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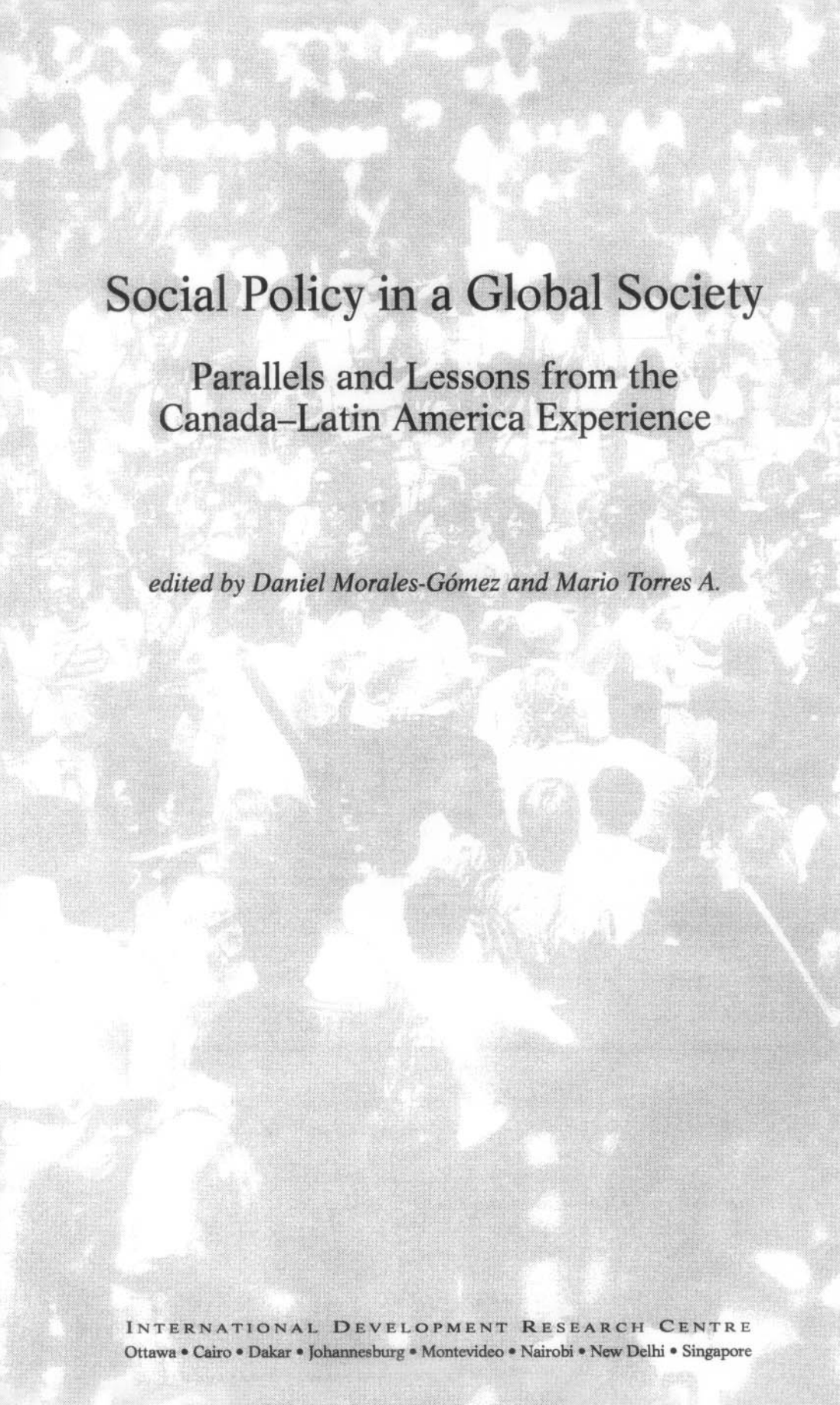
# Social Policy in a Global Society

Parallels and Lessons from the  
Canada-Latin America Experience

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edited by Daniel Morales-Gómez and Mario Torres A.



# Social Policy in a Global Society

## Parallels and Lessons from the Canada–Latin America Experience

*edited by Daniel Morales-Gómez and Mario Torres A.*

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# TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIAL POLICYMAKING: LATIN AMERICA

*Raúl Urzúa*

The purpose of this chapter is to identify training requirements for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of effective and efficient social policies in Latin America. The economic, social, and political context where those policies operate and the societal goals they are expected to achieve must be considered.

Two assumptions are made in addressing these issues. First, under current and probable future scenarios the Latin American economies will be market oriented. A development strategy aiming at sustained economic growth equity and democratic consolidation will continue to be the major societal goal in all countries of the region. Second, there are different dimensions to the concept of social policies used in the region. A broader definition includes not only antipoverty programs but also employment policies, demographic policies, and the strengthening of social integration among others. The choice of one or another definition has consequences not only for the goals and means of social policies but also for the identification of the actors involved, the institutional arrangements needed for implementation, and the criteria to evaluate policies and programs.

For the purpose of this chapter, social policies have been defined broadly, and linked to a more general social development strategy, rather than to a narrower approach that identifies social policies with antipoverty programs. Interesting sociological analyses of these discussions in the European context can be found in George and Wilding (1979), Misha (1977), and Room (1979). In Latin America, a useful compendium of different views on the subject can be found in ECLAC et al. (1982).

## **Recent trends**

In Latin America, social policy questions are directly linked to the eve of industrialization and urbanization. In particular, they are linked to their social, labour, and ideological consequences, such as a new labour force dependent upon the wage system; the appearance of worker housing, health, and sanitation

problems; the formation of organizations to defend the interests of the new working class; strikes and street demonstrations; armed clashes between workers and police or the military; and organization of leftist political parties that compete with the more traditional parties. Under the common label of "the social question" those are problems that some countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Perú, among others) began to experience at the turn of the century, and for which new government institutions and legislation were introduced during the 20s and 30s (Morris 1966; for the Brazilian case see Draibe 1990).

Although the practice of social intervention by the state was established at that time, the conceptualization of social policies and the attempt to define them technically and operationally as a necessary component of government planning is linked to efforts to introduce planning and programing institutions in the state in the 60s. In fact, although influenced by ECLA's (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) thinking and the development of technical tools, many governments introduced planning exercises. It was at the Presidential Conference of Punta del Este, Uruguay, in 1961, that the concept of planning was formally accepted by Latin American governments (Rodríguez-Noboa 1992).

The social and ideological conflicts that characterized the 60s in most countries contributed to widening the meaning of social planning, making it a tool for achieving redistribution of income and social benefits and, in many cases, for introducing structural reforms. At the same time, vigorous efforts were made to strengthen traditional sectoral social policies such as education, health, and social security.

Of particular relevance is the importance the social sciences began to acquire. By the end of the 50s, leading national and private universities had established departments of economics and sociology, while the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO), through its research centre in Rio de Janeiro and its schools of sociology and political science in Santiago, started its pioneering role in the training of graduate students. Indirectly, the attempts to provide theoretical explanations for Latin American underdevelopment, and more directly the efforts of José Medina Echavarría and his disciples to link those encompassing theoretical efforts with social planning, as well as the creation of the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), led to the first generation of formally trained social scientists in Latin America who contributed to provide intellectual respectability to social planning in the region. Their contribution was, however, more at the level of developing macro and incompatible utopian models of society than of identifying ways to achieve concrete social changes.

Political turmoil created by social and economic problems, and the acceptance that the import substitution strategy had led to a dead end, contributed to the radicalization of political conflicts and to violent clashes between partisans of one or another of these utopian models of society. This led to the breakdown of democratic regimes even in countries with a long democratic tradition, like Chile and Uruguay, and to the adoption of economic strategies based more on their natural or acquired comparative advantages in the world market than on import substitution. Structural adjustment policies strictly following neoliberal orthodoxy were implemented to reestablish macroequilibria, state-owned productive and service firms were privatized, and public expenditures were severely restricted.

The effects of those changes on social services and social security are well documented (see ECLAC 1990a,b; Grosh 1990). Most countries experienced public expenditures reductions in both absolute and relative terms during the 80s, seriously affecting health and education, and major cuts in maintenance, new investments, and equipment. Those reductions in the supply of services were coupled with a radical redefinition of the role of social policies. Rather than considering them as elements and expressions of social planning, they were conceived as ways of minimizing the "unavoidable," but temporary, social costs of structural adjustment policies. Social policies thus became equated with antipoverty policies. Although the elimination of poverty was to be achieved with sustained economic growth, it was expected that it could be significantly reduced with antipoverty policies. Program targeting, involvement of the private sector, and decentralization of management decisions were considered necessary requirements for the success of those policies.

It is generally accepted that those radical changes were adopted under the strong influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Without minimizing that influence, it cannot be ignored that social scientists, and particularly economists, also played a major role in that redefinition of social policies. In this particular case, however, the influence came not from the side of economists of the structural school, but from national, neoliberal economists.

The experience of the 80s shows that the combination of economic structural adjustment policies with the definition of social policies as antipoverty policies not only has been unable to reduce poverty, but poverty has increased during the last two decades in the majority of Latin American countries (Cardoso and Helwege 1992; ECLAC 1990c, 1991; UNDP 1990–1992). This failure in minimizing the social cost of structural adjustment policies is leading to a rethinking of social policies and social development in the region. Starting from the realization that "compensatory social programmes are unavoidable palliative



tools for extreme situations, but they only marginally contribute to the fight against poverty," (Raczynski 1994, p. 3) that rethinking goes from questioning of specific characteristics of the dominant approach, to propose a completely different approach to development.

Some of the points being examined are: when and how to combine universal and targeted programs better, under what conditions is it advisable to decentralize those programs and when should they be decentralized, what are the conditions for social participation in the design and implementation of social policies, the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and of the private sector (Arellano-López and Petras 1994; Raczynski 1994; Stahl 1994). Universal and targeted programs are beginning to be seen more as complementary than contradictory. Decentralization is no longer considered the panacea in and by itself, and their necessary links with a strong central government as well as with a more egalitarian power structure at the local levels are recognized. The advantages and disadvantages of NGOs for executing social programs, and when and how to give them that responsibility are now better understood.

A proposal for a development strategy for the 90s made by ECLAC to the governments of the region (ECLAC 1990d), has contributed to broaden the rethinking of social policies. Equity and market-oriented economic development are proposed as two equally important and mutually reinforcing goals, and a set of strategic proposals is made on how to achieve them. Social policies, understood as all policies aiming at the human development of each and all members of society, are linked directly with equity as a goal, but also with economic growth, because social development is seen as both a condition for and a consequence of it. Furthermore, the proposal considers social development as closely interrelated with citizenship and the consolidation of democracy. The connection between social development, citizenship, and democracy is one of the central issues analyzed in ECLAC-Unesco (1992).

The ECLAC and ECLAC-Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) proposals and the ongoing critical evaluation of dominant policies suggest a return to a perspective of social policies that no longer restricts them to antipoverty programs and to a subordinate role vis-à-vis market-centred economic growth. This change of perspective is being strongly influenced by objective changes in economy and society as well as by political factors. As it happened, however, with all previous changes of perspective on the subject, it is also influenced by the increasing number of social scientists that have started to examine more carefully the successes and failures of the still dominant approach to social policies.

The training program proposed here is part of an effort to implement the broad approach to social policies referred to earlier. Specifically, it aims at the development of the human resources required to come to grips with the implied conceptual, technical, institutional, management, and participatory challenges.

### **Challenges to a broad approach**

To adopt one or another perspective on social development implies to accept not only different societal goals but also innovative ways of managing the process of social changes to achieve those goals, and to allow the active participation of the civil society at different stages of the process. In practice, these perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Although the broader approach has hardly been implemented completely in any country, many have integrated elements of it in their development policies. A fuller implementation will initially be determined by the capacity of those favouring changes to mobilize political support. Political support is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition. To transform political support into policies and programs, it will be necessary to cope with the concrete problems derived from various challenges. The following sections discuss some of them.

#### **Incompatible assumptions**

The strategy proposed by ECLAC for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the one proposed by the Preparatory Committee of the World Summit for Social Development, rightly insists on the importance of integrating economic, social, cultural, and political goals, while both recognize the free market as the cornerstone for economic development. A question that cannot be avoided is whether that broader perspective is compatible with the neoclassical model inspiring economic policies, and particularly with its assumptions about the individual and society.

Friends and foes of the neoclassical model agree that it is based on the following three assumptions: the decision-making unit is either the individual or the individual firm, decisions are oriented toward the maximization of a utility, and those decisions are rational. A consequence of those assumptions is the understanding of society as an aggregate of individuals, and hence, as lacking properties or characteristics not reducible to personal or individual ones. This view leads to the belief that supraindividual factors have no place in the definition and implementation of public policies, that the best public policies are those supporting, rather than to interfering with, the individual maximization of utility, and that personal actions are motivated by self-interest.

The broad perspective on social development is based on three opposite assumptions. The first and most basic is the old dictum that "the whole is more

than the sum of its parts." That is, that there are societal characteristics not reducible to the sum total of individual characteristics. If this assumption is not accepted, social policies cannot logically address supraindividual structural and cultural constraints that have been historically major barriers to social justice and equity. The second assumption derives from the first: individual choices and behaviour are not only the result of individual transactions but are also influenced by the social structures, institutions, and collectives that individual actors are placed in or belong to, as well as by the values, norms, beliefs, and practices predominant in groups and collectives acting as "reference groups" for them (Etzioni 1988; Merton 1959). The third assumption is that not only self-interest but also altruism and solidarity, explain social and individual behaviour. This assumption has direct implications for the incentives to be used in policies and programs, as well as for their place in the mobilization of social and personal resources.

To conclude this point, the implementation of a broad approach to social development and social policies can be hindered by the widespread acceptance by social scientists, policymakers, and politicians, of assumptions not well suited to create strong commitments toward it. A first and often forgotten problem in need of solution is the lack of a paradigm capable of accommodating not only self-interested behaviour, but also that which is motivated by altruism and norms of solidarity.

Briefly, for a broad approach to social development and social policies to be fully implemented, the importance of the "social" and not only of the individual will have to be rediscovered. This is a theoretical but highly policy-relevant task of equal importance in both North and South.

The emphasis given in the following to inter- and multidisciplinary university training at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels is based on the need to redirect studies to permit an effective interdisciplinary dialogue and the training of professionals capable of specifying their basic assumptions, complementing their own perspectives with those of specialists from other disciplines, and formulating/analyzing social policies that avoid both individual biases, i.e., individualist reductionism, and the reification, i.e., materialization, of society and its structures.

### **Integration of economic and social goals**

Although the broad approach to social policy questions the belief that economic growth will by itself bring about social development, it recognizes that without economic progress there will be no social progress. The question that remains is how to integrate them at the national level.

In principle, the task should be easier than in the past because now there seems to be a consensus on three points. The first is the need to maintain macroeconomic equilibria. This is accepted for economic reasons but also to ensure the effectiveness of social policies, which requires sustainability through time. Macroeconomic equilibria does not ensure the long-term financing of social policies, but it is the necessary condition for it. Second, social development is not dependent only on social policies, but also on economic policies: wages, labour, prices and subsidies, agricultural development, and industrial policies. Third, productivity increments depend to a great extent on investments in human capital, and basically in education, which amounts to the recognition that long-term economic growth requires social and human development.

Agreements on these points is, however, not sufficient for the formulation and implementation of integrated development strategies. Populist policies of the past preferred the satisfaction of immediate social needs and demands with respect to macroeconomic equilibria. Structural adjustment policies recommended by international organizations have given priority to economic growth and decided to make this generation pay for the evils of the past and the welfare of the future. Both are good examples of the failure to transform the ideal of integrating economic and social development into concrete strategies and government programs.

There are political factors and technical problems at the national level affecting the integration of economic and noneconomic variables. An example of those problems is the lack of adequate instruments to evaluate ex-ante not only the economic but also the noneconomic costs and benefits of programs (social, environmental, demographic, and cultural costs).

Equally lacking are instruments to evaluate the social impact of economic policies and the economic impact of social policies. A teaching program in social policy should contribute, as one of its objectives, to the training of professionals capable of resolving these and other technical problems posed by the integration of economic and social policies.

### **Need for state reform**

The history of Latin America after the World War II shows a clear trend toward an increasing participation of the state in economic and social activities (Klikberg 1993). Revolutionary changes toward a market-centred and export-oriented economy in the region has put state reform as a priority in the political agenda of all countries. In all of them there is a perceived need to redefine the state's role to make it more functional to the economic, social, cultural, and political changes. Institutional changes in executive-parliament relations, privatization of public enterprises and of utilities services, decentralization and deconcentration of

activities, debureaucratization and modernization of public administration, are some of the subjects most often included in the agenda on state reforms. Three of the more specific subjects now being discussed are decentralization, coordination of intersectoral activities and modernization of management practices.

### *Decentralization*

In reaction to traditional centralism, verticality, and standardization of programs, most governments have begun to decentralize responsibilities to levels closer to the beneficiaries of public policies. It is expected that policies and programs will respond better to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and, at the same time, provide opportunities for their participation in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of programs. (For a detailed analysis of the subject, see Palma and Rufian 1989.)

Recent experience, however, has shown that things are not that simple. Clientelism and corruption can be stronger at the local than at the national level, as suggested by recent studies in Argentina and Brazil (Raczynski 1994, p. 36). Centralism and the weakness of local governments that characterize many Latin American countries have conspired against an effective process of decentralization (Raczynski 1994, p. 36). The expected social participation not always occurs because of the weakness of local social organizations of beneficiaries.

Finally, more often than not public officials at the local level do not have the training or the experience to transform social demands into concrete programs, or into project proposals for the central government or for nongovernmental funding sources. These problems raise questions related to the reforms needed at the central, regional, and local levels of government for decentralization to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of social policies and the conditions needed for an effective participation of beneficiaries, the private sector, and NGOs.

### *Coordination of intersectoral activities*

The broad approach to social development and social policies requires much more coordination between ministries and state organisms than what has been customary in Latin America. That coordination is needed among those ministries usually identified as the "social ministries" and between them and the ministries of the economic sector and all the other ministries. (For general discussions of the subject in reference to Latin America, see Rodríguez-Noboa 1991; Rolando 1991.)

Intersectoral coordination has been attempted in different ways in Latin America. One of them has been to assign that role to the ministry of planning or its equivalent. In other cases, a special ministry for social development or social

planning has been created. Another alternative has been the establishment of interministerial committees. Others have proposed the creation of a Fund for Social Development with authority to define priority sectors and programs, assign financial and human resources, and monitor and control implementation (Rolando et al. 1990). None of these alternatives is optimal, and the question for effective coordination mechanisms still remains without an adequate answer.

### *Modernization of management practices*

One of the most common topics all over the world and, certainly, in Latin America, is that of the management of the public sector and of public policies. Recommendations go from "Reinventing the State" (Osborne and Gaebler 1993) to improving the management skills of local-level civil servants. The need to move away from traditional public-management procedures would be present no matter what approach to social policies and social development is chosen. The broader approach taken here for a later discussion on training needs poses additional problems given its requirement to integrate economic, social, cultural, and environmental considerations, as well as the role beneficiaries and nongovernmental actors are expected to play in program formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

At the level of policy and program formulation, the question is how policies and programs involving different sectors are formulated, and how the civil society participates in their formulation. In policy and program implementation, the issues to address are the design of flexible monitoring mechanisms and instruments, the selection of competent managers, and the capacity to create reliable team work at local and intermediate levels.

Recent studies and reviews of social policies have concluded that program monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are extremely poor and unreliable (Midaglia et al. n.d.; Portocarrero et al. 1994; Raczynski 1994; Raczynski et al. 1993; Tenti Fanfani 1993). The need for defining criteria, methodologies, and instruments for monitoring and evaluation is especially urgent in the case of decentralized programs. Defining it and building it into the training of future social policymakers is another objective that must be included in any social policy training program.

### **Reinforcing social organization and participation**

A key characteristic of the broad approach to social development is the role of people's participation in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of decisions and activities affecting them. The expectation is that the participation of institutions and networks of civil society, including NGOs, trade unions,

professional associations, cooperatives, self-help groups, neighbourhood associations, etc., will allow a better definition of the needs and the means to satisfy them.

Social policies and programs in most Latin American countries have traditionally been influenced by demands and pressures from well-organized corporate groups. Recent structural changes have contributed to weaken the influence of some of those groups, such as trade unions and associations of civil servants, but they do not guarantee more equal access to the decision-making process. On the contrary, it is highly probable that both nationwide, and at regional and local levels, income and organizational power may now be more concentrated than in the past. As stated in a recent revision on the subject, "there is little, one fears, to prevent the favoured interests of old from capitalizing their antecedent advantages into differential assets for playing under the new rules of the game" (Glade and Reilly 1993).

One conclusion is clear, unless action is taken to modify the individual, organizational, and structural factors causing inequality in the ability of different groups to identify their needs and articulate their demands, the call for social participation may reinforce, rather than reduce, social inequalities. A condition *sine qua non* for the participation of the civil society in reaching higher levels of social and human development is to ensure that the less-privileged social strata has an equality of opportunities to organize themselves, make demands, and participate in or influence decisions.

Government assistance for the development of organizations, training programs for leaders and members, and their access to relevant knowledge and information are three basic requirements for social participation. In the final analysis, social participation ends up being an objective to be achieved rather than a means already available.

### **Relevant sociopolitical research**

Neither the effective implementation of a new more socially centred development strategy nor an effective reform of the state will be possible without better knowledge of long-term trends and processes. The availability and constant accumulation of that knowledge is also a condition *sine qua non* for the success of the proposed training approach.

Social science research on long-term social processes and structural changes was considerably weaker during the 70s and 80s than in the previous decade because of factors such as military interventions, political pressures, and the little priority funding agencies assign to research that is not directly policy relevant. As a consequence of the interplay of those factors, teaching and research

on social subjects became two separate activities, the first being the responsibility of the university departments and centres that succeeded in surviving the exodus of qualified researchers, and the second being assumed by private academic centres outside the university and by other types of NGOs.

Constantly in need of selling projects to survive, these nonuniversity centres were in no position to set long-term research priorities. With very few exceptions, they could not but devote themselves to short studies in response to demands. The gradual consolidation of democratic processes is opening new opportunities for universities to involve themselves in more global social science research on social policies and their effects on social structures and processes.

A subject that can no longer be ignored is that of the joint impact of long-term trends and the current development strategy on social integration and social, political, and cultural conflicts. Another subject in great need of research is that of the societal factors conditioning state reforms. A more specific subject in need of research is that of the factors affecting the social policymaking process and the success of specific social policies, including impact evaluations of specific programs.

Although far from exhaustive, these challenges help to show the difficulties governments and the international community will face to implement fully a wider and more ambitious perspective on social development. Progress toward that goal will require the combination of a broad scope and a piecemeal approach that does not attempt to tackle all problems simultaneously. If this point is accepted, it seems necessary to conclude that training in the field of social policies should contribute to meet two main objectives: to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of social policies in the narrow sense defined in the foregoing, and to serve as a tool for the full implementation of the broad approach to social policies and social development.

### **Training needs**

Before discussing a social policies training approach aiming at meeting the challenges mentioned, it might be useful to point out some general issues within which training for social policies should be framed. There is a need to strengthen a perspective and the teaching of the social sciences that combines a multidisciplinary approach with a policy orientation. Although there is a growing consensus on the need for this change, it would be naive to expect that it will be easily introduced into a university system characterized by its division into departments, schools, and disciplinary faculties and reluctant to the establishment of multidisciplinary programs.



Changes toward teaching and research that is more policy relevant are urgent. They must not, however, lead to a neglect of theory if social policies are to be seen as a cumulative process. Without policy analyses, theory runs the risk of losing both practical and theoretical relevance. Without theory, social policies may end up being conservative, and social practice may become incapable of responding to new demands or even to use the available experience for improving current policies or formulating new, innovative ones.

If the broad approach to social development and social policies is to be implemented, training programs should not be circumscribed to the social sciences, but should include a wide range of disciplines. Disciplines, such as law, public administration, psychology, computer science, organizational development, communications sciences, are called to play a role in the formulation and implementation of policies and programs.

These and other disciplines are instrumental to the achievement of social development and should be integrated into the curricula of training programs on social development and social policies. There is a need to break away from an individualistic approach to sectoral programs and activities. To ignore the role played by social factors in sectoral policies leads to voluntaristic efforts that do not take into account social, psychological, cultural, or political barriers, or unduly minimizes the range of tools available to reach the stated objectives.

It is also urgent to develop a critical mass of professionals from different disciplines that, from complementary perspectives and playing different roles, participate in debates on the subject, relate it to their own professional activities, advise policymakers and policy managers, or assume responsibility themselves for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of social policies. The broad approach to social development also requires the training of nonprofessional civil servants in the management of social policies requiring much wider participation of beneficiaries and private actors than the more traditional policies. Finally, the analysis of the problems to be solved to implement the broad approach to social development and social policies lead to give high priority to the training of the actual or potential beneficiaries and to the role that training should play in the reinforcement of grassroots organizations.

### **General and specific objectives**

A general goal for training in social policies is to contribute to strengthening development and democracy by increasing knowledge on social issues and by making it available to all the relevant actors in the state and in civil society. From that general objective the following specific objectives can be derived:

- To introduce, in the professional training of different disciplines, integrated elements on social development and social policies to enable their practitioners to participate in national debates and to make informed decisions on the subject;
- To train specialists with the knowledge and skills to diagnose social development problems and to formulate, implement, monitor, and evaluate both social policies and the social impact of other policies;
- To train nonprofessional civil servants on participatory techniques for project formulation, implementation, and evaluation;
- To contribute to increasing social participation by training members of grassroots organizations; and
- To train social scientists capable of making a contribution to the analysis of mid- and long-term state–society relationships, as well as to state reforms needed for the democratic formulation and implementation of an integrated social development strategy.

### **Training levels and training strategies**

Those objectives are aimed at different training universes, and may require different training contents, methodologies, and teaching techniques for their achievement. This section discusses possible strategies to achieve them.

The rationale to introduce integrated elements of social development and social policies in the professional training of different disciplines is based on the conviction that the acceptance of a broad approach to social development and the introduction of effective social policies require the commitment of the political and intellectual communities. It is also based on the fact that the use of technical–scientific knowledge for either policy decisions or professional practice is greatly facilitated when policymakers and professionals have been sensitized earlier at their university training. (For a review and analysis of the available evidence on the subject see Andorka and Urzúa [1991].)

Special strategies are needed to make the largest possible number of students aware of social development issues. The specific objective here is not to train future specialists on the subject, but university graduates who are able to follow debates on the subject of social development and social policies, and who are sensible with respect to the social implications of their own professional activities. This is an objective for the training of students who do not intend to

become specialists in social development or social policies. The expected result at this level would be a more enlightened discussion of the issues and a much higher ability of those university graduates who will eventually become political leaders, decision-makers, or professional civil servants, to integrate new knowledge on the subject and to participate in debates and decision processes on social development or specific social policies.

In training specialists with the knowledge and skills to diagnose social development problems and to formulate, implement, monitor and, evaluate both social policies and social impact of other policies, the aim is to provide them with scientific and technical tools needed for the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies. Specialists who benefit from this training are expected to do applied social research and work mainly in the public sector. They should be able to:

- Identify and set priorities in the area of social policies;
- Manage the financial, legal, and political variables of program implementation;
- Estimate the direct and indirect social, political, and economic effects of social programs; and
- Be able to manage public programs (Vergara 1993).

Training these professionals can be done at either the undergraduate or graduate level. At the undergraduate level, the responsibility corresponds to the schools of public administration existing in a number of universities in the region. It cannot be ignored, however, that these schools have suffered a long crisis of purpose and identity and are ill-prepared for that task.

An alternative could be to assign the responsibility to other professional schools (schools of business, of industrial engineering, etc.) that have tried to fill the void left by the real or perceived obsolescence of the schools of public administration. This alternative would face two related problems. The first is that, at least initially, most students entering the professional schools that could provide that kind of training have other objectives in mind and would probably not be interested in pursuing careers as social policy analysts. The second is that the Latin American university system is characterized by very limited curricular flexibility. When it exists, more often than not, choices are restricted to courses offered in the academic unit where students are expected to get their degrees. In

practice, however, it is impossible for students to take courses from other departments or schools. Neither of the two alternatives open at the undergraduate level, therefore, is very promising in the short run.

The graduate level seems to offer better prospects. In fact, this is the alternative chosen by most universities in the region that have started programs with the objective of providing this kind of training: University of Buenos Aires, University of Chile, Catholic University Andrés Bello, Caracas, Fundação do Desenvolvimento Administrativo (FUNDAP, Brazil), etc. Courses at this level have the advantage over undergraduate courses because students come from different professional backgrounds and usually have greater motivation than younger students. The programs are of different durations, but are never more than a year and a half, including the preparation of a monograph or a master's thesis. A cursory review of the courses offered in each program often reveals the influence of the larger academic unit they belong to. All existing programs are new, and there has been little time to evaluate whether programs giving different weights to the disciplines they include affect the overall impact of the programs and the professional careers of the graduates. What matters most is not the relative weight given to particular disciplines, but the general approach of a program. What a social policy analyst needs is to understand that the process of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation is one of interactions and negotiations affected by macro- and microstructural factors that rarely, if ever, adjust themselves to the rules imposed by instrumental rationality.

No matter what their weaknesses are, masters' programs on the design and implementation of social policies should be given priority over undergraduate programs with the same objective. Short, postgraduate courses conducive not to an academic degree, but to a diploma or a certificate is another alternative. The training courses for social managers offered by the Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), and the intensive courses offered by FUNDAP are some of the courses that fall into this category. These courses are more useful for the "recycling" of professionals on specific social management problems than for training in the overall management of social development policies, and are more effective if conceived and implemented jointly with the public and private sectors.

The task of retraining nonprofessional civil servants in the implementation of social policies with participation of social organizations and the private sector could be carried out by NGOs and nonuniversity academic centres given their comparative advantages over university centres. The involvement, however, via the provision of teaching materials, joint workshops, assistance in defining contents, of universities in charge of training social development and social

policies experts at professional and postgraduate levels, would ensure a consistent approach at all levels. (An interesting program that closely reflects what is proposed here is the Teaching Programme on the Design and Evaluation of Local Level Social Projects that the Corporation for University Promotion (CPU) has conducted since 1991.) Training at this level should be conducted in close contact with local government organizations and services.

Training and education of grassroots leaders and followers are not sufficient to empower the poor but, without them, the task is certainly more difficult. Two main actors have taken responsibility for training at this level: NGOs and independent academic centres providing support and technical assistance to grassroots organizations, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations devoted to adult education. The latter are newcomers to the field. Traditionally, adult education programs have provided basic education to adults who either had never attended school or were early school dropouts. That traditional approach seems to be leaning toward the strengthening of grassroots organizations and the support of social participation (Rivera 1993). Universities are a third actor to be involved in those efforts that have introduced research or teaching programs on social development and social policies.

The experience and the lesson learned by these organizations and programs provide a good starting point for a more systematic approach to training the poor for participating in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies. A concerted effort of NGOs, adult education institutions, and university programs would help solve some of the problems that have been negatively affecting the success of those efforts.

A common problem affecting NGOs is the lack of time to systematize their rich practical experience and to derive lessons applicable in other contexts or at a more general level. Very often, they do not have access to the experiences of others or to studies and research findings relevant for their objectives and activities. Adult education programs have vast experience in the use of pedagogical techniques and long-distance education with the support of mass media (particularly radio), but only casual knowledge of broader social policy issues or of the social and cultural factors affecting the success of their programs. Besides, most adult education efforts still focus on providing basic education rather than on educating for social organization and social participation. Finally, universities have difficulties, and no comparative advantage, in involving themselves directly in training programs at grassroots levels.

A consortium of these three different actors, however, would combine the practical experience at the grassroots level of NGOs with the teaching skills of adult education programs and the substantive knowledge accumulated by the

universities. Furthermore, it would help to integrate the findings and experiences learned at the grassroots level by NGOs working in the field, thus improving policies and programs and orienting teaching and research on the subject. (The Center for the Analysis of Public Policies of the University of Chile and two networks of NGOs providing assistance to grassroots organizations and local governments have just initiated, with the financial support of the Institute for Economic Development of the World Bank, a pioneering consortium roughly corresponding to what is proposed here.)

The purpose of training social scientists to analyze the mid- and long-term state-society relationship as well as state reforms needed for implementing a social development strategy, to provide the society with a critical mass of social scientists trained at the highest level. Graduates should combine a deep knowledge of the theoretical and methodological aspects of their own disciplines with an openness to the contribution of other disciplines and a vocation for the analysis of mid- and long-term trends in the interaction between economic, social, cultural, and political change.

Ideally, these programs should be at the doctoral level and be closely linked to basic social research on, among other things, long-term social changes and their political implications, the political system, state-society relations, and cultural changes, civic culture, and democracy, etc. Inasmuch as those programs have a solid research basis and are in close contact with academic centres abroad, they should also provide ample opportunity for theory building. An important theory building task is the development of paradigms that are as parsimonious as possible, but encompassing enough to take into account all the major factors, conditions, and constraints present in real life. Progress in that direction requires a constant and systematic theoretical effort in close contact with efforts at systematizing research findings and groundwork experiences. An efficient way of doing this would be a permanent seminar on the subject conducted as part of a doctoral program. Although graduates from these types of programs need not be directly involved in policy analysis, they could be expected to have regular academic contacts with policy analysts and to make their research findings available to policymakers and the general public.

Institutionally, programs of this type could adopt two possible forms. One would be to have programs tailor-made for each of the traditional social science disciplines, or at least for sociology and political science. The other would be to establish a single program on social development open to graduates from any social science. Although this alternative will require a longer period of preparation, it would better reflect the multidisciplinary approach required for the conceptualization and implementation of social development.

By the very nature of these programs, it seems unrealistic to expect that they can be established in all countries, or that, with a few exceptions, a single country could host more than one of them. The pooling of resources by means of a network of institutions from both North and South participation seems to be an unavoidable condition for having high-quality programs.

In sum, a training program to contribute to the implementation of social policies and programs integrated into a new and broader concept of social development should cover five levels: awareness building, as part of the general education of undergraduate university students; specialized, graduate professional training of social policy analysts and managers; doctoral programs on social development theory and research; training programs for middle and lower level civil servants; and, finally, training programs for actual or potential grassroots leaders.

The first three levels should be the responsibility of universities; the latter two are better served directly by NGOs, with the universities playing an indirect, supporting role.

### Supporting activities

For its implementation, an approach, such as the one proposed here requires a number of support activities. General support activities can be classified into the following categories:

- *Inventory of resources* — Included in this category would be inventories of existing training and research programs at each of the levels of training discussed earlier, both in Latin America and abroad; listings of teaching staff; compilation of bibliographies; inventories of relevant research projects, etc.
- *Partners identification* — Selection of academic institutions to be invited to participate in the program and organization of South-South and North-South networks of participating institutions. Partners should be selected to ensure that both experts on state/society relations and state reform, and experts on social development and social policies, are included in the program. Besides Canadian and U.S. institutions, European institutions should be invited to participate using instruments such as the interuniversities exchange program of the European community or triangular Canada/U.S.-Latin America-Europe arrangements.

- *Curricula design* — This category would include the compilation of curricula, guidelines, manuals, and reading packages and other teaching aids and materials; their evaluation and selection; identification of additional training materials to be developed; design of model curricula for each of the training levels; and preparation of additional teaching materials, the majority of which should be new materials prepared by the teaching staff participating in the program.
- *Research program* — In addition to the major research areas, the more general point that needs to be repeated here is that no training program will succeed in providing countries with more effective and efficient social policies if it does include a solid research program capable of evaluating the success of current policies, of identifying new problems and vulnerabilities in need of solutions, and of opening the scope of means to achieve the desired ends. In this sense, research and training should be considered as two complementary elements of one single program, rather than as two separate programs with completely independent objectives.
- *Information and communication needs* — To succeed in achieving its objectives the training approach suggested here needs to be supported by and coordinated with information and communication programs. The final purpose is not only the diffusion but also the use of information and knowledge in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. Information programs could play an important support and complementary role to training programs if they provide up-to-date research results and other knowledge on policy-relevant issues both to target groups strategic in the process of social policymaking and to training and research institutions.
- *Communication channels* — A requirement for the implementation of the training approach proposed here is the need for different types of producers and users of information and knowledge to interact and influence each other. This is rarely the case. To improve the situation, and as part of the supporting activities, it will be necessary to study the processes and actors involved in what some have called the “knowledge market,” (Andorka and Urzúa 1991; Brunner and Sunkel 1993) that is, the network of interactions between knowledge supply, demand and utilization.



## Conclusions

Starting from a few widely accepted assumptions about what the most probable development strategy to be followed by Latin American countries will be in the years to come, and from recent developments in the conceptualization of social policies in the region, this paper has identified the major challenges to the actual implementation of that strategy, and to the proposal of a training approach to help meeting those challenges.

The proposed approach addresses different target groups: university students that directly or indirectly will be involved in the policymaking process; professionals with management responsibilities in the area of social policies; high-level and, preferably, doctoral social science students; civil servants in charge of implementing social policies; and, finally, civil society and grassroots leaders and followers. The rationale for this wide approach is that training for social policies should not only aim at more efficient and effective social policies, but also at being an instrument for strengthening civil society and consolidating democracy. For this, a two-way, vertical process of knowledge diffusion and dissemination needs to be established or reinforced in the region.

No doubt, it is an ambitious approach requiring the coordination of intrauniversity activities, of universities with NGOs and grassroots organizations, as well as with research, training and information activities. It also requires close interaction not only between universities and research and training institutions of different countries but also of policymakers and persons with different levels of responsibility in the implementation of social policies.

The question is: Could we concentrate our efforts only on the training of managers of social policies without running the risk of reinforcing a technocratic approach to policy formulation and implementation, and hence, of conspiring against the consolidation of democracy? If, however, we decide to give priority to training at the grassroots level, would we not be favouring populist temptations that put in danger long-term economic growth and fail to achieve higher levels of social justice? If we come to the conclusion that basic research on social issues and training at doctoral levels are luxuries we cannot afford, we shall be denying our societies the possibility of improving their capacity to adjust themselves better to global changes that open new opportunities but also create new, but not unforeseeable, problems. The multitargeted approach to training for social policies suggested here has financial and organizational costs but they are lower than its potential benefits, when these are measured in relation to the goal of implementing a development strategy aiming at the three objectives of economic growth, social equity, and democracy.

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