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SOCIAL SERVICE IN LATIN AMERICA: FUNCTIONS
AND RELATIONSHIPS TO DEVELOPMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the region, demands for social service programmes and allocations from public funds and private resources for the support of new and established services are consistently mounting.^{1/} These trends indicate general acceptance of the proposition that social service has an essential role in the functioning of society and in the advancement of its welfare. Notwithstanding, social service does not seem to have a defined place within the framework of development policy in Latin American countries. Various reasons have been put forward to explain this relative isolation. One refers to the difficulty in defining what social service is and in distinguishing its activities from those of other forms of social action. Another lies in the doubt of economic planners whether social service can contribute significantly to the goals of development in view of its approach to social needs mainly through the individual and the small group. Still other reasons chiefly offered by social service personnel themselves, point to the non-involvement of social service leaders in national politics and higher echelons of public administration. Each of the above explanations is valid to some extent. It seems necessary however to search for more basic reasons in order to clarify the place of social service if any, in national development.

^{1/} In Argentina, a group of industrialists has established an institute to train industrial social workers to staff already established social service programmes and others to be established within industry; the major problem of the National School of Social Service of Peru (Lima) is to increase its training capacity in order to meet increasing demands for the services of social workers within housing and rural development programmes; British Guiana is expanding social service within the judicial and penal system; Bolivia has just embarked on social service for miners and migrants; a major component of Brazil's slum clearance programme is Social Service. Development in other countries of the region show a trend toward increasing demands for social service programmes and personnel.

/This paper

This paper seeks to define the place of social service in national development and its potential contribution to that effort.^{2/} It does this first by bringing together all the common elements of the Latin American conceptions of social service and analyzing the objectives and functioning of the programmes; and second, by clarifying the relationships, if any, between the goals of social service and national development and enquiring whether the two sets of goals are in harmony one with the other. Part I discusses the meaning of social service in Latin America; Part II indicates how it functions at present; Part III deals with its planning within the framework of development policy; while Part IV discusses the future role of social service and its potential contribution to development and sets out what needs to be done so that social service can fulfil its role and maximize its contribution.

There is a dearth of published work on social service relating to Latin America. The sources of information for this document are largely unpublished annual and other reports, case records, student theses, reports of experts in social service under the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme, interviews with programme administrators and planners as well as direct service personnel, and direct observation of existing programmes. Some articles and monographs were found useful but in general, they are limited as sources of information on needs and problems specific to social service and on planning, administration and evaluation of programmes. Since no study in depth has as yet been attempted either of the programmes and the methods used or their effects, this paper runs the risk of making generalizations based on factors, the importance of which may have been over-emphasized, at the same time that

^{2/} Development is here interpreted as roughly equivalent to the complex of social and economic objectives set forth in the 1960 Charter of the Alliance for Progress, which sets among the principal goals of national development a substantial and self-sustaining increase in per capita income that will reduce the gaps in the level of living between the countries of the region and between the region and more industrialized countries; and a more equitable distribution of national income, raising as quickly as possible the incomes and levels of living of the more needy while assuring at the same time the investment of a major portion of the national product for economic development and social progress.

This paper deliberately avoids use of the term "social development"; instead it interprets "development" as a unified social process. The countries of Latin America have been classified under different stages of development, but these well-known differences do not preclude the existence of common characteristics which demand regional interpretation. A presentation of these common characteristics and "internal contradictions" can be found in a forthcoming Division of Social Affairs ECLA study, entitled "Social Development" and "Social Planning: A Survey of Conceptual and Practical Problems in the Setting of Latin America".

/other factors

other factors not readily observable might not have been given due consideration. The sources utilized indicate the difficulty of drawing a picture representative of the region. The most that can be expected is the identification of common concerns, characteristics and trends and also of some local and restricted experiences from which wider lessons can be derived. It is hoped that this exploratory work will start the countries into more thorough studies on the developmental potentialities of social service that will leave a positive mark on the quality of life in Latin America.

The student of international social service will no doubt find situations and characteristics that are similar to those obtaining in countries in other parts of the world. These similarities only confirm the sameness of the basic problems that beset human society everywhere, the unevenness of the phenomenon called development, no matter what stage a country has reached, and the reality of human relationships and human inter-action on an international level. There are also, however, regional, national and local differences that defy uniform action and make imperative the search for indigenous answers to what may seem, on the surface, common human needs.

Part I

THE MEANING OF SOCIAL SERVICE IN LATIN AMERICA

1. Social Service Defined

A United Nations Expert Group on the Development of National Social Service Programmes convened in 1959 defined social service as an "organized activity that aims at helping towards a mutual adjustment of individuals and their social environment". The adjustment is "achieved through the use of techniques and methods designed to enable individuals, groups and communities to meet their needs and solve their problems of adjustment to a changing pattern of society, and through co-operative action to improve economic and social conditions". 3/ This definition assigns relationships as the area of action of social service, relationships that may involve individuals, groups and communities. The techniques and methods referred to are presumed to be those specifically attributed to social work.

In practice, the term social service includes:

- (a) a set of conceptions concerning human needs and approaches to the satisfaction of these needs;
- (b) a body of professionals (social workers) who have received formal training based on these conceptions and approaches, plus wider circles of auxiliaries and volunteers who perform functions deriving from these conceptions and have acquired to some degree a "social work" outlook; and
- (c) organized institutional settings that have functions based on these conceptions and that employ social workers.

While the three elements above-mentioned can be found in all the Latin American countries, the present situation does not permit clear delimitation under any or all of them. The conceptions that form the basis of social service represent varying combinations of influences from Western Europe and the United States with older religious and charitable viewpoints. The character of professional training of social workers and the extent to which such training is considered indispensable differ according to the relative strength of such influences. Social service functions and the employment of social workers are diffused

3/ "El Desarrollo de los Programas Nacionales de Servicio Social"
Naciones Unidas, Nueva York, ST/SOA/40, página 6, par. 6.

through a wide variety of public and private agencies, and to a large extent appear as ancillary parts of programmes and institutions having other primary functions. The problem of delimiting social service as a distinct sector of social policy and action is further complicated by the fact that many institutions with social service functions and objectives are neither directed nor staffed by trained social workers. (There even exists a lack of agreement on the minimum qualifications of social workers. 4/) On the other hand, not all the functions actually performed by social workers within wider institutional settings can be legitimately brought within social service conceptions.

Terminology can also lead to misunderstandings. In the plural, social services (servicios sociales) refer to all activities with human welfare objectives including education, health, social security, community development, housing, etc. 5/) In an enumeration of this sort, social service as a field of policy and action may be listed as social welfare services (servicios de bienestar social) or as

4/ For example, there is now a bill under consideration by the Federal Congress of Argentina to regulate the employment of social workers, including within such profession the "trabajador social" and the "asistente social" both of whom have graduated from a school of social work, the "visitadora social" (an earlier name of the "asistente social" but with lower level training), the "Visitadora de higiene social" (a health aide that has a two year training course mostly in medicine) and the "educadora sanitaria" (a kind of public health aide). This lack of agreement as to who is the professional exists in varying degrees in all countries of the region.

5/ According to para. 4 of "Reappraisal of the United Nations Social Service Programmes", E/CN.5/AC.12/L.3, March 29, 1965 Social welfare is more commonly understood and used in different parts of the world to describe what henceforth the United Nations called social service. Accordingly, the Secretary General intends hereafter in this report and in all subsequent references to United Nations activities in this field to use social welfare and social welfare programme where previously the term social service and social service programme would be employed. Conversely, social services and social services programmes will be used in the broader sense to include activities in such fields as health, education, social security, etc. besides social welfare... The reappraisal Report, however, employs the term "social welfare" to embrace a wide range of social activities found in different parts of the world and does not attempt a delimitation of the coverage of the term. The present paper retains the term "social service" (singular) both to correspond with Latin American usage and to distinguish the relatively restricted range of conceptions and functions here indicated.

social assistance (asistencia social). Social Assistance is the earlier term for social service and from it derives the title social assistant (asistente social), by which the practitioner and professional in social work is known in most of the region. 6/

In Latin American usage, the singular form "servicio social" refers to the profession of social work 7/ and the substantive area in which social work concepts and techniques are applied. The use of "servicio" in preference to "trabajo" which is the literal translation of the English "work" (social work) is a particular expression of the Latin American spirit. "Trabajo" evokes the image of "labour", usually manual, and of activities the products of which accrue directly to the benefit and profit of the doer. On the other hand, "servicio" signifies action in behalf of someone other than the doer or his immediate family. It conjures up the "helping" image which is the essence of servicio social in Latin America. Some other components of this concept of social service are altruism, philanthropy, self-abnegation, a high degree of emotional commitment to the common weal plus a body of religious and charitable beliefs concerning one's obligations to one's fellow men. The professionalization of social work is tending to relegate the religious and charitable components to the background and to base social service on a more objective and rational matching of needs, available resources and expected benefits. This tendency however is not dominant considering that many schools of social work are under the management of religious institutions. What is probably more universal is the increasing acceptance of the methods of social work. Social service in Latin American is still intrinsically a "helping by doing" activity.

As a substantive area, social service includes legislation, programmes, services and activities that prevent, alleviate and remove conditions that limit the ability of specific individuals, groups and communities to make full use of such facilities and services, as schools, health centres, hospitals, churches, public utilities, etc., organized for the general public on the assumption that everyone has an equal opportunity to benefit from them. Social service provisions invariably seek to strengthen the actual capacity of individuals, groups and communities to make use of other services and more broadly, to participate on equal terms in the national society.

6/ The exceptions among the Spanish speaking Latin American countries are Mexico, Panama, Central America and Colombia which use "trabajador social"; indicative perhaps, of stronger North American influence in contrast to the stronger European orientation of South American social service.

7/ Schools for professional training in social work are called "escuelas de servicio social" throughout the region.

2. The Setting for Social Service

The Latin American setting within which social service institutions and personnel must function has, in its main features, been often described and for the purposes of the present work, it will be sufficient to set forth these features very briefly.

(a) Major trends and their meaning to social services 8/

Three particularly relevant aspects of the Latin American situation may be summed up as follows: (1) Very high rates of population increase with consequent high dependency ratios and large primary families; (2) rapid redistribution of population with high rates of concentration in urban areas, scattered and isolated settlements in the countryside and a labour force highly mobile geographically and occupationally; and (3) low and unevenly distributed incomes together with lagging growth in production and inability of the economies to absorb into productive employment a labour force growing by nearly 3 per cent annually. In a nutshell, for social service these trends mean increasing demands unmatched by resources for essential services that governments are pressured to provide but can only pretend to provide. The above trends also imply a decreasing ability and willingness on the part of parents to assume the burdens of physical support and of guidance of their children from infancy to responsible adulthood, as well as the wide range of maladjustments associated with traditional societies in transition towards modernization.

The economic growth that has taken place in the region, irregular and unbalanced as it has been, does not seem to have brought about any appreciable improvement in the lot of the masses. If anything, it has widened the gap between them and the groups whose incomes have benefitted from this growth.

The material accompaniments of poverty are well-known: families housed in one-room dwellings in the older urban slums or in shantytowns, rural as well as urban; malnutrition; educational services so rudimentary that they give the children no real opportunity to overcome the many handicaps of the environments, etc. From the standpoint of social service, the "culture of poverty" that represents the adaptation of the people to the precariousness of their situation and their lack of opportunities to participate in the national society is an even more serious challenge than the lack of the material amenities of living. 9/

8/ For detailed descriptions see Report on the World Social Situation 1963, U.N. Sales N° 63.IV.4; Desarrollo Económico de América Latina en la Postguerra, U.N. Sales N° 64.II.G.6; Industrialización en América Latina, CEPAL, E/CN.12/716; Boletín Estadístico de América Latina, Vol. II, N° 2, UN, August 1965.

9/ Oscar Lewis's "Five Families", "Pedro Martínez" and "The Children of Sánchez", Basic Books, Inc., are family case studies that illustrate very well the ways by which adaptation to a "culture of poverty" is achieved by people.

/This culture

This culture is characterized by shifting and unstable family relationships, deprivation of responsible care for many of the superabundant young children and of constructive occupations for adolescents, unstable values and weak loyalties in the face of competing ideologies. At the same time, the culture of poverty retains a remarkable amount of readiness to assume burdens of mutual aid and support of dependents not met by society, and a capacity to combine in new forms of social organization to meet local needs.

Characteristic of the region is the relative concentration of organized services and job opportunities, especially for the "educated", in the big city. Notwithstanding, these resources have proved inadequate in the face of rural-urban influx, so that for a high proportion of migrants a move to the city does not represent much improvement in the level of living nor in the opportunities for attaining such. It has been asserted that the main reason for rural-urban migration is social not economic, the result of "changes in the images and aspirations which render rural life in poverty less satisfactory than urban life in poverty". 10/

The rural population cannot be ignored in any discussion of the Latin American situation. A study 11/ by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America speaks of the "... rapid population growth, combined with apparent incapacity of the rural areas to absorb more than a fraction of their contribution to this growth, to narrow the very wide gap between their levels of living and those of the cities, to respond adequately to rising urban demands for their products, or to participate effectively in national decision-making". On the role the rural situation plays in relation to urbanization and urban marginality, this same paper says: "... static or declining employment opportunities in the countryside and the small towns combines with insufficiently rapid growth in urban employment openings, to condemn a high proportion of the population increment to a marginal position - drifting from rural to urban under-employment, increasingly finding its way to the peripheral shantytowns of the great cities, multiply handicapped in education, motivations, even physical health, for any effort to escape from its marginality".

The breakdown of the "hacienda", the traditional social organization based on land tenure, as a result of revolutions, programmes of agrarian reform and land distribution, advancement in techniques of organization and increased mobility towards urban centres is changing the fabric and tempo of life. Alternative sources of the security and stability,

10/ Charles Wagley "Social Research in Latin America", Columbia University Press, New York, page 264.

11/ "Rural Settlement Patterns and Social Change in Latin America", Economic Bulletin for Latin America, X, 1.

/however minimal,

however minimal, provided by the hacienda must be found if social disorganization is to be contained within tolerable limits. The increasing geographical mobility of the population brings with it occupational shifts that affect whole families and unattached persons (single men going to mines and ranches and single women to the cities and small manufacturing centres) in pursuit of job opportunities. In the place of origin is left an economically dependent, unproductive population consisting of women with young children, the aged and the incapacitated, all in need of more than a normal amount of welfare services which the community cannot provide. In addition, there is the natural anxiety over the physical health and safety of the absent breadwinner, the uncertainty of economic contribution to the family maintenance and the possibilities of temporary or permanent desertion. Even when such possibilities are ruled out, the frequent changing of roles for the family members during the periods of absence and the periods of presence of the breadwinner is a probable source of conflicts and tensions. This is unsettling for the adults but even more so for the young; it is equally disrupting to the web of community activities. Host communities are not exempt from the negative effects of seasonal migrations. The seasonal increase in the demands for living facilities and services of all kinds can never be foreseen nor provided for in its entirety. More serious than deficiencies in facilities and services for the fluctuating population are the problems of social and psychological order that affect the resident population and the migrant. These problems are often manifested in hostile attitudes, prejudices, and disguised and open conflicts.

(b) The family ^{12/}

In a static society, the degree of equilibrium and adjustment attained would diminish the probability of disharmony and conflicts in social relationships. The economic and social changes indicated above mean that in Latin America today, except in very isolated settlements, society is far from static. These factors have raised the levels of expectations far beyond the capacity of the economies or the public authorities to meet. Traditional relationships are breaking down in all aspects and levels of society; there are constant shifts in leadership, a birth of new images of what is desirable and a groping for substitute sources of security. In this atmosphere of change, the family group seems to be the most affected and with it, its individual members. It is assumed that the objective of development is to raise the level of living of every family. But this can be done only if the family itself contributes sufficiently to the effort. The family is seriously handicapped as an agent of progress by the fact that its dependency burden is increasing: more children, more numerous and complex individual and family wants, and often less employment for adult members. Besides, the relationships in the family itself are shifting. Many heads of families are mothers of

^{12/} Effects of urbanization on the family are discussed in detail in Report on the World Social Situation, 1957, UN Sales No. 1957.IV.3.

young children, many young people now question parental and adult authority and "wisdom". The intensity of the struggle for the material necessities of survival coupled with the stresses on human relationships brought about by changing roles and values exert more and more pressure on the family as the basic unit within which the growth of the human resources for development takes place. The family members respond to the pressure sometimes by socially objectionable expedients, such as abortion, desertion and child neglect; and sometimes family ties disintegrate altogether.

3. Problems and Programmes

From the settings described above originate problems considered in the region as appropriate targets for social service action. Such problems can only be understood and dealt with effectively when considered in relation to each other, since one problem may be only a symptom of, a sequel to, or a corollary of another. Moreover, any action that is directed against a specific problem may even create another kind of problem. From this viewpoint, it is possible to appreciate the necessity of a concerted attack on the barriers to the satisfaction of the needs of a particular society and its members. Such a viewpoint permits, besides, a rational perspective on social service as part of the totality of social policy and as only one of the several possible approaches to such problems.

Table 1 presents the various problems that are prominent within the particular setting of the region and about which social service is actually doing something. These relate to (1) individual disabilities and handicaps that impede the person from utilizing the opportunities for "better life" that society provides, (2) absence, debility or disorganization of family life, and (3) inadequacies and imperfections of the existing societal order itself and its institutions. The condition of vulnerability, of disability and dependency, of family weakness and disorganization and of individual and group maladjustments, and marginality arise from situations that lend themselves in varying degrees to human intervention.

The various activities in Latin America shown in Table 2 are claimed by social service professionals and institutions, and are referred to by the general public as social service. They are classified into five general headings: (1) The protection of the young; (2) the promotion of family welfare; (3) the promotion of social change and adjustment; (4) the improvement of community life; (5) the sustaining of economic growth; and (6) the complementation of other organized services. Programmes in social service in principle increase the capacity (1) of the individual to function better in society; (2) of the social group to engage in mutually beneficial co-operative action; and (3) of the community to provide more opportunities to individuals and groups that enable them to participate in its functioning.

/Table 1

Table 1

SOCIAL SERVICE CONCERNS

Situations	Contributory Causes	Problem Manifestations
1. Inadequacies and imperfections of the social organization	<p>Unemployment and under employment, lack of skills, low income, maldistribution and lack of income, disability and ill-health, underdevelopment, lack of jobs</p> <p>Mass poverty, inadequate provision of public facilities and services, maldistribution of facilities and services, poor physical planning, social segregation, migration, urbanization, geographical isolation, demographic "explosion"</p>	<p>Economic dependency, marginal housing, child labour, employment of women with young children, mendicancy, social deprivation, forced idleness, prostitution, promiscuity</p> <p>Lack of organized services such as schools, health agencies, churches, recreation, parks and playgrounds, communication and transportation, lack of neighbourhood cohesion and interaction, crime, vice, delinquency, high dependency ratios, large primary family, marginal housing.</p>
2. Absence, debility or disorganization of family life	<p>Death of Breadearner, desertion, conjugal conflicts, parental irresponsibility, ambulatory employment, employment of women with young children, low level of parental education, ill-health, occupational shifts, migration, changes in roles, impact of new values, needs and ideologies</p>	<p>Orphanage, abandonment, child labour, behavioural problems, delinquency, child maltreatment, marginal housing, employment of mothers of young children, promiscuity, youth "gangs", dependency, ill-health and disability, maladjustment in relationships, child neglect, mendicancy, economic dependency, etc.</p>
3. Individual disabilities	<p>Biological factors Social factors</p>	<p>Ill-health, physical disability, mental disorders, psychological problems, old age and infirmity</p>
4. Emergency situation	<p>Natural disasters, armed conflict, fires and other preventable calamities</p>	<p>Emergency economic needs, refugees, broken families due to death, destruction of properties, displacement of population, crime, delinquency and vice, disruption of community organization.</p>

Table 2

SOCIAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES IN LATIN AMERICA^{a/}

1. Programmes for the protection of the young	Institutions for the care of orphans, abandoned and neglected children Casework service for children with behaviour problems Adoption and foster care (very limited) Rehabilitation services for the handicapped Group activities Legislation Supervision of child labour Training institutions for the juvenile delinquent Day care centres, nurseries, feeding centres Supervised playground and recreation Vacation camps, youth groups Probation and parole
2. Programmes for the promotion of family welfare	Economic assistance Recreation and vacation services Rehabilitation of victims of national disaster and armed conflicts Counselling, family planning, and preparation for parenthood Rehabilitation services for the handicapped including the dependent aged, addict, crippled and convict Education for family life and home management Community centres Group activities for mothers, fathers, and for entire family
3. Programmes for promoting social change and adjustment	Casework services to improve relationships Informational campaigns Mobilization of resources for the benefit of families and groups Social education Welfare services with migrants, new communities and unintegrated minority groups

^{a/} For detailed description of various types of family welfare programmes, see "Family, Child and Youth Welfare Services", UN, E/CN.5/AC.12/L.4/Con.3, April 1965.

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4. Programmes for improving community life
Community centres, social centres, social group organization, community betterment (acción cívica) creation of community parks, playgrounds, and other welfare amenities
 5. Programmes for sustaining economic growth
Vocational training, employee welfare services, education for income management, (these services are established in industries, commercial enterprise, governments and other economic programmes and may consist of a complex of activities)
 6. Programmes to complement other organized services
Services within programmes of health, education, nutrition, community development, housing, agrarian reform, colonization, etc., designed to facilitate the action of these services, complement their action and intensify their effect

/It is

It is important to note the consensus that the inability of the family to meet adequately the responsibilities which a rapidly changing society imposes on it is the most important single source of the problems falling within the sphere of action of social service. 13/ For example, a 1964 study by the Dirección Nacional de Menores of Bolivia on the causes of behavioural problems among youth under its care disclosed that among the males, 84.7 per cent and among the females 63.9 per cent result from unsatisfactory family conditions. Only 8.7 per cent among the males and 2.7 per cent among the females are the consequences of inadequacies of the material and physical aspects of living. 14/

Notwithstanding the identification of the family as a particularly vulnerable part of the social order, the programmes for helping and strengthening it are few and are restricted both in coverage and scope. 15/ Because of the historical lines of growth of social service in the region, programmes for the institutional care of the minor and the infirm are much more numerous, with emphasis on large closed institutions. More attention is also now directed towards "educative" activities, particularly for women and children, via organized groups such as mothers' centres, juvenile clubs and community and social centres. Statements that Latin American social service is largely directed to the individual are misleading. A survey of programmes will show that only a few agencies work directly with the individual in a casework relationship. In fact, it appears that social service in Latin America is mainly concerned with the basic material needs of individuals and primary groups. This is to be expected in a situation of poverty where the fight for mere survival occupies the centre of the arena, and where the needs of the moment are so great that until they are met, the individual cannot even think of the future. Many of the activities in question are no longer considered social service in countries with more highly developed economies and where specialized

13/ See Reports of countries submitted to the Latin American Conference on Children and Youth in National Development, Santiago, 1965. Also "Factores que afectan la organización de la familia". OEA, SIF, Doc. 2/60, June 1960.

14/ Extracted from the national report of Bolivia to the Interamerican Seminar on "Normas para la protección del menor en programas integrados de desarrollo", Montevideo, 2-10 May 1965.

15/ Legislative provisions for family allowances are common. Owing to budgetary limitations, however, no country has provided such allowances on more than a token scale to the most needy families, those outside the social security systems, and even within social security benefits are often too small to enable large families to meet minimum needs. Interviews with programme executives indicate that other services for the family as a whole are usually very short of funds and personnel.

technical services exist. ^{16/} Particularly within settings of housing and rural development programmes, there are more and more evidences of the use of "self-help" in social service, of genuine interdisciplinary relationships with other fields of policy, of the community approach to situations, and of action directed to the basic social structure and causes instead of single problems. There is also a strong conviction among social service professionals that their programmes should be integrated into national development efforts and as an initial step, that they should be included in over-all plans of development.

4. Functions and Methods of Social Service

(a) Functions

One commonly heard criticism is that the functions of social service in Latin America are so obscure that nobody really knows or understands what they are. Others go further and say that social service has no inherent functions, only those derived from other services and therefore social service is an auxiliary to such services. An examination of the laws and regulations as well as the social decisions that form the bases of social service programmes will refute these criticisms. The functions are clear when stated in general terms and constitute important potential contributions to an over-all strategy for development. The confusion results from the tendency to state specific objectives or activities of each social service programme instead of the function in the generic sense. The objectives are often expressions of aspirations rather than practical targets for implementation. The number of activities hinders understanding of the unifying function and, worse, each activity is too specific to some isolated problem to be significant, particularly in the context of over-all development. By classifying all the statements of what social service is supposed to be doing, or is expected to be doing, there emerge five generic functions. Below is an illustrative table showing relationships among the functions, the objectives and the activities. Since the list of objectives and activities is only illustrative it does not cover the entire field.

(b) Methods

It is taken for granted that the principal methods used in social service are those attributed to social work: that is social casework, social groupwork and community organization. Other techniques such as social welfare administration and social research have essential auxiliary roles, but affect only indirectly the services to individuals, groups and communities. Social service also uses borrowed techniques which constitute the main tools of other services such as education, just as these services also use to some extent social work methods. The basic and auxiliary methods are taught in schools of social work and applied after a fashion throughout the region.

^{16/} Within the Andean Indian programme and other rural development programmes, the social worker serves as a home improvement agent, a nurse-aid, a literacy teacher, a crafts teacher, etc. Recently, with the availability of home economics workers, the tasks related to cooking, sewing and other household activities have been assigned to these more specialized technicians.

Table 3

GENERIC FUNCTIONS, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Generic Functions	Specific Objectives	Activities
1. The progressive improvement of the conditions of living of people	(a) Assist the destitute and dependent to meet basic material needs (earliest and best understood objective)	Food grants to the needy Family relief Clothing relief Relief to victims of disasters Free transportation Public dormitories Economic housing
	(b) Provide specialized facilities and services	Special diets and drugs to the sick Preparation of the ill person and his family to cope with the illness Nurseries for children of sick mothers School supplies, clothing to destitute children Casework and counselling to individuals with personal problems
	(c) Help the unemployed in earning an income	Placement service Free vocational training Nurseries for children of working mothers
	(d) Provide opportunities to the disadvantaged for cultural advancement	Vacation camps, youth camps, playgrounds that are organized and supervised, employee welfare services, etc.
2. The development of human resources	(a) To restore the impaired capacity of individuals	Rehabilitation of the handicapped Training institutions for the delinquent Probation and parole

/(b) To

Generic Functions	Specific Objectives	Activities
	(b) To promote better relationships and bring about real adjustment to one's circumstances	Casework to those who have behaviour problems impeding satisfactory adjustments Measures to strengthen the family Welfare services for the migrant Welfare services for the unintegrated indigenous groups
	(c) To motivate people to assume responsibility for development	Casework services Organization of social groups Educative activities for citizenship, for new wants, for new values
	(d) To promote wholesome use of free time	Organized groups Training camps Special skills courses Community activities such as volunteer service, etc.
3. The orientation of people to change and adjustment	(a) To create awareness of the necessity for change	Direct contact with people Groupwork activities with clubs, etc. Community assemblies Demonstrations
	(b) To assist people to adjust to new ways of living	Casework and groupwork services within housing programmes, co-operatives, rural development
	(c) To form public opinion in favour of development and assist in decision-making	Discussion groups that lead to the expression of ideas, the crystallization of wants and their overt expression in the form of demands Information and interpretation of needs and resources to clients, leader groups and general public

/(d) To

Generic Functions	Specific Objectives	Activities
	(d) To introduce practical aids in social setting of deprivation and want	"Self-Help" and mutual aid activities Facilities and services to low income employees (meals, vacations, medical care)
4. The mobilization of community resources	(a) To bring available resources to the attention of the uninformed and to help them use these	Placement services (for institutions, adoption, employment, foster homes, etc.) Orientation and information
	(b) To obtain for the needy essential services	Co-operative relationships with organized services such as health, education, housing, as well as public utilities, sources of work, etc.
	(c) To stimulate the creation of welfare amenities for communities	Action for the promotion of social legislation Pioneering work in the creation of new community services such as public laundries, sanitary facilities, play-ground parks for families, etc.
	(d) To provide means for social participation	Organization of volunteer services in different community programmes

/5. Provision

Generic Factors	Specific Objectives	Activities
5. The provision of institutional structures for other services	(a) To raise level of child care	Feeding centres Nurseries and other day care centres Community centres
	(b) To prevent family disorganization	Social groupwork Counselling Family welfare services Casework activities
	(c) To make other services more effective	Counselling Provision for special needs Formal education, health and nutrition education, vocational training, etc. within social service institutions

/Social work

Social work from its beginning focussed upon services to individuals; from this were evolved the techniques known as "casework" on which the greater part of social work in Latin America relies in principle. However, in view of the unrealistically heavy caseloads (all social workers interviewed reported at least 150 cases) and to some extent as a result of a weak background in the social sciences, social casework as a technique is applied rarely in settings outside of highly specialized clinics for disturbed children (in programmes for the treatment of juvenile delinquents and in neuro-psychiatric wards of hospitals). What is called casework is often only information - giving, instruction-dispensing and aid-service (trámites) that become ends in themselves.

The appeal of groupwork and community organization emanate from their multiplier effects. As the kinds and magnitude of recognized handicapping situations multiply in the course of Latin America's social evolution, so also does the demand for social services expand. In recent years, there has been a conscious effort to extend and improve training facilities in groupwork and community organization. Groupwork, which in theory presupposes the existence of group objectives and uses group inter-action as a means for developing the capacities of the members and of the group itself, in its practical application in Latin America it is no more than mass orientation. 17/

Community organization, which relies on the bringing together of different groups and classes in a community for the achievement of common goals, is limited to the neighbourhood level. Its potential in mobilizing the active participation of people in all kinds of development efforts is vast. For example, in Ecuador, the social service programme of the Acción Andina, whose objective is to integrate into national life the Andean Indians, has successfully used the community organization method to gain acceptance for the other technical services such as health, education, etc. that form part of the Acción and to get the people to participate gradually and by stages in all kinds of community activities.

The concepts underlying these methods of social work are universal. However, to apply them effectively they must be interpreted in the light of the value structure, the ideological system, the political organization and the religious and other beliefs of the people. This kind of adaptation of the imported techniques is only at its initial stage (there is a beginning in Colombia as well as in Brazil). There should be accumulating throughout the region a great deal of empirical evidence concerning the problem of adaptation but documentation of experiences is almost absent and whatever recording is done is too sketchy and inaccurate to serve as working materials for systematic study. Another deterrent factor to a more scientific analysis

17/ An interesting apparent exception to this general statement is a recreation programme described by Natalie Kisnerman in Hoy en Servicio Social, Buenos Aires, Vol.1, January, 1965, "Una experiencia con un grupo recreativo", in which the group work method was used as a means of provoking changes in individual and group attitudes and of promoting relationships that tend to group cohesiveness.

of the methods of social work in the region is the tendency to "bandwagon hitching". The "news" value of popular movements commonly known as community development has, in extreme cases, resulted in claims concerning the application of the community organization method even in individually-oriented activities and settings such as the pediatric ward of a hospital or an institution for physically incapacitated children. The "spectacular" element diverts attention from serious analysis.

The other techniques applied to social service programmes are more properly classified as "staff" techniques related to organization and management of social service agencies (social administration) and social research applied to social work. Social administration has limited application and this situation will continue until trained social work personnel are utilized on the management level of programme planning and implementation, which is not yet the case in the region. While there are a few programmes under the executive direction of social workers, these are rare and are exceptions rather than the rule. ^{18/} The application of social research as a technique in social service is barely started. The weakness of the social research component may account for the failure to plan the expansion of social service activities in relation to the changing needs of the societies;

^{18/} Ecuador's Director Nacional de Servicio Social and Chile's Director General de Asistencia Social for example are social workers. Argentina has a social worker in the technical staff of the Consejo Nacional de Desarrollo in charge of social welfare planning. However, these instances are few and recent. Heads of schools of social work are in the majority social workers; however, in some instances, physicians and other professionals are heads of such schools.

Part II

THE FUNCTIONING OF SOCIAL SERVICE ^{1/}

Social service as an organized activity outside the family received its first legal basis in Latin America in the Laws of the Indies originally promulgated between 1500 and 1542 as the framework for governing Spain's colonies in the Americas. The law encouraged the organization of charitable institutions for the poor, the first such institution being a hospital established in Mexico in 1521. The law also contained some provisions that may be considered the precursors of social policy for the protection of the mother who works for wages and the regulation of female and child labour.

During the nineteenth century, a relatively extensive range of activities classified as "social assistance" (asistencia social) began to be organized by private initiative. This was also a period of partial secularization of welfare institutions already established under the auspices of the Catholic Church and religious communities. These institutions included hospitals, schools, institutions for the aged and infirm, orphaned, abandoned and neglected children, the physically handicapped and the mentally deficient. Besides shelter and protection, these institutions also provided educational, nutrition, health and recreation services.

The concept of an activity outside the family to relieve the distress and suffering of the poorer, the weaker, the handicapped and the under-privileged classes, served as the foundation upon which social service today is organized. The first decades of the twentieth century brought in from Europe, particularly France, Belgium and Germany, and after the Second World War from the United States, influences that bear strongly on the content of social service in the region today. The legislative provisions and philosophic basis belong to the European heritage, whereas the organization is strongly influenced by United States institutions. Social service has helped in the creation of a consciousness of the need for protective laws. Public social service programmes and some of the voluntary ones have bases in law. These laws, however, are often unsupported by adequate and stable means to carry them out, and sometimes the provisions themselves are so cumbersome as to render programme operation ineffectual. Examples are the many and detailed regulations on eligibility, beneficiaries, etc. which seem to conspire in making programmes legalistic and procedural. For this reason, social service, that has a "helping" image in the public mind, is often accused by its clientele of betraying this image through rigid and "unfeeling" proceduralism on the part of the personnel.

^{1/} Organización y Administración de Servicios Sociales, ESAPAC, Costa Rica mayo de 1960, gives a comprehensive description of the functioning of social service in Central America.

People concerned with social service are generally agreed that social service personnel should be trained. Many laws creating social service programmes specify that "professional social work methods" should be applied and that "graduate" social workers should be employed. In some countries, the social service profession is given recognition and protection by law. In other countries it is a career that is struggling very hard for professional status, and in some, it remains a "vocation" and an auxiliary service. In the latter situation, although training is considered desirable, "good-will" and the desire and ability to "do good" for the unfortunate and less endowed is also an acceptable qualification.

The pioneers of social service have invariably come from the upper social class, trained in West European countries, particularly France and Belgium, to some extent Spain, and the United States. These few had the responsibility of establishing schools of social work and programmes of social service, assisted sometimes by European and United States technical advisers. The Latin American country that wielded the strongest influence in social work education is Chile; it is also the country which has the longest history of formal training in the field. The content of curricula as well as programmes reflect West Europe orientation with recent superimposition of North American conceptions and methods. For the most part, the leaders of social service in the countries have influence in society and exert strong personal and to a lesser and more recent extent, political pressures in the national leadership. With rare exceptions, their faith lies in the value of the various activities for the individual, in the traditional concern for "helping" as "doing" and the classical interpretation of "service" with its spiritual and religious connotations. In recent years, with the rapid expansion of local training institutions, these schools have become accessible to youth from the lower middle strata who are motivated not only by their interest to participate in the advancement of welfare but who also see, consciously or unconsciously, entrance into the field as a means for social mobility.^{2/} This group is impatient for change, an impatience intensified by recent trends of incorporating schools of social work into universities, thus exposing faculty and student body to the restlessness that characterizes Latin American university groups. Currently, two forces interact with each other, one tending to hold social service to trodden grounds and the other tending to push it towards new frontiers.

^{2/} With very few exceptions, professional social workers and social work students in Latin America are women. This predominance in social work is probably more overwhelming in Latin America than in any other region. In Chile, there is only one male graduate social worker compared to over two thousand female graduates. In 30 schools in Argentina there is not one male in the total enrolment of about 400. Of the approximately 4,500 social workers in the country, there is not a single male.

1. Patterns of organization and administration

The lists of social problems and programs above suggest the great variety, the complexity and the changing nature of social service. The patterns of organization and administration are several, modified to greater or lesser degree by the nature of the problems, cultural and religious differences, the availability of economic resources and general character of the administrative system. These patterns can best be understood through a consideration of the relationships between national and local levels of administration, between public and voluntary sectors, among social service programmes and between social service and other forms of social action.

The most general characteristic is the extensive use of existing administrative structures of a social character which serve as the organizational setting for social service. There are any number of combinations. The setting may be a ministry of health and social assistance or of labour and social security, or of education and social welfare, or of interior and social assistance or of justice and social service and so on. Within such structures, social service may be a bureau (dirección), a division (departamento) or a section, or it may consist of specific activities scattered in various specialized and functional units of administration, in which case they are designed to meet specific needs related to the function of the specialized structure. It may also consist of a combination of such administrative arrangements. 3/

Although there are social services under functional government ministries, there are also autonomous bodies, self-contained boards or commissions exercising a degree of financial and operational independence within the administrative system. 4/ Autonomous bodies are offshoots of the general tendency to use ad hoc groups to meet every newly recognized need. They are also half-way attempts at co-ordination without offending already existing administrative structures by curtailing their responsibility over certain areas of action. Because earlier social service programmes related to specialized functions (delinquency within justice or rehabilitation of the physically handicapped within health etc.) are already located in corresponding administrative structures, the services that usually grow around autonomous bodies are those relating to family and community welfare. (For example, under the influence of the Inter-american Institute for the Child there is in every country an autonomous body (Consejo del Niño) that is expected to co-ordinate as well as administer programmes for children. The degree of co-ordination thus

3/ In Chile, there is a Dirección General de Asistencia Social within the Ministry of Interior and Social Assistance but there is also a Sección de Servicio Social within the Servicio Nacional de Salud; in Ecuador there is a Dirección Nacional de Bienestar Social under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, etc.

4/ The Junta Nacional de Bienestar Social of Honduras is an example.

achieved is relative and uneven.) The charters of such bodies carry provisions for integrative functions in relation to public and voluntary programmes although such provisions are seldom implemented for lack of personnel and as a result of cumbersome and inoperable provisions. Autonomous bodies have the advantage of comparative freedom from the rigidities of bureaucracy but on the other hand are more vulnerable to the incursions of personal power and prestige.

The administration of social service manifests the same general characteristics of a highly centralized top-heavy bureaucracy that have been described in relation to other parts of the public sector in Latin America; failure to delegate; heavy emphasis on written regulations, rules and precedents; complexity of paper work; mazes of administrative communication; and personnel relations relying on strict protocol and arbitrary authority from top to bottom.

Despite this "centralization" there is no real standard unification or centralization. The rigidity and complexity of administrative procedures and personnel policies prohibit mobility and favour the formation of "cliques". While on paper, the administrative procedures may be well formulated, the implementation is on the basis of personal relationships.

The frequent and radical changes in general administrative orientation resulting from political changes are likely to nullify what might have taken years to build.

It is not unusual to encounter a series of administrative "principalities" some of them with no staff other than a "chief". This kind of administration poses difficulties for co-ordination and makes real integration impossible. As a result, social service is dispersed in many small scale actions in different units under several ministries and autonomous bodies. Seldom are there inter-agency co-ordinating or consultative bodies and if they exist, rarely do they really function as such. For this reason, social service lacks the comprehensive coverage of a defined sphere of activity that is taken for granted in certain other sectors of social policy.

(a) The national and local levels of administration

Four countries of the region (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela) have federal systems. In all four countries, social service provisions are the responsibility of the state government, the extent of central government participation being limited to grants of aid and formulation of national policy. In the other countries the national government is directly responsible.

There is a high degree of administrative centralization. In developing countries, centralization is often a necessary expedient arising from the scarce supply of top skills, the dearth of local leaders, the absence or undeveloped state of local government and the consequent

/lack of

lack of local authority for the administration of public funds. While theoretically most programmes are national in scope, in practice, coverage is restricted to cities and "pilot" areas.

Where there are local programmes in operation, their direction and supervision is a direct responsibility of the national level ^{5/}. Local citizen boards may be organized but are only advisory and in many instances their existence is only nominal. The local level has no participation in decision-making nor in programme development. Personnel is recruited and controlled from the national office affording little leeway for local idiosyncracies.

The financing of public social service is a national responsibility. The cost is usually met from appropriations in the national budget. But since most social service programmes are parts of other areas of policy, seldom is there a direct allocation to social service. For this reason, of it is impossible to arrive at an accurate figure as to the actual cost of supporting social service. The availability of funds from institutional allocations is unstable, largely dependent on the interest of the general administrator or the weight of the pressures that bear on that authority. Social service may also be fully or partially supported from proceeds public lotteries, from special levies (luxury taxes and taxes on non-essential consumption items such as liquors, soft drinks, movies, or even on sugar as in Honduras, etc.), donations and confiscations (unclaimed imports, contraband, etc.) and incomes from institutional properties ^{6/}. These sources are fluctuating and resistant to rational programming, constituting one of the serious drawbacks to the formulation of more comprehensive and responsive programmes and providing one of the best props for bureaucratic administration. Initiative for legislation emanates from the national level, sometimes from sources unrelated to the administration of social service. In federal systems, the State or provincial governments also enact laws independent of, or complementary to, federal laws. All countries of the region have formidable bodies of social legislation but these laws are not fully enforced for lack of implementing funds, of administrative machinery, and of personnel. The practice of basing legislation on imported models whose practicability under local conditions have not been tested is, of course, not limited to social service. The Instituto Interamericano del Niño which has made the only known exhaustive study of an area of social legislation, that

^{5/} "National" is used here unless otherwise stated, to mean the central government in the unitary system or the State (provincial) government in the federal system.

^{6/} Many of the secularized welfare institutions have incomes from properties transferred from Church to State during the period of secularization.

relating to children, concludes that there is much overlapping as well as gaps and recommends systematic codification. 7/

(b) The role of the public and voluntary sectors

The voluntary sector had always been active in the field of social service. It still constitutes a strong force in the creation of services and in the formulation of public opinion in support of social service. Many programmes are administered by voluntary groups throughout the region. Such programmes are largely local, serving a limited geographical area and independent of similar programmes elsewhere. In this sense, such programmes are answers to local needs and spring from local initiative.

The earliest form of voluntary action in social service is in the provision of institutional care to dependent children and adults. Other areas of voluntary action are special services for handicapped children, economic grants to the destitute, welfare services for the family and recreational and cultural facilities and opportunities to the youth. Recently activities in family planning and in the organization of community living have gained importance. There are few voluntary organizations of formally national scope and the few that exist limit the coverage of their programmes to selected localities. The organizational structure of voluntary action may be formal or informal; in the small scale and specialized activities, there may be no formal organization. At the other extreme, the functions may be multiple and the organization correspondingly formal, with legal personality and probably discharging in addition certain functions delegated by some government agency. 8/

While much voluntary action is supported from private contributions and incomes from institutional properties, government subsidies constitute an important component. In some cases, government subsidy provides full support. A common complaint of voluntary institutions is the relative inflexibility of government subsidies, remaining the same year after year, unrelated to needs and purposes. On the other hand, programme review and budget analysis do not exist and therefore the institutions do not account for public funds received. Except in rare exceptions, there is no government machinery for licensing, regulation and standard setting for the voluntary sector. In some of the countries there are councils of voluntary organizations to which the government sends a representative whose influence is entirely personal and varies according to his social and professional prestige. Such councils have not yet attained the roles of co-ordinating, joint-planning and standard-setting bodies. Other countries have stronger bodies representing public as well as voluntary institutions. Argentina

7/ Situación de la Legislación Relativa a la Minoridad en América Latina, Dr. Rafael Sajón and José Achard, IIN, 1965.

8/ In Brasil for example, some state government programmes "board" out children under government custody to voluntary institutions.

for example, has a National Social Aid Council with governmental status to which some 8,250 welfare institutions are accredited, a large number of them voluntary.

The process of creating new services in the public sector is slow and complicated. The regulatory provisions of laws once enacted prohibit any kind of experimentation. The voluntary sector, being comparatively free from such fetters, has the important role of pioneering in the creation of new services and in experimentation with new methods of work and organizational structures. In the latter role, its contribution has been limited for lack of specialized and "development oriented" personnel and leadership. Voluntary action has been especially useful in the establishment and operation of specialized services such as the care of crippled children or chronically ill people, promotion of family planning and others that do not find full and immediate government support because of the small size of the group to which a certain programme is directed or because the service is considered controversial and cannot count on the support of majority public opinion.

(c) Co-ordination and Co-operation

The indispensability of co-ordination and co-operation among programmes of social service and between social service and other fields of action have been implied in the above pages. The programmes today are isolated and the activities within programmes are individualistic. ^{9/} The barriers spring from the absence of a unified approach and from the importance of personal relationships in the organization and administration of programmes. There is also a lack of agreement on common goals or of a feeling of interdependence; without these there can be no compelling motivation to co-ordinate and co-operate. Some degree of co-ordination is being achieved within broad programmes, between the component social service and the other specializations partly because of the complementary relationships that exist. ^{10/} The channels are far from adequate. The various co-ordinating bodies already mentioned are recent. Their main contribution up to the present is sponsorship of periodic meetings for the discussion of common problems and the exchange of information.

(d) Programme evaluation

Programme evaluation is now routine in modern administration. Evaluation takes several forms. It may be a continuous process of programme

^{9/} For example, a child welfare programme in a Ministry of Health might have no communication with a similar programme in a Ministry of Justice, and one in a capital city with another in a provincial city. The only constant channel of communication is the professional association of social workers, if such exists.

^{10/} As in the cases of social service and maternal health within health centres, or physical plant administration and social service within housing projects, etc.

review and assessment or it may be an aspect of supervision. It may be a periodic review by staff or by independent programme evaluators. The preparation of annual budgets and other periodic reports are forms of evaluation. In whatever form, programme evaluation is not a standard practice in Latin America. The preparation of reports is sporadic and in compliance with specific requests. Supervision is not yet a developed skill and although theoretically it is recognized as an educational and administrative tool, in practice it does not amount to much more than routine inspection and physical accounting. Budget preparation is the task of people who have nothing to do with the implementation of programmes and therefore do not have the instruments for evaluation. The lack of objective criteria for programme evaluations is general and to it may be traced the undue importance attached to subjective factors of administration.

There are some models that can be used in evaluating administrative structures and procedures but not for measuring programme content and impact. The formulation of criteria for the latter purpose presents a difficult task for the region because of the fragmentation of programmes, the deficiency of research on the nature of programme determinants, the scarcity of qualified personnel to conduct evaluation and the absence of an evaluation machinery.

(e) Social Participation

"Participation" is becoming common usage and common belief in Latin America. It is expressed in different terms: popular participation, popular action, popular co-operation, etc., sometimes it is understood as community development (the partnership of people and government for bringing about improvements in living conditions), and sometimes as the institutionalization of the platform of the political party in power.

In social service, participation takes the somewhat different meaning of a sharing of responsibility with regard to the content and support of an organized service between individuals and groups called "clientele", the local community, organized interest groups, and the national authorities. "Social participation" implies a search for procedures insuring that a needed service is rendered in a manner that guarantees the dignity and self-respect of the individual, the group and the local community and permits the growth of individual capacity to weigh alternatives, reach decisions and initiate and maintain action. "Paternalism", a real deterrent to social participation is often attached as a label to "helping" services. It is one of the challenges to social service in Latin America whether it can, in societies of relatively rigid class and cultural barriers, apply basic principles concerning the inherent value of the individual irrespective of the handicaps that his environment might have imposed on him, whether the needy can be accepted in terms of their culture and their circumstances instead of on the basis of the standards of an outside group; and whether the "help" is to "enable" and not to "disable".

/Ideally, the

Ideally, the "client" (individual or group) should be able to understand and make responsible use of the organized services; the community should be able to make coherent demands for such services and help in their organization; the public in general through its organizations, the press, political channels, etc. should provide both support and informed criticism of their functioning. Through mothers' clubs, juvenile groups, neighbourhood councils, direct contact with individuals and other "educative" activities designed to change attitudes and ways of doing, the first kind of participation is taking shape to some degree in the region. Organized groups for self help and mutual aid, whether for earning a living or procuring shelter or land are growing steadily and are beginning to "participate" in the second sense in social service activity. As to the third aspect of social participation, citizen committees are common, and in most countries, volunteer services exist. Nevertheless, the potential is far from being tapped to the maximum. The general public remains passive, leaving the responsibility to a small part of the population motivated by personal, social or professional interest. Deliberate efforts to expand and organize volunteer service are being made at the national and regional levels.^{11/}

2. Social service personnel

There is a misconception that professional social workers are the only needed personnel in social service. The objectives of social service programmes require a variety of the "helping" specializations as well as many kinds of administrative staff and aides, especially in the care of young children and infirm aged. A great many volunteers are also utilized in varying degrees.

(a) The professional social workers

Social work personnel may be classified as professional or auxiliary. A third category - the "technical" sub-professional level is gaining favour. There are also many who claim a professional status based on work experience, short orientation courses, on-the-job-training and on social prestige. The social work profession has great emotional appeal as a result of which it is often exploited for personal aggrandizement. Thus, society personalities and candidates for elective positions alike lay claims to the status of "social worker". The social work profession is increasingly popular despite resistance to its acceptance on equal footing with the older and more established professions. There is no country in the region where a trained social worker is out of employment because of lack of job opportunities. The demand is always beyond the limits of supply. In

^{11/} During the year, 1965, the USAID conducted a series of training courses for volunteers, the International Secretariat for Volunteer Service had a regional conference in Argentina and courses for volunteers are being conducted in Chile, Colombia, Peru, Brasil, and other countries.

Argentina, it is claimed that about 80 per cent of the 4,500 graduate social workers are employed. The remaining 20 per cent who are not working are not seeking work because of family responsibilities. Chile, with about 2,500 professionals, also reports a very high percentage of employment. A majority of the 217 professionals of Uruguay hold more than one job. Applications for admission to schools of social work with rare exceptions outnumber the capacity of the schools by two to one, in some cases by four to one. The National Social Service School of Peru, for example, reported that at the start of the school year 1964, there were over 500 applicants for only 50 places.

Throughout the region, there is a strong movement towards professionalization and the definition of status by law. In some of the countries, the professional organization has legal personality and the qualifications, responsibilities and privileges of the professional are defined. ^{12/} The regulation of social work as a profession may be accused as clamorishness which would not be without basis. However, the valid purpose is to ascertain the competence of the social worker, to establish uniform standards of practice, to provide leadership, and to ensure mobility to the professional within the country.

The functions proper to social workers are to assist and to stimulate individuals, groups and communities towards innovation, adaptation and qualifications for life in society. They do these by helping to prevent the loss of capacity, to restore lost capacity and to rehabilitate impaired capacity. These functions are constant. What vary are the activities which are the overt manifestations of these functions. The activities of the social worker are specific to the purpose, coverage and institutional structure of the programme, the users of the service and the social setting. The activities may differ from one social worker to another and from one period to the next. As was stated above in relation to social service in general, the activities are often stated as if they were the essential functions.

(b) The training of social work professionals

Professional training in Latin America started during the second decade of this century with the establishment of the first school in Chile. Since then the increases in the number of schools of social work has not been matched by any other profession. Argentina and Brazil have 30 and 36 schools respectively. Only in some of the smaller countries is there only a single school. Paraguay with barely two million people has two and Uruguay with a million eight hundred thousand people has three. In Chile, according to the Instituto de Investigaciones Estadísticas de la Universidad de Chile, Social Work accounts for 3.3 per cent of all university enrolments,

^{12/} Chile's "Colegio de Asistentes Sociales" is an example of a highly developed professional organization with legal personality and protection similar to a trade union.

compared to Engineering (9.2 per cent), Law (8.7 per cent), Medicine (6 per cent), Economics-Administration and Commerce (6 per cent), Architecture (3.1 per cent) Political Science (2.3 per cent), Agriculture (2.2 per cent), Sociology (0.6 per cent), etc.

Most of the schools are autonomous, but some are dependencies of functional ministries, while others are affiliated to or are integral parts of universities. The school that is not plagued by financial problems is an exception. The direction is usually vested in a professional social worker although there are exceptions. University schools as a rule have more liberal curricula and more competitively selected faculty in conformity with general university requirements than do the others. In all instances, there is a very high dependence on part-time faculty. In extreme cases, there can be more than 30 faculty members, each giving one or two courses and having contact with the school only for the duration of the class period. While this system makes available the services of practising professionals, it deprives the school of steady and dedicated leadership and the students of continuing guidance from the faculty.

Prevailing curricula vary in relation to the intensiveness and unity of the social work and social science content. There is a tendency to overload the curriculum with too many isolated courses with consequent inability to impart an integral view. Currently, there is a pronounced trend to bring curriculum structure closer to that of United States schools with emphasis on methods of social work and of basic social sciences. Nevertheless, the traditional "skills" content (puericulture, first aid, etc.) is still retained to a large extent so that curriculum revision has resulted so far in lengthening the duration of the period of study and in increasing yet more the number and diversity of courses.

Although curriculum structures are similar from school to school such similarity does not imply uniform standards of instruction. In the first place, faculty for social work courses are not trained in the techniques of teaching. Often they are themselves recent graduates only beginning to acquire work experience. In addition, they are products of basically ineffective teaching systems and with rare exception, do not have breadth of perspective. The teachers of the social science courses usually have no conceptual orientation to social work and therefore teach social sciences as they would to those preparing for careers in those disciplines.

Social work teaching is based on knowledge and methods developed in other settings. Teaching material consists largely of translations of foreign social work literature. So far there has not been any systematic effort to adapt such texts to regional needs, to develop original conceptual formulations, and to identify the mainsprings of a truly Latin American social work philosophy. These are essentials of any profession.

Weaknesses that social work education shares with most other professional training in the region include emphasis on information and

/memorization instead

memorization instead of the fostering of an ability to generalize from experience and to particularize from principle, and, emphasis on theory as theory instead of on skill in applying theory to practice.

Another persistent problem area in social work education is supervised field work, by which the student learns to apply the concepts learned in the classroom to practical situations. This aspect of social work training differentiates it from other disciplines in which classroom instruction is considered sufficient. Such field work is carried out in existing social service programmes. The training capacity of organized social service programmes is limited because few of them are staffed with personnel who can train. Their unquestionable value lies in their liaison role between the school of social work and the community and in the introduction of the student to the real world of work he will face after leaving the classroom.

Social work training has until recently been preoccupied with the formation of direct service personnel. The numbers of competent personnel for higher level functions is small and their preparation is only accidental. There is an extreme scarcity of methods specialists for consultant positions, teachers, executives, planners and researchers. Some schools have started basic and post-graduate courses in administration, supervision and methods for practitioners with a minimum number of years of experience. The dependence on teachers who do not have adequate preparation, however, detracts very much from the value of these courses. One such teacher for example asked to be furnished a bibliography upon which to base a course in economic development, a subject about which he honestly admitted he had no competence at all. In addition to training within the countries international and regional training opportunities are made use of in a limited way. Both have high prestige value and both have stimulating effects on profession and programmes. They also introduce problems of adaptation for the professional.

(c) The training of auxiliary and volunteer personnel

As was stated above, professional social workers constitute only a minority among social service personnel. At present, the main stimulus for the training of sub-professional personnel who can function as "multipliers" for the professional worker comes from rural development programmes that have been unable to recruit more than a few professionals. The social work professionals are not all agreed as to the need to train sub-professional personnel. Resistance arises from two aspects of professional insecurity: first, the differentiation between the training of the auxiliary personnel and the professional is only slight and this arouses fear that eventually the sub-professional would supplant the professional. Second, in the programmes the delineation between the functions and statuses of the sub-professional and those of the professional are vague. Practical experience with sub-professional personnel in some countries, although limited, has been quite satisfying to both professional and auxiliary. Experimentation is still in progress as regards the appropriate content and duration of training courses at this level.

/Historically, social

Historically, social service has always used volunteer service. This still constitutes an important although unreliable resource in programme implementation. At the beginning, anyone who had goodwill and time to spare could do volunteer work. The most common use of volunteer service is in activities needing the support of social prestige such as fund-raising, collection of donations in kind and promotional work. Volunteers are also used for activities that do not require special skill nor continuity of application such as temporary care of children, reading to the confined, supervision of recreation, preparation and distribution of supplies, etc. The training of volunteers has been spearheaded by the private sector through courses in leadership. Although it is generally agreed that leadership training is useful as preparation for public participation in community programmes, there is a danger that the current tendency towards mass training courses to professionalize leadership will produce too many who want to direct and leave only a few who feel humble enough to perform the needed community work. This in itself hinders participation in community improvement efforts. Leadership training and special skills training for volunteers should balance each other.

(d) The training of specialized direct service personnel

An obstacle to effective implementation of programmes is the total absence until recently of training facilities in specializations for direct service personnel. Training courses for personnel in child care institutions and day care centers and in institutions for juvenile delinquents, most of which were supported by UNICEF funds, have been conducted with satisfactory results. The next step would be to explore training possibilities other than ad hoc arrangements and to expand such facilities to include personnel for recreational and use-of-leisure time programmes and for specialized services for severely retarded and handicapped persons.

3. Social service within other institutional settings

Social service activities often exist within other institutional settings as a unified functional and administrative division or as an integral part of other administrative units. In Latin America, one may find social service in industrial and commercial enterprises, in programmes of health, education, housing, social security, community and rural development and in public administration particularly the army, airforce, navy, police, ministries and autonomous bodies. The functions assigned to social workers in these settings are combinations of those of social work and of other fields of action. There is also a gap between the alleged functions and the practice due mainly to difficulties in the application of social work techniques to the different activities which social service personnel undertake. An examination of social service within such settings however, indicates that it retains inherent functions, should make its voice heard in the planning of its contribution in such settings and should not be limited to miscellaneous auxiliary activities.

/(a) Social

(a) Social service within industry and commerce

Most countries of the region have laws, usually as part of a labour code, requiring industrial and commercial establishments with a minimum number of workers to provide "professional" social service (meaning a service staffed by personnel trained in social work) to their employees. Some countries, Brazil for instance, have national councils of industry and commerce to which each enterprise contributes a regular quota depending on the size of its operations, towards the provision of social service. The administration of the service is the responsibility of the national council. In other countries such as Ecuador and Argentina, each enterprise sets up its social service according to its own norms. There are advantages and disadvantages to each system. Where administration is a responsibility of a national council, management is likely to take a disinterested attitude and may fail to provide the necessary resources such as suitable locale, equipment and supporting staff for effective functioning. It may even set up barriers to prevent the workers from using the service. On the other hand, management-established and administered social service arrangements have been suspect to workers and unions as paternalistic "tools" of management.

The assumption is that a worker can attain a higher level of productivity if his personal, family, work and community relationships are satisfactory, if his family's basic needs for health, education and culture are met to a reasonable degree and if he understands the value of his role within his work organization.

While no evaluation studies have been so far made of the contribution of social service in improving productivity in industrial and commercial enterprises, some managements mention among the benefits derived, improvement in attendance and punctuality, decrease of errors and accidents in work, improved level of productivity, decreased work disputes and more stable loyalty to the enterprise. At the same time, the resources that industry and commerce allocate to social service have permitted a more rational development of programmes than in the governmental or voluntary agencies. The staff is generally able since these enterprises pay better salaries. There is a more permissive atmosphere for experimentation fostered by adequate and sometimes superior facilities.

There is no evidence that social service enters into the initial planning of enterprises. On the contrary it is usually among the last services organized. While the activities are almost always directed and supervised by a trained person, administrative responsibility including planning of the services (with few exceptions such as some enterprises in Brazil) is generally vested in a general or labour relations executive.

(b) Social service within health programmes

The earliest social service programmes in Latin America were established within the health setting. Thus most public social service

/programmes today

programmes today constitute a division of health administration and are usually supervised and directed by medical professionals. This pattern of organization is part of the heritage from Western Europe, particularly France, but it also has a historical basis in the Laws of the Indies of colonial times. It should not be surprising therefore that Red Cross first-aid volunteers and nurses and even doctors are often referred to as social workers (trabajador social or visitador social).

Social service activities are constant components of the service complex in hospitals, sanatoria and health centres. The Servicio Nacional de Salud of Chile, for example, employs at least 50 per cent of all social workers in the country. The function of social service in a health setting is mainly supportive and complementary, intended to render health and medical services more effective and better utilized. On one hand, the aim is to help the sick individual and members of his family understand the nature of the illness and how to cope with the situation. In the process, new needs may crop up, attitudes may change and latent capacity may be released. On the other hand, social service interprets to health personnel the fears, handicaps and aspirations of the individual and his family so that these factors may be taken into account in the course of treatment. It also mobilizes for both patient and health service other resources which tend to improve the therapeutic relationship.

(c) Social service and education

Many countries in the region have social service programmes within their educational system. The earliest and most widely established of such programmes are at the university level (bienestar social universitario) and are responsible for the administration of fellowships, economic grants and loans to financially deserving students, as well as case work and counselling to students with personal adjustment difficulties.

At the secondary and primary education level, social service is very recent. The beginnings of school social work appear mostly in the operation of school feeding programmes. The use of social service in connection with the problems of "drop-outs", of irregularity of attendance, of anti-social behaviour and unsatisfactory scholastic performance is still at an initial stage. The present contribution lies in helping students and parents in meeting minimum needs of food, clothing, school supplies and fees, and in combating other hostile factors in the environment that impede the learning process.

On the other hand, social service programmes use educational methods and include some educational activities in their complex of activities, e.g. primary and vocational training within institutions for children and youth. Other educational activities frequently classified in Latin America as social service rather than as part of the educational system are free and ungraded vocational courses, literacy classes, adult education activities and special classes for mentally retarded and physically handicapped children and adults.

/(d) Social

(d) Social service and housing

The function of shelter is directly related to other human needs mainly originating from the nature of living in a family. The house is the framework of family life and unless it meets the needs of that life, a house cannot be considered to fulfill its central purpose. This conception of housing has paved way for the participation of social service in housing programmes.

In practice, the functions of social service in housing may consist of providing empirical data to housing planners and administrators concerning "target" families to be taken into account in planning the lay-outs of housing developments, in the design of the houses and the determination of costs and amortization rates; of defining and applying eligibility requirements in the allocation of houses; of educating families in the use of modern housing, of fomenting neighbourhood and community spirit; and of stimulating the community to create or seek the creation of needed services and opportunities.

In Argentina, Chile and Uruguay the services of social workers are applied in promoting "self-help" group organization for housing construction as well as for other types of co-operative action in the improvement of housing conditions. The latter include maintenance, repairs, enlargement and beautification of existing houses to meet new needs of the families. These activities are found to be particularly realistic in situations of scarce public resources to finance new houses and limited or non-existent capacity to pay for a new house on the part of the family.

Social service programmes within housing projects are varied. The most rewarding approach seeks to integrate the organization of the "community" with the subsequent establishment of a community centre from which all services brought into being by such a project can radiate. This approach provides motivation and stimulus to the community to work together. It is an arrangement which fosters co-operation among technical services and facilities through their provision within the community framework. The activities that can be associated with a community centre are numerous. They can even become the starting point of local self-government.

The provision of services in shanty towns and in the older slum areas of cities is limited in relation to the magnitude of the need. Within the few shanty town eradication programmes (Rio de Janeiro has probably the most extensive of such programmes), existing social service assists in determining the number of people affected through community surveys and in preparing them for the transfer, in providing and mobilizing services to minimize the traumatic effects of change and in helping people to re-establish themselves in new locations and new human groups.

(e) Social service and community development

To the present, the demarcation line between community development and social service is not clearly defined particularly because the

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implementation of "localized" community development projects is very much in the hands of social work personnel.

The role of social workers in community development programmes in Latin America has two aspects: (1) the performance of social work functions in an interdisciplinary relationship within the framework of the community development programme; and (2) the application of social work techniques for the achievement of the goals of community development in such programmes. Both aspects pose important issues for social work theorists and professionals; for example, whether the focus of action in community development should be content or process, and whether the approach should be through the individual or through the community.

Among the new movements in Latin America exemplified by "Cooperación Popular" of Peru, "Acción Comunitaria" of Venezuela and "Promoción Popular" in Chile may be identified possible elements for a distinction between community development and social service. Social service calls for the focusing of existing resources, organizations and power structures upon the solution of specific problems. It is carried out within existing formal institutions and its goals are determined by such institutions.

Within these limits it helps people to identify problems, to understand what they are and to decide what to do about them. The conceptions of community development that are now evolving assume that solution of the major social problems will involve some sort of reorganization of existing systems and a re-structuration of established relationships based on "grass roots" efforts. The newer national initiatives in Latin America link community development with the national political process. They are revolutionary in the sense that they aspire to involve the public directly in the development process. Social service leaders face the challenge of finding ways to adopt their techniques of work to the objectives and approaches of such community development initiatives.

(f) Social service and rural development

Rural development (including programmes of agrarian reforms, colonization, and rural community development) is the most recent setting for social service. The activities assigned to social service in rural development programmes are directed to and function through groups and communities rather than through individuals. Informational campaigns (divulgaciones), community centres and leadership training are important techniques. As more technical services become established, some of the initial activities are transferred to more specialized programmes, e.g. to home economics, agricultural extension, health education, nutrition, etc.

In the majority of cases, the over-all direction of social service in rural development programmes is the responsibility of a general administrator whose specialization is almost always another field such as education, sociology, anthropology, economics, or agronomy. Staffing has so far presented one of the most difficult problems. Training oriented to rural social service is very recent and is found in only a few schools

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of the region (some schools of Ecuador and Brazil). These schools are still in a stage of experimentation as to the content and structure of a rural welfare oriented curriculum. Since in many countries there are more city jobs than trained personnel, only a dedicated few accept positions for rural areas. The reasons are several: "fear" reactions of urban women (those who have received training in social work are mostly urban women) to rural living, the paucity of opportunities for cultural and professional advancement in rural communities, the inferiority of educational facilities for children and the professional isolation of the rural social worker. In some instances, the worker lives in the city and commutes to the rural area. This practice shortens the actual working hours, but more serious is the non-identification of the worker with the community.

(g) Social service and social security

The earliest and one of the most readily identified activities of social service in the public mind is the meeting of basic needs in times of unemployment, sickness and incapacity, disasters, and other periods of stress. Social security systems in all countries of Latin America today are supposed to stabilize individual and family incomes, thus replacing the "economic" assistance function of social service. However, in the Latin American situation, social security systems do not cover the really needy and this is a very large group.

Actual experience demonstrates, moreover that social security has not made social service, in the old sense of economic aid, unnecessary for some covered groups. The levels of contributions have often proved to be too high and burdensome for the family, so that the economic advantage for the family of belonging to the system is more apparent than real. Social service within a social security system is an alternative way of using social security resources where benefits are low. More systems are moving in this direction but its desirability is doubtful.

In practice, all social security systems in Latin America provide for their members social service activities of more varied character. The main activities of social service within social security systems are to assist the system in the determination and control of eligibility to benefits (although this is really an administrative not necessarily a social service activity), to assist the families in taking advantage of available benefits and choosing among alternative uses of the benefits, and to organize for the system and the families additional resources to supplement inadequate benefits. In discharging the first function, social workers interview members or visit them in their homes, helping them to fill out often very complicated forms and guiding them through confusing and complex procedures. In relation to the other functions all the standard social service techniques are brought into play. Most recently, social service within social security is going into community organization activities, mainly the creation of community centres.

/(h) Social

(h) Social service and personnel administration

Within personnel administration in the army, navy, airforce, police, technical ministries, specially those with widely scattered projects requiring deployment of workers far from their families as in the case of public works, and autonomous bodies, social service is frequently provided to the employee and his family. In both private and public settings, it is sometimes criticized as paternalism. Social service in public personnel administration as in private industry is expected to promote work efficiency by helping the workers make a more satisfactory adjustment to his social environment (family and community) and to his work environment (relations with co-workers and superiors). When social service is considered a partial substitute for money earnings, thus depriving the employees of choices in the use of income, it is in itself contrary to the goals of social service. If on the other hand, it is really an additional benefit, it has an income re-distributive function.

Part III

THE PLANNING OF SOCIAL SERVICE

Social service was conceived primarily as an expression of goodwill, not as a discipline. The motive was to "do good", at once a source of self-satisfaction and an expression of kindness to the less fortunate. Subjective factors characterize its growth. The forces behind its evolution from the individual "good deed" to the organized service are strong personal needs for prestige and power and for manifesting philanthropic and religious zeal. The decisions underlying action derived from the humanitarian appeal, the urgency and the spectacular nature of the need to be met. The earlier programmes therefore were directed against the readily visible handicaps of the seriously disabled, economically dependent, weak and vulnerable. This also explains the parochialism that still characterizes social service. It follows also that the allocation of resources to programmes depended upon and still depends to a large extent upon the weakness or strength of the personal factors involved and to a lesser degree on the magnitude of the need and its vulnerability to action. Within programmes, the distribution of the available resources among the component activities (direct service, administrative overhead and infrastructure) likewise depends upon the personal preferences of the seat of authority,

Interest in over-all planning of social service is recent but clearly in evidence. The statements and declarations made at regional seminars and meetings such as the UN-UNICEF sponsored Seminar on the Planning of Social Welfare for Central America held in Costa Rica in May of 1964 ^{1/} and those sponsored by the Instituto Interamericano del Niño in Quito, in October of 1964 and in Montevideo in May of 1965, as well as at national meetings and professional group discussions support the idea of subjecting social service to the discipline of national planning. Up to now, these assertions are only assertions. The stage of systematic investigations and analyses of the problems that need to be resolved before planning of social service can be integrated in national planning is now within view.

^{1/} Among the recommendations of that Seminar appear: "Que dentro de la estructura nacional de planificación, exista una estructura para la planificación del bienestar social, que cuente con profesionales de este campo", and "Que se haga una planificación adecuada de programas de bienestar social conforme a las necesidades y las posibilidades de cada país..." Planeamiento para el Bienestar Social, Informe del Seminario Regional sobre Bienestar Social para Centro América y Panamá, Costa Rica, May 1964.

(a) The Meaning of Planning in Social Work

Planning is a word that has always been in the vocabulary of social work. Ideally, when an application for social service is received (whether from an individual, a group or a community), it is determined whether or not the nature of the request falls within the scope of action of the service. If it does, the application is accepted as a "case" and a "planning process" is initiated. This planning process is directed to the solution of a problem or a complex of problems presented by the "case". The stages of this process consist of:

(1) Prognosis, which involves the collection of information through direct contact with persons and groups and available records related to the case and the need, concerning the resources that can be made to bear on the problem, and other relevant factors; the analysis of the available data; the formulation of provisional objectives and targets.

(2) Social diagnosis, which involves the definition of the problem, a projection of the requirements for meeting the problem, the matching of the requirements and the resources and a lining up of the various possible alternatives for action.

(3) Decision-making, which involves the active participation of the "case", to whom the final decision as to the nature of action to be taken is left.

(4) Action or treatment, which is the implementation of the choice that was made. This may involve other services and action that are not necessarily social service.

(5) Follow-up evaluation of the results of the action taken. This follow-up may take place during or after the chosen action has been completed. It may result in modifications to improve the effectiveness of this action.

An analogous process should take place in the setting up of a service or a programme as well as in the preparation of a programme of activities for a definite period of time. While the planning process may vary in the sequence of the various stages, the essential elements remain the same. In every instance, a problem must be recognized, the needs and resources assessed and arranged, the alternatives or choices that present themselves must be ordered, a decision must be made and action must be taken. Follow-up is an important stage in the process. This kind of planning may be carried on one level or on several levels separately, in stages or simultaneously. It is microcosmic in approach. In principle, it should be the base of all social service action.

Planning in the above sense is part of the content of social work training. It provides the reason for the inclusion in the social work curricula of courses in community surveys, interviews, recording, statistics and other tools of data collection of social sciences.

/(b) Social

(b) Social Service in the Context of National Planning

Within the context of development planning, experience in relation to social service is nil. In no country in the region is social service now a part of national plans. Some countries attempting comprehensive national planning have included in their national plans sectors in health, education and housing and more recently and rarely, community development. Mere inclusion in national plans however does not represent real integration into planning, nor is it a guarantee of better functioning.^{2/} There is no reason to believe that a social service sector in a national plan would render social service more effective unless certain requisites in planning and implementation were met.

Some countries have established planning units in functional departments of public administration. With the exception of one or two countries, even when there is a social service content in the wider programmes, e.g. in health, these activities are not necessarily included in the sectoral programming. In general, the "planning" of social service is autonomous and isolated and often the responsibility of persons who have insufficient understanding of the basic concepts, functions and techniques of social service. What is up to now called planning or programming of social service programmes is more in the nature of directives and administrative decisions made in the upper echelon of the organization hierarchy. This practice constitutes a barrier to the formulation of planning techniques that would facilitate the integration of social service into national planning. In fact because integration would considerably decrease its value as a source of personal prestige, resistance should be expected even when such integration is overtly endorsed.

The non-inclusion of social service in national development plans has not prevented Latin America from acquiring examples of all kinds of services known to social work. Nevertheless, there are weighty considerations that support the bringing of social service under the umbrella of development planning. Models from more advanced countries excite people to desire and compel governments to provide more social services than the countries can afford. The Charter of the Alliance for Progress endorses the provision of social benefits to the more needy sectors of the population in order to attain an equalization of opportunities. Unless social service is viewed as

^{2/} Report of the "Reunión Técnica sobre la Integración de los Planes Sectoriales de Educación en los Planes Generales de Desarrollo Económico y Social", Pan American Union, Document H.6, January 25, 1965.

^{3/} The Ministries of Health and Social Welfare of Peru and Paraguay, for example, have such planning units headed by physicians with training in national planning techniques. In an interview, the head of the Planning Unit in Peru pointed out the difficulties of including social service in the planning content and stated that although it did not (1964) enter into the immediate work schedule, he was seriously thinking of ways and means of doing so. In Paraguay, a social worker was appointed to a Committee in the Planning Unit; this does not mean that the plans already include social service as a field of policy although they mention some such activities.

an integral component of development, and unless it is brought within the discipline of national planning, two possibilities present themselves. At one extreme because of dramatically strong appeals and pressures, resources could be diverted to social service to an extent that would hamper investment for rapid economic growth. At the other extreme, resources could be withheld to a degree that would detract from the smooth functioning of existing services and the meeting of the most urgent new needs, with consequent widening of the gap in levels of living between the various sectors of the population and the further incapacitation of people to participate in development, thus defeating the very objectives of development. If national planning is a process by which the different needs of the population and the resources that can be applied to those needs are ordered, matched and brought to bear upon each other, it is logical that social service, which offers techniques for confronting some of the major national needs, should come within that process of rationalization.

Apart from the problem of formal incorporation of social service into national plans of development, sectoral programming of social service informed by a broad conception of national needs and priorities is necessary. The existent proliferation of social service activities and the consequent seemingly irrational dispersion of already limited resources allocated to social service dilute the impact of such activities and also make impossible their measurement and evaluation for purposes of increasing efficiency. The restriction of the planning process in social service to "cases" and its localization within the boundaries of institutions and programmes leads to considerable waste of funds as well as trained human resources. The preceding description of the functioning of social service in the region pictures a situation where "so much conspires to ensure that so little is achieved. That so much energy and effort seem expended in negative processes is not due to apathy or indifference but to a tendency to strain after unattainable ideals and to reject practical compromises."

(c) Some problems of planning social service

One of the fundamental problems related to over-all planning and social service originates from two seemingly contradictory requisites. On the one hand, such planning requires a clear understanding of the totality of the social scene. The sum total of the different settings of the "cases" that traditionally are the immediate concern of social service action does not constitute that social scene. To arrive at that "clear understanding", social service must incorporate into its approaches the macrocosmic view, into its methods, those of investigation and analysis, and into its skills, the utilization of the findings of other disciplines, particularly the basic social sciences. In other words, social service must emerge from "parochialism".

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On the other hand, the nature of social service subjects it to a compulsion to arrive at certain practical lines of action in view of the strong demands, the urgency of needs, and its proximity to such needs and demands. Whoever has the responsibility of making decisions within each programme has to face a recurrent apparent dilemma between preparation for action through systematic and scientific studies and action that responds immediately to demands. So far, the usual choice has been to attempt practical aid immediately on the basis of what is known, however inadequate. In the long term, these two requisites must be reconciled, although such reconciliation can never be easy nor complete. In fact, the need to struggle toward such a reconciliation is one of the basic principles of social work practice that has been absorbed in the region only partially.

Professional social workers of the region strongly favour over-all planning of social service but are handicapped by their lack of opportunities to acquire training or experience in planning techniques. The scientific attitude has not been sufficiently internalized to enable them to evolve objective criteria for the determination and measurement of needs, the analysis of requirements, the forecast of benefits and the establishment of priorities. From the standpoint of the economic planner, as expressed in the Regional Seminar on Social Welfare in Central America and Panama, such criteria should be quantitatively and qualitatively defined.^{4/} Until planning techniques applicable to social service as a whole are formulated, the integration of social service into development planning is hardly conceivable. This task logically belongs to social work professionals in collaboration with specialists in other fields of social policy and with experienced planners. Until a sufficient number of these professionals can free themselves from absorbing and exacting direct services to cases, the principles and the tools for over-all planning in social service will remain an aspiration.

Social service in the region, even in the few instances in which there is supposed to be a programme of national scope is based on local action designed to meet local needs. Herein lies one of the greatest potential contributions of social service to development - the direct contact with people that places social service personnel in a favoured position to know at first hand their aspirations and their fears, their latent capacities, and the specific approaches that might enlist their participation in the developmental process.

The great number and diversity of actual and potential demands upon social service in relation to the resources available, present a challenge to planning. The targets of social service action, even when locally based, are ambitious to the extent that they represent the real demands and expectations of people. Moreover, such demands may differ from legislative provisions and official directives and may even be in direct conflict with one another. The pressures of conflicting interests - both from its sources of support and its clientele - tend to make social service present-oriented in contrast to the orientation of development policy toward future benefits.

^{4/} Planeamiento Para el Bienestar Social, Informe del seminario regional sobre bienestar social para Centroamérica y Panamá, San José, Costa Rica, 24-29 de Mayo de 1964, paginas 10-12

The bases of programmes are fragmentary policy provisions scattered in a great bulk of social legislation. These provisions do not form a consolidated framework of guiding principles for action. Such lack of a unified national social policy as a basis for programming, however, is not unique to social services. Various analyses have pointed out the same weakness in social sectors such as education, health and housing which have been formally incorporated into national plans. 5/ In the Seminar on the Planning of Social Welfare for Central America and Panama previously mentioned, economists were cited to the effect that there does not exist a true social policy in the region but only a series of governmental directives. According to this source, to formulate a social policy, it is necessary to have a diagnosis of the actual situation, a profound knowledge and understanding of its defects (which is parallel to social service concern with social pathology), an agreement on objectives, and a perspective of current tendencies clarifying the disparity between what is desirable and what is feasible and thus permitting an appreciation of the necessary steps that should be taken to achieve the set objectives. In this same Seminar, administrators of programmes asserted that there are multiple social policies but no instrument to co-ordinate these policies. This same divergence of opinion as to the real existence of "social policies" in the region was observed in the above mentioned seminars sponsored by the Interamerican Institute for the Child and seems to derive from the varied interpretations of "policy". If one considers that unified social policy should define the value premise for action, a set of objectives, a focus of emphasis, a seat of ultimate responsibility and leadership for the translation of the policy into action and the degree and nature of participation by the public, in this sense, there is no unified and defined social policy in Latin America. There is no clear evidence of decision on the above aspects although there are trends identifiable from the many social provisions that exist. For example, some countries have codes that define the status of and the conditions of protection of minors and of women, while others have laws that place the emphasis on the family. These codes express values on which policy is based. Some countries have legal provisions establishing centralized seats of responsibility, and others define sets of objectives without specifying value premises. Very commonly, a statement of values in a legal code is not accompanied by provisions for its attainment, and administrative specifications for implementation are not matched by provisions for financial support. A general characteristic of the abundant social provisions of the region, (many of which remain buried in the statute books) is specificity to defined pathological aspects of society, for example, the destitute dependent child, the low income worker, the dependent aged,

5/ See for example, "Some aspects of educational planning in Latin America" by Maximilio Halty Carrere in Problems and Strategies of Educational Planning. Lessons from Latin America, International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO, Paris, 1964. See also Report of the Departamento de Planificación of Colombia to the Interamerican Conference on Children and Youth in National Development, E/LACCY/NR/L. ; page 4

the criminal, the delinquent, etc.^{6/} There is yet to be formulated a social policy that unifies all these aspects into an integrated basis for social welfare action.

It has been pointed out that there is no definite administrative structure for the planning of social service. Executives of administrative units in which social service is located and those of voluntary programmes take initiatives and make decisions that are based on some sort of analysis of needs, resources and expected results but which are highly colored by personal and subjective factors. Experiences in technical assistance in social service indicate that decisions related to planning seldom involve professional social service personnel. The justification put forward to explain this phenomenon is the scarcity or total absence, of personnel (among the professionals) trained in planning. To sum up, the placing of social service within the framework of development has up to the present been frustrated by: (1) the general absence of a unified social policy on which to base social service planning, (2) the absence of a concept of over-all planning within social service, (3) its traditional local and individual approach to needs and problems, (4) the inadequacies of its techniques for planning purposes, and (5) the inadequacies of administration and administrative structures for its planning including the paucity of planning competence among social service personnel.

(d) Need-Cost-Benefit-Desideratum

Planning involves an assesment of need, cost and benefit in relation to one other. In social service, this aspect of planning is particularly difficult because to date there is no formula for the quantitative measurement of need, or of benefit related to both need and cost. Need has been measured through the number of people affected but a simple numerical count leaves out the important factor of degree of intensity of deprivation and resulting incapacity, which is highly individual. In the same way, benefit can be quantified if the counting is based on the number of people served or benefitted. Again, the degree of satisfaction caused by the benefit is individual and defies ordinary means of measurement.

The problem becomes still more difficult if one seeks the optimum relationship among the three factors. How intense should a need be to justify expenditure and how much benefit would be considered a satisfactory return on a given expenditure? Is the cost of a social service activity solely a consumption expenditure or can it be considered as investment? If it is in part an investment in "human resource development" can the return on such investment be quantified?

6/ "Situación de la Legislación Relativa? La Minoridad en Latino América, Rafael Syonart, José Achard, Instituto Interamericano del Niño, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Planning implies an assessment and balancing of costs and personnel requirement. In some social service action requirements are modest but the majority require some expenditure on infrastructure, rising levels of costs for continuing operation, and trained personnel. There are many instances when the changing levels of these requirements are not considered in advanced, resulting sometimes in elaborate and costly buildings and equipment that lie idle because of lack of funds for operating expenses and for lack of personnel. In other instances, the personnel are hired but find they have no facilities nor funds for carrying out their duties. It is important that the different kinds of requirements should be budgeted for and that this provision should be balanced and timed in accordance with their relative roles in the process of implementation. In the case of personnel, this consideration should affect training policy both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Finally, in the planning of social service, it is well to bear in mind that "to apply economic rationality to expenditures on social programmes cannot be pursued beyond a certain point without running into open contradiction not only with the ways people and nations actually behave but also with their deepest value systems" that "no people is so poor that it would be prepared to do only the things it can afford according to a utilitarian scheme of priorities"; therefore the "demands of the public should be considered if plans are to respond to real social needs and to receive popular support and participation".^{7/} The search must go on for more objective techniques of measuring needs, of defining needy sectors of the population and of relating benefits to costs and needs but such techniques should admit of dimensions other than the economic.

^{7/} "Social Development" and "Social Planning": A survey of conceptual and practical problems in the setting of Latin America, Division of Social Affairs, Economic Commission for Latin America, Santiago, 1965, (to be published).

Part IV

AREAS FOR FUTURE ACTION: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The potential contribution of social service to the development of Latin America lies in preparing people for social change, particularly institutional changes, in preparing people for wider participation in national life, in fostering needed changes in attitudes, in promoting better adjustments in relationships, in making the action of other programmes more effective, and in smoothing out the adverse effects of the change process. The full realization of such a contribution will depend upon the remodelling of concepts along with reforms in legislation and administrative structure adequately supported by competent personnel and research.

1. Conceptual growth and adaptation

The conceptual framework of social service in Latin America originated in more highly industrialized countries where it responded to very different social conditions and relationships. The borrowing of this conceptual basis as well as the associated techniques was inevitable when social service was at its beginning in the region. Within a different cultural and social milieu, concepts assume other meanings, techniques applied produce different effects and institutions established, even though called by identical names work in different ways. The transplantation of these concepts and techniques is further affected by the human, economic and institutional resources available for their functioning. For them to acquire meaning at all, they must harmonize with the political aspirations of the people and the needs toward which these aspirations are directed. 1/ The growth of social service in Latin America should have been accompanied by an evolution in concepts and techniques, bringing it closer to regional value premises, to problems and needs as they are understood and to existing social institutions and resources.

1/ Social Research in Latin America, Wagley, Charles, cites illustrations in law courts, public administration, education, etc. In this respect, social service is not an isolated case. He says on page 27 that although Latin America has borrowed extensively from Europe and the United States, the similarity is only "formal and superficial". "Latin American nations have profoundly modified, adopted and reinterpreted European customs and institutions. A Latin American constitution may read like its U.S. counterpart but it does not function in the same way..."

There has been some progress toward this objective. In the daily task of trying to apply what was learned in school from foreign experience and foreign textbooks, social workers adapt and experiment. These efforts are limited in their effects on theory and practice for several reasons: they are undirected and unsystematic; they are not recorded, classified and tested and do not therefore become incorporated into the body of systematic knowledge and practice. Most social workers are quite unaware of the potential contributions to professional growth that they can make through their own experiences. Some, too insecure to deviate from the traditional, camouflage their experiences in the familiar terms of the classroom or keep these to themselves. In many instances, the social worker has no time to generalize and sift his thinking; the typical scene in a social service office can be likened to a market place of women elbowing their way through a crowd of sick, hungry and dejected people many of them with scuffling babies in their arms. Despite such barriers, growth in harmony with reality must take place.

The differences in terminology under which social service is known (asistencia social, servicio social, bienestar social) are of minor importance; in the public mind, all such terms evoke the same image. This image is still that of a more fortunate person giving alms or free service to the less fortunate, of someone visiting the sick and spreading artificial cheer, of someone who can "pull strings" to give the shelterless a house, the hungry food, the crippled alms. It is not an image of a service that aims to capacitate man as an individual and as a member of a group and of a wider society to recognize his legitimate needs and to choose one way or several ways towards the satisfaction of his needs. The adoption of one term is not sufficient. There must be a clarification of the purpose of social service and a definition of its functions within operational limits. This clarification and definition must be subsequently demonstrated in activities, if distorted images such as that stated by a member of a mother's club are to be dispelled: "These mothers' centres.... trying to teach the most useless things, how to bake a cake for example. They do not teach how to cook a meal. Now they are teaching machine sewing but no one has sewing machines. Also they bring electric washing machine. It is no use here. Sometimes they keep the women in meetings the whole day leaving the housekeeping to their little girls. These persons who come from outside come to divide not to unite people. Another thing is this spirit of paternalism. They want to do everything for us and they leave us knowing nothing!" 2/

2/ Quotations are taken from interviews carried out in the course of a study of "Servicios en una Población de Eradicación" carried out by the Division of Social Affairs of the Economic Commission for Latin America.

The basic principles and methods of social work need to be tested in local settings for their applicability. The principle that society is responsible for the removal of obstacles to self-realization and social participation and the parallel principle of equal opportunity, for example, suffer modifications in interpretation under different political systems and beliefs and the degree of affluence of any particular society. One of the national reports to the Latin American Conference on Children and Youth in National Development generalizes from a description of services provided to delinquent youth in local institutions on "the common anomaly of civilization by automatically guaranteeing to deviants an opportunity for training whereas the rest of their age group who are well-behaved and well-adjusted have to compete among themselves for places available to but a small proportion of their number". This does not imply that youth in institutions in Latin America receive favoured treatment in general; the resources of many such institutions are inadequate even for minimum custodial functions. It does suggest that social service provisions borrowed from more affluent settings are likely to be implemented mainly in favour of problem groups that are easily identified and small enough so that services can be provided for them without an unmanageable claim on resources. The character of the wider needs that are likely to be disregarded both because of their magnitude and because they do not correspond to the borrowed provisions can be suggested by another quotation, from a leader within a marginal urban settlement: "We lived in a place bare of everything, so we organized a 'junta'. We fought for water because in winter we had to walk in the darkness of night to arrive at the faucet and in summer the water was often cut off. We fought for light, actually at first we stole it. The junta is very representative, and we achieved this perhaps because we had nothing, no houses, no land. We seized land illegally, with sacrifices, out of need. There are many ideologies in the Junta but we achieve things".

Even the nature of elementary human needs must be re-interpreted to fit varying conditions of mass poverty and deep-rooted patterns of attitudes toward need and dependency. Food is a basic need, but this does not mean that any food will be acceptable to appease hunger; the assumption that an outside agency knows better than the local people what they need to eat is likely to be rejected by the people themselves, who often use food aid in ways unforeseen by its providers. Another local leader, mentioning that food distribution in his community had been cut down because the supplying agency did not consider it well utilized, went on to explain: "The people don't take this milk; it makes the children ill because it is skimmed milk; the adults don't like the taste and it doesn't interest them because they don't know the nutritive value of milk. The majority sell it to makers of ice cream who pass through the settlement buying it up".

The meaning of interdependence in society will differ where alienation from traditional sources of security and well-being is widespread. Its implications need to be considered in conditions such as

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those described by a social worker in a housing project who classified the population into three groups; those who have steady jobs and incomes, who feel secure and feel individualistic, caring only about their own interests; those who have some income and some kind of job, who feel partially insecure, who care about the well-being of the community and participate actively in communal affairs because they see community solidarity as a potential resource to meet their insecurity; and those who have nothing, not even aspirations, who care for nothing because they have nothing to lose and believe they have nothing to gain.

Schools of social work should take the leadership in struggling for conceptual growth and adaptation by providing the essential atmosphere for searching discussions and the facilities for systematic study and formulation. The possibilities of a regional exchange of personnel among schools of social work should be explored.

2. Social Legislation

Legislation is an important link in the growth process of social service. As stated previously, there is no scarcity of legislation, but existent laws contain expressions of unrealistically high standards impossible of realization because of limitations on resources and discriminatory provisions resulting from interest group pressures.^{3/} Gaps and duplications in coverage are frequent. Provisions with good intentions are even interpreted so that they become instruments of exploitation. Social service should consider it within its innovating function to re-examine all legislation affecting its areas of concern for the purpose of formulating recommendations for their amendment or repeal and of proposing the enactment of needed laws. In fact, professional groups should spearhead social action for legislation reform including the codification of relevant laws so that they become declarations of consistent social policy. There should be a constant testing of the effect of laws on the aspects of life to which they are directed.

The making of laws is not solely a function of legislators. Government and voluntary agencies, the professions, social scientists and the general public should share this function at different stages. The whole process of law enactment for social welfare needs systematization and democratization.

^{3/} A study of the body of social legislation for children by the Interamerican Institute for the Child, "Situación de la Legislación Relativa a la Minoridad en Latino América", Montevideo, Uruguay, 1965, prove these points.

3. Administrative development

Some of the most serious weaknesses of social service discussed above lie in the administrative arrangements for its functioning. Its fragmentation into small-scale isolated activities makes evaluation of programmes difficult and measurement of general impact impossible, prevents concentration of resources in the areas of highest priority, and fosters the growth of rival cliques and vested interests: barriers to programme co-ordination and joint planning. While there are certain advantages to the practice of attaching social service to functional administrative units, there seem to be weightier arguments for the creation of an additional separate policy entity to take care of the major responsibility for formulating standards, defining functions and undertaking over-all planning.

Improvements in planning of programmes, implementation, co-ordination and evaluation, all require changes in organizational structure and administrative procedures, but above all in the general administrative orientation. Such requisites may be difficult to realize for some time to come. Schools of social work should recognize this likelihood and train their students to struggle and survive in "muddled" situations. At present training is carried out often in an illusionary setting.

A logical first step would be the establishment within the planning structure, if such exists, of a system of over-all evaluation of existing programmes both under government and voluntary auspices, or at least of the voluntary agencies receiving financial support, total or partial, from public funds. Programme evaluation needs to be established in each functional unit of administration for periodic assessment of changes in the nature and magnitudes of needs as well as the impact of programmes on such needs. Criteria for evaluation must be clearly stated. Such a step would require progressive attitudes and analytical and objective points of view supported by administrative procedures that are conducive to free communication, flexibility, group instead of individual decision-making and hierarchical mobility. An over-all public administrative structure oriented to development should likewise affect positively the administrative arrangements for social service. Other specific changes should include a unification of the planning and operational functions, a more rational and stable basis of financing programmes, and a functional rather than restrictive accounting system equally applicable to public and voluntary agencies expending public money. There is a lack of uniformity in standards of service from agency to agency and existing definitions of such standards remain buried in official documents with imperceptible effects on implementation. A general norm of service should be formulated and made one of the considerations of evaluation and of financing. Evaluation procedures should support regulation and licensing to weed out the voluntary programme which is solely for propoganda and self-aggrandizement, and should permit a more rational allocation of funds to assure the meritorious voluntary programme adequate and stable support.

No programme can count on success without the participation of those who benefit directly from it. A strong local administration capable of formulating its needs into demands that can be reconciled with wider planning and of sharing responsibility in the implementation of programmes as "a watchdog" to guarantee effective action, is a resource of immeasurable value. Social service should be able to contribute to the development of a strong local administration.

Several means of effecting co-ordination are now under experiment. The commonest of these are inter-ministerial commissions, technical committees and study groups within the governmental system, and councils of agencies, either limited to voluntary agencies or including both the public and voluntary sectors. Whether they are effective or not will depend upon individual and agency attitudes and the recognition of the element of interdependency as an essential consideration for survival.

4. Preparation of personnel for social service

A programme can only be as good as the people who plan and execute it. Sometimes a technically and substantively weak programme can be implemented with some degree of effectiveness if the personnel are capable. The preparation of personnel for social service is uneven and at times internally inconsistent. The training of social workers has advanced ahead of programme development and thus lacks clear objectives related to programme needs. There seems to be little relation between training and actual functions and between training and practice. A necessary pre-condition is the definition of the functions for which personnel are to be trained. In Latin America there are three distinct levels, the functions of which have not so far been clearly defined and delimited. As they become defined, these functions should become the determinants of the content of the training programme. Otherwise, personnel will continue to find their training inapplicable in the face of reality.

There is need to re-orient some aspects of the training of professional social workers so that they would be more able to function in human and professional relationships; such relationships constitute the central focus of their activities. A deeper understanding of their role in relation to their functions is the legitimate source of motivation and morale. Such understanding is possible only if the principles they are taught as basic harmonize with the culture values and beliefs that they hold, or if the teaching is able to transform the values and beliefs. The need to enlarge the understanding of social problems and of human needs indicate that the social science and research content of the curricula must be strengthened. In research, the focus should be on action-oriented types of research and on the use of the findings in social work situations leaving the responsibility for basic research to social scientists. Today, what is often called training in social research is participation in researches conducted by sociologists in which the social worker is merely an interviewer with no responsibility for analysis. This does not give any training in research methodology

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and the social workers who participate are no more than suppliers of free labour.

Training opportunities for top-level and specialized personnel should be developed: for teaching in social work, planning, research, administration and methods specialists. The establishment of training institutions for this level of personnel is essential if social work is to acquire leadership capable of original thinking and of participating with other professions in policy formulation, over-all planning and high level administration. In view of limited resources in terms of trained manpower for teaching at this level as well as in financial resources and training materials, regional co-operation would be more practical, economical and effective than national efforts. A regional professional staff exchange programme should be another promising arrangement for sharing resources for higher level personnel, as well as for direct service. The "Social Workers for America" plan of Argentina has possibilities along this line although conceived for other purposes and on different premises.

Social service in Latin America has arrived at a stage when it can contribute and make full use of a core of leaders towards the establishment of a Regional Institute for Executive Development in Social Service that would concentrate on the top-level training of teachers, administrators, planners, method specialists and researchers in social service. The courses would be intensive and in series, each focussing on one of the above specializations so that the participants in each course would have a high degree of homogeneity as to level of basic preparation and specialization. Regional training arrangements up to the present, such as the course for administration of social welfare programmes under the auspices of the Organization of American States in Buenos Aires and CREFAL for community development have been interdisciplinary and do not provide the type of preparation needed by high level personnel in social service. Such an Institute would also be a centre for documentation in social service, for the development of training materials for all levels of personnel, and growth and adaptation of social work concepts and methods.

The regional trend toward increase in the number of schools in itself will not solve the problem of personnel deficiency and might even perpetuate uneven and low standards of training. Consolidation of training facilities to a degree that will permit better selection of students, the development of careers in education for social work and economy in the use of other resources would be a more constructive trend. In the final analysis, fewer but better staffed, equipped and financed schools and the consequent improvement of quality of the graduates would pave the way to the acceptance of social work on a professional level with the corresponding entitlements to prestige and pay. The formulation and enforcement of minimum requirements in terms of physical and teaching facilities, financing, faculty and curriculum might help toward such consolidation. Schools should however be given leeway to experiment on adaptations to local needs.

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Since the functioning of social service does not depend solely on social workers, attention should be given to the training of sub-professional workers and other types of institutional personnel. Social workers should promote the training of such personnel to assure themselves of the availability of competent collaborators. There is much resistance among social workers against the training of lower level auxiliary personnel. A clear delineation of functions and responsibilities should overcome that resistance.

Schools are not the only possible means for personnel qualification. Social service started before training and there are still many untrained persons performing social work functions. Moreover, social service must be dynamic to be functional. Inservice training and supervision are instruments for professional growth within jobs. Schools of social work should take the leadership in the establishment of consistent, continuous and progressive in-service training programmes within each institution or as cooperative efforts of several institutions.

5. The need for social research and statistics

If social service has not contributed to the body of knowledge about society and social problems, it is because it has not developed a system of reporting, collection and analysis of data concerning its activities. This is due to the absence of an orientation to research and of the ability to analyse and conceptualize from empirical data, a weakness in the training programme that is generally recognized by school directors. The report of one of the countries in the region on social service states: "We regret that the chapter about the legal and social protection of children is rather vague but this vagueness is due to an almost complete lack of documentation. Most of the social services feel there is so much work to do and they are so short of personnel, that they cannot bother to prepare any reports. We do not think this is a real excuse. All work and certainly social work should be organized and any organization without data is impossible.

....Documentation should be an important part of this training". 4/ A study undertaken by the Economic Commission for Latin America, Social Affairs Division, calls attention to the difficulty of obtaining data about social service. The statistics on assistance rendered are recorded in a form that cannot be classified nor analysed to get a complete picture of what constitutes the service, much less to evaluate the benefits, the deficiencies, the duplications and the gaps, if any exist. 5/

4/ Background document E/LACCY/NR/L.4, August 1965 of the Latin American Conference on Children and Youth in National Development, Santiago, Chile (ECLA/UNICEF/ILPES)(mimeographed).

5/ "Los Servicios en una población de erradicación", Social Affairs Division, ECLA, Santiago, Chile (mimeographed).

The need for basic and operational research is so great and the areas in which such research is wanting so diverse that the problem is where to start. In the first place social workers are not trained to apply the findings of basic research in practice. In the second place, basic social research on Latin America is still rudimentary. Merely as an illustration, a few of the areas of basic research that affect directly social work practice are here mentioned:

1. The impact of technological and organizational changes on the family in Latin America.
2. The measurement of the levels of living of different population groups in the regions.
3. The identification of felt needs and aspirations of such groups and of their basic attitudes concerning ways of meeting such needs.
4. The various ways in which individual, family and social satisfactions are fulfilled and the outlooks of different social strata in Latin America relative to these.
5. The convictions that shape attitudes and behaviour.
6. Incentives to family life and the relative importance of various patterns of family life.

In operational research, which should be within the competence of social workers, the following topics are suggested for priority, because they would provide important basic information for programme planning and implementation:

1. Contributions of social service in the promulgation of social legislation.
2. Differences between the written law and its operation in social service.
3. Effects of legal provisions on the operation of programmes and their compatibility with social work principles.
4. Social welfare needs of people in rural and urban settings.
5. Inventory of existing social service facilities and measurement of their adequacy.
6. Identification of elements that can be used as bases for comparative measurement of costs and effects.
7. Identification of elements that can be used as bases for determining priorities and allocations.
8. Identification

8. Identification of areas of relationships that social service is replacing with its activities, and an evaluation of the effects of such replacement, i.e. institutions for children on parent-child relationships, community restaurants on family relationships, mothers' clubs on mother-child and husband-wife relationships etc.
9. Effects of programmes on the lives of beneficiaries - relationships, attitudes, behaviour and general ways of life.
10. Effects of local authority or its weakness on the development and administration of programmes.

An initial step towards a more systematic collection of social service data for purposes of evaluation, research and programme implementation is the revision of existing reporting forms, reducing their number, simplifying them and concentrating on statistics that are classifiable and can be interpreted.

6. International and regional co-operation

The United Nations and its specialized agencies have technical assistance programmes in various fields some of which are directly or indirectly concerned with social service. These are mostly centered around the family, children and youth, rural development, and social work training. The Organization of American States has training projects for the preparation of higher level personnel. Several organizations of voluntary nature from outside the region also administer social service programmes using local staff to some extent, while many governments, including those of the United States, the Netherlands, Israel, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, offer fellowships to study abroad.

Certain problems arise from international co-operation. Financing from international assistance usually ties programmes to rigid international standards not adapted to local conditions. Requests for technical assistance are generally formulated by interest groups for certain specializations without previous analysis of the total situation and without benefit of over-all planning. Experts sent to countries are therefore specialists, normally contribute to the concentration of interest and action in the particular field of specialization, and thus unintentionally promote uneven development. There is also little co-ordination in international action at the national level, coinciding with the lack of co-ordination among national agencies already described.

International and regional co-operation can contribute to a rational development of social service in several ways. The work of international bodies in the formulation of concepts and standards is very useful if the countries are helped to use these formulations judiciously, as sources of ideas about desirable lines of policy and as encouragement to indigenous efforts. International assistance can

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also be used to force governments to look more closely at their ways of thinking and patterns of action for the purpose of achieving better unification of purpose and co-ordination of action. International assistance could itself set an example in co-ordination by establishing more effective channels of communication at the national level.

National research both basic and operational can be encouraged and financed. Regional training facilities and opportunities for the preparation of higher level personnel such as the mentioned Regional Institute for Executive Development in Social Service can be developed through matching arrangements similar to those which the OAS is presently applying for administrators of social programmes. While technical assistance in social work training is potentially valuable, the orientation should be changed from the creation of new schools to the consolidation and strengthening of existing schools. Governments should be encouraged to conduct, using technical assistance if necessary, an evaluation of existing institutional arrangements for social service as a preliminary to requests for more specialized types of expert assistance. The relative productivity of regional conferences and seminars against that of small working groups should be considered. The former have in recent years become popular and frequent in all the sectors of social policy and have set forth numerous recommendations concerning broad social objectives. At the present stage, however, it may be that smaller meetings focussed on carefully defined problems and limited to technically qualified participants, would have more real impact on social action at the national level. Some countries have advanced more quickly in certain techniques of social service than others; technical assistance should also promote a system of social service personnel exchange that would open up heretofore untapped training opportunities within the region itself. A valuable contribution which international and regional co-operation can make is the fostering of professional communication among countries and the consequent promotion of development-consciousness and better understanding of the pre-requisites of development among social service leaders and professionals.

A CHALLENGE TO LATIN AMERICAN SOCIAL SERVICE

The traditional approach of social service assumes the existence of economic and social structures that offer real opportunities for self-support and participation to its clientele once they have been helped to overcome their special problems, whether these are economic, psychological, or social relationships.

Under conditions of mass underemployment, exclusion of the masses from effective participation in the national society, absence of really effective educational and other basic services, in which half or more of the national population belongs to the "culture of poverty" the limitations of such an approach are obvious.

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The objectives endorsed by the Government themselves in such documents as the Charter of the Alliance for Progress suppose rapid and far-reaching changes in economic and social structures, and the policy-makers in social service need to consider how they can adapt their techniques to helping the people with whom they deal to take an active part in bringing about changes rather than in adjusting to intolerable existing situations.