



United Nations
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pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Technical Meeting of Regional Focal Points for the Forum of Ministers of Social Development

**23-24 November
UNESCO Paris
Room XVI**

The UNESCO Social and Human Sciences Sector in Latin America and the Caribbean

has

**A TWO FOLD
ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE**

Institutional Building of the Social Sciences

which led to the establishment of two main Networks:

- **FLACSO** a 50 years old intergovernmental organization of higher learning
- And **CLACSO**, an **NGO** grouping 180 different Centers of research in the region.

Some of the main holistic interpretative Theories on regional development stem from their work (i.e. Dependency theory), today exemplified by the

“RETHINKING LATIN AMERICA” PROGRAMME

Operational projects on the management and evaluation of public social policies.

Since the late eighties implementation of extra-budgetary projects on:

- Designing, training and management of policies conducted in half a dozen Member States;
- An innovative impact evaluation methodology of national projects, programmes and policies;
- The management of social policies at local and municipal level, including multicultural management of social programmes;
- Interdisciplinary prevention programmes related to youth violence at national and sub-regional level.



“In view of a felt demand by member states”:

BACKGROUND OF THE « MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FORUM »

- 2001 **Quito, Ecuador:** UNESCO launched a meeting of Minister for Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
- 2002: **Mexico City, Mexico:** It was decided to create a Forum in an effort to address poverty and social policy in the region
- 2002: **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:** The Forum was consolidated
- 2003 **San Esteban, Chile:** the 4th meeting of the Forum decided to create a Permanent Secretariat
- 2004 **Lima, Peru:** a Permanent Secretariat was established



INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS

Structure:

- Organized on a troika of Ministers (previous, present and future host), the Permanent Secretariat of the Forum rotates on a regular basis

Consolidation of a Permanent technical Secretariat:

- Development of specific instruments and horizontal co-operation projects;
- Provision of best practices.
- Creation of 3 working groups (Poverty, Impact Evaluation, Best practices)

LESSONS LEARNED

POSITIVE RESULTS

- High appreciation by Ministers of the region as a pertinent and useful arena for experience sharing, regional concertation, consensus building and external negotiations
- Promotion of horizontal cooperation schemes
- Establishment of a Permanent Secretariat with objectives, work plan and dissemination activities
- Creation of technical working groups on priority themes at regional level (poverty, social indicators and impact evaluation)

MAIN OBSTACLES

- Chronic political instability at Ministerial level in the region
- Scarcity of national resources for expanding horizontal cooperation
- Scarce national engagement to sustain the operation of the Permanent Secretariat and of the working group operation
- Insufficient nexus between Social Sciences and Social policy management

CHALLENGES

- Reinforcing the effective commitment of participating Ministries with the sustainability of the Permanent Secretariat and its working groups
- Ensuring that the action plan adopted by the Ministerial Forum Meetings becomes operational
- Devising means for a stronger articulation between Social Sciences Communities and social policy concerns stemming from the Forum

SUGGESTIONS

- Including in the next Forum Agenda (Argentina, 2007) propositions aimed at financial and staff contributions by member states for the operational implementation of the Permanent Secretariat action plan;
- Reinforcing the financial and substantive capacity of the UNESCO SHS Regional Adviser to contribute to the overall needs of the Forum;
- Identifying areas and mechanism for social sciences contribution to the conceptualization and management of social policies in addition to the “Rethinking Latin America” Programme.