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AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



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C E P A L

Economic Commission for Latin America

REPLIES BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO THE CONSULTATIONS MADE
BY THE SECRETARIAT OF CEPAL ON THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT
REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE INTEGRATION OF
WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (E/CEPAL/L.146)



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Introduction

This document contains the contributions and observations submitted by specialized agencies and other international organizations in response to the consultations made by the secretariat of CEPAL with respect to the preliminary Draft Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development (E/CEPAL/L.146). For reasons of consistency, these replies are reproduced in alphabetical order of the Spanish acronyms of the organizations in question.

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)1/

We are grateful for the opportunity offered to us to comment on this important document. We are particularly pleased that action to improve the situation of women should be considered as part of the general concern for development. This approach makes it possible to establish the links between the problems faced by women and the problems of society and, consequently, to propose solutions as part of the efforts to initiate integral development processes.

We also note with satisfaction the emphasis placed on rural development, in view of the evident disadvantages faced by women and children in such areas. The same emphasis has been made in the "Basic Services Strategy" which is the focal point of our co-operation with governments aimed at meeting the priority needs of under-privileged population groups. This strategy envisages the active participation of the community both in setting up services and in carrying them out.

On studying the Draft Regional Plan of Action we are pleased to note various action proposals for supporting the role of women in the family and their role as mothers. However we feel that it is important to include this basic role of women in the family and their close relation with the children as a fundamental part of Action at the National Level. This would provide a better framework for the set of measures to be proposed in all the spheres of action envisaged: health, education, employment, family, participation, housing, etc. In our view it is very relevant to stress women's role as mothers, since this is a direct factor in improving the situation of the child, especially in the marginal areas.

1/ Original Spanish.

Although it is right that priority should be given to women in rural areas, it seems to us appropriate to propose action taking account of the special situation of women in marginal urban areas. The action taken in the urban areas should of course be compatible with the policies aimed at improving the balance of development among the regions which make up a country.

UNITED NATIONS RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT (UNRISD)1/

RSC 4047

ENRIQUE IGLESIAS FROM SOLON BARRACLOUGH UNRISD.

RE YOUR CABLE 49. HAVE CONSULTED STAFF UNRISD PROJECT MONITORING
CHANGES IN THE CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WHO SUGGEST FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS.
DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN ACTION E/CEPAL/L.146/7 FEBRUARY. PAGE 26
PARA 4 POINT 1 HEADLINE SHOULD BE QUOTE:

P2

CREATION OF NATIONAL RESEARCH COMMISSIONS UNQUOTE: 5TH LINE
AFTER QUOTE TO CO-ORDINATE UNQUOTE ADD QUOTE AND PROMOTE UNQUOTE.
7TH LINE DELETE VARIOUS AND READ ESSENTIAL.
10TH LINE SHOULD BE QUOTE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY UNQUOTE.
11TH LINE INSERT AFTER COUNTRIES THE SENTENCE QUOTE TO CONDUCT
QUICK RESEARCH IN ORDER;

P3

TO UNDERSTAND THE INTERACTIONS OF FACTORS AFFECTING WOMEN'S
SITUATION UNQUOTE.

PAGE 27 FROM TOP

7TH LINE INSERT AFTER STUDY THE WORDS QUOTE BY INTERDEPARTMENTAL
WORKING GROUPS UNQUOTE. 11TH LINE SHOULD READ QUOTE NATIONAL
RESEARCH COMMISSIONS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED AND CO-ORDINATED
UNQUOTE.;

P4

12TH LINE AFTER WOMEN INSERT QUOTE AND PROVIDE FOR PERIODICAL
REPORTING ON THE SITUATION OF WOMEN FOR MONITORING OF PROGRESS
ACHIEVED UNQUOTE. 14TH LINE SHOULD BE QUOTE MULTISECTORAL
RESEARCH TEAMS UNQUOTE. ON QUOTE ACTIONS PROPOSALS UNQUOTE WE
SUGGEST POINT. 1ST LINE DELETE EMPLOYMENT AND READ QUOTE ECONOMIC
ACTIVITY UNQUOTE.;

P5

POINT 2 4TH LINE ADD THE WORD ECONOMIC BEFORE IMPORTANCE.

POINT 2 5TH LINE DELETE AND AFTER PARTICIPATION INSERT WORDS
QUOTE WORKING CONDITIONS UNQUOTE REVERSE ORDER OF PARAGRAPHS.

PARA 3 SHOULD BE PARA 1. PARA 2 SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY PARA 17
PAGE 29.

PAGE 28

POINT 5 4TH LINE SHOULD BE QUOTE THE POSSIBLE SUCCESSFUL;

P6

WAYS UNQUOTE. POINT 6 2ND LINE SHOULD BE QUOTE THOSE CONNECTED
WITH CHILDBEARING BIRTH AND DEATH UNQUOTE. POINT 16 PAGE 29
SHOULD FOLLOW PARA 5.

PAGE 29

AFTER PARA 17 INSERT ADDITIONAL PARA QUOTE TO IDENTIFY THE
GROUPS OF WOMEN WHICH BENEFIT LEAST FROM SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND TO EXAMINE THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF VARIOUS
INDICATORS FOR:

P7/25;

THESE GROUPS UNQUOTE PARA 18 BECOMES PARA 19. GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE
DOCUMENTATION ON HAVANA CONFERENCE FOR OUR PROJECT MONITORING
CHANGES WOMENS CONDITIONS;

UNATIONS GENEVA

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO) 1/

Education

1. As far as education is concerned, this Draft Plan covers action that should be taken so as to ensure equality of educational opportunities for girls and women and thereby to encourage and increase their participation in economic, social and political development. The proposals made in the Draft Plan, especially those pertaining to development of educational programmes for training women of rural and indigenous areas and of the marginal urban zones and to the reform of educational systems and programmes are of high importance as UNESCO thinks that action in these fields will be necessary to correct the unbalanced situation with regard to women in the region: in comparison to the situation in other developing regions of the world, women in Latin America and the Caribbean have a higher level of education in terms of percentage; however, in terms of participation in the workforce, the percentage is lower (in the agricultural sector, women's participation represents 17% against the world average of 52%; in the Caribbean region this percentage is 24%).

2. To contribute to the national and regional efforts aiming at ensuring the participation of women in the social, economic, cultural and political life of their countries on equal terms with men, the following programmes have been and are being implemented by UNESCO a number of countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region having been involved in them and a few other countries of this region being prospective participants:

(a) Programme of Exchange of Information and Experience between Women

Initiated in 1975, this programme is terminating this year. Its objective was to promote exchange of information and experience on innovative measures and achievements in various fields contributing to the advancement of women. Brazil,

1/ Original English.

Costa Rica and Peru were the three Latin American countries which participated in this programme.

(b) Series of 5 National Studies on the Role of Working Mothers in the Education of their pre-school Children

The purpose of this series of studies was to encourage development of educational and social infrastructures to take care of the education of pre-school children and consequently to enable women, especially the working mothers, to participate fully in economic, social, cultural and political life of their countries. Trinidad and Tobago was among the five countries participating in this programme. The report of the study carried out in Trinidad and Tobago and in other countries will be reproduced in view of its distribution.

(c) International Study on Drop-Outs among School-Age Girls

All UNESCO Member States, including those of the Latin American and Caribbean region will be invited to answer to a questionnaire designed to collect information and data on the reasons for and causes of school drop-outs amongst girls as well as on the remedial and preventive measures to combat this problem.

(d) Series of In-Depth Studies on Drop-Outs among, School-Age Girls

In addition to the international series of studies mentioned in (b) above, this series of studies is initiated in order to identify the reasons for and causes of drop-out among school girls as applied to selected target groups, and to develop strategies and actions to eliminate them. One country of the Latin American and Caribbean region will be invited to carry out an in-depth study.

(e) Exchange of Information and Experience with regard to action to combat Drop-Outs amongst School-Age Girls

This programme will be carried out through the provision of grants for study visits to a limited number of women. Its aim is to support national action to combat drop-out amongst school-age girls. Amongst the grants foreseen for study visits, two will be offered to two women from the Latin American and Caribbean region.

(f) Studies on Differences of Curricula

Research, analysis and comparative studies on differences of curricula in secondary schools and teacher training institutes for boys and girls will be carried out in five Member States, including one in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

(g) Fellowships for Further Training of Women

A limited number of international fellowships will be awarded to selected women in various regions, including the Latin American and Caribbean region, so as to offer them opportunities to enlarge their experience and to raise their level of knowledge in their fields of competence.

(h) Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations

Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations for implementation of programmes and activities in the field of advancement of women in the Latin American and Caribbean region will be continued. Assistance was given to the Women's International Democratic Federation for the organization of a regional seminar on Women's Contribution to the Development of Latin America which took place in Panama from 27 to 29 January 1977.

(i) Study for the preparation of integrated rural development strategies

This study will deal with facilities and methods for popularization of basic scientific knowledge in formal and non-formal women's education. Since only one Member State will participate, this study may not take place in the Latin American and Caribbean region. However, as the results will be published, all Member States will be able to benefit from this study because many common characteristics of the target group, which is rural women, will be applicable in all countries.

Social Sciences

There are several activities being undertaken by the Social Sciences Sector of UNESCO which are closely related to the integration of women to development:

- (a) A study undertaken in collaboration with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences on the effects of rural-urban migration on women's role and status, with particular reference to the Buenos Aires region and including an appendix on issues of sociological theory. It is planned to extend this study to include Costa Rica, Chile and Panama.
- (b) Preliminary sociological studies based on existing data for eight countries in different regions on the effects of the introduction of commercialized agriculture on women's position in the family and in the wider economy, with reference to women's situation in a peasant economy. Countries will include inter alia Colombia, Mexico, Ireland, Portugal and India. In mid 1978, it is planned to undertake fieldwork in the selected regions and subsequently to convene a meeting of researchers as part of the project.
- (c) An international meeting of women prominent in politics will be convened by UNESCO in 1978 to discuss the theme of women's access to and participation in political institutions and policy-making.

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SANTIAGO CHILE

14020 FOR IGLESIAS COPY FERNANDEZ IN ADDITION MYLET POUCHED
3 JUNE NOTE FOLLOWING UNESCO COMMENTS STOP DRAFT PLAN APPROPRIATELY
HIGHLIGHTS STRUCTURAL CHANGES REQUIRED AND CORRESPONDS UNESCOS
PROGRAMME STOP WOULD SUGGEST ADD PAGE 12 REFERENCE TO SCIENTIFIC
IN ADDITION OTHER SUBJECTS STOP PAGES 26-27 SENTENCE CONCERNING
RESPONSIBILITIES PROFESSIONAL WOMEN
STOP PAGE 30 ART III REFERENCE ACTION PROPOSED PROMOTION WOMENS
ROLE AND PARTICIPATION CULTURALLINE SOCIETIES MIGHT BE ADDED
AS INDICATED PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE 5 JOINT INTER ORGANIZATIONAL
PROGRAMME STOP PAGE 13 PARA 12 SUGGEST PHRASE QUOTE BY PROTECTING
ETHNIC GROUPS... LANGUAGES UNQUOTE BE CHANGED BY QUOTE RESPECTING
LINGUISTIC MINORITIES
BY PROVIDING AAA POSSIBILITIES FOR LEARNING TO READ AND WRITE IN
THEIR OWN LANGUAGES BBB EARLY BILINGUAL EDUCATION AND CCC GRADUAL
INCORPORATION IN THE NATIONAL CULTURE THROUGH USE OF COUNTRYS
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE UNQUOTE. (NAJMAN UNESCO PARIS)

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION (ILO) 1/

1. The draft was read with great interest and is considered a realistic document conceived within the framework of the Mexico World Plan of Action, ILO Plan of Action, the New International Economic Order and relevant international instruments. The chapter devoted to Action at the International Level (pp. 34-36) reflects the main aims and objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women.

2. Considering the importance of the document, we would like to take this opportunity of making some general comments in addition to a few observations on specific points. It should perhaps be worth remembering that as a large part of the readers of the document would welcome a concise and simple text, it may be advisable to add a summary of proposals and recommendations.

3. General comments

- (a) We would like to propose that the ILO Declaration and Resolution on Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Women Workers which establishes the international norm on equality be incorporated in point 5 on page 35, and
- (b) Under "Employment", (B. (a), page 8), it is suggested that the existing paragraph include data on participation rates of women in the labour force and show by statistical evidence what is meant by "distortion" in occupational distribution in line 4. The order of magnitude of women's employment in Latin America should be highlighted and a coherent picture given of their problems in the labour market.

4. Specific observations

These relate to action at the national level (pp. 4-10):

(a) Legislative Measures

It is our view that whereas legislative measures are by themselves "insufficient to ensure equality for women" the first legislative step on equality needs to be complemented

by administrative infrastructure to translate this equality, i.e., to enforce and implement the existing legal provisions. Recent experience indicates that, even in countries where advanced legislation with respect to legal and economic rights of women has been adopted, the implementing machinery tends to lag far behind, as illustrated by equal pay enactments. It is therefore suggested that a separate heading on "Enforcement of legislation" should be included on page 6, point 2. In our opinion, the role of law as an instrument of social change is only a preliminary step which needs to be supplemented by other institutional changes, a point which should perhaps be brought out more clearly in the document.

(b) Dissemination of Information on Rights

Perhaps the formulation in point 2 (h) on page 7 could be more explicit. We agree with the proposal that there is a need to inform and advise women on their legal and economic rights but are somewhat concerned with the expression "rights offered to them". (This is probably an editorial problem.) It need not be emphasized that rights are not normally offered as recent history indicates: for example, for universal franchise or revision of equal pay legislation. In many countries we will have a long way to go to obtain equality of rights for women.

(c) Representative Groups

In the list of representative groups mentioned on page 7, paragraph 5, it is not quite clear how the representation of so vast a group as "rural women" (without rural organizations) could be assured. Also, instead of "employees", should it not read "employers"?

PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO) 1/

Comments on the chapter "Health" (Part II, section B, item C) of the Draft Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development

Comments will be made first on the description of the current health situation and then on the action proposals set forth in the CEPAL document.

The description of the current health situation begins by terming it as "alarming". A series of indicators is listed, together with qualifying adjectives; and it is shown how many more people would survive if the rates of the most advanced countries in this respect were applied to Latin American age groups, concluding that "most of the population live in unhealthy conditions, ignorant of the elementary standards of hygiene...".

Any assessment implies a comparison, but the terms of reference of this comparison are chosen on the basis of what is to be proved. If the purpose is to show what needs to be done, and what the available knowledge and techniques would make possible if they were applied, it is not appropriate to term the situation "alarming". If on the other hand, the aim is to assess the development of the health situation, the terms of reference do not seem to be the most suitable. Last year a distinguished Latin American economist assessed the Latin American economic situation as follows ... "over the last twenty-five years, as a result of a vigorous internal dynamism which exceeded all expectations, the region has attained the situation where it now has a critical mass, with an internal regional market which is four times the size of the market in 1950 and is now as big as the European market was in 1950".^{2/} Can it be claimed that in the health field the situation in 1976 is comparable to that prevailing in Europe in 1976?

In 1971 the Director of the Pan-American Health Organization said that "the figures reflect a continental effort which derives from the

1/ Original Spanish.

2/ CEPAL. "CEPAL and the Integration Process in Latin America". Statement by the Executive Secretary, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, in LAFTA, 26 November 1976.

work of each country. Viewed as a whole, this has been substantial. Analysed in terms of lower morbidity and mortality, it is equally impressive".^{1/}

In 1972 the Health Ministers of the Americas commented: "the progress of the past decade was considerable both as regards preventive medicine and the timely care of the sick. In this effort - a true enterprise of the peoples and their governments - the successes and failures have provided a series of lessons which we must take into account in our unchanging goal of providing a certain minimum level of well-being for all the inhabitants of the continent".^{2/}

The document refers to various indicators of mortality and of the existence of resources, qualified by adjectives. It says:

"Low life expectancy"... Between 1950 and 1972 the life expectancy at birth increased by 3.1 years in the United States, whereas in Argentina it rose by 5.5 years, in Colombia by 12.7 years, in Costa Rica by 11.3 years, in Chile by 8.8 years, in El Salvador by 13.6 years, in Guatemala by 8.8 years, in Jamaica by 7.6 years, in Mexico by 14.2 years, in Panama by 8.2 years, in Peru by 8.3 years, in Trinidad and Tobago by 12.5 years and in Venezuela by 8.4 years. The figure declined slightly in Uruguay (from 68.8 years in 1950 - lower than that of the United States - to 68.1 in 1972). This evident progress has not given rise to complacency; the Health Ministers included in the ten-year plan the goal of increasing life expectancy by five years in the countries where the 1972 level was less than 65 years and by two years in the countries which exceeded this level. In the year in question this indicator was available for 18 countries of America, and in 13 of them life expectancy was higher than 65 years.^{3/}

^{1/} Annual Report of the Director, 1971. PAHO Official Document No 116 (1972), p. ix.

^{2/} Ten-year Health Plan for the Americas, Final report of the Third Special Meeting of Ministers of Health of the Americas, page 17.

^{3/} PAHO. Health Conditions in the Americas, 1969-1972. Scientific Publication No 287, page 13, table No 6.

... "High mortality rates"... This presumably refers to the general mortality rate. While in 1960 this rate was 10.4 per cent in Central and South America and 9.4 per cent in North America, in 1971 Central America had a rate of 8.5, South America 7.9, and North America 9.2. Most of the Latin American countries have lower rates than the European countries because of their population structures.

It is naturally impressive to show the reduction in deaths of infants under five years of age (or under one year that would be obtained by applying to the population of this age-group the rate of Sweden or another Nordic country. It is also impressive, however, that the mortality rate of infants between one and four years fell between 1960 and 1972 by some 40 per cent in Central America and about 60 per cent in South America, while the rates for infants under one year fell by 20 and 25 per cent respectively. Moreover, compared with countries of Asia or Africa the Latin American figures might seem excellent.

The reference to indicators of resources mentions the shortage of hospital beds per 1,000 inhabitants. Various developed countries are trying to reduce their levels of this costly resource, and in Latin America the tendency is to improve the primary medical attention available to the population and to extend the coverage of services rather than to increase the installed hospital capacity "as our problem consists in providing services to the 37 per cent of the inhabitants who currently do not receive any medical care of any kind".^{1/}

Lastly, the indicator of the ratio of doctors to inhabitants rose more between 1960 and 1972 in South America (5.6 to 7.4 per cent) and in Central America (4.9 to 6.1) than in North America (14.8 to 15.5), and although in one country of the region there was only one doctor for every 13,264 inhabitants, in another Latin American country there was one doctor for every 470 inhabitants, a higher figure than in any of the European countries except the Soviet Union.

^{1/} Ten-year Plan. Op.cit., page 17.

The document goes on to say that "most of the population live in unhealthy conditions, undernourished, and without access to health resources, because of the unjust distribution of wealth". The estimates made in 1972 suggest that some 37 per cent of the population, living in the rural areas or the marginal suburbs of the big cities, is not provided with services. Intensive and extensive efforts are being made throughout the region to correct this situation.

We consider, in brief, that the description of the current situation should show that progress has been made, that there have been both successes and failures, and that much still remains to be done.

With regard to the action proposals, the fact that they are expressed at a very general level makes them rather similar to some of the goals of the Ten-year Health Plan for the Americas and the health policies of many of the countries. The sectoral efforts to obtain resources for health care will be strengthened by the CEPAL recommendations, and this could represent valuable assistance in this noble continental enterprise.

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME FOR LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN (PREALC) 1/

The general view of PREALC is that the Draft Regional Plan of Action takes a very broad and complete approach and included all the factors which may be important in the situation of women in Latin America.

PREALC is also in agreement with the action proposals made for improving the situation of women.

Nevertheless, PREALC considers that the draft would have gained in clarity, and the preparation of action strategies at the national and international levels would have been facilitated, if the measures and action plans had been separated according to whether they are long, medium or short term.

For example, in order to carry out most of the action proposed, a far-reaching change will be needed in the socio-economic structure of the Latin American countries, since it is assumed that there would be control and management of the determinant variables by the State. Consequently, these measures would only be feasible in the long term.

In this context, PREALC wishes to stress that the problem of the situation of women is closely linked to the problem of under-development and the dominant culture and is one of the many symptoms of it, so that it cannot be viewed as a separate phenomenon from the others. Consequently, the policies and action proposed in the draft could also be defined as an integral development plan, because they include measures and action in all the fields affecting this process.

However, it would perhaps be advisable to put more emphasis on cultural aspects in respect of the definition of the role of women, as it is perfectly possible to have a developed society in which discrimination against women persists.

The measures and action which can be carried out under the current socio-political system are short- and medium-term measures of a more or less marginal nature. Detailed comments follow, in the same order as in the draft.

1/ Original Spanish.

A. Structural changes (page 4)

The action proposals under this heading should include the importance of adapting technological change to the variable realities of the countries of the continent and to the utilization of intermediate technology as an important factor in the creation of employment, which would also benefit female employment.

B. Legislative measures

The ILO norms on the employment of women are of two types: those concerning protection (for example, night work) and those concerning promotion (equal pay and non-discrimination).

PREALC wishes to point out that one of the most common forms of discrimination against women, even in industrialized countries, is unequal pay for the equal work. Although the principle of equal pay is almost universally accepted, there are many obstacles which hinder its full application, although the ILO convention on equal pay goes back to 1951. Priority should therefore be given to the improvement of statistical information, especially as regards the classification of jobs, the comparison and evaluation of tasks, etc.

As regards protective legislation (regarding limitations on hours, working days, restrictions on access to jobs, excluding maternity protection), the question is being raised as to whether this legislation does not constitute discrimination rather than protection. PREALC considers that this legislation should be revised in order to guarantee freedom of access to the labour market.

C. Administrative machinery

The important functions of the administrative machinery proposed to watch over the rights of women should include the power of imposing punishment in the event of violations of the new laws and of women's rights of equality, especially in the labour market.

In the long term, however, it will be necessary to eliminate all types of bodies and organizations which are specialized in the problems of a particular sex, as they are basically emergency measures to overcome problems of inequality.

When a certain degree of equality has been attained, these institutions will no longer be justified.

D. Employment

PREALC considers that the main aim should be to devise policies and action to improve the employment situation of all strata of the population, including of course women. To the extent that this action is combined with guaranteed equal treatment for women, employment policies especially directed towards them would not be justified.

PREALC wishes to stress, however, that in order to make women's right to work on the same conditions as men effective, it is necessary to strengthen the social infrastructure providing nurseries and other types of services for children of all ages, as proposed in the CEPAL document. Another measure which would facilitate the combination of family obligations with work outside the home is flexibility of working hours.

Action proposal 7 (page 9)

It does not seem appropriate that in this document the problem of children and adolescents should be considered together with that of the employment of women.

Action proposal 8 (page 9)

It is important to include in this item the need that national training bodies should arrange special programmes to raise the educational level of this group of female workers.