

CEPAL

REVIEW

NUMBER 55
APRIL 1995
SANTIAGO, CHILE

ANIBAL PINTO
Director of the Review

EUGENIO LAHERA
Technical Secretary



UNITED NATIONS

CONTENTS

A summary of the ECLAC proposal <i>Eugenio Lahera, Ernesto Ottone and Osvaldo Rosales</i>	7
Post-conflict peace-building: a challenge for the United Nations <i>Graciana del Castillo</i>	27
Decentralization and democracy: the new Latin American municipality <i>Eduardo Palma</i>	39
The political economy of protection after the Uruguay Round <i>José Tavares</i>	55
Trade policy and international linkages: a Latin American perspective <i>Marta Bekerman and Pablo Sirlin</i>	65
Capital movements and external financing <i>Benjamin Hopenhayn</i>	81
The impact of exchange-rate and trade policy on export performance in the 1980s <i>Graciela Moguillansky</i>	95
The present state and future prospects of the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean <i>Nicolo Gligo</i>	109
Youth expectations and rural development <i>Martine Dirven</i>	127
Transnational corporations and structural changes in industry in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico <i>Ricardo Bielschowsky and Giovanni Stumpo</i>	143
El Salvador: industrial policy, business attitudes and future prospects <i>Roberto Salazar</i>	171
Technological change and structuralist analysis <i>Armando Kuri</i>	191
Guidelines for contributors to CEPAL Review	199

Youth expectations *and rural* development

Martine Dirven

*Economic Affairs
Officer, ECLAC
Agricultural
Development Unit.*

The greater openness to the outside world exhibited today by rural, peasant and indigenous groups is particularly notable among the young people in those populations, whose behavioural patterns, referents and expectations differ from those of preceding generations. At the same time, living conditions in the farming sector have improved very little, and agricultural producers' self-images have worsened; both of these factors prompt young people to leave the sector. Today, only half the people born in rural areas in the 1960s still live there. Not enough attention has been devoted to this situation, which leads, among other things, to the types of problems associated with lack of preparation and difficulties of adaptation on the part of migrants. In those areas from which emigration is the heaviest, the ageing of the population is quite marked; this hampers any attempt to pursue a dynamic form of development and in some cases even leads to the dismantling of existing infrastructure and services (and, hence, an even greater loss of population). Those young people who do wish to remain in rural areas have not received sufficient attention either. In order to utilize the potential they represent, this segment of the population needs to be taken into account by policy makers and has to be provided with channels for active participation in production activities and community affairs –not so that they may attain what their parents achieved, but rather so that they may take a substantive leap forward in terms of both their income and quality of life. It is also necessary to eliminate the many market imperfections existing in the rural sector and to enable each individual agricultural unit to approach its optimal production frontier.

I

Introduction

In order for policies to have any sort of positive impact, we must look at what the actors who are the "objects" of public policy have as their own objectives and what kinds of strategies they use to achieve those ends.

John Durston¹

The above observation seems so logical and so obvious that there would seem to be little reason to draw attention to it, much less quote it at the very start of this article.

Nevertheless, although one of the recurring themes in the papers presented at the Expert Seminar on Rural Youth, Modernity and Democracy (which was attended almost exclusively by social scientists) was rural youth's aspirations, which are –almost without exception– to find a better future for themselves away from the farm and, ideally, outside the rural sector altogether, the focus in seminars on agricultural development (which are attended, with few exceptions, almost entirely by economists or agricultural and business experts) is on the growth of the sector, productivity, innovation and modernization, but very little is said about the aspirations of the population.

Before delving further into this subject and trying to bring the findings of the two disciplines together, I would like to recall the words of Marguerite Bey (1993, p. 24): "...one may well wonder about the future of the community when one learns, for example, that 80% of the farmers in Casinta² were over 50 years of age in 1988".

The community to which she refers is not an isolated case, but is quite representative of regions that are losing a sizeable portion of their population.

This article will focus largely on youth, for the following reason: "Young people, especially in rural areas, are at the stage of life in which strategic thinking is most marked and during which they will take many of the decisions and actions that will exert the greatest influence over the type of life strategy they will follow. This sets them apart from childhood, when the future is something to fantasize about, as well as from the succeeding stages of full adulthood, when the irreversible decisions already taken and the progressive narrowing of options cause the development of life strategies to gradually decline in importance as the individual's life cycle draws closer to its end. The strategies developed by rural youth are oriented essentially towards individual goals, although they may be pursued in partnership with other people and although all the young people concerned may also be contributing to the reproduction of the parental household" (ECLAC, 1993a).

II

Migration or the desire to migrate

The study conducted by ECLAC (1993a) on the life strategies of rural youth cites a number of examples drawn from studies and interviews conducted in the

1980s which differentiated between young men's and young women's ambitions and their strategies for realizing those aspirations. Men and women have different expectations about inheriting land, moving up in society, attaining a respected position in the community, forming an identity of their own, and earning an income of their own. These differences, along with the fact that different sets of options are open to

¹ Expert Seminar on Rural Youth, Modernity and Democracy in Latin America, cited in ECLAC (1993a).

² A community in the Cañete valley, approximately 150 kilometres south of Lima.

them, cause young men and women to formulate different strategies for their studies, their search for a partner, their place in the family, their place in the labour market and migration. Some of their aspirations are endorsed and others are opposed by their parents, who have their own plans for their children's future and their own ideas about the roles their children will play in caring for them in their old age and in preserving their birthright and cultural heritage (or failing to do so).

In contrast with the views of many authors, the above-mentioned ECLAC study stresses that the qualitative evidence suggests that many young people, especially males, would prefer to stay in agriculture rather than move into other fields of endeavour, so long as it will enable them to earn enough to avoid living in poverty. This preference is associated, among other things, with the value placed on blood ties and relationships of *compadrazgo*, cultural traditions, forms of mutual aid and the chances of establishing a respected position within the community. Even landless youths have some chance of gaining access to land by marrying a woman who will inherit property, sharing land with a brother, brother-in-law or other relative, or leasing land or sharecropping. On the other hand, it frequently happens that the child who ends up staying on the family farm is the one who "doesn't have the head for anything else". In Spain the current tendency is for the youngest in the family to shoulder the "obligation" of staying behind to take care of the family's assets and the parents (González, 1990), because the older siblings tend to have already emigrated. This runs counter to the traditional ways of the past, when it was the custom for the eldest son to inherit the land.

Although many young people do not emigrate and have no wish to do so, the figures on rural-urban migration clearly show that nearly half of them do choose (or find it necessary) to emigrate. Some rural areas lose more of their young people than others. In Colombia, emigration is greatest among the "scattered rural population", i.e., people who do not live in the district capitals, or "*cabeceras*" (Colombia, Ministry of Agriculture, 1994, p. 87). As we will see later on, poverty indexes are even higher in these sparsely populated zones than in other rural areas.

Young people are not the only ones who want to emigrate; many parents want to get their children into decent primary schools so that they will be better

able to fit into urban environments. Parental opposition—at least in the beginning—to the introduction of bilingual education in Guatemala is one example of how the desire to better one's position by moving outside the agricultural and rural sectors may be manifested.³ Frequently, parents want their children to emigrate not only so that the young people themselves will be better off, but also as part of their own rural survival strategy, since they hope the children will send back money and thus raise their own income.

It is often felt that the dearth of services (education, health, infrastructure, entertainment) is one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration. Cuba has made a determined effort to lessen the differences in service levels between the countryside and the cities and to raise rural inhabitants' living standards; it also offers its young people (in both rural and urban areas) more opportunities for social participation than do the rest of the countries in the region. Furthermore, in order to deal with manpower shortages in the agricultural sector, since the mid-1980s Cuba has formulated explicit objectives in terms of the population's territorial distribution, and it has made an effort to reach those targets by, among other things, differentiating housing availability and wage levels on a territorial basis. Rural-urban migration has indeed slowed and, due to the deep economic crisis in which Cuba is currently immersed, some urban youths agree to go to the countryside for short (two weeks) or somewhat longer (two years) periods to work in the agricultural sector in exchange for a dwelling of their own. Nevertheless, the main ambition of most of Cuba's young population still appears to be to work in non-agricultural activities and to move to an urban centre, especially the capital (Morejón, 1993).⁴ It is worth recalling that, with few exceptions, the population density of Latin America's rural areas is low, and investments in rural infrastructure and services are therefore an especially heavy burden.

³ See, inter alia, Barrera de Martínez (1985); Matos Mar and Alberti (1980); and Vecino, Tedesco and Hernández (1980).

⁴ This last assertion does not appear in the study by Morejón cited above; the point was made quite forcefully, however, in Morejón's contributions to the discussions at the Expert Seminar on Rural Youth, Modernity and Democracy in Latin America, organized by ECLAC (Santiago, 1993).

Another reason why young people want to emigrate, apart from seeking a more promising economic environment, is to escape from parental control and the social pressures put upon them by their home community. The image of a "good" (i.e., obedient, quiet and submissive) son or daughter or member of the community is still the rule in many indigenous or farming communities, and this runs counter to "modern" attitudes (and current educational theories) about the virtues of encouraging curiosity, creativity, a questioning attitude, an inquiring mind, and individualism. While it is true that rural-urban migration and the undermining of the social mores of the past jeopardize peasant or indigenous communities' ability to survive in some cases, it is also true that these communities have ways of adapting and that the remittances sent by family members living in urban areas (or abroad), as well as these urban family members' (sometimes quite active) participation in community affairs (e.g., as intermediaries who can intercede with the authorities), also contribute to their survival, at least in the short and medium terms (Dirven, 1993; Bey, 1993).

Emigration sometimes becomes an option at quite an early age. In the south of Chile, for example, young Mapuche girls may start thinking about moving to the city to seek work as domestic servants when they are as little as 12 years old (Cecilia Díaz, cited in ECLAC, 1993a).

Some types of events –such as natural disasters, one or more years of bad weather, a serious attack on crops by some sort of insect or disease, violent guerrilla activity or civil war– may hasten people's decision to emigrate temporarily or permanently. Para-

guay, for example, experienced mass migrations in 1993, when the cotton harvest was particularly poor (cotton being a crop that is mainly grown by peasant farmers). Caputo and Palau Viladesau (1994, p. 26) state that in the first nine months of 1993, approximately 100 000 Paraguayan emigrants arrived in Argentina to swell the ranks of the 360 000 Paraguayans already living in that country in 1992. It may be assumed that in 1993 –as in 1992– the majority of these new arrivals were young.⁵

Migratory flows (sometimes sparked off by forcible evictions) are sometimes prompted by changes in land use that entail a reduced demand for labour or temporary labour. The large-scale conversion of non-irrigated farming areas into industrial forestry plantations, as has occurred in southern Chile,⁶ is one example.

There are also other factors which have not yet been analysed thoroughly enough to determine whether or not they may intensify migratory flows. We will mention three such factors here: liberalization policies and free trade agreements, which may open the economy up to imports of items that are in direct competition with traditional agricultural products (Levy and van Wijnbergen, 1992); a shift in consumer habits in favour of prepared foods or foods having a better or more homogeneous appearance, which increases the market share of more heavily capitalized agricultural activities at the expense of peasant farmers' produce; and the liberalization of land markets when no specific provision is made for credit schemes designed, for example, to make land accessible to small-scale producers.

III

The figures

There are three phenomena underlying current rural/urban population figures and trends: migration from the countryside to the cities, the rural and urban populations' differing rates of change (fertility/mortality), and the changes that some countries⁷ have made in how they define "rural" and "urban" from one census to the next. Interpreting these figures is therefore no simple matter. What is not in doubt, however, is that the population is ageing and that the number of young people in rural areas has

diminished in absolute –as well as relative– terms since the start of the 1990s.

⁵ About 80% of them were under 25 years of age, according to *Informativo Campesino*, 1992.

⁶ For an in-depth analysis from a historical perspective taking account of similar processes in Europe, see Mazoyer, 1981.

⁷ Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua, among others (Klein, 1992, annex).

TABLE 1

**Latin America: Rural and urban population,
by age groups, 1970-2000**

Age (years)	1970	1980	1990	2000	Growth (%)		
					1970- 1980	1980- 1990	1990- 2000
Rural population (thousands)							
0-9	39 960	38 187	36 774	34 389	-4.4	-3.7	-6.5
10-19	27 021	28 776	28 386	27 432	6.5	-1.4	-3.4
20-29	16 920	18 594	20 298	20 152	9.9	9.2	-0.7
30-39	12 112	12 605	14 929	16 723	4.1	18.4	12.0
40-49	9 056	9 359	10 370	12 638	3.3	10.8	21.9
50-59	6 256	6 910	7 375	8 368	10.5	6.7	13.5
60 and over	6 253	7 437	8 538	9 673	18.9	14.8	13.3
Total	117 579	121 868	126 670	129 375	3.6	3.9	2.1
Urban population (thousands)							
0-9	44 026	58 244	71 697	82 334	32.3	23.1	14.8
10-19	35 682	52 776	66 011	79 230	47.9	25.1	20.0
20-29	25 774	42 049	58 754	72 014	63.1	39.7	22.6
30-39	18 950	28 285	43 332	59 938	49.3	53.2	38.3
40-49	14 467	19 953	28 543	43 336	37.9	43.0	51.8
50-59	10 083	14 500	19 639	27 925	43.8	35.4	42.2
60 and over	10 425	15 262	22 389	31 434	46.4	46.7	40.4
Total	159 406	231 068	310 366	396 211	45.0	34.3	27.7

Source: CELADE, 1991.

The figures for Latin America as a whole mask the existence of sharp differences between one country and another and between one area and another within each country. Some projections (FAO, 1993a, pp. A-10 and A-11) indicate that the Latin American agricultural sector's economically active population (EAP) will decline between the years 2000 and 2010 for the first time in several centuries.

The projections of the total population, by countries, shown in table 1 were prepared jointly by the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and national institutions; the urban-rural projections were developed by CELADE on the basis of data from the latest population censuses (prior to 1990) and the trends observed over a period of time in the urban population as a percentage of the total. The definition of "urban population" used by each country in its census has been maintained in the CELADE projections.

An examination of table 2 indicates that, according to CELADE estimates, of the nearly 40 million children between the ages of 0 and 9 living in rural areas in 1970, only 16.7 million of those persons will

still be living in the countryside by the year 2000, and of the 27 million adolescents living in rural areas in 1970, only 12.6 million (who will by then be in their 40s) will still be living there by the year 2000. The difference between the decrease in these population segments in rural areas and the increase registered for urban zones is accounted for by deaths and emigration from the region.

The overall population figures for Latin America conceal the fact that in a majority of the countries—as suggested in our earlier discussion of people's aspiration to migrate—rural men seem to have stronger ties to the countryside than rural women do, and this leads to striking imbalances between the sexes. Thus, in 1990 there were 5.2 million more men than women in rural zones. Among children and young people up to the age of 30, this difference amounted to 3.2 million (7% more young men than young women), which may well create difficulties for young people seeking to find a partner and have an active social life. The situation in the cities is just the opposite, of course, although the imbalance is rela-

TABLE 2

**Latin America: Changes in the population,
by age groups and decades^a**
(Thousands of persons)

		1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	Total	Age in the year 2000
Rural population						
0-9	in 1970	-11 184	-8 479	-3 575	-23 237	30-39
10-19		-8 427	-3 665	-2 292	-14 383	40-49
20-29		-4 315	-2 235	-2 002	-8 552	50-59
30-39		-2 754	-1 983		-4 737	60-69
40-49		-2 146			-2 146	70-79
Urban population						
0-9	in 1970	8 749	5 978	1 184	15 912	30-39
10-19		6 367	1 283	4	7 654	40-49
20-29		2 511	258	-618	2 151	50-59
30-39		1 003	-314		689	60-69
40-49		33			33	70-79

Source: CELADE, 1991.

^a This table was compiled by reading table 1 diagonally (i.e., taking the first line of the age groups for 1970, the second line for 1980 and so on) in order to see what happened in the succeeding decades to the groups that were children, adolescents, etc. in 1970.

tively smaller and its effects are therefore not felt as strongly. There is also a growing number of women (widows, women who are divorced or separated, or women whose husbands work elsewhere) who are acting as heads of household and agricultural producers, often with even less access than their male counterparts to credit, legal title to their land, etc. (Muriedas, 1988).

In the past, however, migration was not a problem in and of itself. In fact, if none of the rural children born between 1960 and 1990 had migrated (or died), there would have been 115 million rural children and young people between the ages of 0 and 30 as of 1990 instead of the current 85.5 million (in 1970 there were 84 million). The worrisome facet of this situation is the failure to pay due attention to the foreseeable decline in the young population in the future,⁸ to the aspirations of today's youth and the resulting development outlook for the future, or to the situation as it stood in the recent past, to existing demographic disequilibria, to the de-population and

regression of some areas, and to the lack of preparedness and difficulties in adapting to a different environment experienced by the people involved (Dirven, 1993). On the other side of the coin, the areas that are receiving this migrant population are unprepared or unable to receive them properly. The urban centres of the region suffer from a great many problems, and the increases seen in urban poverty and urban informal employment would appear to indicate that these centres have not been able to absorb earlier rural-urban migratory flows adequately; instead, many problems have simply been carried over from the countryside to the cities.

According to figures compiled by ECLAC (1993b, p. 45), the percentage of indigent households in the region dropped from 34% to 30% between 1970 and 1990 in rural areas but climbed from 10% to 13% in urban areas. Similarly, the percentage of poor households declined during that same period from 62% to 53% in rural areas but rose from 26% to 34% in urban zones. If all households are taken together, then the percentage of poor and indigent households appears to have gone down by 1% between 1970 and 1990. Meanwhile, non-agricultural informal employment rose from 26.1% to 30.7% of total non-agricultural employment between 1980 and 1985 (OECD, 1990, p. 22) and apparently held steady at that figure in 1989 (ILO, 1992, p. 44).

⁸ A simple calculation – assuming that the percentage change in projected births between 1990 and 2000 and in migration, by age group, will remain constant – shows that in 2010 there will be 78 million young people between the ages of 0 and 30 in rural areas and 72 million in 2020 (CELADE projects a figure of 82 million for the year 2000).

IV

Self-image and feelings about the future

Being a "peasant", someone who "works on the land" or a member of an "indigenous" group carries a very low status in society in general. This low status—which is indirectly propagated by the mass media (to which rural inhabitants have increasing access),⁹ by the schools and by the various sorts of messages that are sent out about "urban life" or "modernity"—is reflected in a deteriorating self-image. In a survey of 500 peasant farmers throughout Chile, it was found that the interviewees were very sensitive about the fact that they are never given much importance in television programmes and that when, for example, the boom in fruit exports is discussed, mention is made only of the experiences of exporters and agro-industrialists, while nothing is said about those of the peasants or their group representatives. The failure to depict these groups as performing an important role is regarded as an implicit disparagement of peasant farmers and of their role as significant economic and social actors.

One of the consequences of the negative self-image of people who "work on the land" is their reluctance to do that kind of work. A household survey conducted in 1988 in marginal districts of Manizales and Chinchiná (both in the Department of Caldas, Colombia) showed that a large percentage of workers (41.5%) were employed in the agricultural sector. Follow-up interviews revealed that none of the interviewees actually wanted to work in that sector but that, given their lack of qualifications and of the documentation required for entry into the formal labour market—together with the absence of other full- or part-time job opportunities—the coffee-growing industry was the simplest option. All the persons interviewed felt that their living standards had improved since moving to the city (Hataya, 1992). This view is corroborated by the poverty indexes based on unmet needs, as will be seen in table 5.

⁹ To cite but one example, a survey of 80 households living in extreme poverty in the Province of Osorno, Chile, showed that 28.7% had access to radio and television and that 60.1% had access to radio. Of this total, 46.3% also had access to a newspaper, while only 8.7% did not have access to (or interest in) any mass medium (Bastías Urra, 1983).

TABLE 3

Paraguay: Young peasants' vision of the future, 1993

(Percentages of total responses, by sex)

	Male	Female	Total
<i>Future of country</i>			
Better	36.8	38.1	37.5
Same	39.7	27.4	32.9
Worse	23.5	34.5	29.6
<i>Future of peasant farm population</i>			
Good	12.1	33.7	24.2
Fair	75.8	50.6	61.7
Poor	12.1	15.7	14.1

Source: Caputo and Palau Viladesau, 1994, pp. 23 and 24.

In Paraguay, despite this negative image and the mass migration of young members of the country's peasant population in 1992 and 1993, as mentioned earlier, the responses of 152 young people (68 males and 84 females) between 14 and 23 years of age from typical peasant families in seven of Paraguay's 17 departments reflected a relatively optimistic view of the peasant population's future prospects (see table 3).

Is there any need to reiterate that young people represent a great potential force for rural development because they are more educated (although much remains to be done in terms of the quality, content and duration of formal education and training), more receptive to "modern" ideas, and have the enthusiasm of youth on their side? In order to take advantage of their energy and potential, they must be given an opportunity to participate in the life of the community and—via access to markets, information and technology, land and other means of production, credit, etc.—to make a productive contribution, not so that they may simply attain what their parents achieved or make some marginal improvement thereon, but so that they may take a substantive leap forward in terms of both income and quality of life. Otherwise, as the talents and energy of youth continue to be siphoned off, certain zones or areas

will continue to regress. Times have changed, and many young people have different frames of reference and expectations than preceding generations. They no longer migrate or leave the farm solely because their family can no longer survive there; they leave because they have a positive desire to improve their station in life.

V

Rural poverty and the (im)possibility of escaping it

The data on poverty levels and trends differ depending on which source is consulted. For example, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD, 1993) gives much more discouraging figures than ECLAC does, with its statistics indicating an overall increase in rural poverty between 1965 and 1988. Regardless of any differences which may exist between statistical sources, however, there is no doubt about the fact that the level of rural poverty was high in the past and was still high as of 1990 (see table 4).

A recent study on rural poverty in Colombia (see table 5) clearly established, first, that the levels of rural poverty are generally high; second, that poverty—whether measured by income or by the level of unmet needs—is much more severe in the Atlantic zone than in other areas of the country; and, third, that the differences between the poverty levels found in district capitals and in sparsely settled areas are greater when poverty is measured in terms of unmet needs than when measurements are based on income.

The gap between the extent to which basic needs are satisfied in district capitals and in sparsely populated areas is considerable; it should therefore come as no surprise that many young people choose to leave sparsely settled areas, as indicated by the figures cited in the preceding section.

Rural inhabitants' living standards might be raised by satisfying their needs more fully in either of two ways: encouraging migration to district capitals while making it easier to commute to places of work, or facilitating access to infrastructure and services in sparsely populated areas in order to help meet the inhabitants' needs, provided that cost/benefit and opportunity-cost analyses yield positive results.

Participatory decentralization as it is currently being implemented in, for example, Colombia, coupled with the creation of specific channels for the participation of young people, can cause rural inhabitants to perceive themselves as performing a new and important role which, in the long run, is bound to boost their self-image and their hopes for a better future.¹⁰

In order to improve the rural population's living standards by increasing its income levels, it is necessary to create more productive jobs, whether in agriculture, in agriculture-related activities or in other sectors. Although it is estimated that something over 30% of the economically active rural population currently works in some activity other than agriculture proper (Klein, 1992), the following considerations relate exclusively to agriculture itself.

Certainly, one way of increasing the incomes of people employed in agricultural activities is to raise the sector's factor productivity and to step up the use of high-yield technologies. A series of empirical studies (including those of Cotlear, 1989; Lockheed, Jamison and Lau, 1980; Phillips, 1987; Figueroa, 1986; and Inkeles and Smith, 1974) corroborate the importance of formal education in determining the individual's ability and willingness to adopt new technologies and adapt them to his or her farm's or land's specific requirements. In more specific terms, Figueroa (1986) relates a mastery of the four basic arithmetical operations, the rule of three, and the calculation of percentages, along with the ability to utilize one unit of measurement as a ratio of another (grams per litre, kilograms per hectare, centilitres per litre, etc.), with the ability to apply the inputs re-

¹⁰ See Machado (1994) for an analysis of Colombia's recent participatory decentralization process (through laws and executive orders, as well as the joint identification by the local community and municipality of the projects and programmes the community wants to pursue and the way they want to finance and execute those initiatives).

TABLE 4

Latin America: ^a Extent of poverty, 1970-1990
(Percentages)

Year	Poor households ^b			Indigent households ^c		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
1970	40	26	62	19	10	34
1980	35	25	54	15	9	28
1986	37	30	53	17	11	30
1990	39	34	53	18	13	30

Source: ECLAC, 1993b.

^a Includes 19 countries; separate figures are given for 14 of those countries in ECLAC, 1993b.

^b Percentage of households whose income is less than twice the cost of a basket of staple foods. Includes indigent households.

^c Percentage of households whose income is less than the cost of a basket of staple foods.

TABLE 5

Colombia: Percentage of poor persons in the rural sector, 1988

	National total	Sparsely settled areas	Towns other than district capital	District capitals	Atlantic region	Eastern region	Central region	Pacific region
<i>Based on levels of unmet needs</i>								
Critical poverty	35.7	43.4	36.3	17.6	57.0	28.3	28.9	30.1
Non-critical poverty	26.9	36.8	29.6	21.4	21.8	26.4	29.3	30.2
Total poor	62.6	80.2	65.9	39.0	78.8	54.7	58.2	60.3
Not poor	47.4	19.8	34.1	61.0	21.2	45.3	41.8	39.7
<i>Based on income</i>								
Critical poverty	34.8	38.6	32.2	28.3	45.3	41.4	25.7	27.4
Non-critical poverty	30.4	30.7	32.1	28.3	30.5	26.8	34.6	28.7
Total poor	65.2	69.3	64.3	56.6	75.8	68.2	60.3	56.1
Not poor	34.8	30.7	35.7	43.4	24.2	31.8	39.7	43.9

Source: Ayala Oramas, 1994, p. 99, based on a rural household survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia.

quired by modern technology properly. The schools usually do not begin to teach these operations until the fourth grade and students do not really begin to perform them well until the sixth grade (ECLAC, 1991a). In these terms, the quality of rural education continues to be deplorable, even though it has improved quite a bit if we compare the achievement levels of people under the age of 30 with those of people who are now over 30 (actually, closer to 40) (see table 6). It is of interest to note that, except in Guatemala, a larger proportion of young rural women have completed more years of formal education than their male counterparts.

Latin America has an abundant endowment of agricultural resources (land per inhabitant, soil quality, water supply) in comparison with other regions (FAO, 1993a). Its yields (kilograms per hectare) are often

lower than those of other continents, however, especially in the case of the more traditional crops (maize, beans, potatoes, yucca) that are grown primarily by peasant farmers and indigenous groups on small holdings. An even more serious feature—especially in a world that has embraced the concepts of a free market and economic liberalization—is that Latin America is losing ground in relative terms with regard to the productivity level of most of its crops, since it has increased its yields less, on average, than those yields have risen worldwide or in the developing countries as a whole.

In the following discussion we will look at the value added per hectare and per person employed in agriculture rather than at yields in physical quantities per hectare; this means that we will be discounting

TABLE 6

Latin America (five countries): Years of formal education completed by rural males as of the mid-1980s
(As percentages of age group)

	Between 15 and 19 years of age		Over 30 years of age	
	Up to 3 years of formal education	Up to 6 years of formal education	Up to 3 years of formal education	Up to 6 years of formal education
Guatemala (1986)	60.3	91.0	88.9	97.9
Brazil (1987)	55.6	90.4	77.0	95.8
Venezuela (1986)	25.5	73.2	-	-
Costa Rica (1988)	11.5	71.2	44.0	84.5
Panama (1986)	8.2	56.6	48.0	87.3

Source: Various tables based on household surveys, taken from ECLAC, 1991b.

the cost of the inputs used to arrive at a more intensive type of farming and, hence, higher yields (see table 7).

This analysis shows us that, in some countries, the amount of value that is actually added by agriculture is not enough to provide the sector's economically active population with a "decent" income (i.e., an income above the poverty line set for each country) even if that income were to be divided equally among all the members of that EAP. There are two possible ways of resolving this situation: we can increase the amount of value added or reduce the number of people employed in agriculture.

In view of the differences that exist between countries, it would appear possible to increase the amount of value added per hectare by changing crops and improving the production function through the use of a more suitable flow of information, the creation or stimulation of markets, the introduction of technologies, etc.

If we consider the value added per hectare in Costa Rica as a kind of near-optimum technological frontier, then we can recalculate the value added per economically active person in the agricultural sector, assuming that all the countries' output places them on their production frontier. On performing this calculation, however, we find that "decent" income levels cannot be attained in a number of countries¹¹ even if we assume that the value added per hectare is near the "optimum", that the total value added is distributed equitably among all economically active persons, and that each agricultural worker has only two dependents. In order to deal with rural poverty in these cases, it would not be enough to provide im-

proved access to land, credit, inputs, irrigation, technology, information, insurance and markets: it would also be necessary to reduce the number of economically active persons in the agricultural sector and boost labour productivity.

However, FAO projections up to the year 2010 foresee an increase in the economically active population in the agricultural sector in several of the countries in which the amount of value added per member of the sector's EAP is too low, even after making the correction needed to arrive at a level of value added per hectare that would position it "on the frontier".¹²

If we take the current figures on the amount of value added in agriculture and factor in the inequitable pattern of land distribution, we can gauge—although only very roughly, of course—the income-generation possibilities for small holdings.

The estimated income levels for small agricultural holdings shown here (see table 8) are based on the assumption that the average amount of value added is valid in the case of small-scale producers, that the latest data on the average size of small holdings were still valid as of 1990 (despite the trends in this regard, which indicate that in most cases such holdings are shrinking) and that these small-scale producers' average household size is five persons.

¹¹ Including Colombia, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Jamaica and Peru.

¹² The agricultural EAP is expected to increase between 1980 and 2010 in Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Jamaica and Mexico (up to the year 2000 in the case of the last two countries listed), while it is expected to decrease in the other countries of the region (FAO, 1993a, pp. A-10 and A-11).

TABLE 7

**Latin America and the Caribbean: Measurements
of productivity, 1990**

	Value added by agricul- ture (millions of current dollars) ^a	Economically active population (EAP) in agriculture (thousands) ^b	Arable land and permanent crops (thousands of ha) ^b	Hectares/ EAP	Percentage of irrigated land ^{b c}	Value added/ agricultural EAP (dollars/ person) ^d	Value added per hectare (dollars/ha)
World		1 109 621	1 444 217	1.30	21.4		
Latin America and the Caribbean ^e	104 716	41 238	151 954	3.68	10.4	2 540	690
Argentina	12 405	1 197	27 200	22.7	6.2	10 360	460
Bolivia	1 069	949	2 308	2.43	7.1	1 130	460
Brazil	42 288	13 366	60 000	4.49	4.5	3 160	700
Chile	-	585	4 526	7.74	27.9	-	-
Colombia	6 876	2 885	5 420	1.88	9.6	2 380	1 270
Ecuador	1 435	996	2 725	2.74	20.3	1 440	530
Peru	2 420	2 443	3 730	1.53	33.8	990	650
Costa Rica	915	251	529	2.11	22.3	3 640	1 730
Guatemala	1 978	1 346	1 885	1.40	4.1	1 470	1 050
Mexico	21 074	9 340	24 710	2.65	21.0	2 260	850
Haiti	-	1 823	905	0.50	8.3	-	-
Jamaica	209	324	269	0.83	13.0	650	780
Dominican Republic	1 273	819	1 446	1.77	15.6	1 550	880

Source: World Bank, 1992, p. 224; FAO, 1992.

^a Figures compiled by World Bank.

^b Figures compiled by FAO.

^c Irrigated land as a percentage of arable land and permanent crops.

^d The figures for the value added per economically active person and per hectare are consistent (somewhat higher, but of the same orders of magnitude) with those given for 1985 (the only year for which data were available) in FAO, 1993b, pp. 140-141 and 143-144.

^e In addition to the countries shown in the table, the FAO figures for Latin America and the Caribbean cover the following countries: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, El Salvador, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), French Guiana, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Honduras, Martinique, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands, Uruguay and Venezuela.

TABLE 8

**Latin America and the Caribbean: Estimated incomes
of small farms, 1990**

	Average farm size (ha) (1)	Value added per ha (dollars/ha) (2)	Average value added on small farms (dollars) (1) x (2)	Average value added per household member ^a (dollars)
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.1	690	1 449	290
Argentina	8.9	460	4 094	819
Brazil	2.1	700	1 470	294
Colombia	2.6	1 270	3 302	660
Ecuador	1.9	530	1 007	201
Peru	1.4	650	910	182
Costa Rica	3.9	1 730	6 747	1 349
Guatemala	1.8	1 050	1 890	378
Mexico	1.7	850	1 445	289

Source: Preceding table.

^a Assuming an average of five persons per household.

The present outlook for small-scale producers is by no means promising. In 1981, it was estimated that nearly 70 million persons (more than half the region's entire rural population) were directly involved with small holdings or were landless agricultural workers (López Cordovez, 1985, p. 27). This

situation (and the poverty it entails), in combination with the psycho-social motivations discussed in an earlier section, prompts young people to abandon agricultural pursuits and emigrate from rural areas in order to seek a better future for themselves elsewhere.

VI

Programmes aimed at retaining young people in the agricultural sector

In most of the Latin American countries, rural youths who have recently graduated from school are not the object of any special development efforts (whether on the part of the authorities, non-governmental organizations or trade unions), and the few measures that do specifically target young people reach only a small fraction of them. As a rule, these initiatives take the form of short courses dealing with specific aspects of production, sometimes in conjunction with loans and short courses on business management. As stated earlier, any initiative designed to further the development of the rural or farm sector (coupled with efforts to open up the relevant markets) is laudable and may improve the situation of the target group. Be that as it may, because the coverage of youth programmes is quite narrow and because they usually address no more than a small part of the problems that exist (whose complexity and scope have often not been fully identified), they are necessarily limited in nature.

Since there are few broad-spectrum programmes for young people in the region's agricultural sector, and in view of the fact that a number of rural areas in Europe are –just as in the case of Latin America– experiencing a high rate of migration by young people, with consequent demographic ageing of the remaining population, it may be instructive to present an overview of a few of the programmes that have been set up by the European Community (EC) to mitigate these demographic imbalances.

The EC programme designed to help young people (up to 35-40 years of age) to establish themselves in the agricultural sector requires that at least 50% of the individual's income must come from agriculture and that the person must devote 50% of his/her working hours to agricultural activities for at least the first five or ten

years after starting operations. Beneficiaries may start operations immediately by acquiring the necessary land, obtaining users' rights, renting land, etc., or they may do so gradually through arrangements with the official owner or operator under which the civil liability and administrative responsibility are assumed by the young person in question.

Moyano and Fernández (1990) conclude that the ingredients needed in order for such a programme to have a chance of success include, on the one side, a strong commitment on the part of government authorities and cooperation from the rural society in question and, on the other, a willingness on the part of the young people involved to set themselves up in an agricultural activity and the availability of suitable farms (yielding an income per unit of family work equivalent to 100% of a benchmark income level). Such programmes cannot be expected to alter the major social or economic trends existing in a country or region, however. Instead, their success must be defined in terms of whether or not they have helped to energize and renew the agricultural population, make farms more profitable, and lead to an improvement in the quality of rural life and work by making agricultural activities more attractive and more rewarding.

There are two main lines of policy regarding such programmes: a neo-professional orientation which calls for the incorporation of new, trained agricultural producers capable of practising the profession in an efficient manner,¹³ and a neo-rural orientation, whose

¹³ In France, in addition to having the required academic qualifications, these young people must have taken a 40-hour course dealing with the formulation of their start-up plan and have completed a six-month internship on an agricultural production unit other than their family-owned farm.

objectives are to promote a demographic balance, counteract desertification in rural zones and create jobs for young people in the agrarian sector as a means of mitigating the adverse effects of unemployment levels in other sectors of the economy.

Each of these policy lines enjoys the support of trade unions and associations of differing ideological leanings and historical backgrounds. France was a pioneer in this field, since it launched its agricultural youth settlement policy in 1973, whereas we cannot really talk about any EC policy of this sort until 1985.

González (1990) notes that in Spain in the late 1980s, half of the farmers over 54 years of age who owned their land had no successor. It then devolves upon the public sector, trade unions or some other sort of medium to put the outgoing generation of farmers in contact with young people who wish to be farmers (or who feel they have no other option) and are seeking access to land.

The European Community considers farms measuring less than four economic units (EUs) to be "very small" or "marginal". It may be noted that 69% of all farms in Spain fall into this category, and one-fifth of all Spanish landowners or occupiers under the age of 35 have plots measuring less than four EUs.

Nevertheless, although the nationwide average economic size of farms in Spain is 5.3 EUs, the average size of the farms on which people under 35 work is much greater (14.1 EUs) and those owned by a person under 35 years of age average 17.9 EUs, which places them in the category that the European Community defines as "large" (16-40 EUs).

In terms of physical size, Spanish farms average 13.9 hectares in area, but the average size of those owned or occupied by persons under 35 years of age is nearly double that figure (25.3 hectares). The fact that the average economic size of young farmers' units is approximately three times the national average while the land area of such farms is double that average may largely be accounted for by the more intensive nature of these operations (based on the use of irrigation, intensive stock-raising, etc.). A nationwide survey of young Spanish agricultural producers showed that 63.2% of their total number and 51.6% of the owners or occupiers would like to change their occupation if it were possible (as opposed to 49% of the participants in the settlement programme), while 82% of all these producers said they would prefer to stay in their own habitat rather than migrating (as compared to 92% of the settlement programme's beneficiaries).

VII

Conclusions

Rural poverty in Latin America is a severe problem, and the level of unmet needs is very high. Little headway has been made in recent decades –far less than is needed in order to turn this situation around. The inhabitants of rural areas therefore have little chance of attaining higher living standards or personal advancement within the rural environment in general and agricultural activities in particular. All the indications are, however, that many of the young people living in rural areas today have more individual visions of the future and greater ambitions in terms of personal betterment than the generations that went before them.

Society's image of agricultural producers –and especially of peasant farmers and producers from indigenous groups– is quite negative, and the self-image of people (especially young people) who work the land has deteriorated due, among other

things, to their increasing contact with the mass media, "modern" attitudes and "urban" viewpoints.

Various studies and interviews clearly indicate that many young people –farmers' sons and, even more so, daughters– not only wish to give up farming and emigrate but actually do change their field of activity and place of residence. There are also many others, however, who do not wish to change their field of activity or leave their ancestral home, or, if they do desire a change, do not believe it is possible to do so.

Consequently, only about half of the children born in rural areas during the 1960s still live in those areas today. Although it has eased off somewhat, this trend persists. Because of this fact, together with a declining birth rate (accompanied by a decreasing infant mortality rate as well) and rural-urban migration by adults, it is projected that, for the first time in

centuries, rural youth and the total rural population will decline in absolute –rather than merely relative– terms during the present decade.

These circumstances and the “youth” variable itself are rarely incorporated into analyses of what lies ahead for the rural sector. Nor do rural development policies (relating to education, training, health, housing, infrastructure, services, recreation) or policies aimed at correcting market imperfections (in the fields of credit, technology, land, inputs, water in the case of some countries, etc.) take into account the aspirations and strategies of the people who will be tomorrow’s adults. How, then, can we possibly expect them to be valid or effective except perhaps in the short run?

Young people clearly have a great potential for furthering rural development because they are more educated, are more receptive to modern ideas, and have the enthusiasm of youth. In order for this potential and this energy to be utilized, they must be given an opportunity to participate in the life of the community and to make a productive contribution, not so that they may simply attain what their parents achieved but so that they may take a substantive leap forward in terms of both income and quality of life.

Participatory decentralization may prove to be the way to offer rural inhabitants a new and important role to play and, in time, to reinforce their self-image and their hopes for a better future.

In some countries –even with greater and more equitable access to the means of production, crop diversification, the use of more profitable technologies and the opening of new markets– the value

added by agricultural activities would still not be enough to provide a “decent” income for the people working in the sector. A number of the countries in which the rural and agricultural populations are still on the increase would appear to fall into this category. For them, the answer is to route –at the least possible cost to the individuals in question and to society as a whole– a sufficient number of people towards other, more productive activities; it is to be hoped that this could be done without causing any major demographic imbalances, and also without neglecting to take any of the steps necessary in order to utilize the countries’ agricultural potential.

There are also places in Latin America –as in Europe– where the exodus of young people has been so great that many older farmers have no successors, although they may have heirs. Some of these areas are showing signs of regression and are either failing to maintain services and infrastructure or actually dismantling them. To counteract these situations, agricultural settlement programmes for young people implemented with support from the European Community could serve as an example of how to put young people who wish to go into business in the agricultural sector in contact with older agricultural producers who have no one to take over their operations. These programmes might or might not include start-up credits or subsidies and requirements that farms be restructured or be of a certain size and/or that participants possess a given level of knowledge acquired through practical experience and schooling or training.

(Original: Spanish)

Bibliography

- Ayala Oramas, Ulpiano (1994): Contribución al diagnóstico sobre la deuda social rural en Colombia, *El agro y la cuestión social*, Bogotá, TM Editores.
- Barrera de Martínez, S. (1985): *La educación campesina: testimonio de un conflicto cultural*, La Paz, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).
- Bastías Urra, M. (1983): *Socialización de menores en un área rural de pobreza extrema*, Santiago, Chile, Centre for Educational Research and Development (CIDE).
- Bey, Marguerite (1993): De campesinos a ciudadanos: una nueva estructuración en comunidades campesinas del Perú, *Cuadernos de agroindustria y economía rural*, No. 31, Bogotá, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas, Second semester.
- Caputo, Luis A. and Tomás Palau Viladesau (consultants) (1994): *Entre la exclusión y la reconstitución: la juventud campesina paraguaya en los noventa* (LC/R.1373 (Sem. 73/5)), Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
- CELADE (Latin American Demographic Centre) (1991): *Demographic Bulletin*, Vol. XXIV, No. 47 (LC/DEM/G.97), Santiago, Chile.
- Colombia, Ministry of Agriculture (1994): *El agro y la cuestión social*, Bogotá, TM Editores.
- Cotlear, D. (1989): The effects of education on farm productivity, *Journal of Development Planning*, No. 19, New York, United Nations, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.II.A.2.

- Díaz, Cecilia (1985): La juventud de la mujer mapuche: el duro camino entre las familias, ECLAC, *Mujeres jóvenes*, Santiago, Chile.
- Dirven, Martine (1993): Rural society: Its integration and disintegration, *CEPAL Review*, No. 51 (LC/G.1792-P), Santiago, Chile, ECLAC, United Nations.
- ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) (1990): Latin American Youth in the 1980's: Equality of Opportunity in Education and Employment (LC/R.960), Santiago, Chile.
- (1991): *Educación y transformación productiva con equidad en la agricultura. Problemas y propuestas* (LC/R.1084), Santiago, Chile.
- (1993a): *Estrategias de vida de los jóvenes rurales en América Latina. Obstáculos, condicionantes y políticas* (LC/R.1307 (Sem.73/3)), Santiago, Chile.
- (1993b): *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean. 1992 Edition* (LC/G.1747-P), Santiago, Chile. United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.II.G.1.
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) (1992): *Production Yearbook 1991*, vol. 45, FAO Collection: Statistics, No. 104, Rome.
- (1993a): *Agriculture towards the year 2000*, Rome.
- (1993b): *International comparisons of agricultural production and productivity*, FAO Economic and Social Development Studies, No. 112, Rome.
- Figuerola, A. (1986): *Productividad y educación en la agricultura campesina de América Latina*, Rio de Janeiro, Joint Study Programme on Latin American Economic Integration (ECIEL)/Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).
- González, Juan Jesús (1990): La incorporación de los jóvenes a la agricultura, *Revista de estudios agro-sociales*, No. 154, Madrid, Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, Secretaría General Técnica, October-December.
- Hataya, N. (1992): Urban-rural linkage of the labor market in the coffee growing zone in Colombia, *The Developing Economies*, vol. XXX, No. 1, Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economies.
- IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) (1993): *El estado de la pobreza rural en el mundo - La situación de América Latina y el Caribe*, Rome.
- ILO (International Labour Organisation) (1992): *The World's Labour*, Geneva, United Nations.
- Informativo campesino* (1992): *El fenómeno de migración afecta con fuerza a familias campesinas*, Asunción, Centro de Documentación y Estudios, March.
- Inkeles, A. and D. H. Smith (1974): *Becoming Modern - Individual Change in Six Developing Countries*, London, Heinemann Educational Books.
- Klein, Emilio (1992): *El empleo rural no agrícola en América Latina*, Documento de trabajo No. 364, Santiago, Chile, Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC).
- Levy, Santiago and Sweder van Wijnbergen (1992): Maize and the free trade agreement between Mexico and the United States, *The World Bank Economic Review*, vol. 6, No. 3, Washington, D. C., World Bank.
- Lockheed, M. E., D. T. Jamison and L. J. Lau (1980): Farmer education and farm efficiency: A survey, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 29, No. 1, Chicago, IL, The University of Chicago Press.
- López Cordovez, Luis (1985): Transformaciones, tendencias y perspectivas, *Pensamiento iberoamericano*, No. 8, Madrid, Ibero-American Cooperation Institute (ICI)/ECLAC.
- Machado, Absalón (1994): Nueva institucionalidad para el desarrollo rural, *El agro y la cuestión social*, Bogotá, Tercer Mundo (TM) Editores/Banco Ganadero (BG)/Caja Agraria/Vecol.
- Matos Mar, J. and G. Alberti (1980): Educación, lengua y reformas en Perú. La perspectiva desde una comunidad rural, *Educación y sociedad*, Santiago, Chile, UNICEF/Ed. San Jorge.
- Mazoyer, Marcel L. (1981): *Origines et mécanismes de reproduction des inégalités régionales de développement en Europe*, paper presented at the Congress of the European Agronomists' Association, Belgrade, 11 August - 4 September 1981. Paris, mimeo.
- Morejón, B. (1993): *La estrategia cubana de la vuelta al campo: anhelos y opciones de los jóvenes rurales*, Cuba, University of Havana.
- Moyano Estrada, Eduardo and Mari Cruz Fernández Duránte (1990): Teoría y práctica de la instalación de jóvenes en la agricultura, *Revista de estudios agro-sociales*, No. 154, Madrid, Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación, Secretaría General Técnica, October-December.
- Muriedas, María del Pilar (1988): *Familia y crisis económica en México*, Studies and Documents Series of the Regional Human and Social Sciences Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, No. 6, Caracas, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), September.
- OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) (1990): *The Informal Sector Revisited* (D. Turnham, B. Salomé and A. Schwarz (eds.)), Paris.
- Phillips, J. M. (1987): A comment on farmer education and farm efficiency: a survey, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 35, No. 3, Chicago, IL, The University of Chicago Press.
- Vecino, S., J. C. Tedesco and I. Hernández (1980): Proceso pedagógico y aprendizaje en contextos de heterogeneidad cultural: el caso de la sierra ecuatoriana, *Educación y sociedad*, New York, UNICEF.
- World Bank (1992): *World Development Report 1992*, Washington, D. C., Oxford University Press.