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**Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women
into the Economic and Social Development
of Latin America and the Caribbean**

Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, 16-19 September 1991

**ACTIVITIES OF THE ECLAC SECRETARIAT FROM 1 JULY 1988
TO 31 MAY 1991 RELATING TO THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN
INTO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

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Introduction

The activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) which relate to the status of women in the region are primarily carried out through the Women and Development Unit of the ECLAC Social Development Division. These activities are conducted in accordance with the mandates set forth by the Governments of the region in the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development and with the recommendations made by the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean. In terms of recommendations made at the international level, the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, which were endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 40/108 of 13 December 1985, serve as the principal working tool at the present time. The Commission has also been given specific mandates by the General Assembly (resolution 42/178) and by the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC resolution 483(XXI)) to ensure the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies throughout the ECLAC system and in all its areas of work. Accordingly, in recent years other ECLAC divisions, the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and the Latin American Centre for Economic and Social Documentation (CLADES) —which also form part of the ECLAC system— have been making every effort to incorporate those elements relating to the status of women which are relevant to their specific fields of endeavour.

The work programme of the Women and Development Unit forms part of ECLAC programme 21, Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. The activities corresponding to the period 1990-1991 were approved by the Governments at the twenty-second session of ECLAC (Rio de Janeiro, 20-27 April 1988).

During its twenty-third session (Caracas, Venezuela, 28 April-11 May 1990), ECLAC adopted a resolution in which it endorsed the recommendations made by the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean and urged the Executive Secretary to provide as much support as possible for the regional activities to be carried out in preparation for the forthcoming world conference on women.¹

Between July and September 1988, the work of the Women and Development Unit was primarily focused on the preparations for the

Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Guatemala City from 27 to 30 September 1988. Thereafter, its activities have been structured on the basis of the proposals and recommendations put forward at that conference and have therefore included the preparation of baseline studies and the formulation of policy guidelines in respect of women in the region which will serve as inputs for the evaluation to be made by the member States.

These studies have concerned such crucial questions as the repercussions of the economic and social crisis, changes in the status of women, the employment situation of women, rural women, demographic changes, legislative reforms since 1980 and information systems. Substantive services were also provided for the Fourth Conference, during which the participants, in addition to evaluating the progress made in carrying out the Regional Plan of Action, formulated proposals for action by the countries and by the region. As on some previous occasions (ECLAC 1984, 1985, 1986), the papers prepared for the conference were later edited and published in book form (ECLAC, 1990a) in order to contribute to a fuller understanding of the issue in the region and to achieve a wider dissemination of the information they contain.

Since 1989 the Women and Development Unit has been reorienting its activities in line with the evaluation carried out by the Governments at the Fourth Conference, which drew attention to the need to systematize, with the help of the Presiding Officers, the Unit's relations with the Governments of the region during the periods between regional conferences; to strengthen its links with the countries; to ensure the continuity of the Unit's substantive work; to reinforce the ECLAC system's efforts to address women's issues; and to increase coordination with other United Nations bodies at the regional level.

Emphasis was also placed on the need for a more in-depth treatment of issues relevant to women and for an improvement in the status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this last regard, two steps of the utmost importance are the integration of women's issues into ECLAC's major schools of thought and the incorporation of the dimension of gender into the countries' general and sectoral policies.

Very active relations were maintained between the ECLAC secretariat and the Presiding Officers of the Fourth Regional Conference in 1988-1991. The Presiding Officers held five meetings during this period (ECLAC 1988a, 1989a, 1990b, 1991a, 1991b) and presented recommendations and guidelines to the secretariat which were designed to assist it in reinforcing its efforts to promote the integration of women into development.

ECLAC's activities in the Caribbean subregion to promote the integration of women into development will be discussed in a separate section in view of the fact that they have been conducted in accordance with the guidelines furnished by the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) and have devoted special attention to the specific problems of this subregion.

I. MAIN EVENTS

1. Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was convened in accordance with ECLAC resolution 495(XXII) and was held in Guatemala City from 27 to 30 September 1988. The primary objective of the conference was to evaluate the steps taken to carry out the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development in the light of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, taking into consideration the impact of the crisis on the status of women (ECLAC, 1988b).

Participants in the meeting included the representatives of 22 member States and of three associate members of the Commission, as well as two non-ECLAC States Members of the United Nations, which attended as observers. The conference was also attended by representatives of the United Nations Secretariat, of seven United Nations bodies, two specialized agencies, four intergovernmental organizations, a number of non-governmental organizations which have been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council, and special guests.

The Fourth Conference elected representatives of Argentina, Cuba, Guatemala, Netherlands Antilles and Venezuela to serve as its Presiding Officers.

The chief goal of the meeting was to carry forward the analysis of processes of change likely to contribute to the integration of women into development. The fact was also brought out that this process has two different facets, in as much as it involves a combination of successes and failures, and that in order to overcome the failures, it will be necessary to surmount the obstacles that stand in the way of the advancement of women and that hinder progress towards development, equality and peace.

During the conference the current status of women was evaluated, future courses of action were proposed, and the region's commitment to the advancement of women was reaffirmed. The severe deterioration of women's living conditions as a result of the crisis situation in the region and the common guidelines for action set forth in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies were the two main elements which provided the frame of reference for the

debates. In conducting the above-mentioned evaluation, it was noted that Latin America is undergoing the most severe economic and social crisis of the last 50 years. This crisis, which was caused by both external and internal factors, has placed most of the countries of the region in a precarious position. Indeed, since the closing years of the United Nations Decade for Women the overall economic situation has worsened, and the financial, economic and social crisis in the developing world, which has led to an ever more serious deterioration in the status of large sectors of the population, has had a disproportionate impact on women.

One of the effects of the crisis and of the debt problem has been an increasingly severe decline in the quality of life of the Latin American and Caribbean population, and this deterioration in women's living conditions has been particularly striking. Not only has there been a steep reduction in allocations to cover the costs of social policies, especially in the areas of education, health and housing, but the social well-being of the entire population has also been seriously affected.

With regard to women's participation in the labour force, the fact was stressed that despite their entry into the labour market on a large scale, the crisis-induced deterioration in the employment situation has had a severe impact on women, who constitute a majority of the unemployed and of informal-sector workers and who are discriminated against in many countries by being paid less than men. It was also pointed out that women's economic participation is greater in the services sector and that this is one of the contributing factors to the process of tertiarization. However, although the prevailing employment pattern has been in keeping with traditional roles, women's autonomy and economic independence have increased, and these attributes have now begun to be regarded in a positive light as having intrinsic value. As regards education, emphasis was placed on the tremendous expansion of formal education and on women's growing participation in it, but attention was also drawn to the great disparities existing among countries, between rural and urban areas, and with respect to native, indigenous and black sectors of the population. In reference to the subject of health, the conference recognized the fact that a majority of the countries still fail to provide adequate free public services for a large percentage of the population. Furthermore, it was noted that because of their capacity to bear children, women have special health requirements, especially in the case of frequent pregnancies, which, when combined with poor nutrition and a lack of rest, lead to high maternal and neo-natal death rates. Teenage pregnancies, which are on the rise, and induced abortions—most of which are performed illegally—may also constitute a threat to life. Despite the seriousness of the situation, no progress has been made in the area of health and sex education for the population in general or for young people in particular.

In so far as legislation is concerned, however, it was noted that substantial progress has been made in the region. Firstly, over half the countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination Against Women and, in so doing, have expressed their commitment in this regard. Secondly, most of the countries have adopted legal measures in pursuance of the Convention's objectives.

With regard to the family, the conference drew attention to the sharp deterioration in the current economic situation in Latin America and the Caribbean, which has created serious problems that have affected women more than men. The crisis has also led to a deterioration of traditional ways of life, and in many cases this has given rise to instability and to violence against women and children. In some countries migration from rural areas to the cities has increased, as has the number of households headed by women. Moreover, since many societies have maintained their traditional role divisions whereby housework and child-rearing are regarded as being exclusively the responsibility of women, women are called upon to shoulder an inordinately heavy workload.

In relation to political participation, it was noted that women still play no more than a minimal role in the executive and legislative bodies of their countries and that their participation is primarily concentrated in the lower party echelons. Although the political awareness of women in the region has grown, significant obstacles to their participation in political affairs remain.

In recent decades social participation by women has taken the form of new social movements, especially in the low-income districts of large cities. Women have formed mothers' groups, participated in church-run social welfare programmes, led campaigns for day-care centres or health facilities, taken part in volunteer work and in vocational groups, founded organizations to develop survival strategies that will help them to cope with the serious conditions confronting them, and formed pressure groups for the purpose of obtaining housing or infrastructure services. They have also participated in professional associations, trade unions, federations of women workers in various branches of production and federations of peasant women. Participation by women in social movements appears to be a reflection of a broader cultural change which is linked to new forms of political activity.

Based on the evaluation summarized above, the conference formulated proposals for action at the national, international and regional levels with a view to the achievement of economic and social goals which would give women a genuine role in the development process and an equitable share in the benefits it brings.

2. Meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional
Conference on the Integration of Women into
the Economic and Social Development
of Latin America and the
Caribbean

a) Eighth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional
Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and
Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Presiding Officers elected at the Third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean held their eighth meeting on 26 September 1988 in Guatemala City. The meeting was attended by representatives of Argentina, Ecuador and Mexico—member countries of the Presiding Officers—and focused on various matters relating to the organization of the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, specifically as regards the documentation prepared by the secretariat for that meeting, its provisional agenda, the election of officers, the objectives of the Fourth Conference and the way in which its work on the evaluation of the status of women in the region should be undertaken (ECLAC, 1988a).

b) Ninth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional
Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and
Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Ninth Meeting of the Presiding Officers who had been elected at the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was held on 26 and 27 September 1989 in Panajachel, Guatemala. With a view to strengthening the links between ECLAC and the countries of the region, the Presiding Officers agreed, inter alia, to convene two meetings during 1990. The first was to be held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago on 28 and 29 May and Chile would be invited to attend as an observer; the second was to take place in Cuba in October or November. The Presiding Officers also decided to meet at least once a year thereafter, although they felt that more frequent meetings would be desirable. On the subject of forthcoming regional conferences, the Presiding Officers proposed that the Fifth Regional Conference should be held in 1991 and that a meeting should be held in 1994 in order to forge a link between the Fifth Regional Conference and the preparatory meeting for the world conference to be held in 1995 (ECLAC, 1989a).

The Presiding Officers also stressed the need to take more effective steps to obtain resources in the region and to bridge the gap between academic information and political action and decision-

making levels. There was agreement as to the urgent need to provide technical training to national offices and other bodies, particularly as regards the design and implementation of projects in the countries. High priority was placed on strengthening national mechanisms through the creation of information and documentation centres that would provide a communications link among the countries, the secretariat and the major existing information networks on women. Importance was also placed on intensifying the work being carried out in the subregions, especially within the framework of seminars and comparative studies. Among a range of priority issues, the Presiding Officers devoted special attention to those related to socialization, culture, young women and migration.

c) Tenth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Tenth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was held at the headquarters of ECLAC in Santiago on 28-29 May 1990. This meeting was attended by all the Presiding Officers (Argentina, Cuba, Guatemala, Netherlands Antilles and Venezuela), as well as the representatives of Chile and of the Inter-American Commission for Women (CIM) of the OAS, who participated as observers. The meeting was also attended by representatives of CELADE, ILPES and other divisions of the ECLAC system, as well as by representatives of the offices of specialized agencies of the United Nations in Santiago (ECLAC, 1990b).

During the meeting the Presiding Officers examined the substantive and operational activities undertaken since their ninth meeting and stressed the need to link the ECLAC work programme concerning women's issues with its proposal for changing production patterns with social equity, as well as the importance of delving more deeply into issues relating to education, culture, gender relationships, information and statistics and the situation of women in specific groups, such as young women, migrant women, women in the informal sector and others. They also stressed the need to develop comprehensive regional projects of a type that will generate fresh resources for use in improving the living conditions of women in the region within the context of collaboration between the countries and the secretariat of ECLAC.

The next meeting of the Presiding Officers was scheduled for 19-20 November 1990 in Cuba. They thanked the Government of the Netherlands Antilles for its offer to host the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean in September 1991 in Curaçao.

d) Eleventh Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Presiding Officers elected at the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Social and Economic Development of Latin America and the Caribbean held their eleventh meeting on 19 and 20 November 1990 at Varadero, Cuba. The meeting was attended by all members of the Presiding Officers (ECLAC, 1991a).

The aims of the eleventh meeting were to examine the activities carried out in the region between 1 May and 31 October 1990, to establish the agenda for the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean and to assess the preparations for that meeting, to consider the outlook for regional projects and to discuss the comprehensive programme of work for the future.

The Presiding Officers agreed that the basic framework for the preparations for the Region Conference were to be found in the ECLAC proposal for changing production patterns with social equity, which needed to be adapted so as to incorporate considerations related to gender. It was recommended that the position paper should be centred around that priority.

e) Twelfth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean

The Twelfth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 7 and 8 May 1991. During the meeting the Presiding Officers reviewed the draft position paper which was being prepared for presentation at the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, reviewed the preparations for that meeting and drafted its provisional agenda. In addition, they drew up a list of the duties of the Presiding Officers and drafted a number of recommendations for presentation to the Conference, including one which concerned the preparation of a new regional plan of action for the integration of women (ECLAC, 1991b).

3. Meeting of the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions

One of the subjects examined by the executive secretaries of the regional commissions when they met at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, on 27 and 28 April 1989 was that of cooperation between the regional commissions and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

They agreed that cooperation among the regional commissions in relation to the issue of women and development should be strengthened and, within this context, that such collaboration should be based on the results of the regional commissions' recent meetings with INSTRAW (INSTRAW, 1989). The executive secretaries felt that, rather than relying solely on the use of complicated interregional cooperation mechanisms, each Commission should carry out parallel cooperation activities with INSTRAW or other United Nations bodies working in this area, especially the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and that an exchange of information in this regard among the commissions should be promoted. They also agreed that the heads of the five regional women's units should meet with INSTRAW officials in order to define a cooperation project on a joint basis.

Regional cooperation for the advancement of women was the second item on the agenda of the Meeting of the Executive Secretaries which was held in Vienna from 13 to 15 March 1991. The executive secretaries discussed future activities in this connection, with emphasis on the participation of women in the informal sector and on collaboration between the regional commissions and other United Nations bodies, particularly INSTRAW. It was agreed that the ECLAC Women and Development Unit would represent the regional commissions at the meeting of INSTRAW's Strategic Planning Committee that had been scheduled for September 1991.

4. Seminars and technical meetings

a) Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Women in Development

The Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Women in Development took place at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, from 2 to 5 May 1989 and was organized by the Joint Consultative Group on Programming, which is formed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), in collaboration with ECLAC, ILPES and CELADE. The seminar was attended by representatives of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras,

Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, as well as by representatives of several United Nations bodies which maintain offices in Chile, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The aim of the seminar was to analyse the role of women in development at the regional level. To this end, a number of participatory meetings were held at which experts from the various United Nations bodies and representatives of the Governments exchanged experiences and interdisciplinary expertise. The participants examined the crisis' impact on women and explored possible means of alleviating extreme poverty, with emphasis on innovative strategies. A gender analysis workshop involving group activities was also conducted.

b) Regional Seminar on the Analysis of Women's Production Projects and their Policy Implications

This seminar was organized by ECLAC with the sponsorship of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). It was held in Santiago, Chile, from 5 to 8 June 1989 and was attended by coordinators and community leaders of production projects in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Mexico, representatives of Chilean organizations working on income- or employment-generating production projects, and representatives of a number of United Nations bodies.

The seminar had the following objectives: a) to evaluate the projects in order to ascertain both their potential and limitations as an effective means of generating income or creating jobs for women in low-income sectors; b) to pinpoint what elements play the greatest role in determining whether or not such projects will be successful and c) to formulate policy recommendations concerning means of alleviating poverty in the countries of the region and of promoting the creation of donor organizations.

The seminar participants recommended that women's production projects should not be regarded as making no more than a supplementary or marginal contribution to the efforts being made to combat poverty and that the budgets for such projects should make provision for the resources required to systematize the information generated by them, to conduct marketing studies and to recruit the personnel needed in order to ensure the project's success. In addition, the participants felt that although the projects clearly have economic objectives (to generate income or create jobs), this is not their only dimension. Such projects should also pursue participatory and organizational objectives, and donor organizations should consequently display greater flexibility with respect to the real needs of the projects and their participants

and should engage in a more direct and open form of communication with the personnel directing such projects (ECLAC, 1989b).

c) Seminar on "On Being a Woman: Chile in the 1990s"

With the joint sponsorship of ECLAC, UNDP, PREALC and UNICEF, a series of monthly events on the theme "On being a woman: Chile in the 1990s" were held which focused on the subjects of education, labour, legislation and institution-building as they relate to the status of women in Chile. The national counterpart agency for these events was the Centre for Women's Studies (CEM), a non-governmental academic and research organization, which provided substantive materials developed in the course of a five-year research project on Chilean women whose findings have been published in a study entitled "Mundo de mujer: continuidad y cambio". These meetings were held once a month in Santiago, Chile, from August 1989 to December 1989. Participants included national specialists from government agencies and non-governmental organizations as well as experts from the United Nations. UNICEF subsequently published and distributed the papers presented at the meetings (CEM, UNICEF, 1989).

d) International Seminar on Social Change, Transition and Public Policies on Women

At the request of the Women's Institute of Chile, ECLAC sponsored and played a substantive role in this seminar, which was held in Santiago, Chile, on 9 and 10 October 1989. During those two days experts from Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Spain discussed the institutional frameworks for participation by women in each of their countries, public policies and the position of women in respect of specific cases involving public policy-making and implementation, the significance of a democratic institutional structure for women, and specific public policy proposals oriented towards this sector. The possibility of issuing a joint publication is currently under consideration.

e) Expert Meeting on Women in the 1990s: Cultural Aspects of their Participation

Technical meetings have served as another means of strengthening the links between the Women and Development Unit and the member countries, as well as providing an opportunity for the analysis of substantive issues. The above-mentioned meeting of experts on the cultural aspects of women's participation in the 1990s was held for the purpose of promoting the incorporation of this dimension into the studies carried out in this field and of formulating feasible proposals for action. The meeting was held in Santiago, Chile on 22 and 23 November 1989 and was attended by

experts from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Cuba. Its aim was to incorporate the subject of culture into analyses of the status of women within the framework of a broader concept of development as an integral process in which the cultural dimension plays a leading role. The participants discussed such topics as culture and labour, the position of Latin American women at the crossroads between two cultures in a rapidly changing world, the significance of modernity and cultural traditions, and some of the prevailing cultural patterns in countries of the region. The experts were all of the opinion that women are beginning to emerge as historical figures and to think about the possibility of having an identity as women, despite the wide variety of situations in which women find themselves in Latin America and the Caribbean. Some of the discussions held and the papers presented at this meeting are reflected in the document entitled Women, Culture and Development: Views from Latin America, Mujer y desarrollo series, No. 5 (LC/L.596).

f) Meeting on Changing Production Patterns and the Integration of Women into Development

The Meeting on Changing Production Patterns and the Integration of Women into Development, which was organized by the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN/MUDAR) network and ECLAC, took place in Santiago, Chile, on 13 and 14 November 1990. The objective of the meeting was to analyse the ECLAC proposal for changing production patterns with social equity and, in the light of the knowledge acquired during the United Nations Decade for Women, to devise ways of incorporating the dimension of gender into this proposal and thereby enriching it. The meeting thus combined the DAWN/MUDAR network's interest in analysing development proposals from a woman's perspective with the Women and Development Unit's desire to contribute to the ECLAC proposal for changing production patterns with social equity through an analysis of gender-related dimensions.

The meeting was attended by experts from the DAWN/MUDAR network, the Centre for Women's Studies (CEM), Isis International, the La Morada Women's Centre and the National Women's Service (SERNAM). The substantive divisions of ECLAC represented the United Nations Secretariat. Among the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, representatives of PREALC, FAO and UNICEF were present at the meeting.

The discussions focused on the following major topics, which were chosen on the basis of an analysis of the ECLAC proposal with a view to the incorporation of the dimension of gender: changing production patterns and the region's position in the international economy, the linkage of production sectors, the role of the State and, finally, suggestions concerning policy design (ECLAC, 1991c).

II. RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES

The meetings of the Presiding Officers have served as an important and dynamic means of strengthening the secretariat's ties with the countries of the region, which is one of ECLAC's priorities in this area. Its concerns in this respect have to do with such matters as the need to gather information on the status of women at the national level, on the action being taken by the Governments and by non-governmental organizations, and on the coordination of activities so that policy guidelines in this area can be designed. In some of the countries the bodies in charge of women's issues have not yet consolidated their technical capabilities, and their capacity in this area therefore needs to be strengthened.

The integration of women into development is now a concern throughout the region, but the treatment of this issue has become quite complex, and modifications and adjustments are called for. Furthermore, the crisis affecting Latin America and the Caribbean has added yet another problem, since the countries lack the resources they need to implement specific policies, to equip the corresponding offices and to set up the appropriate programmes. Moreover, the living conditions of a majority of women have deteriorated, and this problem urgently demands attention.

In view of this situation, ECLAC has sent technical assistance missions to various countries in order to analyse their current needs and to collaborate in the programming of steps to be taken in the future. In 1989 missions were sent to Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela.

In order to update the available information on the countries' laws as they relate to women, missions were also sent to Argentina, Peru and Guatemala in 1988 using resources provided by ECLAC, UNDP and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). One of the specific objectives of these missions was to analyse the possibility of instituting legal reforms in keeping with the recommendations contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Activities of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

In order to backstop the efforts being made in this field by the countries of the Caribbean subregion, a book entitled Women in Development Bibliography was published in two volumes ("Part I: Abstracts and English Indices" (LC/CAR/G.301) and "Part II: Spanish and French Indices" (LC/CAR/G.301/Add.1)). These volumes, which

were prepared within the framework of ECLAC project RLA/87/W03 on the publication of a bibliography on women and development, contain a portion of the information that can be found in the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning (CARISPLAN) computerized bibliographic database, which is maintained by the Subregional Headquarter's Caribbean Documentation Centre. Its broad coverage (nearly 900 references) is in large part a result of the collaboration of the Caribbean documentation centres which were designated as national focal points, of non-governmental organizations in the subregion, and of researchers from outside the ECLAC system.

In addition, surveys and other information-gathering tools were used in the Caribbean countries to compile a wide range of information concerning the size of their informal sectors and their impact on economic activities. It is hoped that this information will be useful to the Governments of the subregion in carrying out certain types of programmes to support the informal sector, such as those concerned with the creation of cooperatives and the adoption of legislation to protect the small-scale traders—most of whom are women—in this sector.

The following technical studies were prepared on the basis of research papers drafted by experts and consultants: "The hucksters of Dominica" (LC/L.588(MDM.11/7)), "The agricultural traders of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica and St. Lucia" (LC/L.589(MDM.11/8)), "The suitcase traders in the free zone of Curaçao" (LC/L.587(MDM.11/6)), "Self-help and survival: Women traders in the Caribbean", "The use of computer software in the research on women in trade", "Participation of women in Caribbean development: Inter-island trading and export processing zones", "Export processing zones and women in the Caribbean" (LC/L.586(MDM.11/5)) and "Women workers in the Caribbean: A selection of ECLAC research".

The outputs of research projects conducted during this period at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean included the following documents: "Women as recipients of services in the national budget of Saint Kitts and Nevis" (LC/CAR/L.254), Port of Spain, ECLAC, and "Comparative status of women in selected Caribbean countries as indicated by selected social, economic, demographic and legal parameters" (LC/G.1659; LC/CAR/G.273).

In addition to these activities, the Subregional Headquarters collaborated with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in designing a project on occupational health and furnished substantive support to ILO for its High-Level Expert Mission on Employment Promotion in Trinidad and Tobago and for its project concerning a televised presentation on equal opportunity and treatment for women.

As part of the effort to strengthen relations with member countries, technical assistance was provided to Cuba at the request of its Government. This activity, which was conducted through the Cuban Women's Federation, dealt with the fields of information, documentation and communications as they relate to the status of women in Cuba. As part of this programme of technical assistance, a mission was carried out in Cuba during the period from 24 September to 13 October 1990; a baseline study of the existing situation was subsequently undertaken and activities were initiated with a view to putting into operation some of the mechanisms of the national information system on women. During the second phase of this technical assistance project, which was carried out in Santiago, Chile, a report was prepared setting forth the information system's main features and its programme of activities.

In Chile, advisory services have been provided to the National Women's Service (SERNAM) at its request in connection with various activities having to do with the nature of the Service's functions and its start-up of operations. Coordination meetings have been held with specialized agencies of the United Nations system so that ECLAC may cooperate in the preparation of a baseline study on the status of women in Chile, and technical assistance has been furnished with a view to improving the compilation of information, specifically with regard to households headed by women and to the participation of women in economic activities.

In collaboration with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, which is headquartered in Vienna, advisory assistance is being provided to the National Commission for Solidarity and Social Development of the Office of the President of the Republic of Bolivia in connection with those of its activities which are directed towards women.

At the request of the Government of Germany and in collaboration with an expert from that country, prefeasibility studies were conducted with a view to the design of economic projects for the advancement of women in the informal sectors of Mexico and Venezuela within the framework of project RFA/90/S08 of ECLAC and GTZ of Germany. As part of this project, a review was undertaken of the activities of government agencies and non-governmental institutions which provide assistance to women working in the informal sector of the economy, and possible national counterparts for the preparation of future cooperation projects were identified.

Under the terms of the technical services agreement existing between PAHO and ECLAC, a proposal was drawn up for the creation of an information system on women in health and development. This proposal, which was prepared specifically for training purposes in Central America, Belize and Panama, is designed for senior government officials responsible for policy-making in respect of

women and health, for non-governmental organizations working in the area of women's issues, and for the technical personnel who will be involved in setting up the system.

The proposal was discussed at the Seminar/Workshop on the Information System on Women in Health and Development, which was held in Guatemala City from 18 to 20 July 1990. ECLAC drafted and published the report of the meeting.

With funding from the Government of the Netherlands, work commenced on project HOL/90/S34 on the "Improvement of the legal and institutional framework for the incorporation of women into development in selected countries of Latin America". During the second half of 1991, the baseline studies prepared as part of this project will be discussed with authorities in the countries and with officials of non-governmental organizations, after which the project will proceed with the formulation of policy proposals and the relevant legal modifications. In the next few months, work will also begin on the design and execution of two communications programmes which may contribute to the dissemination of new values as regards the role of women in society.

In accordance with the project's programme of activities for 1991, national seminars will be held to discuss the above-mentioned proposals, and the following year a seminar/workshop will be conducted in each of the selected countries in order to promote the implementation of the recommendations. In late 1992 a regional seminar/workshop will be held for the purpose of analysing the experiences of each of the countries and of drawing generally-applicable conclusions which can serve as a basis for efforts to promote the incorporation of women into development not only in the countries covered by the project but in the rest of the countries of the region as well.

At the request of the National University of Cuyo in Mendoza, Argentina, assistance was provided in connection with courses on women and society as a means of furnishing support for a postgraduate programme of the University's School of Political and Social Sciences.

III. RELATIONS WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS BODIES

Relations with other United Nations bodies are maintained within the framework of the international cooperation and coordination provided for by the system.

Since the beginning of the United Nations Decade for Women, the organizations of the system have cooperated closely in activities relating to the advancement of women. The preparations for the three world conferences on women, including the relevant documentation, have been the result of a joint effort. Many examples of concerted efforts are to be found in activities currently under way as well, such as the preparation of studies on many priority topics for the Commission on the Status of Women; the first update of the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development; and the drafting of follow-up reports, analyses and appraisals. An effort is now being made to strengthen such cooperation even further in order to rationalize the use of resources and increase the effectiveness of the activities being conducted.

During the period in question the ECLAC secretariat worked in close cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in Vienna. It also took part in the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-third session, where it reviewed the activities undertaken by ECLAC to follow up on the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and to monitor the status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, substantive contributions were made to a number of technical seminars. Information exchanges with the CSDHA Division for the Advancement of Women concerning all matters relating to the furtherance of women are carried out on an ongoing and free-flowing basis.

One example of the above is the technical assistance that has been provided to Bolivia in conjunction with the Division for the Advancement of Women. Close contact has been maintained with that Division in regard to substantive matters through participation in technical meetings and the presentation of regional studies.

Relations with INSTRAW have been close during the period covered by this report. The ECLAC secretariat participated in the meetings held by the regional commissions with INSTRAW to review the current programme of work and the medium-term plan for 1990-1995, as well as to consider possible areas in which joint efforts might be undertaken. In this regard, a list was drawn up of activities that could be executed jointly. Despite the differences

existing among their specific programmes of work, the institutions' willingness to work together has been made clear on those occasions, as has the feasibility of identifying activities in the areas of research, training and publications that are of common interest. Furthermore, the ECLAC secretariat participated on a regular basis as an ex-officio member in the sessions of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees. Ongoing, free-flowing contact has been maintained with INSTRAW, and cooperative activities concerning women in the informal sector have already been scheduled with other regional commissions for 1991. As part of the joint programme on this subject, the ECLAC secretariat played a substantive role in the Consultative Meeting of Experts on Macroeconomic Policy Analysis of Women's Participation in the Informal Sector, which was held in Rome from 18 to 22 March 1991. These activities have drawn the interest of the executive secretaries at their periodic meetings.

The ECLAC secretariat has also taken part in the ad hoc inter-agency meetings on women which are held each year in Vienna and which are attended by representatives of virtually all of the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations, including the five regional commissions.

Within the framework of the PAHO/ECLAC agreement, activities were conducted in the Central American countries for the purpose of setting up and strengthening health information systems oriented towards women. Missions were sent to these countries and sensitization and training materials were prepared for use in subregional seminars. ECLAC also played a substantive role in the Second Subregional Meeting on Women, Health and Development (San José, June 1989) and prepared the report of the meeting (ECLAC/PAHO, 1990).

Advisory services were provided to Chile within a broad framework of cooperation with FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP and PREALC.

In conjunction with UNIFEM, the Regional Seminar on Analysis of Women's Production Projects and their Policy Implications was held during this period.

Various bodies of the system regularly collaborate with the Women and Development Unit in connection with information and joint activities. Cooperation is also provided in a number of fields, such as the appraisal of UNESCO literacy projects, project analyses, etc.

IV. RELATIONS WITH THE ECLAC SYSTEM

At the twenty-third session of ECLAC, which took place during the period covered by this report, the Commission adopted resolution 513(XXIII) on the role of women in economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Women and Development Unit of the ECLAC Social Development Division has received ongoing support from the ECLAC system in all its activities. The Unit has worked closely with the ECLAC Division of Operations on the preparation of project proposals concerning a number of topics relating to women. In addition, the Unit receives ongoing and effective support from the ECLAC Bibliographic Information System, which currently includes nearly 70 000 entries. This system, which is formed by CLADES, the CELADE Latin American Population Documentation System (DOCPAL) and the ECLAC Library, maintains databases which include information on women's issues. Within the framework of this system, CLADES directs its activities towards the creation of inter-agency information networks concerning various aspects of development and towards the design and promotion of standardized information processing systems. It is responsible for the coordination of the Planning Information System for Latin America and the Caribbean (INFOPLAN), issues publications containing planning information, conducts training activities, and provides technical assistance in the fields of information and systems and in regard to the implementation of computerized systems for processing bibliographic information.

With regard to the work carried out by CELADE, during the period in question emphasis was placed on socio-demographic analysis as a basis for the design and execution of economic and social development policies. Particular attention was devoted to considerations of equity within the context of changing production patterns, especially as they relate to women, while taking into account the particular characteristics associated with the situations of poor mothers and women heads of household in terms of fertility and migration. In addition, the present situation as regards demographic information on women was analysed and a number of shortcomings were identified in the areas of data collection, processing and tabulation. CELADE has recently been working on evaluations of the status of women from a demographic standpoint and of specific measures that have been adopted to promote the advancement of women. Other noteworthy CELADE activities have included the collection of information for use in the management of family planning and maternal and child health programmes, the services provided by the DOCPAL system, the publication of a special issue of the Demographic bulletin on women, its work on the

analysis of fertility by stratum, and the development of methodologies for the study of family groups. Other studies are currently being conducted on family planning, teenage pregnancy, women and health, and women and aging.

Important spheres of work for the future include the field of information and collaboration in specific policy-oriented activities, with special emphasis on the relationship between the two. CELADE maintains cooperative relations with Governments; non-governmental organizations; other components of the ECLAC system, particularly the Women and Development Unit; and with other United Nations bodies.

Furthermore, the Postgraduate Programme on Population and Development which has been organized by ECLAC, CELADE and UNFPA for 1991 includes a module on policies directed towards women.

ILPES has continued to cover topics relating to the status of women in the courses it offers, and consideration is currently being given to the possibility of designing training courses for women who work in this field in government offices and non-governmental organizations in the countries of the region.

Several staff members of the Women and Development Unit taught classes on topics related to the participation of women as part of the international courses on social policies and projects which are offered by ILPES.

The Statistics and Projections Division has continued its work on the incorporation into its databases of information obtained from census samples, population censuses, current statistics and household surveys which has been disaggregated by gender.

V. STUDIES

During the period in question the secretariat continued its work on substantive studies designed to contribute to a better understanding of the status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 1988, papers on the impact of recent changes and of the crisis on the women of the region, women and employment, the new social leadership role of women, and women and demographic change were prepared for presentation at the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, reports were prepared on trading activities in the Caribbean, remittances in El Salvador, women's participation in cooperatives, the status of women in Central America, and the situation with respect to information in this field. Some of this documentation has been revised and published in book form by ECLAC with a view to its wider distribution (ECLAC, 1990a).

As part of a UNIFEM-sponsored project, a bibliography on women in the Caribbean has been published (ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 1990), and a database on certain fields of social and economic participation by women is being created within the framework of a cooperation project which is being conducted with the Netherlands.

A new publications series in both Spanish and English entitled "Women and Development" was inaugurated with a view to promoting a more exhaustive analysis and a wider dissemination of information on priority issues relating to the status of women. To date, eight studies in this series have been published on such topics as women and culture, rural women, women and policy, women heads of household, and women refugees and migrants. A complete list of the studies prepared during the period covered by this report is given in the annex.

Note

¹ The text of this resolution, which was adopted at the twenty-third session of the Commission, reads as follows:

513 (XXIII) THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 40/108, 42/62, 44/75, 44/77 and 44/171 and also Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/18 and 1988/59 concerning activities of the United Nations system for the promotion of women within the framework of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,

Considering General Assembly resolutions 40/105, 42/178 and 44/171 and also Economic and Social Council resolutions 1987/65, 1988/22 and 1988/30 and ECLAC resolution 483(XXI) relating to the role of the regional commissions in the integration of women in economic and social development at regional level.

Mindful of the regional efforts which will be necessary in respect of the forthcoming world conference on this question, which is scheduled for 1995,

1. Endorses the assessment and recommendations made by the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean and by the Ninth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of that Conference;

2. Urges the Executive Secretary of ECLAC to provide as much support as possible for the regional activities on women and development carried out by the Commission in preparation for the forthcoming regional conferences and for the world conference scheduled for 1995.

243rd meeting
11 May 1990

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_____ (1989b), Informe del Seminario Regional sobre Análisis de Proyectos Productivos de Mujeres e Implicaciones para Políticas (LC/R.809(Sem.49/11)), Santiago, Chile.

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Annex

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BETWEEN 1 JULY 1988 AND 31 MAY 1991

ECLAC, Latin American and Caribbean women between change and crisis (LC/L.464(CRM.4/2)).

María Rebeca Yáñez, Information and communications at the service of women in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.461(CRM.4/3)).

ECLAC, Activities of the ECLAC secretariat with respect to the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.456(CRM.4/4)).

ECLAC, Women and legislation (LC/L.457(CRM.4/5)).

ECLAC, Women, work and crisis (LC/L.458(CRM.4/6)).

ECLAC, Women and cooperativism in Latin America (LC/L.466(CRM.4/7)).

Ximena Aranda, Woman as a social protagonist in the 1980s (LC/L.470(CRM.4/8)).

ECLAC, Women in the inter-island trade in agricultural produce in the eastern Caribbean (LC/L.465(CRM.4/9)).

Lilia Lázaró de León, Diagnóstico de la situación de la mujer centroamericana (LC/L.472(CRM.4/10)).

ECLAC, Women and demographic change: Statistics and indicators (LC/L.473(CRM.4/11)).

ECLAC, Remittances, family income and the role of women: The case of El Salvador (LC/L.476(CRM.4/12)).

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ECLAC, Proyectos productivos de mujeres: problemas y soluciones en las intervenciones sociales (LC/R.764(Sem.49/2)).

Carlota Olavarría, Los proyectos productivos con mujeres de sectores populares (LC/R.765(Sem.49/3)).

Vera Lucía Galvao dos Santos, Una producción que produce otras: las artesanas del proyecto Timbi de Brasil (LC/R.760(Sem.49/4)).

María Rita Valencia, Vinculación de la mujer con aptitudes de liderazgo a la promoción del desarrollo y producción de material didáctico de apoyo (Cali, Colombia) (LC/R.761(Sem.49/5)).

Ana María Maldonado, Desarrollo rural integrado en áreas deprimidas, con atención específica de la mujer campesina (Ecuador) (LC/R.763(Sem.49/6)).

Ximena Barrientos and Gabriela Villalobos, Generación de empleo a través de la creación de microempresas para mujeres de la Región Metropolitana. Chile (LC/R.766(Sem.49/7)).

Yara Carafa, Producción lechera con mujeres campesinas del Altiplano, La Paz, Bolivia (LC/R.769(Sem.49/8)).

Equipo coordinador del Proyecto MEX/85/W01, Programas socioeconómicos para organizaciones de mujeres (Tempoal, Veracruz, México) (LC/R.770(Sem.49/9)).

Klaus Bethke, Proyectos productivos de mujeres en México y Centroamérica: resultados y reflexiones sobre la experiencia (LC/R.771(Sem.49/10)).

ECLAC, Informe del Seminario Regional sobre Análisis de Proyectos Productivos de Mujeres e Implicaciones para Políticas (LC/R.809(Sem.49/11)).

ECLAC, Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean: Results of Projects and Programmes (LC/L.513), Mujer y Desarrollo series, No. 1.

ECLAC, Latin America: The Challenge of Socializing the Home Environment (LC/L.514), Mujer y Desarrollo series, No. 2.

ECLAC, Women and Politics in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.515), Mujer y Desarrollo series, No. 3.

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Adriana Valdés, Women, Cultures and Development: Views from Latin America (LC/L.596), Mujer y Desarrollo series, No. 5.

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María Rebeca Yáñez, Human resource training and gender-based differences in such training (LC/L.598(MDM.11/4)).

Myrtle Bishop, Frank Long and Joaquin St. Cyr, Export processing zones and women in the Caribbean (LC/L.586(MDM.11/5)).

Monique Lagro and D. Plotkin, The suitcase traders in the free zone of Curaçao (LC/L.587(MDM.11/6)).

Monique Lagro, The hucksters of Dominica (LC/L.588(MDM.11/7)).

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Alcira Mujica, New Participatory Methodologies for Working with Women (LC/L.592), Mujer y Desarrollo series, No. 7.

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ECLAC/PAHO, La mujer en la salud y el desarrollo; propuesta para un sistema de información (LC/L.615)

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