



INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
1300 New York Avenue, NW
Washington D.C.

REGIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE
Second Meeting of the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Network

December 10 and 11, 2001

Poverty and Inequality Unit (SDS/POV)
Sustainable Development Department

PRESENTATION

Poverty Reduction is one of the main challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. In the Final Declaration of the Summit of the Americas in Quebec, signed on April 22, 2001, the Heads of State and Governments of the Americas committed themselves to make additional efforts to achieve the international objective of reducing the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 50% by the year 2015.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, more than one third of the population lives in extreme poverty (with less than 2 dollars per day in purchasing power parity). Although the incidence of poverty declined in the 1990s, the number of poor increased and the proportion of poor people is still higher than that of 1980. In addition, countries that have experienced economic crises and natural disasters have seen fast and high increases in the incidence of poverty, which partly explain why progress has been relatively slow and show the great vulnerability to which large groups of the population are exposed.

The IDB adopted poverty reduction and promotion of social equity as one of its main mandates at its Eight Resource Replenishment and its Institutional Strategy. With the view to achieving this objective, the Bank offers countries of the region credit support programs aimed at reducing poverty and a broad set of non-financing activities such as the Regional Policy Dialogue, an initiative of the Board that sponsors the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Network.

The objective of this Network is the creation of a forum where the countries of the region can share experiences, learn about practices carried out outside the region and explores opportunities for regional cooperation in the areas of poverty reduction and social protection. The Network is made up of a government representative from each country of the region holding the highest technical rank and with experience in the design and implementation of poverty reduction policies and programs.

The Second Meeting of the Network, to be held on December 10th and 11th of this year, includes among other topics, the experience in the region with the design and development of national poverty reduction strategies, and with the diverse types of social investment funds. These short presentations will guide an open dialogue among members of the Network. The topics and presentations included in the agenda were prepared on the basis of suggestions made by members of the Network at their first meeting last June.