

Alberto Minujin, Mónica González Contró, Raúl Mercer (Eds.)

Tackling Child Poverty in Latin America

Rights and Social Protection in Unequal Societies

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The editors

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INTRODUCTION¹

Alberto Minujin²

Mónica González Contró³

Raúl Mercer⁴

Recreating childhood means generating a space in culture where that reality can be thought of as a new intergenerational link, and as an emancipatory category, and not merely as a period of pure submission to adults Child autonomy is a core concept, given that the goal is to provide fundamentals to nothing less than freedom. As it is known, without freedom, the person is not possible.

Eduardo BUSTELO, *The recreation of childhood*

The core purpose of this book is to show that the debate on poverty in Latin America, specifically childhood and teenage poverty, must be part of a larger discussion involving justice, freedom, citizenship, identity, participation, and

1 This introduction has been prepared by members of the Working Group for the Investigation of Child Poverty in Latin America (GT) and is based on a work by Alejandro Acosta (doctor in Education, Director of the International Center for Education and Human Development [CINDE], aacosta@cinde.org.co) and María Cristina Torrado (PH.D. in Psychology, Coordinator of the Observatory of Children Universidad Nacional de Colombia, mcristina.torrado@gmail.com). The authors like to thank Alejandro Acosta and Maria Cristina Torrado for their contribution.

This document is the exclusive responsibility of the authors and it does not necessarily reflect the opinions and orientation of the institutions they belong to.

GT is a body of a consortium formed by researchers and comprising Alberto Minujin, Valeria Llobet, Raúl Mercer (Argentina), Ernesto Durán, María Cristina Torrado, Alejandro Acosta (Colombia), Helia Molina, Cristian A. Herrera and Alejandra Vives (Chile), Alberto Cimadamore (Norway) Verónica Bagnoli, Mónica González Contró (Mexico). Institutional Affiliates: Equity for Children (USA/Argentina), Flacso (Argentina), Universidad Nacional (Colombia), CINDE (Colombia), Universidad Católica (Chile), CROP (ISSC/UiB).

2 Alberto Minujin, Mathematician and Statistician. Specialist in demography and social policy. Director of Equity for Children/Equidad para la Infancia/Equidade para a Infância, minujina@newschool.org.

3 Mónica González Contró, PH.D. in Fundamental Rights. Researcher with the Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas of UNAM, monica_contró@yahoo.es.

4 Raúl Mercer, Pediatrician and public health specialist. Coordinator of the Social Science and Health Program of the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Argentina, raulmercer@gmail.com.

peace on a global level. It attempts to promote efforts in our region to generate our own line of thinking about social policy. Our focus is on lasting alternatives that are unconstrained by traditional views about social policy's formulation and implementation.

The current context shows us that the world may be experiencing its most severe crisis since the 1920s. Although income-related poverty has decreased in Latin America, particularly in comparison to other regions, this trend is both non-sustainable and less than expected considering the investments made.⁵ As a measurement of inequality in income distribution, the Gini index shows that inequality continues to prevail in the region. For children, poverty persists because of their lack of rights and the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

Human beings must be the protagonists of the decisions that affect them. Therefore, it is necessary to provide new definitions and context to citizenship. That is why it is so important for girls and boys to be recognized as full-fledged citizens. In doing so, it is vital to analyze public policies as part of a larger research and social mobilization effort that seeks to address the issue of inequality and improve children's standard of living.

In this context, the nature of child poverty and inequality in Latin America must be conceived of in a way that deepens the debates on the social determinants of exclusion and marginality, incorporating reflections on how new and old inequalities articulate in the restriction of the rights and in the exercise of citizenship by boys, girls, and teenagers (NNyA, as per the acronym in Spanish).

In that sense, this material may serve as a catalyst for debate and analysis that advances the study of child poverty and inequality and identifies potential ways to address the problem in the region.

The works included in this publication were selected by an academic committee in response to an international call under the International Seminar "Childhood Poverty, Public Policy and Democracy," organized by Equity for Children (<http://www.equityforchildren.org/>) and Comparative Research Programme on Poverty, CROP (<http://www.crop.org/>), with the support of Flacso and UNAM, held in Mexico D.F, in February 2014.

2 While it is true that in the last decade both poverty and extreme poverty have been reduced, as of 2011, 40.5% of children were poor, 16.3% lived in extreme conditions, and inequality remained the highest in the world.

I. Background

This publication is the result of research and collaboration initiated by the Working Group for Investigation-Action on Child Poverty and Inequalities and by the Project for Connectivity in Graduate Studies on Children Rights and Policy (GT) commissioned by Equity for Children with the support of the regional offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 2010. It aims to boost academic training for the application and democratization of knowledge required to strengthen childhood policy in Latin America.

Since 2011, a group of academicians was convened by Equity for Children to develop an information and analysis tool that contributes to the debate about the conditions of inequality faced by children and teenagers in Latin America. They also explored policies aimed at overcoming the factors generating these conditions of inequity and exclusion. They approached the concept of child poverty from a critical and scientific perspective, in the broad context of social exclusion and inequalities related to, among other areas, gender, ethnic origin, and social class.

The GT coordinating team included researchers from Equity for Children Latin America, Comparative Research On Poverty-ISSC/University of Bergen, Flacso-Argentina, the Observatory of Children of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Chile's Universidad Católica, and CINDE-Colombia.

The first concern in the child poverty analysis was recognizing its increasing complexity inside the home, including aspects of social relationships such as gender, age, and ethnic relations that often give rise to many forms of inequality and that cannot be considered in isolation. The second concern was the interrelationship between the home and its relationship with stakeholders from the state and civil society, the latter of whom build barriers or bridges to the exercise of rights to the following: a quality environment, adequate public areas and services, violence rates that do not restrict the mobility of women and children, dignified public transport, and decent jobs. Third, the team considered the intergenerational transmission of poverty and the effects of poverty both at different stages of life and over the long term.

II. Reference framework

Below are a series of conclusions from the review process at the international seminar “Childhood Poverty, Public Policy, and Democracy”:

1. Childhood teenage and social justice

The inclusion of the rights of children and teenagers as guiding principles in the formulation of public was achieved through the social, academic, and political mobilization of the past 20 years. However, identifying the issue and defining it in technocratic terms does not necessarily lead to a political solution.

Views on social justice have been guided by the debate between transcendentalist justice theories and the comparative approaches. The former seeks to analyze whether institutions can be made fair, as posited by transcendental institutionalism based on the theory of justice in Rawls. The latter is about comparisons based on realizations that allow eliminating evident injustices. These debates have extended the issue of social justice as a matter of redistribution and equity by positing the subjects of *identity* and *difference* (Fascioli, 2011: 53).

In this way, social justice is related to issues of distribution (*economic*), recognition (*cultural*), and representation (*political*) as manifested in the nation-state, a frame of reference rendered obsolete by globalization. Fraser indicates that failing to account for globalization results in the injustice of *mis-framing*. This injustice relates to the *what*, the *who*, and the *how* of justice and further elucidates the debate on the right approach to theorize about justice (Fraser, 2008). In adopting the perspective of the participant, Fraser states the following:

I have proposed to conceive present-day arguments about distribution, recognition and representation as a species of “abnormal justice,” in which the taken-for-granted parameters of “normal justice, such as a shared sense of “who counts,” are up for grabs. At the same time, however, I am also trying to clarify the aspirations of those social movements that seem to me to carry our best hopes for emancipatory change. (Fraser, 2008: 253)

Child poverty is relevant to each of these areas. Economic injustice is present in the material deprivation endured by poor children. Discrimination and

horizontal inequalities are related with the lack of recognition of the identity and injustice in the acceptance of the differences. Lastly, problems such as child trafficking, child pornography, and the movement of “unaccompanied” minors must be considered in a global rather than national context.

From another perspective, postcolonial authors proposed that there are more radical forms of exclusion, that is, *a priori*, structural exclusion that hinders them from being understood; because they do not have access to any possibility in the sphere of representation, they are “subalterns.” Therefore, they establish that “the continent of exploration of the postcolonial thought is constituted by the processes that subjectively construct differences under conditions of extreme inequality” (Boutang and Vidal, 2007: 13).

Faced with this situation, the authors propose generating in Latin America a geopolitically endemic thought that is merged for the south and in opposition to Eurocentrism. In this way, the dominated are not favorably inclined to repeat the practices of the colonizers (Boutang and Vidal, 2007: 12).

Although Sen’s (2010) last book on justice acknowledges Rawls, he posits that beyond formulating a theory of justice, it is necessary to base concrete actions by citizens on their moral feeling toward situations of injustice to further advancement in the development of justice.

Even if guided by different motivations and strategies, human beings must be protagonists of their decisions, giving new definition to the idea of citizenship.

2. Social citizenship and childhood

Social justice and equality among citizens is a political ideal of democratic societies that cannot be reduced to formal language as it appears in constitutions, legal regulations, and social policy documents; on the contrary, it must become apparent in the welfare and exercise of fundamental freedoms by the people.

As Cortina (1998) declares, the idea of citizenship, inherent to the emergence of the modern ruleoflaw, has traversed a long historical process to reach the meaning we give to it today. On the one hand, the status of citizens has ceased to be an elite privilege and has become a condition to which every member of society aspires. On the other hand, the idea of citizenship has expanded to incorporate political participation, cultural identity, and welfare as individual rights recognized by the state.

In a democratic culture, citizenship is related to the awareness of human rights, trust in social institutions, social bonds and cohesion, and participation and autonomy.

The subject of children's citizenship has gained prominence in recent discussions.

The notion of childhood citizenship has become a way to re-think the position of children as members of the community and as holders of rights.... This "turn toward citizenship" in the field of childhood studies received the approbation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is a significant regulatory milestone for children. (Llobet, 2012: 19)

Quoting Roche, Llobet (2012: 20) states: "The rights of children and teenagers encompass both inclusions and exclusions, and citizenship is restricted or partial. In this way, the forms of social inclusion of children and teenagers, from a regulatory standpoint, are problematic, to say the least.". From the perspective of feminist theory, citizenship is not a homogeneous phenomenon.

Based on this idea of citizenship and in reference to the issues of social justice and the capacity for action of the governments and the role of public policy, it is important to recognize that, as Llobet states, "the issue of child citizenship, and of the social construction of childhood, is unclear in social policy, despite the 'the issue of childhood' being at the epicenter of social protection" (Llobet, 2012: 11). They have been justified with revisions to human capital theory, specifically the idea that state spending on children mitigates greater expenditures in the future. Social protection policy anticipates returns in the adult life of children because of those early-year interventions, the benefits of which have been proven by neuroscience. However, those policy interventions fail to take into account the necessary and sufficient actions that boost the subjectivity and intersubjectivity, exploration, creation, and leisure implications of growth in children.

A broad concept of citizenship allows for the inclusion and recognition of new social stakeholders. In other words, this notion of citizenship reveals the ways in which state and society develop and exercise their rights.

The recognition of new expressions of citizenship is justified in the literature on politics and social development, supporting the formation of a fair society in which everyone is able to fully enjoy fundamental rights and a

shared sense of identity and belonging. This seems to overcome the elitist character that the exercise of citizenship, and the concept itself, had in other historical moments.

On the other hand, in recent years social movements have brought new dimensions to the concept of citizenship. The institutional and/or legal view of citizenship has been informed by feminist thought, multiculturalist or environmentalist theses, and various social movements that are constantly reinventing social interaction and the sense of welfare and social justice. This is why citizenship appears as a dynamic, ever-changing concept, situated in specific political contexts and historical moments.

The granting of certain rights to children and teenagers leads to the idea of *childhood citizenship*, in which childhood is divested of its “underage” connotation and is recognized in full ownership (Brailovsky, s.f.).

In this concept, and in relation to the recognition of children and teenagers as holder of rights, there have recently been discussions of *child citizenship*. Even though several arguments exist around the subject, the idea clearly expresses the intention of transcending the representation of childhood as an underage, giving them agency as full citizen in the amplex of their rights (Brailovsky, s.f.).

Recognizing children and teenagers as citizens breaks the traditional paradigm restricting their participation in the political and social sphere, a rupture which is only possible if we recognize them as individuals at every stage of their life.

How can we understand childhood and teenage citizenship? Although it is essential to recognize them as social stakeholders and grant their participation in the social, political, and cultural life of their community, we can consider welfare and inclusion as equally important dimensions of child citizenship. It is in daily life, the context in which children live, that they must be treated as citizens, because it is there where their relationship with the state and society takes shape.

The concept of intersectionality involves the interrelationship of various categories of difference: gender, ethnic origin, age, and social class, among others. That is to say, the experience, determinants, and cycles of “poverty” will not be the same for girls and boys, for Mapuche girls and white girls, for 5-year-olds and 12-year-olds. According to intersectionality, child citizenship must be considered within the framework of interrelationship. Not only are the rights of individual children interrelated but so are children

themselves. Social exclusion studies have pointed to the confluence of intersectionality and time-related dynamics, using the concept of “concentrated disadvantages” (Saravi, 2006), that must be confronted to achieve full access to social, political, and economic rights that are intrinsic to citizenship (conceived in opposition to social exclusion).

In other words, for children to fully exercise their rights as citizens, they must participate in the public arena and benefit from the welfare they deserve, including the socialization processes guided by the democratic ideals of equality and respect.

3. Child poverty and inequality

The issues of poverty and inequality are inextricably tied to the ideas of social justice and citizenship. These discussions have allowed a more rigorous analysis of the issues of poverty and childhood (Alberto Minujin and Shailen Nandy). The authors indicate that “the measurement and analysis of child poverty requires the consideration of a wide range of measurements and non-monetary factors that have a widely documented impact on child survival, development and welfare.” Based on sound methodological approaches to measuring child poverty, the publication “calls politicians, researchers and activists to immediate action to make the reduction of child poverty and inequality a central issue in their agendas and to use their influence to ensure that children are granted the priority they deserve in international, regional and national policies” (Minujin and Nandy, 2012: 3 and 572).

Viewing the issue of poverty by incorporating the rights approach, while not neglecting the risks of depoliticizing said approach, must confront social inequalities beyond considerations of wealth and treat children as individuals connected to networks of social relationships.

With respect to childhood, considering problems derived from a lack of material access to life options that guarantee development above the minimum survival level, there is a tendency to obfuscate the frontier between biological immaturity and its materiality, and the social processing of the same, with its results in terms of psychosocial normality patterns. In that sense, it is a challenge to sustain this tension without naturalizing inequality as “particularism,” or without naturalizing “normality” as an individual result of an adequate/expected development.

On the other hand, the issue of poverty, and how to measure it, presents a series of challenges. Although the measurement of poverty must entail a multidimensional approach, this approach may become detached from the conceptual and political debates surrounding “poverty.” Likewise, the local political visibility adopted by the measurement strategy and its results in various countries risks limiting the debate surrounding the nature of societies notable for their levels of poverty and inequality. Lastly, the international context that points to the validation of scales between countries obstructs how poverty is affected by political action on the local, regional, and global levels. This has not helped in evaluating the impact of public policy on people’s living conditions.

4. Social policy

As previously mentioned, we must recognize that there has been major progress in legislation and policies aimed at guaranteeing the rights of children and teenagers in the region; however, child inequality and poverty still inhibit the exercise of fundamental rights by younger citizens.

Children from the most excluded sectors grow up as “second class citizens,” lacking rights and with a subordinate role in society.

Likewise, the territorialization of inequality must be considered in terms of relational and structural processes that are resistant to change; in turn, the institutional modalities of organization of childhood welfare and exercise of rights may obfuscate institutional exclusion processes.

These reflections lead us to the following questions:

- How can we guarantee the welfare of younger citizens in highly unequal societies that are socially segregated?
- How can we bridge the gap between children and teenagers of different social classes, regions, and ethnic groups, and even among those who live in urban centers?
- How can we formulate childhood and teenage policies that are not based on failed views and practices in favor of policies that invite new perspectives and approaches to management and evaluation, breaking new ground for social policy in Latin America?

Highlighting the limitations of studies on social policy in relation to childhood problems (and, conversely, of childhood studies that have social

policy as a setting) is an emergent budding matter. In effect, those studies mostly tend to focus on socioeconomic inequalities and not on the categories related to gender, ethnicity, and interage relations (Tilly, 2005).

Policies that will guarantee the enjoyment of rights by the child population and seek to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality are required. It is also necessary to consider the true effects of the conditional subsidy programs and those aimed at the poorest persons. Do these policies actually reduce inequality?

According to Sanhueza and Atria (2013), when social investment is focused on the poorest and the most vulnerable, while leaving to the market the regulation of services for the richest, it is unavoidable that services for the poor will be worse than the services for the rich. As for education, this means that the poor will all attend low quality establishments, while the rich will all attend quality establishments. Instead of reducing inequality, this trend will deepen it in the long term.

By maintaining segmented services of varying quality, social inequality between groups of children is strengthened and naturalized. The construction of an inferior citizenship for poor children is widely reinforced early in life.

Clearly, interactionist, ecological, and constructivist perspectives toward childhood, centered on intersubjectivity, involve enormous challenges in relation to the traditional ways of developing, executing, and evaluating policies and programs. It is clear that global conventions and declarations, such as the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Jomtien and Dakar Declarations on Education for All, and the United Nations Head of State Summits on Childhood, have supported action from civil society, international cooperation, academia, and government sectors to include childhood and teenage issues in the public agenda of our countries. However, they have proven to be insufficient.

In this context, it is necessary to reinforce any gains realized, preventing them from being co-opted by approaches and practices that debase them while maintaining the declaratory aspects. Progress made on legislative issues is important, given the responsibility of the state as the main guarantor of rights, in conjunction with the family and civil society. There are possibilities to incorporate policies and/or programs with other social and economic policies and programs that may generate major synergies.

For that purpose, it is important to look at issues such as the relationship between quality and coverage. Increasing coverage at the expense of quality negatively affects both of these objectives. Therefore, it is essential to consider quality in terms of integrity and complementarity, with the related challenges for institutional practices and realities that, due to their origin and approach, are necessarily classifying, fragmented, and disjointed.

Given the enormous diversity both among and within our countries—as well as the growing decentralization in many counties—it is also necessary to take into account the differential perspective in the design and operation of policies and programs that fail to distinguish between deconcentration, delegation, and actual decentralization and that one would expect to reduce regional inequalities for the benefit of the most excluded areas.

5. The Latin American context

It is important to note that Latin America has recently experienced a democratic resurgence, including the creation of new legal frameworks and the implementation of policies and programs aimed at reducing poverty. In this context, the issue of child and teenage poverty has received more public attention; however, social injustice and inequality have not improved as much as expected.

In effect, and despite the disparities, Latin American countries share historical and socioeconomic processes that affect their domestic social dynamics, characterized by persistent inequalities and a unique position in the global arena. In addition to poverty, there are major differences in living conditions and in development opportunities among the population. We may say that a significant number of the people suffer from “citizenship poverty.”

the poor are not only the victims, in one way or another, of an inadequate distribution of income and wealth, but also lack the material and immaterial resources to meet the social demands and habits required of them as citizens. Therefore, poverty is, above all, poverty of citizenship. (Bustelo, 1999: 40 and 41)

Today, millions of Latin Americans lack the tangible and intangible goods considered as necessary to guarantee their welfare. Therefore, they lack

conditions to participate in social life and also opportunities to enjoy a satisfactory life. It is well known that Latin America is the most unequal region in the world, because of the enormous gaps in the quality of life between different demographic groups.

The 2013 CEPAL Report on the Social Panorama of Latin America shows that between 2000 and 2011 childhood poverty was reduced by 14 percentage points, and extreme poverty was reduced by 10.5 percentage points. Likewise, the numbers show that the intensity of poverty also dropped and, in every country analyzed, there were reductions in both poverty and extreme poverty. However, despite the improvements, in 2011, 40.5% of children, or 70.5 million children, were poor, and 16.3% were in extreme poverty (CEPAL, 2013: 16).

In 2010, 10 out of the 15 most unequal countries in the world were in Latin America, which, as we have pointed out, contradicts the idea that economic growth would guarantee a substantial reduction of poverty and inequality.

As some analysts point out, this situation shows the failure of the development model, under which economic growth would directly lead to an increase in the welfare of the people. Also, Sen recognized that the freedoms enjoyed by the people depend on other determinant factors, such as social and economic institutions (e.g., education and healthcare facilities), as well as political and civil rights (e.g., the freedom to participate in public discussion and scrutiny) (Sen, 1999).

Social exclusion has been one of the important subjects in social science because, as Llobet indicates, and based on Weber's concept of "social closure," it was among the concerns of Durkheim, Merton, and Simmel, and most recently

as Norbert Elias indicated, in his *Essay on the Established and the Outsiders*, interdependence between different groups does not emerge from social prejudice. Rather, the socio-dynamics of the relationship between established groups and outsiders is determined by the nature of their bond, not from any of their individual characteristics. (Llobet, 2013: 6)

Regarding childhood and teenage poverty, Llobet continues: "In principle we may note that the 'exclusion' of children and teenagers relates to a particular

relationship between the State and them, and not to a social process directly or indirectly linked to poverty” (Llobet, 2013: 3).

In this way, the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion are strategies of the state which, as pointed out by Fraser, go beyond the process of redistribution during the twentieth century, since today they compete with claims for recognition. For that reason, they have to be analyzed in the context of the “mis-framing” caused by globalization (Fraser, 2008: 16).

For Lahire (2008: 46–47), there are many differences between people and groups of people other than their relative equality in a certain historical moment. According to the author, “The issue of inequality is clearly indivisible from the belief in the legitimacy of a good, knowledge or practice, that is to say, indivisible from what we may call the *degree of collective desirability* maintained for the latter.”

In that same sense, Jackson (2011) posits the need for revising the notion of prosperity to prevent it from being reduced to the idea of “having more” or “consuming more.” According to him, individual and collective prosperity is not limited to material safety, as it also involves social and psychological dimensions such as emotional stability or the feeling of belonging to a community.

It is worth remembering that if social protection is understood as a citizen guarantee, it must essentially focus on the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights (Cecchini and Martínez, 2011).

It is necessary to review the legal framework, because while the enforceability and judiciability of those who deal with childhood is complex, they have serious difficulties and contradictions in terms of its application. Diligence is required to ensure that the financing of policies and programs does not become pro-cyclical and detrimental to the poor. This is also the case for the fiscal structure and oversight of public spending.

Likewise, it is essential to have feasible and reliable information systems that are used by various stakeholders that can be used for research and for management, monitoring, and evaluation purposes. Universities, research centers, and national science and technology organizations must be able to systematize their work on childhood and teenage poverty.

In addition, it is also necessary to continually train and develop the human talent working with children, families, and institutions, from the many sectors, at different stages of the life cycle, in the state and in civil society.

III. Structure and content of the book

This material is the result of a synthesis process that started, as described at the beginning of this article, with a call to participate in an international seminar held in Mexico D.F. in 2014. After the selection process, each work was submitted orally and analyzed in depth by a professional in charge of reviewing it. Each submission was discussed among the participants, and the discussions were recorded for systematization.

After that, there was a screening process to select the works that would be included in this publication, taking into consideration their academic quality, their original contribution to the subject matter, and the feasibility of their completion within the established schedule.

Then, the editorial team was responsible for establishing an interactive dialogue with the different authors to make relevant adjustments to the content. Lastly, all the works underwent a final review and editing.

The book includes three parts:

- Part I: The contexts of child poverty.
- Part II: Social policy and child protection.
- Part III: Inequalities and care policies.

Each part comprises a group of lectures aligned with the posited axes. In any case, the epistemic limits of the works are unclear, and as such, they have ramifications that relate to each other as communicating vessels between the different perspectives proposed by the authors.

It is important to note the diversity in terms of thematic axes, in the territorial origins of the works, and in the multiplicity of methodological perspectives that nurture and diversify the analytical frameworks. Despite this diversity, there were common perspectives and fields of investigation throughout the material that had a transversal nature. These included childhood, poverty, rights, and the Latin American context. In this way, this book provides a holistic and critical view of the multiplicity of children and teenagers, their problems, and the social policies that prevail in the region.

Due to the universal dimensions of childhood and rights, contributions and experiences started coming together to collectively build a scaffolding of knowledge that translated into this work with an integrating spirit. Positioning childhood centrally in these investigations helped provide an enhanced entity to this social collective of childhood, often invisibilized and denied of their rights.

PART I: The contexts of child poverty

“Starting at the beginning: A social exclusion indicator centered on the mother-child dyad for Colombia,” by Ana María Osorio and Luis Fernando Aguado.

In this paper, the authors construct a composite indicator that reflects the use of and access to key social goods and services during early childhood in the Colombian context. This paper accords with the basic rights outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is essential in the accumulation of human capital to decrease the likelihood of falling into poverty during adult age; it incorporates aspects related to education and the independence of the mother that affect quality of life, and the partial indicators used may be construed as intermediaries in the framework of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health. This can potentially make an impact through public policy.

“Child Poverty and Inequalities at the Geographic Level: A Spatial Analysis. Mexico 2010” by Héctor Nájera Catalán.

The understanding of the geographic concentration of inequality is important from the standpoint of poverty and social justice. The core questions of the article are as follows: What is the geographical distribution of child poverty at the municipal level? What is the spatial pattern of deprivation/contextual poverty? Is there a nonseasonal geographical link between childhood poverty and contextual deprivation? Where is this relationship stronger? A measurement of childhood material deprivation and contextual deprivation is developed from municipal data from the Sample of the Population and Housing Census (2010).

“Family poverty, teenage work, and school desertion. An overview of a complex relationship based on the case of Lima (Peru)” by Robin Cavagnoud.

The work of children in the framework of family strategies is an unavoidable phenomenon in contemporary Peruvian society, which has three fundamental social spaces: family, work, and school. In the metropolis of Lima/Callao, the relationship of working children and teenagers between these socialization spaces brings up many questions, such as their schooling paths. This article analyzes the school abandonment process that affects working teenagers in Lima as a factor in the reproduction of childhood poverty in Latin America.

“Production and reproduction of child poverty in Latin America. An analysis centered on the educational dimension” by Jorge Paz.

This work aims to explore the potential for equalization of opportunities to impact the gap of the educational results between poor and nonpoor children. If this impact is verified, the challenge would then be to calibrate the current conditional transfer programs and to expect that, within one or two generations, the said interventions start to yield results. Education, as can be seen, is one of the focuses of Conditional Transfer Programs (PTC), and schooling is one of its main goals. That is also what the Millennium Development Goals proposes, and also what is sought by everyone involved in one way or another on the conceptual framework of the equalization of opportunities.

PART II: Social policy and child protection

“Human rights, hegemony, and utopia in Latin America: Intercultural dimensions of poverty and indigenous migration in Mexico as case studies” by Camilo Pérez Bustillo.

This paper seeks to analyze the main outlines of a conceptual framework to approach the migration of indigenous children—of Mexican, Central American, and Andean origin in transit to the United States via the territory of Mexico—as a case study of the complex and multidimensional relationship between poverty, indigenous people, and migration in these contexts. The emphasis here is on poverty and inequality as structural factors that trigger the decision to migrate, commonly assumed in liberal mythology as a “rational,” individual, and “voluntary” choice but understood here more as forced migration” process.

“Children rights: A framework for the construction of social policy and for the eradication of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean” by Yedith Guillén Fernández.

This study posits the need for developing an integral social policy, based on childhood rights, to eliminate child poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean. It also argues that the right of children to have access to social benefits provided by the state has been framed as part of their family unit, or home, but that children are citizens in their own right, who have specific needs and the right to have access to public services, as well as the right to participate in the benefits provided by their societies.

“Poverty and child poverty: Elements for the debate in the preparation of a social protection policy in Haiti” by Jorge I. Vásquez.

The text presents a conceptual framework that explores the importance of considering, for the contemporary debate on poverty and its corresponding expression in Latin America, the analysis of three logical aspects that define and reformulate the development of both public policy and private initiatives for the reduction of poverty. These aspects refer to the ongoing reformulation of the issue of poverty, the determination of who the poor are, and therefore, assuming that certain levels of consensus on the subject have been reached, the consideration of why the conditions that perpetuate impoverishment continue to be reproduced. It highlights aspects of governance and strengthening of the state as a key element in developing any public policy that involves long-term planning, articulating multisector demands with a rights-oriented approach, and considering the importance of the development of an active citizenship. This analysis is made based on the case of Haiti.

“Vulnerable childhoods and social protection systems: Child allowance in Argentina” by Ianina Tuñón and Agustín Salvia.

Considering the case of Argentina, a society where major social inequalities persist in the exercise of basic childhood rights (food, health, and education), the authors ask: To what extent does this fragmented system of economic aid aimed at children as the subject of public protection reach the poorest sectors and improve their economic, social, and educational opportunities? More accurately, does a conditional income transfer program explicitly targeting excluded children, such as the Universal Allowance per Child (AUH), have a positive impact on food safety, school exclusion, and child work? Answering these questions allows us to reflect on the challenges faced by income transfer programs and their effects on childhood rights.

“Integral protection of childhood through the ‘Chile Grows with You’ (Chile Crece Contigo, ChCC) subsystem: Analysis of a policy to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and inequality” by Cristian Herrera, Alejandra Vives, Camila Carvallo, and Helia Molina.

This work focuses on analyzing the policies of the ChCC program, exploring its development process and the factors that influence its evolution, final content, and current results. Among the main findings, it highlights that the main actor in the political endorsement of ChCC was the

president of the Republic, who made it a priority during her campaign and at the start of her mandate. The design of this policy had a technical component in the Presidential Advisory Council and a political component in the Committee of Ministers for Childhood, where the political ministers of the relevant sectors of the government discussed the final characteristics and components of the program and promoted its execution. Currently, the policy faces challenges in readapting itself, acquiring new momentum to reach teams and families, and performing a systematic evaluation to improve results.

PART III: Inequalities and care policies

“The ‘woman/mother’ as the only responsible party for child poverty? Critical ethnography of some health programs against child malnourishment (Latin American examples),” by Charles-Édouard de Suremain.

Although both women and gender relations have attracted considerable attention from mass media and scientific literature, research on the representations of the “wife/mother” continues to be scant. This is particularly true with respect to their social role and relationship to efforts aimed at fighting poverty, and, more specifically, childhood malnourishment. Based on the analysis of the discourses and the institutions of the implied and explicit stakeholders engaged in health and nutrition issues in Latin America (Bolivia and Peru), the paper explores the ideological and anthropological challenges related to the notion of the wife/mother as a “responsible party” with respect to child malnourishment in addition to child poverty, childhood inequality, and health care.

“Comparative study of the day-care programs in Mexico (2007–12)” by Juan Antonio Vega Báez.

This work seeks to answer the following questions: How has the issue of child poverty developed over the last decade in Mexico? How did the social policy of child care change from a solidarity-benefactor model to a mixed social/private and social/residual model that has had the effect of reproducing discrimination and child poverty? Why is there not a Universalist conception in childcare policy, particularly with respect to the indigenous population, which is the most impoverished and most discriminated against? It is possible to have a global post-2015 social agenda that includes the issue of care, and not only child survival? For that purpose,

the paper considers the social determinants of health and childhood policies in analyzing the level of discrimination in access to childcare services in Mexico, particularly in the case of the *Estancias Infantiles* Day Care Programs initiated in 2007. One of the premises of the study is that the crisis in care and the exploitation of the reproductive work of women have an impact on the generational transmission of child poverty in Latin America.

“Do early childhood policies perpetuate the historical inequalities between Colombian girls and boys?” by Ma. Cristina Torrado, Ernesto Durán, and Tatiana Casanova.

Based on secondary sources, this article analyzes the issue of early childhood poverty and inequality in Colombia. It recognizes monetary or multidimensional measurements that take the household as the analytical unit, as well as the more recent ones that take children as unit of analysis. The analysis allows the conclusion of the enormous inequality between regions of the country and between demographic groups, with indigenous and Afro-descendent communities showing the highest poverty rates, and, simultaneously, a high percentage of children under five. In recognizing other intervening dynamics with respect to inequality, it shows the relationship between armed conflict and rates of early childhood poverty.

“Reflections on child poverty, quality of life, and local public policy” by Nelson Antequera.

The article posits the relationship between child poverty and local public policy as it relates to the concept of development and poverty behind state intervention through programs, projects, and budgets. It also refers to concrete situations of poverty that transcend these areas and therefore challenge the policies and practices of the state. Based on qualitative data on child poverty in the municipality of La Paz (Bolivia), it shows that in daily life, child poverty is suffered not only as a deprivation or lack of access to resources and services but also as an expression of abandonment and violence. It thus highlights that the concept of development and poverty, which has been promoted as state policy to overcome of child poverty, is insufficient to meet these challenges. Based on the concept of “the quality of life of a community” as an alternative proposal to the understanding of development and poverty, it proposes a few guidelines for a local public policy that could engage with the problem of child poverty with the community as the protagonist.