

FINAL REPORT

**33rd ICSW Global Conference on Social Welfare
Brazilian Preparatory Conference Meeting**

**“The Dynamics of Welfare in Globalization:
Lessons from the Past, Challenges
for Today and Tomorrow”**

**Rio de Janeiro
2008**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The CBCISS (The Brazilian Center for Cooperation and Exchange of Social Services), founded in 1946 as the Brazilian arm of the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), is one of the oldest NGO in Brazil.

With head office in Rio de Janeiro, the CBCISS is financed by its associates – both individuals and organizations – and by services (consulting, research, courses and publications).

The CBCISS has the following objectives: to establish dialogue with organized civil society, public authorities and universities; to look for strategies to fight social inequality; to promote social justice; to improve the standard of living of the population; and to disseminate information on practices in the social area, among others.

CBCISS is traditionally responsible for organizing the preparatory meetings of international conferences, which are held every 2 years by ICSW which is celebrating this year 80 years. In the 2008 Brazilian Pre-Conference Preparatory Meeting for the 33rd Conference, CBCISS took new steps: first, it invited professionals from different social services to participate, second, it invited the School of Social Work from the UFRJ (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) to become partner in the organization of the event.

The motto of the event was *The Dynamics of Welfare in Globalization: Lessons from the Past, Challenges for Today and Tomorrow*, which can be broken down into three main topics: Social Work, Welfare Protection and Welfare Development – the same topic that shall be included in the 33rd Global Conference on Social Welfare, which will be held in Tours, France, from 30th of June to July 4th.

Participants analyzed and exchanged ideas and experiences on social welfare in Brazil and in Latin America during the three days conference. In this document we shall present a summary of this meeting which shall be submitted at the Global Conference. This paper includes the positions of the Brazilian Committee of the ICSW and the delegates from the committees of the following countries that participated in the event: Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, as well as participants and guests from Chile and Columbia.

The steering committees of CBCISS and of the Social Work School of UFRJ University, co-sponsors of the event, would like to thank every person and organization that collaborated in making this event possible.

2. EVENT DESCRIPTION

From April 9th to April 11th of 2008 the Science and Culture Forum Center of the UFRJ Campus, located in Praia Vermelha neighborhood, hosted the BRAZILIAN PREPARATORY PRE-CONFERENCE meeting for the 33rd CONFERENCE OF ICSW.

This event was sponsored by CBCISS in partnership with the School of Work at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Thanks to the efforts of the respective steering committees, the collaboration of representatives of several universities and other institutions engaged in social welfare¹, that are part of the Organizing Commission or have co-financed this event. After 6 months of hard work to put together the event, over 3 days participants met to reflect on: "*The Dynamics of Welfare in Globalization: Lessons from the Past, Challenges for Today and Tomorrow*", the same topic of the event in Tours, France, from June 30th to July 7th, 2008.

We evaluated the technical and scientific activities of the 3 day event and found the results to be very positive, as follows: Brazilian experts participated in thirteen sessions; international guest speakers were invited to give presentations on the topics of the symposium (social work, welfare protection and welfare development), and to expand on these topics, thus opening the debate. Furthermore, 12 significant positive experiences were presented by local institutions of merit, sixty-seven papers were selected to be presented at the conference and posters exhibit.

It was not possible to present a summary of all interjections in the final closing panel, because they were so rich and diverse. Therefore, the Preliminary Document, which included a summary of the debates of the

¹ We would like to mention the significant contribution of the following universities, councils and institutes: Brazilian universities, Latin American and French universities; Social Service Regional Council of the state of Rio de Janeiro; Regional VP of the Brazilian Association of Social Service/Welfare Education and Research; State Secretary of Social Welfare and Human Rights; Ministry of Social Development & to Combat Hunger; organizations members of the SESC National Department, Regional Management Offices of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and the state of Pará; National Council and National Department of *SESI*.

scientific session, was presented for review at the closing plenary session. The panel discussion decided at the end of the session to give participants of the Pre-Conference a chance to continue exchanging opinions via internet through chat groups until May 30th, so that they could finish writing up the Final Report to be presented at the 33rd Global Conference in France.

This summary of Brazilian and Latin-American reflections covering the issues that affect the countries of this region, considering the impact of globalization, will be sent to France.

2. 1. Scientific Sessions

The **Magna Opening Speech** was delivered by José Paulo Netto (Brazil), presenting the main topic of the event.

Then six **Symposiums** were held with two conference sessions for each one, on the main topics:

- Work Life under the impact of Globalization, Pierre Salama (University of Paris XIII-France) and Márcio Pochmann (President of the Institute of Applied Economics Research-Brazil).
- Social Work and Social Issues – Ana Elizabeth Motta (Federal University of Pernambuco-Brazil) and Teresita Matus Sepúlveda (Catholic University of Chile-Chile).
- Social Welfare Protection in Latin America and the context of globalization – Aldaíza Sposati (Catholic University of São Paulo - Brazil) and Carlos Barba Solano (University of Guadalajara Mexico).
- Current Configurations of Social Welfare in Brazil – Márcia Lopes (State University of Londrina-Brazil) and Berenice Rojas Couto (Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul-Brazil).
- The Issue of Social Welfare Development in Latin America – Ladislau Dowbar (Catholic University of São Paulo-Brazil) and Flavio Bezerrada (University of Maranhão-Brazil).
- Social Welfare Development in Brazil: current perspectives and limits – Danilo Santos de Miranda (Director of SESC Regional Office of São Paulo-Brazil) and Jessé de Souza (Federal University of Juíz de Fora-Brazil).
- The workshops were given by representatives of successful social programs stories of different areas

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- The implementation of the Social Welfare Protection Policy in Brazil – Beatriz Augusto Paiva (Ministry of Social Development and to Combat Hunger)
- Social fight for the right of the elderly generation – Olga Luisa Leon de Quiroga (GARMIC of São Paulo)
- National Social Work Program in Rio de Janeiro: achievements and challenges – Heloisa Helena Mesquita Maciel (State Secretary of Social Welfare and Human Rights of Rio de Janeiro)
- Observatories of the shanty-towns of Rio de Janeiro – Fernando Lannes Fernandes
- The rights of patients with cancer: Meetings with Social Work – Social Work Team of the National Cancer Institute
- The experience of the Brazilian Program of Social Welfare of the Pará Retailers-Edimar Neves
- The experience of the Brazilian Institute of Social & Economic Analysis via Citizenships Observatory - *Luciano Cerqueira*
- The experience of Social Work at the Industry: Programs implemented in Latin America – *Karita Rachel Pedroso Bastos*
- Legalization Project at Rocinha (slum) – School of Social Work UFRJ University - *Gabriela Lema Icasuriaga*
- Integrated Project of teaching and research activities for continuing education with the Landless Workers Movement – UFRJ - *Maristela Dalmoro and Luis Eduardo Acosta*
- Social-cultural projects of SESC – Rio de Janeiro – *Gilberto Fugimoto*
- Social Projects of Rio Solidarity – *Daniela Pedras*

Altogether, the conference offered a total of 41 **presentations** and 26 **Interactive Poster Sessions**.

Professor Teresita Matus Sepúlveda gave a mini-course on “Innovation in Social Intervention: Post-traditional theories of intervention, new criteria, how it relates to public policies, successful experiences and the challenges of social work”.

Coordinators and participant responsible for note-taking participated in the scientific sessions **Sympósiuns**: Ana Cristina Brito Arcoverde, Cleusa

Santos, Dulce Pandolfi, Maria Magdala Vasconcelos de Araújo e Silva, Marilena Jamur, Suely Gomes Costa e Yolanda Demetrio Guerra; **Workshops, Presentations and Interactive Poster Sessions:** Adela Puente, Ana Maria Vasconcellos, Andréa Medrado Bragard, Andréa Moraes Alves, Alejandra Pastorini Corleto, Aura Marlene Márquez Herrera, Edna Donzelli, Elizabeth Sanchez, Joel Naimayer Padula, José Pedro Simões, Lenise Lima Fernandes, Luciana Patrícia Zucco, Luciano Cerqueira, Lucio Dias Dumenez, Luis Eduardo Acosta Acosta, Marileia Franco Marinho Inoue, Maristela Dal Moro, Miriam Azambuja Guindani, Mirtha Sosa Crevoisier, Rosely Reis Lorenzato, Silvina Verônica Galízia.

Next, we shall present a summary of the main points of the main topics analyzed at 33rd Global Conference of Social Welfare preparatory meeting.

3. THE SOCIAL WELFARE SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES UNDER THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION

The main perspectives for reflection were presented at the Magna Opening Speech and they were expanded by guest participants during the three days of the event.

Globalization, representing a new form of capital development, causes the internalization of economics to expand, through the development of productive forces and that of the internationalized market.

From the point of view of economics, the phenomenon of globalization would not break the pattern of capitalism. Instead, it creates a new “moment” of development which constitutes radicalization of the current trends and following the logical next step- previously announced by Marx in the 19th century – the intensification of interdependence and global cooperation. The production chain and circulation of goods tends to topple economic and political barriers, notwithstanding contradictions and inequality among countries, thus propagating the myth of the “free market”.

To understand the sociological and political dimensions of globalization, we must take into consideration the conditions that set the ground for trend radicalization, such as: the redefinition of the relations between national societies caused by the dissolution of the Soviet Union Block that increased the potential of capitalism’s reach and generalization, thus favoring its globalization. In addition, the crisis of the State-Nation changed the nature, function and priority of the State. In this case, the State abandons its function

as protector of national economies to become a principal agent of adapting national economies to the world economic order, therefore abandoning the functions of social welfare provider.

Consequently, globalization leaves exposed the possibilities and limits of the development of capitalism at a global level. The same problems arise everywhere, although they are manifest to different degrees and in different ways, reflecting both qualitative and quantitative differences in resources. This process can be identified in work and employment, and raising unemployment rates which now have become a global problem. Poverty, which used to be restricted to the so called Third World, now is also a problem of rich countries, which are now facing "poverty stricken regions".

We examined in general terms the social situation of countries of Latin America – those that occupy a subordinate economic and technological position according to the global capitalist order. We further analyzed the situation in Brazil: although from the second half of the last century Brazil implemented an import substitution policy and developed rapid industrialization, it continues to export primary products, like its neighboring countries.

Brazil offers a peculiar scenario because of the contradictory economic policy of the last 10 years. It is a policy that stimulates agro-business focused on exports, and, more recently, the production of bio-fuels. On one hand, bio-fuel production is stimulated by conceding incentives to the industry of alcohol production, under the pretext of reducing global warming caused by the over use of fossil fuels such as oil and vegetable coal which are greatest pollutants. On the other hand, the favored solution is to expand agriculture borders without control, producing extensive areas of deforestation and forest fires which have already spread throughout large parts of the Amazon, previous virgin land, thus increasing emissions of pollutants. In addition, the production of bio-fuel can cause a serious crisis, due to price increase of basic food which in turn increases hunger indicators in Brazil and the world.

Similarly, South and Southeast regions of Brazil present extensive areas degraded by exploration and use of vegetable coal, regardless of it being highly pollutant and low source of energy.

Therefore, technological-economical dependence and the subordinated position of Latin America countries in the capitalist relations, cause serious social consequences in these countries, such as increasing inequality and poverty.

We also analyzed, in theory, the political implications of the Social Welfare State as well as the consequences of its dismantling, which we will analyze further on. The Social Welfare State institutionalization gained ground as of the Second World War, due to the dissemination of the social-democratic model, in a complex scenario which involved: work, social protection and economic growth during the so called "30 glorious years", in which the Keynesian-Ford standard drove capitalism to grow around the world.

All the measures to ensure this process were affected by the macro-economic policies, with a decreasing correlation between low economic growth and investments in social policies. Through the historical overview of the past 3 decades, we were able to identify the adoption of different "social protection models" in several countries, adjusted to each country's needs. In Latin America, as we shall review further on, there is great heterogeneity in standards of social protection. According to the "residual" intervention of the State model, the State intervenes through social policies, only when the "natural" channels for meeting needs (individual effort, family, market, community net-works) are insufficient. Thus the State acts selectively, focusing vulnerable groups and individuals in crisis. The State operates based on time restrictions, promoting incentives for the population, individual and family capacity to deal with the situation by using private insurance.

Under the "merit-rewards" model, although starting from the same premise – in which individuals are responsible for solving their own problems based on their own merit, work, professional capacity and political engagement – the State intervenes only to compensate for partial market distortions or due to inequality. It does so by way of complementing the role of social and economic institutions, establishing client-type relationships. As such, the State is pressured by groups backed up by corporate interests that compete for public funds in order to institutionalize social protection services.

The "redistributive" model considers the Welfare State as an important and integral part of modern societies geared towards the productions of "extra-market" guaranteed for every citizen. Its premise is that the market is unable to take on alone the allocation of resources to reduce lack of security and eliminate poverty thus promoting universal access to services without binding contracts instead.

We need to consider a direct relationship that exists among the heart of capitalistic consumption, the type and rhythm of economic growth and the institutionalization of the social welfare state. Therefore, as growth decreases,

the state invests less in social protection. In order to overcome this logic we would need to overcome the current capital order.

We will now present the most relevant points that were presented and discussed on the main themes: Social Work, Social Protection and Social Development.

3.1. Social Work in Brazil and in Latin America

In the Brazilian Pre-Conference, we expanded our reflection on social work beyond its traditional scope of action to include not only social intervention by professionals of different areas, but the work of volunteers who get involved for different reasons. Therefore, we found it important to start by examining the social work environment conditions to identify the need for implanting social actions and social work to overcome poverty and inequality.

Employment conditions have gone through structural economic changes which have had a profound impact on society. This phenomenon reflects first of all the economic process of globalization. In economics, globalization is characterized by increasing job opportunities abroad, by forming international job markets in which products, capital and services are traded. However, globalization involves other facts and processes, like information revolution of the last decades which, to a great extent, for example, in technology, made globalization of the economy possible while, at the same time, turning capital into sources of financing.

The main impacts on the work force are as follows: the introduction of new technologies, especially that of automatization and robots substituting workers; decrease in manufacturing and the growth of service market; introduction of new forms of new processes in production and work, causing new health risks and for the environment; an increase in new small units of production, making it more difficult to organize the production chain; an increase in the number of mobile units of production and companies, increasing global job competition; raise in unemployment rates in various regions around the world; increase in amount of work and thus longer working hours, increasing the level of stress and resulting diseases; increasing precarious working conditions, by reducing the number of formal jobs available and increasing informal job opportunities, home-offices, part time jobs and seasonal jobs; outsourcing jobs and tasks which leads to lower salaries and payments for services rendered.

We also need to consider significant changes of the types of jobs available in the current market scenario, and consequently, how management also see the role of jobs differently, especially in the industrial production chain of goods and services. This scenario leads companies to radically review the role of work when preparing strategies of production. The massive dissemination of new production technologies, create a need for developing management strategies and more sophisticated products, resulting in the need for new production skills previously un-thought of in *Taylorist* work force organization.

There are immediate and radical consequences in terms of quantity and quality of work and management within the work force. This scenario creates the need for: better qualified work force; workers with higher education levels; using alternatives or management strategies requiring collaboration of workers (as collaboration and consensus substitutes control and repression). This does not mean, however, that old predominant job relations will disappear, but, instead these old forms will need to learn to coexist with contradictory ones. The end-result is not a positive one (192 million unemployed in the world, in 2005); increase in social inequality, at a national level and within the Latin American continent, where we face a structural excluding globalization. The overall scenario reflects a random future, of uncertainty and vulnerability that the modern work force faces: one in which the original employment's function of integrating individuals, of offering livelihood, status, protection, identity, social network weakens more each day.

If, on the one hand, we can observe a new standard of relationships in the work force taking place in capitalistic advanced countries, on the other, in other regions, it has threatened livelihood as unemployment rates have increased, which represents the loss of the personal identity of workers and resulting psychological impacts. Still, the unemployed of this country have their basic livelihood guaranteed thanks to social security. IN the so called Third World, the situation is much more serious due o the precarious nature of social security. Comparative studies show that countries with solid social protection and rights resist better external pressure against social security as they are better able to compensate for risks and the process of degradation of the work force happens at a much slower rate.

Brazil and the Latin America countries present the highest inequality indicators of the entire world. Inequality and poverty increases, chiefly, as a result of the repercussions of globalization (unemployment, precarious working

conditions etc) recurrent economic and financial crisis are two other predominant factors responsible for the increase in inequality and poverty in the region. The increase of inequality can also be measured using a very simple instrument, the Gini Coefficient: the inequality coefficient score of Brazil and Latin America is 0.6 in comparison to slightly over 0.3 in Europe and slightly less than 0.3 in Asia. The closer the score falls to 1.0, the greater inequality rate.

If we examine these rates over time, we see that inequality rates increased in the last ten to fifteen years, due to globalization of the financial markets, in the hands of the 5% wealthiest portion of the population, in detriment to middle classes and less qualified workers, whose income can increase only due to income re-distribution. In Latin America, income inequality increased less than before, and in some countries has stabilized, except in Argentina, where poverty and inequality increased significantly. This relative stability hides, however, a thorough re-definition of income distribution. The Lorentz curve – which allows us to measure income inequality distribution reflecting both assets and liabilities (poverty) shows that this re-distribution disfavors the middle class. In Brazil, the poverty rate decreased in the beginning of 1990's, due to the end of hyper-inflation, stabilizing at a relative high level. This process reflects the oscillations of income distribution in the continent with varying peaks according to the situation of each country, but, in general, the majority of the income falls into the hands of the wealthier classes.

High levels of inequality in Latin American countries represent a challenge for their development. An increase in levels of inequality or sustained high level of inequality generates a society where exclusion and instability are the norm, thus weakening social cohesion. It is a complex scenario given the heterogeneity of the above mentioned factors. This also represents a political and intellectual challenge as a result of the complex relation between growth and inequality. Depending on the circumstances, growth can be encouraged through the competition caused by both minor and major inequality and its evolution. It is not possible to understand the relationship between inequality and growth without taking into account other interdependent variables: income per capita, position of the international markets, open economies and the role of the State. These variables combine producing different results, such as: the controlled opening of markets indicates that the State adopts an industrial policy.

Whereas lower inequality rates can indicate that the State should adopt an active social policy to reduce it. On the other hand, higher rates of inequality can accompany the free game of the market forces, indicating that the State reduce its intervention in social and economic policies. In the case of Latin American economies, its main failure is due to choosing not to adequately confront the enormous challenge that poverty represents, instead, keeping it at one of the higher levels in the world. Indicators show a tendency towards reducing poverty levels due to the implementation of income re-allocation social programs, however, household income per capita has decreased 20% which caused an increase of destitute population. Asian countries, on the one hand, were able to reduce poverty indicators whereas poverty indicators in Latin America stayed the same, with little variation. Poverty is not taken seriously enough as governments do not consider it a priority, even when they would like to portray the image of dealing with this issue to gain the support of the lower and middle classes. It is very easy to evaluate what the government has done to help the poor. In Brazil for example, for every dollar allocated to the *Bolsa-Familia* (a specific type of care to the low income family) social program, 18 dollars were allocated to foreign and internal debt. This is a result of apparent inadequate management of behalf of the State.

This is the general context of the last two decades defining the space in which social action takes place and is developed, of the public and private sectors. In our view, the space available for social intervention is created by and determined by social relationships. It is in the spheres of economy and politics that the conditions for production "of the social reality" and "social actions" are set as the State, even when minimizing its intervention in this area, promotes a type of social regulation. Brazil, although presents similar characteristics to those of other Latin American countries, subject to the so called Washington² Consensus in the 1990's, in fact presents a unique situation in terms of the State's intervention in social programs, especially regarding social work done by professionals which reflects the country's history.

² This is how neo-liberal policies of that the USA preached as a "solution" to economic crisis of Latin America was called. It was part of the foreign debt package deal; which became the IMF model and that of the World Bank. The world works based on a market economy, free from state intervention in the private sector which limits development. It also means: markets open through free trade; no more barriers for foreign investment; ample privatizations; reduction of subsidies and social expenditure; lack of regulation in employment, to allow different types of contracts which reduce company costs. The discourse that defends these types of measures, and its disastrous results by increasing social inequality is well known.

The circumstances of the beginning of the 1990's, were quite promising, such as the promise of democracy's maturity, years of important achievements not only for the Brazilian society which had fought for re-democratization, but also for social welfare. In this regard, social workers were able to achieve in over slightly over 10 years a significant change in their field, both in terms of education and reflections. Professional associations supported by social movements fought hard to place social protection as a right of every citizen. This struggle and fight had been initiated in the previous decade, having achieved positive results, such as including social security as a right by constitution, under Social Order Chapter approved by decree in 1988. It should be noted that, in a country where social welfare has always been used for bartering services in exchange for votes in political campaigns, in which the weaker link, the illiterate masses, are explored, bartering their votes in exchange for the promise of job prospects, better standards of living, the above achievement is indeed relevant.

However, already in the beginning of 1990's it became clear that it would not be so easy to guarantee social rights, because that would require the approval of a new complimentary legislation. Meanwhile, the Welfare Law was approved, after much resistance, in 1993, with the advent of neo-liberalism in the continent and foreign investment under following basic premises. The main premises were: inability to sustain current mechanisms of the Welfare State, of its programs and institutions, fiscal balance at the cost of social protection, the urgent need for reform (of labor legislation, welfare, etc.), the reduction of the public deficit, privatization of state-owned companies, liberalization of markets, and a need to reformulate public service. In the political arena, this means standardize economic policies thus reducing the State's role in developing conditions for competition at a global scale, in other words, constitute a "grass roots based state" (focused on helping the poor) and "maximum-state" focused on international foreign capital. In this scenario, financial speculation would be stimulated in detriment to productive investment.

Social work in Brazil has gone through many significant changes during this period, which corresponded to re-evaluating the scope of action-plans and state investment on social programs (at all levels of government). Once the State is reformed, it is no longer directly responsible for implementing economic and social programs, instead taking on the role of regulator. In this manner, the public sector, which before was responsible for hiring social workers significantly reduces this work space. While the public sector reduced investments in social programs, the private sector increased its investment

in this area, stimulated by the actions of the public sector. The public sector now acted on two fronts:

1^a – by setting norms and thus regulating the social services sector, enforcing the corresponding umbrella legislation for diverse non-profit organizations, philanthropic institutes, Foundations, NGOs, among others, in other words, for the so called “third sector”;

2^a – delegating tasks by outsourcing social services programs to private companies, the so called “out-sourcing trend” and enforcing the same market rules used in economics to social services.

The above mentioned conditions have a significant effect on social work. There is an extensive list of studies of the challenges of this sector and considering the impact of globalization. The impacts of globalization are as follows: it destabilizes work, has a negative impact on the community, social classes regardless of class, age or sex, although low income groups end up penalized the most. Globalization causes and/or increases economic inequality and thus directly effects other areas of life (culture, education, politics and symbolic), which is a product of the social structure inherent in the current production development model adopted by the countries of this region.

Therefore Latin America faces today enormous challenges in social work. As a result, professionals of this field have to live with several paradoxes:

- Their work has to coexist with economic growth and a high level of inequality;
- A greater number of qualified professionals are working in this field. If we look at the number of professionals with Graduate degrees, Latin America now ranks 2nd place, of professionals with PhDs, only behind USA, close to Canada, Europe and Australia;
- This is why we have great social programs, some of the best, unfortunately within a context of social regression;
- Intervention in this area has increased but they are not always competent;
- The old and new social work systems coexist side by side in the countries of this region, as such, one of the main challenges we face in the past decade is to prepare proposals based on a new perspective of intervention.

Today, social work in Brazil and in other Latin America countries is most engaged and aware of the fact work within a context of inequality and that they are challenged daily to mediate between the needs and interests of the working class within an area where there is a lot of conflicts of interests.

Social workers face these ambiguities on a daily basis as they try to meet the needs of the masses – and their issues while trying to fulfill demands of other groups. They have to interpret these demands and act find appropriate solutions – this is social work-using the current channels (institutions) and public policies to achieve this goal.

Social workers face in general, have a wide range of different types of social programs to work with, but they may not be available in the long run, so they are may not be able to implement them on the long term. In addition, there are not enough social program effective follow-up and evaluation, which many times do not possess the necessary indicators to study the regional reality. A reality that is inserted in social spaces that are very heterogeneous, not easily studied by indexes such as average HDI or by other indicators that have been used to examine and determine social development.

3.2. Social Protection in Brazil and in Latin American Countries

We analyzed the current situation of social protection in countries of Latin America within two different perspectives. Each perspective offers different approaches but both are based on a comparative study.

The first approach covers the effects of economic globalization – setting that as the framework in order to then analyze how governments of different Latin America attempted to face the consequences of the effects of this process.

The second approach presents Social Welfare “Systems” of different Latin American countries. We analyzed them by using the following criteria: the system’s evolution over time; models that inspired these new systems; range of coverage offered; out-reach range of the programs; homogeneity or heterogeneity of implemented systems; up to what point they consider significant existing differences among Latin America countries and the end-results achieved in terms of social protection – reflected in the proportion of inclusion/exclusion.

Initially, up to 1970's there were three major groups of countries in Latin America with similar institutional and similar social welfare systems, each one corresponding to a different type of "regional social welfare system".

As of the 1980s, Latin American systems went through an intense process of adjustment and reform, driven by international financial agencies and supported by various governments of that region. From then on, a new paradigm predominated: that of attributing to the market the fundamental role of not only generating and distributing wealth and income but also social protection. If we analyze the impact of this process of structural re-adjustment and that of social reform in the infra-structure of the above mentioned systems, we observe that: Latin American countries reformed their welfare systems, and, as a consequence, redefined the concept of social protection. The objective of this analysis was to prove the following hypothesis:

- The social liberal cross-sectional reform left three types of residual systems, emphasizing an focused and security approach subjecting them slowly but surely to the logic of the market;
- Reform, in all three cases, increased the trend towards segmentation of social protection;
- Reform, however, did not profoundly change the gap among all three types of systems.

Another factor identified is that there is an apparent uniformity in the region. In general, Latin America can be identified, among other factors, by:

- Having ranked, during several decades, number one in social inequality in the world – if we consider inequality in terms of income distribution divided per region of the world (2005), and use the Gini Coefficient (GDP per capita, PPA in US\$) the result is: Sub-Saharan Africa (722) whereas Latin America ranked first, the Caribbean, second.
- This Region has also stood out because it has been unable to consistently reduce high poverty rates that characterize this region, in contrast to rates around the globe, particularly rates of regions like East Asia and the Pacific.

The first excluding model: social security

Analyzing historically the social welfare systems, we would be able to verify that during the first period of this study, social security in this region was articulated by a fundamental system: social security, which in fact was not the basis of universal access to social protection.

The security coverage system was divided into the following categories:

- a - *Integrated*: (through social security and services from NGOs): middle class sectors: labor unions, civil workers, businessmen of the national industrial sector and foreigners, political parties and public workers;
- b - *Excluded* (no protection): indigenous population and Afro-Brazilians;
- c - *Non-affiliates* (social welfare): workers of the urban “informal” sector, peasants and rural workers.

In addition, the social security providers in Latin America had a “family-oriented” concept of social welfare, based on a *breadwinner system*, based on an old patriarchal system. This model preserves existing gender and age inequality:

- Men – were breadwinners and head of households by holding “formal” jobs;
- Women (mothers and daughters) – provided welfare-type services to other members of the household;
- Children (especially boys) went to school to improve their chances of getting good jobs in the future.

Results of the second excluding model

During the 1990s, social security is re-allocated from social protection previously given by formal employment to other social policies created exclusively to reduce poverty and to grant the poor and vulnerable population minimum resources, so that they could find solutions for their problems.

The results show that, within a precarious labor market, characterized by an abundance of “informal” jobs, a new kind of poverty increased, whereas there were less opportunities for the poor to change the social status. In addition: there was an increase of social non-affiliation and gradual destitution of social rights acquired during the second half of the 20th century.

A comparison of systems

Dual (or two-tier) and excluding systems dual systems include Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela, whereas the excluding model was found in the majority of the Central America countries (with the exception of Costa Rica and Panama) and a few countries from South America like Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Paraguay.

The two types of systems are also characterized by ranking two or more points lower in the scale of poverty level indicators: income concentration, quality of jobs and sub-employment, social expenditure, social security coverage, education and preventive health services. They also stood out due to a gradual increase of: ethno-cultural heterogeneity, regressive character of social protection systems and the level of informality of the job market.

While these characteristics can be identified in the intermediary systems, offering privileges for the urban population, the majority of the population was left without coverage, especially the indigenous populations and Afro-descendants, although the above measures were necessary to sustain the industrialized model and that of import substitution (*ISI*).

The social development indicators (life expectancy at birth, infant mortality, illiteracy and life related indicators) re-confirm this tendency: in the two-tier systems the intermediary tier is prevalent, while the excluding systems stood out the most out of the entire region.

The universal-coverage systems: the countries under this category stand out historically because of: high social expenditure, lower level of ethno-cultural heterogeneity and by giving greater social security coverage, access to education and health services.

Despite the first signs of economic stagnation which lead to the 1970's crisis, it became evident that these countries presented the best indicators of life expectancy, infant mortality rate, illiteracy and life related indicators.

Results of the 1990's structural and social reform

In the 1990's, there was an improvement in terms of economic growth. However, it was not a homogenous growth in terms of macro-economic stability. Chile and Costa Rica were more stable; while Argentina and Uruguay faced severe crisis. The precarious nature of employment continued to

increase (of the self-employed), as did unemployment, income concentration remained at a high rate and poverty decreased in relative terms only.

The clear result showed the precarious nature of these systems, which was manifested in the trend towards no affiliation of the large social sectors, due to the reduction of social responsibilities of the State. In this area, Argentina was an exceptional severe case with an extraordinary increase in poverty: from 21.2% in 1990 up to 41.5% in 2002. These numbers place Argentina under the two-tier systems category. This was perhaps the most notorious case of a country shifting changing categories, since Argentina moved into the dual system.

However, in general terms, these changes did not result in reducing the gap among welfare systems. The universal-coverage social protection systems continue to represent the most de-commercialized systems of the region. We can observe this when we examine the levels of social expenditure, or the percentage of formal jobs and access to higher education, aside from primary and secondary education.

Differences and similarities among social protection systems

During the industrialization phase, social protection systems developed significantly in countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay; although it remained precarious or practically non-existent in the majority of Central America; in Paraguay, Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, etc.

As for the levels of coverage, we can observe that in Brazil and Mexico, the systems did not develop further than limited social security. However, other countries, like Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay created quasi-universal-access systems of social protection.

Some studies, such as the Mesa-Lago, clearly show that the maturity level of social protection systems do not necessarily correspond to institutional longevity. In any regard, we did identify in the region different types of measures implemented to expand social protection coverage. In the case of the majority of the countries with “strong” systems (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Mexico) the tendency was that of a gradual advance. This is why we can refer to the “Bismarkian” model (social security made up of compulsory contributions of employees, employers and the State, covering: health, retirement, and accidents in the workplace).

However, there is at least one case of “*Beveridgean*” model (complex and complete system of social protection in the absence of salaries which should be the result of full time employment) or quasi-universal coverage, at one time: this is what happened in Costa Rica. There is another example, of a Socialist Universal coverage system: Cuba.

The existence of full time jobs, a prerequisite of the Keynesian model that inspired social welfare systems, was presented as the system in place in Central Europe and Scandinavian countries, which are in retraction. On the other hand, there is a large segment of working class in the informal job market, without coverage under the social (welfare) legislation of labor. In fact, both the homogeneity of the economic model, on the one hand, and the heterogeneity of the social welfare legislation on the other, coexists side by side. Restructuring the productive chain caused the breaking down the role “factory” and migration of the labor force, thus creating new production patterns and a new type of relationship between formal and informal job.

Social welfare regulation is elaborated today differently in different countries and regions, with varying degrees of social security coverage according to a series of variables: homogeneity of the economic model also corresponds to greater diversity of standards adopted by countries for social protection. These differences can be divided by regions: below the line of the Equator, in the South of Europe, Eastern Europe in Asian and African countries.

It is important to highlight a few conceptual differences the new unique way social protection was adopted: social protection in the workplace (social welfare legislation of employment) and protection of citizens (social protection).

We also noticed a difference among Latin American countries in terms of social security concepts as the definition varies between security and safety³. Social security is always based on contributions and inspired by trade relations (those that buy insurance spend a lot of money paying insurance premiums hoping they will get their money back in services as stipulated in the insurance contract); social security to can insure services not based on fixed contributions.

³ Security is an anthropological right of every individual, but it cannot be met at an individual level alone. It also reflects basic needs of society in order to ensure a certain level of social order for all its members. Public policies represent one specialized available instrument to fulfill that role. (Villa Lobos, 2000:58)

A comparative study done by the Center of Latin American Studies analyzed the constitutions of 20 countries and their laws on social security, social welfare, social assistance. Some of the countries studied were: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Republica Dominicana, Uruguay and Venezuela⁴.

According to this study, the above-mentioned countries fall under three different kinds of categories:

1 – limited protection (part of full time job benefits, where security is equal to social security offering unemployment pension, disability pension, and a type of unemployment pension). The following countries fall within this category: El Salvador, Guatemala, Chile, Costa Rica, Honduras e Uruguay.

2 – mixed social protection, falling between limited and subsidized: social protection (part of full time job benefits, where security is equal to social security offering family pension plans). The following countries fall within this category, respecting regional complementary plans: Argentina (+ housing), Bolivia (+ health), Colombia (+ women, + elderly), Mexico (+ women, + maternity (daycare) + housing + health), Nicaragua (+ food), Panama (groups excluded from welfare), Dominican Republic (+ elderly + poor population).

3 – articulated social protection: health plus social welfare (social security includes extended coverage for extended family with emphasis on family nucleus and groups.

The following countries fall within this category: Cuba, Ecuador, Brazil, Paraguay and Venezuela.

It is important to clarify the main principles of these systems: there is a need to make drastic changes by re-organizing the priorities of social protection, to overcome the idea that of giving priority to current issues, in other words, to find solutions for “lack of social protection”.

Social protection – in terms of protection (from the Latin *protectionare*) means first and foremost to defend something, to avoid destruction, or change. In this sense, protection contains a preservationist character – not in terms of a precarious nature but of preserving life. This entails offering support,

⁴ This study of the Latin American Studies Department of Georgetown University is available on the website: <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

protection, aid and support. This preservation perspective underlines notions of social security and social rights.

However, we need to highlight that a social protection policy is made up of a set of citizen rights and/or solidarity manifestations of a society looking out for its members. This policy focuses on preservation, security and every citizen's right to dignity.

In Brazil, the National Welfare Policy – *PNAS-2004* states that social protection should offer ample security coverage: livelihood security (of income and autonomy), security as support and family security.

Analyzing the model axis, can be observed the following: the first axis confirms Brazil's unique case; in which social welfare is part of a policy of rights that functions through services and benefits; the second axis highlights its federalist aspect; and the third axis indicates that this model should operate through a national system; whereas the 4th axis confirms the relationship between social democracy and politics; finally, the fifth axis projects a management model agreed upon.

The Brazilian model has other unique aspects: a proposal to mix benefits and services; establish a relationship between several sectors; engage in the efforts of these sectors to develop social programs.

As for the roles of social welfare, they are defined as: social surveillance, and advocacy of rights and social protection, among others. The system's several sectors working together and the following items should be part of management strategies: gradual progress, heterogeneity and convergence.

The above mentioned models underline the following principles: a) universal access; b) family nucleus honoring the role of mothers as essential for sustaining social relations; c) territoriality, decentralization, sharing, and regionalization; d) regulation e) housing.

The following is a list of main points for reflection:

- The non-contribution based on social protection systems, although included in the constitution, has not been fully implemented. In order to implement these systems, according to the constitution, it would be necessary to first implement significant changes in the institutional-policy and social-economic systems, in terms of their function and rules in the Brazilian society. We would also need to consider the federative elements that constitute the Brazilian State and the institutional agents that govern social protection.

- The Federal Constitution of 1988 attributes social security features to non-contribution based social protection, and defines the field of social welfare, health and social assistance. Nevertheless, there are still no mechanisms in place able to connect the three spheres, other than fulfilling the requirements of the main legal requirements of the *Bolsa Família* social program (a type of family benefit) and the current dialogue available among benefits, lifetime minimum pension and the *INSS (National Social Security System)*. Although the model of social security has still not been consolidated, there have been great advances in food safety, and other area of social protection.
- In the non-contribution social protection model, there is an interface with programs geared towards combating poverty, thus, the potential for reaching social development goals. These two perspectives reflect an old correlation between hunger and poverty adopted by the re-distribution policy aligned with the economic model.
- There is an institutional arrangement of public policies which results range from protection to social development.
- There is an institutional arrangement that presupposes the 3 levels of the government work together by sharing responsibilities, coverage's and results;
- There is a relationship of complementarities among public policies of social welfare food safety, health, education, housing, work and income, social welfare and a national human rights system, such as *SINASE*.
- Policies, strategies and different sectors unite to work together, each department or area complementing its counterpart.
- It is necessary to apply the concept of demarking the role of social protection and its out-reach across the three levels of government.
- Social protection should implement mother-as family nucleus strategy.
- The Brazilian mode of non-contribution social welfare model is based on the principal of offering families total protection, in other words, reinforces the necessary conditions to be able to offer protection to all its members.
- Social assistance rights have not yet been implemented because there are no adequate legal instruments in place to enforce it and offer penalties whenever necessary.

The analysis done by different perspectives, clearly shows that the region needs to implement social reform for each social welfare system and that it will only be able to reduce poverty if exams the different challenges faced and try to find unique solutions to each region, each situation. The discussion taken place was able to pick up weaknesses in the reform process: gaps in all social security systems, which translate to the abandonment of the responsibility of public policies, weakening of social rights; increase in social regional inequality, followed by potential universal access dual systems, worsening of the precarious nature of the dual and excluding systems.

We could ask whether, considering the social results presented, if there was in fact a shift in paradigm. However, expanding social security coverage does not necessarily mean universal access to social security. The context continues to be the same and so are the main goals: focus, de-regulate, de-institutionalize, focus on trade, transfer responsibilities, and, above all, simply not approach citizen social rights.

Within this context, it became evident that the conditioned monetary transfer programs which nowadays is considered a source of income to overcome poverty, did not work as expected, because these programs continue not recognizing that poverty is a result of tremendous regional inequality and the result of adjustment policies that are applied without appropriate consideration.

It is quite evident that the States of this region should aim at achieving and implementing a universal-access social protection system, working side by side with the rights of citizens which in turn would help reduce the current state of inequality.

However, it is also obvious that this should be done in alignment with policies that favor ways of reducing social exclusion, especially in the case of the dual and exclusive systems. Special attention should be given to certain social groups that suffer social exclusion (such as the indigenous population), whereas in all cases gender inequality should be addressed as well.

It is also important to develop policies that will reactivate formal and steady employment, one that will support creative contributions of employees, and offer training to get the majority of the population out of low paying jobs or the unemployed off the streets. Otherwise, workers are not able to climb the social or corporate ladder and poverty will only increase.

This approach means that new regional social welfare systems should be seen as systems in transition, highlighting the need to create new social and political associations that would help implement the type of reform we have presented.

3.3. The Question of Social Development in Brazil and Latin America: Perspectives and Limitations.

When talking about *social development*, it behooves us to remember that this is a historical concept; that is, the way in which development is discussed has changed significantly in Brazil as well as in Latin America and around the world. Today's recommendations for development in Brazil and in the region bear little resemblance with the ideas advocated in the period ranging from the 1950s to the 1970s – a period in which intellectuals acting as cadres in such organizations as ISEB, CEPAL and USP advanced different interpretations for Brazilian ills and espoused countervailing strategies to overcome them.

In those decades, the debates revolved mainly around theoretical perspectives that stressed industrialization and economic growth, and others that envisioned national development as a process that was far more complex than the achievement of high growth rates – such as those reached during the so-called “Economic Miracle”, showcased by the military administrations of the dictatorial regime that prevailed in those days, which advocated the hollow promise of “making the pie grow first in order to divide it up later.”

Thinking about social development today requires considering the transformations in the world economy in the course of the past few decades, especially from the point of view of the process of productive restructuring that has changed the pattern of assimilation of the labor force.

Capitalist development has undergone momentous transformations, not only in its productive processes, but also in its surplus appropriation strategies and ownership patterns. In the past, the individual that owned the means of production was the owner of some physical good, of something concrete that constituted his/her property; today, however, one wields the property of a process, and the profits generated by the latter derive from its use. Processes have become increasingly more intensive in information and knowledge, and intellectual property, patents and copyright issues have acquired much greater significance. The nature of the goods consisting of

knowledge (immaterial goods) is different from the nature of material goods: knowledge is a good that does not cease to belong to a specific individual even after it is transferred to others.

At the present time, we are living in a new technological era, one that is geared to the acceleration of communication and connectivity, in which the capacity for the dissemination of information is virtually immeasurable, and the private appropriation of knowledge thus makes no sense whatsoever. The democratization of the access to information and to all the knowledge produced is a fundamental component of the educational process. Therefore, there has been a significant shift in the theoretical understanding of social and economic development processes.

From a social perspective, a basic distinction must be made. One must distinguish between enrichment that stems from an increase in social wealth and that which stems from the redistribution of existing wealth. A concrete example will shed light on this issue: if an individual invests in the building of a house (in a residential compound) and if, for some reason, s/he goes bankrupt, a possible assessment is that s/he has lost money. However, there is a practical outcome: the new houses that have been built may serve as homes for real people; therefore, we may conclude that there has been an increase in social products. Another type of investment is the purchase of dollars when, by monitoring the exchange rate movements of currencies, one anticipates a trend towards appreciation, which then materializes; this gain accruing to the individual who made the purchase corresponds to a reduction in someone else's capacity to buy (namely, the individual who sold currency); such a transaction leads only to a transfer of income between individuals or groups, with no gains or losses for society (this is a microeconomic process that may lead to the enrichment of some individuals). Banks undertake speculative activities that they label as "investments", but these are merely financial applications. Investment, from a technical viewpoint, is that which increases society's production stock, such as the building of a factory, which will create jobs and will bear some social relevance. From a macroeconomic point of view, the goal must be to allocate resources as sensibly as possible, with a view to increasing the welfare of the whole population, rather than favor financial speculation, as was the case for so long in Brazil due to two kinds of speculative processes: inflation and high interest rates, which were tools aimed at enriching a minority, with no gains accruing to the country's economy.

As a result of changes in the pattern of capitalist development, known nowadays in general terms as *globalization*, in addition to fewer jobs and higher unemployment, greater restrictions have been placed on labor absorption in regular wage-earning positions, be it because of incentives to the outsourcing of services by companies, or as a result of self-employment initiatives, also known as “informal labor”.

A new international division has surfaced: that which separates the countries that focus on intangible goods (such as research and development, design, law, accounting, marketing, and control systems) and those that still carry out activities centered on physical production. This new division corresponds to that which used to separate countries that were producers/exporters of raw materials, on one hand, and countries that manufactured industrial products, on the other. Today, the division is based upon the distinction between material production and immaterial production. Although the factors underpinning today’s division are different from those of the previous era, in terms of the power that these modes of production bestow upon the countries placed on one pole or the other, there is equivalence, and the relationship of subordination remains.

Many studies devoted to Latin America and to developed countries have shown the impact of higher labor flexibility and the increase of unemployment on general living standards, as those have deepened inequalities and promoted social exclusion. Such analyses have brought to the fore, in different contexts starting in the 1980s/1990s, the *social precariousness* stemming from increased productive flexibility and the institutional changes that have made it possible; in view of this scenario, compensatory policies of an emergency nature were adopted in lieu of policies of a permanent/universal nature which, in the case of Brazil, were never actually implemented on a large scale.

Such processes have affected most metropolitan areas in Brazil and have spelled losses to the quality of the work supplied in the market, in which one notices the increasing precariousness of ties and the end of the protection once made possible by labor rights. It is nonetheless true that the year 2007 witnessed an improvement of indices, in view of the fact that formal labor rose above 55% and the unemployment rate remained stable at 7%. Moreover, an analysis of recent social indices shows how the drop in the income derived from labor starting in the 1990s has become a determining factor behind the worsening of certain social issues, clearly posing as a hindrance to development.

Starting in the beginning of the 1990s, income transfers undertaken in Brazil through a variety of “minimum income programs” were aimed not only at significantly reducing the number of poor people in the country by 4.94 million – which meant a reduction from 34% to 31.1% in the overall population – but also at paving the way for a significant decline in poverty rates.

Over one decade after these programs were first implemented, one may notice their merit also in modifying the degree of income concentration, thus leading to changes in the inequality of income distribution. Even though financial income transfer programs geared to poor families in Brazil have different characteristics from those in other countries – inasmuch as they require commitments on the part of targeted families, such as regular school attendance for children in the 7-to-14 age bracket – such initiatives have garnered a great deal of praise. One must not overlook the fact that in Brazil schoolchildren aged 14 have a delay higher than three years in their schooling, which indicates that a significant share of youth in the 14-to-18 age bracket should be brought into such programs, insofar as they must first conclude their basic schooling in order to reach better levels of development and secure a position in the labor market.

Given the recent results of the *Bolsa Família* (“Family Benefit”) Federal Program (11 million families in 2007, according to IPEA figures) and the assessment of the importance of school stimuli for the youth not served by the system, the Program will be broadened as of 2008 to reach families with children aged 16 and 17.

In this version, minimum income programs seek to fight poverty by curbing early child labor and increasing the degree of schooling of poorer families, in particular that of dependent members. The idea here is that an increase in the educational level of those children will allow them to widen their future income self-generation capacity, thereby breaking the vicious circle of poverty reproduction.

Nevertheless, the issue of school access – which has almost been solved at the present time – is not the greatest hurdle: “social development” depends upon the quality of education and, from this point of view, many challenges have yet to be overcome, such as infrastructural decay in many schools, high rates of flunking and school attrition, as well as the inadequacy of school curricula and the professional graduate qualification.

The issue of public health in Brazil is also quite worrisome. From a preventive standpoint, sound public health leads to fewer medical interventions, whether at outpatient clinics or hospitals. Sanitary education, among other good practices in hygiene and popular health, must be viewed as a public policy at many different levels. The resources allotted to health must not be limited to less than 4% of the country's GDP, as current rates have shown. According to international indicators, at least 6% of GDP is needed to support a Unified Health System in the case of a country with such large territorial dimensions as Brazil.

Although we view the implementation of the Unified Social Assistance System (SUAS) – with its goals of organizing and coordinating the social protection services of the municipal, state and federal levels of Government – as an important breakthrough, some key concerns remain, such as the volume of resources and the resource allocation schemes to be implemented.

It is important to build educational programs geared to leisure and viewed as leisurely activities as well, over and above the notions linked to continuing education based on a wide-ranging idea of *socio-cultural development*, as part not only of institutional discourse, but also of its goals and action plans.

The Economist and Nobel Prize Laureate, Amartya Sen, has stated that the goal of *development* must be freedom, adding that policies must lead to actions, in practical terms, so as to ensure that the viewpoint of freedom is always conducive to and coherent with development targets. However, freedom is not an end in itself; it is also a means towards development. Freedom here may be translated as: opportunity, self-reliance, expression, creation, safety, and rights.

The cultural dimension treated through the lens of education is crucial to the process of development. The ability to perceive identities is the only tool capable of providing guidelines to perceive the present and build the future. The education/culture association does not entail only upholding school ties; rather, it is a social process requiring the involvement and commitment of many different institutions. We know today that the informal continuing education actions present in a wide array of cultural activities play a significant role in that regard. In Brazil, in particular, most of the population still has very limited access to cultural activities, notwithstanding the combined efforts of governments and many institutions. Changes and continuous efforts are needed in order to widen access, democratize culture, and ultimately improve this picture.

Social services are paramount to any human development program. In a country like Brazil, it is incumbent upon the public sector to view them as a priority, and to ensure that these will be supplemented by the ethical and social commitment of non-governmental organizations, which must also be vested with a public mission.

A social development process aimed at bringing well-being to the Latin American masses as a whole would be difficult to implement and would hardly take root in the region because of the lack of sovereignty that characterizes most Latin American countries. Yet, an effectively democratic movement that overcomes the current state of affairs must not bring about the farce of a pendulum-style return to a providential model of state interventionism.

The financial shortcomings of the Latin American regional bloc have become a hurdle to its own potential as well as actual subsistence. The governments of Latin American countries could reduce their financial dependency by creating a jointly-controlled regional bank capable of financing development, without speculative encroachments from the core countries.

The evident failure of neo-liberalism in Latin America has created a double possibility: on the one hand, it favors the developmental illusion; on the other hand, it spurs the concrete anticipation that may guide the real movement towards the abolition of the current state of affairs, in the general struggle against exploitation, domination, and attacks against human dignity as well as in the specific fight for a far-reaching redistribution of resources that would include writing off all the debt affecting, above all, the relative overpopulation.

Developing countries may be viewed as having islands of excellence – made up of modern companies capable of becoming competitive in the international market, with high work productivity and accounting for the bulk of the country's GDP – in a scenario marked by low productivity that is fairly immune to the economic system. However, some economists ponder that the rapid growth fostered by this sector of modern companies by itself will not reduce the initial heterogeneity, adding that the most likely outcome of this scenario is the concentration of wealth and income in the hands of a few who actually control such islands of excellence. In the view of these analysts, there is no alternative to the development of a country other than further investments in the sector of modern companies, but efforts must also be made to increase productivity levels in the poorer sectors.

Such development experts affirm that the main challenge is to transform small activities by organizing them into small companies capable of competing in the capitalist market. There are many initiatives that may lead to that outcome – or at least improve the quality of life and the labor capacity of poor people – who already account for a substantial part of the development process.

Some of these ideas have been applied in Brazil for about two decades, starting with the country's re-democratization process. One such example is showcased by the upgrading programs in slums and other poor areas of large urban centers, where a conceptual change has taken place – instead of forcibly transferring slum dwellers to houses or apartments in other areas of the city, generally in the farthest neighborhoods, distant from their workplace, it soon became clear that landowning regularization would make more sense. Hence, in many metropolitan areas in Brazil, the option was made to grant deeds to slum dwellers, provide them with such public services as electricity, water, sewage, and telephone lines, and pave streets and alleys in shantytowns.

Such programs correspond to a form of integration of the poor into the capitalist system “from below”, rather than try to integrate them “from above”, as was the attempt in the years 1950-1960. Being guided by these concepts, governments have sought to create credit mechanisms for very poor people, thereby enabling them to make small investments in businesses or in building their own homes. The Government in its various levels (federal, state, and municipal) has undertaken social investments in the periphery of large cities. By so doing, through micro-credit or landownership the poor are slowly but surely inserting themselves in the capitalist market. Beyond those specific programs, social expenditures in education and health aimed at the poor have led to improvements in their quality of life.

Still in this modality of “integration of the poor from below,” one may cite the land reform programs undertaken thus far, starting with the democratization of the country and spurred by the pressure of social movements such as the Landless Rural Workers' Movement (MST) and some sectors within the Catholic Church, above all the land reform advocacy group known as *Pastoral da Terra*. Some more conservative sectors argue that land reform is not efficient and is thus unnecessary, inasmuch as large-scale capitalist agriculture “is the only vehicle capable of solving production bottlenecks in Brazil”. But this notion ignores the fact that development is only possible insofar as the poor population is brought into the process.

Therefore, to think of development as a historical process founded on achievements is also to think about the great political goals advocated by modern societies, together with an egalitarian social order, freedom, and justice. This is an ethical perspective of development guided by a political philosophy that renders the concept of development normative. It is not enough to understand development as a process: it is incumbent upon each and every society to define which kind of development it hopes to achieve. If the choice is geared to sustainable, long-lasting development – and not just a “burst of development” as has been the case in Brazil as well as other Latin American countries, the promotion of income distribution must be included as one of the political goals to be pursued.

At the present time, the legitimacy of rulers has increasingly relied upon strategies through which to present to the population solid and consistent justifications for the economic and social policies that have been adopted. Therefore, the discussion of issues related to justice, freedom, and sustainability in the development process – because they affect the whole population – must mobilize all of those citizens imbued with a Republican spirit. At the end of the day, development is not limited to its economic dimension; rather, it has a political dimension that speaks to the heart of democracy.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given that the social and political policies implemented over the past ten years in Latin American countries – under the influence of international financial agencies – have increased social inequalities, it is strongly recommended that the States in the Region resume the strategy towards universalizing social protection tied to citizenship rights, with a view to reducing such inequalities.
- Is also evident that, in cases where the social protection regimes adopted are dual and excluding, these measures must be combined with policies that favor the swift reduction of the social exclusion of certain segments (such as Indigenous populations), whereas in all cases there must be measures geared to the elimination of gender inequalities.
- It is imperative that policies be urgently developed with a view to reactivating work, supporting the creation of higher-quality formal employment as well as capacity-building opportunities, and preventing

large segments of society from being permanently confined to low-skilled jobs or turned into members of the residual population, which would systematically hinder their upward social mobility and thus lock them into poverty indefinitely.

- Current welfare regimes in the region must be designed as regimes in transition, highlighting the need to build new social and political coalitions that will pave the way for a reform geared to universalization, with a view to reducing the social inequalities noted.
- It is necessary to urgently list among the alternatives towards development, in addition to further investments in the sector of modern companies, the adoption of measures aimed at increasing productivity in the poorer sectors. The main challenge is to transform small-scale activities into small companies, well organized and supported by an adequate popular credit system, so that they will be able to compete in the major capitalist markets.
- It is crucial that measures be urgently adopted to overcome the great hurdle to social development posed by the low quality of public education and mitigate current challenges, namely: improving the precarious infrastructure in schools, bringing down high rates of flunking and school attrition, ameliorating the inadequacy of school curricula and, most importantly, embracing the urgent need for massive investments in the qualification of professionals in order to enhance opportunities for workers from lower class in the labor market.
- It is necessary to face the crucial issue of public health in Brazil, in view of the fact that preventive health-care initiatives lead to fewer interventions at outpatient clinics and hospitals. Governments at all levels must widen their programs in this domain and foster the improvement of health indicators through methods capable of reaching larger segments of the population; likewise, sanitary education must be viewed as an urgent public policy at many different levels.
- Investing in basic sanitation is fundamental and urgent in order to promote health and to prevent and control diseases that are due mainly to the lack of suitable sanitary conditions. It is necessary to include the sanitation issue in the fight for social rights and in the public agenda, drawing attention to the dreadful costs of the sanitation deficit on the basis of concrete indicators. It is important to recognize that access to sanitation services is a basic right that must be part of public debate. Through various activities and initiatives – such as radio and television

campaigns, photography contests, corporate sponsorship, and school programs, among others – politicians, government employees, and the general public must face the problems stemming from the lack of basic sanitation, which are conspicuously absent from public debate.

- The resources geared to health must not be limited to less than 4% of GDP, as shown by current indicators. According to international studies, at least 6% of GDP is needed to provide support to a Unified Health System in the case of a country with such large territorial dimensions as Brazil.
- Professional social workers must design answers founded on investigation and research undertaken on the basis of their practice and day-to-day realities, the products of which must feed into and provide support to the multidisciplinary debate regarding social protection systems, social policies, and social initiatives.
- It is imperative to draw upon the different perceptions amassed by social workers that deal on a daily basis with the trials and tribulations of pressing social issues and to work towards catering to the demands of users considering the interfaces between global and local levels, with a view to offering relevant answers aimed at bridging social gaps.
- Furthermore, it is imperative to bring the systematic knowledge of social workers concerning their day-to-day activities to the political arena in national as well as international spheres in order to contribute consistent proposals to the design of an efficient system for public resource allocation and the implementation of social policies that bring together distributive mechanisms aimed at ensuring the concomitant reduction of inequality, poverty, and wealth concentration.
- Development policies must acknowledge the fact that the sustainability of development is intimately linked to the reduction of social inequalities. In the medium term, any national project that fails to prioritize the search for solutions to the issues of social exclusion and regional disparities will be doomed to failure. The foremost goal of sustainable development, therefore, is to secure social commitment aimed at the convergence of plans and projects and geared to the fight against inequality, taking into account people's expectations vis-à-vis their future and their quality of life.
- The greatest challenge to be overcome today by governments, companies, development agencies, and social organizations is to recognize that their policies, programs, and practices must bring together social and environmental concerns. The preservation of natural

resources and the quality of the environment will only be feasible inasmuch as social inequalities are recognized as such, and provided investments are made in the human beings that live in that environment, thus improving their living conditions, their education, and the availability of job opportunities, as well as ensuring their access to the benefits made possible by modern society.

- Sustainable development projects must include processes of participation for the population involved in their design, whereby political institutions, civil society and organized interest groups may find room in which to play a role through political and institutional representation. The sustainability of those projects relies on actions in the realm of governance and means that the development solutions proposed must be widely debated and negotiated step by step with the various segments of organized civil society.
- In order to uphold modes of sustainable development, the great challenge lying ahead is to promote sustainable consumption policies revolving around three major axes: taking into account the reality of ecological limits on the planet by considering the current degree of depletion of natural resources and the impossibility of renewing them; examining the political feasibility of the implementation of measures geared to fostering sustainable consumption and curbing waste in rich as well as poor countries; and joining the debate around the existence of unequal consumption patterns that mirror the current unfair structure of wealth distribution, be it internally in each country among rich and poor, or among nations. It must urgently bring into the public agenda the issue of conspicuous consumption in developed countries, as one of the root causes of the environmental crisis which concerns the whole world so as to try to influence and change the thinking of people in relation to consumption; it is extremely relevant to this debate that the consumerism that is permanently fostered by large corporations be confronted with the structural sub-consumption that plagues large segments of the world's population, prevented by destitution from consuming that which is essential to their subsistence, doomed to hunger and to a life of sheer indigence. It must urgently seek a better understanding of the causes of conspicuous consumption and contribute to the development of strategies leading to a debate around possible changes in attitudes and practices, as well as the processes that may lead to responsible modes of consumption, which may in turn translate into higher levels of social welfare for all.

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6. PARTNERS

MDS	Ministry of Social Development and Hungry Prevention
SEASDH	State Department of Social Assistance and Human Rights Rio de Janeiro
SESC/SP	Social Service of Commerce - São Paulo Regional Office
SESC/DN	Social Service of Commerce - National Department
SESI	Social Service of Industry - National Department
SESI	Social Service of Industry - National Council
UFRJ	Federal University of Rio de Janeiro Forum of Science and Culture Praia Vermelha Campus Administration
CRESS-RJ	Social Work Regional Council – 7 ^a Region
ABEPSS	Brazilian Association of Teaching and Reserarch in Social Work