IDRC ✳ CRDI

International Development
Research Centre

Centre de recherches pour le
développement international

LEARNING FROM SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

REGIONAL CONSULTATION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

MONTEVIDEO, JUNE 9 – 10, 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Learning from social innovation for gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean" meeting was convened by LACRO for the purpose of advising IDRC on its future gender work in the region. The main purpose of this meeting was to debate the relevance of regional tendencies and of changes implemented by democratic political institutions in terms of social innovation for gender equality and the empowerment of women, with a group of regional experts and to try to understand how these processes are influencing policy-making in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The meeting was organized with four issues in mind:

    a. Women's political participation in democratic processes and their impact viewed in the context of gender, considering local and global processes.

    b. Legislation, institutions, public policy and gender equality. An analysis of the principal results of the implementation of legal instruments and government measures to promote social innovation.

    c. Regional networks: successes, challenges and new mechanisms to influence policies and capacity building to monitor social innovation and gender equality.

    d. Determination of priorities for a future research agenda on gender issues with a limited budget.

A key point that emerged from the discussion was the importance of proposing an evaluation of what has taken place in the region concerning institutionalization of the gender equality analysis, for example within the framework of agencies and programs dedicated to women at State level. In general, it was agreed that these actions seem weakened and one of the reasons for this could be the mainstreaming strategy.

Another recurring proposal was the questioning of the gender transversalization strategy or "mainstreaming" and the need to encourage specific gender research. The proposal was not to set the mainstreaming strategy aside, but rather to emphasize the need to evaluate that phase and combine it with specific gender research.

Regional networking was considered in LAC as the most efficient way to link research with policy influence and knowledge-based actions at both domestic and international levels of intervention.

The key elements for the successful functioning of networks identified were:

o the possibility of a high-impact response to specific problems;

o precise definition of the network's agenda issues;

o ability to develop and promote their own views and to set up alliances with other social actors;

o ability to take advantage of new opportunities;

o ability to develop a medium and long-term political view, acquire technical qualification, achieve the appropriate level of institutionalization and formality according to the network's requirements,

o be conscious of the different needs of the various publics that integrate the network; and equity in the access to and distribution of resources, independence from strong personal leaderships.

It has been noted that there are networks of women in the region that are referrals for decision-makers; these networks have influential impact on social and political decisions.

The main risk regarding working through networks is that of becoming free or cheap labor for some actors, as well as the risk in cases of excluding networks, which are not open, of imitating power and participation biases.

During the discussions, a series of relevant research issues were identified. These were classified in three broad categories: basic issues, innovative issues and critical issues for the region.

<u>Basic issues</u>
-- Governance, comparative approach
-- Public policies and inclusive social compact viewed in the context of gender
-- Women and the political system. Changes and permanence. Profiles of women who participate at different levels of the political scene: local, national, etc.
-- Active citizenship, not only from a citizen's rights standpoint, but also taking into account the responsibilities and obligations of citizenship (women's roles and tasks)
-- The cultural dimension, values and social changes
-- The educational system in the region and its impact on women
-- The sexual division of labor with regards to productive and reproductive work, and its articulation and impact on women.

<u>Innovative issues</u>
-- Women's participation and their tasks within the State: decision makers, executives, beneficiaries, claimants, etc.
-- Women and their relationship with the State and public policies. Gender system at the State level.
-- New political actors and new emerging social movements and gender relations within them.
-- Use of time: differences between men and women in the daily distribution and use of time, time for productive work, time for reproductive work and housework, spare time, etc.
-- Masculinities: new masculinities, changes and permanence of males within the framework of changes and permanence in social gender relations.

<u>Critical issues in the region</u>
-- Violence in its different forms (urban, armed, domestic) and the different impact it has on men and women.
-- Poverty and its implications, an analysis of the different impact it has on men and women.

It is proposed that these issues must be worked out beginning with the articulation of different dimensions of concept-related analyses, such as the symbolic dimension, values, relation between the productive and reproductive spheres, the territorial dimension. At the same time, these issues must be connected with the global research agenda in the regional and sub-regional ambits, in order for them to have greater impact. Also, their dissemination and appropriation by different social actors must be foreseen, especially those with decision-making and influencing capacity in order to obtain greater gender equality in the regional ambit.

To this effect, sub-regions and urban conglomerates, cities, were proposed as adequate places to undertake research and actions regarding gender issues, as places promoting development and culture, and as territories offering social inclusion opportunities but also practicing social exclusion. Another outstanding element was the need to include the gender issue in the formulation and analysis of public policies and the analysis of the gender system at State level.

LEARNING FROM SOCIAL INNOVATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

1. Objectives of the regional consultation

The "Learning from social innovation for gender equality in Latin America and the Caribbean" meeting was convened by LACRO for the purpose of advising IDRC on its future gender work in the region. The main objective of this meeting was to debate, with a group of regional experts, the relevance of regional tendencies and of changes implemented by democratic political institutions in terms of social innovation for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and to try to understand how these processes are influencing policy-making in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2. Work methodology

The meeting was organized with four issues in mind, which were discussed by participants spontaneously relating their own work and research experiences. These issues were:

  a. Women's political participation in democratic processes and their impact from a gender perspective, considering local and global processes.
  b. Legislation, institutions, public policy and gender equality. An analysis of the principal results of the implementation of legal instruments and government measures to promote social innovation.
  c. Regional networks: success, challenges and new mechanisms to influence policies and capacity building to monitor social innovation and gender equality.
  d. Determination of priorities for a future research agenda on gender issues with a limited budget.

3. First round table: Women's political participation in democratic processes and their impact viewed in the context of gender

One of the first issues addressed, and which would be taken up again at following round tables, was the questioning of the gender mainstreaming strategy and the need to retackle specific gender research. The proposal was not to set the gender mainstreaming strategy aside, but rather to

emphasize the need to evaluate that phase and combine it with specific gender studies. This mainstreaming strategy, which is seen as interesting and complementary to specific studies, has not yet been applied correctly in the region.

The importance of proposing an evaluation of what has taken place in the region with what is called the institutionalization of the gender perspective, i.e. within the framework of offices and programs dedicated to women at State level, emerged from the discussion. In general, we find that these actions seem weakened and one of the reasons for this could be the gender mainstreaming. One of the important issues to work on in the region is how to strengthen the institutionalization processes of the gender issue.

On the other hand, there was a proposal regarding the need to consider women's social participation at all levels, (locally, at the bases, in newly emerging social movements), their motivations to participate, what they have learnt and the changes in actions implied by this participation. Regarding participation in the traditional political field, analysis of the stories of women who had access to it through quota systems was proposed. There was also a proposal regarding the need to review the electoral systems: how the participation of women in the political field is affected by the electoral systems and the quota systems.

Another issue which was widely debated was the dissemination and appropriation by social and political actors of the results of the research undertaken: how knowledge generated in the academic field can be transferred to and have impact on the social and political field. For this there is a need to generate socially concerted research agendas, so that the issues on the gender research agenda are directly related to the issues on the regional research agendas, taking into consideration new regional priorities and realities.

4. Second round table: Public policy and gender equality

The three key elements framing the discussion of this point were: how, with whom and where to work on gender research in the region.

To this effect, sub-regions and urban conglomerates, cities, were proposed as adequate places to undertake research and actions regarding gender issues, as places promoting development and culture, and as territories offering social inclusion opportunities but also practicing social exclusion. Another outstanding element was the need to include the gender issue in the formulation and analysis of public policies and the analysis of the gender system at State level.

The work methodology should take into account the regional complexity and diversity. When deciding with whom to undertake research on these issues, the need to train human resources in gender research came up repeatedly, and the existing regional differences were underlined regarding such training.

Some concrete research issues and priorities emerged from these two sessions:

- *Concentrate the research on women's rights, considering women as social and political subjects.*

- *Analyze women's roles, reproductive tasks, and family responsibilities as some of the barriers to integration and effective social and political participation.*

- *Analyze violence at different levels and the different impact it has on men and women, both within the family circle and in public.*

- *Articulation of poverty and gender in the field of public policies, with special emphasis on the consideration of the situation of poverty, which is impacting the region.*

- *Analyze women's incidence in the State and the gender system operating at State level; changes in the nature of the State, in the exercise of rights, obligations and social responsibilities.*

- *Evaluation of the course of gender studies in the region in terms of generating institutionalization; analyze new practices and new knowledge.*

- *Analyze and draw up an evaluation system of what has been done regarding the subject of gender in the region, in order that the experience leads to more profound and broader actions and knowledge regarding gender in the regional ambit.*

- *Comparative studies of the legislative and judicial mechanisms in each country*

- *Integration of different levels of analysis: local, national, sub-regional, regional and the role and coordination of multilateral and international organizations.*

5. Third round table: Regional Networks

The exchange on the issue of regional networks resulted in a clear consensus regarding the benefit derived from the concept and methodology of working in networks. The success of some networks[1] in the regional ambit and the appearance of a "thinking as a network" culture within the regional women's movement were particularly highlighted. The network concept was considered of great benefit and adaptable to different work situations.

The key elements for the successful functioning of networks were identified as:
o the possibility of a high-impact response to specific problems;
o precise definition of the network's agenda issues;
o ability to develop and promote their own views and to set up alliances with other social actors;
o ability to take advantage of new opportunities;
o ability to develop a medium and long-term political view, acquire technical qualification, achieve the appropriate level of institutionalization and formality according to the network's requirements,
o be conscious of the different needs of the various publics that integrate the network; and
o equity in the access to and distribution of resources, independence from strong personal leaderships.

The main risk regarding working through networks is that of becoming free or cheap labor for some actors, as well as the risk in cases of excluding networks, which are not open, of imitating power and participation biases.

In effect, it has been noted that there are networks of women in the region who are referrals for decision-makers; these networks have influential impact on social and political decisions.

6. Final debate: Determining the priority of a research agenda on gender in Latin America and the Caribbean

One of the first elements pointed out in the discussion is a clear proposal regarding the need to consider the global agenda being discussed in the region and sub-regions and articulate the gender agenda surrounding these major issues in order to obtain greater consensus.

The main items identified in the regional agenda were:
- Poverty
- Social and political citizenship: acquisition and exercise.

---

[1] Although many networks were mentioned, all with elements of success in their work in the region, the cases of CLADEM, REPEM, ISIS, Red Mujer and Habitat stood out.

- Governance
- Identities and cultural transformations
- Scientific technological development
- Regional integration

One of the first consensuses reached when faced with the challenge of setting up a gender research agenda for the region, was the need to investigate and evaluate what has already been done, the paths taken and experiences, in order to obtain better elements with which to research what is emerging. At this point particular attention was paid to the need for conducting evaluatory research of state applications for the development of women, such as agencies and programs for women, as well as into how the gender system works within the State.

A second important consensus was reached on the need to allot means for training human resources in gender research in the regional ambit.

During the discussions, a series of important research issues were identified. These could be classified in three broad categories: basic issues, innovative issues and critical issues for the region.

Basic issues

--   Governance, comparative approach
--   Public policies and inclusive social compact viewed in the context of gender
--   Women and the political system. Changes and permanence. Profiles of women who participate at different levels of the political scene: local, national, etc.
--   Active citizenship, not only from a citizen's rights standpoint, but also taking into account the responsibilities and obligations of citizenship (women's role and tasks)
--   The cultural dimension, values and social changes
--   The educational system in the region and its impact on women
--   The sexual division of labor with regards to productive and reproductive work, and its articulation and impact on women.

Innovative issues

--   Women's participation and their tasks within the State: decision makers, executives, beneficiaries, claimants, etc.
--   Women and their relationship with the State and public policies. Gender system at the State level.
--   New political actors and new emerging social movements and gender relations within them.

--   Use of time: differences between men and women in the daily distribution and use of time, time for productive work, time for reproductive work and housework, spare time, etc.

--   Masculinities: new masculinities, changes and permanence of males within the framework of changes and permanence in social gender relations.

<u>Critical issues in the region</u>

--   Violence in its different forms (urban, armed, domestic) and the different impact it has on men and women.

--   Poverty and its implications, an analysis of the different impact it has on men and women.

It is proposed that the issues identified must be worked out starting with the articulation of different dimensions of concept-related analyses, such as the symbolic dimension, values, relation between the productive and reproductive spheres, the territorial dimension. At the same time, these issues must be connected with the global research agenda in the regional and sub-regional ambits, in order to have greater impact and their dissemination. Also, appropriation by different social actors must be foreseen, especially those with decision-making and influencing capacity in order to obtain greater gender equality in the regional ambit.

The following table shows a summary of the issues suggested at the meeting and their relation with the regional research agenda mentioned.

REGIONAL RESEARCH AGENDA	REGIONAL GENDER RESEARCH AGENDA PROPOSALS		
	CRITICAL ISSUES	BASIC ISSUES	INNOVATIVE ISSUES
Poverty	Poverty: different impact on men and women		
Social and Political Citizenship		Division of work according to sex: productive and reproductive work. Active citizenship. Women and the political system: changes and permanence	New political actors and emerging social movements
Governance		Governance and gender. Public policies and inclusive social impact from a gender perspective. Women and their relationship with the State and public policies	
Identities and cultural transformations		Cultural dimensions, values and social change. Masculinities. Division of work according to sex. Educational system and its impact on women	
Scientific Technological Development			
Regional Integration			
	Violence and the different impact it has on men and women		

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Line Bareiro Documentation and Studies Centre	Tel.: (595 21) 225 000 - 204 295 Fax: (592 21) 213 246 Mail: line@rieder.net.py line@cde.org.py
Gloria Bonder Regional Program Director, Gender and Public Policies PRIGEPP_FLACSO Gender, Science and Technology, Unesco Argentina	Tel.: (54 11) 4375 2435 Fax: (54 11) 4375 1373 Mail: prigepp@flacso.org.ar Web: http://www.flacso.org.ar www.prigepp.org
Lily Caravantes Women's Presidential Secretariat Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala	Tel.: (502) 288 8213/6039 Fax: (502) 288 6407 Mail: spmujer@intelnet.nt.gt
Ana Falú Regional Program Director UNIFEM - Andean Office Quito, Ecuador	Tel.: (593 2) 2460 329 / 2460 334 / 2460 330 Fax: (593 2) 2460328 Mail: ana.falu@undp.org unifem.ecuador@undp.org
Marta Lagos Director LATINOBAROMETRO Santiago, Chile	Tel.: (56 2) 334 4544 / direct: 232 0345 Fax: (56 2) 334 6970 Mail: latibaro@rdc.cl
Natasha Loayza Castro United Nations Development Programme - UNDP La Paz, Bolivia	Tel.: (591 2) 279 5544 ext. 530 Fax: (591 2) 279 5820 Mail: natasha.loayza@undp.org Web: http://www.undp.org
Veronika Paulics Polis Instituto de Estudos, Political Science Training and Counselling Sao Paulo, Brazil	Tel.: (55 11) 3258 6121 Fax: (55 11) 3258 6120 Mail: veronika@polis.org.br Web: http://www.undp.org
Magaly Pineda Executive Director FEMININE ACTION RESEARCH CENTRE (CIPAF) Santo Domingo - Dominican Republic	Tel.: (1 809) 533_6410 / 535 2696 Fax: (1 809) 535_2696 / 535 2599 Mail: taveras2@tricom.net
Bianca Pomeranzi Ministerio degli Affari Esteri Italy	Tel.: (39 06) 3691 6218 Fax: (39 06) 3691 6253 Mail: bianca.pomeranzi@esteri.it

From IDRC

Maureen O'Neil President IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (613) 236 6163 Fax: (613) 238 7230 Mail: moneil@idrc.ca
Colleen Duggan Senior Program Specialist Peacebuilding and Reconstruction IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (613) 236 6163 ext. 2024 Fax: (613) 238 7230 Mail: cduggan@idrc.ca
Federico Burone Regional Director Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 204/236 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: fburone@idrc.org.uy
Roberto Bazzani Senior Program Specialist IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 244 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: rbazzani@idrc.org.uy
Cristina Echavarría Director Mining Policy Research Initiative (MPRI) IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 228 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: cechavarria@idrc.org.uy
Merle Faminow Senior Program Specialist IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 239/240 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: mfaminow@idrc.org.uy
Ben Alfa Petrazzini Senior Program Specialist IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 223 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: bpetrazzini@idrc.org.uy
Alicia Richero Research Officer IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 224 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: arichero@idrc.org.uy
Andrés Rius Senior Program Specialist IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 226 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: arius@idrc.org.uy
Walter Ubal Executive Director Environmental Management Secretariat (EMS) IDRC/CRDI	Tel.: (598 2) 709 0042 ext. 229 Fax: (598 2) 708 6776 Mail: wubal@idrc.org.uy

Rapporteur

Karina Batthyany Gender Relations Sociology Sociology Department Faculty of Social Sciences Montevideo, Uruguay	Tel.: (598 2) 409 1524 Fax: (598 2) 408 9665 Mail: karinab@fcs1.fcs.edu.uy