population of 7 billion people on 31 October 2011. This initiative was supported by the Ministry of Health, the Vice-Ministry of Youth, and the Inter-institutional Adolescent Mother Help Council.



Dissemination and Advocacy Strategies



3. Campaign 1+1

The campaign “1+1 We make Costa Rica” was launched by the Costa Rican Department of Immigration in July 2011. This campaign aims for users and employees of the Department of Immigration to be more aware of the positive contributions made by immigrants in Costa Rica. The campaign was developed with funding from the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation and Development, within the framework of the Immigration and Sexual and Reproductive Health Project, and under the direction of the Department of Immigration, the Centre for Social Rights of Migrants and UNFPA.



4. Support to UN Secretary General's campaign in Latin America: “Unite to End Violence against Women”

In 2011, the UN System in Costa Rica launched this campaign aimed at ending violence against women. The campaign was supported by Costa Rican President Laura Chinchilla and various Judicial Branch justices, as well as the Legislative Assembly and the Office of the Ombudsperson. UNFPA contributed significantly to the success of this campaign, demonstrating the positive effects of joint efforts within the UN system.

Audiovisual presentations:

In Costa Rica the use of audiovisual technology to disseminate the results of research and processes has been a priority over the last few years. Thus, the National Women's Institute produced and used a documentary that explains the **National Policy on Gender Equality and Equity**. Likewise, the National Youth Council used a documentary that summarizes the information of the **First National Youth Survey**. Also, an audiovisual presentation was produced to summarize the experiences of **Health Fairs** (an initiative encouraged by the Immigration and Sexual and Reproductive Health Binational Project: Costa Rica & Nicaragua). In addition, a video about the **Ibero-American Convention on Young People's Rights** was shown to national authorities when the convention was ratified by Costa Rica.



Document production:

Knowledge management has been enhanced through supporting the production and dissemination of numerous technical documents directed at:

1. Positioning approaches and perspectives.
2. Disseminating fundamental information for decision making and public policy formulation regarding the status of specific populations such as reports about the situation of migrant youth and women.
3. Promoting best practices.
4. Visibilizing unresolved challenges for the country on human rights issues, especially in the situation of women and youth.



Achievements and lessons learned...



Teamwork

The use of a results based approach and the promotion of inter-institutional alliances have enabled the efficient use of resources through strengthening the exchange of experiences and coordination. This achievement was possible thanks to the technical assistance and monitoring of UNFPA and the promotion of common learning activities among members.

Institutional strengthening and appropriation of the Cairo Agenda

Partner institutions and organizations have largely appropriated the Cairo Agenda, approved during the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, which also serves as the base of UNFPA's mandate. Additionally, these institutions and organizations participated in the evaluation of the 2008-2012 Programme and the formulation of the 2013-2017 Programme, and have strengthened their capacities in executing international cooperation projects.

Policies as a means to leverage national resources

The support in policy development has been a critical instrument to leverage and direct national resources per the policies objectives and criteria. It has also been

a means to strengthen the coordination role of the institutions involved (National Women's Institute, National Youth Council, and the Ministry of Health) and to promote the participation of individuals and organizations.

Improved achievements thanks to inter-agency coordination

UNFPA has actively engaged in the UN Reform. In Costa Rica, the joint efforts of the UNFPA with other UN agencies has allowed to identify synergies and achieve extremely relevant results for the country. Inter-agency work, more than just "pooling" resources, allows for the multiplying of positive effects.

Because everybody counts

We have confirmed the enormous potential of our slogan: "Because everybody counts". Projects and initiatives have focused on people, their rights and their needs, including their active participation both individually and collectively. Thus, it has been possible to transform the lives of the inhabitants of Costa Rica, particularly adolescents and young people, women and migrants. The modification of laws, policies, programmes, and regulations will allow, with national resources, for people to continue to benefit from the advances achieved.

Estos logros del país han sido posibles gracias al trabajo conjunto del UNFPA con las siguientes instituciones y organizaciones:



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Fotografías: UNFPA Costa Rica.

Foto de portada: Jóvenes del programa Giro 180° de la provincia de Puntarenas

The aforementioned achievements made by Costa Rica have been possible thanks to joint efforts of UNFPA with the following institutions and organizations:



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Photos: UNFPA Costa Rica.

Cover photo: Young people from the province of Puntarenas, members of Giro 180° programme