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Notes and explanation of symbols

The following symbols are used in tables in the *Review:*
Three dots (...) indicate that data are not available or are not separately reported.
A dash (—) indicates that the amount is nil or negligible.
A blank space in a table means that the item in question is not applicable.
A minus sign (-) indicates a deficit or decrease, unless otherwise specified.
A point (.) is used to indicate decimals.
A slash (/) indicates a crop year or fiscal year, e.g., 1970/1971.
Use of a hyphen (-) between years, e.g., 1971-1973, indicates reference to the complete number of calendar years involved, including the beginning and end years.
Reference to "tons" mean metric tons, and to "dollars", United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.
Unless otherwise stated, references to annual rates of growth or variation signify compound annual rates.
Individual figures and percentages in tables do not necessarily add up to corresponding totals, because of rounding.

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CONTENTS

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Unequal participation by women in the working world

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Interest in studying the economic performance of women in the region dates from recent times and is related to development studies. An initial conclusion of analyses on the economic roles of the sexes was the unequal participation by men and women in the labour market. According to census records, the greater part of the adult male population appears as working population, while the majority of women appear as non-working population, i.e., they are registered as homemakers. This finding led researchers to attempt to determine its causes and to explore the different ways in which work is distributed between men and women in the areas of production and reproduction, respectively. In one way or another, Latin American societies —like those of the rest of the world— have centered women's work on the duties of social reproduction, labour force reproduction and biological reproduction. Thus, women's role in these areas determines the form and scope of female participation in productive work.

In this article, an attempt is made to outline the work undertaken by Latin American women in the labour market and in the domestic domain, since there is a complex series of interrelations between these two spheres, both of which have been seriously affected by the crisis.

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I

Measurement of female work

The concept of the work force —defined as the population available for work— prepared and adapted for a capitalist society under full expansion (like the United States in the 1940s) was transplanted to populations which are not totally integrated into the market and where different production modes coexist (Wainerman and Recchini, 1981). The separation of working population and total population connotes the existence of a production system where work is differentiated from other activities designed to meet the needs of everyday living. This difference is not as clearcut in precapitalist modes of production.

The concept of the work force, as Reicher Madeira (1978) indicates, measures the "advance of capitalism", i.e., how many individuals have been incorporated into the commercialization and monetization of social relations where the work force is transacted like merchandise.

In addition, since domestic and social domains are appraised differently, individuals engaged in paid work become the only ones responsible for social production and, in counterbalance, the rest are seen as dependents. The latter group includes the majority of women, with no recognition being given to the economic contribution of housework.

On the other hand, the definition of the term working population used in censuses and surveys poses a series of difficulties for the proper measurement of female work, such as:

— The definition does not record as work unpaid domestic activity carried out in the home.

— The definition considers work to be those market activities which are continuous, paid and full time. Women in general, and rural women in particular, tend to be engaged in unpaid, seasonal work and in family enterprises (Wainerman and Recchini, 1981).

— The definition used does not adequately measure work that produces goods and services for self-consumption.

— Censuses and surveys process individual variables and not those of the household. This makes it difficult to study the fundamental aspects of the availability of women for work derived from the family cycle.

— Finally, there are problems regarding the application of the definition of working population, for example, the phrasing of questions on work, the period of reference and minimum work period.

Despite their limitations and defects, population censuses are the only statistical instruments available for measuring the main trends in the economic participation of the population over time.

II

Women in the labour market precariousness of social cohesion

One of the most common ways of measuring a population's economic activity is through participation rates, which relate the working age population that is employed or seeking work with the population that is neither employed nor seeking work. In recent decades, economic participation rates among the population have declined and have tended to even out in the various countries of the region. In part, this equality is doubtless due to greater uniformity in the measurement of work, but the sharp drop results from two social processes. The first is the expansion of education, which kept the youngest within the school system, and out of the labour market, and the second is the extension of social security coverage, which permitted broader sectors of the elderly population to retire and to draw pensions.

These trends apply to the working population as a whole; on the other hand, participation rates by sex reveal a dual trend. Between 1960 and 1985, on the one hand, there was a drop in male economic participation rates in all countries of the region and, on the other hand, there was an increase in female participation; the latter grew in 21 of the 25 countries, remained constant in one country and dropped in another three (table 1).

As mentioned earlier, women's performance in the labour market, unlike that of men's, is conditioned by the stage in the life cycle. Their participation tends to be influenced by marital status, number of children, place of residence and level of schooling, in addition to other factors related to the demand for female labour. Consequently, female labour has specificities which must be highlighted.

Trends in women's participation in the labour market between 1960 and 1980/1985 have the following characteristics:

— Female work rates by age increased in the period 1960-1985 in all age-groups between 15 and 64. There was greater participation by young age-groups (20-24 and 25-29) in all countries with advanced modernization, such as Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Costa Rica, and also in those with accelerated but unbalanced modernization which have shown relatively strong economic activity, especially Brazil, Cuba, Panama and, to a lesser extent, Peru. The trend in countries with partial or incipient modernization, such as Paraguay and Guatemala, involves rather a crystallization of the same participation structure by age that prevailed in 1960 (ECLAC, 1989a).

In terms of education, mass secondary schooling in all countries has brought about radical changes. In countries with greater modernization such as Argentina, Chile and Panama, primary education has become virtually universal and secondary schooling continues to expand. This can be seen in the extent of the female working population that in 1960 already had over 10 years of schooling, and whose proportion increased by 1980. In Argentina, 69% of working women have over seven years of school-

Table 1

PARTICIPATION IN WORK BY SEX, 1960 AND 1985

(Refined rates)[a]

Country	Men		Women	
	1960	1985	1960	1985
Argentina	78.3	67.1	21.4	24.7
Barbados	72.6	68.4	39.6	55.4
Bolivia	80.4	70.9	33.2	21.5
Brazil	77.9	71.8	16.8	26.6
Colombia	75.5	67.3	17.6	19.2
Costa Rica	79.3	73.5	15.0	20.6
Cuba	72.7	64.0	13.9	29.6
Chile	72.5	65.2	19.7	24.4
Ecuador	82.1	69.2	17.3	16.6
El Salvador	80.7	72.9	16.5	24.3
Guatemala	82.0	71.7	12.0	12.9
Guyana	73.9	71.8	16.7	23.6
Haiti	84.0	72.9	72.1	52.2
Honduras	82.7	74.5	13.7	15.6
Jamaica	76.9	68.7	43.6	56.0
Mexico	72.5	68.1	14.3	25.0
Nicaragua	80.5	70.8	17.3	21.3
Panama	75.8	67.1	20.2	25.4
Paraguay	78.5	75.5	21.3	19.5
Peru	73.1	66.5	20.4	21.4
Dominican Republic	75.9	70.7	9.3	11.3
Suriname	68.5	59.3	19.1	23.6
Trinidad and Tobago	71.2	69.5	25.8	26.8
Uruguay	74.3	67.6	24.1	28.2
Venezuela	77.1	68.4	17.2	25.3

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (1989): *Anuario estadístico de América Latina y el Caribe* (Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean) (LC/G.1550-P), 1988 edition, Santiago, Chile, United Nations publication, Sales No. E/S.89.II.G.1.

[a] Percentage of working population aged 10 and up, over total population aged 10 and up.

Table 2

FEMALE PARTICIPATION RATES BY MARITAL STATUS AND EDUCATION, 1980 (WOMEN AGED 10 AND OVER)

Country	Total	Level of schooling (years)			
		0-3	4-6	7-12	13 and over
Argentina					
Single	43.3	30.2	46.7	40.3	56.2
Non-single	20.6	12.4	16.2	32.3	58.0
Brazil					
Single	33.8	23.2	35.3	57.6	75.1
Non-single	22.1	16.7	22.8	44.3	69.6
Chile					
Single	29.5	30.2	28.0	28.3	42.8
Non-single	22.2	14.8	18.2	26.3	54.8
Ecuador					
Single	21.7	22.1	19.7	17.7	48.7
Non-single	16.8	11.2	12.2	27.6	56.5
Panama					
Single	34.9	22.4	40.9	28.8	63.0
Non-single	26.5	10.9	19.3	43.9	75.2
Uruguay[a]					
Single	30.9	21.5	28.6	34.6	58.8
Non-single	24.5	16.5	21.4	35.4	71.5

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (1989b): *Transformación ocupacional y crisis social en América Latina* (Occupational transformation and social crisis in Latin America) (LC/G.1558-P), Santiago, Chile (in press).

[a] 1975.

ing; in Chile and Panama respectively, 44.3% and 44.4% of working women have over 10 years of schooling. Besides constituting a kind of participation and a symbolic satisfaction of consumption by the population as a whole, changes in education have meant an accelerated training of labour. This phenomenon is quite marked, since in Latin America the female working population has higher levels of schooling than the female population that does not participate in the labour market, and than both the working and non-working male population. Although the expansion in education has been one of the keys to maintaining social mobility up to the 1980s, it is more apparent than real. In fact, the increase in educational levels of the working population has also brought about a devaluation of education, so that, in order to choose the same jobs workers must now possess much higher levels of education.

— There have been no major changes in participation and marital status in the period from 1960 to 1980. Participation rates for single women are generally higher than for non-single women. For women with low educational levels, marital status has a major influence on their option to work. In other words, participation rates of single women are high compared with those of non-single women. As the level of education increases, marital status becomes less important and, in the case of women with post-secondary education, its effect disappears (table 2). The greater the number of years of schooling, the greater the possibility of generat-

ing family income and of having access to goods and services on the market. In this case, other women may be hired to do housework and the number of goods and services bought on the market may increase (laundries, day-care centres, prepared foods, etc.). This way of replacing housework does not mean a delegation of responsibilities, and in some cases, an improvement in the family's economic situation could mean an increase in housework.

The logic underlying women's participation in the labour market is clear and two-fold (ECLAC, 1985a). On the one hand, the *logic of determination* forces low-income women to work, independently of the stage they have reached in the life cycle, of the education they may possess and of the income they may receive. These women are the least recorded in population censuses because they work primarily in the informal sector of the economy. On the other hand, there is a *logic of choice* for women with the highest incomes, who are incorporated into paid work not only in search of income, but also as a way to personal fulfilment. This group, inserted into the formal sector of the urban economy, is adequately recorded by censuses and has increased steadily, especially in countries with advanced modernization.

Three critical aspects may be analysed from the standpoint of labour market demand: structure of female occupations, level of feminization and changes that occurred during the period studied. With regard to the first aspect, there is census information[1] that points to a large segmentation of the market by sex. In the period between 1960 and 1980, regardless of the degree of modernization of the country, the majority of women worked in the service sector. Information corresponding to 1980 shows that the female population incorporated into the service sector varied between 55% (in Panama) and 38% (in Peru), with rates between 45% and 54% in the remaining countries (table 3). Female participation in agriculture and manufacturing decreased in the period studied, which meant a continuation of the "tertiarization" process. However, in countries with advanced and accelerated modernization, the internal breakdown of the service sector changed; female occupation increased in the social services sector and decreased in the personal services sector.

From the degree of feminization of certain occupations (table 4), the following may be inferred:

— Greater degrees of feminization, i.e., greater percentages of women in each occupational group, are found in the group of workers engaged in domestic service and laundering, of which between 89% and 99% of those employed are women. Men who do engage in these jobs work as restaurant waiters, hotel employees, etc., and a very small proportion of them work in private homes (and are paid considerably more than women).

— Another category in which some feminization is also observed is that of professionals and technicians. By 1980 over half of these were women (except in Ecuador), because most of the main activities in this group —education and health— are carried out by women.

— Another occupational sector with a high proportion of women is that of spinners, tailors and dressmakers, in which over half of those employed are women.

In the period from 1960 to 1980, female participation by occupational groups did not experience major changes in terms of the proportion of women found in the various categories. In general, this proportion increased somewhat more among office workers and sales persons, although by 1980 women were still a minority in these categories. Generally speaking, the labour market continues to be very segmented, since occupations traditionally defined as female have not changed and no other occupations have opened up with significant numbers of women. Together with segmentation, the incorporation of women into production has been predominantly bipolar. Very many women work at the manual level, almost exclusively as maids, and another majority group is engaged in non-manual labour: professionals, office-workers and saleswomen.

Lastly, occupational trends in the 20 years studied show that most women have been incorporated into non-manual jobs: over half of the increases that occurred at this level can be attributed to female employment. Although this sug-

[1] This refers to tabulations from 1960, 1970 and 1980 census samples. For a more detailed analysis refer to ECLAC, 1989b.

Table 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FEMALE POPULATION BY AREA OF ACTIVITY, 1980[a]

Area of activity	Argentina	Brazil	Costa Rica[b]	Chile[b]	Ecuador[c]	Guatemala[d]	Panama	Paraguay[c]	Peru[b]	Venezuela[b]
Agriculture and hunting	3.1	14.2	6.4	2.8	12.6	9.7	7.9	12.0	24.9	2.6
Mining and quarrying	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.9	0.4	0.4
Manufacturing	16.9	18.6	20.3	15.7	15.5	18.8	8.5	20.8	12.0	16.2
Construction	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.6
Electricity, gas and water	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.2	0.3	1.1
Commerce	18.8	12.5	20.6	23.6	18.5	21.9	17.4	15.6	20.2	21.1
Transportation and storage	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.8	1.0	0.8	3.7	1.2	1.3	2.1
Financing	5.1	2.8	2.2	2.8	2.5	2.6	5.3	2.1	2.7	6.0
Services	53.4	49.4	48.7	52.6	48.7	45.3	55.2	48.0	38.1	49.9
Total: %	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Thousands	(2 772.7)	(11 660.0)	(197.1)	(1 035.7)	(479.4)	(245.2)	(149.7)	(209.2)	(1 272.9)	(1 230.0)

Source: (ECLAC) (1989b): *Transformación ocupacional y crisis social en América Latina* (Occupational transformation and social crisis in Latin America) (LC/G.1558-P), Santiago, Chile (in press).

[a] Working population aged 10 and over, excluding those seeking work for the first time. Activity areas are classified according to the Uniform International Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (UIIC).

[b] Data from household surveys.

[c] 1981.

[d] 1982.

Table 4

FEMINIZATION OF OCCUPATIONS, 1980[a]

Occupation	Argentina	Brazil	Chile[b]	Ecuador	Panama	Uruguay
Professionals and technicians	51.9	56.0	53.7	42.5	54.3	57.4
Nurses and paramedics	83.8	78.9	84.6	62.3	74.5	83.1
Professors and teachers	84.7	85.8	63.8	54.9	70.0	76.4
Directors, managers, administrators and owners	9.8	17.1	15.4	29.5	19.8	17.1
Office workers	41.4	44.9	41.4	45.4	64.4	35.2
Secretaries, telephone operators	[c]	[c]	[c]	66.4	81.7	[c]
Saleswomen, store owners	27.8	34.0	38.4	30.0	34.6	27.0
Salesmen and salesclerks	29.8	41.1	37.6	31.3	38.1	41.5
Farm workers	5.4	13.1	4.7	7.4	3.8	4.4
Artisans, factory workers, spinners, tailors and dressmakers	10.8[d]	16.5[d]	64.8	44.8	64.9	70.0
Other workers and labourers			12.5	13.7	12.4	6.1
Personal service workers	64.3	69.7	71.4	58.5	55.6	61.8
Maids, washerwomen	98.3	92.4	95.3	89.7	89.3	98.9
Total	27.5	27.5	29.3	20.8	27.6	28.6

Source: (ECLAC) (1989b): *Transformación ocupacional y crisis social en América Latina* (Occupational transformation and social crisis in Latin America) (LC/G.1558-P), Santiago, Chile (in press).

[a] Percentage of female working population *vis-à-vis* total working population in each occupational group.

[b] Data taken from home surveys.

[c] Information available did not allow the separation of secretaries and telephone operators from the remainder of office workers.

[d] Information available did not permit the separation of spinners, tailors and dressmakers from female artisans and workers.

gests a trend towards an improvement in women's occupational status, the history of some countries of the region indicates that increases in women's schooling and in their numbers within non-manual occupations has not raised their incomes, since their employment continues to be segmented within occupations considered to be female, i.e., lower in prestige and pay.

III

Women's domestic work

Up to now, we have been examining occupations engaged in by women in the labour market. To understand the forms taken on by work outside the home, we should also examine housework done by women in their homes. Housewives without paid employment in the region constitute between 30% and 50% of the female population over 15, depending on the country. Thus, according to data from household surveys, in 1985, out of the total of women over age 15, housewives accounted for 32% in Bogotá, 44% in Caracas, 40% in Panama, 48% in San José, Costa Rica and 55% in São Paulo.

It is difficult to define housework. At a general theoretical level, it is the "series of maintenance activities required to reproduce the work force daily, which includes the transformation of goods into valuables for consumption use' (Benería, 1984, p. 25). In all societies, housework is distinguished from non-domestic work and is considered to be predominantly women's work. However, at a concrete level, the definition is very heterogeneous in terms of the forms which housework takes on. It varies depending on family cycle stage, social class, cultural, ecological and regional conditions, degree of development and modernization and, in a very definitive way, on the ideological conceptualization adhered to by society on the role of women as "mother-wife-housewife".

Until recently, there were no quantitative studies measuring housework done by women in Latin America.[2] This lack of concern results from the fact that unpaid housework done by women, which is very heterogeneous, is not considered to be work as such, because it is not transacted on the market and, therefore, is not recorded in national accounts. However, early in the 1970s, ideological changes regarding women's role in society and the conception of their work, began to emphasize the importance of unpaid housework in the reproduction of the population. This situation was reinforced by the crisis, when the importance of housework became more apparent, particularly among the popular sector. Here, the decrease in basic goods and services had to be supplemented by female housework (Barbieri and Oliviera, 1985). Thus, the importance of housework helps to explain the relatively low rates of participation by married women, in particular among the lower strata of the population.

A pioneer study by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 1984), shows that among women in Latin America, time dedicated to housework is often equal to or greater than that dedicated to paid work in the market, so that a high proportion of housewives are "overemployed". In a study on Chile, it was calculated that housewives worked an average total of 56.3 hours a week, out of which 37.9 hours were devoted to housework, not counting work outside the home. Thus, housewives had an eight hour workday every day without Sunday rest, while for women who were also employed outside the home, the total time worked was 12 hours a day (Pardo, 1983). In terms of value, these measurements suggest that housework could be equivalent to between one third and one half the families' monetary income. In the case of poor households, it is more important since it constitutes an essential element in survival strategies. In the same study on Chile, it was

[2] For an exhaustive discussion on ways to measure housework, see Goldschmidt (1987). This article examines values attributed to housework by substitute workers, wages for equivalent function in the market, opportunity costs and average or minimum wage in the market.

estimated that the contribution by women's housework to gross geographical product reached 30%, and that it was exceeded only by the manufacturing sector. Given the characteristics of housework, it is possible to suppose that in other countries women's contribution is equal or similar.

Likewise, studies done by the ILO (1984) on Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Uruguay have confirmed some important hypotheses:

a) The incorporation of women into the labour market does not mean a correlative reduction of work in the home, i.e., women who work actually perform two work shifts a day.

b) The increase in family income has not meant less housework for the homemaker; what has changed is its composition, as a result of which the most unpleasant chores have been delegated to third parties. In fact, housewives continue to do housework, and they have even incorporated some new chores that relate to an improved social position.

c) Housewives who rely on technical equipment within the home devote almost as much time to housework as do those who live in houses without such equipment. The important difference lies in the intensity of personal effort involved, since technological development actually helps to recreate women's reproductive role.

d) With regard to the economic crisis, although housework has increased, men have not increased their contribution to it. Thus, although the role of men as main providers has declined, this did not mean correlative increases in housework.

IV

The crisis and its repercussions on women's work

From the 1950s onward, and for three decades afterwards, Latin American countries experienced sustained growth in their economies, with some variations. But from 1980 onwards, there began a drastic decline in this growth.[3]

The repercussions of the crisis and of the adjustment policies implemented became evident in the labour market in three main ways (Tokman, 1986a and 1986b): a) declines in employment growth rates; b) modification of the type of employment generated, with increases in the informal sector and "tertiarization" and c) reductions in real wages.

1. *The crisis and unemployment by sex*

Unemployment was one of the results of the crisis which became evident in a more drastic and rapid manner in the labour market. For the work force as a whole, between 1980 and 1985, the number of unemployed persons in the region grew by 48% (ECLAC, 1987). The following is an examination of the ways in which the crisis affected the labour market in the cities of Bogotá, Caracas, Panama, San José, Costa Rica and São Paulo. The effects of the crisis on men and women are analysed for the years 1982 and 1985.[4]

In 1985 unemployment rates in these five Latin American cities reached magnitudes of between 5.2% (São Paulo) and 13.6% (Bogotá). A comparison based on sex shows that the range at which male unemployment rates vary is much lower than for female rates: between 5% and 10% for the former and between 6% and 19% for the latter. Thus, with the exception of Caracas, women's unemployment rates in the various cities are higher than for men, and the variations are greater between countries. The latter difference may be due to difficulties in measuring female unemployment, which in many cases remains hidden in the category of housework (table 5).

[3] For detailed information on the crisis see (ECLAC, 1987); (ECLAC, 1986a); (ECLAC, 1986c) and (ECLAC, 1985c).

[4] This information is derived from the respective household surveys. A series of special tabulations was made. For greater details, see ECLAC, 1988.

In the past, female unemployment rates were greater than those for males. This statement confirms information gathered by the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC, 1982) on six countries in the region, according to which, between 1970 and 1980, this situation occurred in all countries. The biggest difference was found in Panama and the smallest in Brazil.

In order to explain higher female unemployment, we must bear in mind that the Latin American economies are not dynamic enough to absorb the growing labour force. Besides, there is an oversupply of female labour for the limited number of occupations available to women. This is due to the high degree of segmentation of the work force by sex. On the other hand, it is argued that, as women are not usually heads of households, they can "allow" themselves to be unemployed because they are not the main economic support of the family group. This is the classic argument used by employers for hiring fewer women or for paying them lower wages (Ribeiro and Barbieri, 1978). However, this argument is contradicted by the growing number of female heads of household. In recent years women have come to account for between a fifth —and, in the case of the Caribbean, a third— of total heads of household (ECLAC, 1984) (Massiah, 1984).

The economic situation in Brazil runs counter to the general trend recorded in other countries. Until 1986, Brazil had succeeded in resolving external imbalances at a lower recessive cost, as compared with the rest of Latin America. As was indicated in the preceding section, prior to the crisis, Brazil experienced major progress in the growth of per capita gross domestic product and in the creation of new jobs for men and women. However, this progress was also accompanied by marked inequality in income distribution and in access to different sectors of the labour market (ECLAC, 1986b) (ECLAC, 1986d). Recent information shows that the effect of the crisis on the informal and formal labour markets did not affect participation rates by women. On the contrary, these continued to grow during the most critical period in the Brazilian economy, which was more obvious in the formal sector than in the informal sector (Spindel, 1987).

Between 1982 and 1985, female unemployment increased almost five-fold in Bogotá, and in Caracas it practically doubled. In São Paulo it increased somewhat, while it decreased in Panama and San José, Costa Rica. Unemployment rates were highest among youths between the ages of 15 and 19, reaching over 30% in Bogotá and Panama (tables 5 and 6). Between 1984 and 1987 unemployment in Mexico was greatest among the population aged 15 to 19, and among the unemployed the percentage of those looking for work for the first time was higher among the female population than among unemployed males (De Oliviera, 1987).

While the rate of female unemployment increased in the majority of cities, the number of jobs held by women rose, as may be seen by examining employment rate performance.[5] This trend is observed in three of the five cities: Bogotá, Caracas and São Paulo. A similar trend is also observed in Uruguay, a country where women poured into the labour market and where the process became irreversible (Prates, 1987).

Table 5

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE AND SEX, 1985

City	Population 15 years and older	Population aged 15-19	Population aged 20 to 24
Bogotá	13.6	33.9	22.3
Men	10.1	32.3	17.8
Women	18.6	35.6	27.2
Caracas	9.8	21.5	15.6
Men	10.5	23.8	16.1
Women	8.6	16.7	14.8
Panama	10.4	32.3	22.7
Men	9.4	30.6	19.9
Women	12.2	34.7	27.7
San José	7.3	19.8	13.1
Men	6.8	18.5	11.7
Women	8.2	21.8	15.3
São Paulo	5.2	13.7	7.2
Men	5.0	13.4	7.2
Women	5.6	14.2	7.2

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.

[5] The employment rate is the ratio between persons effectively employed and the working age population. Unlike the working rate, the employment rate does not include either unemployed persons of first time job-seekers.

Table 6

FEMALE EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, 1982 AND 1985

City	Employment rates		Unemployment rates	
	Total women	Women aged 15-24	Total women	Women aged 15-24
Bogotá				
1982	35.8	29.5	4.2	8.7
1985	39.9	33.0	18.6	30.0
Caracas				
1982	35.3	26.9	4.8	8.3
1985	37.2	27.5	8.6	15.3
Panama				
1982	33.6	24.4	14.2	29.3
1985	33.8	21.4	12.2	30.3
San José				
1982	37.7	34.1	9.2	18.5
1985	32.4	29.4	8.2	17.5
São Paulo				
1982	35.4	49.5	4.7	7.5
1985	42.5	51.1	5.6	10.5

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.

While the incorporation of women into the labour market has tended to remain constant, there has been an increase in female participation *vis-à-vis* the drop in family income. Thus, women's participation in the Latin American labour market during the crisis of the 1980s has had the opposite effect to that recorded during the crisis of the 1930s in the United States, a country where women withdrew from the labour market to allow greater employment opportunities to the male population.

In Latin America, as a consequence of the decrease in family income during the recession, other household members, especially young women have joined the formal and informal labour markets in search of paid work to compensate for this drop (ICRW, 1986).

The reason for this difference in performance is unclear. On the one hand, it may be said that appraisal of female work has changed, so that now women place greater value on working outside the home. However, it is probable that women in the middle and upper echelons behave in similar fashion to North American women in the 1930s: within their logic of choice, as wages drop, they withdraw from the labour market. For their part, women in the popular sectors, following the logic of determination, have had to work outside the home in all parts of the formal, and in particular the informal, labour markets.

From the situations examined we may conclude that, within the context of the crisis, unemployment levels have increased considerably, particularly among women and youths, and the capacity for absorption of the labour force has declined. The diversity of situations in the various countries is due to the different trends in income, the greater or lesser capacity of the economic system to generate new jobs, the adjustment policies implemented and public and social investment programmes.

One may say, then, that trends towards the broadening of the labour market for women, which had been in evidence since the 1950s persist. But the great increase in growth rates in the female work force for the period 1950-1985 did not ensure their absorption as a productive force, which particularly affected young women recently incorporated into the labour market.

With regard to the insertion of women in employment, female occupational structures remained constant despite the crisis, and significant changes in the segmentation of the labour market by sex are not likely in the short term. In effect, this segmentation has not been greatly affected by the economic changes of the crisis period; instead, the ideological rigidity which defines jobs as "female" and "male" prevails.

For a more in-depth analysis, one would need to review records on the forms taken by women's participation in the informal sector. Much of the qualitative research done shows that in times of crisis women at the poorest levels become incorporated into the work force, but they are not measured adequately by either population censuses or household surveys (Raczynski and Serrano, 1985) (ECLAC, 1984) (Leon and Arriagada, 1987).

2. *Income distribution by sex*

Income distribution in Latin America has always been unequal, although variations depend on the degree of development of a country and the prevailing political and social model. Thus, income concentration in the upper echelons has

reflected differentiated access to property and to use of goods and services.

In Latin America no recent comparative studies have been made on income differences between men and women. National studies show that income received by women is lower than that obtained by men, although this difference varies between countries. In the case of Chile, for example, between 1960 and 1985, average female income did not exceed 68% of male income, once the education level variable was controlled. This relation has not changed in the past quarter of a century (Leiva, 1987).

If average income differences are analysed by sex and age, it is seen that among the young population these differences are less and that they increase as age increases. This leads to the conclusion that women progress less than men, which deepens the income disparity between sexes of equal age (AES, 1987).

It can also be said that, by having higher education levels, young women incorporated into the labour market reach higher occupational levels, but only a diachronical analysis would allow one to confirm whether they maintain their positions over time.

In 1985, among the five metropolises studied, the female population received between 53% and 84% of average male income (São Paulo, 52.8%; Caracas, 60.8%; Bogotá, 66.3%; San José, Costa Rica, 79.9% and Panama, 83.5%).

One might ask whether the difference in income between men and women results from women's lack of skills. However, in the five cities studied, the average income of employed men and women with equal levels of schooling, showed major differences, and in all cases, the higher the level of schooling, the greater the gap in income, to the detriment of women. Thus, the difference in income by sex among illiterate persons is much lower, and in San José, Costa Rica average female income is slightly higher. At university levels (over 12 years of schooling), differences in income are markedly greater between the sexes. The extreme case is presented by São Paulo, where average male income is double the average female income (table 7).

Average income indicators by male and female occupation (table 8), show that male income is always higher for the same occupations. Once again, as we pass from manual to non-manual occupations, the gap between incomes widens, with the greatest differences being observed between average male and female incomes among professionals, managers, administrators and directors. Whether for men or women, these occupations are the best paid.

Heads of household, be they men or women, have much higher income levels than men and women of the total population. However, the difference between heads of households of each sex is much greater than that which exists between men and women of the population as a whole (table 9). This pattern repeats itself in all countries and in similar magnitudes, thus prompting the need for thought about this group of female heads of household whose living conditions are among the worst of the region.

The greatest disparity between female and male incomes, both in the population as a whole and among heads of household, is observed in São Paulo. This city has recorded one of the most spectacular increases in female participation in recent years. However, this has been possible at the expense of women accepting much lower wages than men. In this case, as in Uruguay, female occupation constitutes a "stagnated labour reserve" made up of active workers but with irregular work whose pay levels are below normal working class levels (Prates, 1987).

Between 1982 and 1985 the relative average income of women declined in Bogotá and Caracas, remained constant in Panama and grew only in San José, Costa Rica, a country where there was a strong decrease in occupation, i.e., the opposite of the São Paulo process. In relation to education levels, women who saw decreases in their average income again were those with intermediate levels of schooling, i.e., between 7 and 12 years. During the process, average incomes of women with the highest and lowest levels of schooling tended to draw closer, so that in 1985 the difference in income due to schooling was much lower (table 10). Thus, a drop in average female wages occurred; in other words, the equalization was towards lower income levels.

With regard to occupations, women who lost the most income during this period were office workers —which coincides with that recorded at the intermediate levels of schooling— and self-

Table 7

AVERAGE INCOME INDICATORS AMONG WORKING POPULATION BY SEX AND LEVEL OF SCHOOLING, 1985[a]

City / Level of schooling	Bogotá		Caracas		Panama		San José		São Paulo[b]	
	M[c]	W[d]	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
No schooling	61	42	53	40	...	...	70	76	50	23
Primary									78	37
0 - 6 years	69	52	76	46	63	42	77	52	84	44
Secondary										
7 - 12 years	93	70	104	65	99	83	104	82	142	77
University										
13 years and over	263	152	221	134	251	157	175	140	335	150
Total	**115**	**76**	116	**71**	**106**	**88**	**107**	**85**	**117**	**62**
Average population income	100		100		100		100		100	

Source: ECLAC, Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.
[a] Average income for total population is taken as a basis for the index (= 100).
[b] Levels of schooling in São Paulo are: no schooling; 1 to 4 years; 5 to 8 years; 9 to 11 years; and 12 years and over.
[c] M: Men.
[d] W: Women.

Table 8

AVERAGE INCOME INDICATORS OF WORKING POPULATION BY SEX AND OCCUPATION, 1985[a]

City / Occupation	Bogotá		Caracas		Panama		San José		São Paulo	
	M[b]	W[c]	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W
Professionals	313	193	240	154	317	180	200	175	340	142
Technicians and similar workers	197	154	138	71	164	118	167	125	168	72
Directors and managers, public administrators	540	373	205	175	195	158	234	124	347	191
Secretaries and tellers	105	85	77	70	91	101	98	50	95	102
Business employees	89	43	102	76	110	76	93	69	114	52
Self-employed businessmen	163	78	118	49	67	51	116	79	149	69
Skilled and semi-skilled workers	75	49	89	60	88	67	81	73	86	93
Unskilled workers	61	51	75	46	69	65	75	63	40	33
Domestic employees	58	54	48	40	60	33	80	46	28	20
Total	**116**	**74**	116	**70**	**106**	**88**	**107**	**85**	**117**	**62**
Average population income	100		100		100		100		100	

Source: ECLAC, Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.
[a] Average income for total population is taken as a basis for the index (= 100).
[b] M: Men.
[c] W: Women.

employed saleswomen. Only in Caracas did average professional incomes drop. In the other cities they remained constant and even increased (table 11). A comparison of the average income of the highest and lowest paid occupations, shows that in Bogotá, income concentration by occupation increased, widening the gap between both extremes.

In Caracas and San José, Costa Rica, on the other hand, the difference between these wages decreased, and in Panama they remained constant.

An initial analysis of what occurred during the crisis shows an increase in income inequality among workers, both men and women. There has been a general decrease in wages among women, but particularly so at intermediate levels, which has given rise to lower concentrations of income, so that differences due to different levels of schooling and to different types of occupation have tended to decrease.

In summary, the crisis has had a very severe impact on the labour market and on all workers, but has particularly affected women in a negative way. This situation has consequences for specific social policies among the female segment, as well as for female heads of households and young women, who have been the hardest hit.

Table 9

AVERAGE INCOME INDICATORS BY HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD AND SEX, 1985[a]

City	Total population			Heads of household		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Bogotá	100	116	74	134	140	95
Caracas	100	116	70	133	140	81
Panama	100	106	88	118	123	95
San José	100	107	85	119	127	84
São Paulo	100	117	62	135	141	80

Source: ECLAC, Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.
[a]Average income for total population is taken as a basis for the index (= 100).

Table 10

AVERAGE INCOME INDICATORS FOR FEMALE WORKING POPULATION BY LEVEL OF SCHOOLING, 1982 AND 1985[a]

Schooling	Bogotá		Caracas		Panama		San José	
	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985
No schooling	50	42	46	40	28	-	29	76
1 - 6 years	63	52	53	46	41	42	46	52
7 - 12 years	117	70	81	65	84	83	73	82
13 years and over	161	152	146	134	148	157	137	140
Total	**98**	**74**	**77**	**71**	**86**	**88**	**72**	**85**
Average population income	100		100		100		100	

Source: ECLAC, Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.
[a]Average income for total population is taken as a basis for the index (= 100).

Table 11

FEMALE AVERAGE INCOME INDICATORS FOR SOME OCCUPATIONS, 1982 AND 1985[a]

Occupation	Bogotá		Caracas		Panama		San José	
	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985	1982	1985
Professionals	173	193	181	154	173	180	163	175
Technicians and similar workers	163	154	79	71	95	118	123	125
Directors and managers, public administrators	179	373	197	175	184	158	159	124
Office workers	130	85	74	70	100	101	88	50
Saleswomen	92	43	81	76	74	76	53	69
Self-employed saleswomen	80	78	61	49	50	51	102	79
Maids	37	54	42	40	36	33	25	46
Total	98	74	75	70	85	88	72	85
Average population income	100		100		100		100	

Source: ECLAC, Social Development Division, special tabulations based on the respective home surveys.
[a] Average income for total population is taken as a basis for the index (= 100).

V

Repercussions of the crisis on families of the popular sector[6]

Up to now, this analysis has focused on the effects of the crisis on the segment of paid women workers. However, an important group of women have yet to be considered, i.e., those who work in the home, about whom no quantitative records exist. Therefore, the following is a review of results from some primarily qualitative studies, which show what has taken place in the domestic domain of the popular sectors.

As already mentioned, the crisis had a specific effect on women. Housewives of the popular sector saw their precarious situation worsen. This was particularly reflected in the difficulty in finding paid work and in high unemployment rates which affected both men and women of that sector. At the same time, the crisis made itself felt within family life, in daily household chores and in the burden of domestic work which women had to shoulder.

Some information on the region indicates that in some countries the extended family has increased, so that more than one family group coexists in one household. In the majority of cases, this involves sons and daughters who have formed their own families but who have been unable to become independent. Also, there are distant relatives or non-kin who have put up precarious constructions within the same building lot and with whom they share water, electricity and, in some cases, food. This phenomenon of "dependent families" includes those that are dependent on the lot, on housing and the lot and those that are totally dependent, i.e., families that completely depend on the families that have taken them in. Both in Chile

[6] This section is based on the following studies: Jelín and Gogna, 1987; De Oliveira, 1987; Zuleica, 1987; Raczynski and Serrano, 1985 and Hardy, 1985.

and in Brazil this process of the growth of dependent families has been widely described.

It has also been shown that during the crisis the number of workers or working personnel per family has increased, particularly in the popular sectors where, in many cases, younger children are incorporated into various informal and self-employed activities. This change in family structure has meant a greater workload for women, from two perspectives: resources for reproduction have declined, and the number of persons to be supported have increased.

Some studies have pointed out that prolonged unemployment gives rise to various family survival strategies that differ between men and women. Male strategies are based at first on the search for work related to their own occupations or to some previous work, through friends and ex-fellow workers. At the second stage, the search extends to any kind of work, which means self-employment or, in other cases, the undertaking of sporadic and low-paying jobs which generally end up swelling the informal sector of the economy. Frequently, this permanent frustration over prolonged periods of unemployment leads to excessive alcohol consumption, which causes family problems, strife and family violence.

For women, the strategies are varied in nature. Like men, they begin the search for income by doing part-time, irregular, unstable and very low-paying work, which to a large extent is an extension of their domestic role: sewing, laundry, domestic service on a wage basis or by the hour, sale of food, etc. Another different alternative is to participate in groups of women who join forces to face the same types of survival problems together, whether by generating income or for obtaining the goods necessary for survival of the family unit. What is new about this type of female response is that women face the problem of survival collectively and not as individuals. At the same time as it provides a more "social" view of the problem, there is an increase in opportunities for female participation and self-valuation, since what was normally an exercise of domestic chores becomes work that is considered as such.

There are various stages which domestic organizations go through and that have a direct impact on the increase in women's workload.[7] The first thing that happens is that bills are left unpaid, i.e., mortgage payments if they exist, gas and electricity, and lastly water bills. This means that women have to use firewood to cook, which in many cases involves going out to collect it. They must also fetch water from public standpipes that are a long way from the house, etc. Later, personal property is sold: the refrigerator, dishes, clothing, household repair materials, etc. All these sales impose an additional burden on women since they are deprived of the essential tools for carrying out household chores. Lastly, articles such as clothing, shoes, and household furnishings, which break down or wear out, are not replaced. Neither do they have the minimum amount of money necessary for transportation to go out and look for work, since all the money that they manage to scrape together is spent on food. Likewise, not only does the place where they shop for food change, but also the amount spent and amounts bought, with housework thus becoming excessive. Neither can they plan for the future. "Immediacy and the solution of permanent small crises becomes the lifestyle of popular sectors" (Jelin and Gogna, 1987 p. 9).

This increase in domestic activity, due to the excessive work derived from the crisis, added to the feeling of inadequately fulfilling the reproductive function assigned to them by society, tends to cause serious depressions and psychosomatic disorders among many housewives.

This raises the question as to how serious the crisis would be if women did not shoulder most of the resulting burdens at a high personal cost.

[7] The majority of qualitative studies have been carried aout in countries with advanced modernization (Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and also in Brazil).

VI
Conclusion

One may conclude from the statistical and qualitative data provided that the repercussions of the crisis have had a different effect on workers of both sexes. With drastic reductions in household income, women, unlike men, have increased the rate at which they are incorporated into the formal and informal labour markets. In this way, participation rates continue to grow, although their internal breakdown varies, since occupations increase at lower rates and unemployment increases significantly, particularly among the 15 to 19 age group.

The segmentation of the labour market by sex has not experienced major variations attributable to the crisis. The informal sector has increased, although the recording of it in household surveys is not exhaustive. Paid housework, which had progressively declined between 1970 and 1980 increased during the period 1982-1985. In this way, the structure of occupations considered to be female remains constant despite the crisis, and it is not likely that there will be major changes in the segmentation of the labour market by sex over the short term.

Lastly, with regard to income distribution by sex, one may conclude that the gap between workers of one and the other sex is more clearly observed in this sphere. This situation of inequality has been heightened by the crisis, to the point where average female income in some cases accounts for half of the average male income. This discrepancy becomes greater in the case of heads of household. Data by degree of schooling and type of occupation show that the average income which declined the most was that of women with non-manual low-level occupations, i.e., self-employed saleswomen, office workers and others, corresponding to groups with intermediate levels of 7 to 12 years of education.

Likewise, the process of maintenance and reproduction of the work force of which women are in charge, particularly in the popular sectors, becomes increasingly difficult. In this way, women in these sectors must extend and intensify their working day to compensate for the decrease in goods and services caused by the crisis.

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