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## Professional Overview

Demographer and applied statistician with over 20 years of experience in the field of population and international development, including UN agencies, civil society organizations, and academic research institutions. Technical leadership expertise includes population analysis and statistical modeling (including population projections, indirect estimation and small area estimation), evidence based policy development, population data usage, and statistical capacity development.

Skilled in production of population projections, model-based population estimates, SDG data analysis, and small-area estimation in support of the 2030 sustainable development agenda, ICPD Program of Action and population and development policies.

- Experience leading demographic analysis and research to support population policies and national development plans
- Field experience in South and Southeast Asia, Africa, Arab States, and Latin America
- Ph.D. in Demography from the University of California, Berkeley
- Chair and participant in multiple expert and inter-agency panels on population health and technical demography

## Recent Professional Experience

United Nations Population Fund Technical Specialist, Population and Development Branch	Jan, 2017 – present New York, NY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Led strategic analysis of civil registration, census and household survey data in support of 2030 sustainable development agenda and ICPD Program of Action;</li> <li>● Led scale-up of production of Common Operational Datasets on Population Statistics (COD-PS) from 8 per year to 80 per year within 3 years;</li> <li>● Positioned UNFPA's COD-PS as one of the most widely used resources on the UN Humanitarian Data Exchange (over 80,000 downloads per year);</li> <li>● Repositioned UNFPA's analytic risk assessment of FGM risk from a prevalence to incidence framework to support policy and programme efforts to the UNICEF-UNFPA Joint Program to End FGM;</li> <li>● Contributed analysis and technical review to multiple issues of UNFPA's State of the World's Population</li> <li>● Launched and grew UNFPA's work on civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) systems and gender, including production of 6 new technical guidance notes, 4 technical reports, 5 vital statistics reports, and 2 policy briefs</li> <li>● Led capacity development of National Statistics Offices in analysis of civil registration, census and household survey data and production of vital statistics reports;</li> <li>● Founding chair of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Interoperability of data on baseline population, refugees, internal displacement and returnees;</li> <li>● Expanded the usability of UNFPA COD-PS to support efforts in recovery and long-term reconstruction, including the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement;</li> </ul>	
United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Western Asia Demographer/Statistician, Statistics Division	Jan, 2015 – Dec, 2016 Beirut, Lebanon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Led UN-ESCWA's technical work on strengthening Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems in the Arab region, with a particular focus on improving death registration data and producing mortality estimates in partnership with WHO, UN Population Division and Unicef.</li> <li>● Provided technical assistance to national statistics offices of UNESCWA member states in the area of demographic and social statistics via advisory field missions, regional training workshops and specialized evaluations of national statistics systems.</li> <li>● Led the data collection, analysis and writing of the recurring publication, <i>Arab Society: A Compendium of Demographic and Social Statistics in the Arab Region</i>.</li> </ul>	
Department of International Health, Johns Hopkins University	Jan, 2014 – Jan, 2015

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Research Scientist

Baltimore, MD

- Lead analyst for a multi-country study (in Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, and Niger) testing validity and scalability of 'real-time' measurement of under-five mortality rates in low-resource settings. This project explored both methods that draw on both community-based health worker information systems as well as birth history surveys and censuses. This work strengthened the evaluation tools for measuring the impact of child health programs. It also informed initiatives to strengthen civil and vital registration systems in low-income countries.
- Co-investigator on a study that modeled the risk profile of unaccompanied minors in conflict-affected and disaster-affected populations. This research strengthened the evidence base for decision makers supporting minors during and after humanitarian emergencies.
- Teaching responsibilities included advising graduate students in International Health, revising the curriculum of the School's Health Information Systems course, and giving guest lectures on demographic measurement and mortality analysis.

The Ford Foundation  
Evaluation Consultant

June, 2013 – Feb, 2014  
New York, NY

- Co-led a review and evaluation of grant making activities and program work in the area of "human rights & technology" for the Ford Foundation and four other leading philanthropic grant making institutions (Open Societies Foundation, Oak Foundation, Macarthur Foundation, & Humanity United)
- Developed a policy white paper on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the area of international human rights and technology that explores both opportunities for technology to advance human rights and potential technology threats against human rights.

International Center for Transitional Justice  
Lead Survey Consultant

April, 2012 – Jan, 2014  
Beirut, Lebanon & Berkeley, CA

- Led the design of a qualitative survey (consisting of focus groups and in-depth interviews) to map the lived experiences of civilians in Greater Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War and understand people's expectations, hopes and fears related to transitional justice principles and initiatives. Managed a small research team to design the survey, collect the data and develop the survey analysis.
- Led the analysis of oral history testimony data on the intergenerational effects of the Lebanese Civil War collected within Greater Beirut.
- Led the writing of a report that synthesizes findings from the qualitative survey and oral history project and presents findings for discussion by Lebanese policy-makers and political leaders in a human rights roundtable forum.

Center for Civilians in Conflict  
Information Management Consultant

Mar, 2012 – Dec, 2013  
Mogadishu, Somalia & Berkeley, CA

- Co-led two field missions to Mogadishu, Somalia to evaluate the capacity of the African Union Peacekeeping Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to document and report on civilian casualties in Somalia.
- Carried out a feasibility assessment for the design, set-up and launch of a Civilian Casualties Tracking, Analysis & Response Cell within AMISOM as a means to developing AMISOM's amends policies and practices.
- Wrote a detailed design and implementation plan for the launch of a Civilian Casualties Tracking, Analysis & Response Cell within AMISOM.

Statistics Without Borders, American Statistical Association  
Pro-Bono Consultant/Adviser

February, 2011 – Present  
Berkeley, CA & Washington, DC

- Led a team of six statisticians and data analysts in supporting the International Center for Dalit Rights in the development of a caste freedom index to measure integration of Dalits in different societies in South Asia.
- Led a team of five analysts in assessing the quality of data collected by a World Health Organization / Centers for Disease Control Epidemiological Surveillance & Famine Early Warning System.
- Advised the American Bar Association's Rule of Law Program on the design of a monitoring and evaluation program for its human rights initiative in Latin America.
- Guided Unicef's Niger Office on the use of indirect mortality estimation methods for analyzing data from a household survey on maternal and child health and mortality.

International Center for Transitional Justice  
Research Consultant

Feb, 2011 – Dec, 2011  
New York, NY/Berkeley, CA

- Researched the challenges and opportunities for demographic measurement of forced displacement during and after

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protracted armed conflicts and how such analyses can contribute to transitional justice initiatives – specifically historical clarification mechanisms and accountability processes.

Stanton Hill Research  
Consultant Demographer

Oct, 2010 – Dec, 2011  
Berkeley, CA & New York, NY

- Led demographic research into the measurement consistency of direct and indirect estimation methods for under-five mortality rates for the Technical Advisory Group to Inter-Agency Group on Mortality Estimation of the United Nations.
- This research is being carried out using data from 116 Demographic & Health Surveys (DHS) and Unicef Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys in 36 countries. The purpose of this research is to inform the technical basis on how the United Nations agencies develop estimates from DHS data, when direct and indirect estimates from a given DHS survey are inconsistent.

Office of Transitional Initiatives, USAID  
Consultant Demographer

Aug, 2010 – Oct, 2010  
Harare, Zimbabwe

- Assessed available medical and hospital data sources for the study of mortality and morbidity consequences of political violence in Zimbabwe.
- Formulated detailed strategy paper and technical recommendations on the improvement of collection, processing and analysis of quantitative data by Zimbabwean non-governmental organizations.

Berkeley Population Center, University of California, Berkeley  
Graduate Student Researcher

Jan, 2010 – Dec, 2012  
Berkeley, CA

- Carried out assessments of the quality of mortality data from selected demographic surveillance sites in Sub-Saharan Africa for Human Mortality Database Project. Developing estimates of mortality and fertility rates from demographic surveillance sites.
- Contributed to the design and initial proof-of-concept development of a new database for researchers interested in the measurement and modeling of mortality estimates in developing countries.

Human Rights Data Analysis Group, Benetech  
Senior Demographer

Oct, 2003 – Dec, 2012  
Palo Alto, California / Amritsar, India/ Dili, Timor-Leste / Bogota, Colombia  
Chiang Mai, Thailand / Guatemala City, Guatemala / Colombo, Sri Lanka

- Led fieldwork in Sri Lanka, Chad, Timor-Leste and India. Responsibilities included initial project evaluation, design of large-scale data collection process (qualitative data collection and statistical surveys), statistical & qualitative analysis and report writing. These projects sought to measure population dynamics in low-/middle-income countries.
- Designed and directed a large-scale household survey in Timor-Leste and Amritsar, India (including questionnaire design, hiring of sampling statistician, training of field teams, and overall project management of survey whilst in the field).
- Led research on and development of demographic analysis and statistical methods to estimate population dynamics.

Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development  
Statistical Consultant

Mar, 2004 – Feb, 2006  
Colombo, Sri Lanka, Ramallah, Palestine & Paris, France

- Led assessment of education statistics project at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. Coordinated Metagora Project statistical assistance to Sri Lankan human rights organizations.
- Contributed to the production of a technical training manual on the production and analysis of human rights data and statistics.

The Asia Foundation  
Statistical Consultant

Jun, 2003 – Feb, 2004  
Colombo, Sri Lanka

- Carried out detailed assessment of institutional capacity of Sri Lankan National Human Rights Commission and non-governmental human rights organizations.
- Led technical assistance to National Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan NGOs on projects to quantify the mortality impact of armed conflict in Sri Lanka.

American Association for the Advancement of Science  
Statistical Consultant

March, 2002 – May, 2003  
Washington, DC & New York, NY

- Launched a technical assistance project to Sri Lankan human rights groups to measure the mortality impact of armed conflict in Sri Lanka via the Science & Human Rights Programme.
- Guided Sri Lankan human rights groups on development of new data collection initiatives and analysis of human rights

violations data.

- Developed training manuals and led training workshops on data collection, data processing and exploratory data analysis of human rights violations data.

United Nations Development Programme  
Statistical Consultant

March, 2000 – Sept, 2001  
Vientiane, Laos

- Managed the data collection process, constructed quantitative human development and poverty indicators and prepared the statistical inputs and annexes for the 2001 UNDP National Human Development Report for Laos.
- Advised the Laotian Ministry of Finance in establishing a national statistics system for the collection, storage, processing and disseminating of international merchandise trade figures as part of a tri-partite project with the International Monetary Fund, UNDP and Government of Laos. This project was part of a technical assistance project to assist the Lao Government in meeting its obligations under its Poverty Reduction Growth Facility.

Australian Prudential Regulation Authority  
Analyst, Market Risk Team

Mar, 1998 – Aug, 1999  
Sydney, Australia

- Engaged in consultations with banks, for the purpose of general market risk analysis of banks' risk governance and for approval of internally developed risk management models.
- Reviewed banks' capabilities of managing general and specific market risk under the Basle Accords and Capital Adequacy Standards using quantitative methods.

## Education

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Doctor of Philosophy

Aug, 2007 – Jul, 2013

Department of Demography, University of California, Berkeley

Dissertation: Papers on Indirect Mortality Estimation & Analysis in Low-Resource Settings and Unsettled Environments

Qualifying Examination Fields: Demographic Estimation, Mortality & Health, Famine Demography

Master of Arts

Aug, 2006 - May, 2007

Department of Demography, University of California, Berkeley

Master of International Affairs

Aug, 2001 - May, 2003

School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, New York

Concentration: International Development

Bachelor of Science (First Class Honors)

Mar, 1994- Dec, 1999

School of Mathematics, University of New South Wales, Australia

Thesis: On the Application of Extreme Value Theory to Market Risk Management for Commercial Banks

Bachelor of Arts

Mar, 1994- Dec, 1999

School of German & Russian Studies, University of New South Wales, Australia

## Selected Publications

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Comprehensive list of publications (40+ in total) available on [Google Scholar page](#)

### *Selected United Nations publications*

1. **Silva, R.**, Souza, E., Simelane, S (2024) Marriage, divorce registration and vital statistics: where are we? Where do we go from here? UNFPA Centre of Excellence for CRVS Systems, Technical Report TR-2024-01.
2. Government of Malawi, **UNFPA**, WHO, Health Data Collaborative (2023) Aligning partner support with the Government of Malawi to strengthen the integrated national data system for health: civil registration, vital statistics and geospatial data.
3. **Silva, Romesh** and Rachel Snow (2019) The Life-Course Approach to Civil Registration and Vital Statistics: A Crucial Tool to Advance Gender Equality. Knowledge Brief Series on Gender and CRVS. Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, Ontario.

### *Selected peer-reviewed publications*

1. Weny K, **Silva R**, Diop, N., Snow, R (2023) *Spatial Clustering in Temporal Trends of Female Genital Mutilation Risk: Leveraging sparse data in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia*. Studies in Family Planning 54 (3), 487-501.
2. **Silva, R.** (2022) Population perspectives and demographic methods to strengthen CRVS systems: Introduction. Genus 78(1), 8

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3. **Silva R.**, Mizoguchi N. (2019) *Mortality Data in Service of Conflict-Affected Populations*. In: Macfarlane S., AbouZahr C. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Health Data Methods for Policy and Practice*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.
4. **Silva, Romesh** (2012) *Child Mortality Estimation: Consistency of Under-Five Mortality Rate Estimates Using Full and Summary Birth Histories*. *PLoS Medicine*, 9 (8): e1001296.

### Selected Honors & Awards

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- Research Fellow 2013 – 2016  
Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley
- Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award Mar, 2013  
Graduate Student Instructor Teaching & Resource Center, University of California, Berkeley
- NICHD Doctoral Training Fellowship 2011 – 2012  
National Institute of Child Health & Development, United States National Institutes of Health
- John L. Simpson Research Fellowship in International & Comparative Studies 2010 - 2011  
Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley
- Dean's Normative Time Fellowship 2009 - 2010  
Graduate Division, University of California, Berkeley
- Field Research Award 2007  
Institute for Business & Economic Research, University of California, Berkeley
- University of California Human Rights Center Fellowship 2007 - 2008  
Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley
- Wray Jackson Smith Memorial Award August, 2007  
Social Statistics Section, American Statistical Association
- University of California Regents Intern Fellowship 2006 - 2010  
Office of the Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley
- Lionel Murphy Overseas Postgraduate Scholarship 2006 - 2010  
Lionel Murphy Foundation, Australia
- Dean's Fellowship in Applied Quantitative Analysis 2002 - 2003  
School of International & Public Affairs, Columbia University
- Class Prize in Professional Issues & Ethics in Mathematics Dec, 1999  
School of Mathematics, University of New South Wales
- Rotary Youth Leadership Award Jan, 1999  
Rotary Club of Maroubra, New South Wales
- Exchange Year Scholars Award Aug 1996 - Jul 1997  
International Office, University of New South Wales

### Professional Activities

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#### Participation on Expert/Study Panels

- IUSSP Scientific Panel on Population Registers, Ethics and Human Rights 2023 – 2026  
Chair
- Principal Investigator: IDRC Grant to IUSSP Scientific Panel to support research and mentoring on civil registration and vital statistics;
  - Convened and led strategic research collaboration between IUSSP, Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, and USC International Institute for Global Health
  - Led IUSSP Population, Ethics and Human Rights Fellows Program
- WHO/UN-DESA Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment 2020 - present
- Advise efforts by WHO, UN-DESA and UN Member States to obtain accurate estimates of numbers of deaths attributable to the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic
- IUSSP Scientific Panel on Population Perspectives and Demographic Methods to Strengthen CRVS Systems 2018 – 2023

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## Chair

- Principal Investigator: IDRC Grant to IUSSP Scientific Panel to support research and mentoring on civil registration and vital statistics;
- Led and Organized IUSSP CRVS Research Fellows Program
- Editor of Genus Thematic *Series* “*Population perspectives and demographic methods to strengthen CRVS systems*” and IUSSP/Springer Edited Volume

## National Academies of Sciences

Mar – Dec, 2019

### Scientific Panel on Forced Migration Research

- Co-convened National Academies of Sciences workshop “Forced migration research: From theory to practice in promoting well-being” – Washington, D.C., May, 2019
- Contributed to special issue of Journal of Migration and Human Security “New demographic directions in forced migrant and refugee research” – September, 2021

## IUSSP Scientific Panel on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems

2015 – 2018

### Invited Member

- Principal organizer of a PAA-2016 side meeting on CRVS and record linkage methods co-hosted by the World Bank
- Principal organizer of a special journal supplement of the International Association of Official Statistics (IAOS) Statistical Journal – the focus of the supplement is the use of record linkage methods to assess and improve CRVS systems.
- Principal organizer of an invited session on CRVS and the 2030 Development Agenda at the 2016 IAOS Conference in Abu Dhabi.

## Participation on Advisory Panels

### Committee on Scientific Freedom & Human Rights, American Statistical Association

#### Invited Member

Aug, 2010 - Jul, 2016

### Ensaaf

2009 - 2015

#### Member, Board of Advisors

### National Academies of Sciences

2006

#### Invited Member, Expert Panel on Excess Mortality Estimates in Darfur

## Professional Society Memberships

- American Statistical Association 2001-present
- Population Association of America 2005-present
- International Union for the Scientific Study of Population 2008-present

## Other Professional Service

### Research Affiliate, DataPop Alliance

2014 - 2019

### Organizer & Chair

Aug, 2013

#### Session on Ethical Challenges & Lessons Learned in Conducting Field Research on Human Rights Issues

#### International Population Conference (Pusan, South Korea), International Union of the Scientific Study of Population

### Session Chair, Session on Child Survival in Sub-Saharan Africa

April, 2010

#### Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington, DC

## Editorial Activities

### Genus

Jan - Dec, 2021

#### Guest Editor (Thematic Series on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics)

### Conflict & Health

Mar, 2012 – present

#### Member, Editorial Board

### Invited Reviewer/Referee

2006 - present

#### Various academic journals

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- Provided expert peer review, upon invitation, for the following academic/practitioner journals and presses: BMJ Global Health, Conflict & Health, Genus, PLoS ONE, PLoS Medicine, Demography, Journal of Population Research, The Lancet, International Journal of Transitional Justice, Journal of the American Medical Association, Springer, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press.

### Teaching

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#### Classroom Instruction

- Co-Instructor, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health  
Evaluation Methods in International Health  
Fall, 2014
- Graduate Student Instructor, University of California, Berkeley  
Introductory Demographic Methods, Prof. Kenneth Wachter  
Fall, 2012
- Graduate Student Instructor, University of California, Berkeley  
Social Consequences of Population Dynamics, Prof. John Wilmoth  
Fall, 2007
- Teaching Assistant, Columbia University  
Intermediate Econometric Analysis, Prof. Jason Bram  
Spring, 2003

### Academic Service

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- Technical University of Munich  
Dissertation Committee Member (Kathrin Weny)  
2022 - present
- Johns Hopkins School of Public Health  
Second Reader, MSPH Thesis (Emily Carter)  
Spring, 2014
- University of California, Berkeley  
Member, Health & Safety Committee, Department of Demography,  
Aug, 2010 - May, 2013

### Languages

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- Spoken: English (Native), French (Intermediate), German (Intermediate)
- Programming: R (Advanced), Stata (Advanced), Bash (Intermediate), Python (Novice)