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ADOLESCENCE, CHILD RIGHTS AND URBAN POVERTY IN COSTA RICA
BY: UNICEF AND UNCHS (HABITAT)

Translation and Memoir

Graduation Project to receive the degree of *Licenciatura* in Translation
(Spanish-English)

presented by:

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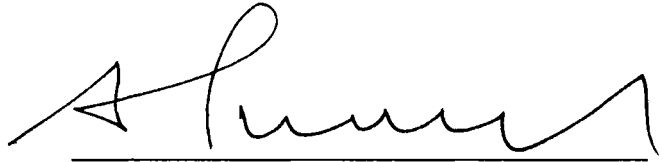
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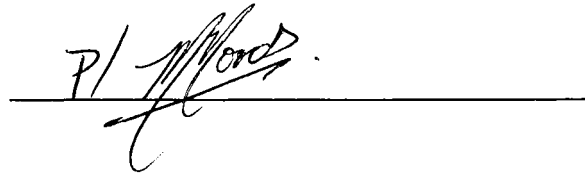
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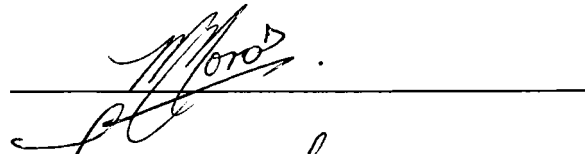
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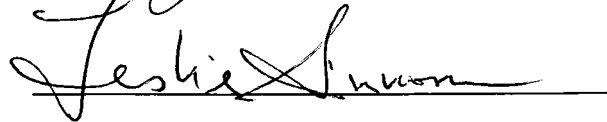
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PROLOGUE

The following translation was requested by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Costa Rica. The original book, entitled *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez, y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*^{*}, was translated from Spanish to English by the candidate as part of her work as a translation consultant at said organization. A copy of the original text is included as Annex 1.

The text is comprised of a series of articles written on various interrelated aspects within the larger fields of child rights, adolescence and urban poverty. Although the entire book was translated, only selected articles are presented in this Graduation Project in order to comply with the standards established by the School of Language and Literature regarding the length of the translated text. The present Graduation Project also includes the accompanying memoir, which reviews several salient aspects of the translation process.

It should be borne in mind that the format in which the translation appears in this document differs from that employed for its publication. This was modified as per the norms set forth by the School of Language and Literature. Sample pages of the published version of the translation appear as Annex 2.

^{*} UNICEF, UNCHS (HABITAT), *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*, UNICEF, San José, 1997.

TRANSLATION

ADOLESCENCE, CHILD RIGHTS AND URBAN POVERTY IN COSTA RICA

JNICEF

UNCHS (HABITAT)

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ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT

CCSS	Costa Rican Social Welfare Institute (leading national public health-care organization) <i>Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social</i>
CEMIE	Multinational Center for Educational Research <i>Centro Multinacional de Investigación Educativa</i>
CEV	Special Housing Commission <i>Comisión Especial de la Vivienda</i>
COOPESALUD	Self-Managed Cooperative for Comprehensive Health Services <i>Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Integrales de Salud</i>
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EBAIS	Basic Comprehensive Health Care Teams <i>Equipos Básicos de Atención Integral en Salud</i>
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENSR	National Survey on Reproductive Health <i>Encuesta Nacional de Salud Reproductiva</i>
FODESAF	Fund for Social Development and Family Allocations <i>Fondo de Desarrollo Social y Asignaciones Familiares</i>
ILANUD	United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
ILPES	Latin American Institute for Prevention and Health Education <i>Instituto Latinoamericano de Prevención y Educación en Salud</i>
IMAS	Joint Social Assistance Institute <i>Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social</i>

NVU	National Institute of Housing and Urban Works <i>Instituto Nacional de Vivienda y Urbanismo</i>
MIVAH	Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements <i>Ministerio de Vivienda y Asentamientos Humanos</i>
ANI	National Child Welfare Institute <i>Patronato Nacional de la Infancia</i>
PROFAC	Community Self-Strengthening Program <i>Proyecto de Fortalecimiento Auto-comunitario</i>
ROMECEUM	Program for Improving Marginal Urban Schools <i>Programa de Mejoramiento de las Escuelas Urbano Marginales</i>
VP	Second Vice-Presidency (Costa Rica) <i>Segunda Vice Presidencia</i>
JNCHS	United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
JNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
JNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

PRESENTATION

Poor children and adolescents living in cities face especially difficult and threatening situations, particularly in developing countries. The majority of the poor live in cities, and most of the children are poor. The struggle for child and adolescent rights is of great strategic importance in the development of a society. This can and must generate broad-scale social mobilization in an effort to achieve cities that are more humane and healthy for all.

This book addresses the characteristics of recent urbanization, impoverishment and social disintegration in Costa Rica, as well as the repercussions these processes have on the rights of boys, girls and, above all, adolescents. The first three articles in Section I provide an aggregate view of the current situation, whereas the following articles analyze the living conditions of children and adolescents in terms of education, labor, sexuality and justice. Section II is dedicated to projects, proposals and initiatives and includes two brief articles on work being carried out with young people in poor urban neighborhoods.

The framework of reference for this work is the **Convention on the Rights of the Child** (CRC), as well as the recommendations and conclusions established at the **United Nations Conference on Human Settlements** (HABITAT II), held in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996.

The Convention establishes a new perspective in which children and adolescents are viewed as citizens with social and individual rights. This means that they are the subjects of these rights and should be recognized and respected by all social institutions. Thus, comprehensive development and a conviction in the advantages of community

participation, particularly that of children, should be more than an aspiration, they must become a reality. The fulfillment of child and adolescent rights, and above all those of adolescents, is the cornerstone of the analyses in this book.

The **Istanbul Declaration** makes specific reference to the needs of children. During this conference, a great deal of emphasis was placed on the **Rights of the Child**. Special mention was made of the conditions that must be met with regard to the security of urban families, the home and its environment as well as the development of healthy communities. In order to meet these rights, the urgent need for changes in economic models, governmental patterns and relations between government and local communities was stressed.

In an effort to achieve more and better results, **UNICEF** and the **Community Self-Strengthening Program (PROFAC)/UNCHS (HABITAT)** in Costa Rica created this joint publication on subjects of common interest. The goal was to contribute to the formulation and implementation of strategies and methodologies for improving the quality of life of poor adolescents living in Costa Rica's urban areas.

UNICEF and **HABITAT** would especially like to recognize the contributing authors as well as Patricia Salgado Muñoz, who was responsible for the compilation of this work.

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this book is to promote debate on the relationship between recent urbanization and the appearance of poor child-adolescent sectors in urban areas. It is also designed to contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for rights-based social policies geared towards children and adolescents.

Over the last few decades, Costa Rica has experienced rapid urbanization, with very negative consequences on the provision of services, infrastructure and urban planning. One of the most distinctive characteristics of this process is the growth of human settlements where the majority of urban poor live. For a variety of reasons, this group does not receive sufficient social services or benefit from a basic infrastructure that would insure minimum living conditions for adequate human development.

Children and adolescents living in these poor areas generally have fewer opportunities and are exposed to greater risks and stereotypes, which affect their self-esteem and socialization. Many of the adolescents in these poor neighborhoods are the victims of social exclusion. Thus, as has been the case in other cities, gangs or groups of adolescents have been formed. In some instances, these groups violate the established legal social order. This has intensified the stigma placed on poor adolescents where they are viewed as a threat to society. At the same time, these adolescents feel intimidated and limited in their scope of movement. As a result, there is a vicious cycle of social exclusion and stigmatization.

Policies and programs specifically geared towards adolescents are few or insufficient. The analysis and actions taken with regard to the problems facing

Adolescents have been inadequate and unable to raise awareness or garner resources to the extent required. If this lack of attention has serious consequences for adolescents whose living conditions provide them greater opportunities than poor adolescents, they are virtually denied a future in which they could even minimally develop their potential as people. They are being confined to a world in which desperation, ignorance and rejection make up their lives.

Given the increasing social importance of these poor settlements in Costa Rica and the particularly difficult social conditions of children and adolescents in these areas, it is unfortunate that this situation has not been adequately studied. Moreover, these groups have not been afforded the opportunity to speak about their aspirations and the harshness and drama of their daily lives.

This book covers a series of topics considered to be of vital importance for understanding how to meet the rights of poor adolescents. It begins with a conceptual, overall vision of the relationship among rights, poverty and social integration. It considers recent trends towards urbanization and poverty, focusing particularly on policies that deal with urban poverty as well as children and adolescents. Following is an analysis of the more specific and diagnostic dimensions of the social environment of adolescents. This is directly related to the creation of opportunities and the concrete manifestations of rights as well as educational, labor and legal issues. Sexuality is also addressed. This is a polemic and difficult subject, as it is clearly related to a broad spectrum of values. In addition, stereotypes, stigmas, religious ideas and essentially the culture itself all play an important role. In the second section there are two shorter articles on projects and experiences currently being implemented. These provide feedback in the design of national policies in this field.

The framework of this publication consists of the concepts, principles and values set forth in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, as well as the proposals and agreements resulting from the convocation and implementation of the **United Nations Conference on Human Settlements**. This event was held from June 3rd to June 14th in Istanbul, Turkey, and was known as **HABITAT II** or **the Summit of Cities**.

In Costa Rica, the CRC was approved in 1990 and, to date, has been ratified by 187 countries. This convention establishes frameworks of reference and addresses the aspirations of all children, that is to say, all persons under 18 years of age. Its importance lies not only in its contents, but also in its being an instrument for raising awareness and mobilizing society in order to improve comprehensively the lives of children and adolescents, particularly those in the most vulnerable sectors.

The goal proposed at the **Istanbul Conference** was to make cities, towns and villages healthy and safe, while fostering equitable and sustainable conditions. For this reason, two subjects were analyzed: adequate housing for all people and sustainable human settlements in an increasingly urban world. One of the significant achievements of HABITAT II was the recognition of child wellbeing as a sound indicator of a society's health and prosperity.

The CRC is a crucial point of reference in this publication as it constitutes the legal framework for the basic social and individual rights that should be recognized for children and adolescents as part of development. Given that the CRC focuses on the rights of all persons under 18 years of age, adolescents are also covered by this convention. With regard to the terms "child," "adolescent" and "young people" as well as their corresponding age brackets, it should be pointed out that these are based on criteria that vary according

to discipline and even to continent. Therefore, authors have been allowed to use the terms best suited to their purposes, making sure that the terminology in each article is clear.

It is important to clarify that the concept of poverty is not examined in depth with regard to its meanings or the ways it may be measured. Rather, emphasis on this subject has been qualitative and related to the failure or partial failure in meeting needs as well as to limited access to resources and poverty's psychological, social and cultural dimensions. Poverty is seen more as an impediment to the fulfillment of rights and is evaluated in terms of exclusion. However, this should not be viewed from the perspective of marginalization, but rather as ways of life and diverse reactions. Based on these considerations, the culture of poverty and the need to address this phenomenon at the local level are of great interest.

The purpose of this book is to increase debate on the subjects being examined and spur discussion on possible proposals. In this sense, it is recognized that there is a need for further research and publications. However, certain guidelines and general considerations derived from the articles included in this book should be mentioned here.

The authors' works underscore the utility and value of the CRC as a powerful mechanism for analyzing the situation of children in urban areas as well as for developing programs that respond to their needs and rights. Children and adolescents in urban areas are often denied these rights, particularly those living in slums and marginal neighborhoods.

Society is obligated to meet the rights of children. Demanding that children and adolescents fulfill their responsibilities or duties should be seen only as part of the educational process, not as a condition for insuring that their rights are met.

The merits of the CRC are undeniable; it is now time to promote the rights of adolescents, based on their particularities as a child subgroup.

Children and especially adolescents have specific characteristics with regard to the demands, problems and potentials that must be considered when initiating or supporting the required changes. Particular attention must be placed on policies for these groups. In addition, appropriate strategies must be conceived and implemented, including the availability of trained and motivated personnel to work with youths. Moreover, this work must complement rather than substitute the efforts of adolescents.

Adolescents and young people have a great potential for developing initiatives if they are adequately supported in this respect. It should be pointed out that it is important to work in conjunction with adolescents, showing faith in their potential and supporting their own organizations, so that they will be a positive means for group and community development. This would help decrease aggressiveness towards adolescents and the stigma the world places on them. It would also help to lessen or eliminate conflicts between adults and young people.

Although the problems facing children and adolescents are specific in nature, the search for solutions must not be their sole responsibility. These problems must also be addressed at the community and national levels. There is a need for actions to raise

awareness as well as for simultaneously formulating and implementing proposals at the individual, group, family, community and national levels.

The PROFAC initiative highlights the importance and value of contributions made by organized communities in defining problems and seeking solutions at the local level.

Recently, Costa Rica has made various achievements in the legal field with regard to this subject. The Child and Adolescent Code as well as the Law of the National Child Welfare Institute (PANI) have been approved. This complements prior progress made with the Juvenile Criminal Justice Law, which was passed months earlier. Moreover, educational and health reform positively reinforce a new culture in which child rights are a central point.

It would be neither feasible nor realistic to propose solutions based only on governmental initiatives. There must be efforts to stimulate the participation of various actors, such as non-governmental organizations, churches, private enterprise, etc. Even though it does play a key role, the State cannot assume all of the functions and responsibilities needed to bring about change.

Coordinated efforts among institutions and agencies are very significant and make it possible to address simultaneously various aspects of the situation facing adolescents.

As an agency, HABITAT's mandate expressly focuses on work with and for urban communities, and does not make specific reference to work with children and adolescents. However, the Istanbul Conference established working with young people in human settlements as its guiding principle. Experiences in Costa Rica reinforce the importance of

this approach. Along these lines, HABITAT and PROFAC are supporting the creation of a Network of Young People in Human Settlements in Costa Rica. This is part of a larger effort to create a similar Latin American network, in accordance with the HABITAT II Agreements.

There are various challenges in redefining intervention strategies. A balance is needed between universal and selected efforts. The institutional structure must be strengthened at the local level. At present, this structure is not comprehensive in spite of the universal nature of its interventions. There is a need to find the means for insuring the adequate growth of the State in local governments. In addition, respect for the ways of life associated with this new poverty must be integrated into public awareness. The general and stringent nature of policies must be modified, and full decentralization achieved incorporating participation and management on the part of communities, families, children and adolescents.

“We are convinced that placing children at the centre of urban development strategy can accelerate progress and make the world a better place for us all.”

(Taken from the UNICEF STATEMENT IN SECOND COMMITTEE New York, October 30, 1996)

POLICIES THAT ADDRESS POVERTY IN URBAN COMMUNITIES

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From a historical perspective, poverty in Costa Rica has been predominantly rural to the extent that, up until the end of the 1970s, nearly three-fourths of poor families lived in rural areas. However, urbanization and migration from the countryside, in conjunction with an economic situation characterized by intense periods of recession and adjustment, have converted urban poverty into a major phenomenon. At present, nearly half of the nation's poor families live in cities, and this has changed the nature of poverty.

Structural poverty related to lack of access to land and low agricultural yields has given way to urban poverty. The latter is associated with the absence of opportunities for obtaining well-paying jobs or for developing the skills needed to perform them. This generates a contingency of urban families who are not permanently poor, but who are vulnerable to unemployment and the drop in real wages. It is a type of situational poverty. In addition, many workers employed in the formal job market in the public sector have lost their jobs as part of structural adjustment processes. They are without work in a time when opportunities are fewer and their capabilities limited for finding new jobs with income similar to their former ones. These groups constitute the new poor.

The increasing numbers of poor children and adolescents growing up in cities have greater chances of accessing the health and education services that could eventually open the doors to social mobility. However, these children and young people also face new problems that increase their vulnerability and make them likely to encounter greater suffering and hardship. Abandonment, abuse, mistreatment, loitering, drug addiction, sexual and labor exploitation are problems that tend to be exacerbated for children and adolescents in poor urban communities.

1. POOR URBAN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN COSTA RICA

Poor households are larger, particularly with regard to the number of children in the family. This means that they suffer the scourge of poverty to a greater extent. They become the vehicle for transmitting poverty from one generation to the next through the well-known cycle of malnutrition, health and learning problems, dropping out of the education system and premature entry into the labor force under unstable conditions characterized by low productivity and wages. Therefore, effectively addressing poverty means breaking the cycle that reproduces it.

As can be seen in Table 1, in the beginning of the 1990s, 18% of urban families were classified as poor in terms of insufficient income. With regard to persons, this percentage rose to 21%, and with regard to children and young people, it represented nearly 30%.” This is the result of the presence of two children, on the average, in each

” There are significant difficulties in measuring poverty. These data are based on poverty in terms of insufficient income. Income-based poverty generally encompasses families whose earnings per household member are below the poverty line that measures the total resources per person needed to satisfy basic material needs. The principal limitations of this approach, which is in fact the most commonly used method, are that it focuses on material shortcomings and the potential for satisfying these. Difficulties are also encountered in measuring income and setting a standard poverty line.

or household and one young person for every two poor households. This means that more than half of the members of poor households are underage and that the household wage earners must care for an average of 2.3 children. This proportion is more than three times higher than that of non-poor households. The table also shows the effect of women heads of household, thus rendering a complete representation of the privations that urban poverty generates.

Based on the general information presented in this table, it is possible to examine what extent the rights of poor urban children and young people are being met. For this reason, Table 2 includes some indicators on the inability to take advantage of certain basic rights that can be measured directly. The first aspect that must be pointed out is that the percentage of children among the poor is greater than that of young people. Whereas 35% of children are poor, an average of 24% of young people is poor. This means that households and persons in the initial stages of the life cycle are more likely to be poor, precisely when they are most vulnerable. This also demonstrates that the presence of young people can reduce the risk of poverty due to the financial support they provide the household. However, this can imply child-adolescent labor and school dropout.

Fulfillment of the right to health care is fairly widespread in Costa Rica, particularly in urban areas. Only about 20% appear to lack the formal right to receive health services from the Costa Rican Social Welfare Institute. However, all have the legal right to access these services even if they are not insured. This information does not include primary-care programs. In effect, nearly two-thirds of the uninsured used governmental health services when they suffered some type of health problem. The fundamental reason that people do not receive care lies in the use of self remedies (SVP, 1995).

TABLE 1

COSTA RICA: SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN POVERTY, 1992

INDICATORS	TOTAL FAMILIES	POOR FAMILIES	NON-POOR FAMILIES
RELATIVE DISTRIBUTION			
Families	100.0	17.8	82.2
Individuals	100.0	21.2	78.8
Children and young people	100.0	29.5	70.5
Persons per household			
Total	4.0	4.8	3.8
Children up to 12 years of age	1.1	2.0	1.0
Young people (13 to 17 years of age)	0.4	0.5	0.3
Children and young people	1.5	2.5	1.3
Relative weight of children and young people			
Total	37.6	52.4	33.7
Children	28.4	41.9	24.8
Young people	9.2	10.5	8.9
Household members	1.6	1.1	1.7
Children and young people per employed family member	0.9	2.3	0.7
% of homes with female heads of household	26.2	27.7	25.9

SOURCE: The Second Vice-Presidency of the Republic. Profiles of the Target Population of the National Plan for Combating Poverty. Developed based on the Social Investment Survey carried out by MIDEPLAN in 1992.

For most poor school-age children, the right to education is widespread, but not generalized. Table 2 includes access to day-care facilities for children up to 6 years of age and shows minimum coverage, with increases for children over two years old. This information does not include children that attend preschool or primary school and does not account for the fact that the family normally covers day-care services. Still, it is clear that availability of these services is inadequate for families that, due to health or employment restrictions, cannot care for their children. This implies that these children are excluded

from other benefits such as attention to psycho-motor development, adequate nutrition, and the overall opportunity to take better advantage of education once they begin school.

TABLE 2

COSTA RICA: SOME INDICATORS OF THE STATUS OF POOR CHILDREN IN URBAN

AREAS

INDICATOR	Under 2 years of age	Between 2 and 6	Between 7 and 12	Between 13 and 15	Between 16 and 17
Poor population	20,958	59,845	57,650	23,437	11,428
% of the total population	32.9	33.4	28.9	26.5	20.3
HEALTH	21.3	19.9	19.1	24.1	17.9
% without insurance for sickness and maternity					
EDUCATION					
% that do not attend ¹	98.8	87.2	9.4	24.2	52.6
% that attend without economic support	n.d.	n.d.	50.5	65.4	85.9
% behind grade that attend school	n.a.	n.a.	13.9	37.2	42.6
% that study and work	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.	3.3	4.5
RECREATION					
% without recreation areas ²	39.7	39.7	27.7	28.4	22.5
HOUSING					
% in homes in poor condition	17.6	10.9	14.7	14.2	24.7
% in homes with no running water	6.0	4.3	3.5	4.3	4.4
% in homes with inadequate sewage	9.1	7.1	4.2	n.d.	2.3
% in overcrowded homes	34.8	30.2	25.9	35.0	35.9
% in squatter homes	30.5	32.1	30.9	25.1	42.8
LABOR					
% that work	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.	8.8	24.8
% that only work	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.	5.5	20.3
% that neither work nor study	n.a.	n.a.	n.d.	18.6	32.4

¹ Up until 6 years of age, this refers to facilities that provide daily care services, such as CEN-CINAI day-care centers, etc.

² Up until 6 years of age, this refers to play areas; after that age it refers to sports fields and multi-activity areas.

.d.: no data

n.a.: not applicable

SOURCE: The Second Vice-Presidency of the Republic. Profiles of the Target Population of the National Plan for Combating Poverty. Table developed based on the Social Investment Survey carried out by MIDEPLAN in 1992.

The right to education of poor young people dissipates rapidly. One-fourth of those under 15 do not attend educational centers. Two-thirds of those who do attend, do not receive incentives or support in terms of scholarships, food and transportation. One-third are behind in their education because they have had to repeat grades, left the education system temporarily or entered it at a later age. Retention in the educational system is lower for poor young people under 15; more than half are excluded. In addition, 86% of those who do attend do not receive additional support, and 43% are behind in their education or are older than their peers. The right to recreation and play can be examined by evaluating the existence of recreational installations. Though not sufficient to insure this right, relatively safe areas where children and young people can spend their leisure time are necessary for achieving this goal. Bearing in mind these limitations, it should be pointed out that nearly 40% of children six years old and younger do not have child play areas in their communities; this would increase fulfillment of this right. For children over six years of age, the existence of a recreational infrastructure, generally sports areas, facilitates meeting this right. However, the prevalence of soccer fields creates an unequal situation for girls.

Considering the concentration of poverty in marginal urban settlements that do not meet minimum safety and healthy conditions, the right to safe and healthy housing is least often met. With regard to overall urban poverty, Table 2 presents some indicators of the situation of young people and children associated with this right. The most common problems are related to the squatter status of certain households and overcrowding, which

affect a third of the child population. This is followed by problems in the general condition of the household, which influence 15% of children and young people. Sanitation conditions are more often met given that access to potable water, electricity (not appearing in the table) and adequate sewage are more generalized. It should be pointed out that some poor urban communities tend to be located in areas with a great deal of environmental vulnerability, and this seriously affects the physical safety of their inhabitants.

Finally, the table provides information on incorporation into the labor market. Nearly one-tenth of young people under 15, and a fourth of those over this age, are actively employed. A low proportion of young people (less than 5%) tend to combine work with study. For this reason, labor does not appear to be affecting access to education. On the contrary, a high percentage of poor young people neither work nor study. This group is at greater social risk, more likely to become involved with drugs and come into conflict with the criminal law.

2. WHAT PRINCIPLES SHOULD DEFINE POLICIES FOR ADDRESSING POVERTY?

Combating poverty must be part of an overall strategy. Isolated policies and programs that are not comprehensive generate waste and meager results. The general strategy desired must recognize a series of principles that are defined below.

The first principle establishes that social policy is not solely responsible for combating poverty. In order for efforts to be effective, economic policy must encourage sustained financial growth and generate quality, well-paying employment. Lack of job opportunities, high unemployment and the deterioration of real income make it difficult for

families to cover the most basic needs of children and young people. This is particularly true for the high individual expenses incurred by study, which pressure young people and even children to seek ways to earn extra income.

The second principle also suggests that social policy alone is not responsible for combating poverty; rather it is part of a framework made up of complementary universal and selective social policies. Social policy cannot be based on a single objective as this implies abandoning other undeniable goals that involve the participation of other sectors of the population. That is to say, not only should policies be geared towards combating poverty, but also to avoiding impoverishment. This translates into investing in human resources in order to promote integration and social mobilization as well as to generate competitive economic advantages in a world that is increasingly more global.

The third principle is based on the idea that combating poverty is not only the State's responsibility. Civil society also plays a key role in this process. Business and workers' associations as well as community and non-governmental organizations must have concrete opportunities for contributing, from the perspective of their particular environments. However, this does not mean rejecting the idea of government support so that it consists only of subsidies and transfers to the poor while designating all other social services to the private sector. The objective is not that the State withdraw its efforts, but rather that these be complemented and united with the rest of society. The government should lead the way with actions for combating poverty and serve as a catalyst for other efforts.

In order for this to be successful, action is required on the part of those affected by poverty, not just the State and civil society. The poor are an active population, agents who

act and react and can help either foster their social integration or inhibit changes. This last aspect must be addressed innovatively by comprehensive programs that, in an effort to increase their impact, also seek to define the rights and responsibilities of the target population.

The fourth principle stems from the idea that the causes of poverty rather than its manifestations must be addressed. That is to say that defining suitable policies for combating poverty necessitates taking into account its causes. In social policy, ignoring this concept leads to an erroneous focus on the consequences of poverty, and thus, assistance programs are primarily designed. However, expanding initiatives and creating equal opportunities specifically address the causes of poverty, viewing them in terms of the inability to achieve full social integration. In terms of children, this implies combating the inter-generational cycle of poverty.

This perspective is visible in universal policies whose wide range of coverage produces far-reaching effects, reduces poverty and opens up the possibility of overcoming poverty. This also holds true for complementary selective policies. It is incorrect to assume that because a program is universal, the poor are guaranteed equal access in comparison with the rest of society. For example, if the quality of education is increased in public schools, opportunities are undoubtedly created for children. However, this must also provide poor children with assistance in overcoming the privations that lead to academic failure. If this is not done, they will continue to drop out of school and will not be able to take advantage of the opportunity provided them. Therefore, not only must opportunities be created, equal access to them must also be guaranteed.

Thus, combating poverty is a long-term effort which involves eradicating the causes that generate and reproduce it. Sufficient time must be allowed for the investment in human capital to mature and for the poor to be effectively empowered by fostering their participation. This requires continued and lasting governmental efforts, rather than isolated actions addressing situational poverty.

The fifth principle to be considered is that a strategy for combating poverty must be based on including the poor in this process. Selective social programs must be designed to complement universal ones and make it possible for the poor to access the latter effectively. Poverty will not be resolved by programs, generally lacking in resources and low in quality, designed only for the poor. In addition, many of these programs also include perverse selection criteria to prevent these initiatives from being filtering up to the middle class.

The sixth principle of a strategy for combating poverty must take into account its heterogeneous nature and therefore be based on comprehensive interventions. This approach goes beyond a simple linking together of social and economic policies. It is not merely a question of improved income in conjunction with real access to goods and services provided by social programs. Comprehensive interventions are also an imperative for social policy itself. This implies abandoning isolated activities by institutions in favor of inter-institutional, cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary efforts. These types of aggregate actions tend to reinforce and empower the effects of each individual endeavor. For example, high academic performance requires a healthy and well-nourished student body, while acquiring good habits and knowledge helps improve nutrition and health.

The seventh principle for designing a strategy to combat poverty should be based on the heterogeneous nature of poverty and demand. Thus, it must involve comprehensive interventions and mechanisms. Given the varying nature of poverty, the number of privations to be addressed and the singularities of social programs, efforts to establish homogeneous programs and uniform selection mechanisms for all selective social programs must be abandoned.

The eighth principle implies recognizing that poverty is not solely an individual phenomenon. Thus, community interventions are needed. Poverty has a collective component, which requires that programs be geared towards the sociocultural and economic contexts of the poor. The local and regional arenas demonstrate a great deal of potential with regard to comprehensive selective policies. They make it possible to identify poverty, gear actions towards addressing its specific nature in a coordinated manner and provide an adequate offer of services. In addition, this takes into consideration environmental sustainability in programs which will have an impact on their surroundings (assistance in housing and urban settlements) as well as those that indirectly affect it.

The ninth principle underscores the undeniable need for efficiency. The financial resources available to society are obviously scarce. However, budget restrictions for social programs may be partially overcome by increasing productivity in the use of these resources. This absolutely requires that programs be efficient and effective. In this regard, not only programs, but also their integration or coordination, when applicable, must be well-designed. This also implies innovative and efficient management and could include decentralization, diverse forms of community organization and diversification of agencies implementing the projects.

To conclude this analysis, it should be pointed out that a strategy for combating poverty needs to be continually developed and redeveloped, as the characteristics of poverty are constantly changing. This requires a system and culture of monitoring and evaluation. In order to assess the fair and optimal use of resources, the State must lend priority to improving its evaluation, follow-up and regulation of the social programs that it implements or finances. In addition, the programs must develop reliable information systems, and evaluation systems must be strengthened. Moreover, monitoring the status of poverty, the ability of the poor to access programs and the impact of redistributing social spending must be incorporated into the institutional structure.

PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS GEARED TOWARDS POOR CHILDREN

Based on the foregoing principles, strategies for combating child poverty must be geared towards creating equal opportunities. Comprehensive support measures must be implemented for poor children and young people in order to compensate generously for decreased development opportunities resulting from the family, physical and social environments in which they grow up.

These interventions will have to include concepts and priorities that vary according to the distinct characteristics of the target population. One way of illustrating this point is by dividing children into age groups according to their particular importance and the various ages for basic social services with regard to their right to education, health and protection. The goal is also to define groups in terms of their degree of vulnerability or risk. Following these procedures, it is possible to distinguish nine groups that demand differing interventions.

Children under two years of age – Priority is placed on **comprehensive health care**, including *in utero* fetuses. This care is based on mother-child or primary health care for pregnant women, providing specialized services in the birth process, regulating development and growth and offering complete and timely immunization as well as promoting access to mothers' milk and quality water. Primary care also helps achieve more sanitary and healthy communities.

Children from two to six years of age – Priority is given to **comprehensive day care**. This is based on regulating health, nutrition and personal development. Emphasis should be placed on actions related to cognitive, emotional and psychosocial development, early stimulation and at least one year of preschool education for all children.

Children from seven to twelve years of age — Emphasis is placed on **access to and remaining in quality schools**. The focus is essentially on primary school and includes actions that facilitate universal access to quality schools, with healthy environments, state-of-the-art technology as well as computer and multimedia education. In addition, incentives for staying in school are stressed; this encompasses complementary food, scholarships, study materials, resource rooms, etc. This also includes health services in school and use of the school for recreation programs during vacation.

Adolescents from thirteen to fifteen years of age — The priority is to substitute **labor for education**. The focus continues to be on primary and secondary schools and includes actions for retaining students in the educational system or for attracting them to it. This implies initiating activities to make high-school education more pertinent to life and work.

Young people from sixteen to eighteen years of age — Priority is lent to **improving and expanding opportunities for entering the labor market.** This is a multi-faceted focus that includes programs to encourage education, and, whenever possible, open up a wide range of job-training possibilities. It also encompasses actions in the areas of mental and reproductive health and major efforts in recreation, counseling, advising and organizing youths.

Children and young people at social risk – Emphasis is placed on **protection and addressing their most vulnerable areas.** This involves comprehensive support services for abandonment, mistreatment and abuse, with efforts to reinsert this group into communities and homes and provide them access to basic health and educational services without segregating them. It also implies specialized attention for street children and child labor.

Young people in conflict with the criminal law – The priority is to reform juvenile offenders. This implies prevention efforts and providing them with comprehensive care. They are separated from the previous group even though there may be some partial overlap. This is done so as not to prejudice all young people at social risk.

Households with high vulnerability – The focus is on **assistance to homes headed by women**, which are more vulnerable as are the children living in these homes. The goal is to provide comprehensive support that facilitates incorporating the head of household into the labor market and improving her income. This support must allow for and be conditioned towards meeting with the rights of her children.

Marginal communities – Priority is given to **comprehensive care** by means of interventions including community participation encompassing various sectors and institutions. Given that these communities have significant concentrations of poverty, children and young people living there face greater difficulties with regard to rights compliance. Their active participation is needed in addition to the rest of the community in defining priorities for this intervention.

4. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Poverty is a multi-faceted phenomenon and, as such, requires comprehensive and complex interventions. Addressing the reasons why it is reproduced means viewing children as the central focus of strategies for the long-term eradication of this terrible scourge. For this reason, there is a need to guarantee effective fulfillment of child rights. Once this has been achieved, the conditions will be in place for definitively overcoming poverty.

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Social Risk

RECENT URBANIZATION AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF ADOLESCENTS AT HIGH SOCIAL RISK

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1. ADOLESCENTS IN COSTA RICA DURING THE PERIOD OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

The economic boom that Costa Rica had been experiencing in previous decades came to an end in the 1970s, and the country entered a phase of economic stagnation. This reflected the “exhausted” technological/productive, financial and social aspects of the previous development model.

Overcoming the crisis translated into structural transformations that opened the way to a new consumption model essentially encompassing international trends towards market deregulation, reduction of State responsibility for social development and making labor relations more flexible.

The period of economic crisis (1979-1982) and the ensuing structural adjustment policies (1982-1996) have caused considerable changes in the living conditions of the Costa Rican population, as well as in the policies and values that shape their lives.

individualism, competition, desperation and violence have appeared in multiple forms and increasingly tend to define the new social fabric.

In urban areas, this process is clearly manifested in an accelerated process of urban segregation³ with a specific effect on lower-income social groups. Adolescents represent one of the most numerous segments⁴ of this population sector. Thus, they have been more affected by these changes. This has spurred increasing social, political and academic interest in studying how these changes affect adolescents and in discovering what actions should be taken to reduce the most harmful effects. Over the last few years, this interest has been complemented by increased adolescent participation and visibility as a specific social category⁵ in the current context of globalization and social exclusion.

The goal of this article is to provide certain ideas that might contribute to "recognizing" and "truly understanding" ⁶ one of the various subgroups of this social category — adolescents who live in the poorest neighborhoods in Costa Rica.

Urban segregation is the physical expression of economic, social, political and cultural inequalities generated by the capitalist system. This phenomenon is determined by factors such as established urban land value (families are able to access urban land depending on their economic capacity or income level), the reproduction patterns of groups and social classes beginning with their incorporation into the production structure, conflict among various groups and social classes, the content and scope of governmental policies for urban areas and the cultural aspects that define and affect the identity of each group or social class. For a more detailed analysis of these aspects, see Mora and Solano, 1993: 25-27.

³ Cf the article in this book by Juan Diego Trejos, "Policies that Address Poverty in Urban Communities."

⁵ Before the eighties, adolescents were seldom taken into consideration as a social group. When they were taken into account, these reflections concentrated on reproductive health, education and labor. More recently, studies and reflections on this population sector have led to its recognition as a specific social category that plays a key role in new sociocultural processes.

⁶ This recognition has recently begun. However, there are negative stereotypes promoted by some sectors of the population against adolescents in addition to those of communication media and state institutions. Thus, it is ever more urgent to break with schema and prejudices in this area and make academic and civil commitments to recognize adolescents and their rights, as per recent United Nations proposals.

2. THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD:

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

The development of the major urban centers in Costa Rica, beginning particularly in the 1950s, was the result of economic, social and political transformations that yielded a new model of capitalist consumption. Some of the reasons behind the formation of a national urban system are increases in industrial and commercial activities, urban population growth as a result of country-city migration and natural population growth as well as the appearance and consolidation of a vast infrastructure and public-service network. The national urban system is composed not only of the capital city of San José, but also of the cities of Alajuela, Heredia and Cartago. The coastal cities of Limón and Puntarenas are interconnected with this group (Valverde, 1989: 119-120).

For a major proportion of the population, this process of economic growth, urbanization and the construction of the Costa Rican welfare state over the last three decades have noticeably improved living conditions. This has been reflected in an increase in real income and access to basic services such as health, education, housing, transport, potable water, electricity, etc. For another sector of the population, this process did not imply an improvement in living conditions. The status of this poor population sector spurred aggressive governmental intervention in the early 1970s. This explains the creation of the Joint Social Assistance Institute (IMAS) and the Fund for Social Development and Family Allocations (FODESAF) as well as the strengthening of other social programs.

In spite of the existence of these poor persons, the major urban centers in Costa Rica were still considered fairly safe for the average citizen. Pollution levels were not alarming; traffic jams were rarely seen. Poor neighborhoods were basically secure areas

r families and, in particular, for children and adolescents, who for lack of recreation areas and cultural opportunities, made the street their favorite meeting place and diversion area. Other urban centers were not very much different; adults moved from one place to another with a certain sense of belonging/identity and security.

As a result of the economic crisis and the initiation of the structural adjustment process, the social-urban scene changed. The first evidence of this transformation was the formation of numerous committees to petition for housing as well as demonstrations of thousands of workers protesting the high cost of living and the deterioration of their wages. In addition to these activities, other citizens as well as public officials began to protest budget cuts in certain social programs (health, education, housing).⁷

From then forward, poverty, informal labor, social exclusion and urban violence related to the crisis began to be the sign of the new era and social scene that the emerging adolescent population would have to face years later.

. THE URBAN FACE OF ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT

The economic adjustment process that followed the crisis was suggested by the groups in power as the way to reinsert Costa Rica into the international capitalist economy. Far from diminishing the above-mentioned trends (poverty, social exclusion, etc.), it increased them.

To date, there are numerous studies that consistently demonstrate that living conditions deteriorated during those years for a wide sector of the Costa Rican population and that social programs decreased in quality as a result of inflation and cutbacks in social investment.

Within the framework of this economic adjustment process, urban areas underwent major modifications. The changes mentioned below are of particular interest in the context of this study.

Expansion of the informal sector in the urban labor market

This process is the result of a combination of factors. First, the economic crisis at the beginning of the 1980s left hundreds of workers unemployed, thus obliging them to generate their own income in the informal labor sector. Second, the deterioration of the salary levels of many workers forced them to seek additional work in order to supplement their income. Third, the structural adjustment policies led to a trend towards cuts in public employment (“labor mobility”) and what is known as creating flexibility in labor relations.⁸ Both of these phenomena foster what could be classified as precarious insertion into the labor market in the sense that it is unstable and not institutionally regulated.⁹ The latter is characteristic of what is known as the informal sector.¹⁰ Some authors have pointed out that self-employed workers are most represented in the informal sector. In the eighties, the growth index for this occupational group was consistently higher in comparison with wage earners, employers and family members with no income. As stated by Juan Diego Trejos, approximately 59,000 persons worked in the informal sector in the metropolitan area during the eighties. This represents nearly 22% of total employment in the San José Metropolitan Area (Mora and Solano, 1993:44).

⁸ Cf. José Manuel Valverde, “Flexibilización de las relaciones laborales: tendencias y perspectivas.” October 1994.

For information on precariousness of employment, see Juan Pablo Pérez in *Respuestas silenciosas, proletarización urbana y reproducción de la fuerza de trabajo en América Latina*, Editorial Nueva Sociedad, 1989.

⁹ Given that it falls outside of the scope of this work, discussion has been omitted on the pertinence of speaking of creating labor flexibility rather than of the informal sector in the context of adjustment policies.

Reduction of real wages

In accordance with the new consumption model, the crisis resulted in a trend towards decreasing the value of the labor force. This, in conjunction with the unemployment and underemployment of the labor force and its increased flexibility, translated into an increase in the poor urban population. In 1970, 1980 and 1986, the percentage of poor homes was 15%, 16% and 21% respectively (Céspedes and Jiménez, 1995: 113).

Increase in the number of families in urban squatter settlements

Towards the end of the 1970s, a land invasion process began in Costa Rica, primarily in the cities of San José, Puntarenas and Limón. Initially, leftist groups supported these invasions (1976-1986). Later, this was true for leaders of the political party *Liberación Nacional* (1982-1990). In accordance with a study carried out by the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements (MIVAH, 1991), there are approximately 168 new urban squatter settlements¹¹ in the Greater Metropolitan Area (GMA). In addition to the privations mentioned, the vast majority of these squatter settlements is prone to flooding and landslides. There are also high levels of overcrowding within the settlements and in housing units. Moreover, family and neighborhood violence is very prevalent. This is a

¹¹ In this case, this concept includes the social and legal conditions of the groups of families that occupy the land. In general, these settlements are "illegally" occupied. Houses are made from waste or poor-quality materials. There is no infrastructure (systems for eliminating waste and rain water, sidewalks, public roads, public lighting, etc.); nor are there basic services (water, electricity, health, education, recreation areas, etc.)

result of the moral, psychological and social deterioration in which many families¹² are forced to live as well as of the government policies promoting social disintegration.¹³

deterioration of urban infrastructure and basic services

The situation described above was even more aggravated as a result of two fundamental factors. One was the reduction in public spending in social policies and programs for lower-income families. This type of governmental intervention, characteristic of the previous consumption model, was abandoned for several years. This represented a shift from social housing to housing solutions and from urban areas complete with all basic services to placing families on land unsuitable for residential purposes and lacking in services and infrastructure. Universal policies were replaced with what are today known as social compensation programs. These programs clearly do not manage to satisfy the most basic needs of poor urban families.

In addition, the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements (MIVAH), formed in 1979, took over capacities and leadership activities in housing and urban development that were previously assigned to the National Institute of Housing and Urban Works (INVU). From then forward, MIVAH began to intervene in defining policies and actions according to

¹² On Wednesday, October 9, a television program called *Testigo Directo* featured a woman from the Los Pinos neighborhood located on the Finca La Verbena. She described her situation, stating that, "There we live worse than as if we were animals. At every turn, there is poverty, it is a disgrace, children are dirty ... My teenage daughters are always asking me 'Mommy, when are we going to leave here?'...I hope to God that we will leave this place soon."

¹³ For more information on the fractured state policies in these settlements, see Valverde, José; Mejías, María Eugenia and Mora, Minor, **Integración social o disolución sociocultural, el nuevo rostro de la política social**, Editorial Porvenir, San José, 1993.

criteria that were more political (electoral) than technical. The result was completely chaotic urban development, with no control or regulation.¹⁴

The advent of the adjustment policies meant even further abandonment of INVU's work in urban planning and development. In spite of certain privations, there was, at the same time, accelerated growth in urban areas in commercial and residential installations not based on any plan. This is perhaps one of the principal problems plaguing the current urban model. To a fair extent, it explains part of the difficulties Costa Ricans, adolescents in particular, face.

Increased violence¹⁵

Several factors contribute to this situation. The first is that the new consumption model propitiates treating human beings as objects (objectification) that can be manipulated regardless of the means employed. Essentially, it means obtaining maximum yields from them in terms of production, i.e., obtain profit. The "labor culture" becomes the highest value that can be reached, even though in practice, this means sacrificing free time

¹⁴ Surely the institution that has caused the most damage to recent urban development in this framework has been the Special Housing Commission (CEV), which was created during the Arias Sánchez administration (1986-1990).

¹⁵ In this context, violence refers to a certain type of social conflict or a means of expressing social conflict that emphasizes socioeconomic aspects and their psychological and social effects on groups and individuals. This means that violence cannot be analyzed outside of the social and political context in which it takes place because this context is doubtlessly one of its determining factors.

Urban violence is the result of the continued physical segregation of a population segment. This concept includes not only physical violence, but also many other forms such as verbal, psychological and social in these neighborhoods as a result of inhuman living conditions (drug addiction, crime, child abuse, etc.)

and any possibility of family and social recreation.¹⁶

In addition to these aspects, relationships are becoming more impersonal and less human as a result of the current situation and an ideology (neoliberal) that tends to interfere with feelings of solidarity and social coexistence. The spectacle or entertainment that communication media make of events as bloody as the Gulf War or the arbitrary detention of adolescents within the capital city are also symptoms of this process.

Second, as social integration decreases and the social fabric disappears, violence is fostered over any other form of relationship. Urban policy applied during the adjustment period has contributed greatly to this. It is sufficient to cite the case of one institution, the Special Housing Commission, which expressly designed separatist strategies for community organization as well as among organizations of different communities or squatter settlements (*Cf. Valverde et al, 1993*).

Third, the deterioration of living conditions and the reduction in social investment in lower-income sectors led to highly deteriorated urban areas in both social and environmental terms. In addition, these factors produced a type of gap between social and economic expectations generated by the globalization process and the real possibilities some sectors of the population have of fulfilling these expectations. One of the consequences of this gap has been the spread of urban violence, and one of the major victims is lower-income adolescents residing in marginal urban neighborhoods.

¹⁶ The Japanese productive model is probably the best example of this "labor culture." In turn, this is surely the most representative case of how human beings are sacrificed for consumerism and capitalist gain. For more information on this subject, see María Eugenia Trejos, "La energía vital, toda le queda al patrón", *Aportes al debate No. 1*, Heredia, 1992

The following section includes material from interviews with adolescents in marginal neighborhoods in San José. Their comments illustrate the trends we have been examining.¹⁷

THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD AS SOCIAL RISK FACTORS

In past decades, streets, soccer fields and vacant lots were important spaces for the daily socialization of children and adolescents. In those times, the neighborhood had its own identity that gave its inhabitants a sense of belonging and security, in spite of the prevailing poverty of many of them.

The economic crisis and ensuing adjustment process have created neighborhoods and cities very different from the situation described above. Today, these areas have become extremely impersonal, unsafe and devoid of identity. Everyday citizens currently hold very different opinions now, regardless of age or sex. The results of interviews held with adolescents between 13 and 19, residing in marginal urban neighborhoods, were of serious concern with regard to the phenomenon we have been describing.

.1 Perception of the neighborhood and poverty

All of the adolescents interviewed stated that the neighborhood in which they live is not a safe or pleasant area. It was commonly associated with material privations, drugs

¹⁷ For purposes of this article, eight interviews were held with male and female adolescents living in marginal urban neighborhoods. Their statements are a testimony of how they live and the exceptions they have of the neighborhood and the city, within the framework of adjustment policies.

id violence. When asked their opinion about their neighborhoods, the following responses were given.

It's the worst ... a lot of people sell crack. (Victoria)

My neighborhood is sort of middle-class; but there are a lot of problems; there are a lot of drug addicts; not everybody goes to school; most people, like 70%, work. (Marisol havarria).

Well, my neighborhood can be very dangerous and it can also be very safe if, let's say, if you know who causes the problems, you sometimes feel safer. But, sometimes once you don't do anything, then they think that everybody is the same. This happened to me yesterday, when you get too trusting, and they almost broke into my house and robbed me. (Grettel Alfaro)

Other adolescents emphasized the lack of recreation and sports areas. This is seen as a factor that encourages adolescents to turn to drugs or criminal activities, because they have nothing with which to occupy their time.

In my neighborhood there are very few recreation areas for young people and they have to search for other places. Well, we go to the pool hall around here. There is a soccer field and a basketball court in very bad condition. There are no recreation areas for kids or teenagers. (Roberto Pacheco)

Adolescents were asked which factors generate the problems present in their neighborhoods. They mentioned the difficult economic situation and lack of employment.

More than anything it is because of economic needs, because of unemployment, which is the most important factor, I think, because if people don't work, or don't have anything to do with their time, they turn to drugs, and that's a real mess. (Marvin Alvarado)

I think that it is due to the economy, to how hard life is. Maybe children or adults are looking for a way out...that is, how hard it is and they think that they can't do anything and look for a way out in drugs. (Roberto Pacheco)

Two adolescents pointed out that the fact that children and adolescents are mistreated by their own families is highly related to their living conditions.

In general, a lot of kids are addicted to drugs and maybe that's because of how they were treated when they were little. They suffered a lot of mistreatment, abuse and other things. They are kids who grow up with this that they were mistreated when they were small. Maybe they were even sexually abused or abandoned or maybe when it got dark they were children who got thrown out of the house and they had no place to go. (Rebeca)

Their comments coincide with what certain studies have already established about street children. For them, the street becomes a comparatively "safer" area, or at least a place where they can take refuge from being continually physically or psychologically abused. However, the street is becoming less and less safe for adolescents.

The problems mentioned obviously affect adolescents in many ways, making their neighborhoods unsafe places that are a continual threat to physical health as well as their

psychological and moral wellbeing. Adolescents were asked how problems in the neighborhood affect them; some of these responses appear below.

For kids, who you hang out with has a lot of influence. Young people do things that maybe they don't want to do, but maybe they have bad friends. (Victoria)

Yeah sure, let me tell you, one day somebody took my watch. I've had my shoes stolen in this neighborhood. At night, you see a lot of young people at houses asking for money, saying it's for food and that there isn't much money at home. But you know perfectly well that it's for drugs. (Roberto Pacheco)

Yes, of course, I have lived here since I was little and it hurts to constantly be seeing it. There they don't hide it anymore, you see them taking drugs everywhere. My brothers and sisters and friends are watching all of that. (Grettel Alfaro)

In general, as can be seen from these testimonies, the image that adolescents have of their neighborhoods is quite negative. References to poverty, lack of opportunities, drug addiction and insecurity are constant.

2 There is a lot of crime in San José and it is not a safe place

Perceptions of the city of San José were not significantly different than those of their own neighborhoods. In this case, additional problems such as pollution, overpopulation," violence and others were cited.

What I don't like is that there is so much pollution, cars and all that. This puts us in a great deal of danger. I don't like that there are places with a lot of prostitution, even during the day. (Victoria)

The city of San José is extremely overpopulated and there is a lot of crime. (Roberto Pacheco)

Well, I don't go too much to the city anymore because it scares me. I used to go a lot because my mother has a small restaurant and I used to buy things for her, but now she sends my brother because I get so nervous. Now there is a lot of crime, so I'm scared to go out. Now you go with just what you need to buy and you get back home fast. (Grettel Barro)

First of all, I think that a lot of kids work; also there are a lot of thieves in San José; there are a lot of corrupt people in San José, and little girls and boys get attacked everyday. Young girls prostituting themselves is a big problem. Then there is the other side of the coin, which are the pickpockets, as they are called in San José. Sometimes, the police take bribes. There are also a bunch of other problems: the smoke from buses affects your lungs and the ozone layer. There are also a lot of bars in San José and four or five fights in every bar, drunks lying around. This is also a big problem. (Minor Varado)

The *chapulines*, the name police give to members of gangs of juvenile delinquents, are seen by the adolescents as another factor that threatens their own safety and one of the main reasons why they no longer "hang out" in the city.

Some of those interviewed mentioned that in the past they used to go for walks in the Plaza de la Cultura, la Plaza de la Democracia or the Parque Morazán, but that now it is impossible to do that, because the police stop them, alleging that they are *chapulines*.

As was the case with their neighborhoods, adolescents have a very negative perception of the city of San José, based on their daily experiences. Crime, drugs, prostitution, robberies, the police and “overpopulation” are some of the risk factors that the adolescents mentioned.

The foregoing makes it possible to conclude that, for these adolescents, the neighborhood and the city are no longer socialization areas that contribute positively to their physical and psychological development. On the contrary, these areas have become high-risk zones that aggravate the problems these adolescents face.

4.3 Solutions to the problems of neighborhoods and the city

In general, the solutions envisaged by the adolescents are very much in keeping with the specific problems analyzed. In no case was an opinion expressed against the political or economic system or any current policies. In fact, these problems were not visualized as products of a system that segregates them and associates them with poverty; nor are any social groups or classes recognized as the cause of this situation. In this sense, it should be pointed out that their “level of awareness” is strongly influenced by their daily experience and most pressing issues.

Job sources, recreation areas, police protection and training are some of the things these adolescents demand in order to resolve their most urgent problems.

Well, beginning with my neighborhood, I would suggest more recreation areas because then adults and young people would have a place for recreation. If they don't have anything to do what they are going to do is get involved in drugs or see what they can do to get some money. On the other hand, if you have your mind occupied with some project, some park or something like that, then you're going to forget that there are drugs and what you would do is have fun, and have things on your mind other than drugs, or stuff like that. This could also happen in San José.

Maybe give more work and more opportunities to young people, also give more training ... more work to spend more time developing as a young person. (Grettel Alfaro)

First of all, the issue with the police has to be resolved. In our neighborhood, there's a problem with this. Where I live there is a guard station, but if something happens to you, if you get attacked, you call the police, but they don't come. It is difficult to get them to arrive. They tell you "yes, we are sending the patrol car in a little while." But, two or three hours go by and you could get killed and killed a second time and no patrol car would appear. (Rebeca)

. CONCLUSIONS

The interviews carried out make it possible to see that recent urban development in Costa Rica is characterized by high levels of deterioration. For adolescents, the neighborhood and city have become increasingly important risk factors. These areas are viewed as places that pose everyday dangers in terms of their physical health as well as their psychological and social wellbeing.

Other problems are underscored, including drug addiction, robberies, a lack of employment and recreation areas, child prostitution and adult violence against children and adolescents. The police frequently contribute to this set of factors threatening adolescents.

Obviously, these problems must be seen as part of the aspects that characterize poverty in marginal urban areas and as another one of the many forms of the social conflict generated by a system of unequal opportunities.

There are three factors to consider. The first is structural poverty, accentuated by the crisis and adjustment policies. The second is urban policy that encourages or perpetuates the creation of settlements where there is a lack of infrastructure and minimum services, and social and family disintegration is prevalent. The third factor is the violence generated by a model that fails to focus on caring for the wellbeing of future generations.

Recognizing the rights of this sector of the population will undoubtedly address some of the problems analyzed in this article. The neighborhood and the city must once again be considered safe places; adolescents are entitled to this.

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Rights

CHILD-ADOLESCENT LABOR AND THE RIGHTS OF BOYS, GIRLS AND ADOLESCENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article is written from the viewpoint of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its purpose is to raise awareness and provide information about child-adolescent labor, its importance, scope and characteristics as well as the effects it has on children and adolescents. This text first provides a general overview of the subject and then examines how it is manifested in Costa Rica. The latter focuses on the interrelationship of poverty, early entry into the labor force and educational dropout and how this leads to social vulnerability. In closing, there are some suggestions that could be of use in designing policies and programs in this field and fostering greater understanding of this problem with regard to young people living in poverty.

It is very important that this subject be addressed because preventing and eliminating child-adolescent labor encompasses business, economic and political interests. In addition, it is also associated with mistaken conceptions and incorrect information which

* I would like to thank my colleague, Lidia Torrico, for her support, comments and suggestions. Her input was fundamental to this article.

reinforce social images and take away the support that society as a whole could provide for eliminating child-adolescent labor.

Even though this subject has a long history, discussion has been limited to restricted circles and only its most visible forms and severe violations are covered now and again by the communication media. This area seems to belong to specialists, international organizations, officials, NGOs and specialized circles that address this problem. Society as a whole is still not fully aware of one of the most destructive and permanently damaging activities affecting boys, girls, adolescents, families and the nation.

Society reacts more often to extreme or more visible situations associated with certain types of child-adolescent labor. Examples include children who work in the streets, sexual exploitation or particularly dangerous work. (Oddly enough, rural child labor does not seem to count.) Generally responses are situational, short-term and moralistic. However, worldwide, this problem affects more than 200 million children between the ages of 10 and 14. This does not include children involved in domestic labors nor those that fall below or above this age group.¹⁸

Even given the under-reported numbers in official statistics, it is estimated that 20 million children work in Latin America.¹⁹ In spite of this, this problem has only recently begun to be defined in Costa Rica. It is estimated that in 1994, 152,128 (16.8%) of children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 17 were involved in income-

¹⁸ Brazier, Chris "Child Labour, Part One – The Nature of the Beast", Internal draft, 1, 17, June 1996.

¹⁹ Inter-Agency Steering Committee for the Americas, "Trabajo Infanto-juvenil en América Latina, Diagnóstico y Políticas", draft, ILO/IPEC/UNICEF Regional Office.

generating activities.²⁰ In the canton of Upala, located along the Nicaraguan border, 23% of young people from 14 to 17 years of age work and 81% of them are not in school.²¹

Generalized, everyday manifestations of child-adolescent labor are ensconced in all societies, even in industrialized countries. In very few places and on few occasions has this been counteracted with comprehensive short- and long-term policies as well as specific plans and programs geared towards preventing and progressively eliminating child-adolescent labor and immediately eliminating its most dangerous forms.

2. CHILD-ADOLESCENT LABOR

Harmful forms of child labor only began to be viewed as a problem beginning in the 19th century as a result of the industrial revolution and the advent of the concept of human rights. Adolescence did not exist as a stage of individual development. In traditional agricultural societies, child labor was an inherent part of development in terms of labor and personality. It was also a way of earning the respect of the community and belonging to it. Even today, in rural areas, family farm work retains part of these elements, which are very much linked to decreasing production costs per rural unit. In urban areas, many jobs are not directly productive and they are clearly unrelated to the social recognition of the community. Moreover, urban work culture does not include children. Thus, children obtain marginal and informal employment in the niches left by the adult labor market. This is usually characterized as underemployment, and includes production activities whose

²⁰ Lidia, Torrico, "¿Quiénes son y por qué trabajan los niños y las niñas en Costa Rica?" UNICEF-PANI, Monitoring and Evaluation Series, 1996.

²¹ UNICEF-UNHCR-ILO-CIET – National Ombudsman: "Auditoría de los Derechos Humanos en Upala," unpublished draft, August 1996.

profitability and comparative business advantages for companies and even countries are based on the abuse or exploitative use of child labor. This is possible due to lax, non-existent laws or inefficient control and supervision systems.

The concept of child-adolescent labor includes a wide range of activities that historically have had and today continue to have varying meanings. For this reason, work that is harmful to children must be differentiated from labor that, in certain cultures and geographical areas, is viewed as positive in terms of socialization and transmitting skills. Work may be considered educational when it is carried out during vacation, for short periods of time or under adequate conditions after studying. On the other hand, labor exploitation²² is characterized by forced labor that produces some form of stress, excessive work hours (limits are set in labor legislation in the majority of countries), working in the street for inadequate pay and excessive responsibilities or conditions that are poor or detrimental to human dignity and self-esteem (slavery, sexual exploitation). Essentially, labor exploitation is that which hinders a child's complete social and psychological development, particularly when it limits access to education, remaining in school and academic performance.

In the effort to differentiate between educational and harmful labor or that which violates rights, the latter is defined in terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Costa Rica ratified in 1990.

² Dr. Antonio Carlos Gómez Da Costa, a Brazilian expert on child rights prefers to call this exploitation of child labor, "given the cultural perception of work as an educational tool.

The Convention represents the legal and ethical guiding framework for policies on child and adolescent rights. This agreement defines children and adolescents as “bearing inalienable rights which the States Parties are compelled to respect.”²³ For the first time in the long struggle to expand human rights, humanity has managed to make progress towards, at least, the formal acceptance of children as rights subjects — that is to say, as citizens. In practice, this means that they have the legal right to be heard, to association, to be considered equal before the law, and, in particular, to have their best interests taken into account in designing policies. A concrete example of the application of this principle is that children must not be used as instruments (in child labor) in order to insure the survival of poor families. This is the responsibility of the State and adults.

The Convention considers childhood a formative stage, and that children, even though they are rights subjects, still require protection and adequate conditions for comprehensive development, precisely because they are children. Adults, families and the State must meet these needs.

With regard to child labor, article 32, section 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states the following, “States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.” Section 2 of this same article states that measures must be adopted to insure implementation of this article, to set work ages, regulate the situation and establish corresponding sanctions. Premature entry into the work force not only violates article 32 of the Convention, it also transgresses other

²³ ILO/IPEC-UNICEF, Op. Cit. p. 7.

articles related to intangible rights such as the rights to rest, recreation, culture, play, participation, etc.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified by more countries than any other international legislation. In spite of this, research from various parts of the world shows that, even today in civilized times, children work under shocking conditions.

Boys, girls and adolescents suffering from labor exploitation run the risk of having their development affected. In terms of **physical development**, this includes the loss of up to 30% of height potential and their resistance capacity as adults; coordination, vision, hearing and general health may also be affected. In terms of **cognitive development**, intellectual and cultural capacities basic to a normal life may be impaired. With regard to **emotional development**, this encompasses damage to self-esteem, family closeness and an inclination towards love and acceptance. **Moral and social development** may be affected in terms of feelings of group identity, cooperation and the ability to perceive right from wrong.²⁴ For these reasons, Antonio Carlos Gómes da Costa maintains that exploitative child-adolescent labor and its effect on personal growth destroy human beings twice: as children and as adults.

Premature entry into the labor force is not just a problem in terms of its negative impact, but also because it affects the most vulnerable child-adolescent population. Harmful labor is most often associated with poverty. Contrary to popular belief, poverty, in conjunction with other factors, makes child-adolescent labor possible, but it does not seem

²⁴ Brazier. Chris, Op. Cit, p. 6

generate it. In most countries, the proportion of poor families is greater than that of child and adolescent workers. This is a polemic issue that requires further research.

Child-adolescent labor is more prevalent in rural areas than urban ones. In rural areas, males tend to combine family labor with wage-generating agricultural jobs. Women combine it with domestic employment. In these areas, jobs may be dangerous because of the use of chemicals, extreme weather conditions, long hours and the physical exertion needed as a result of the rudimentary methods employed. In urban areas, children normally work at sales and services and at informal activities in general; that is to say, in the most traditional and backward economic sectors that require very few labor skills. The risks are different, but no less important than those of rural areas. These children are at moral and criminal risk in addition to being vulnerable to overcrowding and the dangers of the street. And, what is the economic remuneration for all of this? This is one of the aspects that also demands further research.

First of all, a distinction must be made between what those under 12 earn (who are legally forbidden to work) and the income of those between 13 and 17 (see note at the end of this article.) It is recognized that income is related to age (the higher the age, the greater the income) and the number of hours worked. However, there are differences with regard to the contribution that children and adolescents make to their homes. Some justify child labor as necessary to the survival of poor families. However, data show that it is young adults, rather than children, who provide economic assistance to a certain type of

households.²⁵ Thus, young people, their families and the country must ask themselves if income in the short-term is a profitable strategy, when it means an entire future is mortgaged away. Certain studies carried out by ECLAC have shown that “two years less of education implies approximately 20% less in monthly income during economically active life in the labor market.”²⁶ This demonstrates the negative relationship between child-adolescent labor and education.

3. CHILD LABOR IN COSTA RICA

Policies on child-adolescent labor are in the process of being developed in Costa Rica. Fortunately, the government recently decided to form the National Supervisory Committee for Combating Child Labor, whose objective is the progressive elimination of labor for children under 15 years of age. This Committee is to be comprised of government ministers and vice-ministers and autonomous institutions that work to insure social wellbeing. It will also include union representatives and employers. UNICEF, ILO and representatives from non-governmental organizations will serve as technical advisors. This is a very important initiative given the lack of specific policies and the existence of an imprecise legal framework²⁷ with regard to preventing and regulating harmful child labor.

²⁵ In a recent study (at press) that was supported by UNICEF and carried out by FLACSO, young people of both sexes between 13 and 17 years of age who had received permission from PANI to work were evaluated. It was concluded that the contribution young people make to the home is marginal. Moreover, two-thirds came from homes with per capita spending 25% greater than the cost of meeting basic food needs.

²⁶ UNICEF-TACRO, “Trabajo Infantil y Educación,” Policy Documents, No. 1, May 1, 1996, p.36.

²⁷ In an article that appeared in *El Heraldo* on April 12, 1996, the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare, Mr. Farid Ayales Esna, pointed out that current labor law is “fairly general.”

the initiative is also important, given slow, traditional, sectoral, and even contradictory institutional responses reminiscent of what is known as the irregular situation doctrine.

With regard to premature entry into the labor market in Costa Rica, recent estimates show that this is not as high as in some Latin American countries. In addition, for some reason, a greater proportion of children and young people combine school and work.²⁸ Even though this seems encouraging, it is not a great cause for optimism because, as has been seen, only under very special circumstances is the combination of work and study positive. This is not the case for poor children and adolescents. The convention sets forth that children should be studying, not working. Moreover, it is alarming that approximately 45% of school-aged young people are excluded from the educational system and that the number of young people who neither work nor study is increasing.

In 1994,²⁹ 152,128 of the 906,210 (16.8%) children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 17 were involved in remunerated and unremunerated income-generating activities. The participation of males (21.7%) was nearly double that of females (11.5%). In 1995, there were 925,723 children in this age group and overall participation in the labor force dropped to 13.1%. By gender, it dropped to 19.3% for boys and young men and to 6.5% for girls and young women. By age group, participation of 5- to 11-year-olds went down 2.5% between 1994 and 1995. The percentage of those between 12 and 14 rose

During 1995 in Costa Rica, 41.7% of the nearly 100,000 children and adolescents between 12 and 17 who worked also studied. In Latin America as a whole, the average is 25% for adolescents between 13 and 17. In Peru, 33% of children and adolescents between 6 and 17 combine study and work. In Ecuador, only 23% of 8- to 18-year-olds do so.

“¿Quiénes son y por qué trabajan los niños y niñas de Costa Rica?” Lidia Torrico, UNICEF-PANI, Monitoring and Evaluation Series No. 2, 1996.

ightly (0.2%), and those between 15 and 17 showed a somewhat greater increase (1.3%).

The decrease, with the exception of the last group, could be due to a fine tuning of measurement methodologies, increased preschool coverage or the greater attractiveness of secondary school and increased retention in basic education due to current programs for improving education. The number of young workers increased in spite of the limited labor market, but was commensurate with their high level of educational exclusion.

However, leaving the work force does not necessarily imply reentry into the educational system. Nor does dropping out of the educational system imply direct entry into the labor market. It seems more likely that those who leave school become part of the doubling group that neither works nor studies.

By comparing Torrico's data from 1994 with that from 1995³⁰ based on the same battery of questions, it can be seen that the number of children that **only study** increased for all age groups (5-11, 12-14 and 15-17). This was particularly true of the first age group (13%). The number of those that **only work** and that **work and study** decreased for all age groups. Even though this is very positive, **there was an increase in the number of young people that neither work nor study**. This was very much the case for the 5-11 and 15-17 groups. Approximately 100,000 young people of both genders between 12 and 17 also fall into this group.³¹ Due to their high vulnerability and social risk, this group

³⁰ Author's partial processing of the child-adolescent labor module of the National Household Survey carried out by the Bureau of Statistics and Census, 1995.

³¹ Children between 5 and 11 are not considered as allowance would have to be made for the five-year-olds in this group who are not old enough for preschool and therefore skew the number of those who do not study.

ould be made a priority in selective social protection policies. A boy, a girl or a vulnerable adolescent is a strong candidate for becoming an excluded adult.”³²

Studies carried out in various countries and corroborated in Costa Rica illustrate the route of social vulnerability from infancy to adolescence. Vulnerability is linked with poverty, exclusion from the educational system and child-adolescent labor exploitation. According to the 1994 National Household Survey, poverty affected 17.9% of families, and working children “made up 92,059 households, of which 22.9% were poor.” Households with children that work are 18% poorer than those with no child workers. In rural areas, this rises to 20%.³³

It has been shown that education is one of the principal inhibiting factors of child labor and, at the same time, most affected by this phenomenon. Due to the normally exploitative conditions under which it is carried out, this work is incompatible to accessing education, remaining in school and academic performance.

Poverty and an exclusionary educational system result in premature entry into the labor market or lack of socialization for these children. The long work schedules of child laborers are incompatible with formal learning, staying in school and academic performance. With variances by age, between 20% and 61% of the juvenile economically active population (EAP) work forty or more hours per week. As children grow and advance through the educational system, school dropout increases. Up until 11 years of age, there is a 93.3% retention rate in the educational system. From that point forward, young people

“Adolescencia, pobreza, educación y trabajo, el desafío de hoy,” UNICEF-Argentina, Red Latinoamericana de Educación y Trabajo (CIID-CENEP), 1994.

Torrice, Lidia, Op. Cit. p. 41.

begin to combine and alternate study with work, until they prematurely leave the educational system and definitively accept jobs that seldom require more than a primary education. A total of 78.4% of the juvenile EAP (12- to 17-year-olds) has a level of instruction below primary school.³⁴ In Puriscal, 4 out of every 10 children between 7 and 17 who received payment for their work did not enroll in school in 1995.³⁵

Adolescents are in a crucial, never-to-be-repeated phase of developing their identities and future possibilities. Their interests focus on their sexuality, education and work. For the poor, opportunities for this development are unequal. Their vulnerability and the social exclusion processes have already been shown. In urban areas, young people have to confront marked difficulties with the contradiction between extensive consumer goods and their limited possibilities for accessing these objects and what they symbolize. What they are offered is exclusion or access to the most deteriorated segments of education and work.

Faced with this reality, some countries have chosen to improve employee value in three basic types of knowledge or skill areas for young people who are excluded from education and fall within that narrow age category permitted by law to work under regulated conditions and for training purposes. These include: "a) technical and management skills; b) compensation for shortcomings in basic skills; and c) maintenance, socialization and development of social capacities."³⁶

³⁴ Torrico, Lidia, Op. Cit. p. 46.

³⁵ UNICEF-CIET, "Auditoría social para la aplicación de la Convención sobre los Derechos de los Niños en un cantón de Puriscal," 1996, unpublished.

³⁶ UNICEF-Argentina, "Adolescencia, pobreza, educación y trabajo, el desafío es hoy", p. 6.

. WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Accumulated knowledge about this subject has made it possible to outline general guidelines for the prevention and progressive elimination of child-adolescent labor in Latin American countries. The contribution of UNICEF and ILO has been fundamental in the design of this framework based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.³⁷ Countries must implement these directives according to their specific situations. First, strategy and policy design must focus on preventing and eradicating harmful child-adolescent labor. This refers to what Antonio Carlo Da Costa calls the exploitation of child and adolescent labor. This concept includes not only the dangerous labor that all people agree should be eliminated immediately, but also that which inhibits or interferes with the normal development of children as well as their access to education, retention in school and academic performance. Second, it is useful to make a distinction between long- and short-term policies and to reinforce the idea that policies be comprehensive, cross-sectoral efforts at both the national and local levels. ILO points out that economic growth alone does not eliminate child labor.³⁸ Surplus and benefits must be channeled to eliminating poverty. Moreover, child labor is not based on pure economic logic, as it is highly influenced by cultural factors. Legal frameworks are important and necessary, but often insufficient because even if they exist, they are often not applied. Based on the foregoing, it is recognized that there are great difficulties in eradicating child labor in the short-term. Progress will be possible when there is clear political and social will to combat this problem, and when it is realized that no single sector has the solution. No partial, sectoral

³⁷ ILO has an International Program for the Eradication of Child Labor underway, IPEC. This has been important in spurring government initiatives and decisions for strengthening efforts in this area.

³⁸ ILO, "El trabajo infantil: Qué hacer?", ITM/2/1996, Document submitted for discussion at the Official Tripartisan Ministerial-Level, Geneva, June 12, 1996.

specific intervention is sufficient. It is of the utmost importance that new social actors be incorporated, that the institutional structure be strengthened, priorities set and timely measures adopted in order to distance children from harmful labor. Part of the long-term measures include addressing the underlying causes by promoting economic development (productive, well-paying jobs with social protection) that takes into account the most disadvantaged persons. These measures must also focus on educational services as “the best vaccine against child labor.”

UNICEF suggests differentiating child-labor measures by age group. For those under 12, all forms of work must be prohibited and the working age must be raised to 15 (see note at end of article.) While the latter is being accomplished, those between 13 and 14 should be provided with professional training and apprenticeships. Those between 15 and 17 should receive assistance in the professional field and emphasis should be on legal protection.

In addition to the economic aspects already pointed out, UNICEF feels that the definitive solution to the problem lies in quality education that is attractive and pertinent. This must be combined with universal and selective support policies for families so that they can keep their children in school for as long as possible. In the case of Costa Rica, it is necessary to recover, intensify and broaden the value society has traditionally placed on education. Over the last few years, this has been devalued. If Costa Rica wants to obtain comparative advantages in the globalization process and international competition, it must invest in education³⁹ and eliminate educational exclusion for adolescents by supporting

ECLAC has adequately shown that the benefits of timely investment in education. See annex Child Labor and Education, UNICEF-TACRO, Op. Cit. p.21.

am in the completion of their studies through the secondary level.⁴⁰ This is particularly important in rural areas, where there are not enough high schools and no innovative methods for facilitating access, retention and success for young people. As ILO pointed out "there will be no satisfactory solution to this problem if there is no fundamental education system that makes school physically accessible to all school-age children. This could be financially feasible for all families, even the poorest ones. It should also be attractive because of the final results and future prospects it offers."⁴¹

In conclusion, it is important to consider the participation of children and adolescents in analyzing this problem and developing solutions. Many of the current policies and programs would be radically different if we listened to their voices.

DTE: On February 6, 1998, nearly one year after this article was written, Law 7739 was officially enacted. Known as the Child and Adolescent Code, this law sets the minimum legal working age at 15 and establishes a Special Protection Regimen for adolescent workers between the ages of 15 and 18. In addition, the presidential administration elected on February 8, 1998 appointed new members to the National Supervisory Committee for Combating Child Labor. This administration has also embraced the National Plan for the Prevention and Progressive Elimination of Child Labor and is beginning to take actions in that regard.

Recent reform initiatives of Article 78 of the Political Constitution and the proposal for new education for the 21st century are geared in this direction and towards improving the quality of the education offered.

ILO, Op. Cit p.5

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education

EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES FACING POOR URBAN YOUTHS

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty in Costa Rica has been traditionally rural and associated with agriculture. However in recent years, this has changed. Today, nearly half of the poor live in pockets of urban poverty. Given their vulnerability, the children and adolescents of this social group are exposed to greater social risk as well as sanitary, nutritional, educational, cultural and social privations that compromise their development and future. With regard to education, these groups face new social, economic and historical situations that, to a great extent, determine their chances for full participation in the nation's overall achievements.

This work analyzes some of the most salient aspects of the educational status and social context of poor urban youths. It examines this situation with regard to the enormous challenges still facing the Costa Rican educational system and proposes certain actions to be taken. This analysis is based on the idea that formal education must provide young people living in poverty with the opportunities that enable them to "make a life for themselves." Education should not be limited solely to "providing instruction" or that which is considered necessary to "earn a living." In both personal and occupational terms,

thing is more dangerous at this time than minimalist education. Without a strategy for rescuing this group, their marginalization will intensify.

THE EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN URBAN POVERTY

It must be remembered that since the past century and throughout its history up to relatively recent times, Costa Rica has advanced an inclusive national educational strategy. That is to say that this country has managed to incorporate progressively the hitherto possessed into a public education system that was compulsory and free for the rich, the middle class and the poor. This guiding principle gave the country an important advantage not only in terms of training for its citizens, but also in terms of developing a social fabric that promoted communication and interrelation among various social and economic groups.

However, new economic situations, adjustment processes and lack of resources have made it impossible for this inclusion process to be complete and to make the needed modifications to maintain and improve its quality. Public education was increasingly abandoned by the middle and upper classes who, in light of its deficiencies, chose to strengthen private education as an option for their children. Thus, these groups and leaders lost interest in their past commitment to education for lesser developed social sectors.⁴²

For a detailed analysis of this historic phenomenon, see *Educación y Sociedad en Costa Rica* by Francisco Antonio Pacheco, published by the Editorial Fundación UNA in 1996.

This “abandonment” of the public education system led to problems and deficiencies that negatively affected the educational situation of young people. Even though many of these problems are seen in education in general, it is obvious that they have a radical effect on the child-adolescent population living in poverty. These problems constitute obstacles that will be difficult to overcome if substantial changes are not introduced. Some of these difficulties are described below.

Low average schooling

In education, the average low level of schooling and the lack of real access to secondary education are some of the most serious problems facing Costa Rica. An analysis of young people over 15 clearly demonstrates this. According to data provided by the State of the Nation, these levels have increased during only two years since the 1940s.⁴³ Indices of educational coverage are surprisingly low beginning in Cycle III (the first three years of secondary education). Compared with secondary education levels in other Central American countries, Costa Rica’s levels are lower. In 1990, the gross rate of schooling at the secondary level was only 46%. In Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, this rate was between 70% and 83%.⁴⁴ In more developed industrialized countries, such as Japan, more than 90% complete secondary school.

School dropout

Costa Rica has high levels of school dropout, which seriously affect both rural and urban poor. In spite of recent efforts, more than half of young people between 14 and 15 no longer attend high school. The origin of this problem is complex and has a decidedly

⁴³ State of the Nation, Report 2. San José, 1996 p.48.

⁴⁴ Montiel, Ulate et al. *La educación en Costa Rica: un solo sistema?* Economic Sciences Research Institute, University of Costa Rica, Economic Dissemination Series, San José: February 1997.

negative impact on young people's future. As was pointed out in a recent study published by UNICEF, "the students that tend to drop out of school are precisely those for whom education could be a liberating force at both the intellectual and material levels. Thus it is that dropout is more often seen in the most dispossessed classes – greater poverty, higher dropout and higher dropout, greater poverty."⁴⁵

Brevity of the school year and day

The already serious problems of dropout and low levels of schooling are compounded by the reduced school day and short academic year. In Costa Rica, primary-school days are only four hours long, the academic year 180 days. This is an especially serious problem for young people living in poor urban areas. Because of their particular situation, they face serious privations in their development and in access to the cultural and family elements fundamental to good academic performance. In Japan, for example, children and adolescents receive 233 days of instruction per year. This is 53 days, or 319 hours, longer than the Costa Rican academic calendar.⁴⁶ However, the recent agreement between the Ministry of Public Education and the Association of Secondary-School Teachers opens the door to increasing the academic year at least in secondary school.

Shortcomings in the quality of learning

Many national observers, teachers and intellectuals have commented on the shortcomings in the education provided in primary school and high school. It should also be pointed out that failure or low grades in basic subjects such as math, science, social

⁴⁵ William Brenes et al *Calidad de la educación en Costa Rica: deserción y repetencia en Puriscal*. San José, UNICEF, 1996.

⁴⁶ *State of the Nation*, 1996, p.59.

udies and Spanish is one of the most common causes associated with school dropout.⁴⁷

In addition, the rigid, traditional nature of education interferes with learning and performance. Moreover, some of the educational centers with the lowest levels of academic performance are precisely those that young people in marginal urban areas attend. This includes technical high schools and night schools for those who must work.

Inadequate or obsolete educational content

The Costa Rican education system has problems with regard to educational content. It tends to be anachronistic with regard to the students' environment and needs as well as in terms of providing up-to-date scientific and technological knowledge. These factors tend to decrease motivation, which in turn spurs school dropout. In addition, young people, particularly those living in the most depressed sectors, appear to lack the academic, labor, and personal stimuli that justify the effort and sacrifice associated with obtaining higher levels of education. High school is no longer perceived as a means of social mobility. There is an enormous gap between what primary and secondary schools have to offer and the usefulness young people attribute to what they study. There are few technical institutions that could serve as alternatives. Seventy-two percent of vocational technical high schools are located in rural areas.⁴⁸

Shortcomings in the academic background of educators

Problems related to the academic background of educators and maintaining their knowledge up-to-date are well known. At a time when new information is continually being

⁴⁷ Z. Sánchez et al. *La Incidencia de la Crisis Socioeconómica en la Deserción Estudiantil del Sistema Educativo Costarricense*. Multinational Education Research Center (CEMIE), Ministry of Public Education and the Ministry of Planning, 1984.

⁴⁸ Germán Rama, *A la Búsqueda del Siglo XXI: Nuevos Caminos de Desarrollo en Costa Rica*. Report on Pilot Mission of the IDB Social Program, November 1994, p.74.

generated and transformed rapidly, the educational system has not managed to make this knowledge arrive in the classroom in a timely manner. High turnover rates in teaching personnel in marginal urban areas and the absence of stimuli in these primary and secondary schools make it difficult for these institutions to retain educators with adequate academic preparation.

Lack of psychological and methodological training for teachers

In Costa Rica, it appears that there are no teacher-training programs specifically geared towards attending urban youths that live in poverty and at social risk. Clearly, there is a lack of formal knowledge about the cognitive, motivational and subject-specific needs of these groups.⁴⁹ This situation is one of the most serious problems in educational institutions where there are students living in urban poverty and at social risk, given that 5% of students who drop out of school cite conflicts with their teachers as the reason.⁵⁰ It is a double-edged problem. On the one hand, educators are not adequately prepared to address the educational and social problems that characterize those students that tend to be classified as “difficult.” Teachers in these institutions often suffer from depression and personal crisis and feel overwhelmed because of the stress produced by their work environment. On the other hand, the size of classes, learning problems, lack of motivation

The following is a revealing example of this concept. In 1995, IMAS organized summer camps for a group of university students working to develop the creative stimulus of children and young people from Los Guido and Acosta. At the conclusion of this event, the university students submitted a report to IMAS with a recommendation that could be summarized in the following manner. “Continue working with Acosta. There, the children, even though they are very poor, have hope. Progress can be made with them. Abandon Los Guidos. There, indifference, lack of community and violence prevail. Nothing can be done there.” This terrible judgement could not be more representative of the difficulties in communication between young university students – many of whom will become teachers – and the children living in an urban squatter settlement that desperately need their assistance.

See Sánchez et al, Op. Cit.

and student behavior frequently result in a situation that is unbearable, both in and outside of the classroom.⁵¹

Shortcomings in educational resources and infrastructure

Insufficient teaching resources and physical infrastructure have a serious effect on lower-income communities. In the past, educational institutions were housed in buildings erected specifically for that purpose. Today, due to economic limitations, these centers are often housed in groups of classrooms that were built rapidly due to pressure from members of the urban settlement. In general, these do not have the overall conditions needed to attend to their student populations. Secondary-education services are often not available within a reasonable radius. This obliges young people to travel to these sites in order to enroll into Cycle III (the first three years of secondary school) and Diversified Education (following Cycle III). All of these factors make it difficult for schools to attract students and for them to view this as a pleasant place to be.

Moreover, young people living in urban poverty are also victims of other individual and social problems that negatively affect their performance and retention in the educational system. These difficulties, in conjunction with educational concerns, must be addressed if real opportunities are to be created for ascendant social mobility. As was pointed out in the IDB report written by Germán Rama, "with regard to causes, educational inequality cannot be separated from other forms of inequality,⁵²" even though education is an invaluable tool for reducing it.

⁵¹ A 1993 study, carried out by students in the School of Psychology at the University of Costa Rica and supported by the Omar Dengo Foundation at the Escuela León XIII, showed that teachers feel alone, tired and that they receive no systematic technical and institutional support to address their students' problems.

⁵² Rama, Op. Cit. p.70.

In addition to the educational problems already mentioned, there are other social and family issues that seriously affect the ability of poor urban youths to take advantage of the educational system and remain in school.

Deficient family income and breakdown of support networks

Given the economic pressure placed on these families, poor young people often drop out of the educational system at an early age in order to work and make a contribution to household income. Without a doubt, this is one of the major reasons why young people drop out of high school, often against their will. Many of these young people have unemployed or underemployed mothers, who lack the training needed to enter into the work force. Approximately 40% of those who drop out of the educational system cite economic problems as the main reason for doing so.⁵³

In addition, moving from the countryside to the city tends to break down many of the economic, emotional and logistical networks traditionally provided by the extended family in rural areas. Given the absence of grandmothers and aunts, older siblings must often take care of their younger brothers and sisters. This makes it difficult for many young people, particularly girls, to participate in the educational system.

Parents with low educational levels

Young students from poor urban neighborhoods are often the children of single mothers or couples with low levels of education. These parents generally do not have the knowledge or time needed to understand or attend to the specific needs associated with

⁵³ Z. Sánchez et al, Op. Cit.

ie academic, psychological and social development of their children, particularly adolescents, even though they are truly concerned for them. Fifty-one percent of children whose parents have not studied do not attend school or are behind grade.⁵⁴ By their eighteenth birthday, 61% of urban youths whose parents have no education have dropped out of school.⁵⁵ This tends to transmit poverty from one generation to the next. Teachers often complain about what they perceive as the lack of interest these parents have in their children's education. In spite of their limitations in terms of materials and human resources, primary and secondary schools must compensate for what the family unit cannot provide in terms of stimuli and resources available in the home (information, books, materials, personal contact). This is rarely accomplished.

Family instability and the absence of a father figure

Many of these poor urban youths come from unstable homes and socioeconomic conditions. As has been mentioned, many are the children of single mothers with hanging family structures and limited or sporadic income. When there is a father figure, either biological or a stepfather, he tends to be authoritarian or aloof. The decline of the father figure is aggravated by the disappearance of or decreased bonds with grandfathers and uncles. These harsh realities spur insecurity and emotional crises in children and young people. This, in turn, obviously affects their ability to concentrate and their academic performance. Many young people have serious crises with regard to values and demonstrate aggressive behavior towards authority figures, including the teachers and

⁴ Rama, Op. Cit., p.71.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.72.

incipals of the schools where they study.⁵⁶ Moreover, many specialists have expressed their concern over the serious emotional privations that these young people suffer. This group often feels rejected or unloved by their parents and relatives and seeks from their teachers the love and affection they do not receive in their homes.

Low self-esteem

One of the personal problems that most affects the academic performance of these young people is how little they value themselves and, sometimes, the negative image they have of themselves. This problem is frequently the result of inadequate family relationships and crises within the family. This represents a serious obstacle to their learning and social development.

Marginality, overcrowding and lack of study and recreation areas

The urban poor tend to live in overcrowded conditions. Thus, young people do not have a physical space where they can do their homework or enjoy rest and recreation. This lack of space causes conflict in the home. Young people are sent to public places, mainly the street, and this increases their social risk. Given the marginality of these communities, there tends to be no opportunities for spending time with other young people and adults who would serve as models for social mobility and support.

Some Costa Rican and international specialists have stated that in Costa Rican society there tends to be a correlation between the absence or decline of the father figure and problems related to authority or values. This topic is of major importance for a country with such a high percentage of single mothers. Thus, it should be studied in greater detail. This line of research has the potential for making contributions of national importance.

the gap between reality and the world of television

Children and adolescents invest a great deal of their time watching television, considerably more than they dedicate to formal learning. The world of television is a window to materialistic and consumption-based values. It also shows high levels of violence and discrimination as well as inappropriate resolution of personal and social conflicts.⁵⁷ As Neil Postman pointed out, there is no doubt that television is a great teacher for children; often, it teaches hopelessness.⁵⁸ This combination of consumerism and overstimulation is an explosive mix. Moreover, the diversity and speed of the stimulus television provides, as well as its levels of complexity and audio, visual and thematic sophistication contrast with the usually poor methods and materials used in education. This plays a role in developing a lack of interest in educational topics, which for young people seem unattractive and unexciting.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEW LINES OF ACTION

In order to address some of these complex problems clearly, it is necessary to continue advancing along the traditional Costa Rican route of policies for inclusion and universalization of quality services. In addition, new compensatory initiatives are needed to provide the possibility for social mobility. Specific opportunities must be opened up for young people living in urban poverty.

In the past, Costa Rica has developed major initiatives that provide special attention for the urban poor. These efforts help guarantee adequate biological,

Mario Viquez, *La Televisión como Medio Transmisor de Violencia en Costa Rica: El Papel Mediatizador de la Familia y la Escuela*, San José, UNICEF, 1993, p.37.

Neil Postman, *The End of Education*, New York: Vintage Books, 1996.ix.

psychological, social and academic opportunities for children and adolescents as part of their development process. Without these, children and adolescents living in urban poverty would be exposed to greater risk and would suffer more aggravated problems related to debilitating poverty. The contributions of the following initiatives bear mentioning.

Preschool education and school cafeterias

Programs that foster early stimulation, CEN-CINAI, community homes⁵⁹ and preschool education,⁶⁰ and school cafeterias help develop cognitive, physical, emotional and social bases for the ensuing phases of educational development. In addition, care facilities for children cut back on the obligation of adolescents to watch after younger siblings while their parents work.

Single uniform

School uniforms are particularly important within the context of urban poverty because they reduce the risk of exclusion and social discrimination, in and away from educational institutions, based on the clothes students wear and the status symbols attached to them.

⁵⁹ Community homes could fulfill a very important educational function, particularly if they improve the selection process of directors and intensify their training processes.

⁶⁰ The recent decision to make kindergarten obligatory as part of the reform of Article 78 of the Costa Rican Constitution is very important. However, measures should be taken with regard to training for the professionals who will take on this task, so as not to jeopardize the excellent quality these services have demonstrated within the country.

Medical attention

Coverage by the Costa Rican Social Welfare System for all students encourages them to stay in school by increasing the value of the benefits to their parents who may be either unemployed or work in the informal sector.

PROMECUM

The Program for Improving Marginal Urban Schools (PROMECUM) provides diversified assistance that includes improvements in infrastructure as well as incorporating teams of professionals to attend students' social needs. These include a social worker, a psychologist and guidance counselor. This program serves 69 educational districts and is designed to help 52,000 students in critical conditions. This is a major initiative for promoting differentiated education in an effort to provide upward compensation.

Computer education and transmission capabilities

The Computer Education Program was initiated ten years ago by the Ministry of Education (MEP) and the Omar Dengo Foundation. This program has had a significant impact on self-esteem, cognitive development and creativity, reducing school absenteeism and motivating educators. It lends priority to students in rural areas and marginal urban areas and reaches 30% of the national student population per year. Thanks to efforts carried out by MEP and financed by the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, this program will cover 50% of schools all over the country and 100% of Cycle III (1st to 3rd year of secondary school) and Basic General Education (grades 1-6). In addition, since 1989, a high percentage of students in marginal urban schools have had access to Internet, through the Scholastic Transmission Network initiated by the Omar Dengo Foundation. This coverage will be substantially improved by expanding the Computer

education Program in primary and secondary schools.⁶¹ These are two important modernization and compensation projects geared towards closing the gap between the rich and poor with regard to accessing technology. This aspect of education may also help make schools more pertinent and attractive, thus fostering retention in the education system.

Summer activities

The Summer Camp Program recently founded by the Joint Social Assistance Institute (IMAS) links school with recreational educational activities on weekends and during summer vacations. This initiative is geared towards keeping young people involved in educational activities that they consider interesting precisely because they take place outside of the traditional educational context.⁶² These experiences enrich and stimulate various aspects of this population's lives. It is a relief from and even an antidote to despair.

However, there are still many areas in need of specific, complementary interventions, such as the following.

A foundation in the United States, 2b1 has started up a program to create opportunities to access internet for young people living in poverty and marginal communities throughout the world. The Omar Dengo Foundation is in charge of developing the website in Spanish that will facilitate the participation of Spanish-speaking children and adolescents.

⁶¹ For example, this program enabled children from Fray Casiano de Puntarenas to visit a farm in Brotina and go swimming in a pool for the first time. Groups of young people from Los Guidos and Lincón Grande de Pavas had a campout with Scouts in Ochomongo. Children in a shelter run by ANI (the Costa Rican National Child Welfare Institute) received a class on sculpture.

Creation of scholarships

This would include scholarships covering uniforms, materials, transportation and food. In cases that are clearly justified, support would be given to families to compensate them for the loss of income experienced while their children are studying. Scholarship programs existing today are not sufficiently flexible and comprehensive.

Resource, recreation and study centers

Young people should have access to these areas, which they can perceive as their own. These centers would receive children before or after classes, according to the students' academic program. In addition, they would offer special activities and programs for developing complementary intellectual, artistic and work skills.⁶³ For those who have abandoned their studies and wish to return, complementary or compensatory activities would be needed to provide information on the types of and opportunities for study, work and recreation.

Schools for parents

These would combine literacy initiatives and formal schooling with training programs on how to stimulate the physical, psychological, academic and spiritual development of their children. These schools would also provide information on strategies for addressing family problems such as interpersonal conflict, alcoholism, drugs, teenage pregnancy and family violence.

Denmark has designed a program for children with working parents who have nowhere to go after school before their parents arrive home from work. Interestingly enough, given the high incidence of single mothers, the program makes a special effort to incorporate male teachers and tutors so that children and young people can have contact with alternative father figures. In Costa Rica, IAS has instituted some valuable experiences in which retired teachers and young people with high academic performance help children with difficulties after classes. This experience, even though its impact has been relatively limited, has proved valuable.

High schools in areas of priority attention

These high schools would offer a distinct approach to education, providing work alternatives that better respond to these young people and their specific cognitive and social profiles.⁶⁴ These institutions would need to have specialized personnel.

Diversification of what technical vocational high schools offer and updating their methodology

In this way, young people living in urban poverty would have greater options in technical areas and in more interesting and competitive fields, such as microelectronics, biotechnology and computer science. These high schools would have to be located near areas with the greatest concentrations of urban poverty and must have access to market studies and information on job openings. In addition, it would be important that these institutions employ more flexible and stimulating modern methodologies that better respond to the cognitive profiles of young people who encounter difficulties in the traditional system.⁶⁵

Programs for reincorporating young people into the education system

These adolescents require special support in academic, technical and vocational areas. These programs would need to incorporate cultural elements and components, which are determining factors for adolescent development and their integration into the

⁶⁴ For example, in France, "areas of priority education" were established in 1981. In order to provide assistance to the educational institutions in these areas, educators adapted to the local context were selected. Positions were created with a professional profile specifically designed for these institutions (see "Lain Minc, La France de l'An 2000", p. 134).

⁶⁵ In Costa Rica, some important initiatives are beginning to be organized. These start with recruiting young people from poor urban slums into sports and labor. An example is the experience developed by the Salesian Priests in Concepción de Alajuelita. Another valuable effort is that being developed by Amigoniano Priests in Moravia, which is geared towards assisting child and adolescent offenders by providing them with job training.

labor market.⁶⁶

Specialized programs for educators

These programs would provide university-level training for teachers and principals who should work in human development programs related to poverty and social risk. Some European countries already have experience with this type of education.⁶⁷

Mentor program

This program is geared towards young people who, due to their special abilities or difficulties in entering the education system need extra support and stimulus from adults willing to contribute to their education.

Creating or expanding on the initiatives described would require a great deal of economic and human resources. Normally, however, elementary schools and high schools in the most depressed urban areas suffer from serious limitations in resources. As Claudio de Moura Castro, the Head of the Social Programs Division at the Inter-American Development Bank, pointed out "in some cities, poor districts spend, per student, a third of what invested in middle-class areas."⁶⁸ It is paradoxical that these youths are not only

⁶⁶ For example, the Job Corps program being developed in Maine in the United States is innovative in that it is geared towards helping young people with few resources who have dropped out of the education system to acquire the intellectual, social and labor skills needed to better integrate themselves into the job market. This program lasts two years and is based on a wholly new conception of learning. It begins with a technical immersion process that captures the interest and excitement of young people affected by the obsolete focus of schools and high schools that are unprepared to deal with this energy and need for hands-on learning.

⁶⁷ These programs should include efforts to develop professional profiles and posts within the education system that provide benefits and special incentives for educators working in institutions that attend these populations.

⁶⁸ Claudio de Moura Castro, "Problemas de la Educación en América Latina", in *Educación, Crecimiento y Equidad*, Quito, Ecuador: Cordes-IDB, 1995.

culturally distant from modern society, but that the idea also exists that it is possible to educate them with fewer resources.

Budgetary and organizational limitations create very serious problems. In addition, projects such as those already mentioned require major investments that certain groups insist on viewing as simple “budgetary expenditures” in the social sector. Moreover, these investments must be sustained in the long-term if they are to be effective and bear fruit. This tends to be politically unprofitable and difficult to convert into reality. It is of utmost importance that there be a social consensus on the need to invest in education and most particularly, major funds must be channeled to attending these populations that require urgent interventions.

The role of the government and political will is vital in these circumstances.⁶⁹ According to a recent survey carried out by the CID, more than 70% of Costa Ricans are not significantly concerned about resolving the difficulties of the underprivileged.⁷⁰ This lack of interest in those with greatest need must be compensated by government and civil society actions with the vision and resources to support these actions.

In addition, having available resources is not enough. Priorities must also be defined with clarity and assurance. Investments must be made in those projects that can

⁶⁹ It is a hopeful sign that, in spite of the controversy it has raised, reforming Article 78 of the Political Constitution of Costa Rica, which makes it obligatory that 6% of the GNP is channeled to education, has already been approved by the first session of the Legislative Assembly.

⁷⁰ Clotilde Fonesca, “La Crisis de la Solidaridad”, p.15, *La Nación*, February 21, 1996.

provide the greatest benefits. Good intentions do not always guarantee good results.⁷¹ Thus, it is important that priorities be well established so that the changes introduced make it possible to modify the educational environment of schools and high schools in these areas. Results must be not only effective, but also sustainable.

A GUIDING FRAMEWORK FOR FACING THESE NEW CHALLENGES

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the fundamental objective of education is “the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.” For this reason, basing education for young people living in poverty solely on generating “work skills” represents a reductionist vision that, at its core, is against their human rights. Therefore, it is highly important that educational and social programs for children and young people living in poverty and at social risk encompass certain key principles.

The establishment of “primary and secondary schools for the poor” must be avoided at all costs both in terms of the concept of education as well as the provision of resources. Differentiated actions employed should be enriching and geared towards achieving equality and integration, not segregation.

Minimalist efforts towards solutions that are designed to produce cheap manual labor must be combated. Young people living in urban poverty are especially at risk of being

A typical case of extensive, yet inappropriate, investment can be seen in the initiative in Kansas City, Missouri. By court order, compensatory measures were made to groups suffering from social and racial discrimination. This initiative, known as the “the Taj Mahal of education”, did not provide the hoped-for transformation in spite of the millions of dollars invested in infrastructure, technology and “sophisticated educational materials and courses.”

channeled into training options that destine them to hold routine jobs with little gratification and bad pay.

- Solutions must be sought that combine a humanist and a productivity-based approach. Emphasizing human development must be the primary objective of education. Education should not be objectified and viewed as a simple input for productivity, even though it is recognized that this is an essential factor for the material and spiritual survival of individuals.
- What is currently considered as “basic skills’ must be reevaluated in order to provide the preparation needed for incorporation into the information age. Other capabilities to be developed include problem resolution, flexibility, the ability to work in a group as well as high levels of reading comprehension and language development in order to insure fluid oral and written expression. In addition, students need well-developed math skills and must be able to make effective use of computers and telecommunications.⁷²
- The formation of values and citizenship must be strengthened so that urban youths develop a sense of belonging in their community and country and adopt the principles that underlie Costa Rican nationality.

² Richard Murmane and Frank Levy. *Teaching the New Basic Skills: Principles for Educating Children to Thrive in a Changing Economy*, New York: Martin Kessler Books, The Free Press, 1996 p.9.

Priority must be given to changing the educational environment and actions over legal and administrative reforms, even though these latter elements can be a valuable complement.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Education is a critical element for breaking the poverty cycle. For young people living in urban poverty, educational processes are definitive in the sense that their ability to make a life will depend to a large extent on how well prepared they are for entering into the urban job market. This progressive incorporation requires not only higher academic levels, but also increased social and personal development, improved communication skills, greater agility and ease in managing cultural aspects, including general as well as digital technology which is characterized by the speed with which it changes. Currently these are university-level skills, but it will be increasingly necessary for high-school students of all social classes to possess them.

Early and appropriate investment in the education of coming generations is the only way for future elimination of the dependency that the poor develop on government. Jessie Jackson, the well-known preacher and politician in the United States, dramatically summarized this situation when he stated that "It is cheaper to send someone to Yale, than to send him to jail."

As Albert Camus pointed out, "poverty is a fortress without a drawbridge." Education can and must act as this drawbridge. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance for society as a whole to support this action and provide the human and economic

resources needed to make rapid progress in this process of social integration and strengthening of human rights.

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MEMOIR

INTRODUCTION

"...the tenderness of all words passed through the dewdrop illusions of my native tongue."
(Pat Conroy, p.259)

While it may be argued that the written word has an intrinsic value in and of itself regardless of how it is assimilated or used, texts are naturally enriched by the presence and participation of the reader. The reader is the sounding board, gauge and recipient of all types of works, ranging from classical literature to instruction manuals. Translation expands the possibilities and uses of written texts by widening their readership. It is a bridge over the abyss of incomprehensibility and a vehicle for transmitting information, ideas and values.

The text selected for translation and the object of the Memoir of the Graduation Project is a book originally published in Spanish entitled: *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*.¹ The object of this project is to fulfill the requirements set forth by the School of Language and Literature and thus be eligible to receive the degree of *licenciatura* in translation (Spanish-English).

The original version of this text was produced as a joint effort between the office of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Costa Rica and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS). The goal of the original document is "...to promote debate on the relationship between recent urbanization and the appearance of poor child-adolescent sectors in urban areas. It is also designed to contribute to the development of a conceptual framework for rights-based social policies geared towards children and adolescents." (p.9). The translation into English was solicited for this same purpose.

¹ UNICEF, UNCHS (HABITAT), *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*, UNICEF, San Jose, 1997.

This is a book-length document comprised of a general presentation and introduction of the topic, a series of articles covering a range of interrelated subjects and a section on specific projects, proposals and initiatives being carried out in Costa Rica. The specific articles appearing in the book are as follows:

Integration, Human Rights and Social Policy in the Context of Urban Poverty;

Policies That Address Poverty in Urban Communities;

Recent Urbanization and the Quality of Life of Adolescents at High Social Risk;

Child-Adolescent Labor and the Rights of Boys, Girls and Adolescents;

Educational Challenges Facing Poor Urban Youths;

The Rights and Reproductive Health of Urban Adolescents; and

The Status of Adolescents in Conflict With the Criminal Law: The New Model for Juvenile Criminal Justice in Costa Rica

Each article follows an established format, which includes an introduction (which may or may not be specifically labeled as such), a point-by-point breakdown of the topic being addressed and a conclusion. All of the conclusions offer not only a summary of the ideas presented in the article, but also recommendations for future actions. In addition, nearly all of the articles include a separate bibliography, which applies only to that specific text. Thus, there is no general bibliography for the book as a whole.

The projects, proposals and initiatives presented in the book are as follows:

Experiences with Young People in a Marginal Urban Neighborhood: The Application of a Human Development Strategy for Young People at High Social Risk;

An Innovative Experience in Adolescent Health Care in Poor Urban Areas: Pavas Clinic.

In addition, five annexes are included at the end of the book:

- Children Have the Right To Grow Up in an Enriching Environment;
- PROMECUM: Program for Improving the Quality of Education and Life in Marginal Urban Communities;
- HABITAT II: Summit of the Cities, United Nations Conference on Human Settlements;
- COOPESALUD R.L.: An Innovative Experience in Urban Health Care;
- Comprehensive Care Model for Adolescent Rights in Rincón Grande de Pavas.

In order to comply with the standards established by the Universidad Nacional regarding the length of the text to be translated for the Graduation Project, only selected articles and sections of text are included. In order to avoid any possible confusion, the page numbers for references to the translation correspond to those in the Graduation Project, not those of the published version of the translation.

UNICEF-Costa Rica originally requested the translation of this text in April 1998 because of its importance in the field of child rights and adolescence in particular. This is an emerging subject area for this international organization. The desire to have this same work available in English stems from the growing interest to share information and learn from the experiences of countries in both the Americas and Europe. By augmenting the potential readership of this book, this goal becomes more accessible.

In addition to the practical importance of this translation, it is also valuable to the field of translation studies in general. Translating this work offered a series of challenges to be resolved. The techniques and thought processes involved have the potential to be of great use to other translators in both academic and professional terms.

For example, the translation was requested as a professional work within a fairly specific field. Thus, it employs a specific set of terminology, i.e., that of international organizations (UNICEF, in this case). This was a key element in developing the translation

der discussion, given that the candidate did not have a single and reliable source of information in English. For this reason, it was necessary to design a revision and learning system in a minimum amount of time. It should be mentioned that at the outset of the translation project, the candidate had already been working as a translation consultant at UNICEF-Costa Rica for six months. During that time period, certain information was received or certain terminology became familiar that was not necessarily the best option. Therefore, a large part of the effort in developing a terminology base was deciding what constituted a set term and which sources were the best and most reliable.

Developing a system of this type proved to be a unique experience, particularly because of the decision-making processes involved and the candidate's ambiguous role as the translator at UNICEF. On the one hand, it could be said that the candidate was working as a staff translator. However, there were none of the advantages that Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown mentions in his book entitled *A Practical Guide for Translators*. This author states that the advantages of being a staff translator include the opportunity to develop work skills under the careful eye of an experienced translator or editor, access to dictionaries and reference materials, and the opportunity to discuss translations and change ideas in way that is normally not possible for a freelance translator. In the present case, these observations had no practical application, given that there were no other translators to monitor or discuss the translation process. In addition, the reference materials available did not go beyond mediocre bilingual dictionaries.

Moreover, it would also not be possible to classify this translation as a freelance project because the candidate had to follow up on the process until the final version of the translation was published, often addressing aspects that fell outside of the field of translation. (This aspect is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.)

Two glossaries were developed as part of the translation process and are included in a memoir. The first is a reader's glossary of acronyms to aid in understanding the

myriad references made in the text. The second is a translator's glossary, whose scope goes beyond that of the translation included in this Graduation Project. Given that the terminology research carried out by the candidate at UNICEF was an ongoing process, terms from other related fields are included that do not necessarily appear in the translation. Thus, given the general and aggregate nature of this glossary, it could be a very valuable tool for other translators.

The Memoir of the Graduation Project is made up of three chapters. The first discusses the basic premises and background of the text and offers a general analysis of its extratextual and intratextual elements, as per the conceptual framework developed by Christiane Nord. Specific examples from the text are provided for illustrative purposes. Following this is a discussion of translation theory, highlighting the theories of Peter Newmark and that originated by Danica Seleskovitch at the *École supérieure d'interprètes et de traducteurs (ESIT)* at the Université de Paris III. The comparison between these two schools of thought is used to evaluate the applicability of translation theory to translation in general and to the translation under review in particular. An article by Betty Howell, a translation professor at Georgetown University, is also evaluated because of its practical import and special relevance to the process followed in developing the candidate's translation.

The second chapter focuses on the problems related to institutional terminology, with an emphasis on acronyms and the particular difficulties encountered in translating them. One of the unique aspects of this element is the evolution of acronyms, given that they are normally considered to be static terms. The reader's and translator's glossaries are included in this chapter.

The third chapter discusses translation, revision and publication processes and systems. This encompasses various interrelated elements, such as the need for constant

w-up in all stages of the translation, designing and selecting a revision process when working alone, and differentiating between useful and irrelevant or false information.

In conclusion, the text selected lends itself extremely well to a detailed analysis, which provides important and innovative contributions to translation studies. Relevant aspects of the process include an evaluation of intra and extratextual factors for greater clarity, a discussion of translation theory, the creation of research and terminology and revision systems, and the evolution of acronyms through usage and how to translate those with no equivalent.

CHAPTER ONE

TEXT ANALYSIS AND OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSLATION

The text chosen for translation and the framework of reference for the corresponding memoir was *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*. The foregoing title is the name of the original work, which was subsequently translated into English as *Adolescence, Child Rights and Urban Poverty in Costa Rica*. Given the nature and complexity of the document being considered, the translation process, strictly speaking, could be considered a misnomer in that this encompassed a wider range of concepts. Outside of translation, the two leading components of this process were text analysis of the original document and revision of the translated document. This latter aspect will be addressed in detail further on in the memoir.

With regard to the former, the concept of text analysis was divided into two classifications: extratextual and intratextual factors. This delineation is based on Christiane Nord's *Text Analysis in Translation*. Although the document to be translated was analyzed beforehand, it should not be assumed that this process was carried out strictly following the precepts of Nord. Since the purpose of this text analysis was to improve the overall quality of the translation and insure that it be completed in a timely manner, the analysis had to be carried out as efficiently as possible. This meant focusing only on the factors of text analysis that were key to this translation. Moreover, these aspects were not examined sequentially, but rather simultaneously as a set of interrelated concepts. For example, in her description of extratextual factors, Nord differentiates between the sender's intention and the motive for communication. In examining the present text before translating it, this formal demarcation was deemed unnecessary since the two concepts were so closely intertwined as to be indistinguishable. Nonetheless,

given the similarities of the individual analysis and Nord's format and based on the need to define and classify this information, it was decided that this structure would serve as a conceptual framework for lending clarity and coherence to the information to be presented.

According to Nord, analyzing extratextual factors encompasses:

...enquiring about the author or sender of the text (who?), the sender's intention (what for?), the addressee or recipient the text is directed at (to whom?), the medium or channel the text is communicated by (by which medium?), the place (where?) and time (when?) of text production and text reception, and the motive (why) for communication. (Nord, p.36)

Along these lines, the authors or senders of the text are the office of UNICEF in Costa Rica and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS). This element proved to be important because it immediately indicated the possibility of institutional terminology and acronyms that would be used in the text. Along these lines, it should be mentioned again that the book, *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*, is actually a collection of articles written by different authors. This facet provided the translator with the challenge of making the styles and language usage of these various authors cohesive with the overall framework and purpose of the book as a whole. In certain instances, the lexical characteristics of the individual authors were maintained. The introduction of the book states that:

With regard to the terms "child," adolescent" and "young people" as well as their corresponding age brackets, it should be pointed out that these are based on criteria that vary according to discipline and even to continent. Therefore, the authors have been allowed to use the terms most convenient for their purposes, making sure that the terminology in each article is clear (pp. 11-12).

Thus, when translating the terms employed by the authors in reference to these age groups, the terminology system of each one of them was maintained.

The senders' intention is to disseminate information regarding the state of children and adolescents in Costa Rica, with a particular emphasis on adolescents and recent trends in urban poverty.

It is expected that the readership of the translated text will be personnel within the United Nations system and other professionals in related fields. Therefore, the translator had to account for and define the institutional acronyms used in the text. In addition, the translation was requested in order to broaden the readership of the text. For this reason, care had to be taken to include explanations and definitions of strictly regional concepts. For example, the original text includes a table detailing some of the indicators of the status of poor children in urban areas.

The table includes the following line:

Original text in Spanish

Translated text in English

SALUD

% sin seguro E y M
(UNICEF, UNCHS, p.30)

HEALTH

% without insurance for sickness and
maternity
(p.21)

As can be seen in the above case, the concept expressed in the original text in Spanish had to be expanded and defined in order to offset the fact that the readers of the original version are assumed to be well informed about the Costa Rican health-care system. This implied that the translator had first to gain a greater understanding of this same system. This necessity was particularly reflected in the fact that, without this knowledge, "*seguro E y M*" could easily and logically have been translated as "insurance for sickness and death."

What Nord defines as the time of text production and text reception played a very important role in the text analysis, translation and revision processes. The text in Spanish was published in 1997. Given the amount of time involved in producing a publication and the need for inter-agency coordination in this specific instance, the individual articles were submitted long before the text went to publication. The translation of the text was not

requested until March 1998 and was submitted in April 1998, on the assumption that the lengthy publication process would be immediately undertaken at that point. However, since well over a year had elapsed between the completion of the articles and the submission of the translation, some of the information in the original text was no longer considered current. Nonetheless, the candidate was obligated to reflect the original timeframe of the article.

It should be pointed out that the author of the article entitled "Child-Adolescent Labor and the Rights of Boys, Girls and Adolescents" subsequently requested that modifications be made in the translation because there had been sweeping changes in the Costa Rican legal system between the time he submitted his work for compilation and publication and the publication of the translation.¹ This resulted in considerable delays in the overall translation process and necessitated in-depth modifications to the text. In fact, the changes themselves had to be later altered so that they were in keeping with the overall context of the article.

The final element that Nord mentions, that of the motive for communication, is according to this author "the sum total of information obtained about these intratextual factors may provide an answer to the last question, which concerns the function the text can achieve..." (Nord, p.36). This observation holds true for the present text. By taking into account these factors, it can be concluded that the motive for communication is very much related to the sender's intention, that is to foster debate on recent urbanization and how it relates to children while focusing on the rights of children and adolescents. This

¹ Since the translation still had not gone to press, the author presented the candidate with a list of changes that should and would be included in the original text were it to be reprinted. Essentially, the author wanted to inform the reader about the adoption of the Child and Adolescent Code in Costa Rica. This new legislation was ratified on February 6, 1998 (nearly one year after the original article had been written). It sets the legal working age at 15 in all cases and provides special protection measures for working teens between the ages of 15 and 18.

element is complemented by the other extratextual elements previously discussed, thus yielding a complete panorama of the text to be translated.

With regard to the intratextual factors of text analysis, Nord states that:

Intratextual factors are analysed by enquiring about the subject matter in the text deals with (on what subject matter?), the information or content presented in the text (what?), the knowledge presuppositions made by the author (what not?), the composition or construction of the text (in what order?), the non-linguistic or paralinguistic elements accompanying the text (using which non-verbal elements?), the lexical characteristics (in which words?) and syntactic structures (in what kind of sentences?) found in the text, and the suprasegmental features of intonation and prosody (in which tone?). (Nord, p.37)

The prior analysis of the extratextual elements proved to be the key in determining the exact nature of the text's subject matter. At this juncture, it should be mentioned that the analytical structure proposed by Nord states that "the extratextual factors are analysed before reading the text, simply by observing the situation in which the text is used." (Nord, p.37) Specifically speaking, the text's general subject matter focuses on child rights, emphasizing those of adolescents, and on urban poverty. Bearing in mind that the document is a series of articles written by various authors, it can be stated that there are several separate, but interrelated, subjects. Examples include: community structures; child labor; at-risk adolescents; education; reproductive health; and juvenile criminal justice.

The text presupposes a certain degree of knowledge on the reader's part. This includes certain references to national concepts and institutions unique to Costa Rica. Thus, these aspects had to be accounted for when developing the translation. One way of doing so was to include a reader's glossary with the translation, which served to define some of these ideas. This concept will be discussed in greater detail later on in the memoir.

Also of particular importance in translating the text were the lexical characteristics and syntactic structures in certain sections of the text. For example, in the article entitled "Recent Urbanization and the Quality of Life of Adolescents at High Social Risk," the

Author includes excerpts from actual adolescents' remarks concerning their feelings on their neighborhoods and the various problems found there. In these excerpts, the author made an attempt to reproduce speech in written form, incorporating the adolescents' style of speaking as well as the pauses and repetitions common in speech. Below is an example from the original text and the translation, which illustrates this phenomenon.

Original Text

Primero, yo creo que hay mucho niño que trabaja, luego hay muchos ladrones in San José, hay mucha gente corrupta en San José, sin señalar muchos puntos porque por ahí también están los niños y las niñas que son agredidos todos los días por la gente, las niñas que se prostituyen es todo un problema Luego está la otra cara de la moneda que son los carteristas que se le llaman en San José. La misma policía a veces "choricea" con la gente, en fin, un montón de problemas más: el humo de los buses afecta los pulmones y la capa de ozono. También hay mucha cantina en San José, 4 o 5 pleitos en cada cantina, borrachos tirados. Eso también es un problema que afecta mucho (Minor Alvarado). (UNICEF, UNCHS, p.51)

Translated Text

First of all, I think that a lot of kids work; also there are a lot of thieves in San José; there are a lot of corrupt people in San José, and little girls and boys get attacked everyday. Young girls prostituting themselves is a big problem. Then there is the other side of the coin, which are the pickpockets as they are called in San José. Sometimes the police take bribes. There are also a bunch of other problems: the smoke from buses affects your lungs and the ozone layer. There are also a lot of bars in San José and four or five fights in every bar, drunks lying around. This is also a big problem (Minor Alvarado). (p. 46)

Reproducing this concept in the translation proved to be highly challenging, calling into play questions of register, terminology and syntax. In the original text, the author attempts to convey the informality of the adolescent's speech by not strictly employing the rules of formal grammar. For example, the sentence "... es todo un problema ... Luego está la otra cara..." should include a period after 'problema.' However, in an effort to reproduce the flow of spoken language, the author opted not to do so. In the translation, this technique was not duplicated, based on the idea that modifying syntax was not a successful technique for achieving the overall goal. Rather, when translating the text, it

ould be seen that the irregular syntactic structures interfered with reading it. By weighing this flaw against the perceived benefits of this technique, it was decided that the latter were so minimal as to be non-existent.

With regard to terminology, the word "choricea" proved to be highly challenging. Ideally, the goal was to find a word from English slang that is commonly used by teens and carries the exact same semantic weight and circumstances of usage. However, this was not possible. Some of the options not chosen were: "swindle"; "scam"; and "trick." The first was rejected because it refers to a formal crime. The second, which was very nearly elected, was not chosen because "scam" seems to imply a type of formal structure. The strength of this option was that it is slangy and likely to be used by teens. "Trick" was not used in the translation because it was deemed to be too general.

The word "bribe" was finally selected after a great deal of thought. The shortcoming of this option is that it is not slang. However, neither is it so formal nor uncommon that it would not be used in everyday speech. In semantic terms, it was the closest equivalent of all the other options.

In the original text, the term appears in quotes to denote the use of a regional term. These quotes were not maintained in the translation because the term in English is very much part of the standard vernacular.

The register employed in the original passage is that of informal and unplanned speech. Reproducing this aspect required a careful revision of the translation, while trying to imagine exactly what the average teen would be likely to say in English. For example, in an earlier version of the translation, "borrachos tirados" was translated as "drunk people lying about." This translation was rejected given the unlikelihood that an adolescent would use this type of phrase. Thus, the final translation was "drunks lying around."

In addition to the pre-translation text analysis carried out, mention should also be made of the role translation theory played in the translation process. When considering

On this aspect, emphasis was placed on the writings of Peter Newmark as well as those by various authors who subscribe to the school of thought espoused by the *École supérieure d'interprètes et de traducteurs (ESIT)* at the *Université de Paris III*. The ongoing debate between these two apparently conflicting sources proved to be an interesting foundation for a thorough analysis of translation theory and its validity.

In general terms, the theory of the latter is what is known as "interpreting to translate" which was originated by Danica Seleskovitch. The overriding concept stems from the idea that translation involves a type of meta-process very similar to that seen in interpretation. Like the interpreter, the translator absorbs the original, processes it and then reproduces it.

In his article entitled "Le Froment de sens, la paille des mots", Jean Delisle, a professor at the University of Ottawa and ardent supporter of Seleskovitch, sharply criticizes the theories of Newmark. This author maintains that translation means searching for the most perfect coincidence between an idea and its formulation in terms of both sense and expression. He continues, stating that the translator must endeavor to incorporate the structure of thought threaded through the words on paper, rather than making the translation contingent on the words themselves. Delisle compares this theory with the ideas set forth by Newmark, claiming that this author professes a systematic and even dogmatic type of literalism and is an adherent of the 'cult of words' (Delisle, p.62-63).

Newmark responds by saying that he is "...somewhat of a literalist, because I am for truth and accuracy" (Newmark, p.xi). He counters the idea of the overriding importance of thought by claiming that the authors from the Paris school are promoting a false image of translation in ignoring the importance of words.

Many translators say you should never translate words, you translate sentences or ideas or messages. I think they are fooling themselves. The SL consists of words, that is all that there is on the page.
(Newmark, pp.36-37)

By studying the writings of Newmark and contrasting them with those of the authors that subscribe to Seleskovitch's theory, it can be seen that both raise valid points and are highly effective in counteracting the arguments of the other. For example, Newmark's claim that "more words are more or less context-free than most people imagine." (Newmark, p.34), seems particularly relevant in that in an imperfect world, context is not always necessarily available. While the arguments of the Paris school seem extremely valuable in their search to maintain the overall semantic import of a text and assign the translator a more proactive role, they can tend to be somewhat mythical and far-fetched. By the same token, those of Newmark at times appear to be overly stringent and unbending. Needless to say, both sets of specialists draw important conclusions, and it is possible to glean valuable information from them all.

Moreover, it could also be concluded that the very stridency of the comments exchanged and somewhat exaggerated disdain on both sides are not only the cause of the debate, but also the result of it.

These observations notwithstanding, the fundamental question of how the juxtaposition of these theories relates to the translation project at hand still remains. It should be mentioned that while Newmark and the Paris school freely criticize one another's translation theories, they make no mention of the actual translations produced applying these theories. This calls into question the nature of the relationship between translation and translation theory, highlighting the very applicability and usefulness of the latter in developing the former.

Based on the research carried out on the debate described, no mention was found of comments specifically related to translations produced by either Newmark or any of the Paris school. At no point do Seleskovitch's supporters make the argument that the perceived flaws in Newmark's theory are reflected in his translations. The reverse is also true. This would lead one to believe that the shortcomings or strengths of translation

theory are not necessarily represented in translations themselves. By extension, it follows that the relationship between translation theory and the translation process is dubious.

Although these two conflicting theories are highly interesting and spur a great deal of reflection on translation and how it relates to linguistic phenomena, they do not offer a well-defined view of translation as a process, rather than a concept. Along these lines, an article written by Betty Howell, a translation professor at Georgetown University, proved to be very useful. She opens the text by stating that:

This is not theory, no abstract view of metalanguage, no explanation of what happens, but simply how to do it.

In more than fifteen years of experience doing translation and eight years of trying to teach it, I have developed a method of translating that I know works. It is not the only way of doing it, but it is one that many professional translators have developed, by trial and error, without even being conscious of what it is that they are doing. (Howell, p.1)

This author offers seven steps to producing a successful translation: do not read the text first; immediately begin to translate; only use the dictionary in the first draft in extreme cases; leave the draft alone; look at the translation and revise it; compare the translation with the original; make the corrections (Howell, p.1)

This method proved to be highly beneficial in developing the translation being examined in the present memoir. Indeed, the methodology followed in this process was very similar to that set forth by Howell. For example, Howell states that one should immediately begin translating, without first reading the text because "most people who are about to translate a text cannot first read it only to understand it. What they do (what I do, what you can't help doing) is to begin to translate it in their head" (Howell, p.1). In the present case, this observation held true. While the original text in Spanish was skimmed to get a general idea of its content, it was neither possible nor feasible in terms of time and utility to read the entire text before beginning the translation.

In general and with very few exceptions, the above-described method was nearly identical to the one followed in translating the text being examined. The way this author breaks the translation process down into the most practical and relevant procedure seems to be an enormous contribution to the field of translation in that she provides general guidelines that can be applied to nearly all texts. Needless to say, this approach may not be the most appropriate for all translators, highlighting an important idea in the field of translation. Translators should be well-informed on the theories and ideas related to their profession in order to develop the personal work systems and processes best suited to them as individuals.

In conclusion, this chapter is designed to provide an overview of the pre-translation analysis of the book *Adolescencia, derechos de la niñez y pobreza urbana en Costa Rica*, which was translated into English by the candidate. This examination of both the extratextual and intratextual factors of the text is complemented by an evaluation and discussion of translation theory and its relevance to the project at hand, focusing on the importance of translation as a process and the overriding need for practical guidelines. The following chapters of the memoir will concentrate on other factors, which played a key role in developing the translation. These include the development of both a reader's and translator's glossary, the challenges of translating acronyms and the flexibility and evolution of these terms; and a discussion of revision processes.

CHAPTER TWO

TERMINOLOGY FOR THE READER AND THE TRANSLATOR

The terminology encountered in the text to be translated offered a variety of challenges for the candidate, necessitating detailed research and providing interesting aspects that could be of use to other translators and the field of translation studies in general. Essentially, this terminology can be classified in two categories: terms for the reader and terms for the translator.

The former case specifically refers to providing translations of the various acronyms and abbreviations that appear with a high degree of frequency throughout the text. In addressing this aspect, several options were considered. One was to leave the acronym in Spanish and provide a translation in English between parentheses. However, this was rejected as being too cumbersome. This alternative would be more viable for shorter texts where the acronym occurs a minimum of times. However, in a text of this length in which various acronyms are found at regular intervals, this translation between parentheses would need to be repeated, on the assumption that the average reader would not remember the definition of a term encountered several pages earlier.

Moreover, since the work translated is a collection of articles, the reader may only be interested in reading a specific article or articles from the text. Thus, every acronym would have had to be translated in each individual article.

Another option considered was to include the translation and explanation of the acronym (where applicable) as a footnote. However, since the text itself contains a total of 4 footnotes and two translator notes were included in the English version, it was decided that this procedure could create confusion for the reader. In addition, the same difficulties presented with the use of parentheses would also apply in this instance.

Thus, the decision was made to design a glossary for the reader of the acronyms appearing in the text. By so doing, the footnote defining the acronym UNCHS that appears on page six of the original text could be eliminated. The glossary appears after the title page, credits and table of contents.

READER'S GLOSSARY

Institutional Terminology

The terms appearing in the reader's glossary can be divided into two categories. The first is institutional acronyms with known, established equivalents in both languages. In this instance, these acronyms refer specifically to those used for agencies in the United Nations system. The acronym in English appears on the left-hand side of the glossary and what it stands for in English appears on the right-hand side. No mention of the Spanish equivalent appears in these cases. Since there are set equivalents for these acronyms in all the official languages of the United Nations system, such information would be superfluous or even confusing to the reader of the English text.

In the vast majority of cases, when researching the English equivalents of the institutional acronyms that appear in the text, this information could be found in both specialized and general bilingual dictionaries. Generally known terms, such as UNICEF for example, appear in standard bilingual dictionaries. For example, the Collins Spanish dictionary includes the below entry.

UNICEF [juːnɪˈseɪf] *abbr of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund*
UNICEF *m.*
(HarperCollins Publishers, *Collins Spanish-English English-Spanish Dictionary*, Third Edition, New York, 1993.)

However, the UNICEF Thesaurus, produced by UNICEF itself, is listed as being published by the Thesaurus Working Group at the United Nations Children's Fund. In addition, in all of the parallel texts encountered and UNICEF documents translated by the candidate on separate, unrelated occasions, the name of this organization always appears as the United Nations Children's Fund.

This example underscores two important factors of terminology research and development. On the one hand, it highlights the need for investigating parallel texts and demonstrates how this technique may be more effective and accurate than consulting dictionaries. On the other hand, this example shows that acronyms, like any other terminology in human language, may change and evolve through usage.

The latter aspect is of particular interest in that it contradicts the fairly common assumption that acronyms are static and unchanging -- an abbreviated, codified version of a longer more cumbersome term. In the particular case being examined, the acronym is no longer a direct equivalent of the organization's name and has been modified to keep pace with the organization's changing role. It should be pointed out that this specific terminological evolution was not found to be reflected in any of the dictionaries consulted.

Another example of the evolution of acronyms through usage is ILANUD -- el Instituto Latinoamericano de las Naciones Unidas para la Prevención del Delito y el Tratamiento del Delincuente. The *Compendio de siglas y nombres de instituciones nacionales e internacionales*, a specialized acronym glossary, states that the English equivalent of this term and its acronym is the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (UNLAI).

However, further research in parallel texts showed that the acronym ILANUD did not appear as UNLAI even in documents, posters and other printed materials originally written in English. In all examples encountered, ILANUD was used. Again, it was the case of the information available in conventional dictionaries versus that appearing in parallel

texts. In this instance, it bears mentioning that this term was not researched through parallel texts before the translation under consideration went to publication. In this case, the procedure followed up to that point was to verify the institute's name and its corresponding acronym in English using a specialized dictionary for institutional terms.

Parallel texts were not used based on the assumption that this acronym would follow the same pattern as others. Essentially, all of the institutional acronyms within the United Nations system have an English equivalent. This is not always the case in Spanish—the obvious example being UNICEF. This same acronym, which was originally based on a set of words for English is maintained in Spanish, even though what it represents is translated. Other examples of this nature include FAO and UNESCO.

However, the reverse is extremely rare, if not nonexistent, with this one exception. Obviously, the fact that ILANUD is specifically a Latin American organization influences this phenomenon.

Regional Terminology

Also included in the reader's glossary are those acronyms that correspond to national institutions specific to Costa Rica. Given that one of the leading reasons for requesting the translation of this book was to broaden its readership outside of the country, it is possible that the reader of the English translation of the text may be wholly unfamiliar with these institutions. Thus, there was a need to clarify these terms for the reader.

In the case of what could be referred to as regional terms, the acronym in Spanish appears in the left-hand column, and the translation in English as well as the original Spanish appear in the right-hand column. It was decided that the acronyms that refer to these national institutions would not be modified to reflect the corresponding translation in English because set equivalents in English were not able to be found for these specific terms. In researching these terms using parallel texts, it was found that the great majority of those texts in English that included a mention of these institutions and their acronyms

were actually translations from Spanish. This, combined with the variation found among the equivalents used in English, made it impossible to establish the reliability of these sources.

The English equivalents appearing in the right-hand column of the glossary were developed by the candidate. For this reason, modifying the acronym to reflect these translations would be impractical because the new acronym would only be applicable within this single translation. Moreover, by not modifying these acronyms, it would be possible for the reader of the translation in English to cross-reference this information in other texts. The full name of the organization in Spanish was also included for cross-referencing purposes.

In some instances, translating the acronym for a national institution proved to be particularly challenging. This was the case with the *Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social* (CCSS). The name of this organization in Spanish does not immediately transmit to the receptor that this institution is a public health-care organization. Naturally, within the national context, this information is understood even though it is not explicitly stated.

However, in order for the reader of the translation in English to comprehend fully this term, not only a translation, but also an explanation or qualifier is needed. First, translating this term presented several difficulties. One was the candidate's reluctance to translate *Seguro Social* literally as Social Security given that this term in English could possibly create a certain degree of confusion with the Social Security System used in the United States. Since these two systems refer to two very separate organizations, this option was rejected. A second alternative was to translate *Seguro Social* so that it reflected the idea that this institution is part of the welfare state that has been established in Costa Rica. In order to avoid any confusion in English with the welfare system as it exists in the United States, the adjective "social" was maintained to signal to the reader of the translation that the term referred to a broader concept.

In addition, problems were also encountered in translating the word *Caja*. One option would have been to translate this term as "Fund." While this would certainly be accurate, the reader of the translation may not fully capture the idea that the CCSS is actually a physical institution. Thus, the final translation in English for the *Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social* was the Costa Rican Social Welfare Institute.

As has already been mentioned, it was deemed necessary to amplify this translation of the term with an accompanying explanation. For this reason, a qualifier was included between parentheses as follows: (leading national public health-care organization).

Apart from the above example, explanations were not included in the translation of these regional terms. In these other cases, it was felt that the translation itself was sufficiently explanatory.

General Observations on the Reader's Glossary

It should be pointed out that a reader's glossary was not included in the original Spanish version of the text and this technique would have served to enrich it. The reader's glossary may be somewhat more necessary for the reader of the translation in that the reader in English would be less likely to understand many of the acronyms for national institutions. However, the text in Spanish could very possibly be read by other UNICEF offices in Latin America. Thus, the same lack of understanding would be encountered. Moreover, the Spanish text could also be read by Costa Rican nationals who are not directly involved in the United Nations System and thus might not have a ready knowledge of the institutional acronyms used in the text.

For the sake of reference, a copy of the reader's glossary has been included. It should be pointed out that this version varies slightly from how it originally appeared in the published translation. For example, the acronym UNLAI has been substituted for ILANUD, for reasons already discussed.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT

ICSS	Costa Rican Social Welfare Institute (leading national public health-care organization) <i>Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social</i>
CEMIE	Multinational Center for Educational Research <i>Centro Multinacional de Investigación Educativa</i>
CEV	Special Housing Commission <i>Comisión Especial de la Vivienda</i>
COOPESALUD	Self-Managed Cooperative for Comprehensive Health Services <i>Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Integrales de Salud</i>
CRIC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EBAIS	Basic Comprehensive Health Care Teams <i>Equipos Básicos de Atención Integral en Salud</i>

ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENSR	National Survey on Reproductive Health <i>Encuesta Nacional de Salud Reproductiva</i>
FODESAF	Fund for Social Development and Family Allocations <i>Fondo de Desarrollo Social y Asignaciones Familiares</i>
ILANUD	United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILPES	Latin American Institute for Prevention and Health Education <i>Instituto Latinoamericano de Prevención y Educación en Salud</i>
IMAS	Joint Social Assistance Institute <i>Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social</i>
INVU	National Institute of Housing and Urban

Works

Instituto Nacional de Vivienda y Urbanismo

IVAH

Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements

Ministerio de Vivienda y Asentamientos

Humanos

ANI

National Child Welfare Institute

Patronato Nacional de la Infancia

PROFAC

Community Self-Strengthening Program

Proyecto de Fortalecimiento Auto-

comunitario

ROMEUM

Program for Improving Marginal Urban

Schools

Programa de Mejoramiento de las Escuelas

Urbano Marginales

VP

Second Vice-Presidency (Costa Rica)

Segunda Vice Presidencia

JNCHS

United Nations Centre for Human

Settlements

JNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY

In addition to the reader's glossary, which is actually part of the translated publication, a translator's glossary was also developed for the candidate's personal use in insuring the coherence and accuracy of the terms encountered in the translation at hand. Moreover, this terminology was integrated into a larger, more aggregate glossary designed by the candidate for use as a general translation tool. This means that every term in the glossary does not necessarily appear in the translation being discussed in the memoir. It was decided that all terms that had been researched should remain in the glossary in order to increase the overall contribution of the glossary to the field of translation studies in general.

Institutional Terms and Language Use

Essentially, the terms encountered in the translator's glossary could be divided into two categories. The first would be institutional terms and language use — those encountered within the United Nations System. Part of these institutional terms include the acronyms for the various bodies and agencies of the UN System. Thus, in this respect, there is a fair amount of overlap between the reader's glossary and the translator's glossary. However, there are differences in the type of information included in the entries for each glossary. The example below illustrates how the entry for one term appearing in both glossaries can differ.

Reader's glossary

ILO	International Labour Organization
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Translator's glossary

International Labour Organization (ILO)	Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT)
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When designing the translator's glossary, it was originally contemplated that entries such as the above would actually be listed twice — once by the organization's name and the second time by its acronym. However, this alternative was rejected as being too cumbersome. Moreover, given that the glossary was primarily designed for electronic use, it was decided that this would be unnecessary.

Within this same category, institutional language use refers to certain terms or phrases used within the institutional framework. Institutional language use is more complex, in that the translator may not even be aware of its existence. For example, the phrase "enfoque de los derechos" relates to a central concept within the book. The translator could easily and logically translate this phrase as "the rights focus." While doing so would not be incorrect, it would be useful for the translator to know that the term used in UNICEF documents is "the rights approach."

Terms for Organizations and Concepts in Costa Rica

This book includes references to a variety of organizations unique to Costa Rica. These are included in the glossary more as suggested translations, rather than set terms. For example, the "*Proyecto de Fortalecimiento Auto-comunitario — PROFAC*" is specific to Costa Rica. The suggested translation included in the glossary is "Community Self-Strengthening Program." All terms of this nature include a note in the entry, stating that this concept refers to a Costa Rican organization or concept. Thus, the translator using the glossary is aware that the term may appear in a slightly different form in other texts that have been translated into English.

Format of Glossary and Information Included in Each Entry

The translator's glossary is arranged in strict alphabetical order, rather than by classifications of terms. Given that any classification system chosen by the candidate would not necessarily be the most logical structure for other users, alphabetical order was judged to be the most appropriate and clear-cut structure. It bears mentioning that this

same technique was applied by Marina Orellana in her *Glosario internacional para el traductor*.

Since the present glossary is intended for translators, it is supposed that users have high levels of comprehension in both English and Spanish. For this reason, information, which might be found in a standard dictionary, does not appear in the translator's glossary. Examples include pronunciation guides, gender markers and definitions.

In those cases where applicable, notes are included along with the entry to provide any information relevant to that particular term. In addition, since this glossary was created to be used as an electronic tool, Internet addresses are included for all entries researched through this means. These addresses show the user where additional information on that same term may be found. When the glossary is used in electronic format, the addresses included in the entries can provide the user with direct access to that Internet site.

Research Techniques

The majority of terms were researched by cross-referencing them through documents published in English at UNICEF Headquarters. Many of the terms were encountered in the present translation or in other translations carried out for UNICEF. Thus, as the need arose, the term was investigated. In an effort to build a broader data bank, comparisons of UNICEF documents in English and Spanish were made. Therefore, the candidate has not necessarily needed all of the terms for specific translations. However, it is thought that research for the specific purpose of enriching the term bank will yield future benefits not only for the candidate, but also for other translators.

It could be stated that roughly half of the glossary entries were taken from parallel texts. As the research process progressed and developed, it became obvious that this same type of investigation could be carried out more efficiently through Internet. Since the

electronic address of the information source is included, the glossary user's possibilities of finding related information with ease are greatly increased.

Conclusion

Glossaries and term banks are both the tool and responsibility of the translator. They facilitate uniform usage of terms and promote greater efficiency in translation. Since translators are most often exposed to texts in multiple languages, they are generally able to carry out this task.

Along these lines, it is hoped that the reader's and translator's glossaries included in this Graduation Project will be of use to other translators, and that these users will help to build on this work, further increasing its degree of applicability and relevance.

**TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY ON INSTITUTIONAL TERMS AND LANGUAGE
USE WITHIN UNICEF AND THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

Agenda de acción	Agenda for action
Asentamientos humanos	Human settlements
Asentamientos precarios	Squatter settlements
Atención integral de la salud	Comprehensive health care
Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (CCSS)	Costa Rican Social Welfare Institute (CCSS) (leading public health-care institute) Note: This refers to a body within the Costa Rican national health-care system. It is recommended that the descriptive modifier be included to avoid any possible confusion.
Centro Multinacional de Investigación Educativa	Multinational Center for Educational Research Note: This entity is specific to Costa Rica.
Comité sobre los Derechos del Niño	Committee on the Rights of the Child
Concienciación social	Social awareness
Conferencia de Amsterdam sobre Trabajo Infantil (1997)	Amsterdam Child Labour Conference (1997)
Conferencia de El Cairo sobre la Población y el Desarrollo Social	Cairo Conference on Population and Development
Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Asentamientos Humanos (HABITAT II) (Estambul, Turquía, 3 al 14 de junio de 1996) Nota: También conocida como La Cumbre de las Ciudades www.unhabitat.org	United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II) (held in Istanbul, Turkey June 3-14 of 1996) Note: Also known as The Summit of Cities
Conferencia de Oslo sobre Trabajo Infantil	Oslo Conference on Child Labour (Oct. 27-30, 1997)
Conficto (en) con la ley penal	Conflict (in) with the criminal justice law

Educación obligatoria	Compulsory education
Enfoque de los derechos www.unicef.org	Rights approach
Equipos Básicos de Atención Integral en Salud (EBAIS)	Basic Comprehensive Health Care Teams (EBAIS) Note: National health care component in Costa Rica
Estado Mundial de la Infancia 1998	State (The) of the World's Children 1998 Note: Annual UNICEF publication that focuses on a specific theme each year.
Fondo de Desarrollo Social y Asignaciones Familiares (FODESAF)	Fund for Social Development and Family Allocations (FODESAF) Note: National social program in Costa Rica
Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia (UNICEF) www.unicef.org	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Note: The "United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund" has fallen out of usage.
Habilitación de mujeres	Empowerment of women
Intersectorial	Cross-sectoral
Justicia penal juvenil www.un.or.at , www.unicef.org	Criminal juvenile justice
Marco de Ayuda al Desarrollo de las Naciones Unidas (UNDAF)	United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)
Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO)	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Patologías sociales	Social ills
Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI)	National Child Welfare Institute (PANI) Note: Institute that regulates child and adolescent issues in Costa Rica
Programa de acción a plazo fijo	Time-bound programme of action
Programa Internacional para la Eliminación del Trabajo Infantil (IPEC) Nota: programa promovido por la OIT	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) Note: ILO program

Programa para el Mejoramiento de la Calidad de la Educación y Vida de las Comunidades Urbano Marginales (PROMECUM)	Program for Improving the Quality of Education and Life in Marginal Urban Communities (PROMECUM) Note: National program in Costa Rica
Proyecto de Fortalecimiento Auto-comunitario (PROFAC)	Community Self-Strengthening Program (PROFAC) Note: National program in Costa Rica
Terapia de rehidratación oral (TRO)	Oral rehydration therapy (ORT)
Trabajo infantil	Child labour
Trabajo infantil en condiciones de servidumbre	Bonded child labour

CHAPTER THREE

TRANSLATION, REVISION AND PUBLICATION PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

In the translation being considered in the present memoir, various techniques were applied to insure optimal clarity and comprehensibility of the resulting text in English. Essentially, the entire trajectory from the solicitation of the translation to its final publication may be divided into four parts: text analysis (discussed in chapter one of the memoir); the translation process; revision and publication. The terminology research and resulting set of terms detailed in the previous chapter were part of the first two items listed.

Translation Process

Translating a text of this length and complexity provided a wide range of challenges and necessitated an ongoing effort to conceptualize the project as a whole and apply various translation techniques. Basically, this meant making a series of well-thought and well-planned decisions in order to insure the quality of the final product in English.

In general terms, the translation process was viewed and will be discussed from a two-pronged perspective: clarity and consistency; and style and conventions of the English language. While these two categories do provide a clear panorama of the translation process as a whole, it should not be assumed that they are exhaustive or mutually exclusive. Indeed, as would be expected, there is a fair degree of overlap between the two classifications, and many examples or subcategories may demonstrate elements of both.

Although these two sets of factors are fairly common, the present case shows them within the context of a specific translation project, demonstrating how they may be applied in a particular instance and creating a useful bridge between concepts and practice. The examples included under the category of clarity and consistency provide insight into the

aspects that a translator might examine in endeavoring to achieve this overall effect. Clarity and consistency refer to uniformity of format and terminology usage and insuring a sharper definition of each component of a phrase or paragraph. In the latter instance, this sometimes entailed substituting a pronoun for a specific noun or replacing a noun or adjective with a more detailed referent.

Style and conventions of the English language within the context of the present translation specifically refer to repetitive word choice, synthesizing redundant information and efforts to insure that the text translated into English did not read as a translation.

Clarity and Consistency

Consistency

Maintaining a certain degree of consistency throughout the entire text at times proved difficult, given that the book is actually a series of articles written by individual authors. One example of this is the fact that each article includes a bibliography at the end. In various instances, the authors applied different styles in their annotations. All denoted the titles of all the works cited in bold type and underline. However, some also used italic type, while others employed the additional use of quotation marks. It bears mentioning that several irregularities were found in the use of bold type in the bibliographies, i.e., not all the words of the title bolded or not all of the titles in the bibliography bolded. These inconsistencies were most likely the result of errors made at the publishing house.

Along these same lines, the bibliography for the article by Juan Diego Trejos and the one for the article by Ludwig Guendel and Mauricio González (not appearing in the Graduation Project) were not presented in alphabetical order. Thus, to compensate for this inconsistency, they were alphabetized in the translation in English.

In the English translation, the annotation format followed is that presented in the *Style Book* published by UNICEF, which indicates that the titles of book-length works should appear in italics.

Another example of the candidate's efforts to insure consistency in the translation is related to the use of subtexts or direct references to other texts in the original version. This refers to consistency both within the translated text itself and among other texts. The former case is illustrated with the usage and misuse of the Spanish term for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Even when not specifically stated, it can be assumed that this convention is a subtext for all the articles appearing in the book. In both the presentation and introduction of the book, the term used in Spanish is *La convención de los derechos del niño*. In the article entitled, "Desafíos educativos para la formación de la juventud en condiciones de pobreza urbana" ("Educational Challenges Facing Poor Urban Youths"), the term *La convención sobre los derechos del niño* is used. By obtaining copies of the convention in both Spanish and English, it could be verified that the second option was correct. Thus, in order to maintain consistency in the translation, both of these versions of the name of the convention in Spanish were equally translated with the official name in English — *The Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

The following example demonstrates consistency with other texts:

Debemos mantener presente que:

"Colocar a los niños y niñas en el centro de la estrategia de desarrollo urbano puede acelerar el progreso y hacer del mundo un lugar mejor para todos".

(Tomado de: UNICEF STATEMENT IN SECOND COMMITTEE, New York, 30 octubre de 1996)

(UNICEF, UNCHS, p.12)

Thus, maintaining consistency with the UNICEF Statement in Second Committee proved fairly easy, given that such a complete reference was provided in the original text. However, this was not always the case. In other excerpts of texts included in the original document, the exact bibliographic reference could not often be determined, even in those

instances where it was possible to consult directly with the author. An example of this was found in the article "Integration, Human Rights and Social Policy in the Context of Urban Poverty" (not appearing in the Graduation Project). Given that the authors of this text are officers at UNICEF-Costa Rica, they were easily available for consultation. Nonetheless, they were unable to provide bibliographic information for a quotation from a World Bank text. Neither were they able to confirm whether this document had been previously translated into English.

Clarity

One of the techniques applied to guarantee clarity in the English version of the text was to translate pronouns sometimes as specific nouns in those cases where ambiguities were possible. The example below illustrates this technique.

Original Text in Spanish

En las últimas décadas, Costa Rica ha experimentado un acelerado proceso de urbanización que ha tenido consecuencias muy negativas en la dotación de servicios e infraestructura y en planeación de las ciudades. Una de las características más sobresalientes que presenta éste es la creación de asentamientos humanos... (UNICEF, UNCHS p.7)

Translated Text in English

Over the last few decades, Costa Rica has experienced rapid urbanization, which has had very negative consequences in the provision of services, infrastructure and urban planning. One of the most distinctive characteristics of this process is the growth of human settlements... (p.9)

By translating "éste" or the concept of this word's referent with "this process", the text is made more clear for the reader. Another example is included to further demonstrate this same technique.

Original Text in Spanish

Diversificación de la oferta de los colegios técnico vocacionales y modernización de su metodología, de manera que la población juvenil con problemas de pobreza urbana

cuenta con mayores opciones dentro del área técnica y en campos ... Éstos deberán ubicarse físicamente cerca de las zonas...(UNICEF, UNCHS, p.79)

Translated Text in English

Diversification of what technical vocational high schools offer and updating their methodology

In this way, young people living in urban poverty would have greater options in technical areas and in ... These high schools would have to be located..." (p.86).

In the above example, the excerpt taken from the original text in Spanish could be confusing or at the very least cumbersome or awkward for the reader. By specifying that "Éstos" actually refers back to the technical vocational high schools mentioned in the paragraph heading, the reader is able to comprehend the text immediately with greater ease and fluidity.

Another method employed in the effort to achieve a high degree of clarity in the translated text in English was to compensate for regional or national focuses. The following set of examples highlights this concept.

Original Text in Spanish

En nuestro país... (UNICEF, UNCHS, p.79)

Nuestra pobreza, otrora rural y asociada al agro... (UNICEF, UNCHS, p.68)

Translated Text in English

In Costa Rica... (p.86)

Poverty in Costa Rica has been traditionally rural and associated with agriculture. (p.71)

In the above instances, a type of amplification of the underlined text had to be carried out in order to assist the non-Costa Rican reader of the English translation, who may not immediately make the connection that the concept of "our" refers to the Costa Rican national context.

Yet another component to be taken into account in the effort to produce a clear and easily understandable translation is the translator's responsibility to correct or offset any

errors in the original text in the translated text. In this regard, it is of the utmost importance that these errors not be reproduced. In the case of the present translation project, the vast majority of these difficulties could be resolved by consulting with the author or authors of the article in question. For example, in the article entitled "Integración, derechos humanos y política social en el contexto de la pobreza urbana" (Integration, Human Rights and Social Policy in the Context of Urban Poverty), the author quotes another author by the name of Richards. However, no mention of the latter or the name of his text is included in the bibliography of this specific author. This problem was resolved by consulting directly with the author of the article, who had the bibliographic information on hand. This reference was subsequently incorporated into the bibliography of that article.

Style and Conventions of the English Language

Style

In this instance, the term style is used to refer both to the original and translated texts. Along these lines, two phenomena will be examined. The first is repetition within the original text and how this is presented in the translated text. The second is omission from the translation of superfluous information appearing in the original text.

The following set of examples illustrates some of the strategies employed to avoid the same repetitions present in the original text, yielding a cleaner and more concise style.

Original Text in Spanish

El derecho a una vivienda segura y saludable es un derecho que más tiende a insatisfacerse,... (UNICEF, UNCHS, p.31)

In the above sentence, the word "derecho" appears twice, interfering with the overall flow and harmony of the phrase. While it is sometimes not possible to avoid repetition, in this case, the semantic value of the above excerpt can be maintained without the need for it.

Translated Text in English

...the right to safe and healthy housing is least often met. (p.22).

Below are some examples where extraneous information in the original text was omitted in the translated text. It bears mentioning that these examples are but a sample of the total found in the text as a whole. It could be stated that omission was the most widely used technique in developing the translation. The below example, though not included in the translation segments of the Graduation Project, is particularly relevant because it shows two instances of where this technique was applied in the same sentence.

Original Text in Spanish

Este trabajo tiene como propósito entregar un marco conceptual que ubique el problema de la pobreza urbana desde una perspectiva de la desintegración social y centre la discusión en un enfoque de derechos humanos. (UNICEF, UNCHS, p.13)

Translated Text in English

The goal of this work is to define the conceptual framework for viewing urban poverty from the perspective of social disintegration and to center the discussion on human rights. (*Adolescence, Child Rights and Urban Poverty in Costa Rica*, p. 17)*

In the above excerpt, two examples of omission are seen. In the first instance, it was decided that since "problema" and "pobreza urbana" have the same referent, it was not necessary to retain both. In the second case, a verb was no longer needed to introduce the clause because the first half of the parallel structure had already been modified. Moreover, there is a certain degree of redundancy between the terms "centre" and "enfoque", which has been eliminated in the translation in English.

Conventions of the English Language

Sentence Length

It would be incorrect to state that sentences of a certain length are incorrect, inappropriate and infrequent in English. Reviewing copies of the *State of the World's Children*, which is published in English by UNICEF, does much to contradict this myth. In

* This excerpt is part of the translation as a whole, but does not appear in the Graduation Project. Thus, the page number refers to the published version of the translation.

these texts, the sentences tend to be quite long. Yet, if this is only a myth, why does it continue to persist? The response lies in the fact that sentences tend to be shorter only in general terms. Since word order in English is not as flexible as in Spanish, it is not advisable to incorporate as many embedded clauses in sentences in English as in Spanish. In the former case, this is more likely to lead to confusion as to the clause's exact referent.

As stated by Brian Steel in *Translation from Spanish: An Introductory Course*,

Another important and complex set of features of Spanish which often create comprehension and translation problems for English-speaking students is the variety of order or patterns in which major and minor components of clauses and sentences may occur. (*Translation from Spanish: An Introductory Course*, p.257)

The below example shows an instance of how this complexity of clauses and sentence components was addressed.

Original Text in Spanish

Esta forma generalizada y cotidiana de trabajo infanto-juvenil, que está entronizada en todas las sociedades, incluidos los países industrializados, convive con nosotros y sólo en pocos lugares y ocasiones es enfrentada con políticas sociales integrales de corto y largo plazo y con planes y programas específicos tendientes a su prevención y erradicación paulatina y a la eliminación urgente de sus formas más peligrosas.
(UNICEF, UNCHS, p.56)

This sentence was divided into two sentences when translated into English. The object of this technique was that if the high, repeated presence of subordinate clauses were retained in English, this would be confusing and exhausting for the reader. Moreover, the overall impact of the sentence would ring false with a native speaker of English because it would be outside of the normally accepted conventions in the English language.

Taking all of these considerations into account, the final translation of the sentence was as follows.

Translated Version in English

Generalized, everyday manifestations of child-adolescent labor are ensconced in all societies, even in industrialized countries. In very few places and on few occasions has this been counteracted with comprehensive short- and long-term policies as well as specific plans and programs geared towards preventing and progressively eliminating child-adolescent labor and immediately eliminating its most dangerous forms.
(p.53)

Thus, systematizing the aspects discovered and examined in the translation process enabled the candidate to define a type of checklist of factors to be taken into account. This information has proven useful in subsequent translations and would be of potential relevance in the larger field of translation studies. Following is an example of the checklist developed as part of this process.

Translation Checklist

Format/Consistency

Are bibliographies in alphabetical order, using a standard format for entries that is the same for each entry?

Are capitalization, bolding and italics uniform for all titles heading and subheadings?

Are there blank pages?

Is the same terminology used for the same referent in every instance?

Have abbreviations and/or acronyms been clearly defined and accounted for?

Do lists follow a logical, sequential order?

Meaning

Are there any semantic contradictions in the original text?

Does the translation contradict itself in certain instances?

Does the translation as a whole seem logical and sound as well as easily comprehensible?

Can doubts about meaning or errors in the original text be resolved by applying the larger context of the document as a whole?

Is it possible to consult with the author or another reliable authority on semantic problems?

Style and Conventions of the Target Language

Have all punctuation norms been respected in the target language, rather than simply reproduced from the source language?

In reading the translation, does it seem like a fluid document originally written in the target language?

Is there needless repetition of the same words in the translated text?

Could any prepositional phrases or connectors be eliminated?

Do the connectors used to add fluidity to the text jeopardize its semantic integrity?

Clarity

In the translation, is it always readily apparent who is the agent, what action is being carried out and what is the object of this action?

Is it clear what every adjective, adverb or prepositional phrase is modifying?

Are there dangling participles?

Terminology

Which terms need to be researched?

Are parallel texts available, and if so, how reliable are they?

Are experts available, and if so, how reliable are they?

Is there an established system for saving and modifying terms?

Do some terms need to be expanded with additional explanations so that they are comprehensible in the target language?

Will the reader of the translation have a greater or lesser understanding of the terminology in the document?

Revision System and Process

Background

When the translation of the text at hand was requested, the candidate was employed as a translation consultant at UNICEF. In this sense, the post could be considered a staff position. However, as was mentioned in the introduction to this memoir, the candidate did not have the advantage of an established system of checking, revising and editing as part of this position. Thus, the candidate was solely responsible for designing and following up on all stages from the first draft of the translation to its final publication.

Certain factors should be borne in mind when considering this process. First, this translation was assigned to the candidate as a freelance project outside of normal translation and language services provided to UNICEF. This aspect is relevant because it meant that the candidate would be responsible for organizing a work schedule outside of normal work hours, which at that point in time totaled over 40 hours per week. Second, the original deadline set for submitting the translation was moved forward, significantly limiting the timeframe available for this task. Third, the translation was actually part of a series of freelance translations of similar length, which were slated to be submitted in a highly consecutive order. It bears mentioning that the other translations in this series were also to be carried out as freelance projects outside of normal work hours and their deadlines for submission had also been moved forward. The final, and perhaps most significant factor in terms of revision and editing, was the complete absence of a translation support network within UNICEF. Bearing in mind that the translation was to be published, it was also significant that neither the coordinator of communications and publications at UNICEF, nor the persons who would be in charge of the layout and publication of the translated text had more than a minimal grasp of English.

It was deemed likely that the extenuating circumstances described above could possibly yield a substantial margin of error in the translation. For this reason, the candidate decided to subcontract an independent reviser for the translation because as John D. Graham so aptly points out in his article entitled "Checking, revision and editing":

Of all the qualities a good translator must possess, probably the most valuable is a highly developed sense of responsibility. This will enable him to recognize his own weaknesses and limitations. (Graham, p.99)

Choosing the Reviser

The task of choosing a reviser proved to be very difficult and remarkably straightforward at the same time because of the limited field of options. Essentially, the candidate had only one colleague who fulfilled the fundamental criteria desired in this case. Namely, these criteria were that the person be a native English speaker with a high level of fluency in Spanish and a language specialist with the capacity to accomplish the task at hand in a minimum amount of time.

In spite of the sound qualities the reviser presented, there were some drawbacks, which might not have existed had the candidate had access to more persons who possessed the sought-after characteristics. One limitation was that the reviser had little knowledge about the subject areas addressed in the book. However, this aspect was not as relevant as it might have been in other instances, given that the language used in the original text was not highly technical or specific. Another limitation was that the reviser was actually a translator by profession and had had no prior experience strictly in revision. Again, this factor was minimal because while the reviser had never worked exclusively on a revision project, she had acquired a great deal of experience in revising as part of her work as a translator.

Choosing the Revision

In selecting the type of revision that the reviser would carry out, three options were considered. The first was a revision by a specialist for the accuracy of terminology and language usage. However, as was already pointed out, the reviser who would be carrying out this task did not have these skills. Moreover, the candidate was unable to locate a specialist in this specific field with an extensive knowledge of this terminology in English. Furthermore, while this type of revision would have certainly proved useful, it was not deemed wholly necessary given the terminology research that had been carried out by the candidate. In this regard, it should be borne in mind that most of the investigation was based on parallel documents originally written in English at UNICEF headquarters. Thus, this information could be considered to be prime source material.

The second type of revision considered was a review of only the English text. The advantage of this alternative was that it fell well within the scope of the reviser's capacities and would have proved beneficial to the final translation product. However, this was rejected in favor of a revision comparing the original Spanish text with the English translation.

The disadvantage of this choice was that by concentrating on comparing the two texts, the reviser was not able to focus exclusively on the style and fluidity of the text in English. However, it was decided that this possible shortcoming was outweighed by the need to be sure that there were no inaccuracies, omissions or inconsistencies in the translation itself. The possibility of these errors was greatly multiplied by the extenuating circumstances under which the translation was carried out.

This estimation proved accurate in that the reviser encountered omissions in the translated text. It would not have been possible to know that this information was missing, if not for the fact that the reviser had compared the two texts. The reviser similarly encountered inconsistencies in terminology usage for the same concept in Spanish.

Practical Aspects of Revision

After the decision had been made to subcontract an independent reviser and this individual selected, the type of revision and date for submission of the revised text were discussed. Naturally, given the time constraints facing the candidate, these same factors affected the reviser who was subsequently provided with a hardcopy of the translation and a photocopy of the original text in Spanish. She incorporated her suggested changes and alternatives by hand and returned the translation to the candidate on the agreed-upon date. The candidate then incorporated the changes into the electronic version of the text. The majority of alternatives provided by the reviser was deemed as sound and acceptable. However, this was not always the case. In some instances, her suggestion was rejected in favor of the original rendering in the translation, and sometimes, a third option was incorporated that was thought to be better than either the original translation or the revised version.

The candidate then revised the English version only of the document in order to make stylistic improvements and insure that there were no inconsistencies. The translation was subsequently given to the communications and publications consultant at UNICEF, on the assumption that the text would be immediately submitted for text layout and publication. It should be mentioned that, given that none of the persons in charge of text layout and publication had more than a minimal knowledge of English, translations were always returned to the candidate for final revision before definitively being sent to be published. It was not uncommon for this process to be repeated numerous times. This held particularly true in this case.

The Publication and Post-Revision Processes

The above-mentioned process of ongoing revision by the candidate before the text was sent to publication raises an interesting point. It calls into question the translator's degree of responsibility for the final text. In this specific case, the candidate, for lack of

other options or a defined organizational structure, undertook these activities. This implied carrying out tasks and taking on responsibilities that fell outside of the processes normally associated with translation internationally.

The most notable of these was the need to revise changes previously sent to the publisher in order to insure that these had been correctly incorporated. It should be mentioned that these changes and post-changes were not always linguistic in nature. For example, Table 2 in the article entitled "Políticas de atención de la pobreza en comunidades urbanas" was originally returned from the publisher with none of the figures included in the table. This was corrected and sent back to the publisher, who entered the corrections, except for one. In the original version, the legend that accompanies the table includes the following: "**n.d.**: no disponible" (UNICEF, UNCHS p. 30). This was originally translated as: "**n.i.**: no information." However, the publisher did not change "n.d." to read as "n.i." when entering the figures into the table. Thus, in an effort to save money on printing, the communications and publications consultant incorporated changes to try to correct this problem, suggesting the following translation: "**n.d.**: no date." Needless to say this option was not adopted. In the published version of this document, the translation was "**n.d.**: no data" (p.31).

As has already been mentioned, efforts were made to make the bibliographies included with each article consistent with each other and with the format prescribed in the *Style Book*, published by UNICEF. Thus, all the bibliographies had been modified before being sent to the publisher. However, the publisher had been given the general instructions to essentially follow the format in Spanish when printing the translation in English. For this reason, all the alterations made by the candidate were rejected in favor of the original formats used in the bibliographies. It should also be mentioned that the candidate had also modified many of the entries so that periods would be included inside quotation marks, as is standard practice in English. These changes were also reversed

because of the communications and publications consultant's conviction that this format was incorrect. In order to correct these situations, the bibliographies and table were resubmitted with more specific instructions as to how they should appear in the published version of the text.

Many other delays and misunderstandings were encountered during the publication process. One of the most notable stemmed from the fact that the software used by the publisher was different from that used by the candidate. Thus, when the translation submitted by the candidate was converted into this other software, all 78 of the footnotes and the two translator notes were lost. The publisher then retyped these notes and included these new versions in the text sent back to UNICEF for review by the candidate. In revising this modified document, it was soon readily apparent that the footnotes had somehow been altered because of the extremely high number of spelling and punctuation errors as well as deleted information. The other major delay incurred was before the translation was sent to the publishing house for the first time. This was the result of changes made by the author of the article entitled "El trabajo infanto-juvenil y los derechos de los niños, niñas y adolescentes" (Child-Adolescent Labor and the Rights of Boys, Girls and Adolescents). See Chapter One for more details concerning this aspect.

Obviously, the most frustrating part of the above examples was that they all implied a duplication of effort and the need to closely monitor every modification made. Essentially, the candidate could never be fully confident that any changes made would be correctly incorporated. While it could certainly be argued that this excessive back and forth activity falls outside of the translator's realm of responsibility, it would not change the fact that any errors or shortcomings found in the translation would be attributed to the translator, not the publishing house. The very advantage of appearing in the editorial credits of the text as the person who translated the book also meant assuming responsibility for the text itself.

As Graham so aptly points out:

Many critics, no defenders,
Translators have but two regrets;
When they 'hit' no-one remembers,
When they 'miss' no-one forgets.
(Graham, p.100)

Moreover, as has already been mentioned all the other participants in the publication process had little more than a very minimal knowledge of English. Thus if the candidate had refused to take on these additional responsibilities, there would have been no one who could have done so.

One of the most interesting aspects of the publication, or perhaps more aptly called the pre-publication process, was that it easily lasted twice as long as all the other processes combined. While the case at hand may be somewhat unique, it still provides important information about the time and effort involved in a publication. Examples of pages from the published translation are included for reference as Annex 2.

Based on this experience, it is recommended that any translator whose work is to be published should be aware of the actual procedure that will be followed after the work is submitted. If, as in the present case, no one responsible for laying out and printing the finished translation is able to understand the language in which it is written, the translator should thoroughly investigate all available options to insure that the margin for error is minimal. Although, in theory, a translator's work is rightfully concluded upon submission of the final version of the document, he or she will still be held ultimately responsible for any linguistic errors made in the layout or publication processes. Thus, when a document is to be published, the translator must take care to protect his or her professional reputation and make every reasonable effort to guarantee that the publication reflects the same degree of quality as the translation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally speaking, the memoir of the Graduation Project endeavors to discuss and examine the processes that yielded the final version of the translation. The conception and development of both documents have been a valuable personal learning experience, and it is hoped that they will also serve as a guide for other students and translators given their overall contribution to the field of translation studies.

This section provides conclusions and recommendations based on the translation, memoir and the candidate's own experience. Essentially, the intent is to synthesize the information and ideas in these texts in a concise form with a wider range of applicability and relevance. The conclusions and recommendations are subdivided in terms of their sources and their fields of reference.

Conclusions

Text Analysis

- Text analysis is as vital a part of producing a quality translation as is the translation process itself.
- The strength of sound text analysis lies in its effectiveness and efficiency.
- Text analysis can have negative effects on the translation as a whole if it consumes too much time and interferes with pre-established deadlines. In this case, this process is an onerous chore, rather than a useful tool for developing accurate and fluid translations.
- Text analysis provides the general framework, which can lend context when making decisions concerning meaning. For example, if the translator always keeps the

sender's intention present in his or her mind, any contradictions in the text will be easy to detect.

- Text analysis helps the translator develop and bear in mind a conception of the finished translation before beginning to translate.
- Writings on the process and procedure of text analysis represent efforts to describe this concept and its implications; they are not exact, unalterable recipes.

Terminology

- Parallel texts are often superior to dictionaries in researching terminology.
- It is not uncommon to find contradictions of term usage when researching terminology. Thus, insofar as possible, the translator should endeavor to confirm this usage through more than one source.
- Depending on the environmental factors related to the translation (i.e., who or what organization solicited the translation), the translator can sometimes establish a hierarchy of reliability among information sources, and thus determine what could be considered prime source material.
- Terminology stored in commonly employed, easily accessible electronic databases are more user-friendly when adding new terms, ordering lists of terms and sharing information with other translators.
- Internet is one of the most generally accessible and diverse sources of terminology information.
- Developing terminology systems and data banks is an ongoing process.
- Other translators can often be a valuable source of terminology information.
- Being an expert in a given field does not necessarily make that person a reliable source of information regarding terminology.

- Documenting the source of terms every time a new term is researched or encountered is a time-saving technique.

Translation Process

- Inaccuracies in the original text should not be repeated in the translation. In these instances, consulting with the author of the text is often the best way to clarify these situations.
- Repetitiveness, awkwardness or oddities in the original text should generally not be reproduced in the translation.
- Often the translation of a text is more cohesive, streamlined and fluent than the original text.
- In translating, the grammatical and stylistic conventions of the terminal language should be reflected in the translation, rather than those of the original language.
- In many cases, the translation will be more concise than the original document because excessive or unneeded phrases or words have been collapsed into more concrete ideas. It is interesting to note that this conclusion may also be drawn in translations from English to Spanish.

Revision

- Revising a translation can dramatically improve its quality.
- Under ideal circumstances, all written texts, whether they are translations or not, should be revised by another person.
- Not all of the changes or suggestions made by the reviser are necessarily valid.
- Sometimes, the best option in a text is not the original one or that suggested by the reviser, but rather a third alternative conceived out of the first two.

- Insuring a quality revision implies selecting a quality reviser.
- The fact that a person's native language is the same as the terminal language of the translation does not necessarily qualify this person to revise the translation.
- There are many different types of revision. Selecting the most appropriate option depends on the specific needs and context related to the translation.
- As a general rule, good translators make good revisers.
- Revision is an effective tool to insuring quality translations, not an overt, unredeemed criticism of the translator.

General Conclusions

- The translator is always ultimately responsible for his or her work.
- Producing a quality translation involves much more than just translating the text.
- Time is often as important as any linguistic factor.
- Perfect translations do not exist.
- Translation lends itself well to the "learning by doing" approach.
- The best tool that a translator possesses is his or her ability to reason and synthesize information.

Recommendations

The lessons learned in developing the translation and memoir as well as the candidate's personal experience as a translator have yielded several recommendations. Naturally, some or all of them are subjective to a certain extent since individual learning patterns and perceptions may vary.

With regard to these individual learning patterns, it is recommended that, in all areas of work, translation included, people should endeavor to devise systems and

practices in keeping with their own individual mental strengths. For example, in the case of text analysis, the translator should work to adopt an efficient information processing system so that the analysis is not so cumbersome as to be useless. Along these same lines, it should be pointed out that not all systems will be helpful to all translators. Thus, translators should make every effort to learn about their own mental functions and patterns.

In addition, translators should be well versed in the electronic management of information, particularly in the use of Internet. Given the ease of access of electronic databases and the possibilities of building an extensive international client base via electronic information channels, it would be to the benefit of translators without these skills to develop them. Moreover, those who already possess these capacities should endeavor to stay abreast of any new developments in these areas.

It is further recommended that translators network among themselves so that they can share information about new developments in the fields of translation and translation studies. These networks are also useful in exchanging work. For example, in the case of the translation addressed in the memoir, the candidate has revised translations of the person chosen to revise the candidate's translation. This situation also brings to light another salient benefit of these networks. Because of the time constraints placed on the production of the translation, the candidate needed to locate a reviser immediately; having access to a network of language professionals made this possible.

Given the general nature of these recommendations, it is hoped that they can be applied and adopted in a variety of different circumstances. This same observation holds true for the conclusions detailed in this chapter. While these ideas are by no means exhaustive, they may still be of use in many instances, thus representing a contribution to the *Licenciatura* Program in Translation at the Universidad Nacional and to the field of translation studies.

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Persons Consulted in Developing Both the Translation and Memoir

Liliana Mora, translator (native Spanish speaker)

- A series of consultations were carried out regarding certain Costa Rican slang expressions used in the original text as well as to obtain information on the functioning of certain institutional structures in Costa Rica. These conversations also provided valuable information on researching terminology sources.

Ludwig Guendel, Rodolfo Osorio, Mauricio González, UNICEF officers and authors of articles appearing in the original text (native Spanish speakers)

- These authors provided needed information for clarifying certain concepts or contradictions in the original text.