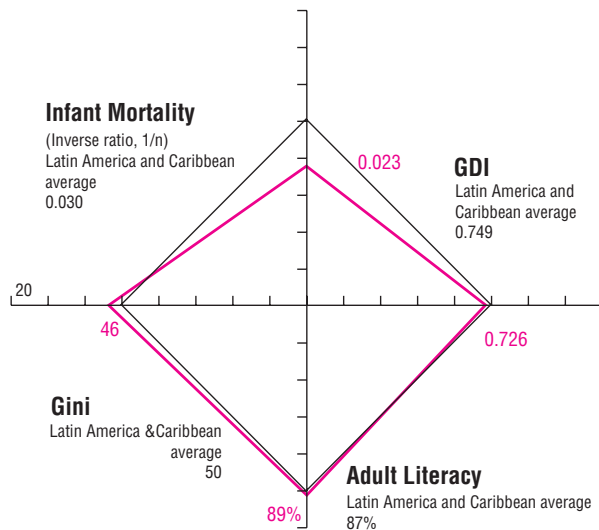


•HÉCTOR BÉJAR<sup>1</sup>



*The Equity Diamond: National values in terracotta compared to regional ones in blue. Source: Infant mortality: UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*; Adult literacy: UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1998*; GDI (Gender Development Index): UNDP, *Human Development Report 1998*; GINI: World Bank, *World Development indicators 1998*. (The regional average for this indicator was calculated by *Social Watch*).*

*The period 1995 to 1999 was characterised by suppression of opposition, restrictions on freedom of expression and welfare focused on extreme poverty. Official figures show a small drop in the level of absolute poverty and no change in overall poverty rates. From 1994 to 1997, poverty affected 12 million people and the overall level of poverty remained unchanged. Despite growing state investment, little progress has been*

## COMMITMENT BY COMMITMENT

*made. What is required in Peru is a return to democracy, the reactivation of the economy, generation of employment, investment in people and strengthening of institutions.*

### COMMITMENT 1: AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Since President Fujimori's «self-coup» in 1992, laws are rarely implemented or are modified to benefit central government. The government intervenes in the judiciary, the Attorney General's Office and the main universities. Peru is trying to withdraw from the litigious clauses of the Inter-American Human Rights Convention. Although the government ratified the 1996 Inter-American Convention against Corruption, it has no anti-corruption policy. Everything is being put in place for the president's second re-election.

### COMMITMENT 2: POVERTY ALLEVIATION STRATEGIES

***The structural adjustment programme (SAP) in place since the early 1990s has reduced purchasing power to 60% of its former value. The government has not analysed the social consequences of the SAP.***

In 1995, President Fujimori set the goal of cutting absolute poverty in half, from 18% in 1994 to 9% in 2000, by applying focussed strategies consisting of basic services, food distribution and family planning.

The Ministries of Health, the Presidency and Women, and other state agencies, implement a range of programmes without seeking consensus or co-ordination. The 1996 National Homes Survey

<sup>1</sup> The author drafted this report based on official data and the opinions of the following experts: Miyaray Benavente (nutrition); Jorge Bernedo (employment); Roelfien Haak; Yenny Melgar (agricultural economics); Diana Milosláovich Túpac and Silvia Loli (gender) Doris Portocarrero (girls and boys), Ismael Vega (indigenous peoples) and Carmen Vildoso (small business).

(ENAHO) concluded that 61% of households (77% in rural areas) received benefits from at least one social programme. According to the National Homes Survey on Standards of Living (ENNIV), from 1994 to 1997, electricity and water were provided to more than half a million families, health services treated more than a million outpatients per month, and the number of children in school increased by 200,000.

World Bank studies show that government programmes have not had the same impact on the whole population and regional inequalities have increased. Of the total reduction in poverty, almost 80% is in Lima and the urban highlands. By international comparison, Peru is among the countries with extremely high disparities in regional income levels.

There is no system in place for evaluating the results of anti-poverty strategies. The ENNIV established that absolute poverty dropped by four points, from 18% in 1994 to 14% in 1997. There was a somewhat smaller reduction in overall poverty, which stood at 49% in 1997.

Government programmes against poverty favour stopgap approaches to meeting the needs of the rural and urban poor without developing their autonomous capacity and potential. People's needs should be met by income, so that women and men are guaranteed «participation in the decisions that affect their lives, the consolidation of their strengths and an increase in their assets» (UNDP, 1997), and so they see their opportunities expand through local, regional, national and global development.

### COMMITMENT 3: PROMOTION OF FULL EMPLOYMENT AS A BASIC PRIORITY OF ECONOMIC POLICY

The government believes that growth through foreign investment will generate employment. This has not been the case: foreign investments have contributed to GDP growth, but they have had a limited impact on employment

According to the 1997 ENNIV survey, in the 1994–1997 period approximately 1.3 million jobs were created, but just 16% of these can be regarded as decent jobs. Indicators measuring quality of employment show that jobs are precarious in general. Working conditions are unsanitary and there is no protection from environmental pollution.

The government has no job promotion policy and no specific goals with respect to employment. Each year, the government purchases products from small businesses, but encouraging small businesses conflicts with recession policy. [Editor: is this what the author wants to say? Does encouraging small business really conflict with recession policy?] There are no government analyses of the impact of adjustment and financial crises on the labour market.

To promote employment, the government must reactivate the economy and encourage savings and local investment. Also

required is improvement of technological and administrative capacity in sectors that have an important impact on employment, such as agro-industry, tourism and livestock farming. 27% of the economically active population (EAP) is employed in these sectors.

Different experts agree that social programmes have not created proper and sustainable employment, only temporary and informal jobs. They also agree that policy-making is concentrated in central government and that the sustainability of social programmes is questionable because these programmes do nothing for people who lack income to cover basic needs. It has been proposed that activities to generate employment should be promoted, and that programmes should be decentralised and take into account the country's cultural diversity.

### COMMITMENT 4: SOCIAL INTEGRATION

The 1993 Constitution and a series of laws established mechanisms to defend the rights of citizens and disadvantaged sectors.

The main mechanism is the 'Ombudsperson's Office'. For children there is the 'Code of the Child and Adolescent', the 'System of integral attention for children and adolescents', and the 'National plan of action for childhood' There are also programmes such as the 'Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Ombudsperson's Offices' (DEMUNA), and wawawasi<sup>2</sup> among others.

With respect to the indigenous population, the state does not recognise their status as peoples, nor does it guarantee them the right to ethnic identity. Decentralisation laws, liberalisation of the land market, granting of titles in coastal farming communities and to natural resources, and contracts signed between the government and private companies are prejudicial to indigenous communities and favour mining, forestry and oil companies. Despite ILO Convention No. 169, the recommendations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Inter-American Human Rights Committee, the government has not consulted indigenous people's organisations on these measures.

The constitutional clause that defines Peru as a pluri-ethnic and multicultural country needs urgent regulation and implementation.

### COMMITMENT 5: GENDER

44% of women in Peru live in poverty and 18% live in absolute poverty. 23% of poor women have no formal education and 42% completed only one or two years of primary school. 40% of poor women do unpaid work for relatives. The maternal mortality rate remained unchanged at 265 deaths per 100 thousand live births, according to the National Health Survey (ENDES III). The gender-

<sup>2</sup> Child daycare centres

based wage discrimination gap remains: it stands at 23% in Lima and 33% nationally (ENNIV, 1997). A gender perspective has not been incorporated into public policy.

Female representation in Congress stands at 10.8%. 5% of mayors and 25% of alderpersons are women. The president has nominated some women to important public posts. It is compulsory for parties to include 25% female candidates in lists for municipal and parliamentary elections.

Legal advances include: Law 26941 which says that pregnant women cannot be prevented from starting or continuing with studies; the 'Law against discrimination in access to jobs'; and the 'Law against family violence'. All police stations are obliged to receive denunciations of family violence and medical exams are free. There are Family District Attorney Offices to deal with family violence and forensic psychologists to assess the effects of psychological violence. Rape charges are filed ex officio by the Attorney General's Office.

These mechanisms function on a limited basis in cities and are non-existent in rural towns. Domestic workers continue to suffer ethnic and gender-based discrimination.

#### COMMITMENT 6: HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Investment has been made in educational infrastructure in poor areas, including in services such as school breakfasts. Since 1997, free school insurance covers five million pupils. The literacy programme focuses on female illiteracy.

The 1997 'UNICEF report on the status of children, adolescents and women in Peru' highlighted the problem of students who abandon or fall behind in their studies. Dropout rates reach 17% among adolescents aged 12 to 17 years. One in five primary school pupils repeat a grade at least once, and one in three are older than they should be for their grade. **One hundred thousand pupils drop out of primary school each year, a figure that doubles at secondary school level. Two hundred fifty thousand girl children—12% of girls from poor homes—do not attend school.**

Vaccinations for infants under one are universally accessible through the Extended Immunisation Program (PAI). Since 1996, vaccination coverage for this age group has been 100% for polio, 87% for third dose DPT and measles, and 99% for BCG (ENDES III). According to the National Statistics and Computing Institute (INEI), however, only 25% of those who live in absolute poverty have access to health services. A self-financing policy for health centres has led to restricted access to these services.

Malnutrition in children under five dropped from 36.5% in 1991 to 25.8% in 1996 (ENDES III), but levels of malnutrition resulting from a lack of micro-nutrients (lack of iron, which causes anaemia) are as high as 70% among poor children. Infant mortality dropped from 92 to 68 deaths per thousand live births between 1991 and 1996 (ENDES II and III).

#### COMMITMENT 9: RESOURCES ASSIGNED TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The government claims that it spends 40% of the national budget and 6% of GDP (3% in 1993) on social policies. There are no accurate data on what is spent on basic social services, however, because budgetary information is inadequate. There are no clear spending goals for education, health or sanitation infrastructure. There is no reliable information on military expenditure.

Spending on external debt accounts for 30% of the 2000 budget and was close to 20% of the budget throughout the 1995–1999 period. Total debt amounts to 50% of GDP (the regional average is 19%). In the context of Jubilee 2000, churches and civil society organisations carried out campaigns to raise awareness of this problem. At the start of 1999, 1,685,000 Peruvians had signed in support of John Paul II's initiative.

#### COMMITMENT 10: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Information about the Copenhagen and Beijing commitments has not been sufficiently disseminated by the government. Monitoring and follow-up activities to Copenhagen have not been encouraged.

While civil society organisations have sought dialogue with the government at regional and district levels, there is no significant degree of co-participation between the government and civil society around the issue of social development.

- Comité de Iniciativa de la Conferencia Nacional de Desarrollo Social (Steering Committee of the National Conference on Social Development), in which the following organisations participate: Acción Ciudadana (Citizen Action); Asociación Nacional de Centros, ANC (National Centres' Association); Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Participación, CEDEP (Study Center for Development and Participation); Centro de la Mujer Flora Tristán (Flora Tristán Women's Center); Centro de Investigación, Educación y Desarrollo, CIED (Research, Education and Development Center); Consorcio de la Pequeña y Microempresa, COPEME (Small and Micro Businesses Consortium); Fomento de la Vida, FOVIDA (Life Promotion); Grupo Mujer y Ajuste (Women and Adjustment Group); Grupo Pachacámac (Pachacámac Group); Red Nacional de la Mujer Rural (National Rural Women's Network) and other networks and organisations. [hecbejar@chavin.rcp.net.pe](mailto:hecbejar@chavin.rcp.net.pe)