

Crisis, Development and Gender

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A very important element of the actual crisis is the break of the development economic model. Undoubtedly, the creation of a new economic paradigm to the economic crisis it has to go along with gender to achieve a sustainable and equitable development.

The economy with a gender approach becomes more important if its studied and analyzed from a different perspective as we had studied since Adam Smith wrote *The nations wealth*.

The exploitation of scarce resources to meet human needs with the Industrial, Technological and Financial Revolution, have been the backbone that has rearranged our lives for nearly three centuries breaking the balance between nature, economic development and gender.

Climate change and the need to change the economic model of development over an economic crisis whose threat is more profound than the crisis of the 29th, implies to rethink public policies with a gender view and a new concept of economic life. The need to create better paid jobs and worthy for human beings involves reorienting monetary, fiscal and financial policies of our countries to establish the needs of nature and life itself. A unique advancement is the recently adopted Constitution of Ecuador which "... adopts the perspective of the axis' Good Living ', which fusions aspects of the worldview of indigenous peoples with assumptions that come from the feminine economy and the green economy [T León, 2008]. " From this vision, we can propose alternatives to the economic crisis from a gender perspective to generate a new economic model more equitable and sustainable.

Since the last three decades, the relationship between the economic crisis and gender have been so profound that it has transformed the family relationships and the family type as the man being the principal provider. The participation of women in the labor market in the 70's decade obeys in its majority the need to increase the family income. Despite the family transformation ideologically the weight of the men over the women has been maintain in different aspects. It is important to notice that at least one of the effects that banks the economic crisis is gender. However, it is important to sustain that in a capitalist economy the financial instability is a constant in the capitalist system. This hypothesis has been explained by various authors like Kindleberger [1984], Minsky [1984] and with a great depth Keynes [1936, chapter 12]. It is important to highlight how the policies under the Washington Consensus as Singh y Zammit [2000: 1258] said, not only have affected the banking crisis but they have widened the gap in wages between men and women and have not reactivate the employment as part of an immediate anti cyclical policy to achieve growth. For example, in the framework of the Financial Reform the capital account during the eighties has liberalized. Shortly after the liberalization of the

capital account hit in banks crisis in the United States, Scandinavia, Chile, Mexico and Venezuela just to mention some countries. Alternatives in Latin America to overcome the economic crisis was the loss of monetary sovereignty, the foreignness of much of the financial systems and privatization of public enterprises. The negative effect of these policies which are used to attract private capital flows affect unfairly the women [Elson, 2002:12]. Rising of unemployment and the revenue falling send children and youth without having completed their basic studies to the market labor. The consumption of basic foods to reach the necessary nutrients for brain and intellectual development is reduce as well their attendance to school by creating an unskilled labor force, compared to the progress of society. These policies of high interest rates and currency restrictions to attract private capitals have a negative impact on the long-term balanced development of society and is very complex to measure. To Fujuda-Parr, Sakiko [2008:4] the contraction of social spending, particularly in essential services such as primary health care, education and transportation looks for balanced budgets to stabilize the economy, but destabilizes the human lives.

The mortgage crisis or brick crisis that began in late 2006 and had a development driven by the Federal Reserve of the United States and the central banks in Europe and Japan could not be sustained in the course of 2008. Economies recorded falls in GDP at the end of the year and the near future is not flattering. The proposals towards the economic crisis and widespread recession in Europe, Asia, USA and Latin America only have been focused in rescuing the banks, insurance companies and mortgage institutions like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. In total, the rescue package add more than one trillion dollars to uncover the plumbing of the international financial system and save international liquidity. However, governments have not visualize how to save the society from the social crisis that has broken families having to leave their homes and lose part of the collateral and their few life savings. The Phantom of the crisis breaks even with the pension funds. In this scenario, women face not only a reduction of wages and household income but also employment opportunities. It is imperative to build roads through public policies with a gender perspective not only through public budget but also search the possibility that women are less affected by the crisis. In one swoop the public budgets are approved in terms of financial capital and the fights achieved by women not only towards the spaces in public life but also in the State programs.

Nowdays, perhaps one of the most complex issues in the economic, political, social and cultural debate is development and gender. To the extent that United Nations talks about the gender architecture. An abstract term and difficult to board in the academic field of social sciences and humanities and the economic policies of governments. Development was part of the discourse of the economic thought during the sixties and seventies of the twentieth century. Large contributions to the theory of development from Latin America perspective were made by two well-defined schools. The school of the structuralists through CEPAL and the dependency

theorists. While large contributions were made by these Latin American thinkers to the study of the Latin American heterogeneously and the development of underdevelopment. In any of their studies the gender category was not included. Even in the Decalogue of the Washington Consensus that prevailed until recent time in some countries but in others countries persists like in Mexico, little has been achieved in the theoretical methodological contributions to address development and gender. Even the economic development is based on economic growth based on the reflection which this essay began: the economy to meet human needs without respecting the ecological balance.

The concept of gender and development from a neo-classical approach has not contributed to economic science concepts for the welfare of women through public policies. The category of gender gathered from the writings of Amartya Sen relates the study of development in countries with a gender perspective. This relationship is transmitted through the United Nations Program for Development [UNDP]. It is in the Beijing Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women [1995], the XXIII Session of the United Nations General Assembly [2000], the Conference of the Millennium [2000] and the World [2005]. Together with the International Conference on Financing for Development adopted the Monterrey Consensus [2002]. Subsequently, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effective [2005]. Just the Monterrey Consensus and the monitoring of the Platform Development Goals related to gender through policy development financing specifically for women. Budgets with a gender perspective, policies of microcredit for women are just some examples of how this language has permeated the international financial institutions and the discourse of the United Nations Program for Development [UNDP]. Therefore, development and gender come together in a causal relationship in the public discourse of States and the United Nations through the Millennium Challenges. During the last decade, development and gender are dumbbells in political discourse to achieve social equity. However, the causality between gender and development has not deepened or has not led to a profound structural change leading to a new society.

These concepts are guides to progress in the gain of social movements and in the election of democratic governments. To move beyond the problems that afflict our countries is important to guide the discussion to those policies that benefit girls and women. In short, we put on the table the discussion of the debate surrounding the development and economic policies to reach a society with social welfare and equity.

The proposals for discussion and the approach used to implement the agenda on gender raises several questions. What is the agenda and topics for the causal relationship between gender and development or development, and gender? An input to the debate and the generation of ideas and of course to the Latin American academic community is to present specific policies being implemented or the ones to be performed in the democratic governments in the region. These

policies should cover or include specific actions for women and girls to achieve a better future for this population. Just to name some in the framework of development policies with gender equity and the vision of development from a gender perspective could be raised the following proposals: budget policies with a gender vision, employment policies for women, policies to promote the care economy, political empowerment for women, policies to participate in public life; microcredit policies for women, policies to achieve pension for old women.

Again, human rights and the financial crisis are important subjects that should be put in a major debate in the UN as a in the World Economic Forum. Confronting the crisis with a package of money does not solve either bank liquidity or the capitalization of banks and neither the recovery of the economy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights held under the leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt when the great depression and before World War II said that every human being has inalienable rights that cannot be taken away. Therefore, governments are obliged to establish a standard of living based on the code right to housing, education and health. Without a doubt, as stated earlier you cannot continue with restrictive policies and a heavy rescue the financial system by creating a deep fiscal crisis to the State. Part of the financial and economic crisis was the result of speculation in mortgage loans. A crisis that is now on public debt that will be paid by the American family. Similarly rescue packages are not guaranteeing the right to employment and therefore the economic benefit of the 'good life'. The people and villages have been deserted by their representatives in parliament. Thus, democracy and democratic systems are put in danger and especially the social and economic programs and the political and social rights.

Briefly it has been outlined above the factors that relate the importance of gender towards the current economic and financial crisis and economic development.

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Ponencia para el Congreso de Americanistas en la sesión Género; Globalización y Desarrollo que se llevará a cabo en el 53° Congreso de *Americanistas* “*Los pueblos americanos: cambios y continuidades: La construcción de lo propio en un mundo globalizado*” en la Ciudad de México, julio de 2009.

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Una de las explicaciones más frecuentes para explicar la crisis de las instituciones bancarias de los Estados Unidos a principios de los ochenta fue la desregulación y liberalización del sistema financiero.