

# CENSUS

The key source of population data  
for sustainable development

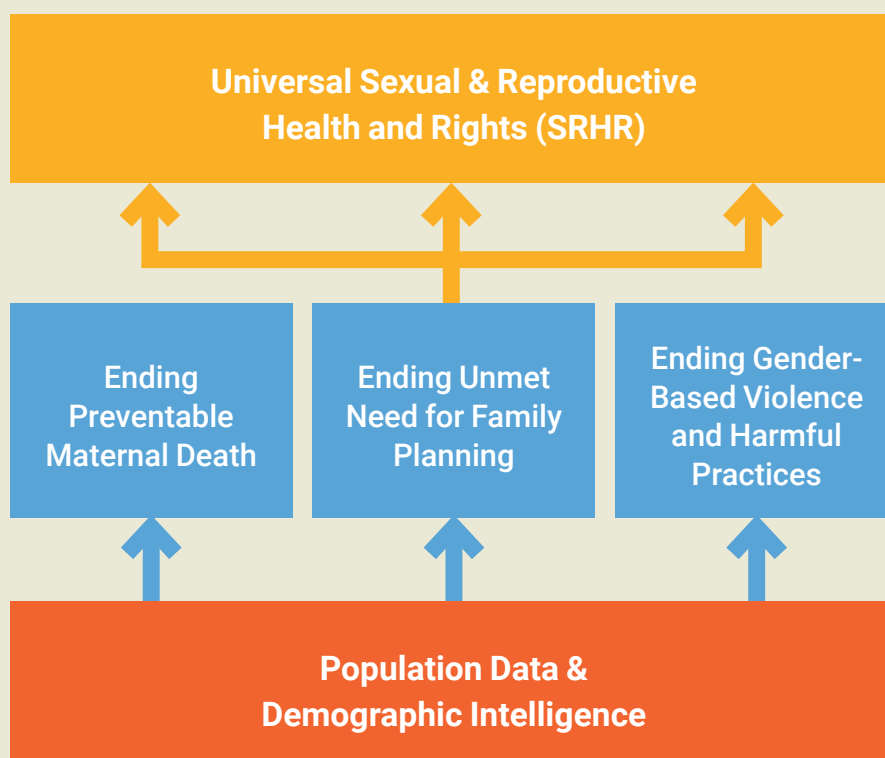


**The population and housing census is one of the most complex and largest peacetime exercises a nation can undertake. It enumerates the entire population in a country, territory or area and requires careful planning, resourcing and implementation.**

Data collected in the census constitute the sole data source on all persons in many countries and are a key component of all national data ecosystems. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supports programming countries to conduct and modernize their censuses to ensure the availability of quality granular population data.

UNFPA promotes use of census data to generate demographic intelligence for evidence-based programming and humanitarian response, and to achieve zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal death, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices.

### **Data is central to achieving UNFPA's transformative results**



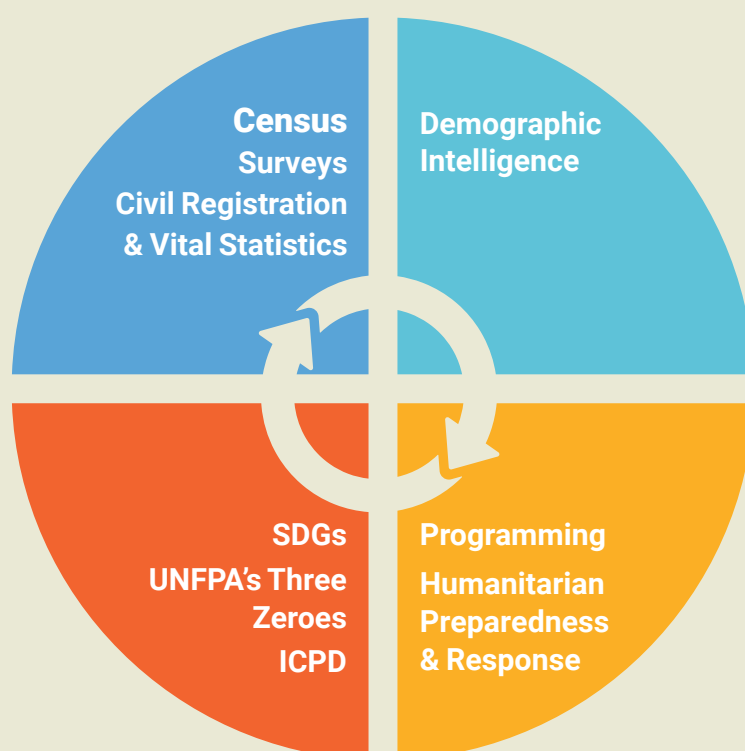
## Humanitarian preparedness and response

- Sole data source on all persons in most countries
- Basis for population projections
- Source for Common Operational Datasets (COD-PS) for humanitarian readiness and response
- Source of data for assessing completeness and validation of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS)
- Basis for master sampling frames for surveys

## Census underpins the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Provides data on population distribution, characteristics and changes at lowest geographic units
- Provides housing and household characteristics
- Generates population data for 107 of the 232 indicators, including 19 that may be fully calculated from census
- Provides the granular data required for multiple disaggregations and georeferenced data needed for locating those left behind

## From census to sustainable development





# 2020 Census Round (2015-2024)

## Challenges



**Massive impact of COVID-19** causing census postponements worldwide



Conflict, instability and large-scale population displacements



Widespread systemic capacity and funding shortfalls impacting census implementation, even prior to COVID-19



Increasing global concerns about data governance to balance data access and confidentiality

## Opportunities



Better technology provides improved census quality and timeliness



Increased access to data through new dissemination platforms and better legislation



Lower costs through sharing of tablets and handheld devices between countries



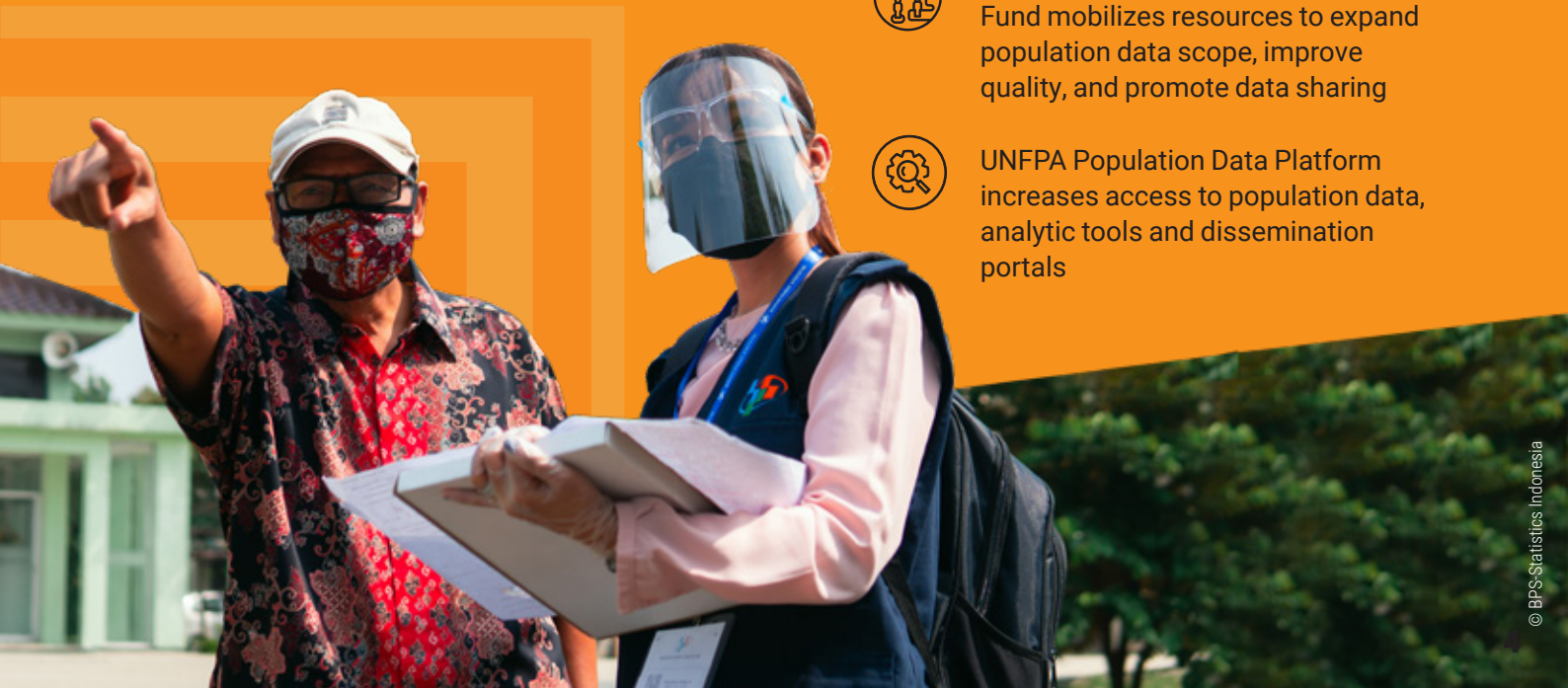
Transformative potential of geo-referenced data for high-resolution mapping and spatial disaggregation of data



UNFPA Population Data Thematic Fund mobilizes resources to expand population data scope, improve quality, and promote data sharing



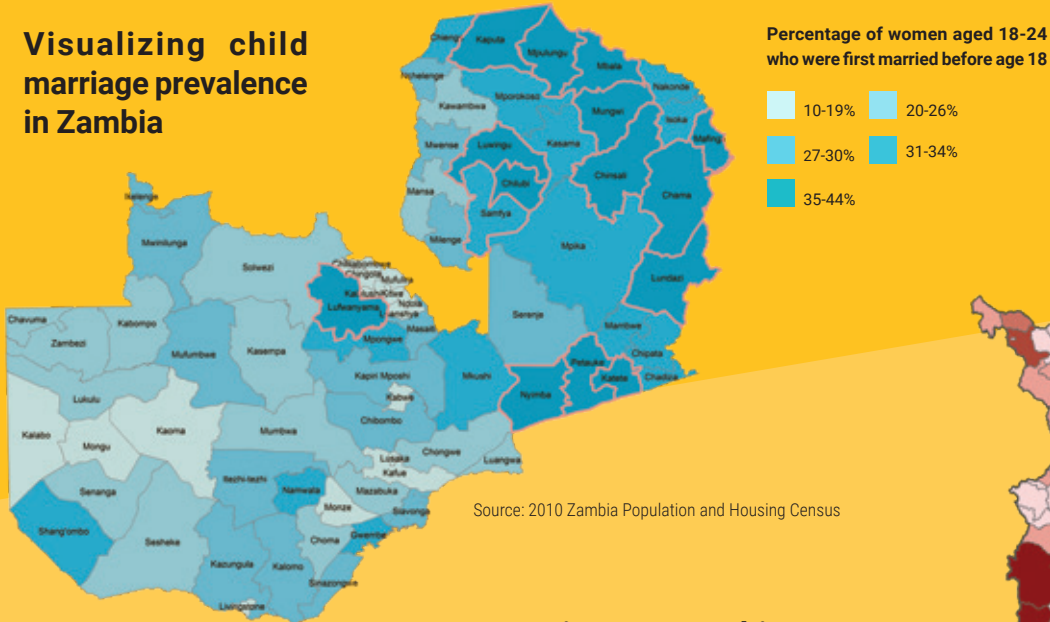
UNFPA Population Data Platform increases access to population data, analytic tools and dissemination portals



# Using census data to locate the furthest behind and visualize inequalities

Overlaying population distribution with other geospatial data, such as administrative boundaries or locations of health facilities, helps target service delivery and programming.

## Visualizing child marriage prevalence in Zambia

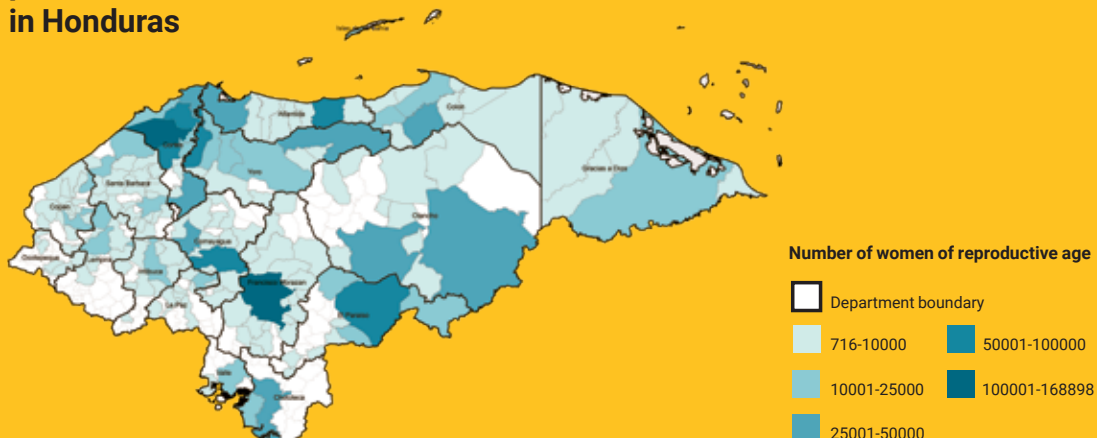


## Mapping geographic access to sexual and reproductive health services in Malawi

Number of people located > 20 km to the nearest Syphilis RDTs Service



## Mapping women of reproductive age in affected municipalities prior to hurricanes Eta and Iota in Honduras



Source: 2020 Subnational Population Projections - INE Honduras

# Modernizing census

Technological progress and innovative methods enable census to be faster, more precise and comprehensive, incorporating tools and systems to enhance efficiency, accuracy and cost-effectiveness. Through its network of 130 Country Offices and six Regional Offices, UNFPA supports governments to implement censuses that meet international standards in line with the *UN Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*.

## Key modernization elements



Mixed Methods



Handheld Devices



Digital Cartography &  
Use of Satellite Imagery

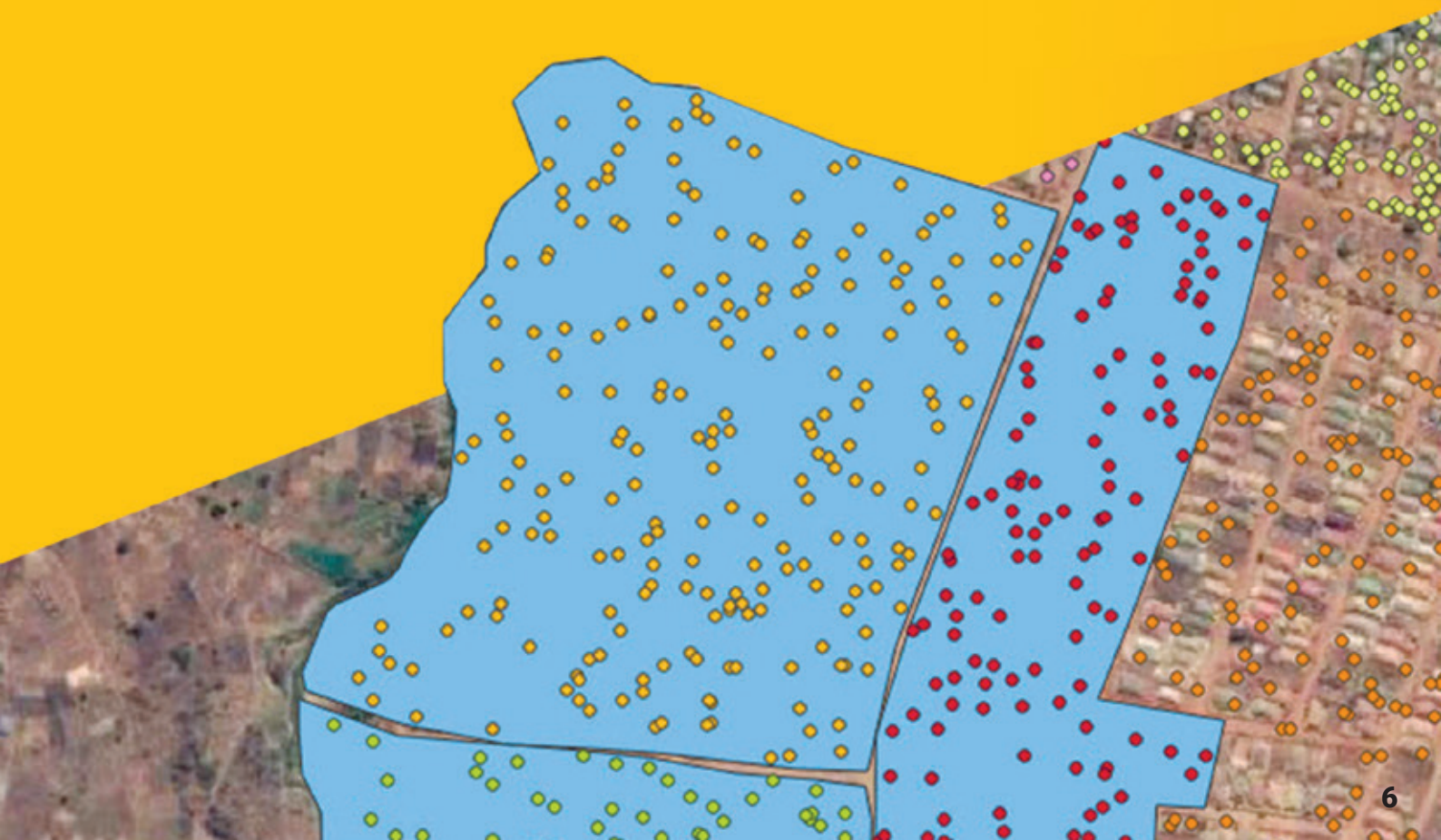


Geographic Information  
Systems (GIS) in All  
Census Phases

Real Time  
Monitoring &  
Field Logistics



Geospatial Analysis  
& Dissemination



# Supporting census across the UN system

## UN Statistics Division

Coordinates the production of *UN Principles and Recommendations* for the implementation of the population and housing census, which sets international standards and guidelines for use by Member States.

## UNFPA

Supports countries at field level to implement the population and housing census in line with international standards and guidelines, and strengthens capacity to use census data for national development and humanitarian action.

## UN Population Division

Uses population and housing census data to produce the UN global population estimates, published every two years, as the *World Population Prospects*.



The United Nations Population Fund is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Our mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

UNFPA supports the collection, analysis and use of the most accurate population data to ensure that everyone, everywhere, is counted, and accounted for, in the pursuit of sustainable development.



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