
mujer y desarrollo

U nderstanding poverty from a gender perspective

Women and Development Unit

Santiago, Chile, June 2004



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Table of Contents

Abstract	5
Introduction	7
I. What is meant by poverty from a gender perspective?	9
A. Definition of the concepts of poverty and gender	9
B. Different concepts of poverty	10
C. Poverty from a gender perspective	12
II. How can poverty be measured from a gender perspective?	17
A. Measurement of household income	17
B. Measuring poverty by income from a gender perspective.....	19
C. Household headships: a good indicator of poverty amongst women?.....	22
D. Measuring unpaid labour	24
E. Measuring the non-monetary dimensions of poverty	26
F. Contribution made by other approaches.....	29
III. Dealing with poverty: policy aspects	31
A. Public policies on poverty eradication with a gender perspective.....	32
B. Main difficulties facing gender policies	33
C. Challenges	34
IV. Conclusions	37
Bibliography	39

Annex: Final report. Technical meeting on the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in poverty measurement	43
A. Attendance and organization of work.....	45
B. Proceedings.....	53
C. Recommendations and conclusions.....	65
Serie Mujer y desarrollo: issues published	67

Tables

Table 1	Gender, poverty, and domestic and individual income: a study proposal.....	20
Table 2	Gender, poverty, domestic and individual incomes: Application of the study proposal, Mexico 2000.....	21
Table 3	An exercise in attributing value to unpaid domestic labour.....	26
Table 4	Total work load.....	27
Table (a)	Member States of the Commission.....	46
Table (b)	United Nations bodies.....	48
Table (c)	Specialized agencies.....	50
Table (d)	Other intergovernmental organizations.....	50
Table (e)	Non-governmental organizations.....	50
Table (f)	Secretariat.....	52
Table (g)	Presentations of Panel 1.....	55
Table (h)	Presentations of Panel 2.....	57
Table (i)	Presentations of Panel 3: Mexico, Central America and The Caribbean.....	60
Table (j)	Presentations of Panel 3: Andean Region and Southern Cone.....	62

Abstract

What is poverty, how to measure it and how to tackle it, are the three questions to which this document responds, on the basis of the theoretical framework of gender studies.

The harmonization of policies for economic growth, social equity and gender equity is a challenge that can no longer be ignored.

Poverty is considered as the result of power relations that first of all affect men and women in a different way, but then also indigenous and Afro-descendent women, older adults and the inhabitants of certain areas. The multidimensional nature of this phenomenon is shown, as well as the virtues and limitations of traditional forms of measuring poverty, drawing attention to specific aspects which explain the disadvantages suffered by women: the invisibility of unpaid domestic labour, the time poverty associated with such labour; the labour and wage discrimination against women; the importance of studies of the family from a gender perspective and the challenges for public policy. In order to avoid discriminatory biases it is suggested that efforts must be made to develop women's economic autonomy and promote a reconciliation of private and domestic life by encouraging a mass influx of men into the sphere of care.

Introduction

In May 2003, the Women and Development Unit of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) invited professionals from different divisions within this organization and experts on gender and poverty issues to enter into a debate that lasted for eight sessions, the results of which are set forth in this document.¹

The aim of this interdisciplinary dialogue between representatives of different divisions was to identify the points of intersection between two areas of study, namely poverty and gender. What do they have in common? What influence does the one exert on the other? Which are the most significant conceptual, methodological and political aspects? The dialogue was organized on the basis of three interrelated aspects: progress and conceptual dilemmas in the preparation of studies on poverty and gender, the contributions made by the gender perspective to poverty measurement and the challenges involved in the formulation of public policies. The participants' contributions referred mainly to the definition of poverty and its indicators from a gender perspective, proposals for poverty measurement, geographical variables, and the analysis of income by means of censuses and the development of public policies.

¹ The Discussion Group members were, in alphabetical order: Laís Abramos, Diane Alméras, Irma Arriagada, Pablo Avalos, Rosa Bravo, Simone Cecchini, Patricia Cortés, Martine Dirven, Juan Carlos Feres, Thelma Gálvez, Lorena Godoy, Ricardo Jordan, Joan Mac Donald, Flavia Marco, Vivian Milosavljevic, Francisca Miranda, Sonia Montañó, María Nieves Rico and Jorge Rodríguez. The ECLAC divisions and units represented were: the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division, the Social Development Division, the Statistics and Economic Projections Division, the Population Division (CELADE), the Agricultural Development Unit and the Women and Development Unit.

Before this dialogue began, the Women and Development Unit conducted an extensive bibliographic review, updated to 2003, to identify the principal contributions made by gender studies to the analysis of poverty.²

In addition, on 12 and 13 August 2003, ECLAC and the International Labour Organization (ILO) jointly convened an Expert Meeting on Poverty and Gender, which was held in Santiago, Chile,³ with the objective of analysing three main issues from a gender perspective: theoretical and methodological progresses into the study of poverty, proposals for poverty measurement and the identification of best practices in public policies designed to combat poverty among women. Experts from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay participated in this meeting, as well as representatives of United Nations agencies such as ECLAC, ILO, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).⁴

This document summarizes the debate held in the Discussion Group and the presentations and analyses heard at the Expert Meeting. The first part deals with conceptual aspects of poverty from a gender perspective and sets out a review of the principal approaches to poverty as well as the contributions made by the gender category to conceptualizing this phenomenon. A number of non-material dimensions of poverty, such as economic autonomy and violence, are also studied from a gender perspective.

The second part is devoted to methodological aspects of poverty studies. It reviews traditional measurements and proposes methods of measurement that allow for the observation of gender inequalities and some non-monetary dimensions of poverty.

The document then discusses the way in which the gender category has been incorporated into the political agenda, proposes the development of policies to overcome poverty among women in the region, and identifies the major obstacles that have been dealt with and the challenges still to come.

A final reflection sums up the main contributions, particularly the proposals for the review of traditional poverty measurements, with a view to formulating recommendations for research and public policy making.

² The bibliography, with about 80 publications on poverty measurement from a gender perspective, was compiled by searching for the words “gender”, “poverty” or both, in the ECLAC Library using the program “Copernic”. A second search was then conducted using the names of authors mentioned in the publications found.

³ See web-site: <http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/mujer/noticias/noticias/0/12810/P12810.xml&xsl=/mujer/tpl/p1f.xsl&base=/mujer/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>.

⁴ The views put forward at this meeting are available on the ECLAC’s Women and Development Unit web-site.

I. What is meant by poverty from a gender perspective?

The interest in analysing the phenomenon of poverty from a gender perspective is rooted in the international women's movement and it is based on the need to recognize that poverty affects men and women in a different way. It is possible to identify the gender factors that increase or decrease the probability of individuals experiencing poverty, and how the characteristics of poverty are different for men and women.

Moreover, a gender perspective enhances the conceptualization of poverty because it goes beyond a descriptive analysis to look at the causes of poverty. It approaches poverty as a process, thereby giving it a more dynamic perspective.

In addition, a gender perspective contributes to the design of policies allowing measures to be directed at the severest poverty and the most vulnerable populations.

A. Definition of the concepts of poverty and gender

Poverty and gender are concepts that have historically been treated in a fairly independent fashion, which explains the specific importance each has been afforded on the political and research agendas.

Notable advances have been made in the theoretical development of both concepts over the last few decades. In the case of poverty, although the most frequent definition refers to the lack of income, different approaches have emerged as regards its conceptualization and measurement. And the concept of gender, as a theoretical and methodological approach to the cultural construction of sexual differences that alludes the inequalities between the female and male sexes and to the way the two aspects relate to each other, has become an increasingly important category of analysis.

The analysis of poverty from a gender perspective develops both concepts to help understand a number of processes inherent to this phenomenon, its dynamics and characteristics in specific contexts. It helps to explain why certain groups, by virtue of their sex, are more likely to be affected by poverty. Hence, the conceptual, methodological, and political importance of approaching the issue of poverty, from a gender perspective.

B. Different concepts of poverty

Various approaches to defining poverty can be identified. Among the most important, Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart (2003) single out the monetary approach, the capacities approach, and the social exclusion and participative approaches. These categories are a reflection of a wider debate on how the development of wealth and the non-enjoyment of its benefits should be understood.

The monetary approach, which defines poverty as a decline in consumption or income, and is based on a poverty line, is doubtless the most commonly used. However, other approaches have gained increasing acceptance insofar as they have revealed the limitations of the monetary perspective in defining poverty, and have contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

The capacities approach, pioneered by Amartya Sen, rejects monetary income as the sole measure of wellbeing, which he defines as the freedom of individuals to live a life that allows them to fulfil their capacities. Poverty is interpreted as a lack of resources impeding people from engaging in certain basic activities such as staying alive and enjoying a long and healthy life, reproducing and transmitting their culture to future generations, interacting socially, having access to knowledge and enjoying freedom of expression and thought. According to this approach, the fight against poverty consists of identifying and increasing people's capacities to improve their wellbeing.

The social exclusion approach studies the structural characteristics of society, which engender processes and dynamics that exclude individuals or groups from full social participation. It makes particular reference to the distribution of opportunities and resources needed to overcome exclusion, and to the promotion of inclusion in both the labour market and social processes.

In the participatory approach, the poor define poverty based on their own analysis of their reality, by including aspects they consider to be significant. From this point of view, overcoming poverty entails empowering the poor (Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart, 2003; Arriagada, 2003).

Other criticisms of the conceptualization and measurement of poverty by income and consumption are found in new theories that broaden and deepen the concept of poverty. One of these is social capital, which, in general terms may be defined as "an intangible resource that enables or prepares individuals or groups to obtain benefits through their social relations" (Miranda, 2003). This approach highlights other, less visible dimensions of poverty, i.e. the existence of "a number of variables that are not easy to measure in monetary terms and which have a strong influence on the condition of poverty. These variables are associated with the psycho-social components of poverty"

(Miranda, 2003). Social capital provides an overall vision of the processes of development and poverty, including political, social and economic aspects.

The geographical approach has also contributed to a better understanding of poverty by studying the features of the spatial context in which the poor reside, and by taking into account such aspects as concentration of and access to natural and physical assets. This approach reflects the heterogeneity of the phenomenon and pinpoints the population's needs.

In combination, these different approaches and concepts have revealed the complexity of poverty and helped to build a greater consensus that it is a phenomenon with many dimensions and many causes, which manifests itself in different ways. In other words, it is a multidimensional and heterogeneous phenomenon, which includes material, non-material, subjective and cultural necessities.

Furthermore, these approaches have demonstrated the need to understand poverty as a process rather than a state. Although poverty can be considered a situation that persists over time, in many cases it is variable and can change in a short space of time, especially as a function of employment and unemployment (Arriagada, 2003).

From a broader perspective, a number of concepts contribute to the analysis of poverty, such as inequality, vulnerability and exclusion. Nonetheless, as Arriagada (2003) puts it, it is important to differentiate these concepts analytically inasmuch as the approach chosen spills over into the type of policies and programmes that will be developed to deal with the phenomenon. The concept of inequality, taken as the degree of concentration and polarization of urban income distribution by population group, "although it constitutes a broader set of issues than poverty, in Latin America it is a necessary additional point of reference, since it has common causes and moreover affects both the economic growth and social expenditure required to eradicate urban poverty, and the periods of time in which this objective might be expected to be achieved in the different countries" (Arriagada, 2003, p. 4).

The concept of vulnerability helps to identify some of the processes that cause poverty. Although it is not synonymous with poverty, it implies an increase in the fragility of individuals or households as regards poverty. Vulnerability is associated with an external aspect consisting of risks to which individuals or households are liable, such as price increases, the loss of employment or accidents, and an internal aspect that refers to the insufficiency of resources to deal with risks and avert major losses. One of the positive aspects of this concept is that it encompasses resources that are both material and non-material, such as insertion in social networks (Clert, 1998).

The concept of exclusion has a dual meaning. The first aspect refers to the act of expelling a person from the space he or she occupied previously, such as dismissing a worker or denying low-income groups access to certain services. The second refers to depriving the individual of some of his or her rights. Exclusion is, then, a phenomenon originating in action, which can imply an external responsibility and an obligation on the part of public agents and civil society to take measures. It is a relational concept inasmuch as the emphasis is not laid on monetary resources but on the individual's relationship with the family, the community and the State (Clert, 1998, p. 49). Usually, a distinction is made between different, though related, forms of exclusion, such as: exclusion from labour, goods and services markets; political and institutional exclusion, i.e. from participation and representation; cultural exclusion, or exclusion from identity, knowledge and values; and spatial exclusion, that is to say from territory and geographic location. The mechanisms of exclusion can be institutional or sociocultural.

The more comprehensive definitions of poverty proposed by the various approaches have been criticized in the light of more operational criteria. In this regard, it has been argued that the definition of a social phenomenon such as poverty should not necessarily encompass its causes or explanatory factors and some of its consequences, but be limited to the identification of the phenomenon. Indeed, this broader conceptualization of poverty may complicate the process of reaching agreements.

That is why partisans of the monetary approach argue for a more operational definition of poverty that serves to establish a measure by which to identify those who are poor and those who are not. This means returning to a primary definition of poverty based on inability to meet survival needs which, though not disregarding historical determinants, uses a more operational definition of poverty to clearly distinguish the phenomenon itself from its explanatory factors and consequences, or what may be termed the situational poverty syndrome. This would increase the possibilities of reaching some kind of agreement and would enable the concept of poverty to be realigned in the current debate.

ECLAC has defined poverty by taking its various dimensions into account. The first definition of poverty indicated that it was a “situational syndrome in which the associated factors include under-consumption, malnutrition, precarious living conditions, low educational levels, poor sanitary conditions, an unstable position in the productive apparatus, feelings of discouragement and anomaly, little participation in the mechanisms of social integration and perhaps adherence to a particular scale of values which differs to some extent from that of the rest of society” (Altimir, 1979). More recently (ECLAC, 2000), in addition to its approach to poverty as a lack of economic resources or what society considers to be basic living conditions, ECLAC has reasserted the importance of perspectives such as social exclusion and capacities, understanding poverty as a phenomenon with multiple dimensions and causes. From this point of view, it has been proposed that poverty should be defined as “the result of a social and economic process—with cultural and political components—in which individuals and households become deprived of essential assets and opportunities as a consequence of different individual and collective reasons and processes, thus making it multidimensional in nature.” So, apart from material deprivation, poverty encompasses subjective dimensions that go beyond material subsistence (ECLAC, 2003).

C. Poverty from a gender perspective

In the 1980s, a group of third-world feminists started to analyse the phenomenon of poverty from a gender perspective. They identified a series of phenomena within poverty that specifically affected women and showed that poor women outnumbered poor men, that women suffered more severe poverty than men and that female poverty displayed a more marked tendency to increase, largely because of the rise in the number of female-headed households. This set of phenomena came to be termed the “feminization of poverty”.⁵

Although the idea of the feminization of poverty has been questioned, it has pointed out the need to acknowledge that poverty affects men and women in different ways, and that gender is a factor—just like age, ethnic factors and geographical location, among others—which influences poverty and increases women’s vulnerability to it. In that sense, “the probability of being poor is not distributed randomly among the population”, as Gita Sen argues (1998 p. 127).

⁵ One of the leading forums for the analysis of poverty from the perspective of women is the international feminist network “Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era” (DAWN/MUDAR).

By assigning the domestic sphere to women, the sexual division of labour causes an “inequality of opportunities for women, as a gender, to gain access to material and social resources (ownership of productive capital, paid labour, education and training), and to participate in decision-making in the main political, economic and social policies” (Bravo, 1998 p. 63). In fact, women have not only relatively fewer material assets, but also fewer social assets (the income, goods and services to which people have access through their social relationships) and fewer cultural assets (the formal education and cultural knowledge that enable people perform in the human environment), all of which places them at greater risk of being poor (Bravo, 1998 p. 63).

Women’s narrower access to resources —caused by the limited spaces assigned to them through the sexual division of labour and to the social hierarchies built up on the basis of this division— translates into deprivation in various social spheres, fundamentally in three closely connected systems: the labour market, the welfare or social protection system and the household (Ruspini, 1996).

Illiteracy rates are another manifestation of the constraints on women’s access to different types of assets. Although the rates historically displayed by women have decreased and the gap as regards men has narrowed, women still represent a higher proportion of the illiterate population. In 1970, the illiteracy rate for the population aged over 15 years was 22.3% for men and 30.3% for women, while in 2000 the male rate was 10.1% and the female rate 12.1%. Furthermore, the causes of discontinued schooling in adolescence are clearly differentiated by gender, since women leave their studies to undertake domestic labour, while men do so to enter paid labour (ECLAC, 2003).

Another indication of the constraints on women is their access to material assets. According to measurements based on surveys conducted in Latin American households, women’s participation in economic life increased significantly during the 1990s, from 37.9% in 1990 to 42% in 1999. However, female unemployment rates are higher and the gap as regards men has increased with the passing of time. Indeed, in 1990 the female unemployment rate was 5.1%, while the male unemployment rate was 4.3%; in 1999, the rate for women increased to 11.2% while the rate for men recorded a smaller rise, to 7.2%. Moreover, significantly, unemployment rates continue to be higher for women regardless of their educational qualifications. As for remuneration, women receive a lower average income from labour than men, with the gap especially conspicuous among more highly qualified women. Discrimination against women is clearly visible, since across the 17 Latin American countries, there are more women in lower-skilled jobs, which are more poorly paid, less stable and more informal, with fewer women in highly-paid and managerial positions.

As regards access to social assets, the tendency is to ignore important differences between the associability of men and women. From the gender perspective, the entire conceptualization of social capital is criticized for being construed as if access to it “were similar for men as for women”, and although “it does not completely disregard the difference, it simply does not assign any analytical or explanatory value to the social construction” of these differences (Montaño, 2003b).

Apart from emphasizing that poverty encompasses a lack of material, social and cultural resources, the gender perspective reveals the heterogeneous nature of poverty in that men and women have different responsibilities and experiences and that, as a result, their interests and needs are also different. Based on the relational dimension of the concept of gender, insofar as it refers to the relationship between men and women, female poverty is analysed considering both the family and the social environment. With respect to the family, the gender perspective improves the understanding of how the household functions, since it reveals the hierarchies and the distribution of resources, and thereby calls into question the idea that resources within the household are distributed

equitably and that the needs of its members are the same. In concrete terms, poverty is not understood merely as a “descriptive concept that establishes distance from a threshold of income or resources, but includes an explanation for inequalities in the power relations within the household” (ECLAC, 2003b). The gender perspective also imparts a multidimensional perspective because it takes into account the multiple roles played by men and women in the household, the labour market and society, as well as factors that interrelate with gender, such as age and ethnic group (Clert, 1998).

As for the dynamics of poverty, the gender perspective affirms the importance of understanding the phenomenon as a process rather than a symptom, thus avoiding the static perception of “poverty as a snapshot” that “naturalizes and freezes social relations, barely acknowledges gender and generation relationships, and does not help to understand previous processes or potentialities, nor poverty in its historical, macro-social and micro-household dimensions” (Feijoó, 2003).

Another of the gender perspective’s contributions to the analysis of poverty has been to expose discrimination both in the public sphere and in the household, revealing in both cases the power relations and unequal distribution of resources. In that sense, it is possible to link general and specific perspectives and to relate economic and social development to people’s daily lives, thereby demonstrating the connections between both levels and helping to understand the complexity of the processes engendered by the phenomenon of poverty.

This conceptual analysis of poverty is of crucial importance in that, as has been corroborated by a number of studies (Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart, 2003), the definition of poverty also defines its measurement indicators —as Feijoó (2003) established, what is not conceptualized cannot be measured— and the type of policies needed to overcome it. Nonetheless, it is important that the debate on the conceptualization of poverty does not become limited by the possibilities of its measurement, i.e. it should transcend the existing measurement possibilities.

According to this broader conceptualization of poverty, economic autonomy and gender violence constitute other important dimensions in showing how poverty affects men and women in a differentiated manner.

? Other dimensions of poverty

1) *Economic autonomy*

A fundamental dimension of poverty is related to economic autonomy, that is, people’s possession of their own income with which to satisfy their needs.

The inequality of opportunities regarding women’s access to paid employment is prejudicial to their chances of achieving economic autonomy. This perspective reveals the habitually hidden poverty that exists in certain groups. For example, individuals may live in non-poor households, but nevertheless not have at their disposal income of their own that would allow them to satisfy their needs in an autonomous manner. Such is the situation of a great number of married women living in either poor or non-poor households who, due to their predominantly domestic activity, are placed in a position of dependence as regards the head of household.

Apart from the constraints on women’s access to employment, they also have restricted access to health, education and social networks, as well as to participation in decision-making on political, economic and social issues. This jeopardizes their autonomy, be it physical (the exercise of

their sexual and reproductive rights), social (organizational capacity) or political (the capacity to express opinions).

2) Gender violence

Violence forms part of the analysis of poverty from a gender perspective because it is seen as a factor that prevents individual enjoyment of autonomy insofar as it hinders women's access to the labour market. It limits women's possibilities of achieving economic autonomy and exercising their rights as citizens, which, by isolating them, erodes their social capital, and hinders the attainment of social autonomy.

Studies carried out by the Inter-American Development Bank indicate that there is a close relationship between poverty and violence. On the one hand, it has been demonstrated that poverty constitutes a risk factor as regards the occurrence of physical violence in the household.

On the other hand, poverty is a consequence of violence, that is to say violence impoverishes people and slows economic development because: (a) dealing with the consequences of social and domestic violence requires expenditure on the part of the police and legal systems and social services which, together, take up resources that could be channelled to more productive activities; and (b) women victims of domestic violence, specifically, are less productive in the workplace, which causes a direct loss in national production (Buvinic and Morrison, 2003).

In synthesis, the gender perspective contributes significantly to the analysis of the concept of poverty, since it approaches it in an integral and dynamic manner, and identifies other dimensions in which the phenomenon is manifested. In common with the criticisms voiced from other perspectives, the gender approach disputes any definition of poverty based on income alone and emphasizes the fact that poverty encompasses both material and non-material and both symbolical and cultural aspects, and that it is fundamentally affected by the power relations, or social hierarchies, that determine the greater or lesser access of individuals to material, social and cultural resources as a function of their gender. In that sense, gender can determine degree of poverty and the risk of being poor.

II. How can poverty be measured from a gender perspective?

Poverty measurements are important in charting the phenomenon, and in the preparation and implementation of policies. The measurement methodology used in any particular case is closely linked with the conceptualization of poverty adopted, which is why measurements can differ, since they are geared towards different aspects of poverty. As has been argued from different approaches, including the gender perspective, methodologies are not neutral but without exception contain subjective elements, even those that apparently offer greater precision and objectivity.

Part of the gender perspective's contribution to a broader definition of poverty consists of the call for new forms of measurement that can represent its complexity, dynamic nature and multidimensionality, by means of successive approximations. In that regard, the debate on the methodological aspects of poverty is not an attempt to produce a single indicator synthesizing all the dimensions of poverty. On the contrary, the idea is to study different measurement proposals so as to improve the more conventional measurements, identify their advantages and limitations and develop new measurements.

A. Measurement of household income

The measurement of income is one of the most commonly used methods. One of its major advantages is that it is a very good

quantitative indicator of poverty and, as far as monetary metrics are

concerned, no other method yields better results. Furthermore, the different countries have more data available for the monetary measurement of poverty than for measuring it in terms of capacities, social exclusion or participation. It also admits comparisons between countries and regions, and allows poverty to be quantified in order to prepare the respective policies.

Nevertheless, the objectivity and accuracy of monetary measurement, which has been criticized from different perspectives on poverty, does not mean that it is free of judgements or subjective elements. This methodology defines options as to what does and does not form part of family income; these are external options, which the poor have no participation in defining. Apart from that, many of the methodological elements in the monetary measurement of poverty stem from economic theory, despite the fact that poverty is not a solely economic category. There is no theory of poverty that allows a clear distinction to be made between the poor and the non-poor, which is why the definition of a poverty line sometimes obeys political criteria.⁶

Furthermore, it is important to realize that income is very difficult to measure in household surveys, since revenues are omitted or declared to be lower than they actually are.

Another disadvantage of measuring poverty by income is that it is highly variable. In this respect, rather than fixing a poverty line, it would be more useful to establish a range, with floor and ceiling levels, which would permit the measurement of different levels of poverty at different points in time.

The capacity of monetary measurement to reflect the multidimensional nature of poverty is much debated. Critics argue that measuring by income takes only the monetary dimension of poverty, and consequently only the material aspect, into account. It disregards cultural aspects, power relations that determine access to resources and, above all, unpaid domestic labour—which is indispensable for the survival of household members— among other indicators that could better reflect the phenomenon of poverty and differences in the well-being of men and women.

However, this point still causes controversy because the apologists of monetary measurement argue that, although income does not capture all the dimensions of poverty, it should not be taken as a one-dimensional indicator since income is related to other aspects, such as human capital and social relations. In that sense, income would include the other dimensions.

Further, income also defines the type and magnitude of satisfiers (not only material ones), to which people have access to cover their needs, which also entails a degree of multidimensionality. Moreover, income takes into account cultural elements by considering consumers' preferences in the choice of satisfiers such as culture, health, leisure and education.

Lastly, another criticism of poverty measurement by income is that it does not take into account the fact that people also satisfy their needs by means of non-monetary resources, such as community networks and family support.

Those who endorse the gender perspective agree with many of the criticisms made and also maintain that the methodology based on per capita household income and poverty lines is insufficient to sustain an analysis of poverty from a gender perspective.

⁶ Such as a relative poverty line defining all those receiving support from public funds as poor (Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart, 2003).

In effect, per capita household income is too limited a criterion to analyse the phenomenon of poverty within households and to reflect the processes that men and women experience in a differentiated manner within this environment. This is because the household is treated as a unit of analysis and it is assumed that resources are equitably distributed among its members. Likewise, it is assumed that all the members of the household have the same needs. According to this interpretation, all the members of a poor household will suffer from poverty in the same way.

Another limitation of per capita household income with respect to revealing gender inequalities is that it fails to consider the fact that unpaid domestic labour constitutes a type of income in households where an individual is devoted to domestic and caregiving tasks. This can make a large difference to household income, especially considering that male-headed households are more likely to rely on the spouse's free domestic labour, thereby avoiding the expenses associated with running the household. In comparison, in female-headed households, women must accept the consequences of carrying out unpaid domestic labour, as well as enjoying less time for rest and leisure. This can harm a woman's physical and mental health and reduce the time available for access to better job opportunities and to social and political participation.

Furthermore, per capita household income measurement does not permit the observation of differences between men and women as regards their use of time and their expenditure patterns, two aspects that allow poverty to be charted from a gender perspective. As regards the distribution of time, research confirms that women devote more time to unpaid activities than men. This indicates that they have longer working hours, which is harmful to their health and nutrition. A study conducted in Nicaragua on time spent by men and women on different activities found that, although women spent less hours performing paid labour than men, they spent more on domestic tasks. This meant that, overall, women had a longer working day than men. What is more, women had less time left for recreation and other activities than men did (Milosavljevic, 2003).⁷

With respect to expenditure patterns, information compiled in different contexts shows that women spend more of their income on the welfare of their children (Buvinic, 1997) and on the home, than on their personal needs. By contrast, men tend to reserve a significant part of their income for personal consumption. Furthermore, the data indicates that the proportion men allocate to the household decreases as their actual income deteriorates, since they try to maintain their level of personal consumption (Bruce, 1989, quoted in Baden and Milward, 1997).

B. Measuring poverty by income from a gender perspective

1. Measurement of income at the individual level

As mentioned, poverty can be analysed on the basis of economic autonomy, i.e. the income that individuals have to satisfy their needs. In order to do this, it is necessary to "open up the black box of the household" by measuring poverty at the individual level. This proposal does not suggest that poverty measurement by household should be replaced by poverty measurement at the individual level, as they are different methods. The latter cannot be used to estimate the poverty of the total population; rather it seeks to use the advantages of the individual level to capture the

⁷ Reference is made to a special table prepared by ECLAC, based on Nicaragua's national household survey on the measurement of living standards (1998), in which time distribution was measured among urban employed between the ages of 15 and 59.

poverty of those who have no income of their own, even in non-poor households, thereby revealing gender differences.

Indeed, a simple average of the individual income of the urban population over the age of fifteen around 1999, in 14 countries of the region, indicates that approximately 46% of women have no income, while only 21% of men are in the same situation. And among income-earners, women outnumber men only in the first income quintile. As can be seen, this indicator of economic autonomy demonstrates major gender inequalities (Milosavljevic, 2003).

According to analyses prepared by ECLAC, a measurement of the ratio of the total individual monetary income of female and male heads of household, by poverty status in urban zones of Latin America around 1999, showed that female heads of household earn less than their male counterparts, in both poor and non-poor households. Furthermore, measurements for female spouses without personal income in poor and non-poor households, in urban areas of the region around 1994 and 1999, show that a high proportion of these women do not have personal income in either poor or non-poor households (Milosavljevic, 2003).

These measurements of individual poverty show the advantages of this method in revealing poverty overlooked by traditional poverty measurements, such as that of individuals who live in non-poor households but do not have their own income, which demonstrates the greater constraints on women's economic autonomy.

2. Combined measurement of income

In the same line of analysis, a combined measurement of individual and household income (Rodríguez, 2003) can measure poverty and, at the same time, capture gender inequalities. Research conducted using this method allows at least four categories to be distinguished (see table 1).

Table 1
GENDER, POVERTY, AND DOMESTIC AND INDIVIDUAL INCOME: A STUDY PROPOSAL

Women's income level	Poverty of the household	
	Poor	Non-poor
Nil or low	Absolute poverty: the worst situation in socio-economic terms	"Invisible" poor: potentially poor since poverty increases with female individualization
Medium or high	Autonomous 1: women's poverty is reduced with female individualization but the poverty of the original domestic unit may deepen	Autonomous 2: women probably consolidate the situation through female individualization but an increase in the prevalence of the original domestic unit's poverty is probable

Source: Jorge Rodríguez, 2003. "Pobreza, Ingresos y Género: usando los censos de la ronda 2000", document presented at the Poverty and Gender Discussion Group, Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), June, 2003.

As table 1 shows, the most precarious situation is that of women without income or with a very low income living in a poor household. In this case, a shift in the measurement of poverty from the domestic level to the individual level would not have a major effect.

In comparison, women without income or with very low income living in a non-poor household suffer a form of poverty that is invisible to the traditional methodology of poverty measurement based on household income, which is why in this case measurement at the individual level would show many women as potentially poor and vulnerable to poverty.

Women with a medium to high income living in a poor household are potentially autonomous, but have domestic responsibilities that use up an important part of their income. A measurement of income at the individual level could raise them out of poverty. Individualization could have a number of effects on poverty indices: (a) female emancipation through the departure of the woman from the household could reduce the prevalence of poverty by constituting a new, non-poor domestic unit from a poor one; this would, however, make the original poor domestic unit even poorer;

(b) if a male to whom a low income is attributed leaves, the poverty rate may drop if a poor unit is created, but the original domestic unit becomes non-poor; and (c) if individualization makes all the “new units” poor, then poverty would increase.

A woman with medium or high income living in a non-poor household is autonomous and the measurement of poverty by household income level is correct in this case in considering the woman to be non-poor. Nevertheless, in the event of individualization, some households classified as non-poor could become poor through the loss of the woman’s income, depending on the modality of individualization and the income of the other household members.

One application for combined measurement of income is the use of census data. Censuses, as instruments for collecting information, have the advantage of being universal, which avoids problems of representativity and sample errors. Moreover, they show data at a very deep level of disaggregation —at the census block level— which has been rendered possible by technological advances.

Historically, censuses have been used to measure poverty by means of the method of unmet basic needs —housing, services, space or over-crowding— although some censuses take income into account.

When this method is applied to the micro database of the 2000 Mexican census (see table 2), the poverty of men and women in the household do not appear to be significantly different, since 60% of men and 62% of women live in households with a per capita income of 1,000 pesos or less, and 40% of men and 38% of women live in households with an income over 1,000 pesos. However, the largest differences become apparent when individual incomes by gender are distinguished from household incomes. The data shows that 55% of women aged 20 years or over declared no income; 15% of women living in households with an income above 1,000 pesos had no income, in other words, these women were invisible to poverty measurement by household income (a situation that is practically non-existent in the case of men); and 40% of women without income living in households with a low per capita income were thus doubly disadvantaged.

Table 2
GENDER, POVERTY, DOMESTIC AND INDIVIDUAL
INCOMES: APPLICATION OF THE STUDY PROPOSAL, MEXICO 2000
(Relative figures)^a

	Individual income (population aged 20 or more) ^b
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Household income (<i>per capita</i>)		None	Up to 1,000 pesos	Over 1,000 pesos	Total
Up to 1,000 pesos	Men	14	11	35	60
	Women	40	13	9	62
	Total	27	12	21	61
Over 1,000 pesos	Men	2	1	37	40
	Women	15	2	21	38
	Total	9	2	29	39
Total	Men	16	12	72	47
	Women	55	15	30	53
	Total	36	14	50	100

Source: ECLAC, based on the author's preparation of census data in Jorge Rodríguez, "Pobreza, Ingresos y Género: usando los censos de la Ronda 2000", which was presented to the Poverty and Gender Discussion Group, Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), June, 2003.

^a Processing of the micro database of the 2000 Census. Sample of 10% of the dwellings.

^b Apart from income from labour, this includes pensions, remittances, family transfers from outside the household, public programmes such as PROCAMPO and PROGRESA, grants, financial revenues and bank interest.

3. A synthetic indicator of economic poverty

Another proposal is the use of a synthetic indicator of the gender-based economic poverty of women (Gálvez, 2001; Bravo, 2003).⁸

This indicator is obtained by calculating total income by sex, that is to say the sum of the incomes received by women and men from waged labour, financial revenues, pensions, benefits, beneficent funds and current transfers, and dividing it by the total female and male populations, respectively.

This calculation gives the total income per woman and per man, and consequently the gender gap in total income, which is calculated as follows:

<p>Gender gap in total income</p> $[100 - (\text{total income per woman} / \text{total income per man}) * 100]$

C. Household headships: a good indicator of poverty amongst women?

Female household headship has been used as an indicator of the feminization of poverty and by the late 1970s it was already being argued that female-headed households were "the poorest of the poor". One of the reasons for the overrepresentation of women is that female heads of household earn a lower average income on the labour market than their male counterparts, and they face greater discrimination in securing paid employment and other kinds of resources due to time and mobility constraints. Another difficulty specific to female-headed households is the need to

⁸ Indicator proposed in the project entitled "Economic gender equality indicators", which was commissioned by the Federal and Provincial/Territorial Ministries responsible for the status of women, Canada, Toronto, Internet, publication ISBN 0-662-26159-3; 1997, quoted in Gálvez (2001).

perform both paid employment and reproductive labour (domestic work and caregiving) in a compatible manner, since most are single-parent households, which, unlike male-headed households, do not have female spouses (Milosavljevic, 2003).⁹

However, several studies have raised conceptual and methodological doubts regarding the relationship between household headships and poverty, and their use as representative measures of women's poverty. Conceptual doubts are related to the argument that female-headed households encompass a highly varied universe. That is why, as a homogenous category, these households form "a universe that does not include all poor women, and whose members are not all poor" (Geldstein, 1997 quoted in Feijoó, 1998).

Moreover, the dependency rates in female-headed households are generally lower than in male-headed households, where many spouses do not engage in waged labour.

On the other hand, there are positive aspects to female-headed households, beyond poverty-related issues. These include a lesser degree of submittal to marital authority, greater self-esteem on the part of women, more freedom to choose an occasional partner or to constitute a couple, more flexibility in having a paid job, a reduction in or elimination of physical and emotional abuse, an expenditure pattern that is more equitable and geared towards nutrition and education, and access to social and community support, i.e. to social capital. (BRIDGE Development-Gender, 2001;

Feijoó, 1998) These aspects help to weaken the concept of female headships as a synonym of poverty and also demonstrate that poverty is a function of subjective elements since, although these households may be poorer in terms of income, women heads of household may feel less vulnerable (Chant, 2003).

As for the empirical evidence, research based on household surveys in a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and in Honduras, whose objective was to determine the proportion of women and female-headed households in total poverty, yielded little evidence that women and female-headed households were overrepresented in the group of poor households. Although the poverty levels were higher for female-headed households and for women, the differences were not that significant (Quisumbing, Haddad and Peña, 2001).¹⁰

Measurements in Latin America give different results. At the individual level, female heads of household receive less income than men in the same position and female-headed households display a lower per capita income than male-headed households. During the 1990s, although the number of female-headed households increased overall,¹¹ indigent households represented the largest proportion of female headships and continued to increase.¹²

Is it possible, then, to assert that women outnumber men among the poor? An index of the proportion of women among the poor, adjusted by age and sex, shows that at the end of the 1990s women represented a higher proportion of the poor than men in most Latin American countries. In 1999, the proportion of women among the poor measured by the urban poverty line was over 100 in 11 of 17 countries in the region. This trend was even more marked in rural areas, where 11 of 13 countries registered indices of over 100. An analysis of this index by age group yields indices of over

⁹ In Latin America, there is a spouse in 88% of male-headed households, whereas there is none in 90% of female-headed households.

¹⁰ This research used household surveys from: sub-Saharan Africa (Botswana, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar and Rwanda); Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nepal); and Honduras.

¹¹ That is to say that female headships have increased in non-poor, non-indigent poor and indigent households.

¹² In these households the increase was 28.5% in 1990 and 31.9% in 1999, as a simple average of the percentages of urban female headship obtained from information available in 16 countries of the region.

100 for the population aged between 20 and 59 in almost all the countries of the region, which is demonstrative of the high degree of female vulnerability to poverty in this age group. These results allow to take this index as an indicator of the feminization of poverty.

According to the information collected, female household headship is not a clear, representative measure of poverty among women, since it does not show in all cases that women suffer from greater poverty. As a result, it is not a conclusive indicator of female poverty.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the criterion of household headship should be omitted from the analysis of this issue. This criterion serves to establish family relationships within the unit under analysis, i.e. the household, and to build up the typology of households. What is proposed is to introduce certain changes in its measurement, by disaggregating household headship by type of household, size, structure and age groups, for example, since it is true that female headships help to better define the poverty of men and women and reveal gender inequalities as well as women's greater vulnerability to poverty. An example of this is that in the majority of male-headed households, the head lives in a couple, which is not the case in most female-headed households. This implies that in male-headed households someone is usually doing the domestic work, which avoids expenditure on these services or the work itself from falling to the head and to other members of the household, who can consequently participate in other activities. In female-headed households, however, which lack this resource, it is likely that part of the head of household's income will be used to acquire these services or that her working day will be lengthened by shouldering both paid and unpaid labour, or that the other members of the household will be obliged to postpone their activities to perform household tasks. This state of affairs makes poverty more severe in such households.

D. Measuring unpaid labour

Unpaid labour is a key concept in the analysis of poverty from a gender perspective. The labour category to which these activities belong has been extensively debated; although they do not conform to a monetary logic, they nevertheless satisfy needs and permit social reproduction. Attention has also been given to the close relationship between unpaid labour and the ways in which women become poor, and to the need to measure such labour. To this end, several different proposals have been put forward.

1. Imputation of a monetary value to domestic labour

There are several proposals for imputing a value to domestic labour. One is to use the value corresponding to the wage of a substitute worker, to an equivalent function on the market or to the opportunity cost. Another is to attribute value based on average or minimum wages on the market (Goldschmidt, 1987 quoted in Arriagada, 1990). It has also been proposed that domestic labour should be included as an item in national accounts.

The need to impute a value to this labour is linked to the importance of measuring women's fundamental contribution to unpaid domestic labour, i.e. to household work and caregiving. Measurements of the rate of domestic activity in the female population aged 15 years or over, by position in the household in urban areas around 1994 and 1999, shows that household work is carried out principally by women, with female spouses undertaking a greater share (Milosavljevic, 2003).

The measurement of household work would also mark an important difference in household incomes between male-headed households that have a person devoted to domestic and caregiving tasks and female-headed households without such a person, which assume the private costs imposed by this work.

Among other arguments, opponents of imputing a value to domestic labour sustain that non-monetary transfers by the State are not attributed a value either. Domestic labour is not comparable to non-monetary transfers conducted by the State, however, since these are transfers from outside the household, whereas domestic labour deals with transfers within the household, and the measurement of income per household attributes a value to all transfers within it, that is to say all the incomes produced within the household, with the sole exception of domestic labour.

It has also been argued that attributing a value to domestic labour would raise the poverty threshold, and would therefore make no difference to poverty measurement. However, imputing a monetary value to domestic labour does reveal differences in the distance of households from the poverty threshold, and captures the severity of poverty in the household. Furthermore, attributing a value to domestic labour means making it visible and placing it in the category of labour (see table 3).

Table 3

AN EXERCISE IN ATTRIBUTING VALUE TO UNPAID DOMESTIC LABOUR

Single-parent household	Income	Two-parent household	Income
Without attributing value to unpaid domestic labour			
Female head with waged employment	75	Male head with waged employment spouse (unpaid domestic labour)	100
First child	0	First child	0
Second child	0	Second child	0
	75/3		100/4
1. <i>Per capita</i> household income	25	1. <i>Per capita</i> household income	25
Poverty line	25	Poverty line	25
Imputation of the value of unpaid domestic labour (10 per capita)			
No imputation	0	Imputation	40
Household income + imputation	75	Household income + imputation	140
2. <i>Per capita</i> household income	25	2. <i>Per capita</i> household income	35
Poverty line	35	Poverty line	35

Source: Vivian Milosavljevic, "El enfoque de género y la medición de la pobreza", presented at the Expert Meeting on Poverty and Gender (Santiago, Chile, 12 and 13 August), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/International Labour Organization (ILO), 2003.

2. Assigning time to unpaid labour

Another form of measuring and visualizing unpaid labour is to assign it a time factor. In this case, the idea is to conceptualize unpaid labour in the form of subsistence labour (self-production of food, manufacture of clothing and services), domestic labour (purchase of goods and acquisition of services for the household, cooking, washing, ironing, cleaning, management responsibilities in organizing and distributing tasks, and activities outside the household, such as paying bills, errands, etc.), family caregiving (taking care of children and adults or elderly people, which implies material work as well as an affective and emotional aspect) and voluntary labour or working for the community (work performed for non-family members through a lay or religious organization) (Aguirre, 2003).

By accounting for the time invested in each of these tasks, they can be made visible so that society can appreciate them and perceive gender inequalities in the family and in society. What is more, this time allocation serves to calculate total workload, a concept that is inherent to both unpaid and paid labour.

E. Measuring the non-monetary dimensions of poverty

1. Measuring time use

As different studies have shown, men and women have very different time use patterns. In general, these studies have concluded that women devote more time to unpaid activities; meaning longer working days, which constrain their access to paid labour, i.e. employment, and are harmful to their health. That is why the measurement of time use is considered to be an increasingly important conceptual and methodological issue.

On this basis, it has been proposed to measure time use by conducting surveys, introducing specific modules into household surveys or carrying out panel surveys. It would also be important to link such surveys to other types of measurements with more aggregated socio-economic information.

? Total workload

One of the proposals consists of measuring the physical units of time devoted to the total workload. This refers to total paid and unpaid labour, as shown in table 4.

Table 4
TOTAL WORKLOAD

Total work load	Market-based labour:	Wage earner Home-based Own account Domestic wage earner
	Unpaid labour	Subsistence Domestic Family caregiving Voluntary

Source: Rosario Aguirre, "Procesos de empobrecimiento y desigualdades de género. Desafíos para la medición", presented at the Expert Meeting on Poverty and Gender (Santiago, Chile, 12 and 13 August), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/International Labour Organization (ILO), 2003.

An example of this type of exercise is provided by a probabilistic survey conducted in 2003, which collected information from 1,200 households in the city of Montevideo, Uruguay, on paid and unpaid labour and time use (Aguirre, 2003). Total paid and unpaid activity was measured by the physical units of time spent on them, and gender and generation differences in time use and in the sexual division of labour were analysed. Household structure, composition and the family life-style were taken into account, with the household as the unit of analysis. This survey served to:

- Quantify the total paid and unpaid workload carried by society under present living conditions and the division of the workload between men and women.
- Quantify the concentration of the workload on those responsible for the household, that is to say the individuals shouldering main responsibility for the production of services and for domestic life within the household, independently of their gender, and to observe if that responsibility is discharged personally or not.
- Establish the distribution of domestic labour and caregiving among the members of the household, in households of different types and socioeconomic strata.
- Calculate the time spent on each of the major groups of activity within unpaid labour, especially caring for children and dependent people according to household way of life.
- Use logistic regression models to analyse how work within the household conditions different aspects of paid labour (Aguirre, 2003).

2. Measuring violence

Violence can act as a constraint on access to resources and prevent people from enjoying them.

There are proposals for measuring the costs of violence, some of which permit observation of the close relationship between violence and poverty. The Inter-American Development Bank proposes a calculation of the total cost of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean, which includes measurement of the direct costs, non-monetary costs, economic multiplier costs and social multiplier costs.¹³

With respect to the specifically non-monetary costs of domestic violence, an estimated 9 million healthy life years (HeaLYs)¹⁴ are lost each year in the world as a result of rape and domestic violence. This figure exceeds the total number of women falling victims to all types of cancer and more than doubles the total HeaLYs lost by women in car accidents. Violence against women was the third greatest cause of loss of HeaLYs in Mexico City after diabetes and perinatal problems, and caused more losses than car accidents, congenital anomalies, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, cardiovascular diseases, cerebrovascular diseases and pneumonia.

As regards the economic multiplier costs, female victims of domestic violence show higher rates of absenteeism and are more liable to be dismissed or resign from their jobs. A study conducted in Managua, Nicaragua, found that female victims of severe physical violence earned only 57% of the income of women who do not suffer abuse, with these losses representing approximately 1.6% of GDP in 1996. In Santiago, Chile, women suffering from severe physical violence earned only 39% of the earnings of women who did not, and these losses constituted 2% of GDP in 1996 (Biehl, 2003).

Lastly, the social multiplier costs include significant erosion of the social capital of domestic violence victims due to their social isolation. Inasmuch as domestic violence, inflicted mainly by men, aims to control women and their contact with the world beyond the household, it reduces women's quality of life and their ability to participate in activities outside the home, including the possibility to earn an income and take part in community and social activities in general.¹⁵

Measurements of the economic costs of domestic violence against women show that it constitutes a serious obstacle to women's economic autonomy. This is very important since having a paid job can help to protect women against violence. Forty-one percent of women who do not work for pay are victims of severe physical violence, while only 10% of women working for pay outside their homes are victims of this kind of violence. In Uruguay, 42% of the women who do not suffer from violence earn high incomes, in comparison to 21% of women who do (Biehl, 2003).

3. Measuring land ownership by gender

¹³ The direct costs include the value of goods and services used in prevention, treatment of victims or capture and prosecution of perpetrators. The non-monetary costs include impacts on health that do not necessarily require the use of health services, for example greater morbidity, higher mortality due to suicides and murders, alcoholism and drug abuse, and depressive ailments.

The economic multiplier costs refer to smaller accumulation of human capital, decreased rates of labour market participation, lower productivity at work, increased absenteeism, lower earnings and impacts on productivity and, at the macro-economic level, lower saving and investment. The social multiplier effects include the transmission of violence from one generation to the next, the privatization of police functions, erosion of social capital, reduced quality of life and reduced participation in democratic processes (Buvinic and Morrison, 2003).

¹⁴ HeaLYs include the years lost to premature mortality and the years during which a person has been incapacitated or ill (Buvinic and Morrison, 2003).

¹⁵ There are no calculations of the direct costs of domestic violence in the Latin American and Caribbean countries. However, the assumption is that, although considerable, they are lower than in industrialized countries, where more services are available (Buvinic and Morrison, 2003).

Very little is known about the magnitude of the gender gap in the ownership of resources, especially land. Agricultural censuses fall short in this regard, since they assume that the owner of a property must be the head of the household. For their part, the surveys on living conditions sponsored by the World Bank in different countries of the region during the 1990s, like agricultural censuses, show only the proportion of women who are the main farmers of their own properties.

Due to the limitations of the sources of information, it can be supposed that, given prevalent gender norms, women who declare themselves to be the main farmers of their own properties do, indeed, own them (Deere and León, 2003). In that respect, data from censuses in different countries of the region and from different years shows a low proportion of women as main farmers, which constitutes a first approximation to the land ownership gap between men and women in Latin America.

In conjunction with this methodological proposal for approaching the measurement of land ownership by gender, it is necessary to take different marital regimes into account, since these govern the way ownership is defined before and after marriage.

One important aspect of the study of land ownership by gender is that it represents not only access to material resources but also the empowerment and bargaining power it can afford women. The right of ownership can give women a “fallback position”. In urban areas, this position can be provided by women’s ownership of real estate. A dwelling is an example of a fallback in poor sectors and it is also a potential safeguard inasmuch as it can generate income from rent (Deere and León, 2003).

F. Contribution made by other approaches

1. Qualitative analysis

Qualitative methods for measuring poverty have acquired increasing importance because they serve to extend the poverty debate beyond monetary criteria, by encompassing the perception the poor have of their own situation and thus measuring the subjective and symbolic aspects of poverty.

These types of measurement may constitute valuable ways to reveal gender inequalities in decision-making and resource distribution within the household, which helps to “open up the black box of the household” and understand how it functions. Research on the participation of men, women and children in agricultural production has also helped to expose the work done by women in the household. Moreover, participatory evaluations of poverty have revealed important differences in the definition of poverty by gender, which demonstrates that men and women perceive and experience it differently.¹⁶

This type of analysis needs to be combined with other, quantitative measurements, in order to arrive at a fuller understanding and a better definition of poverty.

Nevertheless, from a gender perspective, a number of risks are apparent in these methods. In the case of the participatory evaluation methods used in rural areas, the emphasis on community consensus may mask differences, especially the voices of the more marginal groups in the community (perhaps including poor women with less capacity to express their interests and needs), and prevent them from being aired in public forums. It is therefore important to ensure that these

¹⁶ Chant (2003), mentions several studies on the issue.

participatory techniques do not merely reproduce local hierarchies, but serve as an effective forum for the whole community (Baden and Milward, 1997).

2. The geographical approach

Determining the geographical location of poor populations reveals information about, for example, the features of the areas they occupy in terms of endowment of natural and physical assets, such as land, water, climate, infrastructure and access roads. It also shows patterns of settlement, i.e. if the population is scattered or concentrated and how far it is located from hubs of development and centres with basic services. This helps to improve social policies, since it serves to determine the location of the population by age and sex, whether the poor female population is mainly rural or urban areas and how far it is from services, and to determine the nature of the population's needs according to the features of the geographical area it occupies.

In Chile's Sixth Region, it is possible to distinguish a population distribution pattern that is differentiated by gender. In general terms, the largest concentration is found in the low-lying intermediate area, which harbours very significant natural and physical assets, such as major access roads. Analysis of distribution by age and sex, however, reveals that women aged 15-44 are concentrated around the main access roads, while women aged 45-59 tend to be concentrated away from these roads. In addition, although female heads of household are broadly distributed between urban and rural areas, comparison of age and household headship variables shows that female heads of household aged over 45 reside mainly in rural areas, far from the main access roads. These female-headed households therefore have different needs from those located in urban areas.

When the population is disaggregated by sex and age, the geographical approach reveals the heterogeneity of female headships and helps to devise differentiated policies that really reflect this heterogeneity.

In short, the most widely used methodologies for measuring poverty have been criticized from a gender perspective and some measurements that afford a vision of poverty from a gender point of view have been explored.

Indeed, despite its acknowledged advantages, the measurement of per capita household income is limited in its ability to reveal the magnitudes of poverty within the household and does not serve to expose women's poverty or to identify gender differences relating to the use of time and expenditure patterns.

The concept of female headships has been analysed as a representative measure of women's poverty and has been shown to afford a better description of male and female poverty. It also confirms that women are more vulnerable to poverty.

The section on proposals discussed the importance of imputing a value to domestic work and explored the combined measurement of income at the individual level within the household, a method which, gives statistical relevance to the poverty of women who live in non-poor households but have no income of their own.

III. Dealing with poverty: policy aspects

Public policies geared towards women have taken different forms. In the 1950s and 1960s, policies directed at poor women were based on a concept of citizenship that did not recognize the analytical and explanatory value of sexual differences. This was the stage of the welfare State and of centralized planning, in which welfare policies were aimed at a group of citizens perceived as homogenous and neutral.

The crisis of the State and the emergence of authoritarian regimes engendered changes in policies on women. New perspectives arose, such as Women in Development (WID), which proposed measures aimed at including women in development strategies in order to promote access to employment and the labour market, on the basis that increasing women's economic engagement would help to build greater equity. Later, in the mid 1980s, an approach called Gender and Development (GAD) signalled the need for development strategies not only to promote the inclusion of women in the different social spheres, such as the labour market, but also to change the structures and relations that reproduce gender inequalities in access to material, social and cultural assets. From a critical point of view, however, the WID and GAD approaches constitute distinctions at an analytical level rather than in policy implementation, since they seem to have lacked the theoretical foundations on which different policy practices could be based.

A third stage was instituted by the proposal of gender mainstreaming. This approach was pioneered by third world feminists (DAWN/MUDAR) at the Nairobi Conference, which highlighted the need to link gender and poverty in order to observe gender inequalities and female poverty.

Each of these approaches has given rise to different policies. While at first a welfare State promoted like policies and the exercise of rights, such as education or the right to vote, in a second phase, policies in favour of mothers grew in importance. Consequently, the measures taken were limited to the role of mothers and to women of childbearing age, thus “maternalizing” policies directed at women. States channelled their efforts to combat poverty through women and appealed to their role as mothers, i.e. as care providers, taking for granted that they were a means of providing services to the family. This can be observed in the numbers of women involved in productive projects in rural areas, in mothers’ centres and in social investment funds, among others. The gender mainstreaming approach, meanwhile, has led to the creation of offices, ministries and secretariats: institutions responsible for adopting policies on women and promoting their autonomous development and empowerment based on a concept of citizenship that is neither neutral nor secondary but autonomous.

It is important to realize, however, that the different approaches taken by women’s policies have not followed a linear path or succeeded each other. They are, on the contrary, simultaneous phenomena. In the different countries of the region, welfare projects and gender mainstreaming initiatives may therefore exist alongside measures aimed at women as caregivers.¹⁷

A. Public policies on poverty eradication with a gender perspective

Policies on poverty with a gender perspective are a recent phenomenon, since the poverty debate has also figured only recently on the feminist agenda.

In Latin America, such policies appear in a context whose hallmarks are the consequences of an open market economy, the weakening of policies on the protection of labour rights and promoting employment, and the weakening of the State’s regulatory role. Gender thus emerges precisely when the State is weakened and women’s human rights are being won where sovereignty —and therefore the State’s capacity to defend those rights— grows weaker.

The culture of equality, moreover, is under constant threat in the region. Although Latin America is very heterogeneous, one common trait is that the idea of equality has not taken root. On the contrary, inequality and differences are widely accepted as legitimate. Another hallmark of this cultural climate is a high tolerance to poverty, since it is perceived as a phenomenon that has always existed.

These long-term cultural features, together with economic and political changes over the past few decades, represent serious obstacles to the adoption and institutionalization of policies with a gender perspective in the region.

Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, the gender approach must be integrated into the design and implementation of policies to combat poverty. Otherwise it will be impossible to accurately conceptualize and measure poverty and —from the point of view of policy— equity will be undermined, it will not be possible to build on social investment and poverty will be perpetuated.

¹⁷ See Montaña (2003), for an analysis of different stages of women’s policies in the region, and their distinct approaches.

Hence the need to mainstream the gender perspective into the different institutional spheres and to place the problems observed from this perspective at the heart of the agenda. It will thus be possible to build the means to overcome gender inequalities into policies on poverty and to attain economic and social development.

As regards the effort to eradicate poverty, a number of strategic areas for gender policies have been identified: reconciliation or harmonization of the productive and reproductive spheres, empowerment and the promotion of women's economic, physical (sexual and reproductive) and social (participation) rights.

Harmonization policies tend to direct coordinated measures at the productive and reproductive spheres, i.e. at work and the family, and acknowledge the close linkages between those two spheres of social life. Some of these policies aim to improve access to employment and its quality (remuneration and social protection), which at the same time promotes greater responsibility for child care on the part of the public institutions. Other measures seek, for example, to promote cultural changes, which recognize and attribute value to domestic labour, ease the rigidity of the division of paid and unpaid labour by gender, and prevent domestic violence and provide care for its victims.

Another strategic area is the empowerment of women, both in terms of promoting personal development, self-esteem and social skills, and in terms of developing the political skills to build links with institutions, promote rights (the citizen's voice) and participate in community forums, and the organizational capacity to improve their social capital.

Women's economic autonomy is another key area for gender policies. In this regard, the gender approach focuses on the need to articulate policies aimed at gender equity with poverty eradication and pro-employment policies. This coordination should translate into policies that strengthen the productive role of women by promoting their integration into the labour market in well-paid jobs, with social protection and free of any kind of discrimination. As for physical autonomy, it is necessary to formulate poverty eradication programmes that include measures to protect women's sexual and reproductive rights and ensure access to health services, inasmuch as the failure to protect these rights limits women's possibilities of acceding to material and social resources.

As well as their application in strategic areas, gender policies must be integral in nature if action is to be taken against the various manifestations of poverty. The aggregate character of such measures requires a significant degree of inter- and intra-sectoral cooperation in the public sphere. In addition, such measures mean dealing with both the material needs of poor women and the more subjective aspects of poverty. Together with promoting women's access to employment, land, housing and credit, it is therefore necessary to develop women's individual and collective capacities to recognize and vindicate their rights and to build social capital.

Another important aspect associated with integrality is that gender policies combine different types of measures, be they compensatory or structural, or short —medium— or long-term. Consequently, it is important to design good compensatory policies that mesh with structural policies in order to attend in the short term to the more immediate needs of the poor and to modify over the medium or long term the structural conditions that determine their unequal, gender-differentiated access to resources.

B. Main difficulties facing gender policies

Gender mainstreaming and the design and implementation of poverty eradication policies from a gender perspective have come up against a series of difficulties.

One such difficulty is that gender studies have shown a limited capacity to formulate proposals for policy design. The capacity to challenge existing norms apparently exceeds the ability to develop policy proposals to deal with gender inequalities in the poor population.

Apart from this lack of capacity to formulate proposals, there are certain weaknesses in the institutional structure of gender, which hinder the consolidation and continuity of policies. In this regard, agencies with a mandate to establish policies with a gender perspective tend to have low budgets and the technical and professional personnel responsible for implementing policies fall short in their capacity to do so.

These weaknesses on the part of institutions and personnel, together with the segmented operation of the State apparatus, have hampered efforts at gender mainstreaming, awareness-raising and methodological transfer to the State apparatus.

Difficulties in integrating the gender perspective into the prevailing stream of ideas are not exclusively a function of shortcomings in terms of capacity to convince and to develop policy, however. There is also a political reason, related to the limited scale of women's power in politics and the media. A lack of know-how regarding the workings of the State apparatus, together with a confluence of forces that oppose the inclusion of gender issues and policies, account for their volatile presence on the public agenda.

In the face of such institutional difficulties, it is necessary to reflect more upon and understand better the particular institutional contexts in which gender policies are adopted, taking into account such aspects as the symbolic dimension of policies and the difficulties in putting across the purpose they are meant to have, the standards and procedures that constrain or facilitate policies and the political forces within and outside the State that underlie the institutional structure of gender. It is necessary to grasp how currents of political opinion are formed, how social coordination mechanisms become established between the State and social actors, and the type of institutional structure that underlies gender affairs, including secretariats, departments and boards.

C. Challenges

A number of challenges are inherent in the difficulties that have arisen, and continue to arise, in the path of proponents of gender policies, in particular poverty eradication policies. One of these concerns the linking of economic growth policies to employment and gender equality policies. There is a clear relation between employment and poverty, since unemployment, underemployment and precarious employment cause poverty, while employment is a key factor in its eradication. Hence the importance of generating more employment opportunities for women, in order to give them access to monetary resources and promote their economic autonomy. To this end, job creation must be an objective of economic development policies.

Another challenge is the need to evaluate the effects of anti-poverty programmes on the empowerment of women. Although women have participated and continue to participate in a multitude of programmes, very little is known about the effect of such programmes on women's access to rights. This lack of knowledge makes it harder to identify best practices and the problematic aspects that need to be changed.

Further efforts must be made to coordinate policies on the eradication of female poverty and on the prevention of violence. Although the link between violence and poverty has been recognized conceptually, measures to prevent violence and treat its victims need to be better integrated into programmes to combat female poverty.

By the same token, the link between sexual and reproductive rights and poverty has been acknowledged, but the protection of these rights needs to be better coordinated with poverty eradication efforts.

Other challenges arise in the institutional sphere, such as the promotion of increased political capacities for women, so that they can influence the adoption of measures, and the improvement of the technical and professional personnel responsible for implementing gender policies.

IV. Conclusions

The gender perspective has made notable conceptual, methodological and political contributions to the study and treatment of poverty.

In conceptual terms, the gender perspective has broadened the conceptual repertory on poverty and developed an integral and dynamic concept of the phenomenon, which recognizes its multidimensionality and heterogeneity. As a result—in common with other approaches to poverty such as the capacities, participatory and social exclusion approaches, as well as other theories such as social capital and vulnerability—the gender perspective disputes the definition of poverty based on income alone and firmly contends that poverty implies symbolic and cultural as well as material aspects. It further maintains that power relations have a key impact on poverty by determining greater or lesser access to material, social and cultural resources by sex. In that sense, it may be argued that in the absence of the gender perspective, there are insufficient elements to understand poverty.

The conceptual departures proposed by the gender approach as regards the study of poverty have led to a review of the more conventional poverty measurements and to research into new methods of measurement.

Analysis of household income measurement has been a key feature of the debate. On the one hand, it has acknowledged advantages as a quantitative indicator of poverty offering widely available data, thus enabling comparisons between countries and regions and the quantification of poverty for the preparation of policy

proposals.

On the other hand, it has limitations, since it cannot reflect the multidimensional nature of poverty insofar as it emphasizes material rather than non-material aspects such as differences in power. Furthermore, it fails to consider that people also satisfy their needs using non-monetary resources such as community networks and family support.

More specifically as regards gender inequalities, the measurement of household income does not capture the magnitude of poverty within the household, since it assumes that resources are distributed equitably among its members, thus standardizing the needs of each and considering them all equally poor. Another limitation of this method in terms of reflecting gender inequalities is that it disregards, in monetary terms, the contribution to the household of unpaid domestic labour, which can make an important difference in per household income between situations where a spouse provides free domestic labour and situations where no one is devoted exclusively to this work. Lastly, the measurement of income does not reflect gender differences in time use and expenditure patterns, two important elements in improving the definition of poverty and the design of policies.

Criticisms of household income measurement have sought to rethink the traditional methods of poverty measurement from a gender perspective. In that regard, it is of the utmost importance to attribute a value to unpaid domestic labour as a way of recognizing the contribution of women who perform this work and of acknowledging the category of labour to which these activities belong, since they are fundamental to the satisfaction of basic needs.

These criticisms have also aimed to vindicate the need to include non-monetary dimensions in the measurement of poverty. These include the measurement of time, or time poverty, and gender violence.

In addition, a number of indicators designed to obtain measurements of poverty that capture gender inequalities were identified:

- Measurement of the number of individuals lacking their own income in poor and non-poor households, as an indicator of economic autonomy;
- Measurement of the proportion of women among the poor in different age groups, as an indicator of the feminization of poverty; and
- The domestic activity rate, which shows the magnitude of women's contribution to the household in the form of unpaid labour.

Important challenges are set out in this document. On a conceptual level, it is necessary to make headway in the development of concepts that link the causes of poverty and gender inequalities in a more satisfactory manner. On a methodological level, many of the indicators offered to capture gender inequalities represent a challenge for statisticians. On a political level, it is to be hoped that this study will help the countries to adopt analytical frameworks and political strategies that take into account the relationship between poverty and gender inequalities.

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Annex: Final report.¹⁸
**Technical meeting on the
mainstreaming of the
gender perspective in
poverty measurement**

¹⁸ LC/L.2056, February 2004.

A. Attendance and organization of work

1. Place and date of the meeting

The international technical meeting on the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in poverty measurement was held from 23 to 25 September 2003 in La Paz, Bolivia. It was organized jointly by the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Bolivia and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

2. Attendance

The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member countries of the Commission: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

The British Virgin Islands, an associate member of ECLAC, was also represented.

Table (a)
MEMBER STATES OF THE COMMISSION

Country	Participant	Position	Organization
Argentina	Silvia Mario	Economic Analyst	National Department of Social and Population Statistics, National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC)
Bolivia	José Luis Carvajal Audrey Dupleich Ernesto Machicao Walter Castillo	Executive Director Gender Consultant UCOT Consultant Adviser to the Office of the Executive Director	National Institute of Statistics (INE) System of Gender Indicators Project, INE National Institute of Statistics (INE) National Institute of Statistics (INE)
	Iván Paredes	Officer responsible for Economic Activity Statistics	National Institute of Statistics (INE)
	Gladys Salazar Marta Rivero Lisbeth Vega Roxana Cardona María Elena Burgos María Teresa Soruco Carmen Ledo	Deputy Minister Technical expert Technical expert General Technical Adviser Professional-Technical Expert Gender Expert	Ministry for Women's Affairs Vice Ministry for Women's Affairs Vice Ministry for Women's Affairs Vice Ministry for Women's Affairs Vice Ministry for Women's Affairs
	Sergio Criales Charles Pedregal	Teacher/Researcher Area Economist Coordinator	Planning Unit, Ministry of Sustainable Development Universidad Mayor, San Simón (UMSS), Cochabamba Economic Policy Analysis Unit (UDAPE) National System of Health Information (SNIS)
Brazil	Maria Márcia Leporace Hildete Pereira de Melo	Manager of Programme Evaluation Professor	Department of Planning for Women's Policies, Secretariat of Women's Policies Faculty of Economics, Universidade Federal Fluminense
	Cristiane Soares	Consultant Researcher	Department of Planning for Women's Policies, Secretariat of Women's Policies Department of Population and Social Indicators, Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE)
Cuba	Tamara Silvia Columbié Matos Teresa Lara	Foreign Relations Officer and Cooperation Expert Deputy Director General	Federation of Cuban Women National Statistical Office (ONE)
Ecuador	Claudio Vinicio Gallardo León Gioconda Páez Moreno	Chief Chief Expert	Integrated Household Survey System, (SISH), National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) Development Area, National Women's Council (CONAMU)
Guatemala	Lily Caravantes	Secretary	Presidential Secretariat for Women's Affairs
Honduras	Emma Velásquez Gloria Velásquez	Economics and Poverty Manager, Social and Demographic Statistics	National Institute for Women (INAM) National Institute of Statistics
Mexico	Margarita Velázquez	Director General, Statistical Evaluation and Development	National Institute for Women (Inmujeres)

	Gutiérrez María Guadalupe López	Deputy Director General for Gender, Studies and Research	Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL)
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Table (a) (conclusion)

Country	Participant	Position	Organization
Netherlands	Janette Trujillo	Deputy expert for gender	Embassy of the Netherlands in Bolivia
Nicaragua	María Teresa Delgado de Valdivia	Director of Public Policy	Women's Institute
Panama	Elia López de Tulipano Judith Rivera de Fernández	National Director Demographic Analyst	Ministry for Women's, Children's and Youth Affairs and the Family Statistics and Censuses Department, Comptroller-General
Peru	Cirila Gutiérrez Espino Diana Miloslavich	Executive Director of Social Indicators Adviser, Ministerial Office	National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development (MIMDES)
Uruguay	Rosario Aguirre	Senior Professor, Researcher	University of the Republic
British Virgin Islands^a	Andrea Hamm	Senior Administrative Officer	Officer for Gender Affairs

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

^a Associate member.

The following representatives and specialists also attended the meeting:

Table (b)
UNITED NATIONS BODIES

Participant	Position	Country
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)		
Iván Prudencio	Acting Director	Bolivia
Mónica Yaksic	Gender and Education Consultant	Bolivia
Rune Brandrup	Programme Officer	Bolivia
Gloria Telleria	Programme Officer	Bolivia
Antonio Gómez	Population and Development Consultant	Bolivia
Luis Mora	Gender Expert	Mexico
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)		
Liv Elin Indreiten	Assistant Officer for Gender and Adolescence with the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean	Paraguay
Susana Sottoli	Programme Officer	
United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)		

Ana Falú	Director for Latin America and the Caribbean	
Marijke Velzaboer	Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean	
María de la Paz López	Consultant	Mexico

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

Table (c)
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Participant	Position	Country
International Labour Organization (ILO)		
Marcela Alcocer	Consultant and coordinator of the Gender, Poverty and Employment (GPE) Project	Bolivia
Silvia Berger	Director of the Gender, Poverty and Employment Project in Latin America, Regional Office, Lima	Peru

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

Table (d)
OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Participant	Position	Country
The Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM)		
Gemma Tang-Nain Philomen Harrison	Deputy Programme Manager, Gender and Development Programme Manager of the Statistics Section	Guyana
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)		
Silvia Alemán Héctor Campos María Sánchez	Expert on Rural Development and Competitiveness Representative in Bolivia Consultant	Bolivia

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

Table (e)
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Participant	Position	Country
Centre of Studies for Labour and Agricultural Development (CEDLA), Bolivia		
Silvia Escobar de Pabón	Researcher with the Centre and ILO Consultant	Bolivia
Research Centre for the Advancement of Farmers (CIPCA), Bolivia		
Roy Córdova	Rural Support Unit	Bolivia
José Luis Eyzaguirre	Researcher, Rural Economics	Bolivia
María Esther Udaeta	Officer, Natural Resources Area, Policy Action Unit	Bolivia
Centre for Women's Research and Action (CIPAF), Dominican Republic		
Carmen Julia Gómez	Officer, Research Area	Dominican Republic
Gregoria Apaza Centre for the Promotion of Women, Bolivia		
Amal Abordan	Technical and Business Training Area	Bolivia
Network of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Women		
Epsy Campbell	Member of the Costa Rican Parliament	Costa Rica
Regional Programme for Training in Gender and Public Policy (PRIGEPP)		
Mónica Rosenfeld	Technical Adviser	Argentina

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

Table (f)
SECRETARIAT

Participant	Position	Country
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)		
Sonia Montaña	Chief	Women and Development Unit
Diane Alméras	Social Affairs Officer	Women and Development Unit
Juan Carlos Feres	Chief	Social Statistics Unit, Statistics and Economic Projections Division
Irma Arriagada	Social Affairs Officer	Women and Development Unit
Lynette Joseph Brown	Research Assistant	Social Affairs Unit, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Vivian Milosavljevic	Statistics Assistant	Women and Development Unit

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003).

3. Organization of work

The work at the meeting was organized in the following manner:

- Opening session
- Panel 1: Poverty reduction strategies and policies in the region
- Panel 2: Conceptual and methodological challenges for the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the conceptualization and measurement of poverty
- Panel 3: National experiences in poverty measurement. Work in groups:
 - ♦ Group 1: Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean
 - ♦ Group 2: Andean Region and Southern Cone
- Recommendations and conclusions for:
 - ♦ National institutes of statistics
 - ♦ The Statistical Conference of the Americas
 - ♦ National women's mechanisms
- Closing ceremony

4. Documentation

Documents relating to the subject matter under study were given out at the meeting (ECLAC, 2003a, 2003b and 2001; Chant, 2003, and UN, 2000). These may also be consulted on the web site of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit (www.eclac.cl/mujer). This site also carries the presentations of the participants in the technical panels of the meeting, in electronic format.

B. Proceedings

1. Opening session

At the opening session the floor was taken by Sonia Montaña, Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit, José Luis Carvajal, Executive Director of the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Bolivia, and Gladys Salazar Ríos, then Deputy Minister for Women's Affairs of the Bolivian Ministry of Sustainable Development.

The Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit recalled, in keeping with the resolutions adopted at Beijing and at the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, the importance of institutionalizing cooperation between producers and users of statistics. Such cooperation could give rise to guidelines to identifying points of intersection between gender and poverty and could afford public policy makers a clear perspective for designing efficient measures to reduce poverty and gender gaps. Significant progress had been made on indicators and statistics in the previous eight years, and a number of countries of the region already had very positive experiences that it would be helpful to share and build on. Regardless of the very varied methodologies used, the purpose of all those efforts was to acknowledge that equality needed to be seen in its true dimension, not only to show up the existing biases and lacks, but also to redeem the tremendous potential that the women of the region had demonstrated in their activities to combat poverty and promote development.

The Executive Director of the National Institute of Statistics of Bolivia spoke of the problem of a surplus of information juxtaposed with the shortage and unreliability of public resources allocated to the production and analysis of quality statistics. In combating poverty, it was essential to strike a balance between the capacity of the statistical institutes and the needs of other government institutions. One of the basic indicators needed to mainstream the gender perspective in poverty measurement was economic growth. A detailed analysis of GDP growth should determine what proportion of that growth could be attributed to the reduction of the gender gap, especially in sectors where women's participation was considerable, such as the informal economy and the non-bank financial sector in Bolivia. Any initiative undertaken must incorporate elements of oversight and evaluation, so that future policy could be based on well-documented information.

The Deputy Minister for Women's Affairs of the Bolivian Ministry of Sustainable Development referred to the main features of the new Bolivian strategy on poverty reduction and announced that both this initiative and the new national development plan incorporated the gender perspective. She set out an analysis of poverty in Bolivia and gave a brief account of the development of the poverty reduction strategy, the recognition of the feminization of poverty and the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the national gender equity plan for 2001-2003. The plan's many objectives included the coordination and institutionalization of joint initiatives with the National Institute of Statistics and a special focus on policy outcomes.

2. Panel 1: Poverty reduction strategies and policies in the region

The panel discussion was opened by the Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit, who presented the document "New contributions to poverty analysis: methodological and conceptual challenges to help understand poverty from a gender perspective" ("Nuevos aportes para el análisis de la pobreza: desafíos metodológicos y conceptuales para entender la pobreza desde una perspectiva de género"). This document was intended to provide the countries with tools to analyse the gender-poverty link and contribute to our understanding of how the two phenomena influence and determine each other. Beyond the traditional methods of poverty lines and unmet basic needs, it was necessary to grasp the fact that, without gender factors, it was impossible to understand certain facts that were clearly visible in poverty measurement. One such factor was the fact that women's work in the private sphere was not recognized as an important part of society life, and was not valued or quantified in the statistics currently available. This despite the fact that governments and institutions were increasingly acknowledging the relevance of such work.

In addition to the document prepared by the Secretariat, a further ten presentations were made to the panel. Seven of these described specific country cases (Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) and three were theoretical in content. It was emphasized that the gender perspective made the conceptualization of poverty more complex, but also enriched it by helping to describe poverty with the heterogeneity warranted by its multidimensional nature. In order to progress further in this respect, it was necessary to move beyond the household as a unit of measurement —to open the "black box"— in order to precisely quantify differences found in use of time, decision making, personal income, health and other key issues. This meant a conceptual and methodological challenge which was beyond the scope of national institutes of statistics. For the moment, it could be addressed only in surveys of limited coverage. A number of pilot programmes had attempted a preliminary approach to the measurement of intra-household variables at the national level.

Given the nature of poverty from the gender perspective, it was essential to prioritize the measurement of time use, since this linked in with key poverty factors such as income and health. With regard to methods for measurement, it was suggested that the existing household surveys should be made to include surveys on time use and opinion. In terms of instruments, it was essential to use this information to clearly establish the nature of public policies on poverty with a gender perspective. This could be achieved by using a matrix based on four types of complementary policies, in which two categories of poverty reduction initiative (rights-based and compensatory) would intersect with gender equity measures (redistribution and recognition). The combination of the new types of measurement with the new policy solutions would generate a broad variety of gender-focused measures that could impact on the causes of poverty in a more efficient manner.

Table (g)
PRESENTATIONS OF PANEL 1

Presentation	Author	Organization	Country
"La estrategia boliviana de reducción de la pobreza"	Sergio Criales Aguirre	Economic Policy Analysis Unit (UDAPE) of the Government	Bolivia
"Trabajo decente, género y estrategias de reducción de la pobreza: una herramienta para el cambio en el marco de las metas del milenio"	Silvia Berger	Director, Project on Gender, Poverty and Employment in Latin America, Regional Office of the International Labour Organization (ILO)	Lima, Peru
"Dimensiones de la pobreza y políticas desde una perspectiva de género"	Irma Arriagada	Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division of ECLAC	Santiago, Chile
"Pobreza y exclusión de los pueblos y mujeres afrodescendientes. Una propuesta para considerar en las políticas públicas"	Epsy Alejandra Campbell Barr	Member of Parliament of Costa Rica and representative of the Network of Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Women	Costa Rica
"Reducción de la pobreza y políticas relacionadas con los derechos sexuales y reproductivos"	Lily Caravantes	Presidential Secretariat for Women's Affairs	Guatemala
"Transversalización del enfoque de género en la estrategia de reducción de la pobreza. Caso de Honduras"	Emma Velásquez	National Women's Institute	Honduras
	Gloria Velásquez	National Institute of Statistics	Honduras
"Una experiencia cubana en la integración de las mujeres al desarrollo"	Tamara Columbié Matos	Federation of Cuban Women	Cuba
"Género y pobreza en Brasil"	Márcia Leporace	Special Secretary on Policies for Women	Brazil
	Hildete Pereira de Melo	National Consultant for the Project on Democratic Governance and Gender Equality	Brazil
"Valoración del impacto de la perspectiva de género en las políticas públicas"	María Teresa Delgado	Nicaraguan Women's Institute	Nicaragua
"Género y pobreza en Ecuador: desafíos para la formulación de políticas públicas"	Gioconda Páez	Development Area Officer of the National Women's Council	Ecuador

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003). (Presentations available on ECLAC's Women and Development Unit site <<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer>>).

One of the presentations addressed the emerging issue of racism suffered by peoples of African descent, indigenous peoples and other groups, the link between this phenomenon and the development and persistence of pockets of poverty in the countries, and the implications of the two factors on the gender perspective. Given the damage that social processes were causing to these segments of the Latin American and Caribbean population, there was a need to move away from palliative policies and incorporate the ethno-racial perspective once and for all into government policies as an essential step to effectively combating poverty and gender inequality.

The representatives of countries and institutions described the initiatives that had been made to provide sufficient high-quality information to policy makers. In this respect, they acknowledged that in recent years there had been advances in the recognition of certain phenomena, such as the feminization of poverty and the exclusion suffered by many of the region's inhabitants on the basis of sex, race or income. Another achievement was the fact that almost all the countries had specific strategies to reduce poverty and initiatives to mainstream the gender perspective in all political activities.

On the other hand, the challenge of placing poverty and gender on the macroeconomic agendas of the countries and the lack of institutional solidity and resources reported by the government bodies involved were common obstacles. Mention was also made of the difficulty and unreliability of using non-recurrent funding from international cooperation for institutes of statistics and mechanisms for women's advancement. A very common concern was the need for closer coordination between producers and users of statistics, in order to align the real capacity of institutes of statistics with the needs of governments, institutions, universities and other relevant sectors.

The participants in the debate affirmed that poverty reduction strategies would not have visible effects on women's integration, equity and rights unless those strategies dealt clearly and decisively with labour inequality within a general framework of full social integration. In fact, rather than merely considering women as the holders of rights, such strategies should view them as key agents in production and reproduction. This required that public policies include initiatives geared specifically towards the household or the family.

3. Panel 2: Conceptual and methodological challenges for the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the conceptualization and measurement of poverty

This panel analysed the multiplicity of sectors and variables that need to be taken into account in the concept of poverty. There was a consensus that it was necessary to move away from the traditional perspective in which poverty was seen exclusively as a function of the interactions between the State, the market and civil society, and afford more importance to the role of the family and household spheres. It was emphasized that, for the purposes of measurement, efforts to represent the multiplicity of the phenomenon distanced the analyst from the gender perspective. Given the conceptual and methodological developments, the key dilemma was choosing between precise measurement and a precise and localized description of poverty. There was no doubt that analytical indexes had great value for quantitative purposes, but their design unquestionably implied a

certain degree of discretion, and the values they generated lacked a tangible analogue in reality. For this reason they had to be approached with due caution.

The theses put forward by the panellists emphasized the link observed between impoverishment and unpaid labour, and the impact of shortage of time —two factors that affected women more than men. Four types of unpaid labour were identified: subsistence labour, domestic labour, care-giving and community labour, which could be quantified separately. Methods were also proposed for quantifying non-monetary resources, capturing the magnitude of spending and imputing the corresponding share to each family member. As well, consideration was given to the importance of calculating the degree of men's and women's participation in spending decisions. This, in turn, was related to the problem caused by the fact that the concept of "head of household" lacked a clear definition. All this information could be used to enrich the study of poverty from a perspective that would link qualitative and quantitative data in specific contexts. When developing policy instruments, it was essential to bear in mind the qualitative vision that the poor have of their deprived status, as well as family and community strategies used to overcome this situation on a daily basis.

Table (h)
PRESENTATIONS OF PANEL 2

Presentation	Author	Organization	Country
"Procesos de empobrecimiento y desigualdades de género. Desafíos para la medición"	Rosario Aguirre	University of the Republic	Uruguay
"Derechos y salud sexual y reproductiva en la conceptualización y medición de la pobreza con perspectiva de género"	Luis Mora	Regional Gender Adviser, UNFPA	Mexico
"Observatorio de las vivencias y percepciones de la pobreza desde un enfoque de género"	María de la Paz López	UNIFEM	Mexico
"La pobreza en la niñez y la adolescencia desde una perspectiva de género"	Susana Sottoli	Programme Officer, UNICEF	Paraguay
"La perspectiva de género en la medición de la pobreza"	Vivian Milosavljevic	Women and Development Unit, ECLAC	Santiago, Chile

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003). (Presentations available on ECLAC's Women and Development Unit site <<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer>>).

A study published by the World Bank had shown that health was a prime asset for the poor. As well as the invisible costs and the catastrophic expense caused by lack of proper coverage in low-income households, the statistics showed that women were in a much more vulnerable position than men in terms of sexual and reproductive health. Another factor that accounted for the higher rate of morbidity among poor women was the physical strain of combining both paid and unpaid work, which translated into a reduction in hours of sleep and a total absence of free time. In addition, there were insufficient studies on the invisible costs of illness, in both productive and family and social terms. An account was given of the new initiatives to include those factors in poverty measurement, particularly the method of health adjusted poverty lines.

The participants' attention was drawn to the lasting impact of poverty on the lives of children and on their development in adulthood. Poverty was usually analysed in a homogenous manner, in

other words it masked both gender and age differences. Most gender indicators were constructed from the point of view of adult women, which implied a lack of sensitivity to the particular situation of girl children and adolescents, who were especially vulnerable to situations that fed into the transmission of poverty, discrimination, gender violence and exclusion from one generation to the next. It was essential to bring to the fore factors of vulnerability, especially girls' unpaid domestic work, in order to complement the information available on the intersection of poverty, gender and age. If this information were tied in with national development strategies and given relevance at the macroeconomic level, initiatives could be made to go beyond palliative policies and help create high-quality, equitable employment, increase household income, do away with the employment of children and adolescents in production and, in general, combat not only poverty but also inequality in a broader sense.

In addition, an emphasis was placed on the lack of information that could be used to identify the symbolic aspects of poverty and understand the vision the poor have of themselves and their condition. In this regard, the representative of UNIFEM in Mexico gave an account of a project known as the "observatory of experiences and perception of poverty from a gender perspective", which was intended to identify, from a statistical perspective, elements that linked qualitative and quantitative data on poverty in a specific gender context. A data base was built using household surveys, interviews, focus groups, vocabulary tests and contextual information, in addition to data on living conditions from the "Opportunities" programme. Among the results obtained thus far, there was information about women's paid work and how it was perceived by the population, data on families' strategies to improve their economic status and many others that were made available to the participating countries.

The purpose of the methodological proposal put forward by ECLAC was to accomplish a shift from a general poverty measurement and description to a new approach, consisting of direct measurement of poverty from a gender perspective. The main challenge in this respect was the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon, since it involved the analysis of a process rather than a state. The first step was to quantify the income and expenditure of each member of the household, impute individual expenses and attribute a value to the unpaid work conducted by each person. This information would be put into a system of indicators which would attempt to eliminate the distortions that occur in the traditional methods and emphasize the factors that cause or influence the discrimination and exclusion of women: the internal composition of the household, its geographical location, individual habits of consumption, use of time, non-monetary income, the balance of power among the household members and in decision making, and domestic violence, among others. The process of designing these indicators, which were made available to the participants, had not yet finished.

The participants in the debate agreed upon the importance of labour in the incidence of poverty and its differentiated effects on women, in particular because of the difficulty of combining productive with non-productive work. From the point of view of public policies for the promotion of women's employment, it was essential to establish how to resolve such issues as childcare, sexual and reproductive health provision, domestic work and community work, among others. The gender perspective needed to be mainstreamed into the official logic of poverty measurement in order to overcome the current situation in which it was seen as peripheral or unimportant. For this reason, it was essential to demonstrate the social and economic relevance of unpaid work. It was debated whether it would be appropriate to add it to paid work, but the overlapping of activities caused huge difficulty with respect to time measurement.

4. Panel 3: National experiences in poverty measurement

a) *Group 1: Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean*

The representative of Cuba put forward a proposal for poverty measurement from a gender perspective based on the relativist approach of the human development index designed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which defines requirements not only for survival, but also for individuals to be able to lead an integrated existence as members of a social community. She also insisted that income measurement led to a biased view of poverty and it was necessary to develop a method that would give an insight into the development of people's basic capacity in their social context, as well as a comparative analysis of the situation of men and women by age, race, ethnic group, geographical area and level of education.

Poverty measurement by income also discriminated against women, because it masked gender differences in remuneration for the same work; it did not disaggregate work in the informal sector, where most women work, even though it lacks any kind of social guarantees; and it does not account for women's role in generating non-commercial subsistence as unpaid family workers, or for unpaid domestic work. The speaker concluded the presentation with the gender statistics available in Cuba and those from the country's most recent time use survey, which showed the proportion of unpaid domestic work in the total of hours worked by adult and adolescent women, compared with males in the same age groups.

The representative of the Centre for Women's Research and Action (CIPAF) reviewed the gender indicators available and the different methods of poverty measurement used in recent years in the Dominican Republic (World Bank poverty line, multivariate analysis and the unmet basic needs method), and showed that the results could even prove contradictory depending on the approach chosen. In addition, none of the poverty measurements conducted in the Dominican Republic covered non-material dimensions relevant to the gender perspective, such as access to the media and participation in forums and mechanisms of political power. Lastly, by using material deprivation-based methods of analysis alone, policy makers risked ending up with poverty reduction strategies which were designed to impact on the situation of women, but neglected to alter gender conditions. This would lead the State to prioritize the satisfaction of women's practical and immediate needs, while ignoring their strategic interests and thus reinforcing the cultural patterns and objective conditions that perpetuated gender inequality.

In the debate it was emphasized that one of the challenges involved in the implementation of time use surveys lay in changing the most rigid structures in poverty measurement. In turn, Cuba's experience demonstrated the importance of aligning national institutes of statistics with national women's mechanisms in order to mainstream the gender perspective in measuring instruments, and of the political will of governments to deal with poverty and provide access to data.

The representative of the British Virgin Islands reviewed the findings of the last poverty evaluation conducted there in 2003, which included a survey and a number of interviews and participatory evaluations. Although the survey found that 16% of the population was poor, which was considered low by Caribbean standards, combined studies showed that certain groups were particularly vulnerable to poverty: adolescent expectant mothers, separated women who did not receive the necessary support from the father of their children, the older adult population and permanent immigrants who lacked a regular legal status to remain in the islands. These situations were not structural, but family-related. The representative then presented a list of actions needed to reduce poverty. These included programmes to promote adult responsibility within the family,

shelters for abused women, revision of support programmes for the elderly, a strategic plan on HIV/AIDS and the resolution of the legal situation of permanent immigrants.

The research assistant with the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean analysed the problems involved in the design of national level gender indicators in the Caribbean countries. The obstacles included a lack of awareness in the countries of the importance of using such indicators in the preparation of public policies; a lack of human resources, which weakened capacity to compile information at the national level; the fact that samples were often too small to be representative; the non-availability of data outside census periods; and the lack of certain categories of variables (such as distinction between urban and rural areas). All these prevented the comparison of data with the other countries in the region. While she expressed support for the recommendations of the group of experts on training and strengthening human resources responsible for generating information, in the particular case of the Caribbean it was important to make use of the information generated by the Small Island Developing States Information Network in order to build and identify indicators appropriate to the situation of the countries.

Table (i)

PRESENTATIONS OF PANEL 3: MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Presentation	Author	Organization	Country
"Una propuesta para la medición de la pobreza con una perspectiva de género"	Teresa Lara	National Statistical Office	Cuba
"Entre el rigor científico y la búsqueda de la equidad de género: la experiencia dominicana en la medición de la pobreza"	Carmen Julia Gómez	Centre for Women's Research and Action (CIPAF)	Dominican Republic
"Actual experiences of poverty measurement in the Caribbean: Advantages and limitations from a gender perspective"	Lynette Brown	ECLAC Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean	Port of Spain
"Poverty measurement in the Caribbean: A critique of current approaches from gender perspective"	Gemma Tang-Nain	Deputy Programme Director, Caribbean Community (CARICOM)	Virgin Islands

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003). (Presentations available on ECLAC's Women and Development Unit site <<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer>>).

The representative of the Caribbean Community presented a critique, from a gender perspective, of the methods of poverty measurement used in the Caribbean region. The main problem lay in the definition of poverty, and in the fact that the selection of variables with which to measure it was changed from one year to the next and varied from one country to another. Different indicators led to different results, which caused serious problems in terms of reliability, comparability and policy making. Other major problems were the choice of the household as a unit of measurement without knowledge of the distribution of income and expenditure among its members, and the lack of clarity in the criteria used to define the head of household. Related to this was the fact that no consideration was given to how inequities in social gender relations impacted on poverty, which undermined the efficiency of policies in this respect.

One of the challenges involved in using time use surveys was the need to transform the most rigid structures of traditional poverty measurement. Much importance was attributed to the fact that these surveys not only considered unpaid work, but also included different age groups. Another methodological issue that drew many interventions was the need to review the definition of the

categories used to compile data in order to improve the measurement instruments; in this respect, particular emphasis was placed on the definition of head of household and of work, as key aspects in women's poverty.

It was particularly important to strengthen alliances between national institutes of statistics and national women's offices, in order to move forward in the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in measurement instruments, and to strengthen the political will of governments to deal with poverty and to facilitate access to data. Among other things, this objective would require more stable human resources in national institutes of statistics, opportunities of training in the gender perspective for producers of information, and a higher budget allocation by the State to data production. With regard to this last point, the capacity of national institutes of statistics to conduct surveys depended on the necessary funds being approved by ministries of finance and parliaments.

b) *Group 2: Andean Region and Southern Cone*

The representative of the National Institute of Statistics of Bolivia explained the changes in official methods of measurement that had come about with the implementation of the Bolivian poverty reduction strategy. Three groups of indicators (economic, social and demographic) had been designed within the framework of the national system of statistical information, to serve as a basis for the analysis, follow-up and evaluation of all public policies. There was a particular need to strengthen users' statistical culture, especially at the level of local government, in order to ensure that policies would be coordinated and consistent with the new statistical system.

The researcher with the University of Cochabamba, Bolivia, gave an account of the experience of defining poverty in relation to the urbanization process in the city of Cochabamba using a multidimensional interpretative model. After describing how the model was created, the speaker said that the findings of the study emphasized the risk and vulnerability of the population by area of residence, leading to the conclusion that a correlation existed between social, physical and economic space, and quality of life. The model was particularly significant, because it used census data to examine specific dimensions of poverty, such as the incidence of unemployment, women's higher vulnerability to certain phenomena of deprivation and exclusion, the importance of language, and so forth.

The representative of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics of Peru described the method of poverty measurement the agency currently used and spoke of the pitfalls and constraints of poverty lines. With specific regard to gender, she presented two proposals to improve the quality of information: to measure the vulnerability of single parent households and compare the inequalities of male- and female-headed households, and to measure the impact of women's unpaid work on poverty rates, by allocating a price to it and subtracting this price from total household income. In this regard, she also proposed a survey to measure the consumption patterns of indigents, in order to define extreme poverty by age and gender.

The representative of the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE) briefly reviewed Brazil's history of statistics production and methodology for measuring absolute and relative poverty. The Institute was currently researching the measurement of households' non tradable satisfiers, with a particular emphasis on regional features, given the country's huge geographical extension and variety. This study would help to improve the gender perspective in the data produced. The speaker also described the definition of synthetic welfare indicators in relation to the country's demographic features, which included the gender perspective as a determining factor.

The representative of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Argentina described the research process which had given rise to the household material deprivation index (IMPH),

based on census data. This new index was being used to seek a solution to the inconsistency of the results obtained from the unmet basic needs and poverty lines methods. IMPH measured poverty by using a matrix of four categories to transpose household assets and income in a two-dimensional framework. This method helped to unmask gender inequality, since it demonstrated women's lower level of income and the differences in the allocation of household assets.

The presentation of the cabinet adviser to the Minister for Women's Affairs and Social Development of Peru set out the three objectives of the ministry's strategy: to mainstream the gender perspective, to integrate equal opportunities plans and to identify gaps in the poverty reduction strategy. The speaker gave an account of the problems that arose in labour policy when female employment depended on the establishment of transnational corporations in the country, and the potentially harmful effects on both gender inequality and the production of statistics of the focus of public spending. The active engagement of civil society was essential in order to mainstream the gender perspective in all public activities. In this regard, the biggest impact could be achieved at the local and regional levels, to then be passed on to the general government.

The presentation given by the analyst of the Centre of Studies for Labour and Agricultural Development (CEDLA) of Bolivia indicated that work was a structural cause of poverty. In this analysis, economic —not sociocultural— factors were the main determinants of the increase of female participation in the labour market. In addition, increasing structural unemployment affected women with secondary and higher education more than other population groups, since in general the growth of employment had been at the expense of job quality. While horizontal segregation in access to employment persisted, the consolidation of the precarious structure of the job market —with faster growth in unwaged and unskilled jobs— would continue to cause sharp vertical segregation. Moreover, given the State's failure to inspect compliance with labour legislation, precarious employment was no longer a feature of the informal sectors alone, but had spread to all sectors. Lastly, the rise in female employment appeared to have been a key factor in the accumulation of capital and increase in profitability, but had done little to better the position of women.

Table (j)

PRESENTATIONS OF PANEL 3: ANDEAN REGION AND SOUTHERN CONE

Presentation	Author	Organization	Country
"Diagnóstico de la situación de las mujeres en el marco de la política nacional de pobreza de Bolivia"	Walter Castillo	National Institute of Statistics	Bolivia
"La multidimensional cara de la pobreza, vulnerabilidad, privación y desigualdad social en Cochabamba. Un esquema explicativo"	Carmen Ledo	University of Saint Simon	Bolivia
"Situación de las estadísticas sociales en el Perú y propuestas para integrar la perspectiva de género"	Cirila Gutiérrez Espino	National Institute of Statistics and Informatics	Peru
"La medición de la pobreza en Brasil y los indicadores de género"	Cristiane Soares	Researcher, Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute	Brazil
"Efectos e impacto diferencial de la pobreza sobre las mujeres. Una aplicación del índice de privación material de los hogares (IMPH) desde la perspectiva de género"	Silvia Mario	National Institute of Statistics and Censuses	Argentina

"Nuevos enfoques en las políticas y estrategias de lucha contra la pobreza en Perú"	Diana Miloslavic	Cabinet Adviser to the Minister for Women's Affairs and Social Development, associate of the Flora Tristán Institution	Peru
"Resultados del diagnóstico de la OIT sobre trabajo y género en Bolivia"	Silvia Escobar de Pabón	Centre of Studies for Labour and Agricultural Development	Bolivia
"Trabajo productivo y reproductivo en el Ecuador"	Claudio Gallardo	National Statistics and Census Institute	Ecuador
"El aporte de la mujer al valor promedio de producción familiar campesina e indígena"	Roy Córdova	Research Centre for the Advancement of Farmers	Bolivia

Source: Prepared by the author, based upon the Technical Meeting on the Mainstreaming of the Gender Perspective in Poverty Measurement, La Paz, Bolivia (23-25 September, 2003). (Presentations available on ECLAC's Women and Development Unit site <<http://www.eclac.cl/mujer>>).

The representative of the National Statistics and Census Institute (INEC) of Ecuador explained the work of this organization, set out the new Integrated Household Survey System (SIEH) and detailed the set of measurement tools it used as part of the poverty lines method. It was recommendable to institutionalize these tools and monitor poverty in terms of per capita household income in relation to the cost of basic and food baskets, since these were regular, constant investigations that were methodologically comparable to other institutes in the region. The experience of Ecuador's most recent employment survey was particularly relevant, since it had included an additional question on use of time, which had provided a basis on which to analyse this issue. The inequalities identified using this and other methods included the higher incidence of informality among women and the difficulties they faced in acceding to the means of production. In this regard, the equity problem was evidenced mainly in the distribution of productive and reproductive work.

The presentation of the Bolivian Research Centre for the Advancement of Farmers (CIPCA) described the association's experience with the use of a qualitative indicator created to analyse the indigenous rural economy at the microeconomic level, one of the objectives of which had been to determine women's contribution to the gross value of rural production. It was explained that social roles were of prime importance for the research work. While the method had certain limitations—it did not consider generational aspects and could not measure short-term changes—it offered a number of advantages, including the possibility of guiding decisions on rural development strategies in the light of gender differences.

In the debate that followed, particular importance was attached to the consolidation of institutionalized contacts between institutes of statistics and national mechanisms for the advancement of women, and to the harmonization of concepts and poverty measurement methods among the countries of the region. It was also necessary to coordinate statistical information with gender policies, and both of these with ministries of economic affairs, in order to have an impact on macroeconomic policy. Macroeconomic policy makers would thus know when, how and where to direct the efforts of their institutions in order to improve the situation of their countries. It was essential to define methods to expose the consumption of each household member, women's unpaid work, the housing tenure regime, access to credit and management of micro-enterprises, as steps to an efficient delineation of poverty and the full integration of women into all spheres of society.

5. Closing session

In the closing session the floor was taken by Iván Prudencio, Acting Director of the United Nations Population Fund in Bolivia, Ana Falú, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Walter Castillo, Adviser to the Office of the Executive Director of the National Institute of Statistics of Bolivia, and Diane Alméras, Social Affairs Officer with the ECLAC Women and Development Unit, in representation of the Secretariat.

C. Recommendations and conclusions

Participants adopted the following recommendations:

1. For national institutes of statistics

- ♦ To design, implement and set in motion, if they have not already done so, systems of statistics and gender indicators, incorporating information from all available sources;
- ♦ To make better use of existing sources of information, such as censuses, regular household and income surveys and other instruments;
- ♦ To mainstream the gender perspective in the production of statistics, including measurement and disaggregation by race, ethnic and ethno-linguistic group, age, level of education and marital status;
- ♦ To broaden and improve the compilation of information produced by local government administrations;
- ♦ To ensure that the information produced complies with standards that will vouch for the reliability of the findings of gender studies, taking particular care that samples are representative and data is opportune and of good quality;
- ♦ To produce statistics and gender indicators such as those proposed by ECLAC in the meeting and in the data base available at the web site www.eclac.cl/mujer;

- ♦ To promote research on the distribution of resources among household members and the measurement of individual expenditure;
- ♦ To include specific questions on time use in integrated household surveys and other regular surveys, such as those on employment and, in particular, on household budget and expenditure, in order to attribute value to unpaid domestic work, time use and domestic violence;
- ♦ To systematically combine the life cycle approach with the gender perspective in poverty measurement, in particular with regard to the measurement of unpaid domestic work, time use and domestic violence;
- ♦ Given that health is a basic need and a determinant of economic growth and, in the case of ill health, a generator of poverty, poverty measurement from a gender perspective should seek to estimate the volume of health expenditure necessary to ensure a minimum level of wellbeing for the household and its occupants. This should be done bearing in mind the different epidemiological profiles by sex and age, and the differentiated needs of men and women for access to, use and financing of health services, in particular sexual and reproductive health services. Special attention must also be given to the measurement of consumption of health care in the household, since this is provided mainly by women.
- ♦ Given that employment is a fundamental tool for overcoming poverty, and that in this framework decent employment constitutes a poverty reduction strategy, the measurement instruments should include special questions and modules designed to capture new forms of employment and underemployment that affect women (piece-work, home-based and tertiarized work, teleworking, and so on); as well as working conditions, especially the hours they work and their health and social security provisions.
- ♦ To strengthen the economic, human and material capacities of national institutes of statistics and ensure that their technical staff are properly trained and have stable employment;
- ♦ To institutionalize the coordination of national institutes of statistics with national women's offices, strengthening cooperation and promoting dual mechanisms of mutual training on the implementation of the gender perspective and the requirements of statistical production, ensuring sustainability over time;
- ♦ Together with national women's offices, to review the contexts of questionnaires in order to capture the gender dimension more effectively, including the formulation of questions and the training of survey-takers;
- ♦ Together with national women's offices, to continue work on the criteria used to define "head of household", avoiding the gender bias that occurs in measurement instruments, then harmonize the criteria among member countries of the Statistical Conference of the Americas.
- ♦ Together with national women's offices, generate research that is comparable at a regional level, based on common conceptual and methodological references, for example with respect to the issue of time use.

2. For national mechanisms for women's advancement

- ♦ To establish mechanisms of coordination with ministries of economic development in order to ensure that poverty statistics with a gender perspective are used in the formulation of public policies;
- ♦ To include gender experts in government teams responsible for setting national level poverty lines;
- ♦ To promote the production of studies and complementary information, such as studies on time use and violence against women, etc, to be coordinated with regular statistics;
- ♦ To ensure that women are included in social dialogue among representatives of the corporate sector, workers and government agencies, in order to improve the working conditions of female and male workers;
- ♦ To disseminate regional and international experiences on progress made in the measurement of time use.

3. For international cooperation agencies

- ♦ Continuous support is requested to help mainstream the gender perspective in measurement instruments;
- ♦ Agencies are requested to help ensure the sustainability of the gender perspective in national institutes of statistics.



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